An Investigation of Ethical Leadership Approach of Elementary School Leaders in Madinah in Saudi Arabia 1440

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Abstract: This study aimed to identify the reality of the practice of moral leadership by primary school leaders in Madinah, and to compare the moral leadership relationship of the primary school leader in Madinah and the impact of variables of years of experience in education, as well as the type of school, whether governmental or private. The study used the descriptive survey method and a questionnaire as a tool designed by the researcher, consisting of 30 phrases divided into three axes that were distributed to a random sample of (30) school leaders using the statistical program (SPSS). The results of the study showed that the leaders of primary schools in Madinah have an average degree of practicing moral leadership skills. The results of the study also revealed that there were no statistically significant differences at the level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between the sample answers regarding the reality of practicing ethical leadership according to the variables of the number of years of experience, or the type of school. These results are in broad agreement with what other researchers have found in their studies. Based on the results, the researcher recommended training school leaders or candidates to lead schools on moral leadership skills because of the importance of their presence and their positive impact on the school environment.

Keywords: ethical leadership, school leaders, primary girls schools, Madinah, Saudi Arabia.

دراسة واقع النهج الأخلاقي لقادة المدارس الابتدائية في المدينة المنورة 1440

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المستخلص: هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على واقع ممارسة قادة المدارس الابتدائية في المدينة المنورة للقيادة الأخلاقية، ومقارنة علاقة القيادة الأخلاقية لقائد المدرسة الابتدائية في المدينة المنورة وأثر متغيرات عدد سنوات الخبرة في التعليم، وكذلك نوع المدرسة سواءً كانت حكومية أو خاصة. واستخدمت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي المسحي واستبانة كأداة من تصميم الباحثة مكونة من 30 عبارة مقسمة على ثلاثة محاور تم توزيعها على عينة عشوائية بلغت (30) قائد مدرسة وباستخدام البرنامج الإحصائي (SPSS)، بينت نتائج الدراسة أن قادة المدارس الابتدائية في المدينة المنورة لديهم درجة ممارسة متوسطة لمهارات القيادة الأخلاقية. كما كشفت نتائج الدراسة عدم وجود أي فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية عند مستوى (0.05≥α) بين إجابات العينة بخصوص واقع ممارسة القيادة الأخلاقية تبعاً لمتغيري عدد سنوات الخبرة، أو نوع المدرسة. واتفقت هذه النتائج- بشكل كبير- مع ما وجده باحثون آخرون في دراساتهم. واستنادا للنتائج أوصت الباحثة بتدريب قادة المدارس أو المرشحين لقيادة المدارس على مهارات القيادة الأخلاقية لأهمية وجودها وأثرها الإيجابي على بيئة المدرسة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: القيادة الأخلاقية، مديرو المدارس، مدارس البنات الابتدائية، المدينة المنورة، المملكة العربية السعودية.

Introduction.

This study aimed to assess the style of ethical leadership for elementary school leaders in Madinah. When leading an educational institution, the leader needs to be able to influence his or her members to reach the desired goal. The influence the leader uses on the members to reach the goal may have positive or negative effects on the welfare of the members. The leader needs to be aware that his or her influence conveys tremendous influences and tasks. The reason is that the leader has more power and control than the followers; therefore, the leader needs to be sensitive to the lives of the followers (Northouse, 2018). For the last two centuries, the leadership topic has received significant interest from scholars. "Leadership is a highly sought-after and highly valued commodity" (Northouse, 2018, p.1). Leadership discussed and researched by hundreds of researchers many definitions developed from 1900 until now. The leadership definition is often related to the leadership theory, approach, or style. One of the comprehensive definitions of leadership is "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Northouse, 2018, p. 5). Therefore, knowing the best leadership practices and their effects on employees is one of the processes that lead to developing organizations.

