

Ethical Leadership and its Relationship to the Occupational Competency of University Staff

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ABSTRACT

The current research aims to identify:

1. Ethical leadership among university staff.
2. Statistically significant differences in the ethical leadership of university staff by gender variable (males - females).
3. Occupational competence of university staff.
4. Statistically significant differences in the occupational Competency of university staff by gender variable (males - females).

In order to achieve the objectives of the research, the researchers followed the steps adopted in scientific research to build a measure of ethical leadership, and a measure of occupational competence. The researchers investigated the psychometric characteristics of the scale from the validity and reliability of the scale. The scale was applied to a sample of (346) male and female employees.

First: Building a measure of ethical leadership among university staff based on the theory of purpose and path (Martin Evans and Robert House).

Second: Building a measure of occupational competence among university employees based on the theory of occupational competence.

The data were processed statistically through the use of the statistical bag for the humanities (SPSS). The research came up with a set of results, conclusions, a number of recommendations and suggestions.

Keywords: ethical leadership, Building, humanities

Research Problem

The personality of the leader is an important focus of the axes responsible for overseeing the work of employees and the presence of discipline within the work, and to work properly depends primarily on the role of the leader, as leaders differ from each other in the nature of dealing with employees, and how to make employees respect him. Recognition, there are many problems that occur with many leaders because of the nature of the behavior they use with employees. Here, the focus is primarily on the role of the leader in shaping the objective nature of the functions, because many of the behavior of leaders affect the effort and occupational level of the employee and although ethical behavior is reflected in the different leadership structures and productivity level of the employee, but ethical behavior is critical to the credibility. The leader and his ability to influence others so much that makes them practice their work honestly and dedication, being the most behaviors used by the leaders are behaviors of being authoritarian and the use of force and pressure in dealing with employees. The problem of the current research lies in answering the following questions:

- Do university staff have ethical leadership?
- What level of occupational competence do they have?

Research Significance

Leaders are the biggest support for employees who care about and respect their work. Normally speaking, complexity occurs because many of the ethical principles possessed by leaders are

authoritarian, so leadership is acting according to ethical principles and doing right and right, such as making the right decision. Leaders who demonstrate ethical obligations in their work and exhibit ethical behavior in dealing with others may have a role in increased motivation of staff to make additional efforts at work, which is evident through indicators to improve staff performance (Brown & Treviño, 2006).

Leadership has received great attention from researchers and those interested in administrative work, as the success of the work depends on the success of the leader in how to manage the work, and the fact that the current era of great development in science and knowledge, which requires the availability of qualified cadres and those with occupational competence, and the university represents the institution that means cadres. In order to achieve this, we need those who organize these universities to achieve their goals (Aronson, 2001).

Ethical leadership is also an intellectual system based on what should be done. It is also the starting point for understanding the rule that defines the values of justice and integrity. Therefore, the need for ethical leadership has emerged at all levels because the future of students depends on those employees who have the potential to demonstrate strong leadership that includes service to others because the success and progress of the university depends on the leaders' commitment to ethics (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005).

The importance of the university emerges through the quality of employee performance, as it represents an incentive for progress and creativity and all this has a role in improving the work of the employee and redouble his efforts for better performance and this leads to the generation of occupational Competency of the employee, as productivity is used to measure the Competency of the employee

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(Trevino, Hartman, & Brown, 2000). Occupational Competency is one of the things that the University is interested in because it reflects the knowledge and mastery of the skill of the employee (Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum, & Kuenzi, 2012).

Research Objectives

The present research aims to identify:

- The level of ethical leadership of university staff.
- Statistically Significant Differences in Ethical Leadership by Gender Variable (Males - Females).
- Occupational competence of university staff.
- Statistically significant differences in occupational Competency by gender variable (males - females).

Research Limits

The current research represents the community in the staff of the Islamic University and the University of Qadisiyah for the academic year (2018-2019).

