

Understanding wise leadership: Employees' perspective in Oman's government sector

**Authors:**

Raed A. Awashreh^{1,2} 
Abdelsalam A. Hamid¹ 

Affiliations:

¹Department of Management, College of Business Administration, A'Sharqiyah University, Ibra, Oman

²Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Public Administration and Law, Birziet University, Ramallah, Palestine

Corresponding author:

Abdelsalam Hamid,
abdelsalam.adam@asu.edu.com

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Orientation: Success is a common goal in both personal and professional life, and wise leadership is key to achieving it. Effective leadership guides and motivates teams, driving them toward success and excellence.

Research purpose: This study examines wise leadership in Oman's government sector, using Hassi and Storti's theoretical frameworks. It explores dimensions such as Intellectual Shrewdness, Spurring Action, Moral Conduct, and Cultivating Humility to improve employee awareness and perception.

Motivation for the study: To assess wise leadership qualities across different dimensions and demographic groups to identify strengths and areas for improvement in leadership practices.

Research approach/design and method: A descriptive method was employed, and a questionnaire was used as a data gathering tool. The data were analysed by several techniques including *T*-tests, ANOVA and descriptive statistics. Data were anonymously collected from 300 respondents across the Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Information and Taxation Authority, representing diverse demographic profiles and organisational ranks.

Main findings: The findings highlight that practical wisdom is vital for organisational resilience, effective communication, and societal well-being in complex governance. While there is broad agreement on key leadership traits, minor discrepancies suggest challenges in applying theoretical ideals, especially concerning vulnerability and humility.

Practical/managerial implications: Providing a detailed look at employees' views on wise leadership and the impact of personal characteristics on these perceptions.

Contribution/value-add: Provides a comprehensive view of employees' perceptions of wise leadership and how personal characteristics influence these perceptions.

Keywords: wise leadership; practical wisdom; government sector; leadership perception; Intellectual Shrewdness; Oman.

Introduction

Leadership is a multifaceted concept encompassing various theoretical perspectives and practical applications, contributing to a landscape characterised by diversity and complexity. The myriad definitions and frameworks of leadership often lead to confusion and discord rather than clarity and unity (Nadeem, 2024). Some interpretations view leadership merely as a means to compel others to action through manipulative or unethical practices, exacerbating organisational chaos and undermining ethical standards. Amid this complexity, the framework of wise leadership emerges as a beacon of clarity and effectiveness.

This study aims to investigate employees' perceptions and understanding of wise leadership within the government sector of the Sultanate of Oman. While previous research (Ardelt & Sharma, 2021; Bostanli & Habisch, 2023; Hassi & Storti, 2023; Küpers & Statler, 2008) has predominantly focused on the framework and practical applications of wise leadership, there remains a significant gap in its exploration within the Gulf region, particularly in governmental contexts. This research seeks to fill this void by examining how employees conceptualise and apply wise leadership principles within their organisational settings. By doing so, it aims to shed light on the relevance and impact of wise leadership practices on organisational dynamics and performance in Omani governmental institutions.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to promote and implement the framework of wise leadership based on participants' perceptions. Previous studies have demonstrated the

correlation between wise leadership and positive business outcomes. For instance, Al-Amiri and Al-Uqabi (2021) found a significant influence of wise leadership on business models, recommending enhanced leadership capabilities to optimise organisational responsiveness and value creation. Similarly, Hassi and Storti (2023) proposed a framework for wise leadership characterised by practical wisdom in decision-making, ethical considerations and a focus on sustainable outcomes. This framework will guide this study in exploring and applying wise leadership principles within the unique context of Oman's governmental sector.

By leveraging insights from existing literature and applying a developed framework suggested by Hassi and Storti (2023), this research seeks to contribute to the understanding and implementation of wise leadership practices in Oman, thereby fostering environments conducive to ethical behaviour, creativity and sustainable organisational success.

This study is very important in that it creates awareness and facilitates the acceptance of the wise leadership framework by the government sector in Oman. In other words, this research, building on literature published previously – more specifically, the framework proposed by Hassi and Storti in 2023 – contributes to the currently known theory and practice of wise leadership. This literature previously reviewed shows the positive effect of wise leadership on the outcomes obtained in organisations. For instance, Al-Amiri and Al-Uqabi (2021) argued that it has an effect on organisational responsiveness and value creation. On the other hand, Hassi and Storti (2023) described elements of wise leadership as including practical wisdom in decision-making, respect for ethical standards and sustainability of outcomes.

The suggested framework of Hassi and Storti will thus be applied in this study, synthesising insights from the literature in exploring and establishing wise leadership principles within the Omani government. The objective of this research will thus be a working environment that not only brings out better ethical behaviour and creativity but also fosters sustainable organisational success.

Literature review

The concept of wise leadership integrates vision, practical intelligence and the ability to discern opportunities amid constraints (Hochschild, 2010; King et al., 2022). Leaders adept in this domain balance deep expertise in specific areas with a broad perspective crucial for navigating complex business environments (Doeleman et al., 2022). This dual capability, described as moving between narrow and broad intelligence based on contextual demands, underpins the notion of wise leadership (Antonakis et al., 2019). It involves a dynamic ability to balance deep, specialised knowledge with a broad understanding and perspective (Müller et al., 2017). It is a dual-capability leader who focuses the 'zoom in' on an issue with focused expertise when needed, but can also

'zoom out' to encompass the wider implications and context that go with these issues. This makes them able to steer through complex business environments whereby broad knowledge and strategic oversight are called upon at any given time (Schrage et al., 2021).

