





Original Article

Ethical leadership status and performance health of Education workers

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Abstract

Background: Ethical managers provide mutual trust in the organization by increasing the authority to act, which increases interest in work. This study was conducted with the aim of investigating the Ethical leadership status and performance health of Education workers.

Methods: This study was applied, descriptive and by survey method on 341 Education workers in Kerman province, in which the samples were selected by stratified random method and included in the study. Data collection was done on 46 questions and job performance questionnaire including 28 questions. 30 specialists used the Delphi technique to assess the components' dependability, and AMOS software was installed. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient greater than 0.7 revealed the items' internal consistency and verified their dependability. Software called SPSS-22 was utilized to analyze the data.

Results: The results show that the status of ethical leadership and its components are favorable among employees, and the status of job performance and its task dimension are not favorable, and this variable was favorable only in the contextual dimension. The components of job enthusiasm (behavioral, cognitive and emotional) which are considered as predictors of job performance, have a significant difference in which there is a relationship between job enthusiasm and ethical leadership of healthcare workers.

Conclusion: The results of job enthusiasm with the mediation of moral leadership show the strengthening of employees' performance health. By identifying the influencing factors related to job performance and work enthusiasm, managers can help to better understand the nature of employees' performance and work enthusiasm.

Keywords: Employee Performance Appraisal; Ethics; Staff Development; Task Performance and Analysis.

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Introduction

All the countries worldwide pay special attention to the education of their people. It cannot be managed without scientific measures. The need for management and leadership is vital in all areas, especially in social activities since human and material resources are destroyed without proper leadership (1). A company's

ethical culture is greatly influenced by the managers operating at various levels inside the company. Research on ethical leadership is being conducted by a growing number of scholars (2). Research indicates that there is a noteworthy correlation between efficiency and ethical leadership (3–4). Subordinates' work efficiency may

improve or worsen depending on the management's leadership style (5). Individuals desire to work for companies where they are valued, understood, cared for, and inspired to succeed. The manager of an organization can affect the job enthusiasm of the employees. His behavior should reflect ethical capabilities and the principles of honesty and honor throughout his life (6).

A manager can comprehensively pave the way to achieve high performance in the organization by demonstrating ethical principles, establishing human relations with employees, and improving their job enthusiasm in the organization (7). Achieving high performance is one of the most significant goals of senior management in organizations. Thus, organizations try to pay attention to the factors increasing job performance and strengthen it (8). The issue of improving job performance in the education department is also vital since it is training the future generation of the country. Investigating the personality traits of education department managers as factors affecting performance and determining their importance can pave the way for many strategic decisions since managers play the most crucial role in increasing the productivity and performance of the organization. Given the significance of the issue, the present study aimed to answer the following question: What is the status of moral leadership and the health of education department employees?

Methods

Research environment and population

The current study's objectives were applied, its nature was descriptive, and its methodology was survey-based. 3016 managers and staff members of the province of Kerman's education department who hold a diploma or higher education made up the statistical population for this study. The sample size was estimated to be 341 individuals based on Morgan's table,

who were chosen at random via a stratified sampling technique.

To identify the components of ethical leadership in the education department, three components of ethical personality (including personality traits and ethical behavior); and ethical management (including ethical behavior modeling, setting ethical standards, and ethical responsibility) were first considered based on the theoretical framework. Then, 30 experts and specialists were surveyed based on the Delphi method to measure the validity of this component and the extent of their compatibility with the education department.

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Data collection method

Data was gathered using a questionnaire created by the researcher. Two dimensions of the ethical leadership questionnaire were used: 1) Ethical Personality with questions ranging from 1 to 12; 2) Ethical Behavior with questions ranging from 13 to 24; 3) Ethical Management with questions ranging from 25 to 28; 4) Ethical Responsibility with questions ranging from 39 to 46; and 5) Job Performance with questions ranging from 1 to 12 on Task (Technical) Performance and from 13 to 28 on Contextual Performance. The Likert scale has five points for each question.

According to the opinions of experts, the face and content validities of the questions were confirmed. Then, to measure the validity of these components and their compatibility with the education department, based on the Delphi method, 30 experts and specialists were surveyed. The outcomes of the component fitting process using the AMOS program were displayed. The coefficient of Cronbach's alpha was computed for two variables: work performance (0.904) and ethical

leadership (0.919). They were more than 0.7, demonstrating the products' internal consistency and attesting to their dependability.

