The Relationship Between School Principals' Ethical Leadership Style And Self-Efficacy And Job Involvement of High School Teachers In Sanandaj City

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Abstract

Method: This study is practical in terms of purpose, and descriptive correlational in terms of method. The statistical population includes all teachers from second normal secondary schools in the first and second districts of Sanandaj city during the academic year of 2021-2, totalling 686 individuals. A sample size of 343 was selected using a simple random sampling method. Data was collected through three questionnaires: The 10-Item Ethical Leadership Scale by Brown and Trevino (2005), The 12-Item Collective Efficacy Questionnaire by Goddard (2001), and The 9-Item Questionnaire by Schaufeli et al. (2002) utilizing a five-point Likert scale. The face validity of the questionnaires was confirmed through expert opinions, while their construct validity was established by Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). To ensure questionnaire reliability, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was utilized. The resulting reliability coefficients for the ethical leadership, self-efficacy, and job involvement questionnaires were 0.91, 0.72, and 0.93, respectively. After verifying that the parametric assumptions were met, the data was analysed using Pearson's correlation test and structural equation modelling via SPSS software. The results revealed a favourable fit for the research's structural model, indicating a direct relationship between the ethical leadership style of school managers and teachers' collective efficacy and job involvement. Furthermore, the ethical leadership status of school managers emerged as a significant predictor for teachers' levels of collective efficacy and job involvement. These findings suggest that demonstrating ethical leadership behaviours can enhance teachers' self-efficacy, thereby fostering greater passion and job involvement among them.

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Introduction

Education is a fundamental social institution that plays a pivotal role in moulding, directing, and regulating individuals within any given society. A proficient education not only induces social advancement but also fosters political, economic, and cultural progress. The Ministry of Education in any society serves numerous functions, both overt and covert, including acculturation, socialization, political indoctrination, vocational training, promoting social mobility, promoting good health practices, restructuring the class system of society, establishing social order, and cultivating the personality of individuals in the society (Alagheband, 2022). Education holds a crucial position among the various sub-systems of society, due to its unique sensitivity and importance. This is evident from the fact that in many countries, education receives the second largest allocation of budget after the Ministry of Defence, including in the United States. The significance of educational organizations' managers and leaders as decision-makers within these centres highlights the need for enhancing their management skills and capabilities. Such improvements can have a notable impact on the overall status of a country's education system. The rapid advancements in technology during the 21st century have resulted in a disruption of human equations and relationships, akin to many other equations on earth. As a result, leaders and managers can no longer rely on fixed management formulas or specific

leadership styles to benefit their organizations.

The progress of technology and the interconnectedness of modern society, along with the onset of modernity, have led to a devaluing of certain important concepts such as ethics. This devaluation has made it challenging to fully define ethics. Neglecting discussions on ethics has become prevalent not only in educational institutions and schools but also in numerous organizations and large commercial companies worldwide. Schools require managers who possess the competence to address instances of unethical conduct and breaches of the law within their community. It appears that ethical leaders possess the requisite skills and aptitude to tackle the deficiencies present in schools. The presence of ethical leaders serves to diminish the inclination towards dishonesty and cheating within school organizations. When the leaders of a company behave ethically, their followers will emulate them and treat their colleagues with respect, thereby avoiding causing harm to anyone (Ponnu & Tennakoon, 2009).

For an education system to thrive, it requires not only skilled leadership but also compassionate, proficient, well-read, and dedicated teachers. Due to the swift advancements made by the nation in recent years as well as shifts in cultural and social norms, there has been a corresponding transformation in teacher-student interactions. As a result, many teachers feel inadequate in their ability to effectively manage their classrooms. The poor performance of teachers in the classroom is often

attributed to negative feelings that arise within them. Consequently, most teacher training programs prioritize the cultivation of efficient teachers as a fundamental objective. This is because the teachers' collective efficacy influences their educational activities and interactions with students, and consequently affects the level of self-efficacy and self-regulation in students' learning. Such beliefs serve as a model for students to follow. Therefore, it is essential to investigate and study the teachers' collective efficacy (Vafa and et al, 2014). The results of previous studies support the role of ethical leadership in teachers' self-efficacy beliefs (Piccolo and et al, 2010; Trent, 2009; Yarigholi, Golmohammadnejad Bahrami, Fazli, 2019; Mary Lynne, Pamela, 2013).

The concept of self-efficacy was introduced in 1986 by Alberto Bandura to explain the dynamics of human performance. This theory emphasizes the significance of individual belief systems in comprehending human motivation, emotion, and behaviour. According to Bandura, individuals develop a form of self-discipline that empowers them to regulate their thoughts, emotions, and actions (Saif, 2022). The concept of teacher self-efficacy is derived from Bandura's self-efficacy theory and refers to the cognitive process that shapes teachers' beliefs about their ability to achieve a certain level of progress (Bandura, 1997). It pertains to a teacher's conviction regarding their capability to effectively organize and execute actions required for carrying out a given task in a particular subject area (Bandura,

1977). Teacher self-efficacy is the belief teachers have in their own ability to achieve positive outcomes for their students' learning and activities. It is believed that these beliefs can impact teacher's efforts, perseverance, and actions in education (Ghalaei and et al, 2012).

Teachers play a crucial role in reforming and reconstructing the education system. However, due to the neglect of their basic needs and incorrect recruitment criteria, many individuals are forced to choose teaching as a job out of necessity rather than interest and motivation (Ahmadi & Sajadi, 2001). Regrettably, our educational system has failed to create a conducive atmosphere for the encouragement of teacher motivation. As a result, society is riddled with various issues such as moral, social, cultural, economic and political problems. Additionally, this research delves into the correlation between job involvement of teachers and ethical leadership. Previous studies have established the significance of ethical leadership in enhancing the job involvement of subordinates. Several studies have confirmed the link between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and their job involvement and related structures (Shiravand, Hoveida, Rajaee pour, 2021, Woodcock & Faith, 2021; Yakin, M & Erdil, 2012; Toropova, Myrberg & Johansson, 2021; Makruf, Muharom, Hafidah & Maslamah, 2021).

