

The Role of Ethical Leadership for the Faculty Job Satisfaction: A Case of Higher Education Institutes of Balochistan

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Abstract

Leadership is the key driver for the success of any organization. When we talk about educational organization, then its importance further increases. This study examines the impact of ethical leadership on the faculty job satisfaction of the higher education institutions of Balochistan. Furthermore, this study also explains how this relationship is channelized by self-efficacy, organizational commitment, and psychological empowerment. A purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from the 386 faculty of the higher education institutes across the Balochistan province of Pakistan. The data was gathered via a closed-ended questionnaire and was analyzed via SmartPLS. The findings of this study show that ethical leadership plays a significant role in the job satisfaction of the faculty members of the higher education institutes of Balochistan. Furthermore, this study also found that this relationship is channelled by self-efficacy, organizational commitment, and psychological empowerment.

Keywords: self-efficacy; organizational commitment; psychological empowerment; ethical leadership; job satisfaction

Introduction

Leadership plays a significant role in the development of any organization. Employees are the organisation's primary assets to whom the organization relies on if we discuss services sector organization. There are different types of leadership like, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, Ethical leadership, servant leadership, etc. Ethical leadership is most common among them. Ethical leadership plays a fundamental role in promoting job satisfaction among university faculty members. Ethics, as an essential element of leadership, includes honour, equality, simplicity, and responsibility (Suifan et al., 2020). In academic institutions, moral leaders act as role models who promote moral behaviour, foster trust, and foster an environment that supports faculty members' professional development and well-being (S. F. Ahmad et al., 2021). Faculty members feel valued and appreciated when their leaders prioritize open communication, active listening, and collaboration (Hayat Bhatti et al., 2020). This sense of trust and respect contributes significantly

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to faculty members' job satisfaction, creating a positive and supportive work environment (Nawaz Khan et al., 2020). Fairness and equity are critical aspects of ethical leadership that significantly impact faculty members' job satisfaction. Ethical leaders guarantee that all faculty members are treated equally (S. F. Ahmad et al., 2022). They provide resources, mentorship, and feedback for research, teaching, and career advancement (Sharma et al., 2019; Moslehpour et al., 2022).

Furthermore, ethical leaders serve as ethical role models for faculty members. Their actions and behaviors significantly influence the ethical climate of the university. When leaders consistently demonstrate ethical conduct, faculty members are likelier to adopt and adhere to ethical practices (Schwepker & Dimitriou, 2021). Ethical leaders prioritize integrity, honesty, and ethical decision-making, which creates a culture of high ethical standards within the institution. This culture, in turn, enhances faculty members' job satisfaction as they feel a sense of pride and belonging to an organization that upholds ethical values and principles (S. F. Ahmad, Alam, et al., 2023). Ethical leaders can help address these challenges by advocating for resource allocation transparency and ensuring that limited resources are distributed fairly and equitably among faculty members (Ahmed Iqbal et al., 2020). Moreover, the cultural context of Balochistan must be considered when implementing ethical leadership practices (Asif et al., 2022). This cultural alignment fosters a sense of inclusivity and belonging, contributing to faculty members' job satisfaction (Jang & Oh, 2019). Leadership is the key driver for the success of any organization. When we talk about educational organization, then its importance further increases. This study examines the impact of ethical leadership on the faculty job satisfaction of the higher education institutions of Balochistan. Furthermore, this study also explains how this relationship is channelized by self-efficacy, organizational commitment, and psychological empowerment.

Literature Review

Ethical leadership is crucial in fostering job satisfaction among university faculty members. When leaders prioritize and practice ethical behavior, it creates a positive work environment that promotes trust, respect, fairness, and transparency (I. Ahmad & Umrani, 2019). Faculty members feel valued, appreciated, and supported, leading to increased job satisfaction (Irshad, Khan, et al., 2022). Ethical leaders are role models, inspiring faculty members to uphold ethical principles in their work and interactions. They prioritize open communication, active listening, and collaboration, creating a culture of inclusion and teamwork (Saha et al., 2020).