Terms Definitions

Ethical Leadership

It has been defined by:

- **Pohnnu and Tennakoon (2009)**, as a *practical demonstration of naturally appropriate behavior through interpersonal behaviors and interactive relationships and to promote this behavior among employees.*
- **House (2006)**, as *the use of power to help followers deal with conflicting values that emerge in the work environment in a way that helps to raise the level of ethical values to contribute to increase productive work.*
- **Rubenstein (2011)**, as *an intellectual system based on positive rules that include what should be done.*
- **Theoretical definition of Ethical Leadership**, It is to influence employees to achieve a high degree of Competency and effectiveness and to create a productive organizational climate that prevails within the ethical framework as permitted by laws and regulations.
- **The Operational definition of Ethical Leadership**, It is the degree to which the respondent receives in response to the items of the Ethical Leadership scale.

Occupational Competency

It has been defined by:

- **Jones (2007)**, as *the sum of knowledge, skills, procedures and attitudes that an employee is supposed to possess and can exercise in order to perform the job.*
- **Byrne (2006)**, as *the development of modern means of production, new information technology can be produced and distributed in a timely manner.*
- **Theoretical definition of Occupational Competency**, A set of management knowledge and skills in the performance of the work taking into account the priority of the application of the objectives with the possibility of measuring performance.

Theoretical framework and previous studies

First: Ethical Leadership Concept

The subject of leadership has been of great importance since ancient times, and this concept has varied over the ages and times. Ethical leadership is manifested by certain occupational characteristics (such as occupational autonomy and the importance of the task) which have a role in encouraging other employees to do more on-the-job. Ethical leaders have the advantage of displaying their traits that are compatible with the normative ethical principles of honesty, trust and fairness. Governance and decision-making against employees (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Ethical leaders inspire good behaviors among employees, encourage high levels of job commitment and determine how employees perceive hard and effective work (Trevino et al., 2000). The theory of goal and path developed by (Martin Evans and Robert House) that leaders affect the satisfaction of employees and motivate them to raise the level of performance, including linking performance to the results achieved by workers to achieve the goals by taking measures to overcome the obstacles and obstacles encountered. According to this theory, a leader may use one of the following patterns:

1. **Directive Leadership**: This pattern is to give specific guidance to staff related to implementation and to require them to abide by these guidelines.
2. **Supportive Leadership**: This type of leadership is to show support and honesty by dealing with others and understanding their demands.
3. **Participative Leadership**: This pattern involves sharing information and consulting others before making decisions.
4. **Achievement -Oriented Leadership**: This pattern of setting goals that challenge the capabilities of employees and attention to excellence and show confidence, which in turn will lead to the promotion of outstanding performance (Piccolo, Greenbaum, Hartog, & Folger, 2010).

Second: Occupational Competency Concept

Occupational competence is of great importance because of the value it holds to distinguish the employee from other colleagues, so it became the presidents or leaders to value the true value of human resources and all cadres strive to have successful competencies to develop work in universities (Hausman, 2012). The competencies used in the field of career emerge as a fundamental pillar in the development of administrative work in universities. The importance of competencies here is not merely arbitrary, but as an indication that the essence of any career success is through the appreciation of cognitive minds and competencies that are central to the emergence of good work that develops work in universities (Watson, Myhra, Cribb, & Watson, 2008).

Characteristics of Occupational Competency

There are a number of characteristics that must be available in order to have occupational Competency among the staff are as follows:

1. The application of all strategies of the institution accurately and finely.
2. The organization must raise the spirit of competition among employees as this work makes the employee work faster and more motivation.
3. Developing a sense of social responsibility among employees and work to develop a love of work for them.
4. Increasing the employees' motivation.
5. Developing the spirit of intellectual and ethical excellence of employees.

