

**Research Article**

## **TO INVESTIGATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER EMPOWERMENT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between ethical leadership and teacher empowerment and also predicting empowerment based on ethical leadership. The method of the study was Cross-correlation method and the population of the study was included all secondary school teachers in the city of Mashhad. The sample size was 248 individuals according to Morgan and Krejcie Table (N=677) and stratified sampling method was chosen to select sample. For data collection used two questionnaires. One of them was the researcher made questionnaire to find ethical leadership (honesty, regulating activities within a clear ethical standards, confidence and assurance, efforts to improve the employee, Freedom of expression) and another one was a standardized questionnaire for assessing teacher empowerment. The reliability of questionnaires were calculated by Cronbach's alpha 0.92, and 0.82. Data analysis Pearson correlation test and Regression was performed using SPSS software. The results showed that the main hypothesis of the study was approved and there was a significant positive relationship between the ethical leadership and teacher empowerment at the level of  $P < 0.01$ . Accordingly, much expanded and institutionalized ethical leadership may also increase the rate of teachers empowerment. Empowerment teachers was predictable by means of each ethical leadership components and based on this some models were suggested to predict teacher's empowerment.

**Keywords:** *Ethical Leadership, Teacher Empowerment*

### **INTRODUCTION**

According to rapid transformation of human knowledge, all things are intensely changing. Organizations as an open system are continually treating with environment for upholding life due to responding with environmental changes. The human resources are as the most important agent in organizations, so it is very crucial to make them ready and equipped for facing such changes. In this regard, many of organizations consider the implementation program of empowerment as the best solution and try to provide necessary background for training staff (Jordan et al, 2011). Empowering of employees is as one of the ethical leadership functions. Emerson (2012) argues that empowerment means the employee be able to make decision and be responsible towards his/her actions. Empowering give the power of controlling effects and make them able to do their tasks completely (Kalshoven and Boon, 2012). Ethical leadership is as one of affecting factors on the performance of organizations that recently become important issue at organizations. However, in this area, there have not done integrated and regular research (Kaptein, 2011). Ethical leaders consider as the people committed to principles and authentic who make moderate decisions and often treat with followers based on ethical principles and establish transparent ethical criteria to witness healthy environment with high productivity at organization (Brown et al., 2005). Nowadays, in confused and complex conditions, only ethical leaders can create trust and commitment at organization for doing broad and correct activities (Mayer et al, 2012).

### **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

At recent year, the ethical scandals of the leaders at everywhere from commercial and political organization to church has become as main News world widely. Some studies also show that human resource management systems in Iran has lack of suitable framework for empowerment of the staff at the Ministry of Education (Charter and document of the education reform, 2003).

## **Research Article**

Educational system has suffer the lack of efficiency and the low productivity. There are not the defined criteria for selecting of school administrators. Also, there are the lack of systematic and sustained empowerment and subsequently, school administrators has little opportunity for creativity and innovation. (Soleymani and Motahari, 2009).

## **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Amadi-Far (2007) in their study showed that there are an inverse relationship between the direct supervision of management and employee empowerment. According to the results of the research by Bagherzadeh (2004), there are the significant relationship between empowerment atmosphere and empowerment understanding. Also there are a significant relationship between empowerment understanding and the elements of organizational atmosphere. The finding by Golparvar et al. (2011) suggest that by strengthening organizational justice, exchange leader - member can enforce the mental contract. Ahmadi and Jahromi (2012) indicates a significant relationship exists between the dimensions of total quality management and the empowering. According to the research of Mortazayee et al. (2011) some of the dimension of ethical leadership cannot predict the empowerment. Brown and Mitchell (2010), found that the amount of empowering for teachers direct under the effect of the leadership that understand the changes. The results of the study by Reisick et al. (2011) indicated that there was no significant relationship between the honesty of manager and the empowerment of employee. Based on the study of Rubin et al. (2010) when that leaders of schools use the style of human construction leadership, consequently the teachers feel more capability. Fowler (2012) show that the performance of individual teaching has significant relationship with the five components out of nine items related to transformation leadership. The findings of Zhu et al. (2004) suggest that mental empowerment of the staff is as a mediation in relationship with the behaviors of ethical leader and the commitment of staff and in results, the trust to leaders. According to Daniel (2008), the application of the power of specialty and authority by leaders has the most relationship and the obligation and rewards has the lowest effect with the empowerment of teachers. Avey et al. (2010) showed that there significant relationship between the style of construction leadership for human resource, political and the empowerment of teachers. The results of Berry (2008), indicates that the activities of supervisors' leadership and its organizational commitment and organizational atmosphere has effect on the organizational commitment of employees.

## **METHODS**

The cross correlation method was used in this study with attention to main hypothesis: "to investigate the relationship between ethical leadership and teachers empowerment". Population of the study included all secondary school teachers in the city of Mashhad. The sample size was 248 individuals according to Morgan and Krejcie Table (N=677) and Stratified sampling method was chosen. For data collection used two questionnaires. One of them was the researcher made questionnaire to find ethical leadership (Honesty, regulating activities within a clear ethical standards, confidence and assurance, efforts to improve the employee, freedom of expression) with 41 questions by format of Likert (5 degrees) another one was a standardized questionnaire by Spreitzer et al (1997) for assessing t containing 20 questions (5 degree Likert). The validity of research instrument confirmed through library studies and comments of specialist in this topic. The reliability of research instrument determined by Cronbach alpha coefficient. It was 0.92 and 0.82 for ethical leadership and teacher empowerment questionnaires for the entire sample respectively.

