

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Impact of Ethical Leadership and Caring Work Climate on Turnover Intention of Health Care Professionals Mediating Role of Emotional Exhaustion

ANUM NAWAZISH ALI¹, SEHRISH SHAHID², MARIA KANWAL³, QURAT-UL-AIN RASHEED⁴, MUHAMMAD USMAN⁵¹MS in Health Administration Institute of Administrative Sciences University of the Punjab, Lahore²MS in Environmental Sciences Comsats University Islamabad, Vehari Campus³Assistant Professor, Institute of Management Sciences, The Women University, Multan, Pakistan⁴PHD Scholar in Business Administration, Superior University, Lahore⁵MS in Microbiology, University of Central Punjab, LahoreCorrespondence to: Anum Nawazish Ali, Email: dr.anam786@yahoo.com, Cell: +92 323 4303299**ABSTRACT****Objective:** To examine the mediating relation of emotional exhaustion as well as moderating function of caring climate in such relationships.**Study Setting:** Health care providers in government hospitals (such as Lahore General Hospital, Mayo Hospital, Services Hospital, Nishtar Hospital, Multan) as well as private hospitals (such as Fatima Memorial Hospital, Shalamar Hospital, Doctors Hospital, National Hospital, Bakhtawar Amin Hospital, Multan) and health care centres in Lahore (such as the latter two) are included in this group. The health care providers are also included in this group.**Study Duration:** This study was conducted from period of 1st September to 1st December, 2020 in the selected Hospitals.**Materials and Methods:** In order to acquire data, a sampling method was used. Google forms were used to collect data online. A total of 105 health care professionals from Lahore's health care organisations participated in the survey. Process macro model 8 shows that ethical leadership is critical to assessing the variations in emotional tiredness and turnover intention, whereas the ethical environment has a negligible moderating impact on the changes in turnover intention. Exhaustion mediated the influence of ethical leadership on turnover intention, according to the findings.**Results:** The findings show that the ethical conduct of higher management is critical because workers' perceptions of an ethical leadership are based on the ethical beliefs of managers, and their sincere and truthful conduct is an important influence in shaping the organisational environment and thus influencing the employees' turnover intention. Aside from future research directions, the theoretical and practical consequences and constraints of the discussion are also contested.**Conclusion:** According to the findings of this study, the influence of ethical leadership on employee turnover is totally mediated by emotional weariness. There is a correlation between ethical leadership and the desire to leave the company. The association between ethical leadership and emotional weariness is also diminished. Furthermore, this study indicated that emotional irritation and turnover intention are linked in a positive manner.**Keywords:** Emotional weariness; ethical leadership; purpose to replace; ethical climate; climate of turnover**INTRODUCTION**

Organizational costs and employee turnover are leading scholars and intellectuals to focus more on how ethical leadership affects a company's bottom line. Organizational ethics can be improved by the introduction of ethical leadership in an organisation.^{1,2} The following are the first and second steps. Health care organisations nowadays face a huge management challenge due to the high rate of employee turnover. Van Bogaert and colleagues³ found that 13% of newly licenced registered nurses left their jobs during the first year of work, and a further 37% were considering quitting their jobs and switching careers.⁴

Organizational effectiveness, workplace stress, job methods, self-esteem, and supervisor support are just a few of the many aspects that might affect an employee's decision to leave.⁵ However, the amount to which it has an impact is likely limited to internal (such as faculty choices) as well as external client interactions in many organisations that practise moral management (as, administration conveyance). A high level of outcomes can be expected in situations where an individual's or a group's actions have a direct impact on their lives and/or the health of the local environment (such as, the treatment of toxic waste). Thus, moral authority is very important. There appears to be a positive correlation between moral government and supporter prosperity, according to recent writing.⁶ In order to develop a normative structure for the organization's associates and create a common culture, managers' duties and ethical behaviour are crucial. So moral representatives are still crucial in defining the normative structure of an organisation.⁷

In the workplace, an institution's ethical climate influences employees' moral consciousness and behaviour. In such a situation, it is critical to consider what is best for the entire company. Here, employees worry about the well-being of their coworkers but also of individuals both inside and outside the

company who might be impacted by one's ethical stance.⁸ In order to reduce the likelihood of an employee leaving, it is critical to identify any potential defensive measures. Emotional weariness and turnover can both be influenced by leadership.⁹ This is the first trial of its sort, and it should serve as a warning sign.^{10,11} The current study's goal was to replicate this trial and corroborate the findings, taking into account the limited available evidence. It is our hope that our findings will provide light on how ethical leadership behaviour affects the ethical environment, which in turn will have an impact on healthcare workers' desire to leave and their emotional tiredness.