Leaders are the pillar of any organization. One of the organizations that leaders are perceived as central to the organization is in education. Educational leaders are the role models for their employees, the students, the parents, the community, and the society. Therefore, it is very important for the follower to perceive their leader as ethical. Being an ethical leader means he or she demonstrates respect, justice, honesty, and building community (Northouse, 2018). Leadership ethics are very important no matter what type of a leader the leader decided to be, it can be a very important motivation to push employees' morals forward, or backward. Ethics is central to every educational organization, we can know a lot of information about the leader's style and ethics by observing the leader's behaviors in a regular day, "all leaders have an agenda, a series of beliefs, proposals, values, ideas, and issues that they wish to put on table" (Gini, 1998, p.36). The leader's ethics and values must show and appears by the followers' performance, leaders leave a positive impact on their followers even without planning to.

Problem Statement:

Professional ethics play an important role in raising the student of the society and making them decent human beings, that try to do all they can to serve their country and reach the level that is appropriate among nations. If the professional ethics are essential in all fields, it is vital in the leadership field; because these leaders are the role models for these students that will be doctors, teachers, lawyers, and engineers one day. To make a change in the lives of others carries with it a tremendous amount of moral weight and commitment, because the leader usually has greater power to control the followers and also have a greater responsibility to be sensitive to how their leadership is based on the lives of the followers (Northouse, 2018). Regardless how successful is the leader that success means nothing without

that right ethics and purpose behind it. If the leader does not represent an excellent example of the followers, the effects of this will be reflected negatively on the followers and will therefore be reflected in the future on society. This study is different from previous studies that it took place in elementary schools in Madinah, and according to the researcher's knowledge, there are no other studies that studied ethical leadership in elementary schools in Madinah.

Research Questions:

1. To what extent do school leaders in Madinah apply ethical leadership skills in elementary schools?
2. Are there any significant differences in perceptions of leadership ethic based on school type and experience?

Research Objectives:

1. investigate the ethical leadership approach for elementary school leaders in Madinah.
2. determine if there are any significant statistical differences among teachers' perspective of the school's leaders ethical leadership, considering teacher's years of experience and school type.

Research Hypotheses:

H1o: There are no significant differences at 0.05 in teachers' perceptions of their leaders' style of leadership ethic based on:

   a. Years of experience
   b. School type

Definition of Variables:

- **The independent variables (IV):** *Leaders' Years of experience:* This variable refers to the number of years a school leader has practiced since his/her appointment (Beginner: from 1 to 5 years = 1, or Expert: from 6 years and above = 2).
- *School type:* This variable refers to the level of schools (Public= 1, Private = 2).
- **The dependent variable (DV):** *Ethical leadership skills:* This variable consists of 30 statements made on ethical leadership skills.

Significance of the Study:

Leadership ethics is critical in leading educational institutions. It is indispensable to followers, leaders, supervisors, policymakers, and stakeholders. There are many studies that have examined leadership ethics in education in some Arab countries (Darawshah, 2004; Yunus, 2006; Abdeen & et.al., 2012). However, in Saudi Arabia, the topic has not received significant attention of education. For this

reason, this study was initiated to examine elementary teachers perceptions about their school leader's leadership ethics.

Definitions of Terms:

The development of ethical theory dates back to Plato (427 − 347 B.C.) and Aristotle (384 − 322 B.C.). The word ethics has been formed from the Greek word ethos, which is described as "customs," "conduct," or "character" (Northouse, 2018).

Ethical theory helps set a system of rules or principles to push us to make choices about right or wrong (Northouse, 2018).

Research limits: This study was limited in the following boundaries:

- Places Limits: Primary schools in Madinah
- Human Limits: Teachers in Madinah Primary Schools
- Time Limits: First Semester 1440-2018

Review of Literature:

Background of the Situational Leadership Theory (SLT)

There are many theories that explain leadership ethics such Kohlberg, Heifetz, and Burns as cited by Northouse (2018). However, this study followed Kohlberg and Heifetz's theories as a guide. Kohlberg's theory focuses on the moral's development of leaders in which six stages of moral development are presented: obedience and punishment, individualism and exchange, interpersonal accord and conformity, maintaining the social order, social contract and individual rights and universal principles. For Heifetz, his theory focuses on how leaders and members work together to face challenges in order to bring change with values in their workplaces and communities.

