



## Ethical Leadership and Teachers' Job Performance at Secondary Level

Kishwar Sultana<sup>1</sup>, Muhammad Nadeem Iqbal<sup>2</sup>, Bilal Shabir<sup>3</sup>, Nadia Batool<sup>4</sup>

### Abstract

The study's primary focus was on secondary school teachers' job performance and Ethical leadership. The study's objectives were to I) compare secondary school teachers' ethical leadership styles according to demographic factors such as gender, location, title, and district; and (ii) ascertain the association between ethical leadership and teachers' work performance at the secondary school level. The researcher created and put to the test five hypotheses using inferential statistics in order to meet these goals. The survey's cross-sectional design was used by the researcher. Using a simple random sample technique, data were gathered from 680 male and female secondary school teachers (SSTs) working at all the public sector secondary schools in four districts of the Dera Ghazi Khan Division. Self-administered questionnaire, the results were gathered. A 38-item scale for measuring ethical leadership was created and verified by Kalshoven et al. (2011), while a 25-item scale for measuring teachers' job performance was created by Goodman & Svyantek (1999). With the help of SPSS version 26, data were analysed. According to the research, there is less significant difference in secondary school teachers' ethical leadership behaviors based on their gender or job title. But there is a discernible difference based on their location and district. Furthermore, it is evident from the study's findings that ethical leadership and teachers' work performance at the secondary school level are significantly correlated.

**Keywords:** Ethical Leadership, Job Performance, Secondary School Teachers

### 1. Introduction

An ethical leader is one who "models normatively appropriate behaviour through their acts and relationships and encourages this behaviour in their followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (Brown et al., 2005). Ethical leadership can be gleaned from a leader's moral fibre and example (Knights & O'Leary, 2006). Integrity of character, responsibility for one's actions, awareness of one's own ethical standing, the ability to inspire followers to follow in one's ethical footsteps, and the ability to use one's ethical judgement in one's leadership are described (Resick et al., 2006).

Ethical leadership rests on the characteristics of a moral person (such as integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness) and a moral manager (such as setting an example by one's own conduct). Hence, ethical leaders inspire followers by modelling these traits themselves (Trevio et al., 2000). The impact of moral leadership on workers is explained by social learning theory. As leaders set an example of ethical behaviour, followers pick up on the norms that prevail in the workplace. Vicarious learning occurs when we observe the outcomes of others' actions and evaluate them based on our own standards of reward and punishment (Brown et al., 2005; Trevio et al., 2000). Transactional efforts (such as punishment, reward, or an emphasis on ethical laws and standards) are a common tool used by ethical leaders to sway their followers (Mayer et al., 2009). Nonetheless, ethical leaders may have an impact on their teams through interpersonal interactions. Respect and friendship are at the heart of this conversation (Mayer et al., 2009). Principals who are honest, fair, and reward and encourage their teachers can help create a culture of ethics in their schools. An ethical leader sets the standard for acceptable actions and positive results in the workplace (Sharma et al., 2019).

Job performance remained extensively researched area in broader domains of business management, human behavior and educational management and psychology. Organizations and governments spend huge sums to increase the performance of their employees/teaching force by modeling/shaping their positive behaviors. Irrespective of these efforts, studies reported certain ethical issues among managers that caused collapse of many profit and not-for profit organizations such as WorldCom and Enron (Mehnaz et al., 2020). The issue of ethical bankruptcy has not only been restricted to profit and not-for profit organizations, instead it crept into educational organizations as well. Ethical issues such as sexual harassment and financial embezzlement at educational institutions are becoming widespread (Bondestan & Lundquest, 2020). These ethical values transformed the leadership from traditional toxic leadership to ethical leadership paradigm (Bouckenooghe et al., 2015). In view of this movement of ethical leadership, governments in developed countries devised ethical standards for their teaching force and school administration to respond the wave of unethical practices at educational institutions. Huge sums were spent on ethical training of teachers and ethic driven curricula were devised and implemented for teachers' education programs (Sulastri, 2019). As a result, educational leaders became ethical leaders driving their teaching force towards success. In response to global drives of teaching standards, Ministry of Education Pakistan also devised National Professional Standards (NPSTs) in 2009 to regulate the conduct of teaching profession. The third NPST strives to cultivate Islamic Ethical Values/Social Life Skills among educational managers and teachers (Mehnaz et al., 2020). Declining academic achievements of students also suggest that

<sup>1</sup>MPhil Scholar, Department of Education, Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan, Pakistan, [kishwarsani@gmail.com](mailto:kishwarsani@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Special Education, University of Okara, Okara, Pakistan, [dmadeem@uo.edu.pk](mailto:dmadeem@uo.edu.pk)

<sup>3</sup>MPhil Scholar, Department of Education, Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan, Pakistan, [Bilal03022774523@gmail.com](mailto:Bilal03022774523@gmail.com)

<sup>4</sup>MPhil Scholar, Department of Education, Institute of Southern Punjab, Multan, Pakistan, [nadia.zargham786@gmail.com](mailto:nadia.zargham786@gmail.com)

teaching force is hardly driven by ethical guides. Experts suggest that there must be effective normative mechanism to redress these ethical issues at schools (Izzati, 2017).