MATERIAL METHODS

We used a self-administered questionnaire with multiple-item scores to gather our data. The survey was divided into two parts. The goal of the study was clearly defined at the outset of the survey. In the first part of the study, multiple-item measures were used to measure the study's components. The second part of the survey asked participants eight questions about their basic demographics. Lahore's health care professionals (Doctors, Nurses, and Paramedics) working in government, private, and health care centres from September 1st to December 1st. To ensure that only Health Care Professionals took part in this study, we asked them a private question about their profession at the beginning of the survey. A convenient sampling method was utilised to acquire data. Statistical software was used to narrow the field down to 105 participants. Google forms were used to collect the total of 105 replies. A total of 26.7 percent of the responders were male, while 73.3 percent were female.

Khan developed the Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS) to assess a leader's ethical conduct (2018). In 10 of the items, you'll see statements like, "The leader offers an example of how to accomplish things in terms of ethics." Deshpande's seven-item

scale for assessing caring climate was used (1996). As an example, "Our first concern is the well-being of all of our employees," stated one of the sample items. 12 Exhaustion was measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory's (MBI) 9-item Emotional Exhaustion subscale "I'm burned out from my work," as an example: (McKenna et al). 13 According to Singh et al. (1996), the three-item scale was used to operationalize turnover intention, as demonstrated by the following sample items: "I regularly think about quitting the job" and "I will seriously look for a new job next year." Published in 2014, by Cho et al.¹⁴ The caring atmosphere, ethical leadership, emotional weariness, and turnover intention were evaluated using a five-point likert scale (strongly disagree=1 and strongly agree=5).

SPSS Version 23.0 was used to analyse the data and draw conclusions about the study's findings. It is possible to include control variables in a regression analysis since the hypotheses are evaluated using a regression analysis. The research methodologies guided the entire procedure, ensuring the precision and authenticity of the findings. The research approach was essential in achieving the study's objectives in all respects. Ethical Leadership (X) and Turnover Intention (Y) can be tested using Hayes' Process macro, which incorporates a variety of model specifications (Caring Climate).

STUDY RESULTS

There are reliability measures for each variable in table 1 of the study. According to Table 2, 26.7 percent of the respondents were male and 73.3 percent were female. Age ranges from 20 to 50, with the largest group (20-30 year olds) accounting for 81.9 percent of total participation. There were 60% singles and 40%

married people in the study. 35.2 percent doctors, 46.7 percent technologists, 11.4 percent nurses, and 6.7 percent paramedics were among those who participated in the survey.

SPSS, PROCESS MACRO, developed by Andrew F. Hayes, is used for regression analysis, MODEL 8 as shown in table 3. Table 3 and Table 4 show the Regression of Emotional Exhaustion (Mediator) onto Caring Climate (Moderator), Ethical Leadership (Independent Variable) and their interaction. The relationship between Ethical Leadership ($p= 0.012$, $b= -0.417$, $t= -2.573$) and emotional exhaustion is significant and possess negative effect. Thus, the hypothesis that; the Ethical Leadership has a negative connection with employees' Acceptance of emotional weariness (hypothesis 1). However, the effect of the control factors (gender, M status, age, E-level, J-design, C-J-experience, O-J-experience, and changes) is negligible. There is a connection between ethical leadership and emotional exhaustion, as shown in Table 5, at three places on the caring climate scale (moderator). Emotional exhaustion (the mediator), ethical leadership, and a caring climate are all shown in Table 6 along with their interactions. Predictors of Turnover Intention are positively and significantly affected by Emotional Exhaustion ($b = 0.704$, $t = 5.760$, $p=0.000$).

Table 1: Statistics of Reliability

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
Ethical Leadership	0.898	10
Caring Climate	0.850	7
Emotional Exhaustion	0.893	9
Turnover Intention	0.816	3

Table 2: Gender of respondents

Variables	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Gender	Male	28	26.7	26.7
	Female	77	73.3	100.0
Age	20-30	86	81.9	81.9
	31-40	15	14.3	96.2
	41-50	4	3.8	100.0
Marital	Single	63	60.0	60.0
	Married	42	40.0	100.0
Designation	Doctor	37	35.2	35.2
	Technologist	49	46.7	81.9
	Nurse	12	11.4	93.3
	Paramedics	7	6.7	100.0

