THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF OF A PUBLIC SECTOR UNIVERSITY OF PAKISTAN

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DEDICATION

All praised to the Almighty Allah. For my beloved parents, wife, family members and especially my daughter Zymal Hassan, thank you for the unconditional love, support, sacrifices and encouragement, that made me fulfill my ambition.

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ABSTRACT

In current scenario of competitiveness, it has become important to have a workforce with higher level of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), as it affects the quality of education and determines the direction of development of a nation. Likewise, previous research has suggested the need to focus on the role of ethical leadership in influencing OCB among academicians in higher educational institutions. However, ethical leadership for academicians in higher education has received relatively less attention and there is a need of further examining relationship of ethical leadership with employees’ behavioral outcomes such as OCB in research organizations. This study investigated the relationship of ethical leadership and employees’ organizational citizenship behavior among academic staff of a public-sector university in Pakistan. The current study employed a quantitative research design by distributing questionnaires to 204 academic staff using proportionate stratified random sampling, in which a total of 191 questionnaires were received for further analysis. The study employed Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to test the hypotheses of the study using Mean, Standard Deviation and Pearson’s correlation. The results of the study showed that ethical leadership is practiced in public-sector university at moderate level. Furthermore, based on the perception of academic staff, organizational citizenship behavior was found at moderate level. The study also found significant positive correlation between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior, based on the norm of reciprocity, which is supportive of the principles of social exchange theory. In addition, people orientation, fairness, power sharing, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role clarification, and integrity had a significant positive correlation with organization citizenship behavior. The findings of the study contributed to the existing body of knowledge on ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, findings of this study also have practical implications for leaders of public sector universities as practicing ethical leadership can indulge employees in extra-role behaviors such as OCB, based on the norm of reciprocity. Moreover, suggestions for future studies have also been provided in this study.
ABSTRAK

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.0 Introduction

In this chapter background of the study is provided, subsequently, the problem statement, research questions, research objectives, importance, and limitation of studies, along with the conceptual and operational definition of terms have been discussed. Moreover, the aim of this study is to examine the relationship of ethical leadership on employees’ organizational citizenship behavior among academic staff at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, a public-sector university of Pakistan.

1.1 Background of the study

In the current scenario of competitiveness, organizations and institutions are thriving for higher performance from their employees. This higher performance can only be made possible by providing employees a satisfied workplace, fairness, and appraisal (Malik, Ghafoor, and Iqbal, 2012). In today’s world, organization faces the uphill task of working under conditions which are changing rapidly (Zhang and Bartol, 2010). In such a situation, where every organization is looking to edge its competitors by gaining competitive advantage, organizations are left with no other choice but to look up to its employees to go beyond their job description in helping the organization achieving its goals (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine, and Bachrach, 2000). These behaviors where employees go beyond their job description have been termed as organizational citizenship behavior (Brief and Motowidlo, 1986).
Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to those behaviors that are not part of an individual job description and include acts like helping other, taking additional responsibilities, putting extra hours, defending organization and openly speaking about important issues of organization (Organ, Podsakoff, and Mackenzie, 2006). According to Dekas, Bauer, Welle, Kurkoski, and Sullivan (2013), there has been a growing interest of researchers and scholars on OCB, as since its introduction, more than 650 research articles have been written about it. The interest has been associated with the reason that OCB has been linked with the organizational effectiveness.

Organizational citizenship behavior has been related to different factors of leadership. This implies that for employees having organizational citizenship behaviors, leaders shall be having characteristics such as responsibility, trustworthiness, equality, morality, respect and awareness of others (Bello, 2012). In any organization when leader depicts the above-mentioned characteristics, employees feel trust in the decisions of the leader and feel secured working in the organization. Thus, the employees willingly reciprocate by working voluntarily beyond their job description and supporting the organization in achieving the overall objective in term of effectiveness and efficiency (Eisenbeiss, 2012). Therefore, scholars suggest that the ability of leader in inspiring followers can enhance employees engagement in extra-role behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior (Sheraz, Zaheer, and Nadeem, 2012). Hence, organizational citizenship behavior among employees can be achieved by leader having characteristics such as morality and fairness (Mo and Shi, 2015).