Although individuals may grow towards one or the other as their career progresses, business intelligence versus functional intelligence is often driven by personal perceptual filters at work in making decisions (Balarezo et al., 2023; Reyna & Farley, 2006). However, even as a leader acknowledges both kinds of intelligence, it is hard to bring them together in a way that really harnesses their abilities and thus can reduce leadership efficiency (Balarezo et al., 2023). Narratives, still, have been described as a means to enhance leadership efficacy through the communication of values and building trust and organisational change management (Day et al., 2014; Jango, 2024). However, how these insights may be applied in leadership contexts is relatively unexplored (Cugueró-Escofet & Rosanas, 2020; Day et al., 2023).

In contemporary business landscapes marked by rapid technological advancements and socio-economic shifts, wise leadership becomes imperative (Mishra et al., 2019; Whyte et al., 2022). Leaders must balance micromanagement with visionary aspirations, integrating rational analysis, situational awareness and ethical considerations (Küpers & Statler, 2008). This shift reflects a broader evolution towards agile, innovative and culturally sensitive leadership approaches (Fairholm, 1995; Küpers & Statler, 2008). Wise leadership, as a philosophical theory, serves to construct frameworks rather than prescribe specific methods. It integrates multiple leadership approaches within the broader leadership literature, emphasising the ability to anticipate outcomes, perceive intricacies, adapt to shifts, uphold integrity and prioritise service to foster autonomy and enhance collective well-being (Singh, 2016).

Ethical considerations are paramount, advocating for a model of practically wise leadership that aligns narrative strategies with ethical imperatives (Boje, 2006). Diverse perspectives on wise leadership highlight its multifaceted nature, blending strategic acumen with ethical decision-making in organisational contexts (Marishane & Mampane, 2018; Zhao et al., 2021). Practical wisdom, valued in leadership literature, aids in navigating ethical challenges and fostering balanced managerial decisions (Nonaka & Toyama, 2007). Leaders characterised by practical wisdom exhibit flexibility, creativity and ethical behaviour, essential for addressing modern organisational complexities (Gibson, 2008; Halverson, 2004). Bostanli and Habisch (2023) explored practical wisdom through narrative theory, linking narrative practices with ethical decision-making and cultural alignment. Their study underscores narratives as pivotal tools for leadership effectiveness, personal growth and organisational adaptation (Bostanli & Habisch, 2023).

Recent literature distinguished two parallel narrative approaches to leadership studies. Bostanli and Habisch categorised these narratives as models of leadership versus i.e., models of leadership focus on analysing existing practices and behaviors, while models for leadership provide frameworks for developing and implementing effective practices. The first treats stories themselves as models of leadership qualities; the latter strategically deploys narratives to enhance the effectiveness of leadership (Bostanli & Habisch, 2023). Bostanli and Habisch's (2023) framework embeds practical wisdom into narrative practices and therefore does support the appropriate use of narratives in accomplishing authentic leadership development and organisational wisdom.

Contrasting intelligence-driven leadership with wise leadership, Mann worked through the areas of experience, empathy, ethical decision-making and long-term perspective. The distinction is supposed to fill the perceived 'Wisdom Gap' in leadership, where traditional intelligence alone is not able to suffice in steering through complex challenges and in the building of robust cultures within organisations (Mann, 2024). This study advocates for the development of wisdom through practices like mindfulness, continuous learning and mentorship, highlighting their role in enhancing leadership effectiveness. Moreover, virtues embody them in their daily actions, fostering a habitus of mind, body and values that aligns with long-term societal benefits (McKenna & Rooney, 2019).

Wise leadership is put forward as the ability to predict the consequences, to know the details, to manage change, to be transparent and honest, and to serve others in a manner that engenders autonomy and health. Possession of a leader with practical wisdom does not necessarily imply that he or she is a wise leader, *per se*. Serenko (2024) posited the empirical base for practical wisdom by proposing a measure for leader-expressed practical wisdom. This research shows that, across multiple experiments, leader practical wisdom increases employee psychological safety and thus encourages open communication and constructive challenge. This empirical validation underscores practical wisdom's role not only in individual leadership effectiveness but also in the formation of more innovative and growth-enhancing organisational dynamics.

Küpers and Statler added to this discussion their suggestion of an integral model of practical wisdom in leadership that includes emotional and embodied dimensions. Adopting a more phenomenological approach, they question previous cognitive approaches to the study of leadership practice by indicating how affective dimensions and lived experiences of leaders are vitally important (Küpers & Statler, 2008). As Küpers and Statler informed, the model corresponds to the concept of *phronesis* suggested by Aristotle and focused on the contextuality of judgement and ethical decision-making in organisational complexities. In this respect, by constructing a meta-theoretical framework, Küpers and Statler opened the

path for future research-informed empirical studies that would explain how the application of practical wisdom does make a difference in various organisational contexts (Küpers & Statler, 2008).