Additionally, ethical leaders ensure fairness and equity in decision-making processes such as promotions, rewards, and resource allocation. When faculty members perceive their efforts and contributions are recognized and rewarded fairly, it enhances their job satisfaction. Ethical leaders also provide a supportive work environment that encourages professional growth and development (Aftab et al., 2022). They provide the guidance, criticism, and tools required for research, instruction, and career growth. This assistance enables faculty members to flourish in their positions and make significant contributions to their professions, which enhances job satisfaction. Ethical leadership creates a positive and engaging work environment where faculty members feel respected, valued, and motivated, leading to higher job satisfaction and ultimately contributing to the university's overall success (Peng & Kim, 2020).

Ethical leadership enhances job happiness among university faculty members and encourages psychological empowerment. Psychological empowerment describes people's sense of control, independence, and self-efficacy at work. When faculty members are empowered, they feel a greater sense of ownership and responsibility for their work, leading to increased job satisfaction. Ethical leaders play a critical role in fostering psychological empowerment by creating an environment that encourages faculty members to voice their ideas, make decisions, and take ownership of their work (Mudassir et al., 2022). These leaders actively involve faculty members in decision-making, seeking their input and valuing their perspectives. By giving faculty members a voice and involving them in meaningful discussions and decisions, ethical leaders make them feel empowered and valued, contributing to job satisfaction (AlShehhi et al., 2021).

Additionally, ethical leaders offer autonomy, growth, and skill development opportunities. They assist faculty members in following their research passions and professional objectives by offering tools and direction. Ethical leaders encourage faculty members to exercise autonomy by fostering a supportive work environment that promotes it. This empowers faculty members to take the initiative in their respective fields of expertise. This autonomy gives faculty members control and ownership over their work, increasing their job satisfaction. Ethical leaders also promote a culture of trust, respect, and transparency (Khan, Su'ud, Alam, Ahmad, Ahmad (Ayassrah), et al., 2022). They communicate openly and honestly with faculty members, sharing information and providing feedback. This transparency builds trust among faculty members and enhances their job satisfaction. When leaders are transparent about organizational goals, strategies, and challenges, faculty members

feel a greater sense of involvement and connection to the institution's mission. They understand how their work contributes to the overall objectives, which boosts their job satisfaction (O'Keefe et al., 2019). Ethical leaders facilitate collaboration through open communication channels, regular meetings, and opportunities for interdisciplinary and cross-departmental collaborations (Irshad, Hussain, et al., 2022). Faculty members feel valued and appreciated when leaders demonstrate empathy, respect, and understanding, increasing job satisfaction (Charoensap et al., 2019). They take pride in being part of an institution that upholds ethical values and principles, aligning their behaviours with them (Zhou et al., 2020). These factors empower faculty members, increasing job satisfaction and creating a more engaged and committed faculty community (Freire & Bettencourt, 2020). University faculty members' self-efficacy is considerably increased by ethical leadership, which eventually increases their contentment with their jobs. "self-efficacy" refers to a person's confidence in their capacity to carry out tasks and produce desired results. Ethical leaders create an environment that fosters self-efficacy by providing support, resources, and opportunities for growth and development (Faheem et al., 2021; Qing et al., 2020; Zulfiqar & Ahmad, 2020).

Furthermore, ethical leaders encourage autonomy and decision-making authority among faculty members. They delegate responsibilities, provide opportunities for independent decision-making, and promote innovative approaches. Ethical leaders enhance their self-efficacy by allowing faculty members to make decisions and take ownership of their work. When faculty members have control over their work and can see the direct impact of their choices, it increases their job satisfaction and motivation. Ethical leaders also promote a culture of recognition and appreciation (Muhammad et al., 2022). They acknowledge and celebrate the achievements and contributions of faculty members. Ethical leaders reinforce faculty members' belief in their abilities and competence by recognizing their efforts. This recognition enhances their self-efficacy, as their work is valued and appreciated. When faculty members feel acknowledged and respected for their contributions, it significantly contributes to their job satisfaction (Zainab Irfan & Sayad, 2020; Obaid et al., 2022; Irshad et al., 2023). Ethical leaders build trust and credibility among faculty members by consistently demonstrating integrity, honesty, and ethical behavior. Faculty members feel confident in their leaders' actions and decisions, knowing they are based on ethical principles. This trust fosters a sense of loyalty and commitment towards the organization. Faculty members become more emotionally invested in the success of the

university and its mission, which positively impacts their job satisfaction (Zulfiqar & Ahmed, 2022).