Previous research has attributed leaders' fair and consistent treatment as one of the characteristics of ethical leadership (Burke, Sims, Lazzara, and Salas, 2007; Organ, 1990). Researchers have also suggested that ethical leaders can play a significant role in enhancing employees OCB, as these leaders have the ability to improve employees perception regarding fairness and integrity (Mo and Shi, 2015). Thus, organizational citizenship behavior is nurtured by the existence of ethical leadership in the organization (Brown and Treviño, 2006; Eisenbeiss, 2012; Ponnu and Tennakoon,
The ability of a leader to keep the best interest of it’s employees in mind, and show care towards them stimulates a reciprocating effect in the employees, who may feel obliged and thus engage in behaviors such as OCB, completing a feedback loop (Lu, 2014). Moreover, employees having perception of their leader as ethical in term of treating them fairly are more likely to reciprocate the same and get engaged in such discretionary extra-role behaviors known as organizational citizenship behavior (Brown and Mitchell, 2010; Mitonga-Monga and Cilliers, 2016; Walumbwa and Schaubroeck, 2009).

Higher education has been termed as vital and needs to be prioritized by policymakers for the development of the country (Jackson and Weathersby, 1975; Khattak, Khan, Khan, and Tariq, 2012), as it is one of the most important institutions of a nation, due to its significance in developing a country (Khalid, Irshad, and Mahmood, 2012), and serves as the backbone in rising of a nation (Ali and Waqar, 2013). Moreover, Burns and Carpenter (2008) were of the view that in the education sector, leader plays the role of a change agent making the academic staff perform acts of OCB, which will have a positive effect on the organizational effectiveness.

The academic staff of educational institutes, when having high level of commitment, continually show a greater level of involvement with their institution and thus put a higher level of effort and have higher performance (Chughtai and Zafar, 2006; Noor, 2009). However, when the academic staff of public sector organization develops perception of lack of support from their leaders, their level of motivation decreases and they are not involved in their jobs leading to dissatisfaction and finally leaving or changing the current job (Smith, 2007). Thus, it is important to have such a workforce that has a higher level of organizational citizenship behavior, because it affects the quality of education and determines the direction of development of a nation (Noor, 2009). This high level of organizational citizenship behavior can be achieved by the behavior of ethical leaders, facilitating employees’ positive identification, loyalty and nourishing their engagement in extra-role behavior (Mitonga-Monga and Cilliers, 2016).
1.2 Statement of Problem

A review of the literature shows that there are several gaps in research on ethical leadership (Singh and Rathore, 2014). Firstly, ethical leadership has been mostly studied and examined in western context, and there is an urge of examining ethical leadership in different organizational contexts (Detert, Trevino, Burris, and Andiappan, 2007). Secondly, ethical leadership for academicians in higher education has received relatively less attention from researchers (Englehardt, 2009). Therefore, it would be interesting to examine ethical leadership and its understanding in universities and research organizations (Singh and Rathore, 2014). Hence this study attempts to fill the gap by finding the level of ethical leadership among academic staff of a public sector university in Pakistan.

Jain and Sharma (2014) in their study suggested that OCB has been studied across many corporate sectors, however, in the context of higher education institutions, it is still an emerging topic. They were further of the view that there is a huge scope of future studying the phenomenon that leads to OCB among academic staff in higher education institutions. Likewise, Gautam, Van Dick, Wagner, Upadhyay, and Davis (2005), were of the view that OCB may vary across organizations and culture. They further urged that there is a need for research on the same specifically in a non-western context.

Moreover, Farooqui (2012), was of the view that researchers need to focus on OCB among academicians in higher educational institutions, as in educational setting. OCB is a new trend and despite of its high implications, it is still an unattended concept. The researcher was further of the view that OCB has significance for service sectors and has been implemented in hospitals, restaurants and in many other organizations. However, the concept has not received due attention in the context of higher education institutions. Iqbal, Aziz, and Tasawar (2012) in their study of OCB among the academic staff in higher education sector of Pakistan suggested that overall effectiveness of institutions can be enhanced by providing fairness perception to academic staff of lecturers and professors. They were further of the view that OCB is
helpful towards employees’ perception regarding their workplace and behavior in a positive way. Thus, this study attempts to fill this gap by finding the level of employees OCB among academic staff.