Undoubtedly, any person working in a particular job must possess a set of qualifications and behaviors that distinguish him from other employees, he possesses skills and knowledge in the exercise of the job based on his experience and practical experiences and mental practices, Among employees (Kerimov, Safullin, Marusin, & Marusin, 2017). In order to achieve occupational competence in universities, the efforts should be intensified and attention paid to employees and encourage them to love the work and provide an atmosphere that helps to develop their competence (Van Den Heuvel, Stam, Kahn, & Pol, 2009).

Previous Studies

First: Studies on Ethical Leadership

Abu Alba's (2015) Study

The study aimed to identify the degree of teachers' appreciation of ethical leadership among managers and its relation to organizational loyalty. The sample size was (336) teachers. The results of the research showed that the degree of appreciation of teachers for the ethical leadership of their managers was high.

Bowers's (2011) Study

The study aimed to identify the relationship between the degree of managers' exercise of ethical leadership and the level of collective Competency, the sample size reached (209) teachers, and the results were a strong correlation between ethical leadership and collective Competency.

Karkose's (2007) Study

The study aimed to identify the perceptions of teachers towards the ethical leadership of managers. The sample size was (463) teachers. The results showed that the managers exhibit high ethical behavior in dealing with employees.

Studies on Occupational Competency

Abdulaa's (2011) Study

The study aimed to identify the internal competence in the university, the sample size reached (150) students, and the results were that the students have internal competence.

Darawsheh's (2017) Study

The study aimed to reveal the degree of functional competence among the administrative staff at the university.

Heyward (2011)'s Study

The study aimed at evaluating the reality of the functional competence in the faculties of physical education. The sample size was (212) members of the faculty members.

RE Search Procedures

First. Research Methodology

This research relies on the descriptive methodology, in order to suit the nature of the research and its procedures, through which the phenomenon in question is analyzed and its data analyzed, and the quantitative and qualitative description of the phenomenon (Ferguson, 1959).

Second. Research Population

Population is the group that the researcher wishes to study and generalizes the results of his research (Simonoff et al., 2008). The current research community consists of the staff of the Islamic University and the University of Qadisiyah for the academic year (2018-2019), and the size of the community (642) employees of the morning.

Third. Research Sample

The researcher's selection of the sample is one of the most important steps of scientific research (Mohammed, Al-Khattat, & Al-

Muhja, 2019). The current research sample reached (346) male and female employees from the universities (Islamic, Qadisiyah), and this sample was chosen by stratified random method with appropriate distribution.

Fourth: Search Tool

The research tool is an objective and standardized way to measure the research sample and the choice of a good tool is important in identifying the characteristic to be measured in the sample (Samuels et al., 2008). To achieve the objectives of this research requires the creation of a tool to measure the ethical leadership of university staff, so the ethical leadership scale was built based on the following steps in the numbers of the scale:

- Planning the scale and defining its fields.
- Collecting and formulating items of the scale.
- Presenting the scale to a group of experts and arbitrators with specialization.

- Statistical analysis of items (Johnson & Wichern, 2002).

- **Ethical Leadership Scale**

The measure of ethical leadership among university students was based on the theory of goal and path theory, and the scale consists of (15) items.

- **Scale Response and Correction**

The researcher relied on a *Five – Point Likert 'S Scale* in developing alternatives to answering the items of the ethical leadership scale.

- **Response alternatives and weights (correction key)**

The response alternatives are key to correcting items (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) when the items are positive and vice versa when the items are negative.

- **Scale Items Validity**

In order to verify the validity of the items of the Ethical Leadership Scale, the scale was presented in its initial form consisting of (15) items to a number of arbitrators with jurisdiction. This included a presentation of the theoretical definition adopted by the researchers and the presentation of items of the scale and alternatives to answer and instructions, and asked them to give their views and observations on the validity of items. After the analysis of their opinions, the chi-square test was used. It was found that the calculated chi-square values ranged from (6.9-14), which are all higher than the tabular value of chi-square (3.84) at the significance level (0.05).

