



RESEARCH PAPER

**Ethical Leadership in Secondary Schools: A Phenomenological Inquiry into Head Teachers' Lived Experiences and Barriers**

<sup>1</sup>Waneeba Javed, <sup>2</sup>Zainab Mir and <sup>3</sup>Dr. Muhammad Jamil

1. MS Scholar, Department of Education, GC Women University Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

2. MS Scholar, Department of Education, GC Women University Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

3. Lecturer, Department of Education, GC Women University Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

**Corresponding Author** m.jamil@gcwus.edu.pk

**ABSTRACT**

Ethical leadership is a key area for quality school leadership. This study aims to explore the lived experience of secondary school head teachers of ethical leadership and the obstacles they face in their practice. It was a qualitative study with a phenomenological research design. Eight public secondary school head teachers from Gujranwala, Punjab, were selected as the sample through purposive sampling. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews based on a self-developed interview guide. Interviews were analyzed using a reflexive thematic analysis. Results indicated that ethical leadership is a value-based activity that helps in fostering fairness, honesty, transparency, accountability, integrity, and role modelling. The study also revealed political and community interferences, limited resources, socio-cultural expectations of seniority and gender, and professional obligations as barriers to the emergence of ethical leadership. It is concluded that ethical leadership can serve as a transformative institutional resource to support ethical school climate and ongoing school improvement.

**Keywords:** Ethical Leadership, Lived Experiences, Secondary Schools, Head Teachers

**Introduction**

Ethics is an important element of educational leadership, as not every school is about academic education, but also about moral and social education. School leaders, especially the head teachers, are in positions of authority that dictate to the teachers, students, and society. Their behaviors and decisions impact the school culture and shape the behavior and performance of individuals within it (Ahmad et al., 2023). That is why good ethical standards such as honesty, fairness, integrity, and responsibility should be the driving force in leadership in the education sector.

Ethical leadership is the practice of being an ethical leader and making just, transparent, and fair decisions. This type of leadership is particularly important in the school environment, whereby teachers and students are more likely to learn by the behaviors of their leaders (Yukl et al., 2013). Ethical leadership has become more of a subject of discussion in the field of education in the last few years. Despite the growing interest in ethical leadership, most of the studies have been done on theoretical definitions and general results. There is limited information about the real-life experiences of school leaders in ethical leadership (Payne & Landry, 2006).

According to Webster and Litchka (2020), school leadership is a complex process and involves dealing with different stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and authorities. These interactions often place leaders in a situation where they are forced to make difficult decisions that involve ethical considerations. Positive and helpful leadership can be of great importance in such a situation, as it can assist individuals to overcome stress and be motivated. The leadership does not just ensure that people are steered towards the

right direction of attaining their objectives but also helps to ensure that there is a culture of positivity and support whereby people feel appreciated and heard (Imran & Akhtar, 2023).

Kour et al. (2019) suggest that effective leadership is significant to improve motivation, performance, and productivity by establishing trust, support, and purpose in people. Previous studies have been conducted at different levels to explore practices for effective institutional support (Ghaffar et al., 2025; Jamil et al., 2024). The head teacher profession is full of ethical dilemmas that normally involve striking a balance between conflicting interests and making hard decisions. In most cases, they might be in a dilemma of doing what is right and doing what is expected of them because of the pressure of the outside world, which could be the parents, the community, or even the government. At the same time, they may also face cases when personal relations are in contrast to their working duties, and it is hard to be objective and unbiased. This type of situation demands a person to think, make good judgment, and be highly connected to moral and ethical values. These problems require the school leaders to apply their integrity and ethical principles to ensure that their decisions are just and open, and in the best interest of the school community (Chaiyasat et al., 2025).

Ethical leadership is an issue that has received much debate, but a gap exists between theory and practice. A lot of research describes what ethical leadership is, but does not delve into how ethical leadership can be applied in the real world. This lack of correlation complicates the process of comprehending the problems of school leaders and formulating solutions to help them. This gap will be filled in this paper through the analysis of the lived experience of secondary school head teachers. It is concerned about their perceptions of ethical leadership and the values that they use in their practices. The results of the present study can be used to enhance school leadership. The study is beneficial for policymakers, teachers, and researchers to formulate policies that will enable them to become ethical leaders and bring positive school climates.

## **Literature Review**

Ciulla (2014) placed ethics as the centre of leadership and pointed out that ethics is generally the examination of questions about what is right and wrong, what is good and evil, what is virtue, duty, obligation, rights, justice, fairness, and responsibility in human relations with each other and other living beings. In this paper, the author dwells on the three ethical paradigms in a learning context, which include ethics of care, ethics of justice, and ethics of critique.