Ethical leadership has been mostly conceptualized and measured on the unidimensional scale developed by Brown, Treviño, and Harrison (2005). The recent literature has suggested for usefulness of examining several distinct dimensions of ethical leadership and its different effect on individual and organizational outcomes (De Hoogh and Den Hartog, 2008; Kalshoven, Den Hartog, and De Hoogh, 2011b; Mo and Shi, 2015; Piccolo, Greenbaum, Hartog, and Folger, 2010; Shin, 2012; Toor and Ofori, 2009). Similarly, previous studies have used self-reporting scale for measurement of ethical leadership, where leaders may rate themselves favorably, hence to overcome this bias, Shin (2012) in his study recommended to use such scale, where employees and subordinates can rate their leaders. Thus, this study used the multi-dimensional scale developed by Kalshoven et al. (2011b), where employees were asked to rate their leader i.e. immediate supervisor regarding ethical leadership.

Moreover, Khasawneh, Jawarneh, Abu-Alruz, and Al-Zawahreh (2016) in their study of ethical leadership, among academic staff of public-sector university of Jordan, suggested that future studies shall focus on relationship of ethical leadership with employees outcomes such as organizational performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and workplace deviance. Likewise, Toor and Ofori (2009) in their study also suggested that in future, research shall also focus on the relationship of ethical leadership and employees’ behavioral outcomes such as OCB. Thus, to fill this literature gap, this study intends to investigate the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB.

In line with studies in the context of Pakistan, leadership styles have shown positive relationship on OCB (Ali and Waqar, 2013; Irshad and Hashmi, 2014; Malik et al., 2012). However, the relationship of ethical leadership on employees’ OCB in higher education institutions is still in its infancy (Ali and Waqar, 2013; Irshad and Hashmi, 2014; Malik et al., 2012). This study attempts to fill this literature gap, by
further examining the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB among academic staff in a public sector university of Pakistan.

1.3 Research Questions

This research is conducted to answer the below-mentioned research questions:

1. What is the level of ethical leadership among academic staff of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan?

2. What is the level of organizational citizenship behavior among Academic Staff of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan?

3. What is the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB among academic staff of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan?

1.4 Research Objective

This research is carried out to examine the relationship of ethical leadership on employee organizational citizenship behavior in Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, a public-sector university of Pakistan, with the following main objectives:

1. To identify the level of ethical leadership among academic staff of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.

2. To identify the level of organizational citizenship behavior among academic staff of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.
3. To examine the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior among academic staff of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan.

1.5 **Scope of the study**

This study aims to investigate the relationship of ethical leadership on employees’ organizational citizenship behavior among academic staff of one of the public-sector university of Pakistan, named Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan. The independent variable in the study is ethical leadership, while the dependent variable is organizational citizenship behavior. The study has been conducted using quantitative method, wherein ethical leadership has been measured by multi-dimensional scale developed by Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b). Ethical leadership has seven dimensions namely fairness, power sharing, role clarification, people orientation, integrity, ethical guidance, and concern for sustainability. Whereas, organizational citizenship behavior has been measured by scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002). The population of the study is 431 academic staff, and the sample size, based on Krejice and Morgan (1970) table, is 204. This study uses mean, standard deviation and correlation analysis to address the research questions and test the hypotheses of the study by employing software SPSS version 21.

1.6 **Significance of the Research**

The significance of this research can be seen in three areas that are knowledge, organization, and human research practitioners, which are explained below:
1.6.1 Significance of the Knowledge

It is hoped that this research can be used by future scholars and researchers as a reference for those who intend to undergo research on ethical leadership and employees’ organizational citizenship behavior. This attempt can also be used as a guideline for all those who plan to explore the relationship between ethical leadership and employee organizational citizenship behavior for achieving desired organizational outcomes. This is still an emerging topic and it is hoped that this research can contribute to the literature of ethical leadership and OCB, and can be used as a platform for future in-depth exploration with a much wider scope.

