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RESEARCH ARTICLE

IMPACT OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP OVER WORK ENGAGEMENT AND EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SELF-EFFICACY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT

Based on social exchange theory, current study aimed to examine the Impact of ethical leadership over work engagement and emotional exhaustion. The mediating role of self-efficacy and psychological empowerment is examined between ethical leadership and work engagement as well. The sample size was 250 and 221 bank officers is being selected. For testing the model, SPSS 21 version, has been used for data analysis. Preacher and Hayes method was used for mediation analysis. The results of this study revealed significant positive association between Ethical Leadership and employee’s well-being (work engagement and emotional exhaustion). The Mediation role of Self efficacy and Psychological empowerment in the relationship between Ethical Leadership and employee’s well-being was also found significant. Accordingly, the recommendations and implications are provided to banking sector. The findings of this research suggest that banking officers should be more sensitized while dealing with their personnel, because it will create a harmonious work environment which stronger the interpersonal relationships, which in turn, will reduce work place, stress. Thus, banking sector is in need to take some effective measures so bank managers will be able to ensure the wellbeing of their employees.

KEYWORDS

Ethical leadership, emotional exhaustion, work engagement, self-efficacy and psychological empowerment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Based upon concrete support of literature it can be seen that unethical leaderships unintentionally increased in many organizations and among the performance of their employees, if this problem is extensively discovered, it can be seen that employees of private sector organizations are subjected to abusive supervision as a serious problem leading to avoidance behavior, stress, absence of employees from work. Empirically tested studies indicated that job burnout may be increased through silent behavior of employee such as emotional exhaustion (Knoll et al., 2019).

Employees are the key assets within any organization, and may be a source of competitive advantage. Employee’s well-being gets influenced by behavioral related factors of their leader, which ultimately affects the overall performance of business (Rantika and Yustina, 2017; Teimouri et al., 2018). Recent research has established a clear correlation between ethical leadership and employee motivation, satisfaction, positive feeling, ethical conduct, organizational ethical behavior, job performance, and urn over intentions (Liu et al., 2021).

Numerous researches stated that ethical leadership is the most crucial predecessor of all types of organizational success (Sarwar et al., 2020). Ethical leadership may also be discussed in terms of the proper manner to execute their course of action with keeping the best interests of their particular workforce in mind (Yeşiltaş and Tuna, 2018). There are several psychological factors that could have impact on employee’s performance for instance work engagement, organizational citizenship behavior, deviant workplace behavior and emotional exhaustion (Chughtai et al., 2015).

As a result, the current study aims to investigate the impact of ethical leadership on employee well-being indicators (work engagement and emotional exhaustion) in the banking sector by mediating the impact of psychological variables such as self-efficacy and psychological empowerment. As a result, this study is expected to add to the literature by examining the function of ethical leadership in both job engagement and emotional exhaustion, as well as the mediation impact of personal resources on those interactions. Using ethical leadership as a common forerunner of results and examining correlations while taking the border condition, self-efficacy, and psychological empowerment into account, this study is expected to add a new level of authenticity to the thesis.

Various studies have shown the effect of behavior related factors on employee’s well-being in organizations. These factors may affect employee’s performance at individual level, but they can also influence over all performance of particular organization (Mauno et al., 2007).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ethical Leadership, Emotional Exhaustion, Psychological Empowerment, Work Engagement and Self-efficacy are the five fundamental concepts in this study. This chapter of the study not only reviews, but also summarizes the literature relevant to these concepts. To identify studies on these factors a wider literature review was conducted. By setting the examples of highly managed moral values and having a deep internalized moral perception; Ethical Leaders set the basic culture of organizations. This culture makes them enable to employ perfect inspiration (Brown et al., 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008).

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Ethical leadership is highly influential on behavior related outcomes. Researchers has accredited the worth of Ethical Leadership over followers behavioral outcomes meanwhile followers always tend to find perfect Ethical role model who can provide directions to organization to proceed forward (Caldwell et al., 2007). Past results has shown that Ethical Leadership is much different from other types of Leadership styles (for example authentic and transformational leadership), as it only focus Leaders own characteristics, values, skills and self-motivation for behaving ethically (Kalshoven et al., 2011; Klionsky et al., 2012).

