

Ethical Leadership and its Role in Achieving Academic Excellence in Universities

Jamal Awwad Alkharman¹, Sadam Hussin Abdallh Bany Kasem²,
Najwa Abdel Hamid darawsheh³, Saierah Aabed⁴, Suzan Ganayem⁵,
Menas Mahameed⁶ & Rema Salh Haeb⁷

Abstract

The study aimed to identify the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence among faculty members in Jordanian universities from their point of view. The descriptive survey method was used, and the study sample consisted of (384) faculty members. The questionnaire was used as a study tool for the academic year 2023/2024. The study found that the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence among faculty members in Jordanian universities, from their point of view, was high. The results also showed that there were statistically significant differences because of the gender variable, which was in favour of males, and the type of college, which was in favour of humanities colleges, as for the years variable, Experience was in favour of the category of 10 years or more, and light of the results of the study. The researchers recommended the necessity of conducting more studies and research on ethical leadership and the level of its impact on other variables.

Keywords: Ethical Leadership, Academic Excellence, Jordanian Universities.

Introduction

High leadership is characterized by ethics and virtue, as the common interest is a goal with a unified value that contributes to raising excellence for workers, which helps improve productivity and unifies society's approach, which is the approach recommended by our Noble Messenger, may the best prayers and peace be upon him, the approach to ethics.

¹Assistant Assistant Professor, Law Department, Jadara University-Jordan.

j.alkharman@jadara.edu.io

²Department of Political Science, Jadara University, Jordan.

³ Department of Educational Foundations and Administration, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Jadara University, Jordan. najwadarawsha@gmail.com ORCID, 0000-0002-0907-2188

⁴Educational Administration, Ministry of Education, The College of Educational Technology Acre, <https://orcid.org/0009-0004-1396-9459>, Bina village. saierah.aabed.sa@gmail.com

⁵Educational administration, Sakhnin Academic College, Sakhnin City. Sozan321@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-2293-3381>

⁶Educational Administration, Ministry of Education, Kfar Qara. Minasmahameed@gmail.com, <https://orcid.org/my-orcid?orcid=0009-0009-7905-8347>

⁷Educational Administration, Ministry of Education Tuba Zangaria. Rema.adam.89@gmail.com

Universities are considered one of the means that reflect the hopes and aspirations of distinguished societies, preserve the heritage of the past, and transmit it from generation to generation through the functions they perform (Darawsheh, 2018), and preparing human resources to benefit the university, to catch up with the distinguished, creative, and entrepreneurial productivity (Hatamleh & Darawsheh, 2019).

The faculty member represents the main element in determining the type of technology used in education and the quality of its outputs, and interacts with technological innovations, to achieve the desired goals of reaching the highest scientific and professional levels, which will advance the institution and advance (Sharaf, 2021).

Promoting and advancing the path of higher education is one of the options offered to universities to achieve distinction, and superiority (Darawsheh, 2017). To achieve the desired development in university education, periodic and continuous evaluation of the faculty member's performance is necessary (Al-Imam and Bara, 2017). Among these modern trends is what is called ethical leadership, as ethics is considered one of the basic pillars upon which human societies are based (Dajani, 2020).

Makhamra (2019:324) defined ethical leadership as: "demonstrating leadership behaviour committed to approved and accepted standards in personal behaviour and the relationship between others and promoting this behaviour among followers". People who have a firm belief in moral values tend to display moral behaviours and attitudes (Northouse, 2013). Ethical leadership is a contemporary field of study that has recently received significant attention as a result of the positive impact this leadership style has on employees and their organizations (Almandeel, 2019). The emergence of smart applications and systems in education has contributed to the ingenuity of their production and the effectiveness of their use (Malik, Tayal & Viji, 2019).