Statistical analysis

Descriptive and analytical tests were used to statistically test the data. The used statistical tests included a one-sample t-test, multivariate regression, and path analysis. They were performed in SPSS-22 software.

Results

Identifying the components of ethical leadership

The results of fitting the components obtained from AMOS software are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. They show that the components of ethical leadership have a suitable factor load and their significance is less than 0.05, indicating that the components of ethical leadership in the education department include ethical personality (including personality traits and ethical behavior), ethical management (including ethical behavior modeling, setting ethical standard, and ethical responsibility).

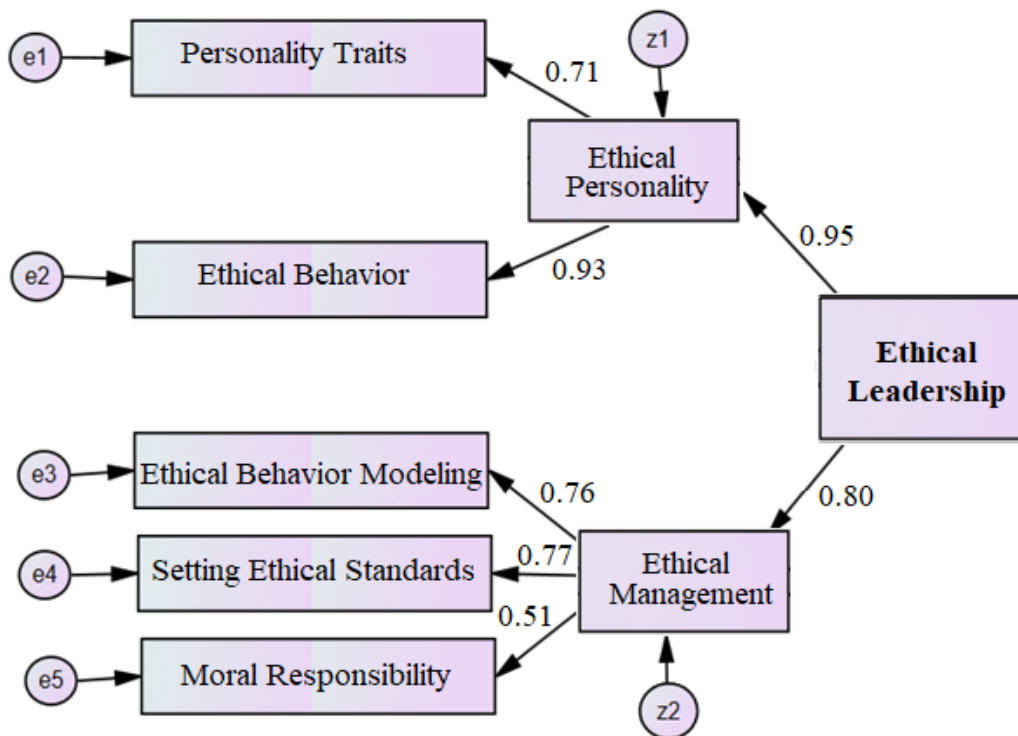


Figure 1. Factor loads of ethical leadership components in the education department

Table 1. Factor load of the ethical leadership component in the education department

Latent factors (second-order latent variables)	Factor loads	first-order latent variables	Measurement indices (observed variables)	Factor loads	Sig
Ethical Leadership	0.95	Ethical Personality	Personality Traits	0.71	0.001
			Ethical Behavior	0.93	0.001
	0.80	Ethical Management	Ethical Behavior Modeling	0.76	0.001
			Setting Ethical Standards	0.77	0.001
			Moral Responsibility	0.51	0.001

Table 2. One-sample T-test statistics to investigate the ethical leadership status of education department employees

Statistics	N	Mean	SD	Test value	Mean difference	t-statistic	Df	Sig
Ethical Leadership Status	341	3.11	0.62	3	0.111	3.277	340	0.001
Ethical Personality Status	341	3.09	0.74	3	0.086	2.159	340	0.032
Ethical Management Situation	341	3.14	0.69	3	0.138	3.682	340	0.001

The status of ethical leadership and its dimensions among education department employees is at a desirable level.