For educational functions to be properly implemented and their ideals realized, it is crucial to have qualified teachers who are highly dedicated to their profession (Akbari, and et al,

2020). This dedication is referred to as job involvement, which measures the level of psychological and emotional engagement employees have with their work. It also reflects how invested people are in their current job and how aware they are of its impact on them (Janson & Vickie, 2010, Khan and et al., 2011 and Mohsan, Nawaz & Khan, 2011). Job involvement refers to the degree of engagement individuals have in their work and the decisions required for its execution. It is characterized as an emotional and psychological attachment to a job, whereby individuals possess knowledge of the job and its components, identify with it, align with organizational objectives and values, and strive to achieve them. This connection is so strong that individuals are not inclined to leave the organization or transfer their employment elsewhere (Bakker, Albrecht & Leiter, 2011). To summarize the definitions, job involvement is a constructive psychological state aimed at achieving and finalizing tasks. This concept comprises three elements: eagerness towards the job, commitment to the job, and absorption in the job (Schaufeli, and et al, 2002).

Teachers' job involvement is a crucial motivational factor in schools that demands the attention of school managers. Numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the factors that influence this structure due to its significant impact on improving organizational outputs. Ethical managers can enhance teachers' sense of responsibility towards their jobs and increase their level of job engagement by creating an ethical atmosphere and promoting organizational justice in schools (Yargholi, Golmohamadnejad bahrami & Fazli, 2019). Previous studies have confirmed the role of job involvement in increasing job satisfaction, reducing the tendency to leave the service, and improving organizational effectiveness (Zhang, 2014; Alhosseini and et al, 2017; Yaseminejad, and et al, 2011; Rogelberg, 2006). If educational managers exhibit appropriate behaviours, teachers are likely to demonstrate higher levels of commitment, involvement, and job satisfaction (Fathi, Ahmadnejad & Salehi, 2021).

The findings of these studies indicate that ethical leadership exhibited by managers is a significant and relevant predictors of job involvement. In his research, Haghiri (2009) demonstrated that the ethical conduct of educational managers has an impact on employee involvement, organizational commitment, and job attachment. In their 2019 study, Anna Sun and Jiangang Xia asserted that while research has focused on examining the approach of school managers towards distributed leadership, there is a dearth of studies exploring teachers' perceptions of it and the potential connections between distributed leadership, teacher self-efficacy, and job satisfaction. Distributed leadership, implemented at both the school and teacher levels, has a notable positive impact on teachers' job satisfaction. This effect is both direct and indirect, with the latter being mediated through teacher self-efficacy. In support of this, Mohammed Qtait (2023) cites evidence

indicating that managerial leadership style has a significant bearing on nurses' productivity.

On the other hand, Chung-Jen Wang, Huei-Ting Tsai, and Ming-Tien Tsai (2017) have demonstrated the significance of job complexity in moderating the connection between transformational leadership and creative role identity among employees. Furthermore, their research has also established a link between employees' creative role identity and their creative self-efficacy, as well as between employees' creative self-efficacy and creativity. Jolanta (2013) demonstrated a significant and positive correlation between the ethical leadership approach of managers and job involvement, employee participation in work, as well as positive attitudes towards work. Meanwhile, Moon's (2015) study established that ethical leadership can enhance organizational commitment and job involvement. Engelbrecht, Heine, and Mahembe (2014) conducted a study titled "The influence of ethical leadership on trust and work engagement" which revealed that ethical leadership and a truthful work environment are factors that contribute to employee engagement. Den Hartog and Belschak (2012) similarly concluded that there exists a positive and significant correlation between managers' ethical leadership approach and employee engagement in the workplace. Hosainpoor and Mohammadimehr (2020) conducted research demonstrating the positive impact of ethical leadership on creating an ethical work environment and fostering ethical and professional

behaviour among employees. It is important to note that there is no one-size-fits-all leadership style that is suitable for all organizations. Therefore, it is crucial to consider a leadership style that aligns with the specific needs and goals of each organization. Leaders who aim for effectiveness prioritize not only efficiency, but also ethical decision-making. Yukl (2002), as cited by Ozgali (2006), has observed that adherence to ethical values and principles has resulted in increased productivity and success at both the organizational and national levels.

Theoretical framework

The concept of ethical leadership has emerged as a topic of discussion within the realm of management and leadership during the latter decades of the 20th century. As a comparatively recent construct, it has been found to have a notable impact on promoting a positive workplace culture. Furthermore, its impacts on both organizational units and individual members have been given considerable attention (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Ethical leadership is centred on universally accepted ethical values such as justice, honesty, correctness, and uprightness. Leaders who embody this type of leadership possess qualities such as honesty, compassion, and fairness. They frequently encourage adherence to ethical standards among their followers and employ rewards and punishments for ethical and unethical behaviours. Ethical leaders aim to influence the moral conduct of their followers by establishing moral standards and ensuring accountability through the use of rewards and punishments. Thus,

ethical leadership entails a practical influence process (Salehnia, 2012).

An ethical leader similar to a boss takes responsibility for ethical accountability and treats their subordinates fairly and honestly. Moreover, ethical leaders possess significant power and are willing to jeopardize their own interests when making important organizational decisions (Celik, 2012). Ethical leadership involves modelling appropriate behaviours through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, as well as encouraging and promoting these behaviours among followers through effective communication and decision-making (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Leaders who possess ethical virtues such as honesty, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, and humility serve as genuine examples to their followers. This is the first aspect of ethical leadership. The second aspect involves not only adhering to ethical principles but also actively promoting them in social settings by initiating conversations with followers and ensuring fairness in interpersonal and procedural matters. The definition of ethical leadership involves the concept of encouragement, which entails imposing punishment on individuals who fail to comply with prescribed rules and standards while rewarding those who adhere to them. It has been found that ethical leadership has a detrimental effect on emotional expression, leading employees to conceal their emotions. Ethical leadership serves to offset the adverse impacts of emotional expression, thereby reducing workplace

interactions and employee engagement (Xiaojun and Mary, 2014).

Ethical leadership is defined as "demonstrating appropriate behaviours and norms through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and promoting and strengthening such behaviours and norms to followers through two-way communication". In other words, this definition highlights three main characteristics of an ethical leader: he is someone who does what he says, believes in justice, and conveys meaningful information (Asif, Qing, Hwang and Shi, 2019: 46).