"Burnout has been presented as a condition of Emotional Exhaustion (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004), Depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment that can develop among persons who work in emotionally demanding positions and has been defined as a state of mental fatigue (Bakker et al., 2002)". Acting as a key aspect to burnout (Maslach et al., 1986), Emotional Exhaustion emerges itself as a conventional phenomenon among employees who work together in a physical and mentally demanding work environment (Hayes et al., 2004).

Here targets for empowerment in an organization can be tangible and intangible i.e., strategy formulation, implementation and ideas generation (Boudrias et al., 2012). Moreover describes Psychological Empowerment as a motivational tool and define it as a technique to promote a sense of Self-efficacy among employees through formal and informal proceeding (Conger et al., 2000). Psychological Empowerment works as a most crucial source of motivation for employees and can help employees to communicate effectively (Frazier and Fainshmidt, 2012; Raub and Robert, 2010).

2.1 Theoretical Framework

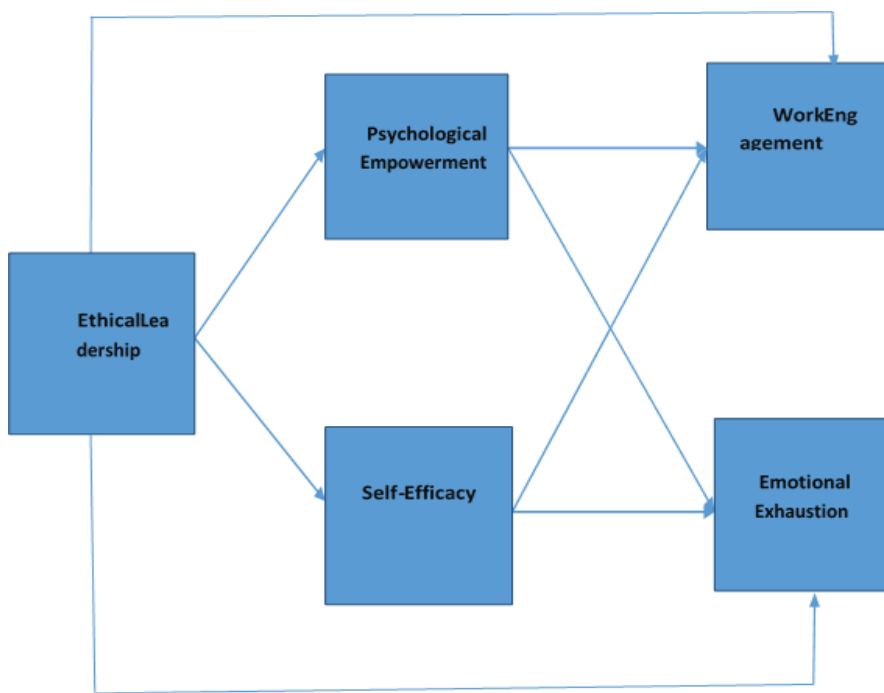


Figure 1: Theoretical framework

2.2 Hypothesis

- H1: Ethical Leadership positively relates to psychological empowerment.
- H2: Ethical Leadership positively relates to employees Self-Efficacy.
- H03: Ethical leadership positively relates to Work engagement.
- H04: Ethical leadership negatively relates to Emotional Exhaustion.
- H05: Psychological Empowerment is positively related to work engagement.
- H06: Psychological Empowerment is negatively associated with Emotional Exhaustion.
- H07: Self-efficacy is positively associated to Work engagement.
- H08: Self-efficacy is negatively associated to Emotional Exhaustion.
- H09: Psychological Empowerment will intervene the positive association

Highly Self-efficacious people have self confidence that they can achieve their goals and can produce required outcomes by using their acquired skills and knowledge. They are more strong and determined while facing difficulties in their way to success (Ghaderi, 2010). It refers that Self-efficacy endures self-motivational characteristics, which motivate employees and direct their energies to accomplish goals.

Bandura Says that: According to vigor refers to the level of willingness of employee to put higher level of energy into their work regardless of the difficulties (Bandura, 1999; Chughtai et al., 2015). While dedication refers to high level of job involvement, passion, pride, enthusiasm and challenge. The last dimension of Work engagement is absorption. It refers to one's involvement into work that they found it difficult to stay away from their work. Employees got engaged into work that they found them selves unable to avoid it for longtime. A group researchers write down that Vigor is similar to the main concept of Motivation, while "dedication" relates to Job involvement the most (Mauno et al., 2007). All of these dimensions and aspects are linked to the Ethical Leadership process.

