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The impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers

أثر القيادة الأخلاقية في التميز التربوي لدى أساتذة التحضيري

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- **Abstract:**

The current study aims to identify the impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers. To achieve the objectives of the study, the researcher employed the descriptive approach, relying on a questionnaire that is divided into two sections: the first section pertains to the ethical leadership scale, and the second section pertains to the educational excellence scale, developed by Amal Nawaf Mahmoud (2023). After verifying the psychometric properties of the study instrument, it was administered to a sample consisting of (80) primary school teachers in the Khemis Miliana district, who were selected randomly. The study hypotheses were tested using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the study showed that there is an impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers.

Keywords:

Leadership; Excellence; Ethical Values; Ethical Commitment.

الملخص:

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التعرف على أثر القيادة الأخلاقية في التميز التربوي لدى أساتذة التحضيري، ولتحقيق أهداف الدراسة استخدمت الباحثة االمنهج الوصفي، بحيث تم الاعتماد على الإستبانة التي تنقسم إلى قسمين، القسم الأول خاص بمقياس القيادة الأخلاقية والقسم الثاني خاص بمقياس التميز التربوي من إعداد أمل نواف محمود (2023) بعد التأكد من الخصائص السيكومترية لأداة الدراسة تم تطبيقها على عينة تتكون من (80) أستاذ من مرحلة التعليم الابتدائي بمقاطعة خميس مليانة، وتم اختيارهم بالطريقة العشوائية، والتحقق من فرضيات الدراسة باستخدام برنامج الحزم الإحصائية للعلوم الاجتماعية، وأظهرت نتيجة الدراسة بأنه يوجد أثر للقيادة الأخلاقية في التميز التربوي لدى أساتذة التحضيري.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

القيم.، التميز.، القيم الاخلاقية.، الإلتزام الأخلاقي.

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• Introduction

Today, many schools face major challenges due to globalization and modern technology, which require all teachers—especially in educational institutions—to enhance institutional efficiency and keep pace with ongoing developments. Since teachers are the cornerstone of the educational process, overcoming these challenges depends largely on their competence and excellence. Ethical leadership is defined as a set of behaviors and actions through which school leaders guide learners using appropriate means to instill moral virtues, thereby producing individuals who are beneficial to their society and nation[1]. This is supported by[2], who found that ethical leadership significantly enhances human resource creativity, with the principle of justice being the most influential, followed by respect and service. Similarly, [3]emphasized that teachers can influence others toward achieving goals by committing to ethically characterized behaviors aimed at improving institutional ethics. This aligns with, who demonstrated a statistically significant effect of ethical leadership on educational excellence among kindergarten teachers in Jordanian public schools, highlighting the need for teachers to embody ethical leadership values to encourage ethical conduct and deter unethical behavior, while serving as positive role models[4]. Ethical leadership contributes to educational excellence across multiple levels including school and instructional excellence leading to improved output and work efficiency. Educational excellence is understood as a comprehensive system of activities and processes carried out by school administration, teachers, staff, and students to achieve integration and high effectiveness, producing unique and distinguished outcomes that meet stakeholder expectations and enhance institutional competitiveness[5]. [6]further stressed the need for effective strategies to establish educational excellence principles, aligning curricula and objectives with national identity to produce balanced and integrated individuals. Excellence in education is important not only at the

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[1] Daradkah, Amjad, § Al-Mutairi, Huda.- The role of ethical leadership in enhancing organizational trust among primary school female principals in Taif City from the teachers' perspective- Jordanian Journal of Educational Sciences-V. 13- N 2 - 2017.pp 223–237.

[2] Yousfi, Radia, § Youb, Amel.- The impact of ethical leadership on developing human resource creativity: A field study at the Omar Ben Omar Food Canning Institution in Guelma Province- Journal of Researcher in Humanities and Social Sciences-V. 12- N26 2020.PP 85–104.

[3] Aliout, Siham § Boujaddar, Khalid.- The impact of ethical leadership on enhancing employee green behavior An applied study at the Tahir Electricity Generation Plant – Jijel Province- Journal of Economic and Financial Studies-V. 15- N 1- 2022. pp 185–204.