The one-sample t-test statistic is less than the significance level of $\alpha=0.05$ ($P<0.05$, $t_{341}=3.277$), according to Table 2 and the t-test statistic. At this point, the null hypothesis is thereby rejected. This indicates that the obtained and theoretical means (test value) deviate significantly from one another. Since the t-statistic value and the difference between the means are positive, the obtained mean is greater than the theoretical mean (test value). Thus, it can be stated that the status of ethical leadership and its components among the education department employees is at a desirable level.

Identifying the health components of job performance

To ascertain the job performance components of education department personnel, two components—task performance and contextual performance—were taken into consideration based on the theoretical framework. The components

that were fitted using the AMOS program are displayed in Table 3 and Figure 2. The component has a suitable factor load and their significance is less than 0.05, indicating that the health components of the task performance of education department employees include task performance and contextual performance.

The health status of job performance and its dimensions among education department employees is at a desirable level.

When looking at the employee job performance variable in Table 4, the one-sample t-test value is much higher above the significance criterion of $\alpha=0.05$ ($P<0.05$, $t_{341}=1.249$). As a result, at this point, the null hypothesis is accepted. As a result, the obtained and theoretical means (test value) do not significantly differ from one another. It follows that the staff of the education department are not performing at a level that is ideal. ($P < 0.05$, $t_{341} = -0.631$) indicates that the one-sample t-test result exceeds the significance level of $\alpha=0.05$ with regard to the task performance dimension. As a result, at this point, the null hypothesis is accepted.

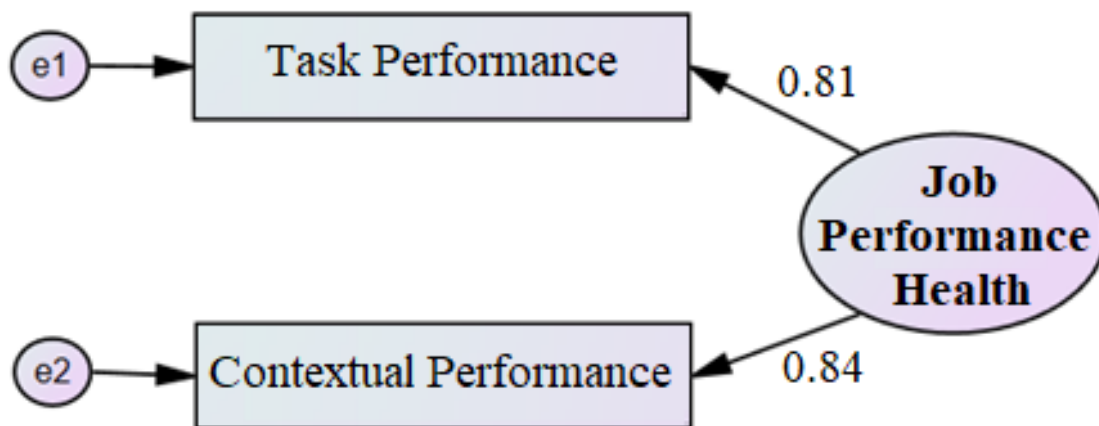


Figure 2. Factor loads of health components of job performance of education department employees

Table 3. Factor loads of health components of job performance of education department employees

Latent Factors (Latent Variables)	Measurement Indices (Observed Variables)	Factor Loads	Sig
Job Performance Health	Task Performance	0.81	0.001
	Contextual Performance	0.84	0.001

This indicates that there is no discernible difference between the test result (obtained) and the hypothesized mean. It follows that the performance of those working in the education sector is below standard. With regard to the contextual dimension, $P < 0.05$, $t_{341} = 2.525$, the one-sample t-test result indicates that it is less than the significance level of $\alpha=0.05$. Therefore, at this point, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the obtained means and the hypothesized means (test value) disagree significantly. Since the t-statistic value and the difference between the means are positive and the obtained mean is greater than the theoretical mean (test value), it can be stated that the contextual performance of the education department employees is at a desirable level.

Discussion

The results revealed that the ethical leadership variable and its components have a good status among education department employees in Kerman province. The personality traits, the behavior of employees in dealing with other people, the way of establishing effective communication with other people, and accepting ethical responsibility are considered a motivation to improve performance health. In the present study, all these factors were at a desirable level. It is considered a good capacity for developing skills to improve performance health in the organization. This result is consistent with the results of studies conducted by Sorani

Yancheshmeh, who reported that traits such as respect for each other, being servile, fair, honest, compassionate, and developing skills will lead to higher job enthusiasm and better performance in the organization (9). In addition to these factors, discussed in this study, the desirable status of ethical leadership will empower teachers as one of the forces of the education system and create an innovative organizational atmosphere (10).