Vikaraman et al. (2021) state that Ethical leadership is leadership that is highly entrenched in morals and ethics, which is founded on doing right, fair, and just in any form of situation. Neither is it merely the achievement of the goals because ethical leaders are extremely sensitive to the impact of their actions on other people and do their utmost to be honest, responsible, and accountable. They are decent and honorable to the people, honor other views, and are upright in doing what they say and do, even in difficult situations.

In addition, Yukl et al. (2013) state that ethical leaders can impact others based on their authority and through their actions, as they are role models in the organization. They create a culture of good ethics in which ethical behaviour is supported, encouraged, and rewarded, and which assists in building trust, enhancing relations, and creating a culture of fairness and responsiveness.

Ahmad and Umrani (2019) believe that ethical leadership can positively and significantly impact the performance and motivation of teachers. Teachers are respected, valued, and assisted in their work with just, honest, and open school leaders. The appreciation makes them more dedicated to their work and work harder. Ethical leadership

also helps in the culture of cooperation among the employees since it builds trust and free communication, and finally results in a good and positive working environment.

In addition, Yasir and Mohamad (2016) describe that ethical leadership is also contagious to student behavior and academic performance. Students will be more likely to imitate and copy the actions of their teachers and school leaders. Students would be more likely to embrace positive attitudes, values, and responsible behavior when leaders are always ready to lead by example. This not only enhances discipline in the school but also helps in better performance in school and overall development of the student.

Shapiro and Stefkovich (2016) note that the path to ethical leadership is not smooth, and school leaders are often put into complicated scenarios that demand critical thinking and balanced judgment since critical thinking has been focused on in the current literature (Jamil et al., 2024; Jamil et al., 2025; Naseer et al., 2022). Their ethical dilemmas are more likely to involve having to choose between conflicting interests or values, and they can barely please all the stakeholders. Such cases are common in these areas as justice and compassion must be balanced when disciplinary problems are considered, or scarce resources must be allocated among competing needs, or the response to the external pressure of parents, authorities, or the community. This should occur, and in such a situation, leaders should apply their professional integrity and moral values to make transparent and fair decisions that are most effective for the school community. The conflict between personal relations and professional duties is one of the conflicts. In most cases, leaders might be compelled to do so to individuals who are their colleagues, friends, or relatives. In such cases, a lot of ethical commitment has to be made to be fair. According to Wright et al. (2018), the obstacle is the pressure of parents, community members, and political authorities. Influential people might also want to make decisions that favor them in other instances. This is a challenging predicament for the heads of the schools who must strike a balance between right and wrong and the needs of society. Ethical leadership is also a factor of culture. In most societies, such as in Pakistan, the social norms and traditions affect decision-making. To provide an illustration, the concept of seniority is normally assigned a weight, and this may interfere with the aspect of equity in leadership. Leaders can also be problematic with gender roles and cultural expectations (Urooj et al., 2024).

## **Material and Methods**

This research was a qualitative study with a phenomenological research design. This approach was used to explore the lived experiences of head teachers regarding ethical leadership. Phenomenology is suitable for the study of sense-making and the interpretation of experiences by individuals (Lim, 2025). Purposive sampling was used to select eight head teachers at secondary schools. The respondents were selected according to their experience in school leadership and the fact that they could offer a lot of information on ethical practices. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect the data. An interview guide was developed based on the study purpose and previous literature. Interviews were audio-taped with the participants' consent and took between 30 and 40 minutes. Reflexive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data (Brown & Treviño, 2006). There was adherence to ethical considerations. The participants were provided with voluntary consent, and the purpose of the study was explained. The research process was conducted with confidentiality and anonymity (Mirza et al., 2023).

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Theme 1: Ethical Leadership as a Foundation of Fairness, Transparency, and Integrity**

The first theme is based on the first objective, which was to explore the lived experience of ethical leadership practices by head teachers. In all eight interviews, the interviewees described ethical leadership in terms of a similar and common set of

fundamental attributes: honesty, fairness, transparency, accountability, integrity, empathy, and the ability to make just decisions despite the personal cost. Participants predicted procedural fairness and institutional accountability, some of them, and institutional accountability and character and moral identity in terms of Islamic values, others, and interpersonal respect and emotional wisdom priorities, others. The following are the sub-themes.