Previous Studies:

Leadership ethic is a complex concept. It has been examined in different ways to assess school leadership ethics. Some studies examined the topic by focusing on the profession, moral, commitment, qualifications, and leaders' experiences.

Ethical conduct: profession, commitment, moral leadership (Darawshah, 2004; Yunus; 2006, Al-Bishri, 2006; Karakose, 2007; Yahia, 2010; Abdeen & et.al., 2012)

Qualifications and experiences:

Darawshah (2004) conducted a study aimed at building a training program to develop professional ethics for principals in Jordan in the light of their training needs. It determined the degree of

principals' practice of ethical principles and their training needs, the results indicated that principals' practice of professional ethics is high.

Yunus (2006) also conducted a study to identify the teachers' assessments of the degree of secondary school principals in Jordan and the ethics of school administration from an Islamic perspective and distributed a questionnaire to 450 teachers. The results showed that teachers believe that their principals exercise moral leadership, which includes taking into account the rights of teachers, students and peers. The results showed similarities in the estimates of male and female teachers, while the teachers with diplomas degree evaluations were better than others.

Another study was from Al-Bishri (2006) who conducted a study to determine the degree of commitment of high school principals in the UAE to the ethics of the profession from teachers' perspectives and applied to a class sample of 950 teachers. The results indicated that the principals' commitment to the ethics of the school administration in all its fields from teachers' perspectives is high, there is a difference between the responses of teachers according to their qualifications and experience, but males were superior to females in this area.

Also, Karakose (2007) conducted a study to identify teachers' perceptions of the moral leadership of principals and applied into 463 teachers in one of the Turkish provinces. The result indicated that teachers see that their managers exhibit very high ethical conduct in communication management, and appropriate attitudes in the school climate. They encourage them, they are humble with them, and they care about them, while the moral behavior in the field of decision-making is average.

Yahia (2010) conducted a study to determine the degree of commitment of the principals of public schools to the ethics of the school management profession. The results indicated that the degree of principals' commitment to the ethics of the school administration is estimated by the teachers to be very large. Furthermore, between the average teachers according to their qualifications, while the differences were statistically significant according to the gender of the teacher in favor of females and according to the experience in favor of the less than 6 years.

Also, Abdeen and others (2012) conducted a study aimed to identify teachers 'estimates of the degree of their principals' ethical leadership through their commitment to the ethics of their work. The study results showed that the principals' practice of ethical leadership was high.

All the previous studies agreed with the researcher about that Ethical is a universal matter it is equally important in every place, time and religion. Our Islamic culture have a very high emphasis on ethical in general and ethical leaders in specific. Ethical leadership can move the leader to the top or destroy a successful leading history. People may forget or forgive leaders leading mistakes or bad decisions, but not their ethical mistakes.

3- Methods

The study used the descriptive-analytical method. Quantitative method used to collect data. Abbas (2012) stated that in the quantitative method quantitative data are collected to represent the situation and thus to disseminate the results to the research community using the questionnaire.

Study Population and Sample:

The study population consists of 30 primary girls' schools in Medina, chose schools were randomly. The study sample consisted of all the 30 elementary school teachers, and they were 627 teachers.

Instrument:

To answer the study questions, the researcher used a questionnaire to collect the data. The questionnaire aimed to know the availability of ethical management among school principals from the point of view of teachers. It consisted of 30 Phrases divided into three axes. That are: Leadership social skills, Leadership Personal skills, Leadership Organizational skills.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts: The first: preliminary data and includes two variables: years of experience (from 1 – less than 10 and 10 –more than 10), and school type (public or private). The second section consisted of the three axes of the questionnaire. The five-dimensional Likert scale was used as follows: highly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, highly disagree.

