

IMPACT OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP ON STUDENT WELL-BEING

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Abstract:

Ethical leadership has a pivotal role in influencing the culture and climate of educational institutions, intensely inducing the well-being of students. This paper probes into the multidimensional scopes of ethical leadership and its importance within educational settings. Drawing upon prevailing literature, the research discovers various aspects of ethical leadership, including its definition, relevance, and impact on student results and mental health.

The study underlines the prominence of ethical leadership in endorsing a positive ethical culture, improving student engagement, and nurturing a supportive learning environment. Through an extensive review of literature, the paper explains the role of ethical leadership in enlightening moral values, promoting transparency, and nurturing partnerships with stakeholders.

Furthermore, the research examines the impact of ethical leadership on students' mental health, highlighting the serious role of trust, fairness, effective communication, and conflict resolution in creating a conducive atmosphere for holistic development. It highlights the importance of ethical leadership in justifying stressors, enhancing social connections, and stimulating students' overall well-being.

In conclusion, the outcomes underscore the crucial role of ethical leadership in educational settings, promoting for its integration into institutional practices to foster a culture of trust, fairness, and inclusivity. By giving importance ethical leadership, educational institutions can create an environment favorable to students' academic accomplishments and emotional flourishing, thereby contributing to their overall well-being and development.

Keywords: *Ethical leadership, Well-being, Moral Development, Academic performance, Responsible citizenship.*

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Introduction:

Ethical leadership can be understood as “leadership demonstrating and promoting normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relations”.

Leadership that is ethical is important for a varied reasons, for an individual, a student, a customer, employee, and also the company as a whole. Leadership skills are essential to aid generate a positive ethical culture in any kind of an institute. Students can figure a best career for themselves having ethical leadership. Leaders can aid investors feel that the organization is a good, trustworthy one. Customers are more likely to feel loyal when they see leaders at place in an organization.

The primary reason why it's vital to have ethical leadership in education is the power of example to move upon the entire education community the rewards of acting ethically.

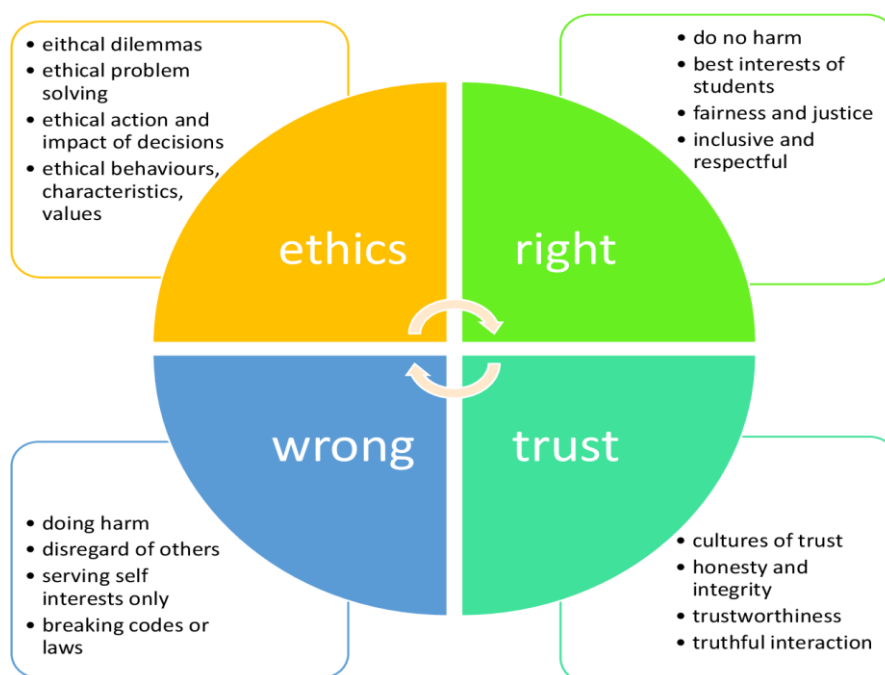
Educators have to take advantage of every opportunity to prove through their behavior the values and morals students will depend on ethical direction throughout their lives, including:

- Valuing self and others in interpersonal communication, behavior and ecological sustainability.

- Helping and supporting a personal connection to the educational institution, its staff, students and the public.
- Consistent practice for leaders in being a role model in everything they do.
- Community association in classrooms, educational communities and societies.