Based on the above discussion, wise leadership, characterised by foresight, transparency and ethical service, is crucial for fostering organisational health, innovation and ethical decision-making and warrants further exploration across diverse settings. Drawing on these foundations, Hassi and Storti (2023) defined wise leadership as an approach characterised by the integration of experience, judgement and ethical considerations. This approach prioritises long-term goals and sustainable outcomes while fostering environments that nurture creativity and collaboration (Hassi & Storti, 2023). The development of the Wise Leadership Scale further solidifies these principles, offering a structured tool to identify and cultivate leaders who embody intellectual acumen, moral integrity and proactive decision-making (Hassi & Storti, 2023). In developing the Wise Leadership Scale, Hassi and Storti (2023) conducted four studies to construct and validate its dimensions. Their work underscores the multidimensional nature of wise leadership, encompassing intellectual shrewdness, moral conduct, virtuous humility and the ability to inspire action (Hassi & Storti, 2023).

Together, these studies contribute to a nuanced understanding of practical wisdom and wise leadership as critical components of effective leadership in contemporary organisations. They emphasise the integration of cognitive, emotional and ethical dimensions in leadership practices, underscoring their role in promoting organisational resilience, innovation and ethical governance.

Hassi and Storti (2023) conducted a robust validation of the second-order wise leadership construct. The study highlighted positive associations between wise leadership and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB), affective commitment and supervisor-related identification, underscoring its holistic impact on organisational outcomes.

Further insights into the organisational benefits of wise leadership were explored by Ardel and Sharma (2021), who investigated how perceptions of wise organisations influence employee well-being mediated by wise leadership and job satisfaction. Their study, based on data from the Age and Generations Study, identified wise organisations based on attributes like training opportunities, work flexibility and job security. The findings underscored that employees in wise organisations reported higher physical and subjective well-being, linking these outcomes to perceptions of wise leadership and job satisfaction (Ardel & Sharma, 2021). This research contributes significantly to understanding how organisational wisdom translates into tangible benefits for both employees and organisational success.

In the broader context of leadership challenges in a rapidly changing environment, Nonaka and Takeuchi (2011)

advocated for leaders to embody practical wisdom (phronesis) as defined by Aristotle. Their conceptual framework emphasises six critical abilities essential for effective leadership in navigating complex situations and fostering organisational resilience. These abilities include prioritising decisions for societal and organisational benefit, understanding the essence of events and people, fostering collaborative environments, using narratives to transmit knowledge, leveraging political influence and cultivating practical wisdom through mentoring (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2011).

Additionally, Al-Amiri and Al-Uqabi's (2021) study on Webology explored how wise leadership influences business models within organisational settings. Their research, involving managers and deputy managers, identified dimensions of wise leadership such as good governance, participatory contexts, effective communication and practical wisdom. The study found significant correlations between wise leadership and business model effectiveness, emphasising its role in enhancing value creation, proposition and acquisition (Al-Amiri & Al-Uqabi, 2021). These findings underscore the practical implications of integrating wise leadership practices to foster adaptive business models capable of responding effectively to environmental changes and delivering value to stakeholders. Together, these studies contribute to a nuanced understanding of wise leadership's multidimensional impact on organisational dynamics and outcomes. They highlight the importance of integrating practical wisdom into leadership practices to navigate complexities, foster innovation and enhance overall organisational effectiveness in dynamic global environments. Future research should continue to explore these dimensions across diverse cultural and organisational contexts to further refine theories and applications of wise leadership.

Küpers and Statler (2008) developed a model integrating different dimensions of experience and analysis levels to elucidate wise leadership in modern organisations. Drawing on phenomenological perspectives on embodiment and emotion, they challenge prevailing methodological individualism and cognitive assumptions in organisational research. The authors emphasise the dynamic and complex nature of wisdom as it unfolds in organisational settings, highlighting the processual aspect and developmental stages of wise leadership. This work contributes to advancing insights into how practical wisdom is enacted and understood in the context of leadership studies.

Yang (2011) explored the manifestation of wisdom in leadership, aiming to shift focus from mere organisational effectiveness to broader societal benefits. Drawing on a process definition of wisdom encompassing cognitive integration, embodiment and positive effects, the study analyses narratives from leaders perceived as wise. Results indicate that leadership-related wisdom involves fulfilling visions, solving problems and benefiting society beyond organisational boundaries. This empirical exploration underscores the pivotal role of wisdom in leadership,

particularly in promoting the common good amid complex global challenges. Building on the evolving discourse of practical wisdom in leadership, Rego et al. (2024) contributed empirical validation to the theoretical foundations by developing and validating a tridimensional measure of leader-expressed practical wisdom. Inspired by Thomas Aquinas' philosophical ideas, their study operationalises practical wisdom through capacities of enquiry, judgement and emotionally regulated action. The research spans multiple countries and employs both field studies and experimental methods to demonstrate that leaders characterised by higher levels of practical wisdom foster an environment conducive to employees' speaking up behaviours. This influence operates through enhancing psychological safety, where employees feel secure in voicing concerns and contributing to organisational improvements (Rego et al., 2024). By bridging theoretical concepts with empirical evidence, this study advances our understanding of how practical wisdom in leadership enhances organisational communication and decision-making processes, echoing the findings of Küpers and Statler (2008).