Additionally, moral leaders guarantee justice and openness in the decision-making process. They support fair treatment by offering opportunities for development, acclaim, and promotion. Faculty members are more committed to the organisation when they believe that promotion, awards, and resource distribution decisions are impartial and fair. They feel valued and acknowledged for their contributions, leading to greater job satisfaction. Ethical leaders also create a shared sense of purpose and values within the organization (S. F. Ahmad, Han, et al., 2023). They articulate a clear vision, mission, and values that resonate with faculty members. Ethical leaders foster a sense of belonging and commitment by aligning individual and organizational values. Faculty members become more engaged and feel a stronger connection to the university's goals and objectives. This shared purpose enhances their job satisfaction, as they feel their work has meaning and contributes to a more significant cause (Khan, Su'ud, Alam, Ahmad, Salim, et al., 2022).

Additionally, moral leaders value candid communication and promote employee participation in decision-making. They value the opinions and ideas offered by faculty members and give them chances to shape the organisation actively. The sense of commitment and ownership among faculty members towards the university is increased by this participative method. When they have a voice and are involved in decisions that affect their work, it enhances their job satisfaction and strengthens their organizational commitment. (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2020) Additionally, ethical leaders foster a positive and supportive work environment. They provide mentorship, guidance, and support to faculty members. Ethical leaders invest in their employee's professional development and well-being, enhancing their commitment to the organization. When faculty members feel supported and valued, they are more likely to develop a stronger attachment and loyalty towards the university, increasing job satisfaction (Flores et al., 2023).

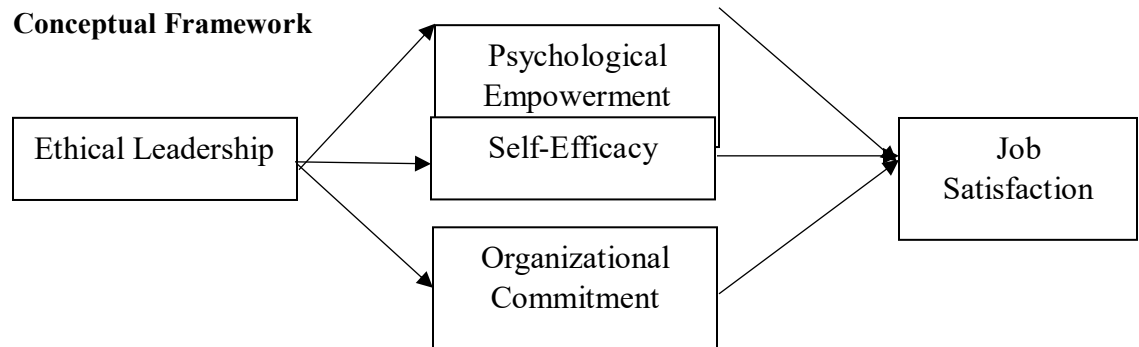
In conclusion, university ethical leadership fosters organizational commitment among faculty members, ultimately increasing job satisfaction (Irshad, Arif, et al., 2021). Ethical leaders build trust, ensure fairness, and promote transparency (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2020). They create a shared sense of purpose and values, involve faculty members in decision-making, and foster a positive work environment (Saha et al., 2020). These factors contribute to faculty members' emotional attachment and loyalty to the organization, enhancing job satisfaction (Irshad, Hussain et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2022).

Hypotheses

H₁: Psychological empowerment will mediate the relationship between ethical leadership and job satisfaction.