Employees are a crucial asset for any organization. The presence of content and proficient employees is perceived as an essential prerequisite for the advancement of an organization. It is important to note that employees are, in fact, the internal customers of the organization. Organizations that prioritize their employees tend to have more customer-oriented employees, resulting in greater job satisfaction and a stronger sense of organizational commitment (Nasresfahani and et al, 2012). The mental health and psychological needs of employees are crucial for maintaining a healthy and satisfied workforce in organizations. A crucial variable that impacts the mental health growth and development of an organization's employees is self-efficacy. Educational institutions should prioritize the psychological needs and well-being of their staff, particularly teachers' level of self-efficacy in schools. It is essential for schools to foster the growth and development of their teachers' self-efficacy levels.

According to Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001), teacher self-efficacy refers to a teacher's assessment of their capability to produce favourable academic results for their students, as well as to involve them in academic matters, even in the presence of challenging or demotivated students (Pirkamali, and et al, 2013). Teachers with higher self-efficacy exhibit greater job satisfaction and a heightened expectation to overcome challenges. Their confidence enables them to better coordinate with students and respond to their unique needs, leading to increased classroom time and creativity in curriculum design, classroom management, and teaching methods (Haughey & Murphy, 2001).

Teachers' self-efficacy refers to teachers' belief in their abilities to influence students' learning and obtain desirable results for teaching and learning despite facing some problems. Teachers with high self-efficacy have acquired sufficient subject knowledge, are ready to fulfill their career aspirations, create good learning environments for their students using different teaching methods, and continue to discover the most suitable and enjoyable teaching strategies for their students (Lin, Yin and Liu, 2022:67)

Over the last decade, experts in organizational, industrial, and management psychology have concentrated their attention on the notion of job involvement. The correlation between this factor and key organizational results, such as job satisfaction, productivity, and attrition rate, has prompted numerous studies on

its underlying causes and outcomes. Job involvement's function as a feedback mechanism is a critical variable that enhances organizational effectiveness. As a result, an organization's efficacy increases in proportion to the elevated levels of job involvement among its employees. Job involvement refers to the extent to which an individual is mentally drawn to and engaged in activities associated with their present job (Rotenbr & Moberg, 2007). Additionally, job involvement can be delineated as the degree of psychological bonding to work that leads to heightened productivity. This factor is interlinked with multiple variables, including personality and demographic attributes. Yasamaninejad et al., (2014) identified various variables that influence job involvement, including organizational multiplicity in both in-role and extra-role behaviour, personal initiative, personality type, age, and gender. Job involvement pertains to an individual's perception of their job and work environment, as well as the degree of balance between work conditions and personal life. Within management systems, job involvement is recognized as a crucial determinant of both individual and organizational outcomes (Zhang, 2014).

Job involvement can be defined as the extent to which individuals are engaged in their work and the decision-making processes associated with it (Mohsan, 2011). According to Khan (2011), an individual's level of job involvement is positively correlated with the amount of authority they have in decision-making, their responsibilities, and the overall job

process. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined job involvement as a positive mindset towards fulfilling and completing work. They identified three dimensions of job involvement: enthusiasm, dedication, and immersion in work. High levels of job involvement are associated with recognition and motivation, increased productivity, and greater likelihood of achieving desired outcomes for both the organization and its customers.

Job involvement is a positive, satisfying and work-related state of mind that is characterized by power, dedication and absorption. Employees who have positive job involvement in their work, experience more positive emotions, higher levels of in-role and extra-role performance, and better mental and physical health (Li et al., 2021: 3).

When employees have job involvement, it indicates that they are effectively utilizing their skills and abilities in their work. Job involvement is a trait often associated with an individual's job motivation (Uygur & Kilic, 2009). Kanungo suggests a framework for examining job involvement that centres around motivation. Within this framework, Kanungo describes job engagement as a psychological state of identity that is linked to work and plays a crucial role in satisfying needs and meeting expectations. However, this definition does not take into account the cognitive and emotional dimensions of involvement (Mirhashmi and Sharifi, 2010).

Job involvement has been identified as a contributing factor to the effectiveness of an organization. This is achieved through the creation of employee morale via deep involvement in their work and by providing a fulfilling work experience (Rogelberg, 2007). Complete job involvement is when employees exhibit positive emotions towards their work, perceive it as meaningful, manageable and controllable, and have hope for their future work (Ram & Prabhakar, 2011). To sum up, job involvement hinges on how employees view their work environment and their job, as well as how they balance work and personal life. This affects the relationship between an employee's personal and professional spheres.

Literature review

According to a study by Mohammad Davoudi and Valai Maleki (2013) titled, Analyzing The Relationship Between Ethical Leadership and Organizational Health, adhering to ethical principles enables school managers to establish a network of mutual and transcendent relationships that contribute to the well-being of the organization. These ethical leaders also foster a shared vision among teachers, challenge existing processes, and inspire others with psychological support. Nemati Amirkalai (2013) conducted research on the correlation between teachers' ability and self-efficacy with their job performance within secondary schools for girls in Tehran. The results of the study revealed that both variables significantly impacted the teachers' job performance.

In their study which was presented with title: the relationship between School managers' collaborative leadership style and teachers' self-

efficacy, Mahdinejad and Arbabi (2019) investigated the correlation between the collaborative leadership approach employed by school managers and the level of self-efficacy exhibited by teachers in implementing educational tactics, managing classrooms, and engaging students. The findings indicated that there exists a positive relationship between a participatory management style and elevated levels of teacher self-efficacy. Majidi and Zafarkandi (2019) in a research under title the relationship between the realization of transformational leadership with self-efficacy and job enthusiasm in employees of the ministry of health and medical education showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between the realization of transformational leadership and the self-efficacy and job enthusiasm of the staff of the Ministry of Health, Treatment and Medical Education. Furthermore, transformational leadership is a reliable predictor of both self-efficacy and job enthusiasm variables. Ramzanpour et al. (2019) examined the correlation between the leadership style of supervisors in operating rooms and the occupational self-efficacy of operating room technologists in teaching-treatment hospitals affiliated with Iran University of Medical Sciences (IUMS). The findings indicated that under all three categories of leadership styles demonstrated by supervisors, there was a rise in the level of self-efficacy among technologists. Consequently, it is recommended that training courses be provided to enable supervisors to gain a comprehensive understanding of the principles and

theories underlying these leadership styles, as well as how to effectively apply them in different contexts.