1.6.2 Significance for the Organizations

The role of higher education cannot be denied while considering the development of a country (Khalid et al., 2012). This research can provide important findings to the top management about improving organizational effectiveness in the context of higher education. It is not only important for an organization to have employees who go beyond their job description in the achievement of organizational outcomes but also that the leader depicts such behavior that employees readily engage in such behaviors and attitudes. In this research, ethical leadership is linked with employees’ organizational citizenship behavior, which enables the organization to find the best and most effective method for learning, training & development, fairness in rewards and punishment of the employees as ethical leadership identifies and acts on the lever, which increases the loyalty of the employees, their satisfaction and ultimately channels it towards driving organizational success (Alshammari, Almutairi, and Thuwaini, 2015).

When the organization is able to identify the level of organizational citizenship behavior of its employees, leaders and top management can understand employees needs and wants, and also provides a direction regarding action and steps needed for achievement of positive direction. Resultantly, by focusing on ethical leadership and
organizational citizenship behavior, organization can plan and execute such strategies that can lead to improvement and ultimately organizational success and achievement of outcomes.

1.6.3 Significance for the Human Research Practitioners

It is hoped that this research helps the practitioners of human resource in identifying and understanding the problems and issues faced by the employees and clarify the expectations of employees from their leader. This research also enables the HR practitioners to think about employees in all the steps of planning, implementing and executing strategies. In achieving organizational outcomes, employees play an equally important role as that of leaders. It is hoped that this research provides a platform to think of the importance of employees and teamwork in an organization.

1.7 Conceptual Definition

According to Ahmad and Usop (2011), conceptual definition describes the key concepts by using other concepts. The key concepts in the current study are given as:

1.7.1 Ethical Leadership

The most common definition of ethical leadership is “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” Brown et al. (2005, p.120).

Moreover, ethical leaders have been characterized as honest, caring, and principled individuals who make fair and balanced decisions(Brown and Treviño,
They also set clear and ethical standards, which are frequently communicated to their followers. In addition, ethical leaders treat their followers with respect, keep promises, allow employees to have input in decisions and clarify expectations and responsibilities (Kalshoven et al., 2011b).

Kalshoven et al. (2011b) devised seven distinct behavioral dimensions of ethical leadership that is fairness, power sharing, role clarification, people orientation, integrity, ethical guidance, and concern for sustainability. These dimensions were based on work conducted by several notable researchers on ethical leadership such as Treviño, Brown, and Hartman (2003), De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) & Brown et al. (2005). The definition of each dimension as given by Kalshoven et al. (2011b) is given below:

a. **Fairness:**
   Fairness is described as the dimension of ethical leaders who don’t practice favoritism, treating others in a manner that is right. Furthermore, ethical leaders have equality and make principled and fair choices.

b. **Power sharing:**
   Power sharing is described as allowing followers to have a say in the process of decision making in the organization and listening to their ideas and concerns.

c. **Role clarification:**
   Role clarification attributes to the characteristics of an ethical leader in clarifying responsibilities, expectation, and performance goals to the employees.

d. **People Orientation:**
   People orientation denotes the characteristics of the leader of caring about, respecting, and supporting employees.
e. **Integrity:**

Integrity is that attribute of ethical leadership which represents consistency of words and acts. It denotes the ability of leader in keeping promises.

f. **Ethical Guidance:**

Ethical guidance is the dimension of the leader which helps in communicating about ethics and explaining ethical rules. This characteristic refers to promoting and rewarding the ethical conduct of employees.

g. **Concern for sustainability:**

Concern for sustainability explains the ability of the ethical leader in caring about the environment and stimulating recycling of materials.

### 1.7.2 Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational Citizenship Behavior has been defined by Organ (1988) as “individual behavior that is discretionary not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate, promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization”(p.4). Furthermore, according to Lee and Allen (2002) OCBs are the behavior of employee that are not critical to an individual task or job, but serve in facilitating organizational functioning. Behaviors such as helping colleagues, attending ceremonies that are not important and so on can be classified as OCB. Lee and Allen (2002) derived from the work conducted by previous scholars such as (Mcneely and Meglino, 1994; Organ, 1977; Williams and Anderson, 1991) in distinguishing OCB into two categories of OCB-Individual and OCB-organization.

a. **Organizational citizenship Behavior-Individual (OCB-I)**

OCB-Individual refers to the behavior of helping individuals at the workplace. This dimension has indirect implication at best, for maintaining balance in the
organization. These behaviors might be a mere reflection of natural expression at work rather than employees’ deliberate effort of restoring balance in the organization.

b. Organizational citizenship Behavior-Organization (OCB-O)

Lee and Allen (2002) described OCB as a deliberate attempt for maintaining the balance in a social exchange between employees and the organization (i.e., a cognition-oriented explanation). Hence, OCB-organization are behaviors that are directly intended to benefit the organization. This dimension has direct linkage to employees thinking of their work characteristics.