Figure 1.1

Understanding of Right and Wrong related to Ethics and Trust



Source:<https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Ethical-leadership%3A-a-study-of-educational-leaders-Carr/4547725f8192e6ad706fe2db2f323e239e1f121b>

Objectives of Research:

- To understand the concept of ethical leadership by reviewing available literature relating to the study.
- To analyse the relevance of ethical leadership in educational settings.
- To know the various reasons for educational institutes to promote ethical leadership.
- To evaluate the impact of ethical leadership on students' mental health.

Literature Review:

The urge to improve leadership skills and management capabilities is known from the student's perspectives (Abbas et al., 2011). In this point, the active participation of students through study discussion and practice of the ethical outlines can play a vital role for those students (Cannaerts et al., 2014). Beyond this, there also is a number of current strategies for ethical experiential learning, especially for health students during practical classes (Grace et al., 2017). Meanwhile, female and older business students exhibit robust ethical attitudes than their opposite counterparts (Borkowski & Ugras, 1998). Emotional intelligence and the organization's ethical

climate are associated to each other (Zhang et al., 2021). Authentic leadership and ethical leadership are extremely co-related with transformational leadership (Hoch et al., 2018). The cross cultural mechanisms also play a crucial role in this regard to recognize the ethical attitudes of the business leaders as the cross cultural components distinguish the magnitude of business ethics (Ermasova, 2021). Later, ethical leadership desires to be responsive and supportive to meet day-to-day activities and the respective capacity development (Makaroff et al., 2014). The varied measure of ethical judgements are desired to a bridge between the theoretical gaps and ethical judgements (Pan & Sparks, 2012). Ethical leadership has a positive effect on workers' in-role job performance (AlShehhi et al., 2020). There should be an understanding of ethical leadership among the students that can be applicable in educational organizations (Akar, 2018) as well. This understanding could come from the programmatic approach developed within the educational institutes (Albert et al., 2020).

Relevance of Ethical Leadership in Educational Settings:

1. Impact of Ethical Decision-Making on Student Outcomes:

While you are students' life, it's important that one take right decisions considering the existing problems need to act professional. Ethical leadership make decisions to address student outcomes in their life. Principals make decisions by appointing counsellors to counsel and guide these students with difficulties so they make the right picks in life. Counsellors with listening hearts always guide the students well.

2. Cultivating Ethical Values and Moral Development in Students:

Cultivating ethical values is important in school cultures. These values will bring in change in the lives of students if applied in teaching and learning every day. Teaching and learning endorse these values and begin to change to lives of many students. 'Modeling is a best practice in education—that means educators have to walk the walk, not only talk the talk' (Seisei & Kaufman, 2022, para 3) and this is true for us teachers. Students need to experience and feel ethics in their lives from their teachers as role models. For example, sometimes students learn how to forgive from us as teachers, so the value of forgiveness becomes real for them.

3. Promoting Positive School Climate and Student Engagement:

It's important to have activities that will inculcate values among students and keep them engaged in a positive environment. Respect, reciprocation, obeying the teachers, taking initiatives and being responsible is what is ensured in order to engage students.

4. Enhancing Academic Achievement and Student Well-being:

Ethical leadership of principal helps to empower and support effective staff culture. Staff culture contributes to effective lesson preparation towards effective teaching and learning by students. Students discover important values in lessons taught to them. Those values discovered boost their emotional health and intelligence and they perform well academically.

5. Preparing Students for Responsible Citizenship:

The main reason is to prepare students to be good and responsible citizens in every aspect of life. They become responsible and loyal to the laws, rules and regulations of our communities and our country. We need

peace in our own families, communities and country so students learned to bring peace and harmony to themselves, their communities and to their country. The environment of the school is conducive to many tropical diseases so we teach the importance of a clean environment.

In an organization or institution, the role of ethical leadership is paramount and important because it brings about the flavour and good taste of authentic leadership. Anyone can be a leader and if there is no ethics, leadership in this sense will collapse because it has its root. Ethics is rooted in ethical values, which build the foundation or basis of leadership. In any educational institution, ethical leadership is important. Educational institution consists of people (staff, ancillary staff and students) who long and in need of good ethical leadership grounded in ethical values. Today, we see many educational institutions and organizations falling apart or at stake because there is a lack of ethical leadership in the country. Very sad to see this is happening in educational organizations and people suffering from bad leadership. Branson & Gross (2014) stated that ‘ethics is at the heart of good leadership’ which is the basis for managing an educational institution.