H₂: Self-efficacy will mediate the relationship between ethical leadership and job satisfaction.

H₃: Organizational commitment will mediate the relationship between ethical leadership and job satisfaction.



Methodology

The philosophical roots of this study originated from the post-positivism paradigm. The approach used for the study is quantitative. The method used for the study was a survey where the primary data was gathered from the research respondents. The study's respondents were the faculty members of universities across Balochistan. The study's sample size was 386, drawn from the population by purposive sampling. The data was gathered via a closed-ended questionnaire. The scale used for the rating was a five-point Likert scale where 1 denotes the lowest level of the agreement while five represents the highest level. The gathered data was analyzed with a partial least square technique via the software of SmartPLS. All the constructs of the study upon which the questioner of the study was composed were adopted from the prior studies considering the reliability and validity of the scales.

Results and Discussion

Demography of the Respondents

Table 1 of the respondent demography shows a total of 386 respondents. According to this table, among the 386 respondents, 245 were males, and 141 were females. The second section of the table denotes the Age wise distribution of the respondents. This shows that among the 386 respondents, 173 were between the age group of 21 to 30 years, 127 were between the age group of 31 to 40 years, 56 were between the age group of 41 to 50 years, and 30 were between the age group of above 50 years. The table's third section shows the respondents' designation, representing that among the 386 respondents, 263 were lecturers, 127 were assistant professors, 56 were associate professors, and the rest 30 were professors.

Table 1 of Demography of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	245	63.5%
Female	141	36.5%
Total	386	100.0%
Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
21 to 30 Years	173	44.8%
31 to 40 Years	127	32.9%
41 to 50 Years	56	14.5%
51 and above	30	7.8%
Total	386	100.0%
Designation	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer	263	68.1%
Assistant Professor	56	14.5%
Associate Professor	34	8.8%
Professor	33	8.5%
Total	386	100.0%

Reliability of the Scales

The below table of reliability shows the reliability of the scales adopted by the study. Reliability means the consistency of a measure. When using structural equation modelling, testing the construct's and the items' reliability is recommended. The measure used for the reliability of the items is called outer loading values, while the measure used for the

reliability of the construct is called Cronbach alpha and composite reliability. The threshold value for both measures is 0.7, and even a value of 0.6 is also acceptable if the minimum criteria of convergent validity are established. The table below shows that all the measure values for the items and the construct are greater than the threshold value, indicating that all the items and construct are reliable.

Table 2 of Reliability

Construct	Items	Loadings	CR	CA
Ethical Leadership	EL1	0.807	0.911	0.882
	EL2	0.817		
	EL3	0.735		
	EL4	0.852		
	EL5	0.795		
	EL6	0.748		
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.825	0.751	0.648
	JS2	0.656		
	JS3	0.635		
Organizational Commitment	OC1	0.732	0.901	0.861
	OC2	0.817		
	OC3	0.899		
	OC4	0.823		
	OC5	0.737		
Psychological Empowerment	PE1	0.829	0.902	0.838
	PE2	0.903		
	PE3	0.875		
Self-Efficacy	SE1	0.870	0.817	0.712
	SE2	0.592		
	SE4	0.841		

Convergent Validity of the Scales

The below table represents the convergent validity of the scales adopted. Convergent validity shows how the collective items of an individual construct are valid. The measure used for convergent validity is called AVE. The threshold value for the AVE is 0.5 or above. The table below shows that all the constructs have AVE values greater than the threshold value, indicating that all the constructs are convergently valid.

Table 3 of Convergent Validity

Construct	The average variance extracted (AVE)
Ethical Leadership	0.630
Job Satisfaction	0.505
Organizational Commitment	0.646
Psychological Empowerment	0.755
Self-Efficacy	0.604

Discriminant Validity of the Scales

Discriminant validity is the measure that theoretically determines how much one construct differs from the other. The measure used for the discriminant validity is called HTMT ratios. The threshold value for the HTMT is 0.85 or less. The below table of the HTMT shows that all the values are below the threshold value, indicating that all the constructs are discriminately valid.