Therefore, excellence has become a goal for all institutions because it has positive effects that raise their status and achieve stability and continuity. It is a necessity imposed by the rapid changes in various institutions (Sukar, 2018). So, they work to increase the efficiency of their employees' performance (Luo, 2018). This is a reason for educators to seize the unique advantages provided by digital applications for educational purposes (Al-Astal, et al, 2021). Which helped faculty members improve the performance of their academic tasks.

Given the importance of leadership and its role in the success of educational institutions, most countries in the world have tended to adopt modern trends in educational leadership (Al-Shammari, 2018). Discrimination management is considered a new way of thinking effectively to achieve achievement, in

business (Al-Dada, 2016, 17). Academic excellence is translated into the form of advanced professional practices and distinct creative ideas, which enable the faculty member to excel in his academics. For a faculty member to excel academically, he must be selected according to precise basic standards specific to the teaching profession (Darawsheh, al el, 2023).

Among the factors influencing outcomes, the participation of employees in formulating these recovery programs is considered extremely important in improving educational outcomes (Alrashdan, et al, 2022).

The excellence of the academic performance of faculty members requires the ability of the faculty member to diversify his skills in employing teaching strategies and modern evaluation methods in education to stimulate students' motivation to learn (Mansour 2019). Many studies have recommended the importance of ethical leadership and academic excellence, such as Al-Najjar's study (2022) by providing professional growth opportunities for faculty members to maintain and raise the level of their university performance and encouraging them to present creative ideas that raise the university and its academic level.

Al-Mashaqbeh's study (2022) recommended encouraging employees to perform better. Distinguished by making them aware of the importance of excellence through training courses, lectures, and workshops. The study by Al-Abadi and Battah (2022) recommended the need for Jordanian universities to pay attention to improving and developing the performance of academic leaders, training them to possess the highest skills in administrative performance, and activating the theory of creative leadership in them.

Number researchers dealt with studies on ethical leadership, such as the study of Al-Zahrani and Al-Sharif (2020), and the study of Al-Makhlafi and Ibrahim (2020), which concluded that ethical leadership obtained a high degree. The study of Al-Sheikh and Al-Fahd (2020), concluded that the performance of faculty members was distinguished, while the study of Andijani and Al-Ghamdi (2021), and Abu Gharara (2020) found that the indicators of excellence in university education were at a moderate degree. Because of the previous studies, the distinction of the current study lies in the fact that it studied the degree of practicing ethical leadership in Jordanian universities to demonstrate its role in achieving academic excellence for the faculty member.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to identify.

- The degree to which academic leaders in Jordanian universities practice ethical leadership

- Identify the role of faculty members in practicing ethical leadership to achieve academic excellence.
- Role statement Ethical Leadership Achieving Academic Excellence in Universities.

Study Problem and Questions

The importance of ethics is due to the influence of faculty members through the exercise of the behavioral function in Several aspects, including belief in the goals of the university, willingness to work for them, pride and pride in them, and the desire to remain there, and this is what prompted many of them to accept the goals of the institution and make an effort to achieve them, by strengthening the ethics of the management and employees of the institution, which contributes to excellence in performance and enhancing the reputation, the institution, and its employees, and that the administration's provision of an ethical charter, its integrity and credibility in its decisions, its concern for the ethical dimension when evaluating faculty members, and its keenness to ensure justice and establish ethical controls, would contribute to the excellence of the employees' performance .

Therefore, through this study, we wanted to reveal the nature of the relationship between creative leadership and the teaching performance of university professors, the current study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence among faculty members, from their point of view?
2. Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence for faculty members, because of the variables: (gender, college, years of experience)?

Theoretical Importance

The importance of this study stems from the importance of ethics and the level of its impact on others, the importance of what it addresses, and the goals it seeks to achieve. Adding new information about how to measure the variables of the study, through the measurement tool that the researcher prepared to achieve the objectives of the study.

Study Methodology

The researchers used the descriptive, correlation approach, which aims to describe the phenomenon as it is, then analyze and interpret it and make appropriate recommendations regarding it, because this approach is most appropriate for the study.

Study Population and Sample.