WHY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES NEED TO PROMOTE ETHICAL LEADERSHIP?

1. Impact of Ethical Decision-Making on Organizational Culture:

Ethical leadership have a great influence and impact on the culture of the organization through virtues and values. Forsey, C. (2018) further elaborate that practicing ethical decision making can help you maintain an honest, supportive and fair workplace culture’ and it has to start from ethical leaders’ empowerment and protection in our communities and places of work.

2. Fostering a Culture of Trust and Transparency:

An ethical leader can foster a culture of trust and transparency. It can be depicted from the following figure:

Figure 1.2

Model of a culture of trust and transparency



3. Promoting Ethical Behavior among Staff and Students

In an educational institution, staff and students need to have a practice of good ethical leadership and role models. It has to come from ethical leaders who provide the leadership framework and influence the culture of an educational institution. It will emphasize and have a great impact on staff to provide more on delivering

quality education, especially in the area of teaching and learning. Unethical and harmful behaviors can be very harmful to young people in educational institutions so it's important to take care of students as responsible teachers and citizens. Ethical leaders are the ones who take the lead, empower and protect everyone. 'Honesty, integrity, accountability, respect, wisdom and responsibility' are important values that must be encouraged in educational institutions by the head teacher or principal.

4. Creating a Supportive and Inclusive Environment

'Leave no children behind' (UNICEF, 1989) emphasizes that every child must receive the best quality education. Inclusive education must always be encouraged in educational institutions, especially for disabled children. Gender equality must be respected. Female students and children must be given protection because they are vulnerable to harassment and sexual abuse by irresponsible male counterparts. There is a need to create communities and educational institutions that are safe environments for young children (male and female) will live happily and enjoy their lives to the fullest. All these areas must start with good ethical leadership.

5. Enhancing Institute's Reputation and Image

Educational institution reflects an important image of themselves to the public and communities, they must replicate ethical leadership in what they do. They need to present ethics exercises every day during school and off-school hours. Teachers are role models to young people 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Ethical leaders uphold the organizational reputation and image and make sure that uniformity is seen. He/she takes ethical corrective measures on teachers and students who do not comply with the sanction activities, rules and regulations to protect the integrity and welfare of the educational organization. Sanction activities, rules and regulations are called policies of the school to correct staff and students and put back order in the school. Lievens, (2017) states that 'organizational image reflects a holistic view of the organizational views' which reflects the image of the ethical leadership of leaders in the educational institution.

6. Impact of Ethical Decision-Making on Stakeholder Relationship

It is important that ethical leadership and stakeholders must build good relationships. Stakeholders always want to become part of the developments and infrastructures of the school organization. It is clearly emphasized that the 'priority of the stakeholder relationship with the level of exigency, that is, the level of urgency of a stakeholder claim, to arrive at a decision about where to begin focusing resources and efforts' (OpenStax, 2018, para 6). To engage stakeholders, ethical leaders must formulate a working document called a contract to avoid misunderstanding so that their engagement is proper. Contract documentation and school policies make them prioritize their time and effort to any projections given to them under the school.

7. Building Trust and Credibility with Parents and Guardians

Building trust and credibility with parents and caregivers of students is very important because it builds the foundation of real relationships. As a leader, they are to be invited to become part of the educational journey of their children. Letting them become part of the adventure of the child's educational journey gives them a better understanding and importance of their work as parents.

8. Collaborating with Teachers and Staff for Ethical Implementation

Working in collaboration with teachers and ancillary staff is important in schools. Paju, B. (2022) states that ‘collaboration between educators is considered to be the key issue when implementing inclusive practices within schools.’ Effective collaboration in schools is important because the primary target is the academic performance of the students through teaching and learning.

Teachers and staff must work together to effectively implement the curriculum because they are responsible for imparting knowledge and important ethical values that students must learn from their lessons. Some of these lessons involve the practical aspect of these ethical values so they become real to them. Berry, Daughtrey & Weider. (2009) ‘suggest that effective teachers are born, not made – and that the academic ability and personal traits of new recruits are more important for teaching effectiveness than pedagogical training.’ Students learn ethical values from the lessons taught by teachers in class.