The results revealed that the job performance status of education department employees is not at a desirable level. The dimensions of this variable, including task performance, and contextual performance, were tested. The results revealed that the task performance status of the education department employees is not at a desirable level. However, the contextual performance health status of the education department employees is at a desirable level. Job performance health as a behavioral factor is affected by other organizational components such as dynamic personality and transformation (11), quality of life (12), intrinsic motivation, and self-efficacy (13).

Although the contextual performance of the education department employees is at a desirable level and people can acceptably evaluate their job roles and make good use of the relationships with other people, the task performance of the job internal roles that deal with examining the organizational roles of a person is not at a desirable level.

Table 4. One-sample t-test statistics to examine the job performance status of education department employees

Statistics	N	Mean	SD	Test value	Mean difference	t-statistic	Df	Sig
Job Performance Status	341	3.049	0.752	3	0.049	1.249	340	0.212
Task Performance Status	341	0.972	0.808	3	-0.027	-0.631	340	0.529
Contextual Performance Status	341	3.106	0.781	3	0.106	2.525	340	0.012

The overall inappropriate performance of education department employees in the task component which is the core of the organization or job can be due to a lack of skills, knowledge, or abilities of people at the desired level or due to the lack of supervision on the presence and absence of people, as stated by Kong and Cheng (14).

Ethical leadership was described by Brown et al. as "demonstrating normatively appropriate behavior in personal actions and interpersonal relationships and encouraging such behaviors in followers through mutual communication, encouragement, and decision-making," with reference to the idea of social learning. Ethical leaders are considered honest and truthful leaders who make fair and rational decisions. Also, these leaders show real concern for their followers and behave ethically in both their professional and personal lives (15).

Arak municipal sports team coaches' job passion and organizational effectiveness were shown to be significantly correlated in a study conducted by Khosravizadeh et al. (16). Staff specialists perform better on the job and are more motivated to do so, according to Sajjadi & Omidy. The staff experts' work performance and their job happiness, motivation, employment history, and educational background were shown to be significantly correlated, according to the correlation coefficient data. The variable of completed courses is the most significant factor for predicting the job performance of the staff experts of the physical education organization (17).

Alshammari et al., found that ethical leadership frameworks simply need a valuable psychological environment to pay attention to organizational performance and identify employees' ethical identity. They also found that the competence of an ethical leader makes the leader achieve the leadership goals by considering what the organization has lost and what needs to be the basis of policies, strategies, and leadership styles (18). According to Malik

et al. (19), employee performance is favorably and significantly impacted by ethical leadership, both directly and indirectly, through the mediation of corporate values. According to what they said, workers play a key role in clearing the path for organizational advancement. The greatest resource for gaining a competitive edge is thought to be employees. Therefore, participatory leadership, which is ethical leadership, distributes authority to employees.

Recommendations

It is recommended to investigate other management and organizational factors affecting the job enthusiasm of managers and education department employees. It is also recommended that this type of study be conducted in other provinces and their results be compared to strengthen the confidence of the results. It is also recommended to study the ways to strengthen job enthusiasm and ethical leadership of managers and education department employees.

Research limitations

The study literature suggests that the association between moral leadership and enthusiastic performance may be impacted by a few intervening factors, including organizational justice and work attachment. Due to time and budgetary restrictions, these variables were not examined in this investigation. Exuberant performance can also be influenced by other leadership philosophies, such as transformational leadership and spiritual leadership, which this study did not examine.

Conclusion

Because ethical leadership is so important, effective action must be taken to enhance the current status of the tasks and job performance of Kerman Education Department employees in addition to paying attention to the personality traits and behavior of employees, in dealing with others, the way of establishing effective

communication with other people, and accepting ethical responsibility as a motivation to improve performance health in the organization. The nation's planners and administrators of education departments can make use of the study's findings.

Authors' contribution

Fahimeh Forootani and Alireza Manzari Tavakoli developed the study concept and design. Alireza Manzari Tavakoli acquired the data. Sanjar Salajegheh and Mahdi Mohammad Bagheri analyzed and interpreted the data, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. All authors contributed to the intellectual content, manuscript editing and read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethical Considerations

Questionnaires were filled with the participants' satisfaction and written consent was obtained from the participants in this study.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

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