This study utilises the framework developed by Hassi and Storti (2023), consisting of 16 statements organised into four dimensions, namely Intellectual Shrewdness, Spurring Action, Moral Conduct and Cultivating Humility, which define wise leadership. These dimensions are crucial for enhancing employees' awareness and perception of organisational and managerial wisdom (Elhattab, 2024). Intellectual shrewdness in wise leadership involves perceiving, understanding and making informed judgements, particularly in uncertain or complex situations. Leaders exhibiting intellectual shrewdness possess timely awareness and the foresight to anticipate challenges and outcomes (Longman, 2002). Their decisions are based on reason and careful observation, avoiding hasty conclusions (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). They apply fundamental principles effectively in complex environments, demonstrating practical intelligence in daily leadership (McKenna et al., 2009).

The dimension of spurring action involves inspiring and motivating subordinates towards shared goals. Wise leaders foster a collective sense of purpose, providing knowledge and guidance (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2011). They align personal and organisational goals, presenting a compelling vision for the future that encourages continuous learning and goal-oriented actions. By consistently aligning words with actions and fostering relationships built on trust and mutual respect, these leaders enhance team capacity (Deo & Jain, 2023).

The third dimension, moral conduct, is crucial in wise leadership, emphasising ethical behaviour guided by principles (McKenna et al., 2009). Wise leaders prioritise moral purpose, aiming for virtuous outcomes and considering broader impacts (Garick, 2013). They uphold integrity and fairness, balancing personal and organisational interests to benefit society. The fourth dimension, virtuous humility,

defines leaders who maintain self-awareness and commit to continuous learning (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). They value diverse perspectives, fostering growth and creativity (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2006), and promote a culture where mistakes are acknowledged and learning is encouraged (Tichy & Bennis, 2007). In short, wise leadership integrates four dimensions – intellectual shrewdness, spurring action, moral conduct and virtuous humility – to foster effective leadership and drive organisational success. These dimensions, while interconnected, provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating and cultivating wisdom in leadership behaviours.

Methods

This study utilised descriptive methodology besides a comprehensive literature review to elucidate the concept of leadership and develop a framework for implementing wise leadership. A quantitative method was employed, with surveys serving as the principal instrument for data collection. Data analysis encompassed statistical techniques such as *T*-tests, ANOVA and descriptive statistics (mean, median and standard deviation).

Given the governance structure in the Sultanate of Oman, which includes oversight by various entities such as the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Information and the Tax Authority, it was appropriate to collect data from these three organisations. The research sample comprised 300 employees from the central headquarters located in the Governorate of Muscat. While the total number of employees is estimated to exceed one thousand, the exact figure is not specified. The survey was distributed via a link to individuals who expressed a verbal willingness to complete it. The distribution of the sample employees across these ministries is detailed in Table 1:

The data collection made use of Google Drive, where the participants, upon issuance of a link, opened a questionnaire. The data collection ensured confidentiality in that no personal data were required from the respondents, like their names, email addresses or IDs. The sampling of the respondents was done by sending questionnaires to all workers through chains of researchers. The study was confined to 40 days in the year 2024, so this was a bounded time frame for effective data collection, scrutiny and analysis.

Reliability

The stability of the study instrument (the questionnaire) is intended to give this questionnaire the same result if it is redistributed more than once under the same conditions, or in other words, the stability of the questionnaire means

stability in the results of the questionnaire and not change significantly if it is redistributed to individuals several times over certain time periods; the stability of the study for the paragraphs of the questionnaire is in the following order:

Cronbach's alpha values for the dimensions were: Intellectual Shrewdness 0.729, Spurring Action 0.783, Moral Conduct 0.772, and Cultivating Humility 0.736. It is statistically acceptable in business and social research because its value is greater than 70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), which indicates that the instrument is characterised by internal consistency and constancy.

Findings

Table 2 summarises the responses of the total respondents for each statement regarding wise leadership qualities. On average, respondents indicated a tendency towards 'Usually' for most statements, with varying degrees of agreement. Key observations include consistent anticipation of future events (2.67), active guidance towards desired outcomes (3.08) and regular consideration of moral implications (2.97). However, there were instances where respondents indicated behaviours occurring 'Sometimes' or less frequently, such as recognising personal limitations (2.29) and admitting mistakes (2.46). The wise leadership framework survey consists of 16 sentences ranging from 0 to 4, in which a higher system reflects a higher frequency regarding behaviours or characteristics of wise leadership. Most of the results range from 2.29 to 3.08. This implies that most of

TABLE 2: Results of total respondents for each statement.

Statement	Average	Rank
1. He or she anticipates what will happen.	2.67	Usually
2. He or she guides towards the action needed to achieve a desired outcome.	3.08	Usually
3. He or she constantly considers the morality of what he or she does.	2.97	Usually
4. He or she regularly questions what he or she knows.	2.71	Usually
5. He or she takes the right action at the right moment.	2.95	Usually
6. He or she motivates subordinates to act.	3.04	Usually
7. He or she balances his or her own interests and other people's interests.	2.68	Usually
8. He or she recognises that he or she does not know everything.	2.29	Sometimes
9. He or she quickly senses what lies behind a situation.	2.45	Sometimes
10. He or she voluntarily shares knowledge with others.	2.69	Usually
11. He or she puts the greater good of the organisation first.	2.94	Usually
12. He or she admits errors and mistakes that he or she makes.	2.46	Sometimes
13. He or she exhibits sound judgement.	2.72	Usually
14. He or she rallies others around his or her vision.	2.71	Usually
15. He or she consistently links saying and doing.	2.83	Usually
16. He or she willingly learns from everyone.	2.66	Usually

0 = Never, 1 = Rarely, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Usually, 4 = Always

TABLE 1: Demographic distribution of the data.