[4] Nawaf, Amel.- The impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among kindergarten teachers in public schools affiliated with the Ministry of Education in Jordan- Derasat: Educational Sciences-V. 50-N 2- 2023.pp 1–18.

[5] Abu Saada, Saif Al Nasr.- Institutional excellence management as an approach to developing administrative performance in basic education schools in Fayoum Governorate- Fayoum University Journal of Educational and Psychological Sciences- V. 15- N 15- 2021. pp 35–91.

[6] Ben Sebti, Asma § Rahali, Saliha.- Towards an effective strategy for establishing the principles of educational excellence- Algerian Journal of Human Security-V. 5- N 2- 2020. pp399–419.

individual teacher level but also at the institutional level, as institutional support facilitates such excellence. [7]confirmed a positive and statistically significant relationship between teachers' professional development and institutional excellence. Thus, ethical leadership directly and positively impacts educational excellence, motivating teachers to deliver high-quality performance and improve teaching and learning in the preparatory environment. Consequently, the research problem is framed by the main question:

- What is the impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory teachers?

This main question branches into the following sub-question:

- Is there an impact of ethical leadership with its dimensions (ethical commitment, ethical values, and personal practices) on educational excellence among preparatory teachers?

1. Study Hypotheses

- There is an impact of ethical leadership, with its dimensions, on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers.

2. Study Objectives

This study aimed to achieve the following:

- To identify the impact of ethical leadership, with its dimensions (ethical values, personal practices, and ethical commitment), on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers.

3. Importance of the Study

3.1 Theoretical Importance

The theoretical importance is evident in its examination of the study variables, as this study contributes to enriching the theoretical aspect of understanding ethical leadership, thereby facilitating the investigation of its impact on educational excellence and providing benefit to scholars and researchers in this field. The findings of this study are of significance to researchers as they will serve as a reference on this topic. Furthermore, the results of this study contribute to an attempt to direct the attention of leaders in the institution under study toward the importance of ethical leadership and the necessity of adopting it to develop their behaviors.

3.2 Practical Importance

[7] Andejani, Essam El Din, § Al-Ghamdi, Amair.- The impact of teachers' professional development on enhancing institutional excellence in public education schools in Makkah Al-Mukarramah from the perspective of educational supervisors- International Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies-V. 10- N 1- 2021. pp 27–48.

The practical importance of this study lies in its focus on identifying the impact of ethical leadership on achieving educational excellence among preparatory school teachers. Through applied studies, we can understand how to implement the principles of ethical leadership in the educational environment and how these practices affect the performance of preparatory school teachers and their excellence in their profession. This aids in developing practical strategies to enhance ethical leadership and educational excellence among teachers in schools and educational institutions. Additionally, the results of this study contribute to providing insight to preparatory school teachers regarding the extent of the impact of ethical leadership on achieving educational excellence for them.

4. Operational Definition of Key Terms

4.1 Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership is defined as "leadership based on the practice of behavioral and moral virtues and their application in daily interactions to activate the process of influence over followers and achieve their loyalty within the framework of realizing the common interest of all individuals in the organization. The ethical leader represents the ethical framework through which all daily transactions within the organization are conducted, and which employees consider correct and natural, provided that these principles are applied in their daily behavior" [8]

4.1.1 Operationally

It is defined as the score obtained by the primary school teacher on the questionnaire developed by researcher [9], which consists of four domains: ethical values, ethical commitment, ethical relationships, and ethical personal traits, comprising 20 items.

4.2 Educational Excellence

Educational excellence is defined as "those planned and continuous organizational efforts aimed at achieving advantages for the educational institution with the purpose of developing it"[10].

4.2.2 Operationally

It is defined as the score obtained by the primary school teacher on the questionnaire developed by researcher (Amal Nawaf Mahmoud ,2023), which consists of 12 items.

5. Study Methodology

Based on the nature of the study and in order to achieve its objectives, the descriptive analytical approach was adopted. This approach allows for the description of the phenomenon under study as it exists in reality without any intervention from the researcher. It does not merely involve the collection of information, but rather its analysis and interpretation in order to reach the most

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[8] Yousfi, Radia, § Youb, Amel.- The impact of ethical leadership on developing human resource creativity: A field study at the Omar Ben Omar Food Canning Institution in Guelma Province- Journal of Researcher in Humanities and Social Sciences-V. 12- N26 2020.p 81.