Ashfaq et al. (2021) confirmed that there is a significant relationship between ethical leadership and employee participation with the mediating effects of self-efficacy and organizational commitment. Self-efficacy fully mediated the relationship.

Employees with high self-efficacy become more flexible, they are confident that they can face challenges and become more committed and involved in their work, which is the result of their high self-efficacy (Ashfaq et al., 2021: 964).) The increasing attention that ethical leadership has attracted is attributed to its capacity in using the positive attitude of employees towards daily tasks at the workplace.

When leaders are authentic, they are role models for their followers who seek guidance from them to carry out their duties. This learning experience increases their belief in their abilities, which increases their self-confidence to succeed in facing emerging challenges. The trustworthiness and support of ethical leaders increases the learning and trust of followers and as a result, increases their self-efficacy (Ashfaq et al., 2021: 965)

Sarwar, Ishaq, Amin and Ahmed (2020) demonstrated that ethical leadership style and job involvement act as main factors that ensure the success of an organization. Ethical leaders should trust their employees and create a sense of self-efficacy and effectiveness by giving responsibility for increasing the importance of the job, understanding the growth needs of

people and creating motivation in them. In this way, employees are likely to put more effort in their duties. They appear more involved in their job and have more active participation (Sarwar et al., 2020: 2011).

In their 2021 study, Rabiei et al. explored the relationship between transformational leadership, job enthusiasm, and emotional creativity among primary school teachers. They concluded that managers who adopt transformational leadership strategies can cultivate enthusiasm and desire for work among teachers, resulting in improved communication and engagement at all levels. In his research, Heydari (2022) discovered that educational managers' leadership has a positive and significant impact on both collective efficacy and teacher commitment. Additionally, the connection between collective efficacy and teacher commitment was found to be positive and significant. These findings suggest that collective efficacy plays a crucial role in mediating the relationship between educational managers' leadership and teacher commitment.

In the study that Piccolo et al, (2010) with the title: the relationship between ethical leadership and core job characteristics conducted revealed ethical leadership behaviour to be positively associated with employees' sense of meaningfulness in their jobs and careers. This perception of work as valuable and meaningful further leads to increased positive and productive behaviours, demonstrating a heightened level of motivation and effort. In their study titled "Teacher leadership and collective efficacy: Connections and links," Mary Lynne and Pamela (2013) found that managers' actions and decisions have a positive impact on teachers' self-efficacy in learning professional and educational activities within the school setting. Similarly, Skalvik and Skalvik (2014) research revealed a correlation between teachers' self-efficacy, independence, job involvement, job satisfaction, and emotional burnout. In "The Effect of Ethical Leadership on Employee Trust and Involvement," Inglebert et al. (2014) found that ethical leadership and a transparent work environment contribute to employee involvement. Huang and Paterson's (2014) research indicates that ethical leadership, characterized by ethical behaviour, fosters respect, attentiveness, and the formation of personal connections among employees. This leads to increased vitality, energy, psychological empowerment, and ultimately improves moral performance among employees.

Flores and Zacarias (2023) indicated that there is a significant correlation between ethical leadership and teacher self-efficacy in general. In addition, the results illustrated that there is a significant relationship between ethical leadership and teacher motivation. This means that teachers who perceive their leaders to be ethical are more likely to have motivation in their work. Ethical leadership may play an important role in fostering a positive work environment and increasing teachers' motivation and positive job involvement.

Since ethical leaders maintain transparency in all their actions, particularly in their expectations,

responsibilities, and communication, they are expected to interact with a more committed and involved workforce (Flores and Zacarias, 2023: 3).

An ethical leader has a desire for mutual respect and tries to create ethical behavior among members. This causes the motivation and belief in the individuals' ability for better performance increase (Flores and Zacarias, 2023: 3).

By conducting a thorough review of relevant literature, as well as an examination of the theoretical and experimental underpinnings of the variables at hand, we have gained a comprehensive understanding of the respective positions and significance of each variable. Previous research has provided insight into the potential impact of each variable on organizational objectives. Our aim in this study is to construct a model that explores the potential interrelationships among these variables. This study aims to investigate the interplay between research variables and their characteristics in a conceptual model. By subjecting each variable to testing, both theoretical and experimental support are gained. The focus is on determining the combined effects of the variables in the model and how they interact with one another, given that each predicted model has already been backed by theoretical and experimental evidence. It also attempts to examine the influence of ethical leaders on the level of job involvement and self-efficacy among teachers. The research proposes that ethical leadership directly affects teachers' sense of self-efficacy and job involvement, while indirectly impacting job involvement through collective efficacy. The hypothetical model was developed and tested through data collection and analysis. This study aims to elucidate the significance of ethical leadership in schools and its impact on teachers' self-efficacy and job involvement. To accomplish this objective, several hypotheses were formulated and analysed, which are as follows:

General assumption:

The ethical leadership demonstrated by leaders has a significant influence on teachers' self-efficacy and job involvement.

Minor assumptions:

1. Ethical leadership is a significant predictor of teachers' self-efficacy.

2. Ethical leadership is a significant predictor of teachers' job involvement.

3. Self-efficacy is a significant predictor of teachers' job involvement.

Research conceptual model
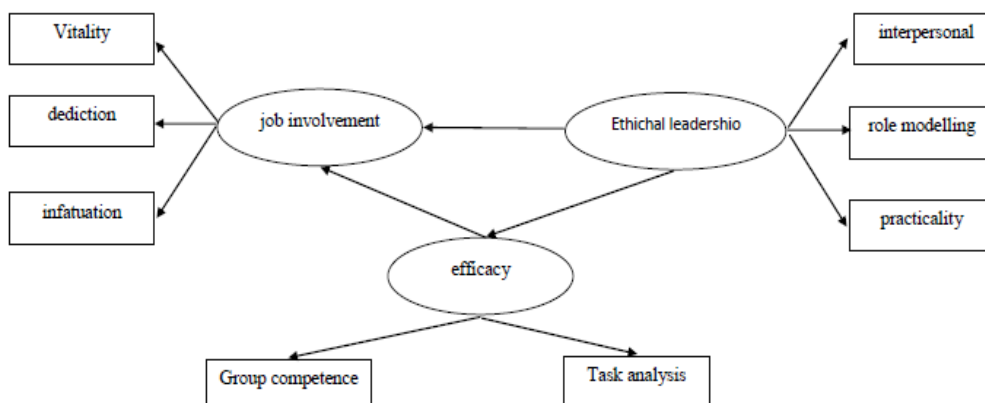
Methodology

This study is practical in terms of purpose, and descriptive correlational in terms of method. The statistical population includes all teachers from second normal secondary schools in the first and second districts of Sanandaj city during the academic year of -2021 2, totalling 686 individuals. The Department of Education has furnished statistical data reflecting the number of high schools in Sanandaj city's first and second districts. District one has 29 high schools, with 14 exclusively for girls and 15 for boys. Meanwhile, district two has 33 high schools, with 15 designated as girls' schools and 18 as boys' schools. District one and district two have 369 and 317 teachers, respectively. In order to determine an appropriate sample size, a simple random sampling method was employed, resulting in a study of 343 teachers. Three questionnaires were utilized as data collection tools, including the Ethical Leadership Questionnaire by Brown & Treviño (2005), the Collective Efficacy Questionnaire by Goddard (2001), and

Job Involvement Questionnaire by Schaufeli et al. (2002).

The Ethical Leadership Questionnaire comprises 10 questions and categorizes ethical leadership into three dimensions: interpersonal relationships (questions 1-3), role modelling (questions 4-7), and practicality (questions 8-10). The score range of this question is between $10 – 50$ based on the Likert scale. The higher the value of this questionnaire, indicating the higher the level of ethical leadership. In Torabi's research (2019), the validity of content and nominal form of this questionnaire has been suitable evaluated also Cronbach's alpha coefficients calculated for this questionnaire was estimated to be above 0.7.

The Teachers' Self-Efficacy Questionnaire consists of 12 items that assess two subscales: group competence (questions 11-19) and task analysis (questions 17-22). The creators of the validity and reliability of this scale using the Cronbach's alpha method for the whole scale 0 /91 , the component of knowledge task analysis Students

reported 0.87 and for group competence 0/90 component. Tschannen-Moran& Hoy (2001).

Job Involvement Questionnaire consisted of 9 questions that evaluated job involvement across three dimensions: vitality (questions 23-25), dedication (questions 26-28), and infatuation (questions 29-31). Using factor analysis, the fitness of the three factors of vitality, dedication and fascination was confirmed.(Ardalam et al, 2014).

Respondents were required to answer the items on a five-point Likert scale, with scoring ranging from one to five. The questionnaires' face validity was confirmed through expert opinions, while their construct validity was assessed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaires, Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was used. The resulting reliability coefficients for the ethical leadership, self-efficacy, and job involvement questionnaires were 0.91, 0.72, and 0.93, respectively. The study also met the parametric prerequisites before using Pearson's Correlation Test and structural equation modelling to analyse the data. The research utilized SPSS22 and LISREL8 software, resulting in a two-part data analysis process. The initial component involves scrutinizing measurement models (questionnaires), while the latter comprises an evaluation of the structural model to address the research hypotheses.

Findings

In order to ensure the normal distribution of data, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used. The null hypothesis in this test posits that data distribution is normal, while the alternative hypothesis postulates non-normality. Based on the findings of Table 1, z values associated with all three variables under examination are not statistically significant at the 0.05 level (p < .05). Consequently, it is confirmed that the null hypothesis of normal data distribution holds, and parametric tests can be utilized to check research hypotheses.

Table 1: The Results of Studying the Normal Distribution of Variables

Variable	Descriptive indices of distribution		Kolmogorov-Smirnov test	
	Skewness	Kurtosis	Z-value	Level of significance
Ethical leadership	0/447	0/930	1/25	0/088
Collective efficacy	0/276	0/287	1/14	0/142
Job involvement	0/394	0/603	1/18	0/122

To assess the validity of the research tools, construct validity method was employed. Confirmatory factor analysis was utilized to examine the construct validity of the research questionnaires, and the results are presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4.

Table 2: Goodness of Fit Indices Around the Evaluation of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Ethical Leadership

Index	Fitness scale	Observed value	Result
X^2/df	Less than 3	2/12	Fit
RMSEA	Less than 0.1	0/079	Fit
CFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/94	Fit
GFA	between 0.9 and 1	0/98	Fit
IFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/98	Fit
NFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/98	Fit
RMR	Less than 0.05	0/026	Fit
Chi-square: 100/35; Degree of freedom: 32; Significance level: 0/000			

Table 3: Goodness of Fit Indices Around the Evaluation of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model of Teachers' Collective Efficacy

Index	Fitness scale	Observed value	Result
X^2/df	Less than 3	2/76	Fit
RMSEA	Less than 0.1	0/072	Fit
CFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/94	Fit
GFA	between 0.9 and 1	0/93	Fit
IFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/98	Fit
NFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/96	Fit
RMR	Less than 0.05	0/047	Fit
Chi-square: 146/68; Degree of freedom: 53; Significance level: 0/000			

Table 4: Goodness of Fit Indices Around the Evaluation of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model of Job Involvement

Index	Fitness scale	Observed value	Result
X^2/df	Less than 3	2/58	Fit
RMSEA	Less than 0.1	0/087	Fit
CFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/99	Fit
GFA	between 0.9 and 1	0/95	Fit
IFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/99	Fit
NFI	between 0.9 and 1	0/98	Fit
RMR	Less than 0.05	0/037	Fit
Chi-square: 85/98; Degree of freedom: 24; Significance level: 0/000			

Table 5: Descriptive Data On the Main Research Variables

Variable	Number	Mean	Standard deviation	Pearson correlation coefficient		
				1	2	3
Ethical leadership	343	4/11	0/674	1	0/296[**]	0/321[**]
Self-efficacy	343	3/14	0/423		1	/294[**]
Job involvement	343	3/85	0/851			1

[**]It is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 5 shows that the mean for ethical leadership, based on the Likert scoring range of 1 to 5, was 4.11. The mean self-efficacy score for teachers was 3.14, while their mean job involvement was 3.85. The correlation coefficients between the research variables were found to be statistically significant at a level of 0.01. Of these correlations, the strongest one was observed between ethical leadership and job involvement, with a coefficient of 0.321.