Statistical Analysis of Scale Items (Psychometric Characteristics)

Statistical analysis is an important characteristic in distinguishing between persons in the measured trait and their ability to distinguish between the upper and lower groups (Johnson & Wichern, 2002; Mohammed, 2017). The aim of the statistical analysis is to stay on the good items that are accurate in measuring the phenomenon (Little & Rubin, 2019). The items of the scale were analyzed in two ways:

First: Two-Terminal Group Method

It is one of the most common methods used in the measurement to calculate the discriminatory power of each item, i.e. the ability of the item to distinguish between members of the upper and lower groups in the measured characteristic, and the significance of differences is chosen between individuals with high scores and low scores on each item of the scale. It is also an important characteristic that should be available in the vocabulary of tests and measurements (Oluwatayo, 2012) In order to analyze the items of the measure of

ethical leadership applied the scale on a sample of (346) male and female employees, the researchers relied on the following steps:

1. Finding the total score for each form.
2. Sorting the total scores of the sample in descending order from the highest to the lowest.
3. A ratio of (27%) for the upper group and (27%) for the lower group of scores were selected in order to determine the two groups.
4. The application of *T-Test* for two independent samples in order to know the significance of differences between the upper and lower groups for each item of the ethical leadership scale, and to adopt the T value as an indicator to distinguish each item by comparing it with the tabular T value of (1.96) at the level of significance (0.05).

Second: Internal consistency

Each item of the *Ethical Leadership Scale* must be consistent with the rest of the other items, in order to achieve the objectives of the research for which there are several methods adopted in this measure are:

1. The method of correlating the degree of the item to the total degree of the scale

It is one of the methods used to find out the relationship of the item to the total score of the scale, and to see if the item is moving in the same direction as the scale (Henson, 2001) All items were found to be statistically significant at the level of significance (0.05) and degree of freedom (344).

- Psychometric Properties

Psychometric properties are one of the basic requirements that indicate the quality of the scale to measure what was prepared to measure which increases the accuracy of the tools used in the research (Box & Tiao, 2011). The researchers have verified the validity and reliability of the scale as follows:

1. Scale Validity

The extent to which the tool performs the function for which it was developed (Yaghmaie, 2003). In order to verify the validity of the *Ethical Leadership Scale*, the followings methods have been resorted to:

- Face Validity

Virtual honesty represents the extent of the ability of the test to measure the characteristic that it wants to measure and this type of honesty is achieved by presenting the scale in its initial form to a number of experts and arbitrators with expertise and experience, for the purpose of judging the validity of the ethical leadership scale in measuring the characteristic to be measured, as Mention of the scale building procedures.

- Construct Validity

This type of honesty is one of the types of honesty achieved for the objectives of the research in terms of saturation of the scale in the general sense, and the scale is sincere, which measured the theoretical construction of the scale, has been verified the validity of the construction of the measure of ethical leadership through the use of the two groups and internal consistency.

- Consistency

Stability is an important psychometric characteristic in psychometric scales, and a fixed scale is a measure that gives the same results if it is re-applied in the same group and under the same conditions (Oluwatayo, 2012). In order to verify the stability of the ethical leadership scale, the researchers adopted two methods:

- *Test -Retest*
- *Cronbach's Alpha Equation*

Research Results and their Explanation

- First Objective: Identifying the level of ethical leadership of university staff.

To achieve the objectives of this research, a measure of ethical leadership was applied to the sample of (346) male and female employees. It was found that the mean of the scores of the respondents was (53.91) with a standard deviation of (8.14). While the hypothetical mean of the scale was (45). After testing the significance of the difference between the two averages using the T-test for one sample, it was found that the calculated t-value (20.35), which is greater than the tabular value of (1.96) at the significance level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (344), and table (1) shows this.

Table 1: The T- Values for t Significance of the Difference between the Arithmetic and Hypothetical Mean of The Measure of Ethical Leadership Among University Staff.