### ***Ethical Leadership as Transparent and Accountable Practice***

Open, rule-oriented, and responsible practice was the most reported ethical leadership dimension that participants highlighted consistently. Participant No. 1 articulated a comprehensive account of ethical leadership that centered on transparency, fairness, and stakeholder inclusion:

*When we talk about ethics, if ethics are removed, I believe that leadership does not exist. For me, ethical leadership simply means how honest, fair, and full of integrity you are in your profession. A person who practices ethical leadership in a headship position carries their teachers and students forward transparently, involves them in their decisions, and does not leave them unattended at any stage.*

Participant No. 7 offered a structured, seven-quality model of ethical leadership that reflected a sophisticated institutional understanding of its requirements:

*In my view, ethical leadership means making the right decisions, whether they are popular or not. It involves ensuring fairness, treating everyone equally, and maintaining honesty and trustworthiness in all actions. It also includes accountability — being willing to admit one's own mistakes and take responsibility for them. An ethical leader practices what they say, standing firmly by their words and decisions. Most importantly, it means serving as a role model for others, so that teachers, students, and the wider community are guided by example.*

Participant No. 3 emphasized ethical leadership as values-driven rather than merely outcome-driven, distinguishing it from other leadership styles precisely on its moral foundations:

*Ethical leadership differs from other forms of leadership in schools because its primary focus is on fairness, integrity, and doing what is morally right, rather than just achieving results or enforcing authority. An ethical leader makes decisions based on principles and values, ensures equal treatment, and acts as a role model, whereas other leaders might prioritize personal interests, shortcuts, or favoritism. In short, ethical leadership is values-driven, not just outcome-driven, and it builds trust, accountability, and a positive school culture.*

### ***Ethical Leadership Rooted in Islamic Values and Moral Character***

A particularly prominent and culturally significant finding was the consistent grounding of ethical leadership beliefs in Islamic values, specifically the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) character as a leadership model, the concept of God-consciousness (Taqwa), and the fulfillment of human rights (Huquq-ul-Ibad). Several participants described religious motivation as the deepest and most enduring source of their commitment to ethical standards. Participant No. 2 gave a theologically grounded account of the connection between religious faith and ethical leadership practice:

*We certainly get that from religion. We are Muslims, so we should first look at our religion. We should see what our religion says to us about this. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said that our religion is a complete code of life. When God-consciousness (Khuda Khoufi) and religion enter a person's mind, then fulfilling the rights of people (Huquq-ul-Ibad) also*

becomes easy. When the rights of people become easy for you, then ethical leadership improves greatly.

Participant No. 8 linked daily ethical leadership practice to the Prophetic example and the role of role models and mentors in motivating ethical behavior:

*The greatest source of motivation for me comes from our religious teachings, especially the Quran and Hadith. Reading about the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) inspires me deeply, as I see how he practiced honesty, fairness, and integrity in every aspect of his life. Observing seniors or experienced individuals who make transparent, fair, and accountable decisions also encourages me to follow the same path.*

Participant No. 1 connected the professional identity of an ethical leader explicitly to Islamic accountability, the awareness that one's actions will ultimately be judged not only by one's institution but by God:

*As Muslims, our main motivation comes from Allah Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala and the character of the Prophet Muhammad. Our Prophet made so many sacrifices for people as a leader, thought so much for them, led them in a just way, and connected them with the main purpose of life. The bigger the purpose of your life, the more motivated you will be toward your work.*

### **Ethical Leadership as Character and Role Modelling**

All eight participants described being a role model as one of the most essential dimensions of ethical leadership. They argued that a head teacher's personal conduct in punctuality, honesty, fairness, communication, and emotional regulation sets the standard for the entire school community and is observed and followed by teachers, students, and parents. Participant No. 8 articulated the distinction between process-focused and results-focused leadership with particular clarity, arguing that ethical leadership is fundamentally about the quality and integrity of the process, not merely outcomes:

*Other leadership styles basically focus on the results of things; they focus on what the outcome of something will be. But if we talk about ethical leadership, our focus is basically on the process. That is, how are things happening, and how can we do them? If we groom students, we don't look at what the outcome will be. If we tell a student about goodness, we are not looking at the outcome; we just focus on the process so that the task is done in a good way.*

Participant No. 6 described the primacy of character in ethical leadership as the foundation from which all other institutional qualities naturally emerge:

*In my opinion, nothing is greater than good character. Ethical leadership is built on strong moral values, and when a leader has good character, all other qualities naturally follow. A person's character defines their identity and shapes their personality, influencing every decision and interaction. Good character includes honesty, fairness, respect, and integrity, which are essential in guiding both teachers and students. Unlike other leadership styles that may focus mainly on authority or results, ethical leadership emphasizes doing what is right, treating everyone fairly, and setting a positive example.*

### **Theme 2: Barriers and Challenges to Practicing Ethical Leadership**

The second theme is to address Research Objective 2 by identifying the institutional, social, cultural, and personal barriers that complicate ethical leadership practice in Pakistani secondary schools. Participants identified five categories of barriers: political and community interference, cultural expectations and seniority norms, resource limitations,

personal relationship pressures, and the challenge of managing unethical behavior within the school. The following are the sub-themes.

### ***Political and Community Interference***

Political interference was the most structurally threatening barrier described by participants. Several head teachers described situations in which politically connected teachers, influential community members, or powerful parents used external pressure to obstruct ethical decision-making. Participant No. 1 placed this barrier in the context of Pakistan's broader normalization of unethical social practices, arguing that institutional ethics must contend with a social environment in which unethical behavior has become normalized:

*Honestly speaking, if we talk about ethics and our Pakistani community, we face challenges at every step while practicing ethics. Why? Because in today's era, we are living within unethical social circumstances. We have normalized things in our lives that are unethical. For example, we receive feedback from parents that their child's marks should be the highest. We have entered such a race, and we have put children into it as well, where we never think that children's ethical development is also necessary.*

Participant No. 7 identified three distinct institutional barriers: resource constraints, parental pressure, and senior teacher resistance as the primary challenges in his leadership context:

*The first challenge was the lack of resources. Being equitable to all turns out to be a challenge when the budget is limited. When there is a single computer lab, then serving various teachers and working in it in a just fashion with equal privileges becomes a little hard. The second challenge that I experienced was parental pressure. Other parents would prefer that their children be given a different form of treatment; they would like good grades and more facilities than the other children. And the third limitation I experienced was the opposition of older teachers. When I make a decision, not all old teachers accept it and criticize it, which is entirely contrary to new ethical policies.*

### ***Socio-cultural Barriers: Seniority, Gender Bias, and Cultural Hierarchies***

Multiple participants mentioned the extent to which entrenched cultures, such as the belief that the elderly teachers are always right, gender norms, and hierarchies in the community, became a persistent strain on leaders focused on ethics who wanted to enforce rules equally. Participant No. 7 provided a subtle description of the nature of the ethical pressures that seniority culture and gender influence in school management:

*In our society, seniority is a significant issue in school because most people want to believe that senior teachers are always correct, even when they are wrong, and their actions are invariably just and right, no matter the circumstances. When I am required to give an opportunity or preference to a junior teacher, it is very important to balance with a lot of care and ensure fairness in all cases, as well as explain to people that sometimes they need to do what is right without necessarily being*

Participant No. 2 explained about the specific difficulties of being a leader in a rural community setting, as the lack of education of the community members creates a long-standing misconception about the institutional decision-making: And everyone will like to intervene in everything in a rural area, whether he is a parent, relative, or other leader of the village, will surely want to interfere in school affairs, although the school is another and the society another, but the positive impact will be less and the negative impact more.

### **The Challenge of Managing Personal Relationships**

One of the most common and emotionally meaningful problems was that it was difficult to divide personal relations from professional duties; that is, it was necessary to deal with the fact that coworkers, family members, or close friends are also institutional stakeholders whose actions should be regulated objectively. Participant No. 8 stated this dilemma candidly and openly:

*The biggest challenge is that, when you are practicing ethical leadership, people put a lot of pressure on you as to how you make decisions, and at times, your personal relations become involved, and you want to make sure that you are not going to hurt those people, and your relations do not spoil, and the school does not spoil either.*