Gender	No.	Age group	No.	Level of education	No.	Organisation	No.	Level of employee ranking	No.
Male	184	18–29	40	General Diploma and below	43	Ministry of labour	73	Employee	233
Female	116	30–39	173	Undergraduate Bachelor or Diploma	233	Ministry of information	143	Heads	61
-	-	50 and above	87	Postgraduate	24	Taxation authority	84	Top management	6
Total	300	Total	300	Total	300	Total	300	Total	300

these responses indicate that these behaviours are normally witnessed, while two of them have suggested 'sometimes'. Putting it the other way, this table reflects the relative magnitude by which these attributes of leadership were perceived by the respondents to range from moderate to little high and will suggest areas for improvement.

The descriptive analysis in Table 3 reveals that while the results for wise leadership across score ranges are generally high, there is a significant disparity between the average score of the Cultivating Humility dimension (10.12) and that of the Spurring Action dimension (11.53).

In terms of sample analysis as per sex (male and female), the results show that the mean scores (2.7884 for males and 2.6697 for females) represent the average values obtained for whatever was being measured in this study. The standard deviation (0.76401 for males and 0.73702 for females) indicates the amount of variation or dispersion in the scores within each group; a lower standard deviation generally suggests that the scores are closer to the mean, while a higher standard deviation indicates greater variability.

In terms of analysis by respondent age groups (18–29 years, 30–39 years, and 50 years and above), the study examines the distribution and variations in responses across these different age categories. In the youngest age group (18–29), there were 40 cases analysed, with mean scores of 2.5188 for Intellectual Shrewdness, 2.8625 for Spurring Action, 2.7313 for Moral Conduct, 2.3563 for Cultivating Humility and 2.6172 for Overall Wise Leadership. Standard deviations ranged from 0.83664 to 0.79929, and this group comprised 12.4% of the total sample.

In the 30–39 years age group, consisting of 173 cases, mean scores were 2.7081 for Intellectual Shrewdness, 2.8685 for Spurring Action, 2.8829 for Moral Conduct, 2.5607 for Cultivating Humility and 2.7551 for Overall Wise Leadership. Standard deviations ranged from 0.78784 to 0.75004, representing 57.9% of the total sample. For respondents aged 50 years and above, encompassing 87 cases, mean scores were 2.7586 for Intellectual Shrewdness, 2.9167 for Spurring Action, 2.8793 for Moral Conduct, 2.5460 for Cultivating Humility and 2.7751 for Overall Wise Leadership. Standard deviations ranged from 0.75140 to 0.74602, comprising 29.7% of the total sample. Overall, across the entire sample of 300 cases, mean scores for Intellectual Shrewdness, Spurring Action, Moral Conduct, Cultivating Humility and Overall Wise Leadership were 2.6975, 2.8817, 2.8617, 2.5292 and 2.7425, respectively, with standard deviations ranging from 0.78497 to 0.75467. The analysis underscores that older age groups generally attribute higher scores across all dimensions of wise leadership compared to the youngest age group. This suggests age may influence perceptions of wise leadership attributes, with older respondents consistently indicating stronger perceived attributes in intellectual shrewdness, spurring action, moral conduct, cultivating humility and overall wise leadership.

Based on the data presented in Table 4 across three organisations (Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Information and Tax Authority), several observations can be drawn: the mean scores for the four dimensions are generally consistent, ranging from approximately 2.5 to 2.9. This indicates a similar level of perceived characteristics across these organisations. Additionally, the standard deviations for these means are relatively low, suggesting minimal variation in perceptions within each organisation across these dimensions. However, there are slight differences observed between organisations. For example, the Tax Authority tends to exhibit slightly higher mean scores compared to the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Information in dimensions such as Spurring Action, Moral Conduct, Cultivating Humility and Overall Wise Leadership.

Statistical Significance: Based on the ANOVA results provided later, there are statistically significant differences observed in mean_Intell between these organisations, suggesting that perceptions of intellectual attributes differ significantly across them. However, there were no significant differences found in the other dimensions (mean_Spurr, Mean_Mora, Mean_Cult, Mean_Wise). In conclusion, while there is overall consistency in perceived organisational characteristics across these three entities, particularly in dimensions other than intellectual attributes, organisations may still exhibit nuanced differences in how they are perceived by their stakeholders or employees. Understanding

TABLE 3: Compounded result for leadership dimension.

Dimension of wise leadership	Out of 16	Rank
Intellectual shrewdness	10.79	High
Spurring action	11.53	High
Moral conduct	11.21	High
Cultivating humility	10.12	High
Wise leadership	10.91	High

Score range: 4: 13–16 = very high; 9–12 = high; 5–8 = low; 0–4 = very low.