Leadership and Job performance are extensively researched domains. However, ethical leadership is relatively novel construct that has appeared during the last decade. Further, the effect of ethical leadership on performance of teachers in education sector is novel idea that may have vital significance for policy makers, curriculum developers for teacher education and educational managers. The findings of the study will be beneficial for the policy makers who may devise policies to conduct ethical trainings of educational managers to cultivate ethics among them. It may also have significance for curriculum developers who may develop curriculum that may include contents about ethical development of teachers and educational managers as well. The study will also be beneficial for the future researchers as it will set new frontiers for further research. Finally, the study will also add new knowledge in the existing body of knowledge on ethical leadership, job performance and educational management. Based on the findings of studies and lessons from profit and not-for profit organizations, the researcher believes that ethical leadership in schools may drive the institutions and teachers towards better performance of institution, teachers and students. They may develop an ethical/normative climate conducive for teachers' and students' performance. However, this assumption needs empirical evidence.

### **1.1. Purpose of the Study**

The main focus of the study was to determine the relationship between ethical leadership and teachers' job performance at Secondary School Level. Based on the discussion and review of studies, major objectives of this research study included:

- To compare the ethical leadership practices of secondary school teachers' on the basis of demographics i.e. gender, locale, designation, and district.
- To investigate the relationship between ethical leadership and teachers' job performance at secondary school level.

### **1.2. Hypotheses**

Based on the research objectives and review of literature, the researcher tested the following hypotheses:

Ho1: There is no significant gender (Male, Female) based difference regarding ethical leadership practices of secondary school teachers.

Ho2: There is no significant locale (urban, rural) based difference of ethical leadership practices of secondary school teachers.

Ho2: There is no significant locale (Urban, Rural) based difference regarding the ethical leadership practices of secondary school teachers.

Ho3: There is no significant designation based (Science and Arts) difference regarding the ethical leadership practices of secondary school teachers.

Ho4: There is no significant district based difference regarding the ethical leadership practices of secondary school teachers.

Ho5: There is no significant relationship between ethical leadership and teachers' job performance at secondary school level

## **2. Research Design**

The nature of the current study was descriptive. The purpose of the study, which used a cross-sectional survey design, was to examine the relationship between teachers' work performance at the secondary school level and moral leadership.

### **2.1. Population**

The population of this research study consisted of all secondary school teachers (SSTs) employed by government secondary schools in Dera Ghazi Khan Division. There are currently 482 secondary schools in Dera Ghazi Khan Division (males: 282, females: 200, SED Punjab, 2022).

### **2.2. Sampling Technique and Sample Size**

A simple random sample procedure was used to pick 680 secondary school teachers (SSTs) from all of the secondary schools in the Dera Ghazi Khan Division. The entire Dera Ghazi Khan Division was divided into four districts by the researcher in order to properly represent all geographic units. Eventually, SSTs were chosen through systematic random sampling from each district or cluster.

### **2.3. Instruments of Study**

Data were gathered quantitatively utilizing a survey approach. The sampled SSTs were given a questionnaire to fill out, which evaluated effect of ethical leadership and Job satisfaction. Participants' comments were graded on a Likert scale with a maximum score of five on a scale from one for strongly disagreeing to five for strongly agreeing. A 38-item scale that was created and approved by Kalshoven et al. was used to gauge ethical leadership (2011). According to Kalshoven et al (2011)'s test, the scale's reliability was 0.89. Using a 25-item scale created by Goodman & Svyantek, teachers' job performance was evaluated (1999). As determined by Goodman & Svyantek (1999), the scale's reliability was 0.82.

### 3. Results

Table 1 shows that a total of 680 participants participated in the study out of which 384 participants (56.5%) were male while 296 participants (43.5%) were females showing that male participants dominated the study. It is also evident that out of 680 participants, 458 participants (67%) possessed M.Ed while 222 participants (33%) possessed B.Ed as their professional qualification. It shows that majority of the participants held M.Ed as professional qualification. Table 1 further depicts that 259 participants (38%) were serving schools located in urban areas while 421 participants (62%) were serving schools located in rural areas. As far as academic qualification of the participants is concerned, above table depicts that 475 participants (69.85%) held MA/M.Sc, 200 participants (29.41%) held M.Phil while 5 participants (0.7%) held PhD. This shows that majority of the participants held 16 years of education.

**Table 1: Demographics of the Participants (N=680)**

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>	Male	384	56.50%
	Female	296	43.50%
<i>Professional Qualification</i>	B.Ed	222	32.64%
	M.Ed	458	67.35%
<i>Locality</i>	Urban	259	38.10%
	Rural	421	61.90%
<i>Qualification</i>	MA/M.Sc	475	69.85%
	M.Phil	200	29.41%
	PhD	5	0.7 %

**Table 2: Gender (Male, Female) based Comparison regarding the Ethical Leadership Practices of Secondary School Teachers**

Respondent Type	N	Mean	SD	df	<i>t</i>	Sig.
Male	384	3.74	28.60	678	0.496	0.3
Female	296	3.8.02	32.85			

**\*\* $P \leq 0.05$**

Table 2 demonstrates that there are no statistically significant gender-based differences ( $P=.3$ ) in secondary school teachers' ethical leadership behaviors. Therefore, the study's second hypothesis—that there is no discernible difference between male and female secondary school teachers in terms of their ethical leadership practices—is accepted.