Leadership social skills:

1. Works on teacher participation in the preparation of a school message
2. Involves teachers in school decision making
3. Provides an opportunity for teachers to express their views
4. trusts the teachers
5. Supports teachers in their work
6. Fosters a sense of responsibility among teachers
7. Encourage teachers to engage in constructive and effective dialogue
8. Encourages teachers to benefit from the experiences of their colleagues
9. Leaves their door open for teachers and students all the time
10. Encourage and reward creativity

Leadership Personal skills:

1. Insists on being an excellent example for others
2. accepts the criticism objectively
3. flexible in dealings with teachers

4. patient in carrying out the tasks

5. Honest with others

6. Caress about justice

7. Have high integrity

8. Humble with colleagues

9. Forgives easily

10. Admits when they make a mistake

Leadership Organizational skills:

1- Modifies the distribution of schoolwork to teachers

2- Works to achieve the school's mission

3- Applicable laws and regulations

4- Makes administrative decisions objectively

5- Being objective when assessing teacher performance

6- runs the school in a scientific way

7- Demonstrates the tasks assigned to teachers

8- Maintains the secrets of administrative work

9- Make sure that new teachers are observed and assisted

10- Attributes the success of the school to all the employees Questionnaire Validity

After the questionnaire was designed in its initial form, the researcher presented it to a number of faculty members in several departments at Taibah University to attract their views in terms of the affiliation of the phrase to its axis, the accuracy of the formulation of the phrase, and the character. The finalization of the questionnaire consisted of 30 statements distributed in three axis Leadership social skills, Leadership Personal skills, Leadership Organizational skills. It consisted of two parts: one of them is the primary and calculated data section of the variable school type, years of experience and consists of the second section consists of the question phrases.

Statistical Validity:

To test the statistical validity of the questionnaire Pearson's factor was applied to all the phrases.

Table (1) *Pearson's Factor for Each Statement*

Statement	Pearson's factor	Statement	Pearson's factor	Statement	Pearson's factor
1	-0.08	11	0.48	21	0.50
2	0.46	12	0.62	22	0.50
3	0.45	13	0.46	23	0.27

Statement	Pearson's factor	Statement	Pearson's factor	Statement	Pearson's factor
4	0.59	14	0.25	24	0.38
5	0.57	15	0.55	25	0.32
6	0.46	16	0.51	26	0.34
7	0.29	17	0.51	27	0.20
8	0.66	18	0.51	28	0.19
9	0.38	19	0.44	29	0.19
10	0.10	20	0.30	30	0.61

Table 1 that done by using SPSS showed that Pearson's factor for the questionnaire phrases is between (-0.08) and (0.66) which means that some phrases needed some improvements before questionnaire distribution.

Questionnaire stability

To verify the stability of the instrument, the researcher calculated the value of the Alpha Cronbach coefficient for each field for each area of the questionnaire as well as for the questionnaire as a whole

Table (2) Alpha Cronbach factor for all the fields of the questionnaire as well as for the questionnaire as a whole

Fields	Alpha Cronbach factor
Leadership social skills	.421
Leadership Personal skills	.605
Leadership Organizational skills	.246
Total	.579

Table (2) that done by using SPSS showed that Alpha Cronbach factor for the questionnaire fields is between (0.24) and (0.60) which could have needed some modification to serve the purpose.

Statistical Methods:

The statistical package used the appropriate statistical methods for social sciences (SPSS) program to analyze the data. The methods were as follows:

1- Frequency, percentages, arithmetic averages and standard deviations to obtain the statistical results of the sample responses to the questionnaire questions.

2- T test, to show the differences between the views of the study sample on the skill of moral leadership in the administration of the school principal according to the school type and years of experience.

3- Alpha Cronbach factor in measuring stability.