One-Sample Statistics						
	N	Hypothetical Mean	Mean	Std. Deviation	T- Value	Sig.
Ethical Competency	346	45	53.91	8.14	20.35	0.000

This result can be explained by the fact that university employees have a high level of ethical leadership in dealing with others. This may be because employees are keen on the success of the work, so they have many qualities that make them have ethical leadership in the eyes of others.

- Second Objective: Identifying the differences of statistical significance in ethical leadership by gender variable (males - females).

To determine the significance of differences in ethical leadership according to the gender variable (males - females), the T test was used for two independent samples. It was found that the arithmetic mean for males was (65.686) and standard deviation (6.738). As for females, the mean was (51.172) and the standard deviation (8.197). When comparing the averages, there were differences in favor of males. Table (2) shows that.

Table 2: The Results of the T-Test for Two Independent Samples Are Not Statistically Significant Differences in Ethical Leadership by Gender Variable (Males - Females).

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-Value	Sig.
Male	172	56.686	6.738	6.683	Significant
Female	174	51.172	8.497		

This can be explained by the fact that male university staff have a higher ethical leadership than females. This may be because

males tend to use the ethical aspect of dealing with others by respecting others and appreciating their skills.

- **Objective Three:** Identifying the functional competence of university staff.

To achieve the objectives of this research, the job competency measure was applied to the research sample of (346) employees. It was found that the mean of the scores of the sample members was (45.804) degree with a standard deviation of (7.125). The

hypothetical mean of the scale was (45) degrees. After testing the significance of the difference between the two averages using the T-test for one sample, it was found that the calculated T value (9.92) is greater than the tabular value of (1.96) at the level of (0.05) and the degree of freedom (344). Table 3 shows this.

Table 3: T-values for the significance of the difference between the arithmetic mean and the hypothesis of the measure of occupational competency of university staff.

One-Sample Statistics						
	N	Hypothetical Mean	Mean	Std. Deviation	T- value	Sig.
Career Creativity	346	42	45.804	7.125	9.92	0.000

This result can be explained by the fact that the university staff have a functional competence resulting from the long experience and respect for work and motivation owned by the employees made them have a clear occupational competency through the work they do regularly and high commitment.

- **Fourth Objective:**

Table 4: The results of the T test of two independent samples are not found statistically significant differences in occupational competency by gender variable (males - females).

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T- Value	Sig.
Male	172	48.0291	5.75	6.07	0.000
Female	174	43.6034	7.67		

This can be explained by the fact that male employees are keen to adhere to the system of work and emphasize attention to time and exploit opportunities in favor of business success.

Conclusion

Based upon the results of the practical part of the study, the researchers came up with a number of conclusions:

1. The university employees have an ethical leadership towards their profession, as a result of their keenness to respect their profession and work to improve the level of work in universities in order to achieve success and prosperity.
2. Ethical leadership is influenced by gender. There are statistically significant differences between males and females employed in the level of ethical leadership and in favor of males.
3. The university staff have a functional competence resulting from the experience and care to work well in the manner that led them to reach the occupational competency.
4. Occupational competency is affected by gender, as there are statistically significant differences between male and female staff, showing that males have higher occupational competency than females.

Recommendations

In light of the research conclusions, the researchers recommend the following:

1. Preparing orientation programs that raise the level of ethical leadership among employees.
2. Working on the development of qualifying courses that work to take care of the segment of employees and develop their potential in the work.
3. Utilizing the occupational competency measure for future research.

To find out the significance of the differences in occupational competency according to the gender variable (males - females), the T test was used for two independent samples. (7.67). When comparing the arithmetic averages, it was found that there are differences in favor of males and Table (4) shows that.

Suggestions

Based on the results of the research, the researchers suggest the following:

1. Conducting a study does not find the relationship between moral leadership and other variables.
2. Conduct similar studies on other social segments such as principals and assistants.
3. Conducting a study does not find the relationship between functional competence and other variables.
4. Conducting similar studies on other social segments such as university professors.

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