A study on relationship between ethical leadership and organizational trust between teachers and principals: A case study of high school employees in Shahre-Kord, Iran

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| CHRONICLE | ABSTRACT |
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| | The present study aims at investigating the relationship between the moral leadership style of mangers and organizational confidence of Shahre-Kord high school teachers. The population includes 590 teachers of district 1 , 2 in Shahre-Kord and 230 teachers are selected for the study sample. The model is based on the effect of moral leadership parameters on organizational confidence factors. The instruments used in this study is a moral leadership questionnaire based on the theory of North house comprising 30 questions for five parameters as well as an organizational confidence standard questionnaire based on Gidnez's theory, which comprises 30 questions and five parameters . The content and face validity of the questionnaires are established through professors' opinions. The reliability of the study was 82%, which was calculated through Cronbach Alfa formula. The findings show that the impact of moral leadership along with its parameters on the organizational confidence and its parameters are significant. |
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## 1. Introduction

Building a trust plays an important role on any society especially between school teachers and principals and there are many studies associated with the relationships of these two components (Flannery & May, 2000). Leung (2008), for instance, investigated the relationship between organizational ethical climate and the types of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), including in-role and extra-role behaviors, and studied the mediating impact of employee loyalty on employees of a traditional Hong Kong-based company. The aim of this study was to study the effects and implications of how different ethical work climates influence employee performance. They reported that lower levels of ethical climate characterizing a weak relational contract between employee and employer, were associated with negative extra-role behavior. In contrast, higher grades of ethical

climate, symbolic of a strong relational contract at work, were also associated with positive extra-role behavior.

Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) argued that to be truly transformational, leadership should be grounded in moral foundations and the four components of authentic transformational leadership idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration should be contrasted with their counterfeits in dissembling pseudo-transformational leadership. Dukerich et al. (1990) reviewed a program of research on how groups reason about different moral dilemmas, and presents data from two studies. They concluded that the reasoning level of the assigned leader influenced group performance while individual performance overall on a subsequent moral reasoning task benefitted from the group experience.

Van Maele and Van Houtte (2012) investigated trust at the level of both the teacher and the faculty to teachers' job satisfaction. Teaching experience was studied as a moderator of the trust–satisfaction relationship using multilevel analyses on data of 2091 teachers across 80 secondary schools in Flanders (Belgium). They reported some positive associations between teacher trust in students, parents, colleagues, and the principal and satisfaction. Nevertheless, faculty trust did not influence job satisfaction and teaching experience did not moderate the trust–satisfaction relationship. Their findings highlighted the social dimension of teaching. Lee et al. (2011) studied the relationships between a professional learning community (PLC), faculty trust in colleagues, teachers' collective efficacy. Their results from the Hong Kong teacher sample disclosed that two PLC factors including collective learning and application and supportive conditions – structures, and the factors faculty trust in colleagues and collective teacher efficacy could substantially account for the school-level variances of teachers' commitment to students. The findings of school-level regressions stated that all three factors of PLC as well as faculty trust in colleagues could positively influence teachers' collective efficacy on instructional strategies. Nevertheless, only one PLC factor, collective learning and application, and the factor faculty trust in colleagues was significant predictor to teachers' collective efficacy on student discipline.

In this paper, we present an empirical study to measure the effect of trust between teachers and principals. The organization of this paper first presents details of the survey in section 2, while the results are given in section 3 and concluding remarks are presented in the last to summarize the contribution of the paper.

## 2. The proposed model

The proposed study of this paper uses Pearson correlation ratio to test different hypotheses to investigate the relationships between five components of ethical leadership styles with organizational trust components. The population includes 590 school principals of different high schools in city of ShahreKord, Iran. Therefore, we may calculate the sample size as follows,

$$n = \frac{N \times z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times p \times q}{\varepsilon^2 \times (N-1) + z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times p \times q}, \tag{1}$$

where $N$ is the population size, $p = 1 - q$ represents the yes/no categories, $z_{\alpha/2}$ is CDF of normal distribution and finally $\varepsilon$ is the error term. Since we have $p = 0.5, z_{\alpha/2} = 1.96$ and $N$=590, the number of sample size is calculated as $n$=230.

Main hypothesis: There is a meaningful relationship between ethical leadership and organizational trust among teachers.

To test the main hypothesis as consider the following 25 sub hypotheses.

1. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' respect and teachers' honesty.
2. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' respect and teachers' coincidence.
3. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' respect and teachers' stability.
4. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' respect and teachers' loyalty.
5. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' respect and teachers' being straightforward.
6. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' dedications and teachers' honesty.
7. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' dedications and teachers' coincidence.
8. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' dedications and teachers' stability.
9. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' dedications and teachers' loyalty.
10. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' dedications and teachers' being straightforward.
11. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' justice and teachers' honesty.
12. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' justice and teachers' coincidence.
13. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' justice and teachers' stability.
14. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' justice and teachers' loyalty.
15. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' justice and teachers' being straightforward.
16. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' honesty and teachers' honesty.
17. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' honesty and teachers' coincidence.
18. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' honesty and teachers' stability.
19. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' honesty and teachers' loyalty.
20. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' honesty and teachers' being straightforward.
21. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' socialization and teachers' honesty.
22. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' socialization and teachers' coincidence.
23. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' socialization and teachers' stability.
24. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' socialization and teachers' loyalty.