[9] Nawaf, Amel.- The impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among kindergarten teachers in public schools affiliated with the Ministry of Education in Jordan- Derasat: Educational Sciences-V. 50-N 2- 2023.

[10] Kechoub, Said, Al-Sayeari, Nasar § Al-Mashelia, Aliya.- School excellence from the perspective of teachers in public schools in Dhofar Governorate and its relationship with some variables- Journal of Educational Sciences-V. 31- N4- Part 2- 2023.p 349

important findings and recommendations, which are hoped to contribute to the development and improvement of the current situation.

6. Study Population

The population of the current study consisted of (120) teachers and early childhood educators in preparatory classes and kindergartens, comprising (110) teachers and (10) early childhood educators. This number was obtained from the province of Ain Defla.

7. StudySample

The study sample consisted of (80) teachers and early childhood educators teaching in preparatory classes and kindergartens, who were selected using the simple random sampling method.

Table 1. Distribution of the sample according to gender

Gender	Count	Percentage
Males	6	7.5%
Females	74	92.5%
Total	80	100%

Source: (Prepared by the researcher)

Comment: It is evident from the table that the proportion of males within the study sample is significantly lower than that of females. The number of males reached (6) individuals, corresponding to (7.5%) of the total sample, whereas the female category constituted the vast majority of the overall sample, with a count of (74) individuals, representing (92.5%).

8. Study Instruments

8.1 Description of the Scale

To achieve the objectives of the study, the questionnaire developed by AmalNawaf (2023) was employed to measure the impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: the first section pertained to the Ethical Leadership Scale, and the second section pertained to the Educational Excellence Scale.

- Ethical Leadership Scale**:** It comprised four related dimensions, distributed as follows:

Ethical Values, measured through (5) items, Ethical Commitment, measured through (5) items, Ethical Relationships, measured through (5) items, Ethical Personal Traits, measured through (5) items.

- Educational Excellence Scale: It consisted of (12) items.

8.2 Scoring of the Scale

The responses to the research instrument were designed according to the five-point Likert scale as follows:

Table 2. Scale scores according to the five-point Likertscale

Agreement	StronglyAgree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	StronglyDisagree

Score	5	4	3	2	1

Source: (Prepared by the researcher)

9. Psychometric Properties of the Scales in the Current Study

The psychometric properties of the two scales were verified through application to a pilot sample of (30) preparatory school teachers (male and female).

9.1 Ethical Leadership Scale

9.1.1 Validity of the Scale in the Current Study

The researcher employed the extreme groups comparison method to verify the validity of the scale.

9.1.1.1 Validity Using the Extreme Groups Comparison Method

The researcher compared the mean scores of the pilot sample participants who represented the upper 27% of scores on the scale with those who represented the lower 27% of scores. This was conducted to test the scale's ability to discriminate between different levels of ethical leadership among the sample participants. The results were as follows:

Table 3. Significance of Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Extreme Groups (Upper and Lower Groups) of the Pilot Sample

Scale	Upper Group		Lower Group		T-Value	Sig.(p-Value)	(df)	Significance Level
	M	SD	M	SD				
Ethical Leadership	96.62	2.50	97.25	2.49	- 13.91	0,00	14	0,01

Source: (Prepared by the researcher)

Comment: It is evident from Table (3) that the t-value, which reached (-13.91), is statistically significant at the (0.01) level, indicating that the scale has the ability to discriminate between the two extreme groups, which is considered an indicator of its validity.

9.1.2 Reliability of the Scale in the Current Study

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed to verify the reliability of the scale. This equation was selected because the responses of individuals to the scale items were based on a five-point Likert scale. The following table presents the reliability coefficient values for the scale.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for the Ethical Leadership Scale

Total Score of the Ethical Leadership Scale	Number of Items	Reliability Coefficient Value
	20	0.72

Source: (Prepared by the researcher)

Comment: The value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale as a whole reached (0.72), indicating that the scale demonstrates a good level of reliability.