In turn, employees having high level of engagement show more positive energy. First of all, job engagement necessitates a high degree of energy and activation since "vigor is a key component of engagement." This energy may help you appreciate the little things in life and encourage you to be more proactive. While Engagement is an optimist emotional phase and it expend onesthinking capabilities by helping individuals to focus their attention to learn new skills and to adopt new behaviors (Kalshoven and Boon, 2012).

among Ethical leadership and Work engagement.

- H10: Self-efficacy will mediate the negative association among Ethical leadership and Emotional Exhaustion.
- H11: Psychological Empowerment will intervene the positive association among Ethical leadership and Emotional exhaustion.
- H12: Self-efficacy will intervene the association among ethical leadership and Work engagement.

3. METHODOLOGY

The quantitative research methodology is covered in this section. There is a research design, a sampling and data gathering approach, as well as a data analysis method included in this.

3.1 Unit of Analysis

Middle-tier employees were used as unit of analysis for current thesis being selected from the banking sector of main cities of Punjab, Pakistan.

3.2 Population and sampling

The present study's population consists of employees in Pakistan's banking sector. An estimation regarding the population of bank's employees has been made. Convenience sampling, a technique of non-probability sampling been utilized since the sample was chosen depending on the characteristics of the population and the study objectives. In addition, owing to time constraints, personnel from the banking industry has been addressed, and 250 questionnaires were distributed to provide a representative sample size.

3.3 Data Collection

In this research data was collected via non-probability sampling. Because the convenience sampling approach requires less time and money than other sampling methods, it has been useful in rapidly and effectively determining sample size.

3.4 Measuring Instrument

In this study, data was acquired using a structured questionnaire. The instrument used a self-administered questionnaire with closed-ended questions. The hypothesis testing in this research has been used to investigate the influence of Ethical Leadership on job engagement and emotional exhaustion, with the intervening mechanism of Self efficacy and psychological empowerment. Questionnaires for data gathering was adapted from past studies. Responses were graded on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 representing Strongly Disagree, 2 representing Disagree, 3 representing Neutral, 4 representing Agree, and 5 representing Strongly Agree.

3.5 Data analysis tool

To analyze the data, SPSS latest 21 version was utilized. The approach of Preacher and Hayes was used in the examination of mediations. A number of procedures were used to generate results, including regression and correlation, reliability and validity, mediation and others.

3.6 Demographics

Demographic information such as gender, age, and experience were acquired as part of the present study in order to achieve more precise results and reliable data. The current study used regression analysis to adjust for demographics.

3.7 Data analysis procedure

The data was first checked to determine whether there are any missing values, and then it was processed for liar analysis. The reverse coded questions are confirmed in the data set in a subsequent phase. Following that, a reliability analysis was undertaken to ensure that the scales were accurate. The demographic variables were then examined using a frequency distribution analysis. Following that, descriptive statistics, as well as correlation and regression analysis, were performed.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The outcomes of the data collection were discussed in this chapter. The data was analyzed using SPSS 21 software. The demographic summary, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were all included in the analysis. The preacher and haze approach was used to examine the analysis for mediation using stepwise regression.

4.1 Demographic of sample

This research looked at three different demographics. In the sections that follow, the summary of each demographic characteristic is presented in detail. They were also taken into account in regression analysis.

Table 1: Gender of respondent					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	102	46.2	46.2	46.2
	2.00	119	53.8	53.8	100.0
	Total	221	100.0	100.0	

The analysis showed that from population the 53.8% participants were male and the 46.2% were female participants from total sample size 221. This outcome was consistent with what was seen throughout the data gathering phase. The target audience was middle line employees belonging to banking sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad where the majority of audiences were male and there were a reasonable number of female employees also performing their job.

Table 2: Age of respondents					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than 20	21	9.5	9.5	9.5
	21-30	158	71.5	71.5	81.0
	31-40	30	13.6	13.6	94.6
	41-50	10	4.5	4.5	99.1
	50 +	2	.9	.9	100.0
	Total	221	100.0	100.0	

In the current research, 9.5 percent of employees in the targeted audience were between the ages of 20 and 30, 71.5 percent of employees were between the ages of 31 and 40, 13.6 percent of employees working in the organization were between the ages of 41 and 50, and 4.5 percent of respondents were over 51.