Table 4 of HTMT Ratios

Relationships	(HTMT)
Job Satisfaction <-> Ethical Leadership	0.527
Organizational Commitment <-> Ethical Leadership	0.632
Organizational Commitment <-> Job Satisfaction	0.440
Psychological Empowerment <-> Ethical Leadership	0.675
Psychological Empowerment <-> Job Satisfaction	0.210
Psychological Empowerment <-> Organizational Commitment	0.671
Self-Efficacy <-> Ethical Leadership	0.316
Self-Efficacy <-> Job Satisfaction	0.369
Self-Efficacy <-> Organizational Commitment	0.280
Self-Efficacy <-> Psychological Empowerment	0.399

Research Model

The figure below shows the model of the study, which shows the relationship among the study variables.



Model Fitness

When the scales' reliability and validity are achieved in structural equation modelling, it is necessary to establish the model's fitness. Different measures are used for model fitness, but according to the researchers, SRMR is the most robust measure used for model fitness. The threshold value for the SRMR is 0.08 or less. The table below shows a value of 0.067, smaller than the threshold value of 0.08, indicating that this study's model has achieved its fitness.

Table 5 of Model Fitness

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.067	0.073
d_ ULS	1.594	1.813
d_ G	0.77	0.804
Chi-square	389.512	400.367
NFI	0.664	0.654

Hypotheses Testing

The table below shows three hypotheses of the study, all based on mediating relationships. The measures used for a hypothesis's significance are called p and t values. The threshold value is 0.05 or less, while the

threshold value for the t value is 1.96 or above. The below table of the hypothesis testing shows that all the three-relationship having the p and t values are more significant than the threshold values. This indicates that the findings of this study support all three hypotheses. While the beta value for each hypothesis shows the strength of the relationship.

Table 6 of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Beta	T state	P value	Results
<i>H1: Ethical Leadership -> Self-Efficacy -> Job Satisfaction</i>	0.258	11.13	0.000	Supported
<i>H2: Ethical Leadership -> Psychological Empowerment -> Job Satisfaction</i>	0.197	20.71	0.000	Supported
<i>H3: Ethical Leadership -> Organizational Commitment -> Job Satisfaction</i>	0.247	2.199	0.028	Supported

Coefficient of Determination

The coefficient of determination represents how much variation in the dependent variable is due to the collective interference of the independent variable. The measure used for the coefficient of determination is R square. The table below shows that the R square value for the dependent variable is 0.113, indicating that an 11.3% variation in job satisfaction is due to the collective variables of the model of the study.

Table 7 of R Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Job Satisfaction	0.14	0.113
Organizational Commitment	0.527	0.522
Psychological Empowerment	0.578	0.573
Self-Efficacy	0.079	0.069

Conclusion

However, the followers' job satisfaction always remains a priority of any organisation's leadership and the HRM department. For this cause, leadership and the organizational administration follow different tools to achieve this. This study examines the impact of ethical leadership on the job satisfaction of the faculty members of the higher education institutes

of Balochistan. This study also aims to explore related channels through which this relationship passes. This study has found that these channel variables are self-efficacy, psychological empowerment, and organizational commitment. From the findings of this study, it was revealed that all three channels are statistically significant and ethical leadership first hit the employee self-efficacy, psychological empowerment, and organizational commitment, and as a result of these, they feel a level of job satisfaction. It was suggested from the findings of this study for the leadership position in the higher education institutes of Balochistan to show more and more ethical manners to the follower because ethical leadership is highly productive as a consequence of the job satisfaction of the faculty members at the higher education institutes of the Balochistan.

Limitations

This study was only limited to the quantitative methodology; further, the researcher can do this study on qualitative methodology to explore new dimensions of ethical leadership and how it affects the job satisfaction of its followers. This study was only limited to the faculty members of the higher education institutes of Balochistan; further, the researcher can test the same model for the higher education institutes across Pakistan to increase the generalizability of the findings.

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