## **RESULTS**

*Hypothesis 1:* There is a significant relationship between the ethical leadership and teacher empowerment. The result is significant at the 0.01 level ( $0.01 > 0.000$ ); there is a significant positive relationship between the ethical leadership and teachers empowerment. (Table 1)

**Research Article**

**Table 1: The results of the Pearson correlation test to the relationship between ethical leadership and teacher’s empowerment**

Pearson correlation coefficient		Ethical leadership	Teacher empowerment
Ethical leadership	correlation coefficient	1	0.887**
	Significance level (Sig)	0	0.000

\*\* The significance level is 0.01

*Hypothesis 2:* teacher empowerment through honesty of manager is predictable. The Linear Correlation Coefficient between the manager honesty and teacher empowerment is 0.897. Significance level shows strong positive linear correlation between these two variables. Also 82% of teacher empowerment variabilities can be predicted by honesty ( $R^2=0.821$ ). (Table 2).

*Hypothesis 3 to 7 explains below and the researcher got the same results for them, as the hypothesis 2:*

- ✓ Hypothesis 3: Teacher empowerment through regulating activities within a clear ethical standards of manager is predictable.
- ✓ Hypothesis 4: Teacher empowerment through confidence and assurance of manager is predictable.
- ✓ Hypothesis 5: Teacher empowerment through efforts to improve the employee of manager is predictable.
- ✓ Hypothesis 6: Teacher empowerment through freedom of expression of manager is predictable.
- ✓ Hypothesis 7: Teacher empowerment through ethical leadership of manager is predictable.

**Table 2: The Regression output; Teacher empowerment and ethical leadership components of manager and ethical leadership of manager (all components)**

Criterion variables	Pearson correlation r)	Significance level (Sig)	Determination coefficient (R <sup>2</sup> )
Honesty	0.906	0.00*	0.821
regulating activities within a clear ethical standards	0.831	0.00*	0.690
confidence and assurance	0.842	0.00*	0.710
efforts to improve the employee	0.643	0.00*	0.414
Freedom expression	0.767	0.00*	0.589
Ethical leadership	0.887	0.00*	0.787

Finally after investigating results and accuracy of Regression model, the bellow model is suggested for predicting teacher empowerment:

**Table 3: suggested model for predicting teacher empowerment**

<b>Teacher empowerment=1.675 + 0.251 (Ethical leadership of manager)</b>
<b>Teacher empowerment=3.170 + 0.866 (Honesty)</b>
<b>Teacher empowerment=2.066 + 1.155= (regulating activities within a clear ethical standards)</b>
<b>Teacher empowerment=4.394 + 1.166 (confidence and assurance)</b>
<b>Teacher empowerment=10.812 + 0.771 (efforts to improve the employee)</b>
<b>Teacher empowerment=4.050 + 1.429 (Freedom of expression)</b>

**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

According to recent research findings, ethical leadership can provide suitable structure to empower teachers and to afford a strong framework for meet the increasing performance and effectiveness demands and finally it helps to improve employee productivity at organization. At educational organizations as well as educational objective and content, the interactive behavior and the hidden programs has influenced on the process of training. The research of Brown and Mitchell (2010) findings clearly and

### **Research Article**

Fowler (2012) indicate only the fifth component had positive relationship between ethical leadership and employee empowerment and they introduce the ethical leadership antecedents for productivity. According to confirming the main hypothesis of this study, it could be concluded that the empowering of teachers through ethical behavior of manager is predictable. The Results of the present study with the results of Rubin et al (2010) is consistent. That means, the success of organization's human resource is depends on the originality of manager's behavior. Accordingly, educational organizations are responsible to establish and develop the ethical values and should provide the underlying background for bring the institutional ethical and ethical values and consider ethical and ethical values as an organizational vision. The results related to the predictive capability of empowering teachers based on the honesty of manager was not consist with the findings by Resick et al. (2011). However, in this study the highest relationship of empowerment was with the component of the honesty of manager. Many managers have no originality in behaviors. Although, they know themselves as participative leadership, they are quite autocratic leadership. Ethical leadership with regulating activities within a clear ethical standards create conditions that support an employee events and activities in their life skills as well as basic control of them (Brown et al, 2005). According to EmadiFar (2009) using more ethical leadership techniques and monitoring teacher based on participatory monitoring and more confidence and assurance towards teachers may result in its more empowering. Ethical leaders believe that the efforts to improve the employee may have intrapersonal/ interpersonal effects, and it changes the relationships within /outside of an organization (Mayer et al, 2012). Ethical-oriented leadership according to two specifications of justice and honesty provide a suitable conditions for logical framework for expressing ideas and they accept rational criticism. Considering the opinions of others and using it in fulfilling tasks will cause the empowerment of people at organization (Jordan et al, 2011). Overall results of this study has consistent with the results of some studies (EmadiFar, 2009; Berry, 2008; Zhu et al, 2004; Avey et al, 2010). With regards to suggested models and by considering the same situation in schools and measuring ethical leadership components of manager we can predict teacher empowerment .Generally, considering the predictability of ethical leadership of administrators to empower teachers; educational managers can provide the empowerment for teachers and the productivity for educational systems with choosing appropriate and correct approach for managing schools.

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**Research Article**

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