**Table 3: Locale (Urban, Rural) based Comparison regarding the Ethical Leadership Practices of Secondary School Teachers**

Respondent Type	N	Mean	SD	df	<i>T</i>	Sig.
Urban	259	4.66	30.99	678	3.047	0.001
Rural	421	4.75	29.91			

**\*\* $P \leq 0.05$**

Table 3 demonstrates a sizable disparity between urban and rural areas in terms of ethical leadership. Therefore, the study's second hypothesis—that there is no discernible variation in secondary school teachers' ethical leadership according to geography (urban, rural)—is not accepted. Consequently, it may be stated that there is a considerable variation in ethical leadership practices at the secondary school level based on geography (urban, rural).

Regarding ethical leadership practices, Table 4 demonstrates no statistically significant ( $P=0.3$ ) difference between SST Science and SST Arts designations. Therefore, the study's final hypothesis—that there is no

discernible difference between secondary school teachers' ethical leadership practices in the sciences and the arts—is accepted.

**Table 4: Designation (Science and Arts) based Comparison regarding the Ethical Leadership Practices of Secondary School Teachers**

Respondent Type	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig.
SST Science	344	3.83	30.92	678	.309	0.3
SST Arts	336	3.91	31.12			

**\*\* $P \leq 0.05$**

**Table 5: Districts based Comparison regarding the Ethical Leadership Practices of Secondary School Teachers**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	Sig.
Between Groups	20738.3	3	6912.77		
Within Groups	611315	676	904.312	7.644	.000
Total	632054	679			

**\*\* $P \leq 0.05$**

**Table 6: Correlation Analysis**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Gender	1								
2. Professional Qualification	.192**	1							
3. Locale	0.002	0.062	1						
4. District	0.036	0.049	.251**	1					
5. Academic Qualification	.094*	.119**	0.055	.088*	1				
6. Experience	0.009	.166**	.128**	0.015	0.008	1			
7. Designation	.129**	0.061	.121**	0.007	0.003	0.023	1		
8. Ethical Leadership	0.004	.114**	.106**	.133**	.080*	.146**	0.031	1	
9. Job Performance	0.046	0.074	.110**	.146**	-0.017	.203**	0.015	.711**	1

Table 5 depicts a significant ( $P=.000$ ) districts-based difference regarding the ethical leadership practices of secondary school teachers. Hence, the fourth hypothesis of the study stating, “There is no significant district based difference regarding the ethical leadership practices of secondary school teachers” is not accepted.

### 3.1. Correlation Analysis

The researcher applied Pearson Correlation analysis to assess the relationship of Ethical Leadership and Teachers' Job Performance.

At a significance level of 0.05, Table 6 shows a substantial positive link between ethical leadership and teachers' job performance ( $r=0.711^{**}$ ). This supports the study's initial premise, which claimed there was no connection

between teachers' job performance at the secondary school level and moral leadership. So, it is safe to say that ethical leadership predicts teachers' performance on the job.

#### 4. Conclusions and Discussion

It is reasonable to draw the conclusion that ethical leadership is a predictor of teachers' job performance based on the social learning theory's (SLT) premises and discussion of the findings. It might improve instructors' performance on the job. According to SLT, when a leader acts morally upright and appropriately in the workplace, the followers copy that behavior. The study's primary goal was to compare secondary school teachers' ethical leadership behaviors according to gender, location, job title, and district. According to the research, there is no discernible difference in secondary school teachers' ethical leadership behaviors based on their gender or job title, but there is a discernible difference based on their location and district. The study's second goal was to look at the connection between moral leadership and secondary school teachers' work effectiveness. The study's findings make it abundantly evident that ethical leadership and teachers' work performance at the secondary school level are significantly correlated. Similarly Liderlik et al. (2021) showed a moderately favourable association between teachers' views of administrators' ethical leadership style and teachers' levels of motivation to do their jobs well. Moreover, the internal, external, and administrative aspects sub-dimensions of the Teacher Motivation Scale were found to be moderately positively correlated with ethical leadership. Practitioners might want to think about whether there is a link between the number of years a teacher has been teaching and how much they are motivated by things outside of themselves. To that end, it would be possible to organise some fun events for the younger instructors to attend in order to boost their morale. If teachers were more internally motivated, new rules would be implemented to help them enhance their knowledge and abilities and advance in their careers. Teacher opinions of school principals' ethical leadership behaviour were found to have a moderately positive relationship with teacher motivation. School administrators should be informed that the ethical leadership conduct of the administration can motivate teachers by sharing the results of similar studies with them in meetings, courses, circulars, etc. Thus, there is potential for improved ethical leadership among school principals and a boost in teacher morale (Liderlik et al., 2021)

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