The study population consisted of all faculty members in public Jordanian universities, numbering (13,394) individuals, according to official statistics from the website of the Jordanian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research for the academic year 2023/2024. The study sample consisted of (443) faculty members who were selected by random stratified method from three public universities, each university representing one of the three regions of Jordan: (the North Region: Yarmouk University), (the Central Region: Hashemite University) and (the South Region). Mu'tah University), and Table (1) shows the distribution of the sample members:

Table (1): Distribution of Study Sample Members According to levels of Variables

Variables	Category	N	Percentage
Gender	Males	161	%0.42
	Females	223	%0.58
College	Scientific	226	%0.56
	Humanities	168	%0.44
Experience	Less than 5 years	113	%0.29
	From 5 - less than 10 years	130	%0.34
	10 years and more	141	%0.37
Total		384	100%

Instrument

To achieve the goal of the study, the researchers developed a questionnaire, by referring to several previous studies and benefiting from them in developing the questionnaire in the field of ethical leadership. The study of Al-Mukhamarah (2019), the study of Al-Zahrani and Al-Sharif (2020), And the study of Al-Makhlafi and Ibrahim (2020) and the questionnaire in its final form consisted of (15) items, distributed into three fields.

Validity of the Tool

To verify the validity of the study tool, the content validity method was adopted, where the questionnaire was presented in its initial form to (10) arbitrators of university professors with experience in the specializations of educational administration and educational policies in Jordanian universities, and they were asked to read the items of the questionnaire paragraphs, and to perform what is Suitable for producing the questionnaire in a form suitable for the respondents.

Table (2) shows the internal consistency reliability coefficient of the questionnaire measuring the degree of ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence among faculty members (Cronbach alpha).

N	Field	Internal consistency stability	Replay stability
1	Personal interaction with teachers	0.92	0.89
2	Artistic performance with members in light of distance education	0.90	0.90
3	Human and moral sense	0.89	0.88
	Total tool	0.90	0.89

It is clear from the table that the study tool has a high-reliability coefficient, and accordingly, these values are appropriate for this study.

The statistical criterion

The statistical criterion for determining the degree of ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence.

Arithmetic average	Degree
From 1.00 Less than 2.33	Low
From 2.34 less than 3.67	Average
From 3.68 Below 5.00	High

Results and Discussion

Results the first question and their discussion, which states: What is the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence among faculty members from their point of view?

To answer this question; Arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the estimates of the study sample members on the tool items as a whole, and each of its fields, and Table (3) shows this.

Table (3): Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study sample members' estimates on the tool's domains, arranged in descending order according to the arithmetic means.

N	Field	Mean	SD	Rank	Degree
3	Human and moral sense	3.99	.86	1	High
1	Personal interaction with faculty members	3.79	.53	2	High
2	Artistic performance with members in light of digital learning as a whole	3.64	.75	3	High

Total	3.80	.57	High
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***Lowest grade (1) and highest grade (5)**

It is noted from Table (3) that the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence among faculty members, from their point of view, was (high) with an arithmetic mean of (3.80) with a standard deviation of (.57).

This result, according to the estimates of the study sample of faculty members, is due to assessing the degree to which leaders in their universities realize the importance of applying ethical leadership among employees in their academic institutions, and their ability to exercise this type of leadership because it is taken from their faith, and that it is considered one of the core interests and priorities of university education. The educational environment must be a good environment in itself.

This high result agreed with the results of the study of: Al-Zahrani and Al-Sharif (2020), Al-Sheikh and Al-Fahd (2020), Al-Makhlafi and Ibrahim (2020), Al-Najjar (2022), and the Celebrity Study (2022), which I obtained a high score, and the high score differed with the results of the studies of: Al-Abadi and Battah (2022), Andijani and Al-Ghamdi (2021), Daoud, Al-Ajami and Nour (2020), and Abu Gharara (2020), which came in at a moderate degree, with the exception of the study of Al-Dumour (2017) until The degree of academic leaders' practice of organizational excellence was low.