Research hypothesis explanation

1. There is a significant relationship between ethical leadership and its dimensions and collective efficacy and its dimensions.

The correlation coefficient between ethical leadership and teachers' collective efficacy is equal to 0.296, which is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, there is a positive and significant relationship between teachers' ethical leadership and collective efficacy. The results of Table 6 show that there is a significant and positive relationship between ethical leadership and all its dimensions with teachers' collective efficacy and all its dimensions.

Table 6: Correlation Test Regarding the Relationship Between Ethical Leadership and Its Dimensions with Teachers' Collective Efficacy and Its Dimensions

Predictor variable	Criterion variable		
	Task analysis	Group competence	Collective efficacy
Interpersonal relationships	0/258[**]	0/214[**]	0/294[**]
Role modelling	0/184[**]	0/142[**]	0/204[**]
Practicality	0/227[**]	0/254[**]	0/297[**]
Ethical leadership	0/250[**]	0/227[**]	0/296[**]

Multiple regression analysis was employed to explore the impact of ethical leadership dimensions on job self-efficacy. The findings of Table 7 reveal that the multiple correlation coefficient and adjusted explanatory coefficient were 0.338 and 0.106, respectively. This indicates that there is a shared variance of 10.6% between the ethical leadership dimension model and job self-efficacy variable. In other words, ethical leadership dimensions

can predict 10.6 percent of changes in teachers' collective efficacy. Furthermore, the results indicated that the F value (14.52) was significant at a level of 0.01, leading to the conclusion that ethical leadership dimensions are significant predictors of teachers' collective efficacy.

Table 7: Summary of multiple regression analysis on the prediction of teachers' collective efficacy through ethical leadership dimensions

Model	Multiple correlation coefficient	Coefficient of explanation	Adjusted coefficient of explanation	F value	Significance
Simultaneous	0/338	0/114	0/106	14/52	0/000

2: There is a significant relationship between ethical leadership and its dimensions and job involvement and its dimensions.

The correlation coefficient between ethical leadership and job involvement is equal to 0.321, which is significant at the 0.01 level. Based on the findings presented in Table 8, it can be concluded

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that there exists a significant and positive correlation between ethical leadership and job involvement. Additionally, it can be inferred that all dimensions of ethical leadership exhibit a positive and meaningful relationship with both job involvement and its respective dimensions

Table 8: Correlation test regarding the relationship between ethical leadership and its dimensions with job involvement and its dimensions

Predictor variable	Criterion variable			
	vitality	dedication	Flow	Job involvement
Interpersonal relationships	0/297**	0/207**	0/263**	0/279**
Role modelling	0/313**	0/185**	0/208**	0/258**
Practicality	0/394**	0/242**	0/248**	0/324**
Ethical leadership	0/373**	0/236**	0/269**	0/321**

Multiple regression analysis was employed to examine the extent to which ethical leadership dimensions can predict job involvement. The findings from Table 9 reveal that the multiple correlation coefficient was 0.336, and the adjusted explanatory coefficient was 0.105. Thus, it can be inferred that there is a shared variance of 10.5% between the composite model of ethical leadership dimensions and job involvement. The dimensions of ethical leadership were found to account for 10.5% of the variance in job involvement. Furthermore, based on the significance of the F value, it can be concluded that ethical leadership dimensions are significant predictors of job involvement

Table 9: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis On Predicting Job Involvement Through Ethical Leadership Dimensions

Model	Multiple correlation coefficient	Coefficient of explanation	Adjusted coefficient of explanation	F value	Significance
Simultaneous	0/336	0/113	0/105	14/40	0/000

3: There is a significant relationship between teachers' collective efficacy and its dimensions with job involvement and its dimensions.

The results of Table10 show that there exists a significant correlation coefficient of 0.294, which is significant at the 0.01 level, between teachers' collective efficacy and job involvement. The results indicate that there is a notable and positive correlation between teachers' collective efficacy and their job involvement. Moreover, the investigation into the relationship between collective efficacy and job involvement demonstrates that the strongest correlation exists between group competence and flow at work, with a correlation coefficient of 0.261, while the weakest correlation is observed between task analysis and dedication, with a correlation coefficient of 0.162.

Table 10: Correlation Test Regarding the Relationship Between Teachers' Collective Efficacy and Its Dimensions with Job Involvement and Its Dimensions

Predictor variable	Criterion variable			
	Vitality	Dedication	Flow	Job involvement
Task analysis	0/259**	0/162**	0/191**	0/223**
Group competence	0/245**	0/190**	0/261**	0/253**
Collective efficacy	0/313**	0/218**	0/278**	0/294**

Table 11 reveals a multiple correlation coefficient of 0.296 and an adjusted explanatory coefficient of 0.082, indicating an 8.2% shared variance between the composite model of teachers' collective efficacy dimensions and the job involvement variable. This demonstrates a significant relationship between the two factors. In other words, the dimensions of teachers' collective efficacy can account for 8.2% of the variance in job involvement. The statistical significance of the F value (16.29) at the 0.01 level indicates that the dimensions of teachers' collective efficacy are significant predictors of job involvement. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers' collective efficacy is an important factor affecting their job involvement.

Table 11: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis On Predicting Job Involvement Through Collective Efficacy Dimensions

Model	Multiple correlation coefficient	Coefficient of explanation	Adjusted coefficient of explanation	F value	Significance
Simultaneous	0/296	0/088	0/082	16/29	0/000

4.Testing research conceptual model based on the effect of ethical leadership on job involvement, directly and through teachers' collective efficacy.