9.2 Educational Excellence Scale

9.2.1 Validity of the Scale in the Current Study

The researcher employed the extreme groups comparison method to verify the validity of the scale.

9.2.1.1 Validity Using the Extreme Groups Comparison Method

We compared the mean scores of the pilot sample participants who represented the upper 27% of scores on the scale with those who represented the lower 27% of scores. This was conducted to test the scale's ability to discriminate between different levels of educational excellence among the sample participants, the results were as follows:

Table 5. Significance of the Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Extreme Groups of the Pilot Sample

Scale	Upper Group		Lower Group		T-Value	Sig.(p-Value)	(df)	Significance Level
	M	SD	M	SD				
Educational Excellence	56	2.13	44	1.19	- 13.85	0,00	14	0,01

Source: (Prepared by the researcher)

Comment: It is evident from Table (5) that the t-value, which reached (-13.85), is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that the scale has the ability to discriminate between the two extreme groups, which is considered an indicator of its validity.

9.2.2 Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was employed to verify the reliability of the scale.

9.2.2.1 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient

This equation was selected because the responses of individuals to the scale items were based on a five-point Likert scale. The following table presents the reliability coefficient value for the scale.

Table 6. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient for the Ethical Leadership Scale

Total Score of the Educational Excellence Scale	Number of Items	Reliability Coefficient Value
	12	0.64

Source: (Prepared by the researcher)

Comment: The value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale as a whole reached (0.64), indicating that the scale demonstrates an acceptable level of reliability.

Based on the findings obtained by the researcher regarding the psychometric properties, it can be concluded that both the Ethical Leadership Scale and the Educational Excellence Scale are valid and suitable for application to the main study sample, and thus the results to be derived can be trusted.

10. Presentation and Analysis of the Study Results

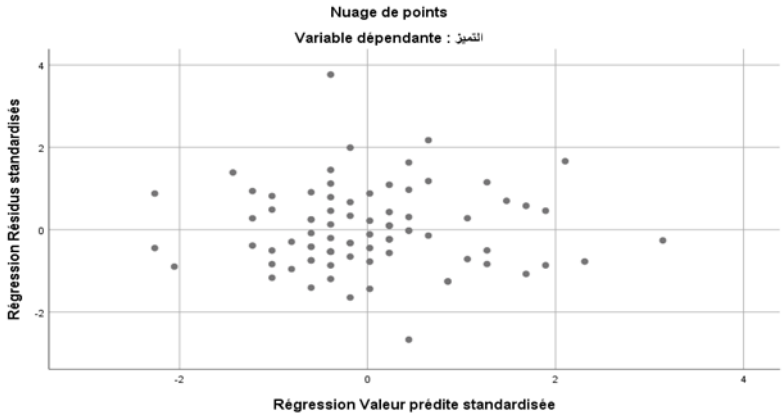
10.1 Presentation and Analysis of the Hypothesis Results

There is an impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers.

To test the validity of the hypothesis, simple linear regression analysis was employed, with educational excellence among preparatory school teachers as the dependent variable and ethical leadership as the independent variable. This was conducted to determine the impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among teachers. It was verified that the assumptions for applying simple linear regression analysis were met in the sample data, as follows:

Homoscedasticity (Homogeneity of Variance of Random Errors): To analyze the random errors graphically, scatterplots were constructed by plotting the predicted values (ŷ) on the horizontal axis and the standardized residuals (es) on the vertical axis.

Fig.1. Scatterplot

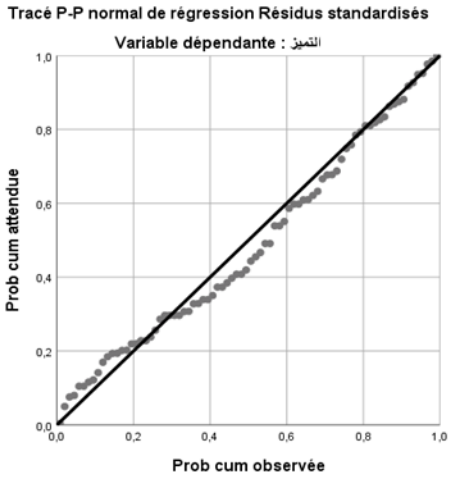


Source: As per the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

Comment: From the previous figure, it can be observed that the points are distributed in a horizontal band pattern around zero, indicating that the model does not suffer from the problem of heteroscedasticity (non-homogeneity of variance of random errors).