25. There is a meaningful relationship between school administrators' socialization and teachers' being straightforward.

We have used a standard ethical leadership and organizational trust questionnaires (Brown et al., 2005; Jenkinson et al., 2004) to perform the study. To validate the questionnaire, we first selected seven university professors and asked them to validate the overall questionnaire and to verify them we have selected a group consists of 30 people and execute the survey, which has yielded a Cronbach alpha of 0.82% and finally, we have used structural equation modeling to investigate the relationships.

## 3. The results

In this section, we first present details of our findings on the relationship between different components. Fig. 1 demonstrates the results of relationship between trust on one side and five components of respect, dedication, justice, honesty and socialization.
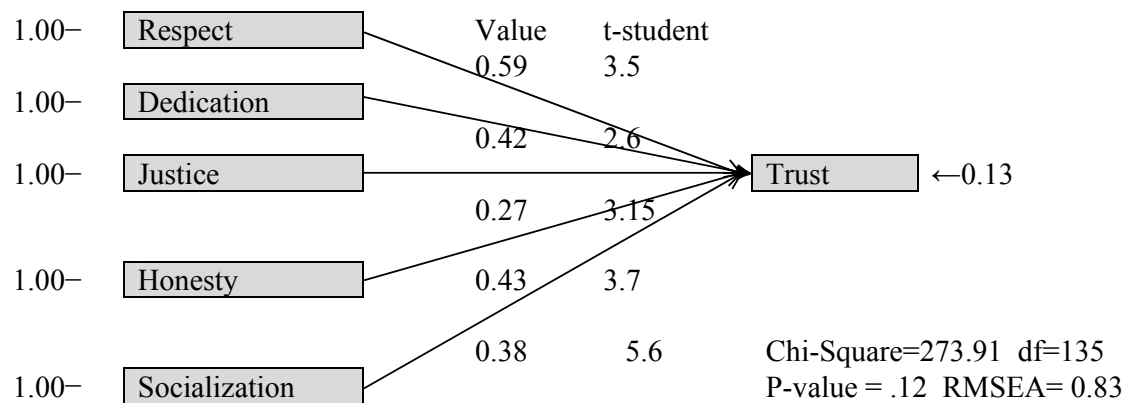


**Fig. 1.** The results of the implementation of SEM

Fig. 1 shows details of our findings for the implementation of SEM. There are two columns on this figure where the first one, value, demonstrates the relationship and the second one shows t-student value associated with each component. As we can observe from the t-student values, all components are well above the minimum desirable values. The result of Chi-Square is equal to 2.02, which is a low value and RMSEA is equal to 0.083, which is a good value. In summary, all components are within the acceptable values and the model maintains a good fitness. There are also some positive relationships between five components of our survey and Table 1 demonstrates the results of our survey.

**Table 1**
The summary of the relationship between five components with t-value

| Component | Respect | Dedication | Justice | Honesty | Socialization |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Respect | - | 0.93(36.43) | 0.88(47.30) | 0.74(31.40) | 0.83(31.07) |
| Dedication | | - | 0.88(9.47) | 0.73(31.07) | 0.84(36.07 |
| Justice | | | - | 0.77(33.33) | 0.85(32.05) |
| Honesty | | | | - | 0.93(48.23) |
| Socialization | | | | | - |

As we can observe from the results of Table 1, all components are statistically significance and there are some positive and meaningful relationships between these components. In addition, Table 2 summarizes the results of the statistical observations associated with the implementation of SEM.

**Table 2**
The summary of the results of the implementation of SEM

| Attribute | Computed value | Standard value | Results |
|-----------|----------------|----------------|---------|
| Chi-Square/df | 2.02 | Around 2 | √ |
| P-Value | 0.12 | More than 0.05 | √ |
| GFI | 0.90 | More than 0.9 | √ |
| AGFI | 0.94 | More than 0.9 | √ |
| RMSEA | 0.08 | Less than 0.1 | √ |
| CFI | 0.90 | More than 0.9 | √ |
| NFI | 0.86 | More than 0.9 | √ |

The results of our survey have concluded that there are some positive and meaningful relationships between school administrators' personal characteristics including respect, dedication, justice, honesty and socialization and trust. In other words, dedicated principals who are honest could socialize with teachers and build a mutual trust by demonstrating their good will through honest judgments.

## 4. Conclusion

In this paper, we have presented an empirical investigation to study the relationships between principals' personal characteristics and their teachers' trust using a structural equation modeling. The proposed study of this paper has been implemented in one of Iranian cities called ShahreKord by distributing a questionnaire among 230 people from different schools. The results have been analyzed and we have concluded that there are some positive and meaningful relationships between school administrators' personal characteristics including respect, dedication, justice, honesty and socialization and trust. In other words, dedicated principals who are honest could socialize with teachers and build a mutual trust by demonstrating their good will through honest judgments.

## Acknowledgment

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