TABLE 4: Case summaries among three organisations.

Organisation	Mean_Intell	Mean_Spurr	Mean_Mora	Mean_Cult	Mean_Wise
Ministry of labour					
N	73.00	73.00000	73.00	73.00	73.000
Mean	2.62	2.81000	2.79	2.48	2.675
SD	0.80	0.83000	0.82	0.82	0.710
% of Total Sum	23.60	23.80000	23.70	23.80	23.700
Ministry of information					
N	143.00	143.00000	143.00	143.00	143.000
Mean	2.68	2.81000	2.82	2.50	2.700
SD	0.79	0.85308	0.90	0.88	0.780
% of Total Sum	47.50	46.60000	47.10	47.10	47.000
Tax authority					
N	84.00	84.00000	84.00	84.00	84.000
Mean	2.79	3.05000	2.99	2.63	2.860
SD	0.75	0.79000	0.86	0.93	0.740
% of Total Sum	28.90	29.70000	29.20	29.10	29.300
Total					
N	300.00	300.00000	300.00	300.00	300.000
Mean	2.70	2.88000	2.86	2.53	2.740
SD	0.78	0.83000	0.87	0.88	0.750
% of Total Sum	100.00	100.00000	100.00	100.00	100.000

SD, standard deviation.

these variations can provide insights into organisational strengths and areas for improvement across different functional domains.

When examining the data using *T*-tests between male and female groups based on variable means, the results indicate that males generally exhibit slightly higher mean scores across all dimensions compared to females, although these differences are not substantial. Regarding statistical significance, *T*-tests determine whether these differences are meaningful. A *p*-value less than the significance level (typically 0.05) would indicate a statistically significant difference between males and females for a specific dimension.

Interpreting these differences requires considering their practical significance in real-world contexts and the specific measurement scales used. These findings have implications for understanding how gender may influence perceptions of intellectual ability, decision-making tendencies, moral sensitivity, cultural awareness and wisdom. Recognising these differences is crucial for organisations and researchers seeking to foster gender equality or tailor interventions based on gender-specific traits.

In summary, while there are slight differences in perceived attributes between males and females across various dimensions, further detailed analysis using *T*-tests would clarify the extent and significance of these differences, offering valuable insights into gender dynamics within the studied context. Based on independent samples *T*-tests, the results indicate that no statistically significant differences were found between groups for any of the dimensions studied (mean_Intell, mean_Spurr, Mean_Mora, Mean_Cult, Mean_Wise). This indicates that the groups compared did not exhibit meaningful variations in these characteristics, based on the measures used in this analysis. Furthermore, Table 5 reveals results from Levene's test, indicating no significant difference in variances for Mean_Wise

($F = 0.023, p = 0.880$). The *T*-test results confirm no significant difference in Mean_Wise scores between groups, assuming equal variances ($t = 1.328, df = 298, p = 0.185$) or not assuming equal variances ($t = 1.339, df = 251.158, p = 0.182$). The mean difference was 0.11866, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from -0.05719 to 0.29451.

In short, across all dimensions tested (mean_Intell, mean_Spurr, Mean_Mora, Mean_Cult, Mean_Wise), no statistically significant differences were found between groups. This suggests that the groups compared did not demonstrate meaningful variations in these characteristics based on the measures used in this analysis.

For statistical significance difference as per respondent's educational level, Table 6 shows that the ANOVA results consistently show no statistically significant differences between education levels across all dimensions studied (mean_Intell, mean_Spurr, Mean_Mora, Mean_Cult, Mean_Wise). Therefore, the level of education does not appear to have a significant impact on perceived intellectual ability, spur-of-the-moment decisions, moral sensitivity, cultural awareness or wisdom based on the measures used in this analysis.

In terms of significant differences among organisations, based on the analysis, the results in Table 7 show that there is no strong evidence to suggest significant differences in intellectual ability, spur-of-the-moment decisions, moral sensitivity, cultural awareness or wisdom scores among the organisational groups studied. The marginal *p*-values for mean_Spurr and Mean_Wise suggest some potential differences, but they do not meet the conventional threshold for statistical significance.

Continue using ANOVA analysis among the level of respondents' jobs in organisations (top management, heads, employee), the results are:

TABLE 5: Independent samples test.

Variables	Levene's test for equality of variances		<i>t</i> -test for equality of means						
	<i>F</i>	Sig.	<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. error difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
								Lower	Upper
mean_Intell									
Equal variances assumed	0.192	0.662	1.082	298.000	0.280	0.10064	0.09304	-0.08245	0.28373
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	1.081	244.130	0.281	0.10064	0.09309	-0.08273	0.28400
mean_Spurr									
Equal variances assumed	1.010	0.316	1.035	298.000	0.301	0.10223	0.09876	-0.09213	0.29659
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	1.054	259.106	0.293	0.10223	0.09697	-0.08873	0.29319
Mean_Mora									
Equal variances assumed	0.185	0.668	0.706	298.000	0.481	0.07314	0.10364	-0.13083	0.27710
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	0.709	248.172	0.479	0.07314	0.10319	-0.13010	0.27637
Mean_Cult									
Equal variances assumed	0.051	0.821	1.906	298.000	0.058	0.19865	0.10424	-0.00649	0.40379
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	1.916	248.745	0.057	0.19865	0.10370	-0.00560	0.40290
Mean_Wise									
Equal variances assumed	0.023	0.880	1.328	298.000	0.185	0.11866	0.08936	-0.05719	0.29451
Equal variances not assumed	-	-	1.339	251.158	0.182	0.11866	0.08863	-0.05589	0.29321

Sig., significance; *df*, degree of freedom; Std. error, standard error.