Table 3: Regression Model Summary for Mediator

Model Summary:						
R	R-sq	MSE	F(HC4)	df1	df2	p
0.421	0.178	0.638	2.007	11.000	93.000	0.036

Table 4: Regression Model of Mediator

	coeff	se(HC4)	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.146	0.697	4.513	0.000	1.762	4.531
EL	-0.417	0.162	-2.573	0.012	-0.739	-0.095
CC	0.031	0.209	0.150	0.881	-0.383	0.446
Int_1	-0.054	0.163	-0.330	0.742	-0.378	0.270
Gender	0.229	0.207	1.107	0.271	-0.181	0.639
M_Status	-0.140	0.173	-0.810	0.420	-0.483	0.203
Age	-0.429	0.275	-1.559	0.122	-0.976	0.118
E_level	-0.008	0.123	-0.063	0.950	-0.252	0.237
J_Desig	-0.123	0.111	-1.110	0.270	-0.344	0.097
C_J_Exp	0.190	0.153	1.242	0.217	-0.114	0.493
O_J_Exp	0.091	0.200	0.452	0.653	-0.307	0.489
Changes	0.107	0.289	0.369	0.713	-0.468	0.681

Table 5: Conditional effect of focal predictor (X) at values of the moderator(s):

CC	effect	se (HC4)	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-0.764	-0.376	0.182	-2.070	0.041	-0.736	-0.015
0.000	-0.417	0.162	-2.573	0.012	-0.739	-0.095
0.764	-0.458	0.225	-2.035	0.045	-0.905	-0.011

Table 6: Regression model summary of dependent variable (TI):

Model Summary:						
R	R-sq	MSE	F(HC4)	df1	df2	p
0.732	0.536	0.592	12.253	12.000	92.000	0.000

DISCUSSION

This study was able to inspect the current association of ethical leadership, emotional exhaustion plus intent to turnover. Conversely, the moderated effect of caring climate is insignificant. The mediation effect of emotional exhaustion is highly significant. This report has established that emotional exhaustion mediated the consequences of ethical leadership upon turnover intention. Ethical leadership influences emotional exhaustion, which in return affects turnover intention. Mediation analyses in this study shows the full mediation of emotional fatigue because ethical leadership's indirect impact upon turnover intention is highly significant as compared to straight outcome of ethical leadership upon turnover intention.

The impact of managers' ethical leadership actions on organisational participants (Health Care Professionals) was investigated using a mediating model. According to this report, managers gain moral influence that has a worthwhile effect on organisational members (Health Care Professionals) by acting as character representations in their organisations and exhibiting principled leadership manners and producing social relations. The existing research discovered that ethical leadership is adversely linked to emotional exhaustion & also detrimentally associated with intention to turnover.

Here it is supported by a report by Chen et al. (2018)¹⁵ in which found that a corporation with higher administration approval for virtuous behaviour has a greater probability of achieving desirable job and administrative results.

In the alternative, moderation analysis in this report underlines that moral surroundings has insignificant effects upon ethical leadership, emotional exhaustion as well as on turnover intention. It means that workers can prefer to remain with a company even though the ethical environment is unsatisfactory; this can be due to the market's availability of replacement jobs.

Here is a downside relation among workers' ethical leadership, as well as a desire to be replaced. The lower the staff's emotional exhaustion and, as a result, the smaller the likelihood of turnover, the more highly the employees regard their leaders' ethical behaviour. Ethical leadership, among other things, has been shown to have an impact on the emotions and associations of employees in the workplace. When you're ¹⁶, you're capable of making a difference in the life of someone else. ¹⁷

Medical associations will profit from having employees (Health Care Professionals) who adhere to the highest ethical standards of conduct as leaders, according to this study's main finding. Diverse managerial abilities, such as the ability to keep lines of communication open and to coordinate efforts, will help to hone these abilities. When it comes to creating a positive work atmosphere, managers must adhere to the highest standards of ethics and truthfulness.^{18,19} In order to establish a moral culture, organisations must pay special attention to the selection and support of their supervisors. Having a clear knowledge of the importance of the human factor in the healthcare industry is essential for health care organisations. Health care organisations require highly skilled and devoted members to maintain long-term strategic superiority.

CONCLUSION

Emotional weariness is found to be an important mediating factor in the influence of ethical leadership on employee turnover. There is a correlation between ethical leadership and the desire to leave the company. The association between ethical leadership and emotional weariness is also diminished. Furthermore, this study indicated that emotional irritation and turnover intention are linked in a positive manner.

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