Table 3: Experience of respondents					
Experience					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	126	57.0	57.0	57.0
	2.00	38	17.2	17.2	74.2
	3.00	23	10.4	10.4	84.6
	4.00	30	13.6	13.6	98.2
	5.00	4	1.8	1.8	100.0
	Total	221	100.0	100.0	

Shows that from total population of 221 respondents there were 57.0 % employees who have 0-3 years of experience of job, there were 17.2 % employees in organization who have 4 to 6 years of job experience, 10.4 % employees have 7 to 10 years of experience, 13.6 % employees were lies in 10 to 20 years of experience and there were only 1.8% employees who are having 26 years of experience.

4.2 Descriptive statistics and Correlation Analysis and reliabilities

Correlation analysis is run to see how the variables are statistically significantly correlated with each other. The results are mention in the following table.

Table 4: Means, Standard Deviation, Correlation and Reliabilities							
Variables.	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. EL	3.6118	.65112	(.841)				
2. SE	3.8218	.70610	.581**	(.860)			
3. PE	3.7269	.56789	.531**	.380**	(.803)		
4. WE	3.7099	.60351	.505**	.290**	.971**	(.788)	
5. EEX	3.7104	.70539	.411**	.591**	.406**	.320**	(.780)

n=221, **p<.01 S.D = Standard Deviation, EL = Ethical Leadership, SE= Self efficacy, PE= Psychological Empowerment, WE= Work Engagement, EEX= Emotional Exhaustion, Cronbach's Alpha are given in parenthesis are the variables instrument's reliability present in the model. Where Ethical

leadership scale having .841 Cronbach alpha reliability, physiological empowerment shows .803, work engagement having .788 and self-efficacy having .860 and emotional exhaustion having .780 Cronbach alpha reliability.

Table 4 reported the mean, standard deviation, correlation and reliability analysis of the study variables. The values possess sufficient reliabilities, as cited in to retrieve slightly low reliabilities with less number of questionnaire's items against respective variables (Gliem and Gliem, 2003). Moreover, the correlation coefficients are less than ($p < .01$), representing appropriate association among study variables, as per predicted hypothesis. So, there is substantial correlation between the bulk of the variables in the analysis.

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to look at the influence of ethical leadership on job engagement and emotional exhaustion by looking at the function of psychological empowerment and self-efficacy as a mediating factor. The current analysis demonstrates the importance of fairness and trust in increasing employee engagement. The findings might be useful in guiding future research on self-efficacy psychological empowerment in a culturally varied setting. The study also looks at the function of job engagement and emotional exhaustion in organizations, because work engagement is beneficial to both the company and society as a whole.

The study found that Ethical leadership is a crucial determinant of work engagement and emotional exhaustion in other words in presence of ethical leadership the employees feel empowered and they go for extra role behavior. Because ethical leadership leads towards concept of good relationship with employees with their leaders at work place. It is essentially the element of leadership that is developed through ethical leadership. According to the findings of the current study, ethical leadership at work is mostly dependent on the leadership and top management, who assure the implications of ethics at work.

It indicates a link between ethical leadership and psychological empowerment and self-efficacy, as well as job engagement and emotional exhaustion. Furthermore, psychological empowerment and self-efficacy play a key role in mediating the link between ethical leadership and work engagement and emotional exhaustion. It also demonstrated that Ethical leadership has a negative relationship with Emotional Exhaustion, and Psychological Empowerment has a negative relationship with Emotional Exhaustion.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Firstly, this discovery had a number of theoretical implications as well. Initial, the study's focus is on the role of self-efficacy and psychological as a mediator between ethical leadership and work engagement and emotional exhaustion. Work engagement played a dependent role in the previous investigations. When employees feel engaged their attitude towards the organization will undoubtedly change. It has been examined in the past from many angles, but now it acts as a mediator. And secondly, this research looked at self-efficacy influences the relationship between work engagement and inventive behavior. As a result of emotional exhaustion, the organization's relationship with its employees will deteriorate. Finally, this research looked into the importance of ethical leadership.

In this field, civility is frequently associated with lower-level employees rather than management. As a result, the significance of ethical leadership is highlighted in this study. Ultimately, it improves productivity and creates a positive working environment. Fourth, the findings of this study demonstrated the favorable impact of work engagement. To put it another way, our study adds to the growing body of knowledge about work engagement by demonstrating that it isn't always a bad thing. self-efficacy becomes a positive work habit when there is ethical leadership and individuals are comfortable with their work. Like a result, rather than revealing the firm's flaws and damaging its repute, the management took actions to resolve them.

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