TABLE 6: ANOVA among education levels.

Wise leadership dimension	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Mean_Intell					
Between groups	1.55	2	0.78	1.26	0.28
Within groups	182.68	297	0.61	-	-
Total	184.23	299	-	-	-
Mean_Spurr					
Between groups	0.95	2	0.47	0.68	0.50
Within groups	206.60	297	0.70	-	-
Total	207.55	299	-	-	-
Mean_Mora					
Between groups	1.11	2	0.56	0.73	0.48
Within groups	227.02	297	0.76	-	-
Total	228.13	299	-	-	-
Mean_Cult					
Between groups	1.64	2	0.82	1.05	0.35
Within groups	231.54	297	0.78	-	-
Total	233.18	299	-	-	-
Mean_Wise					
Between groups	1.14	2	0.57	1.00	0.37
Within groups	169.14	297	0.57	-	-
Total	170.29	299	-	-	-

df, degree of freedom; Sig., significance.

TABLE 7: ANOVA among organisations.

Wise leadership dimension	N	Mean	SD	SE
Mean_Intell				
Ministry of labour	73	2.62	0.80	0.09
Ministry of information	143	2.68	0.79	0.07
Tax authority	84	2.79	0.75	0.08
Total	300	2.70	0.78	0.04
Mean_Spurr				
Ministry of labour	73	2.81	0.83	0.10
Ministry of information	143	2.81	0.85	0.07
Tax authority	84	3.05	0.79	0.08
Total	300	2.88	0.83	0.05
Mean_Mora				
Ministry of labour	73	2.79	0.82	0.10
Ministry of information	143	2.82	0.90	0.07
Tax authority	84	2.99	0.86	0.09
Total	300	2.86	0.87	0.05
Mean_Cult				
Ministry of labour	73	2.48	0.82	0.09
Ministry of information	143	2.50	0.88	0.07
Tax authority	84	2.63	0.93	0.10
Total	300	2.53	0.88	0.05
Mean_Wise				
Ministry of labour	73	2.67	0.71	0.08
Ministry of information	143	2.70	0.78	0.06
Tax authority	84	2.86	0.74	0.08
Total	300	2.74	0.75	0.04

SD, standard deviation; SE, standard error.

- **Mean_Cult:** The p -value (Sig.) of 0.000 indicates a significant difference in mean scores among education levels for cultural awareness.
- **Mean_Wise:** In the ANOVA results, the p -value (Sig.) of 0.001 signifies a significant difference in mean scores among education levels for wisdom.

These findings suggest that education levels influence perceptions of cultural awareness and wisdom differently among participants. Further post-hoc tests or analyses could

reveal specific differences between pairs of education levels for each dimension.

When running ANOVA analysis, the results show that there is a significant difference for means in one dimension, Intellectual Shrewdness, as the p -value (Sig.) is 0.021; however, there is no significant difference for mean in these dimensions of wise leadership: Spurring Action (p -value [Sig.] is 0.281, which is greater than 0.05), Moral Conduct (the p -value [Sig.] is 0.100, which is greater than 0.05) and Cultivating Humility (p -value [Sig.] is 0.101, which is greater than 0.05). As this is in total for the wise leadership: the p -value (Sig.) is 0.066, which is slightly above the 0.05 threshold. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the means of the groups for the variable Mean Wise, though it is somewhat close to being significant. These conclusions are drawn based on the p -values from the ANOVA tests, where a p -value less than 0.05 typically indicates statistical significance, implying that the differences observed are unlikely to be because of random chance.

Discussion

Using Hassi and Storti's (2023) framework, the analysis of data tables provides a detailed exploration of how wise leadership qualities are perceived across various demographic groups, offering valuable insights into both consensus and subtle distinctions in leadership perceptions.

Perceptions of wise leadership qualities

According to the results, there is broad agreement among respondents about the essential characteristics of good leadership, with 'usually' replies overwhelming for the majority of the attributes. This broad consensus points to a common understanding of the fundamental actions – such as inspiring followers and directing them towards goals – that characterise effective leadership. Lower agreement levels, on the other hand, are indicative of possible difficulties in converting theoretical goals into actual leadership conduct, such as acknowledging one's own limitations and owning up to mistakes. These differences highlight how difficult it may be to build leaders who can effectively execute vulnerability and humility in their responsibilities, even if these traits are widely recognised as being important.

Dimensional insights into wise leadership

The categorisation of leadership attributes into dimensions illuminates distinct patterns in respondent perceptions. High scores in dimensions such as Spurring Action and Moral Conduct indicate a strong emphasis on proactive behaviour and ethical decision-making among respondents. In contrast, the slightly lower scores for Intellectual Shrewdness suggest a potential area for improvement in fostering deeper analytical and strategic thinking within leadership roles. This distribution underscores the ongoing need to balance ethical considerations with intellectual rigour to achieve comprehensive leadership effectiveness (Iqbal et al., 2020).