Detailed discussion of the areas

The first area: the human and moral sense

Table (4) shows the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the estimates of the study sample members for the items in the field of human and moral sense

Table (4) Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study sample members' ratings on the items in the domain (human and moral sense)

N	Field	Mean	SD	Rank	Degree
1	Academic leaders respect faculty members in light of digital trends to achieve their excellence.	4.19	.88	1	High
2	Academic leaders take into account the circumstances of faculty members in light of digital trends to provide assistance to solve their academic problems.	4.18	.88	2	High
4	Leaders motivate the successes and creativity of faculty members in light of	3.91	.99	3	High

	digital trends to achieve academic excellence.				
3	Leaders appreciate the efforts of faculty members (by honoring them, praising them, and presenting them with certificates of appreciation).	3.90	.91	4	High
5	Leaders pay attention to the psychological aspect of faculty members.	3.76	.86	5	High
The human and moral sense as a whole		3.99	.88	.88	High

The results showed that the arithmetic averages for the items in the field of human and moral sense, with a total score for the arithmetic averages (3.99), with a “high” rating. This result, according to the estimates of the study sample of faculty members, may be attributed to the leaders’ awareness that humane and ethical treatment is a factor that attracts love and attention. Members, in addition to having results consistent with the desired educational goals, in addition to the director’s certainty that he is primarily responsible for all members of the institution and must replace the method of control and tyranny with humane and ethical treatment because he needs love, respect, and understanding, not hatred, fear, and differences of opinions that cause problems.

The second area: personal dealings with faculty members

Table (4) shows the arithmetic means and standard deviations of the estimates of the study sample members for the items in the field of personal dealings with faculty members

Table (5) Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study sample members’ ratings on the items in the first domain (personal dealings with faculty members),

N	Field	Mean	SD	Rank	Degree
1	Academic leaders share their social events with faculty members.	3.82	1.10	1	High
2	Leaders acknowledge members' achievements in front of everyone and attribute them to them.	3.81	1.08	2	High
4	Leaders involve faculty members in completing tasks in order to achieve academic excellence.	3.80	1.06	3	High
3	Academic leaders use educational platforms to monitor the work of faculty members and provide them with feedback.	3.73	1.22	4	High
5	Leaders are fair and objective in their	3.70	1.10	5	High

dealings with faculty members.

Personal interaction with faculty members as a whole	3.79	.53	High
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The results indicated that the field of personal dealings with a faculty member came in first place, with an overall score of (3.79), and its arithmetic averages ranged between (3.70-3.82), all of which were high. This high result may be attributed to the items in this field according to the estimates of the sample of faculty members. Teaching in Jordanian universities led to the leaders' awareness that relationships do not take place only through the practical framework, but rather need to build the relationship inside and outside the walls of the university. From this standpoint, the leaders maintained the participation of members in their social events, participated with them in their problems, and helped in solving them as much as possible, and this is what was indicated, paragraph (4), which came in first place and with a high degree.

Finally, the second paragraph, which states, "Leaders are characterized by fairness and objectivity in their dealings with faculty members," came in last place. This result may be attributed to the fact that justice is the foundation of society and to the leaders' high awareness of the importance of the presence of justice in its educational institution and objectivity in Relationships between members and fairness between them enhance their psychological security.

The third area: Artistic performance with faculty members in light of digital education

Table (6) Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study sample members' ratings on the domain items (Technical performance with members in light of digital learning

N	Field	Mean	SD	Rank	Degree
5	The university administration meets with faculty members periodically to ensure that the educational process is controlled to achieve academic excellence.	3.80	1.03	1	High
2	The university administration helps faculty members to solve technical problems that hinder their academic work remotely.	3.73	1.06	2	High
3	Leaders monitor the extent to which faculty members adhere to good ethics through digital educational platforms	3.66	1.14	3	High
1	Leaders diversify their use of management strategies to ensure better productivity in organizational	3.51	1.14	4	High

	workflow.				
4	The university administration participates in courses that enhance members' skills in the field of technology and digital communications	3.49	1.18	5	High
	Artistic performance with members in light of digital learning as a whole	3.64	.86		High