9. Nurturing Partnerships with Community and External Stakeholders

The work of education is the work of partnership between the parents, community and stakeholders. A partnership is an important strategy where a school engage stakeholder and uses their expertise to build the school. Stakeholders are companies whether international or local or groups or individuals invited by the head teachers or principal to be partners.

10. Ensuring Fairness and Equity in Decision Making

Decisions made must be rational to everyone. Avoid having preferences and trying to give them first priority. Equity is about fairness and what has been attained is shared equally amongst members of the organization in terms of resources and finance. If these areas are not done properly, there will be division in the organization. When ethics is functional there is fairness.

In school, the principal pays the ancillary staff, paying them according to their fortnight. Avoid unnecessary pay deductions because that will problems in the organization.

Impact of Ethical Leadership on Mental Health of the Students:

Ethical leadership can have a positive impact on students' mental health through various mechanisms that foster a supportive and conducive learning environment. Here are several ways in which ethical leadership may influence students' mental well-being:

- 1. Trust and Psychological Safety:** Ethical leaders often build trust within educational settings. When students trust their leaders, they are more likely to feel psychologically safe, creating an environment where they can express themselves without fear of judgment. This can positively impact mental health by reducing anxiety and stress.
- 2. Fair Treatment and Equity:** Ethical leaders emphasize fairness and equity, creating an inclusive environment where all students are treated justly. When students perceive that they are treated fairly, it contributes to a positive mental outlook and a sense of belonging.
- 3. Emphasis on Values and Morality:** Ethical leaders model and emphasize values such as honesty, integrity, and empathy. Exposure to such values can positively influence students' ethical and moral development,

contributing to a sense of purpose and well-being.

4. **Effective Communication:** Ethical leaders prioritize open and transparent communication. When students are well-informed about decisions, expectations, and goals, it can reduce uncertainty and enhance mental well-being.
5. **Role Modeling:** Ethical leaders serve as role models for students. Observing leaders who demonstrate ethical behavior, empathy, and resilience can positively impact students' mental health by providing them with aspirational examples to emulate.
6. **Positive School Culture:** Ethical leadership contributes to the establishment of a positive school culture. A supportive and positive culture can reduce stressors, enhance social connections, and create an environment conducive to mental well-being.
7. **Conflict Resolution and Problem-Solving:** Ethical leaders often possess strong conflict resolution and problem-solving skills. When conflicts are addressed promptly and fairly, it can prevent prolonged stress and contribute to a healthier school environment.
8. **Focus on Personal Development:** Ethical leaders may prioritize the holistic development of students, including their mental, emotional, and social well-being. This approach can positively impact students' self-esteem, confidence, and overall mental health.

In summary, ethical leadership in educational settings can create a positive and supportive atmosphere that contributes to students' mental health by fostering trust, fairness, positive values, effective communication, and a focus on holistic development. It establishes a foundation for students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded from the study that educational institutes have an indispensable role to play in imbuing ethical leadership among students. The various literatures studied highlight the significance of ethical leadership in promoting a positive ethical culture, enhancing student engagement, and fostering a supportive learning environment. Ethical leadership not only influences student outcomes and academic achievement but also plays a crucial role in nurturing moral development and preparing students for responsible citizenship. Moreover, ethical leadership leads to the establishment of a culture of trust, transparency, and inclusivity, thereby enhancing organizational reputation and stakeholder relationships.

Furthermore, it is inferred that ethical leadership has an impact on students' mental health, emphasizing mechanisms such as trust, fair treatment, effective communication, and conflict resolution. Ethical leaders serve as role models, stimulating importance of values and behaviors that positively impact students' emotional well-being and holistic development. By integrating ethical leadership into institutional practices, educational institutions can create an environment conducive to students' academic success and emotional flourishing. Thus, prioritizing ethical leadership is essential for fostering a culture of integrity, accountability, and compassion, ultimately contributing to the overall well-being and development of students in educational settings.

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Cite This Article:

Kulkarni K.A. (2024). *Impact of Ethical Leadership on Student Well-Being*. In *Educreator Research Journal*: Vol. XI (Issue II (Special Issue-I)), pp. 53–60). DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.11114664>