Testing the Normal Distribution of Errors: To test for the normal distribution of random errors, the Normal Probability Plot was employed.

Fig.2. Normal Probability Plot of the Random Errors



Source: As per the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

Comment: From the previous figure, it can be observed that most of the points cluster near the straight line, indicating that the random errors are normally distributed. The following table presents the results of the statistical analysis.

Table 7. Significance of the Differences Between the Mean Scores of the Extreme Groups of the Pilot Sample

Model	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	(df)	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Significance Level
Ethical Leadership	Regression	240.974	1	240.974	26.40	0.00	0.01
	Residuals	711.826	78	9.126			
	Total	952.800	79				

Source: (Prepared by the researcher)

Comment: From the table, it can be observed that there is a statistically significant F-value for the independent variable (ethical leadership) in relation to the dependent variable, namely educational excellence among preparatory school teachers. The F-value reached (26.40), which is statistically significant at the 0.01 level, as the corresponding p-value (0.00) is less than the significance level (0.01). Therefore, it can be concluded that educational excellence among preparatory school teachers can be predicted through their ethical leadership.

Table 8. Coefficients of the contribution of the independent variable (ethical leadership) in influencing the dependent variable (educational excellence) among preparatory school teachers

Model	Constant (A)	Standard Error	R	Adjusted R^2	Beta	t-value	p-value	Sig. Level
Constant	17.75	6.14						
Ethical Leadership	0.36	0.07	0.50	0.243	0.5	2.88 5.13	0.00	0.01

Source: (Prepared by the researcher)

Comment: It is evident from the table that the model shows the contribution of the ethical leadership variable in explaining the total variance in the educational excellence scores of the sample members (teachers). It is found that ethical leadership explains approximately (24.3%) of the variance in teachers' scores on educational excellence at a significance level of (0.01). Accordingly, the following predictive equation can be derived:

Educational excellence among university students = 17.75 + 0.36 (Ethical Leadership).

In conclusion, it can be stated that ethical leadership influences educational excellence among preparatory school teachers; thus, the hypothesis is confirmed.

10.2 Discussion and Interpretation of the Hypothesis Results

There is an impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers, and this is attributed to its role in inspiring confidence, responsibility, and respect among both students and teachers. It encourages commitment to ethical values and standards in teaching and learning. Furthermore, it strengthens the spirit of collaboration among teachers, leading to more productive outcomes in schools. Creative thinking and innovation in the educational process may contribute to the development of effective teaching methods, while the promotion of positive ethics and values in the school fosters strong relationships among members

of the educational community. Educational excellence achieved under ethical leadership may help enhance fairness and equality in educational opportunities and rewards available to all teachers, and build a culture of appreciation and respect within the school. This effect is due to the fact that educational excellence is a direct result of ethical leadership, which is grounded in ethical principles and values, motivating everyone to achieve their highest levels of performance and excellence across all educational domains.

The study results revealed that all dimensions of ethical leadership were rated at a high level by the teachers, indicating that increased attention to ethical leadership corresponds to higher levels of educational excellence. Ethical relationships serve to strengthen and enhance cooperation in educational excellence, which in turn contributes to the achievement of shared educational goals. Ethical commitment leads to motivating teachers to continuously develop themselves and strive for excellence in delivering education and elevating the level of student learning. Building trust and effective communication between teachers and students contributes to improving relationships, increasing innovation, and fostering continuous development in curricula, which positively reflects on the quality and excellence of education.

The current study is consistent with the findings of[11], whose results revealed a statistically significant effect of ethical leadership, with its dimensions, on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers, and that the application of ethical leadership in educational schools leads to strengthening the bonds among teachers and improving and enhancing the quality of these relationships.

- ## Conclusion

Through the presentation of this study, which aimed to identify the impact of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers, the researcher concluded that there is a significant effect of ethical leadership on educational excellence among preparatory school teachers.

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