The results indicated that the arithmetic averages for the field of artistic performance with members considering digital education came in second place, and the overall rating of the arithmetic averages was (3.64) and a "large" degree. This result, according to the estimates of the sample members, is attributed to the principal's goal not being Punishment, but rather correction, to improve performance, and this goal has become a mandatory requirement considering distance education. There are many means and methods followed to improve performance, some of which were mentioned in paragraphs (2, 7, 6), which were rated as "large."

This result is also attributed to the director's awareness of the importance of teachers' mastery of communication and technological communication skills and his keenness to involve them in training courses and workshops to enhance these skills among teachers, and this is what was indicated in paragraphs (3, 4, 5, 8), which received a rating of "High".

The results related to the second question, and their discussion: which states: Are there statistically significant differences at the level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) in the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence for faculty members in Jordanian universities, because of the variables: (Gender, College, Experience)? To answer this question; Arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the estimates of the study sample members on the study sample members' responses to the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence for faculty members in Jordanian universities attributable to: (gender, college, experience), and Table (7) shows this.

Table (7): Arithmetic means and standard deviations of the study sample members' ratings of the variables: (Gender, College, and Experience)

variable	Sum of squares	dF	Mean squares	F	Statistical significance
Gender	3.665	2	1.832	6.513	.002
College	2.200	1	2.200	7.820	.005
Experience	10.552	2	5.276	18.754	.000

The error	106.336	378	.281
Total	5769.809	384	

Table (8) shows that there is a difference according to the variables of the study (gender, the differences were in favor of males, and the type of college, in favor of humanities colleges), to determine the significance of the differences according to the years of experience variable, post hoc comparisons were made using the Shevi method, as follows:

Table (8): Post-hoc comparisons using Shaveh according to the variable of years of experience

(I) Years of experience	(J) Years of experience	The difference between the two averages	Significance level
Less than 5 years	From 5-10 years	.7848*	.000
	From 5-10 years 10 years and more	.8110*	.000
From 5-10 years	Less than 5 years	.7848*	.000
	Less than 5 years 10 years and more	.0263	.933

It is noted from Table (8) that there are statistically significant differences on the ethical leadership scale in achieving academic excellence between the years of experience.

Below is a detailed presentation of the tool's variables:

Gender Variable

The results showed that there was a statistically significant difference at the level of statistical significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the answers of the study sample members on the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence in Jordanian universities due to the gender variable, and it came in favor of males.

College type Variable

The results showed that there were differences due to the variable type of college and it came in favor of humanitarian colleges. This result may be attributed that members of the humanitarian colleges work to give the best of what they have, each according to their college, whether scientific or humanitarian, because the goal is to prove oneself and leave a distinctive imprint indicative of quality performance and digital academic excellence. However, the effort of the humanitarian colleges is better because they need to know and learn digital technologies, unlike the scientific colleges that practice them in their academic fields.

- The Experience Variable

The results showed that there were no statistically significant differences at the significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the answers of the study sample members on the degree of practicing ethical leadership in achieving academic excellence in Jordanian universities due to a variable attributed to the years of experience variable.

This result is due to the attention directed to faculty members who practice there is very little digital technology, which requires them to pay more attention to keeping up with the developments in digital learning and teaching. This group needs more guidance and guidance to achieve goals, achieve academic excellence, and complete the work that falls upon it.

Recommendations

- Promoting the principles of ethical leadership and explaining its role in achieving academic excellence in Jordanian universities.
- Conduct further studies and research on ethical leadership and the level of its impact on variables such as improving performance and morale, while holding lectures and workshops for faculty members to draw their attention to the importance of ethical leadership and its role in achieving academic excellence.

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