This section presents the outcomes of conducting structural equation modelling to examine the impact of ethical leadership on teachers' job involvement, both directly and indirectly via teachers' collective efficacy. The final observed model is provided in Diagram 1 and Diagram 2, which represent the standard and significance estimation modes, respectively.
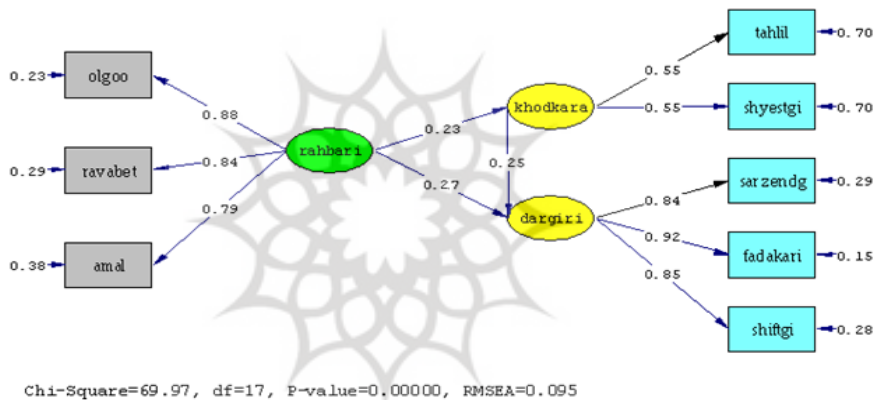

Chi-Square=69.97, df=17, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.095

Diagram 1: The final research model in standard estimation mode

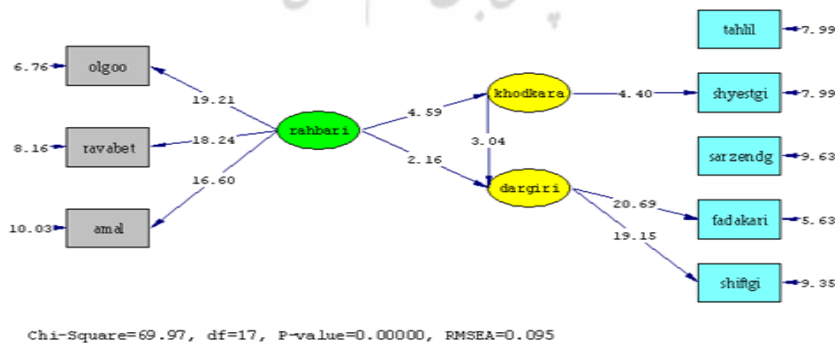Chi-Square=69.97, df=17, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.095

Diagram 2: The final research model in significance mode

Table 12 presents a summary of the structural equation model used to analyse the relationships between ethical leadership, teachers' collective efficacy, and job involvement. The t values associated with each path coefficient exceed 1.96, indicating that the relationships between the research variables are statistically significant and thus confirmed. Accordingly, the path coefficient of ethical leadership to teachers' collective efficacy is significant at the 0.05 level with a beta of 0.23. Additionally, the path coefficient of ethical leadership with job involvement is also significant at the 0.05 level with a beta of 0.27, and the path coefficient of collective efficacy of teachers with job involvement is significant at the same level with a beta of 0.25. These results show that the partial hypotheses of the research based on the two-by-two relationships of the variables are confirmed.

Table 12: Summary of the structural equation model regarding the analysis of ethical leadership, collective efficacy and job involvement.

Path	Path coefficient	T value	Result
Ethical leadership to job involvement	0/27	2/16	Confirmed
Ethical leadership to collective efficacy	0/23	4/59	Confirmed
collective efficacy to job involvement	0/25	3/04	Confirmed

Table 13 displays the goodness of fit indices used to assess the suitability of the final research model. All goodness indices confirm that the experimental research model is a good fit. As most of these indicators point towards a suitable model, it can be concluded that the conceptual framework of the research, which focuses on the influence of ethical leadership on job involvement through teacher's collective efficacy, has been directly confirmed and accepted as the final model. Consequently, it confirms the hypothesis that teachers' efficacy plays a mediating role in explaining the relationship between ethical leadership and job involvement.

Table 13: Goodness of Fit Indices Around the Evaluation of the Final Research Model

Index	Fitness criteria	Observed value	Result
X^2/df	Less than 3	2/31	fit
RMSEA	Less than 0.1	0/095	fit
CFI	Between 0.9 and 1	0/94	fit
GFA	Between 0.9 and 1	0/90	fit
IFI	Between 0.9 and 1	0/995	fit
NFI	Between 0.9 and 1	0/995	fit
RMR	Less than 0.05	0/041	fit
Chi square: 69.97 Degree of freedom: 17 Significance level: 0.000			

Results and Discussion

The first hypothesis analysis revealed a significant correlation coefficient between ethical leadership and teachers' collective efficacy at the 0.01 level. This indicates a positive relationship between ethical leadership and teachers' collective efficacy. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that all dimensions of ethical leadership have a positive and significant relationship with both the dimensions of teachers' collective efficacy. In terms of ethical leadership, the dimensions that have the strongest correlation with teachers' collective efficacy are practicality, interpersonal relationships, and being a role model. These findings align with previous research by Mary Lynne & Pamela (2013) and Lei Huang & Paterson (2014), which showed that ethical leaders within an organization have a positive impact on the efficacy and capacity of their employees.

The second hypothesis of the research was analysed, revealing a significant correlation coefficient between ethical leadership and job involvement. This indicates that ethical leadership serves as a predictor of job involvement. Furthermore, the results demonstrate a positive and meaningful relationship between ethical leadership and all its dimensions with job involvement and all its dimensions. The dimension of ethical leadership that exhibits the strongest correlation with job involvement is practicality. Based on the findings of this study, it can be inferred that enhancing the ethical leadership skills of school managers would lead to higher levels of job involvement among teachers and greater

attachment to their profession. The findings align with the research conducted by Rabiei et al. (2021), Mahdnejad, Vali, Arbabi, Abdul Hamid (2019), Heydari (2022), Inglebert et al. (2014) and Haghiri (2009). The study demonstrated that enhancing ethical leadership positively affects employee engagement and retention rates, resulting in decreased frequency of turnover.

The analysis of the third hypothesis of the research shows a significant correlation coefficient between teachers' collective efficacy and their job involvement. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between teachers' collective efficacy and job involvement. This suggests that teachers with greater self-efficacy demonstrate more engagement in their professional activities, and their work environment serves as a source of motivation. Furthermore, teachers exhibit a strong sense of self-efficacy and exhibit passion and interest in their profession, which contributes to their satisfaction with the work environment. These findings are consistent with prior research studies conducted by Skalvik & Skalvik (2014), Ramzanpour et al. (2019), Anna & Jiangang (2019), as well as Nemati Amirkalaei (2013).