### **Discussion**

The results in this paper are consistent with the existing literature on ethical leadership. This emphasis on fairness, integrity, and role modeling aligns with the previous definitions of ethical leadership (Vikaraman et al., 2021). A particularly relevant contribution of the study is the unique Islamic aspect of ethical leadership perceptions of participants. A number of respondents cited the character of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as their main source of leadership and the sense of divine judgment as their strongest source of motivation. This observation aligns with Ahmad et al. (2023), who established that the head teachers in the government schools in Lahore strongly relied on religious principles as their moral compass in the leadership decision process, and that Islamic ethics of justice (Adl), consultation (Shura), and stewardship (Amanah) were dominant in their day-to-day practice. Vikaraman et al. (2021) also identified that in Muslim-majority schools in both Malaysia and Pakistan, school leaders found religious faith to be a stronger driver of ethical conduct than either institutional policy or legal adherence. Participants' unanimous identification of role modeling as the most powerful mechanism of ethical leadership influence is also consistent with the broader literature. According to Yukl et al. (2013), the strongest predictor of ethical behavior among followers, being more important than formal rules, codes of conduct, or disciplinary systems, was the ethical exemplar function; leaders who modeled integrity, fairness, and accountability through their own behavior. The other study conclusion is that ethical leadership positively affects teacher motivation and school culture (Urooj et al., 2024). Fair and transparent leaders will make the teachers feel valued and more willing to work. Among the key contributions of the work, the focus on the cultural setting of ethical leadership deserves to be mentioned. The findings show that religious and social values play a significant role in shaping leadership practices. This highlights why consideration should be given to context when studying ethical leadership. The repeated responses of participants to honesty, fairness, transparency, accountability, and role modeling as the key attributes of ethical leadership are consistent with the foundational definition of ethical leadership provided by Brown and Treviño (2006), showing normatively appropriate conduct by personal actions, supporting such conduct with communication, reinforcement, and decision-making. The current research confirms this definition together with its extensions, as the conceptualization of ethical leadership, as conceived by Pakistani head teachers, is not only a practice in institutional use, but a form of action, a being rather than a tool.

### **Conclusion**

This research explored the lived experiences of eight head teachers in Gujranwala, Pakistan, as far as the challenges and institutional influence of ethical leadership were concerned. As shown by the results, Pakistani head teachers have and exercise rich, culturally enacted, and personally driven ethical leadership philosophies that are broadly congruent with internationally accepted models of ethical leadership but entail distinctive local scales in terms of Islamic values, community relations, and local social realities of

Pakistani secondary schools. The research presents empirical material of lived experience on the part of practicing Pakistani head teachers - not so much what ethically practicing leaders ought to be like as what they are, what it is like, and what it demands of them in everyday professional life. It unveils the unique cultural and religious aspects of ethical leadership in Pakistan, such as the primacy of Islamic ethics, the model of Islamic leadership embodied by the Prophet, and the relationships within the community that any individual aspiring to promote ethical leadership in Pakistani schools has to comprehend and interact with. Also, the result of the study yields a practically grounded, participant-validated leadership development recommendation set, institutional policy recommendation, and community engagement recommendation that encompasses the essential barriers identified by participants. The main finding of our research is that ethical leadership does not exist as a style among others in leadership, but that it is an institutional resource chronic and custodial, which, when exercised and preserved in a real way, changes schools into not units of administration but ethical communities, where teachers are motivated, students grow in character, and the trust of the public is received and preserved. The fact that Pakistani head teachers who practice ethical leadership are doing so mostly without formal training, systematic support, or policy acknowledgment makes their success astonishing and the need to invest in their development an urgent issue.

### **Recommendations**

The following are recommendations based on the above findings:

- Every head teacher should be urged to stick to daily or weekly practices of checking their decision-making process regarding fairness, consistency, and ethicality.
- Transparency should be seen by head teachers, and it must not be a personal promise.
- Policy mechanisms should be developed to shield school leaders from political pressure for head teachers who make principled disciplinary decisions.
- National and provincial educational authorities should develop clear, operationally defined ethical leadership competency standards for head teachers, integrated into appointment criteria, performance evaluation, and professional development frameworks.
- Leadership development programs in Pakistan should deliberately engage Islamic ethics and the Prophetic leadership model — as foundational elements of ethical leadership training rather than relying exclusively on Western theoretical frameworks.