Study procedures:

A total of 30 questionnaires was distributed to 2 primary schools that were picked randomly from different demographic areas in Madinah (north- south- west- east). In order to deal with the Means and to link it to the five-dimensional scale, the term method will be adopted as follow:

Range = (5-1) / 5 = 0.8

The averages for determining checkpoints will be treated as follows: Average Range

Table (3) *The Arithmetic for Estimating Respondents' Responses*

Average Range	Assessment of the degree of practice
From 1 — 1.80	Very low
More than 1.81 — 2.60	Low
More than 2.61 — 3.40	Medium
More than 3.41 — 4.20	High
More than 4.21 — 5.00	Very high

4- Data analysis

This part will include answers for the study questions by analyzing and discussing the results of the study.

First question's answer:

1- To what level do school leaders in Madinah apply ethical leadership skills in elementary schools?

To answer this question frequency were extracted, percentages, means and standard deviations foe the questionnaire fields according to the following tables:

Results according to the sample:

Table (4) *Means and standard deviations for the questionnaire fields and the total:*

field	Means	Standard deviation	Level
Leadership social skills	2.82	.30	Medium
Leadership Personal skills	2.87	.33	Medium
Leadership Organizational skills	2.86	.25	Medium
total	2.67	.29	Medium

Table (4) that done by using SPSS shows that all the three fields was between (2.6- 3.4) and it was classified as medium level, which refer to leaders having moderate ethical level in elementary schools. It also shows that personal leadership skills were the most common skill that leaders had. This result disagrees with the result of Darawshah (2004), his result showed that principals' practice of professional ethics is high.

Table (5) *Means and standard deviations for the questionnaire phrases:*

S.N	Phrase	Mean	Standard deviation	Order	Level
21.00	Modifies the distribution of school work to teachers	3.23	0.72	1	Medium
20.00	Admits when they make a mistake	3.13	0.68	2	Medium
22.00	Works to achieve the school's mission	3.10	0.84	3	Medium
16.00	Cares about justice	3.07		4	Medium
12.00	Accepts the criticism objectively	3.00	0.78	5	Medium
26	Leaves their door open for teachers and students all the time	2.93	0.69	6	Medium
9	Runs the school in a scientific way	2.93	0.64	7	Medium
5.00	Supports teachers in their work	2.87	0.86	8	Medium
6.00	Fosters a sense of responsibility among teachers	2.87	0.81	9	Medium
30.00	Attributes the success of the school to all the employees	2.87	0.77	10	Medium
7.00	Encourage teachers to engage in constructive and effective dialogue	2.87	0.73	11	Medium
1.00	Works on teachers' participation in the preparation of a school messa	2.87	0.68	12	Medium
14.00	Patient in carrying out the tasks	2.87	0.66	13	Medium
27.00	Demonstrates the tasks assigned to teachers	2.87	0.57	14	Medium
19.00	Forgives easily	2.83	0.74	15	Medium
29.00	Make sure that new teachers are observed and assisted	2.83	0.69	16	Medium
18.00	Humble with colleagues	2.83	0.64	17	Medium
8.00	Encourages teachers to benefit from the	2.80	0.71	18	Medium
13.00	Flexible in dealings with teachers	2.80	0.67	19	Medium
11.00	Insists on being a good example for others	2.80	0.66	20	Medium
4.00	Trusts the teachers	2.77	0.85	21	Medium
15.00	Honest with others	2.77	0.77	22	Medium
2.00	Involves teachers in the school decision making	2.77	0.76	23	Medium
10.00	Encourage and reward creativity	2.77	0.72	24	Medium
25.00	Being objective when assessing teacher performance	2.77	0.67	25	Medium
3.00	Provides an opportunity for teachers to express their views	2.73	0.74	26	Medium
23.00	Applies laws and regulations	2.73	0.69	27	Medium
28.00	Maintains the secrets of administrative work	2.67	0.80	28	Medium
24.00	Makes administrative decisions objectively	2.67	0.75	29	Medium
17.00	Have high integrity	2.63	0.66	30	Medium

Table (5) that done by using SPSS shows that all the questionnaire phrases scores between (2.6 – 3.4) which shows medium level of ethical leadership, that proves that the leaders had equal skills in all three fields. The highest mean was for the phrase "Modifies the distribution of school work to teachers" this means that teachers found this quality is the most noticed quality in their leaders, the least mean was

for the phrase was" Have high integrity" this means that teachers found this quality is the least noticed quality in their leaders, this does not mean that leaders does not have integrity but this quality is very relative, also teachers have different understanding for it and it could be affected by personal feelings. This result disagrees with the results of Karakose (2007), his results indicated that teachers see that their managers exhibit very high ethical conduct in communication management. Follows appropriate attitudes in the school climate, they encourage them, they are humble with them, and they care about them, while the moral behavior in the field of decision-making is average.