Finally, the study concluded that teachers' self-efficacy plays a crucial role in mediating the relationship between ethical leadership and job involvement. This confirms the fourth hypothesis that ethical leadership has a direct effect on the level of job involvement and teachers' sense of self-efficacy, as well as an indirect effect on

teachers' job involvement through their collective efficacy. These findings are consistent with previous research by Piccolo et al. (2010), Emadi-Far (2009), Golparvar et al. (2010) and Mohammad Davoudi & Valai Maleki (2013). The results suggest that ethical leadership entails a recognition of the significance of interpersonal relationships, which enables school teachers to articulate their individual and collective emotions and aspirations. Ethical leaders also demonstrate respect for teachers' viewpoints and recommendations by providing transparent and timely evaluations. Simultaneously, they address areas for improvement while preserving the integrity of the teacher. Ethical leaders also serve as an example for other members of the school community, particularly teachers, by exhibiting behaviours grounded in absolute values. This type of leadership fosters an environment in which teachers feel their dignity is upheld, their opinions are valued in decision-making processes, and their contributions are recognized. As a result, teachers experience a heightened sense of efficacy. Bandura posits that individuals who possess a heightened sense of self-efficacy are more inclined to engage in activities and attain their desired outcomes with greater enthusiasm and confidence. Consequently, the proposition that ethical leaders serve as the foundation for enhancing teachers' enthusiasm and job involvement through the promotion of their self-efficacy beliefs is logically justifiable.

Discussing ethics and morals is a highly significant and delicate subject in organizations, particularly in those related to education. The significance and delicacy of education and schools are evident given that these institutions are pivotal in nurturing specialists and future architects of society. Hence, due to its significance, it is imperative that schools prioritize the teaching of ethics and morals, which remains one of the foremost challenges facing society today. To achieve this goal, we require school managers and teachers who embody ethics. Ethical managers have a significant impact on the school community, particularly teachers, by setting an ethical environment as the head of the organization. The presence of honest and ethical leaders in schools has a beneficial impact on the performance of teachers. Ethical leadership in schools involves facilitating teachers' expression of individual and collective emotions and aspirations, thereby promoting their personal and professional advancement. This, in turn, enhances teachers' self-efficacy and motivates them to become more committed to their work, as well as to engage more actively in school-related activities. Leaders who prioritize ethical tendencies, respect, and positive relationships with teachers can enhance the vitality, energy, ability, and teachers' self-efficacy. By fostering a healthy ethical atmosphere and attending to the psychological needs of teachers, job satisfaction and involvement can increase while burnout decreases in the school environment.

The results revealed that ethical leadership in schools has a positive impact on teachers' self-efficacy and job involvement. As a result, enhancing

ethical leadership in schools can heighten teachers' self-efficacy and job involvement, which in turn directly affects students' performance and contributes to the attainment of educational objectives. Furthermore, creating an appropriate moral atmosphere in schools lays the groundwork for effective school activities and moral education. Moreover, creating an appropriate ethical atmosphere in schools can establish the basis for effective school activities and ethical education. The study's results indicate that ethical leadership is demonstrated through certain behaviours, including active listening, prioritizing employee concerns, being honest in speech and actions, acknowledging subordinates' accomplishments, assisting with career and professional challenges, and empowering employees. These actions contribute to the enhancement of individuals' self-efficacy and lead to increased enthusiasm and job involvement.

Research Limitations and Recommendations

As with any research, the present study has encountered certain limitations that need to be acknowledged for the appropriate utilization and generalization of the results. Firstly, individuals may have consciously or unconsciously presented an overly positive self-image. Secondly, participants may have exhibited conservatism when completing the ethical leadership questionnaire. The research suggests several practical recommendations based on its results:

- Education leaders should acknowledge the significance of ethical leadership in schools. It is crucial for them to familiarize themselves with the prevailing issues faced by educational leaders nationwide, and establish ethical protocols and moral standards in schools through the implementation of an ethical framework.

- To effectively demonstrate ethical leadership values, the organization must prioritize their integration throughout the recruitment, training, and development process. Additionally, it is important to recognize and reward teachers who have upheld ethical standards within their actions.

- Given that self-efficacy is a belief system and personality trait that individuals acquire, educational authorities can enhance academic performance by conducting in-service training sessions and imparting knowledge about self-efficacy to teachers.

- Education managers and school managers are advised to implement the ethical leadership style in the field of management and educational leadership and conduct in-service training courses for school managers to teach them how to apply this leadership style in schools.

- Education managers should provide substantial and pragmatic assistance while also motivating school managers to implement ethical leadership practices in order to address and resolve issues related to teachers' job involvements, which ultimately result in a reduction of such involvements.

• It is crucial for schools to prioritize the psychological and emotional well-being of their teachers by addressing any sources of disruption or tension in the workplace. Ethical leadership practices can be effective in promoting a healthier work environment and supporting teachers' mental health.

• It is recommended that school managers increase the commitment, involvement, efficiency, participation, and sense of duty of teachers in the work environment by implementing ethical leadership. This can be achieved by diversifying the activities of teachers, granting them authority and providing opportunities for their participation in activities. Group meetings and feedback sessions can also be used as a means to improve the level of teachers' job involvement in schools.

Among other limitations of the present study are the limited availability of data and various methods of data collection, which in this research was solely conducted based on quantitative approach and questionnaire. Also, according to the nature of the relationship between managers and employees in different settings, cultural and organizational differences may affect the approaches and research results. These differences should be taken into account in the analysis and results, because schools have their own particular culture and differ with other organizations; and this difference should be considered in the results.

According to the obtained results, it is recommended to school leaders to consider their positive ethical leadership style that acts as an excellent organizational resource and encourages employees to increase their level of participation. Moreover, it encourages employees to show more efficiency and job involvement, try to develop ethical leadership counselling and training and try to do this by holding courses for educational managers and leaders to make this style of leadership more prominent in schools. It is suggested that by creating an ethical atmosphere in the organization, school leaders should establish effective communication and constructive feedback with their teachers. By sharing expectations, providing useful guidelines and acceptable feedback, ethical leaders try to strengthen teachers' self-efficacy and job involvement. Eventually, it is suggested that principals should trust their teachers and encourage them for their abilities and create a safe and supportive environment in order to strengthen the self-efficacy of teachers and provide the necessary opportunities and resources for teachers' involvement and professional development.

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