Hassi and Storti (2023), in their framework dimension, paid attention to spurring action, moral conduct and intellectual shrewdness, strategic while previous literature mentioned ethical, balanced managerial decision and strategic thinking i.e., models of leadership focus on analysing existing practices and behaviors, while models for leadership provide frameworks for developing and implementing effective practices (Boje, 2006; Bostanli & Habisch, 2023; Fairholm, 1995; Gibson, 2008; Halverson, 2004; Küpers & Statler, 2008; Marishane & Mampane, 2018; Nonaka & Toyama, 2007; Zhao et al., 2021).

Gender and age dynamics in leadership perception

Comparisons across gender and age groups reveal nuanced insights into how different demographic factors influence perceptions of wise leadership. While males tend to score marginally higher on average than females, statistical analysis indicates that these differences are not statistically significant. This suggests that gender alone does not significantly shape perceptions of effective leadership among respondents. In contrast, older age groups consistently attribute higher scores across all dimensions compared to younger respondents, reflecting the influence of experience and maturity in shaping leadership perceptions over time or lack of desire to change and a tendency to adapt and accept reality (Kunze et al., 2013).

Organisational and educational contexts

Analysis across organisational and educational levels shows minimal variation in perceptions of wise leadership attributes. While some organisational preferences favour dimensions like spurring action or overall leadership effectiveness marginally, these differences do not reach statistical significance. Similarly, perceptions across different education levels demonstrate no significant disparities, indicating that organisational context and educational background have limited impact on how leadership qualities are perceived among respondents. This stability across diverse contexts underscores the broad applicability of perceived wise leadership attributes regardless of organisational or educational differences. Organisational contexts were mentioned in previous literature by Hassi and Storti (2023), Marishane and Mampane (2018) and Zhao et al. (2021).

Implications

The comprehensive analysis of data tables provides a nuanced understanding of how diverse employees of the Government of Oman perceive wise leadership qualities. While there is consensus on the core attributes of effective leadership, variations exist in the emphasis placed on specific qualities and dimensions. Gender and age demonstrate minor influences on these perceptions, whereas organisational and educational backgrounds exhibit minimal impact. These insights are pivotal for refining leadership development strategies aimed at enhancing ethical decision-making and strategic foresight across varied organisational contexts.

Integration with literature

The integration of scholarly perspectives on wise leadership enriches our understanding by emphasising its multidimensional nature and critical role in contemporary organisational settings. Scholars such as Hochschild (2010) underscored the blend of vision and practical intelligence as essential components of wise leadership, crucial for navigating complex business environments. Narrative-based approaches highlighted by Day et al. (2014) and Cugueró-Escofet and Rosanas (2020) emphasised the role of storytelling in aligning personal and organisational values, thereby enhancing leadership effectiveness and organisational wisdom. Moreover, the integration of practical wisdom into leadership practices, as advocated by Rego et al. (2024) and Bostanli and Habisch (2023), promotes flexibility, creativity and ethical behaviour essential for addressing modern organisational complexities. In summary, the evolving discourse on wise leadership underscores its significance in fostering resilience, innovation and ethical governance amid global complexities. Future research should continue exploring these dimensions across diverse contexts to refine leadership theories and practices, ensuring their relevance in dynamic organisational landscapes. This synthesis enhances our understanding of wise leadership's multifaceted nature, informing strategies for cultivating effective leadership qualities across various demographic and organisational settings.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the detailed analysis of the data tables provides a comprehensive view of how wise leadership qualities are perceived across diverse demographic groups. The findings highlight a broad consensus among respondents regarding the fundamental attributes of effective leadership, emphasising behaviours such as guiding towards desired outcomes and motivating subordinates. However, the lower agreement on traits like recognising personal limitations and admitting mistakes underscores challenges in translating these ideals into practical leadership behaviours. Furthermore, the dimensional insights reveal distinct patterns in leadership perceptions, with strong endorsements for proactive behaviour and ethical decision-making, albeit with opportunities identified for enhancing deeper analytical and strategic thinking. Gender and age comparisons suggest minimal influence on perceptions of wise leadership, while differences across organisational and educational contexts are similarly negligible, underscoring the universal applicability of perceived leadership attributes. Integration with scholarly literature enriches our understanding by emphasising the multidimensional nature of wise leadership and its critical role in contemporary organisational contexts. This synthesis of insights informs strategies for refining leadership development programmes aimed at enhancing ethical decision-making and strategic foresight across diverse organisational landscapes.

Moving forward, continued research is essential to further explore these dimensions in varied contexts, ensuring that leadership theories and practices remain responsive and

relevant amid evolving global complexities. By doing so, organisations can better cultivate and leverage effective leadership qualities across diverse demographic and organisational settings, thereby fostering resilience, innovation and ethical governance in today's dynamic environments.

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Authors' contributions

R.A.A. conceived the presented idea, conducted data gathering, and wrote and revised the literature and discussion. A.A.H. conceptualised the framework, conducted the data analysis and made the revisions.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Research Ethics & Biosafety Committee (UREBC) (ASU/UREBC/23/10).

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, A.A.H., upon reasonable request.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. It does not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this study's results, findings and content.

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