1.8 Operational Definition

Ahmad and Usop (2011) defined operational definition as the application of the conceptual definitions of the research carried out. Thus, for the purpose of this study, the definition as below were used:

1.8.1 Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is that characteristics of the leader or top management where they set such standards in the organization that the employees perceive them as fair and role models and have no compromise for ethical standards. This research intends to understand whether the behavior of leaders in Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan is in line with the behavior described by Kalshoven et al. (2011b) who described ethical leaders as treating their followers with respect, keeping promises, allowing employees to have input in decisions and clarifying expectations and responsibilities.

This research attempts to explore the seven different dimensions of ethical leadership as stated by (Kalshoven et al., 2011b). Each of the seven dimension has its
own characteristics. The definitions of each dimension, as defined by Kalshoven et al. (2011b), are described below:

- **People Orientation**

  People orientation describes the leader behavior towards the employees in term of caring, supporting and understanding them. This research aims to find out the level of people orientation of the leader of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan based on the perception of academic staff regarding their leader’s attention, time, care and interest towards their feelings and problems.

- **Fairness**

  Fairness is described as treating all employees equally in rewards and punishment without any favoritism or bias. In this study, the employees’ perception regarding fairness of their leader will be assessed in term of holding the employees responsible for which they have no control and whether their leader is manipulating the employees in reaching his/her own personal goals.

- **Power Sharing**

  Power sharing implies to the involvement of employees as an important stakeholder of the organization and taking them on board in every important decision. This study tries to explore whether employees at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan perceive their leader takes account of their suggestions, delegating authorities, and decision making.

- **Concern for Sustainability**

  Concern for sustainability means showing empathy towards the environment and surrounding. This study explores employees’ perception whether their leader is environment friendly, has concern for sustainability, and stimulation of recycling.

e. Ethical guidance

The ethical guidance explains the characteristics of a leader in term of explaining the ethical standards to the employee and appreciating the ethical behavior of employees by rewarding them. In this study, the perception of employees regarding their leader ability to explain, clarify, implement and guide ethical conducts has been explored.

f. Role Clarification

Role clarification means giving the employees a clear and specific job description of what is expected from them and what exactly is their role in the organization. This study attempts to find out whether employees at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan think their leader has identified, explained, communicated and clarified expectation of each group and member.

g. Integrity

Integrity explains the leader values for words, whether the leader follows his own words by acting upon what the leader says. In this study, employees’ opinion regarding the integrity of the leader has been explored, whether their leader can keep promises, be trusted and has value for his/her words.

1.8.2 Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior is that discretionary behavior which are not part of the formal job description of employees but employee engages in them for improving organization effectiveness when they perceive their workplace as fair. In this study, the level of employees OCB has been explored in a public-sector university whether the academic staff depicts such discretionary as described by Lee and Allen (2002).
a. Organizational citizenship Behavior-Individual (OCB-I)

OCB-Individual are those behaviors which employee engage in by helping their co-workers and colleagues at the workplace. This factor is more related to helping behavior towards their colleagues and other employees at the workplace. In this study, academic staff perception of their willingness, devotion, helpfulness, and flexibility towards their colleagues has been explored.

b. Organizational citizenship Behavior-Organization (OCB-O)

OCB-Organization are referred to those behaviors which employee engage in for the benefit of the organization like attending functions which are not required or defending the organization in public. These behaviors directly benefit the organization. This study attempts to explore whether the academic staff of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan are engaged in behaviors such as attending functions, defending organization in public, showing pride and expressing loyalty.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter shows the overview of this research from the background of the study, statement of problem, research objective, research questions, importance of the study, definitions of terms and research limitations. Moreover, the next chapter discusses the past literature and other research which are related to this research.
References


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