Second question's answers:

Are they any differences of teachers' perceptions of leadership ethic based on school type and years of experience?

To answer this question T test was used and the answers were as following:

Table 6 T test to show the differences in teachers' responses according to the school type:

Field	School type				T value	Significant level	Significant at 0.05
	Public		private				
	M	S.T	M	S.T			
Leadership social skills	2.75	0.23	2.89	0.35	1.29	0.20	Not significant
Leadership Personal skills	2.95	0.34	2.79	0.32	0.18	0.85	
Leadership Organizational skills	2.87	0.26	2.86	0.25	0.46	0.64	

From the table (6) that done by using SPSS it was clear that none of the fields had a significant difference when comparing between public and private schools, that shows that ethical leadership does not relate to the school type, an ethical leader will be moral and ethical no matter what type of school they were leading even if they had more authorities as it is in private schools. None of the previous studied the difference in leaders' ethical leadership from teachers' point of view according to school type, but it was important from the researcher's point of view because leaders in private schools have more authority than leaders in public schools, this kind of authority could be directed in a wrong way if the leader was unethical.

Table 7 *T test to show the differences in teachers' responses according to the years of experience:*

field	Years of experience				T value	Significant level	Significant at 0.05
	Less than 10		10 and more				
	M	S.T	M	S.T			
Leadership social skills	2.90	0.35	2.75	0.25	1.26	0.21	Not significant
Leadership Personal skills	2.88	0.36	2.86	0.32	1.31	0.20	
Leadership Organizational skills	2.89	0.26	2.88	0.26	0.13	0.89	

From the table (7) that done by using SPSS it was clear that none of the fields had a significant difference when comparing between teachers who have been in the school for less than ten years and teachers who have been working at the school for ten years and more, that shows that ethical leadership is cumulative and original from leader's personality. This result disagrees with Al-Bishri (2006) results, because her result indicated that there is a difference between the responses of teachers according to their qualifications and experience.

Conclusion.

This study aimed to assess elementary school leaders' style of ethical leadership in Madinah. Leading an educational institution requires a leader to be able to influence his or her members to reach a desired goal.

Leadership ethics is a very important concept in every institution and every country, it is even more important in Muslim countries because Islam order us to be ethical all the time, and all the previous studies agree with the researcher about that ethical is a universal matter it is equally important in every place, time and religion.

The study used the descriptive analytical method. Quantitative method was used to collect data. The study sample consists of 30 primary schools' teachers in Medina. a questionnaire was prepared and published by the researcher to collect the data.

The results of the study showed that ethical leadership is a moral quality in the leaders as human beings, it does not get affected by the school type or years of experience, because it supposed to be in leaders before they even become leaders. The results showed that the most common field of leadership skills was leadership personal skills, and the least common field was leadership social skills.

Recommendations.

1- Ethical leadership does not get enough attention in our curriculum, there is a need to focus on the development of curricula and authors of books to include moral leaders in the books of Islamic studies and social sciences

2- Since our schools rarely holds activities to encourage ethical leadership, the researcher recommends Holding lectures, seminars and workshops for educational leaders on ethical leadership

3- Because our educational system lack having ways to evaluate the ethical leadership the researcher recommends designing an evaluation scale to measure the ethical leadership standards

Suggestions for future studies:

1- Conducting further studies and research on the availability of elements of ethical leadership for teachers of various stages of education.

2- Conducting very intense studies about the importance of ethical leadership to apply 2030 vision.

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