**References**

- Ahmad, I., & Umrani, W. A. (2019). The impact of ethical leadership style on job satisfaction: Mediating role of perception of Green HRM and psychological safety. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 40(5), 534-547.
- Ahmad, R., Majeed, S., & Ullah, S. (2023). Exploration of ethical leadership in teachers in government high schools of Lahore. *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review*, 7(3), 388-402.
- Brown, M. E., & Treviño, L. K. (2006). Ethical leadership: A review and future directions. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6), 595-616.
- Chaiyasat, C., Petchsawang, P., Simha, A., & Williamson, P. (2025). An integrative literature review of ethical leadership studies and future research agenda: Insights from empirical research between 2020–2024. *Public Integrity*, 1-33.
- Ciulla, J. B. (2014). *Ethics, the heart of leadership*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- Ehrich, L. C., Harris, J., Klenowski, V., Smeed, J., & Spina, N. (2015). The centrality of ethical leadership. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 53(2), 197-214.
- Ghaffar, R., Urooj, T., & Jamil, M. (2025). 21st century leadership skills of higher education faculty in Punjab, Pakistan: Perceptions, gaps, and development needs. *Research Journal for Social Affairs*, 3(5), 155-163. <https://doi.org/10.71317/RJSA.003.05.0314>
- Imran, M., & Akhtar, N. (2023). Impact of ethical leadership practices on teachers' psychological safety and performance: A case of primary school heads in Karachi-Pakistan. *Academy of Education and Social Sciences Review*, 3(2), 172-181.
- Jamil, M., Sewani, R., & Muhammad, N. (2024). Leadership practices of head teachers: Primary school teachers' perspective in public schools of Punjab. *Research Journal for Societal Issues*, 6(1), 83–92. <https://doi.org/56976/rjsi.v6i1.178>
- Jamil, M., Urooj, T., & Muhammad, N. (2025). Fostering critical thinking in teacher education programs: Perceptions, practices, and challenges of teacher educators. *ProScholar Insights*, 4(3), 13-22. <https://doi.org/10.55737/psi.2025c-43098>
- Jamil, M., Mehmood, W., & Shah, F. U. H. (2024). Development of critical thinking skills among secondary school science students: An analysis of Chemistry textbook grade IX (2020). *Global Educational Studies Review*, 9(I), 13-20. [http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2024\(IX-I\).02](http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gesr.2024(IX-I).02)
- Kour, J., El-Den, J., & Sriratanaviriyakul, N. (2019). The role of positive psychology in improving employees' performance and organizational productivity: An experimental study. *Procedia Computer Science*, 161, 226-232.
- Lim, W. M. (2025). What is qualitative research? An overview and guidelines. *Australasian Marketing Journal*, 33(2), 199-229.
- Mirza, H., Mirza, C., & Bellalem, F. (2023). Ethical considerations in qualitative research: Summary guidelines for novice social science researchers. *Social Studies and Research Journal*, 11(1), 441-449.

- Naseer, H., Muhammad, Y., & Jamil, M. (2022). Critical thinking skills in Pakistan studies textbook: Qualitative content analysis. *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 4(3), 744-755. <https://doi.org/10.52567/pjsr.v4i03.764>
- Payne, D., & Landry, B. J. (2006). A uniform code of ethics: Business and IT professional ethics. *Communications of the ACM*, 49(11), 81-84.
- Sabir, S. (2021). A study on Ethical leadership perceptions and its impact on teachers commitment in Pakistan. *International Journal of Educational Leadership and Management*, 9(1), 28-53.
- Shapiro, J. P., Stefkovich, J. A., & Gutierrez, K. J. (2014). Ethical decision making. In *Handbook of ethical educational leadership* (pp. 210-228). Routledge.
- Stefkovich, J., & Gutierrez, K. (2014). Ethical decision making. *Handbook of Ethical Educational Leadership*, 426-438. Routledge.
- Treviño, L. K., Brown, M., & Hartman, L. P. (2003). A qualitative investigation of perceived executive ethical leadership: Perceptions from inside and outside the executive suite. *Human Relations*, 56(1), 5-37.
- Urooj, T., Sherazi, S. T., & Ali, S. (2024). Ethical leadership of head teachers and its impact on teachers' motivation at the elementary level. *Research Journal for Societal Issues*, 6(1), 93-100.
- Vikaraman, S. S., Mansor, A. N., Mohd Nor, M. Y., Alias, B. S., & Gurusamy, V. (2021). Ethical leadership practices and trust among public school leaders in Malaysia. *Asian Journal of University Education (AJUE)*, 17(3), 174-191.
- Webster, K., & Litchka, P. (2020). Planning for effective school leadership: Teachers' perceptions of the leadership skills and ethical behaviors of school principals. *Educational Planning*, 27(1), 31-47.
- Wright, J. S., Arnold, N. W., & Khalifa, M. (2018). Diversifying approaches to educational leadership: The impact of tradition in a changing educational landscape. *Journal of School Leadership*, 28(6), 815-833.
- Yasir, M., & Mohamad, N. A. (2016). Ethics and morality: Comparing ethical leadership with servant, authentic and transformational leadership styles. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 6(4), 310-316.
- Yukl, G., Mahsud, R., Hassan, S., & Prussia, G. E. (2013). An improved measure of ethical leadership. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 20(1), 38-48.