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EXAMINING THE PSYCHOMETRIC PROPERTIES AND VALIDATING THE MULTI-DIMENSION ETHICAL LEADERSHIP INSTRUMENT IN BANKING SECTOR OF PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the psychometric properties and validation of the multi-dimensional instrument of ethical leadership encompassing orientation, fairness, power-sharing, ethical guidance, role clarification and integrity dimensions in the banking sector of Pakistan. For the data collection purpose, five hundred questionnaires were distributed to the employees of banks in the province of Sindh, Pakistan based on multi-stage cluster sampling. A total of one hundred ninety one usable questionnaires were received. The Partial Least Squares (PLS) path modeling was adopted to analyze the data using Smart-PLS 2.0. The findings revealed that all the ethical leadership dimensions considered in the study were highly relevant. The results of the study also demonstrate an adequate level of internal consistency, reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity for each of the dimensions. This study has confirmed that the ethical leadership instrument could be useful in measuring ethical leadership construct in the service sector. The study findings established that ethical leadership dimensions demonstrate adequate psychometric properties in the banking sector of Sindh, Pakistan.

***Keywords**: Ethical leadership, Psychometric Properties, Banking, Pakistan.*

INTRODUCTION

The leader of the organization is an important position and who plays an important role in formulating the behavior of the employees (Dewettinck & van Ameijde, 2011). Unethical behavior of the organizational leaders has directed the attention of practitioners and academicians towards the research on ethical leadership (Walumbwa,

Hartnell, & Misati, 2017). Ethical leadership and ethical behavior play a central role in reducing frauds and scandals in the organization (Waldman, Siegel & Javidan, 2006). Repeated scandals of frauds involving corporate and public sector leaders over the past decade have increased the interest in studying ethical leadership subject (Johnson, 2017). Previous research studies have highlighted that ethical leadership is warranted due to the increase in employee's ability to deal with different situations and to bring the solutions based on ethical norms (Sabiu et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2013). The relationship between leadership and ethics is natural (Hartnell et al., 2016), as the ethical leader performs actions based on morals and ethics (Mayer, Kuenzi, Greenbaum, Bardes, & Salvador, 2009).

Previous literature has focused on ethical leadership in diverse areas including medicine and finance (Ciulla et al., 2018). In the past decade, interest in studying the antecedents, outcomes, and processes of ethical leadership has attracted considerable attention of the researchers. However, there have also been controversies in the literature of ethical leadership with regard to its effective measurement (Kalshoven, Den Hartog, & De Hoogh, 2011). Researchers have suggested different ways to measure employee perception with regard to effective leadership styles (Northouse, 2015; Brown & Treviño, 2006; House, 1971). In addition, studies specifically focusing on measuring ethical leadership through questionnaires, covering various dimensions of ethical leadership provided confusing results in terms of the number of items for effective measurement of leadership styles (Langlois et al., 2014; Yukl et. al., 2013; Kalshoven et al., 2011). Thus, in line with the above elaborations, the present study aims at attempting the existing body of knowledge on the ethical leadership literature by examining the psychometric properties of ethical leadership constructs. In order to achieve the research objective, the data has been employed from the banking sector of Pakistan. In this connection, the present study attempts to address the following key research question:

- What are the psychometric properties of the ethical leadership questionnaire and its structure factors in the Pakistani banking sector context?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ethical Leadership

Research on ethics has received much attention from researchers and scholars (Kalshoven, 2010). Likewise, scandals, frauds, and breakdown

of trust within the organization have remained an area of concern for the business leaders and organizations (Waldman et al., 2006; Mendonca, 2001). Many authors, such as Tanner, Brügger, van Schie, and Lebherz (2015), and Piccolo, Greenbaum, Hartog, and Folger (2010), state that ethical leadership is instrumental in reducing the misconduct and absenteeism, and hence, enhancing the performance of employees and organizations as a whole. Ethical leadership becomes more significant and essential pillar to the effective organizational operation, especially in countries where relatively higher cases of corruption are recorded (Conrad, 2013). Several authors have discussed the different discourses on ethical leadership, as a leader's integrity; honesty, and trustworthiness. Van Gils et al. (2015), have explained that ethical leadership is considered to be beneficial to others. These authors have further added that a good behavior of leaders helps in avoiding conflicts at the workplace. The success of ethical leadership is based on ethical standards; fair treatment with followers, and, in the true sense, endorses ethical behavior by practicing and dealing ethics and holding everyone liable for it (Yukl et al., 2013).

Leaders play a central role in uplifting the morale of the employees and become a real guide for them (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). Ethical leadership is also positively related to affective trust in the leader and negatively related to abusive supervision (Brown et al., 2005). Research on organizational leadership has long suggested that leaders' honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness are among the most important predictors of leadership effectiveness (Hoffman, Woehr, Maldagen-Youngjohn, & Lyons, 2011). An ethical leader must be honest, altruistic, fair decision maker. He is not only supposed to act in the interest of employees but also for the well-being of society as a whole. In addition, those moral principles values, actions, and ethics are seen in the ethical leaders (Newman et al., 2014). Ethical leaders influence their followers with their style of leadership based on ethical and moral standards, which helps eradicate the unethical behavior within the followers Mayer et al. (2009), proposed a trickle-down model in this aspect and found that the ethical leadership flows down from executives to employees via the supervisory level. Frisch and Huppenbauer (2014), state that the ethical leadership concept goes beyond conventional leadership concepts, as it adds the element of the moral manager who promotes the employees' ethical conduct.

The extant literature on ethical leadership offers several measures of ethical leadership. Some of these include Perceived Leader Integrity Scale

(PLIS) (Craig & Gustafson 1998), Ethical Leadership Scale (Brown et al. 2005), Ethical Leadership at Work Questionnaire (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008), and Servant Leadership Questionnaire (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006).

Perceived Leader Integrity Scale (PLIS) was developed by Craig and Gustafson (1998), on the ethical traits of leadership. The PLS questionnaire aimed at identifying the observable traits of a leader and consist of thirty one items that describe several types of unethical behaviours. The respondents were asked to record their observations in four choices (i.e. not at all, somewhat, very much, exactly). Parry and Proctor-Thompson (2002), validated the instrument. However, the instrument had certain limitations such as the lack of positively worded items. Since the absence of unethical behaviour does not necessarily imply the presence of ethical qualities in the leader, the excess of negatively worded items was one of the noticeable drawbacks of this instrument.

Secondly, in a survey called Ethical Leadership Scale seeking to elicit the core characteristics of ethical leadership, Brown and Treviño (2006), found that honesty, fairness, communication and role modelling of ethical behaviours, values, and accountability were the key qualities of ethical leaders. Based on these findings, Brown et al. (2005), devised a questionnaire to measure these characteristics. The questionnaire was validated in later studies confirming that leader's overall score on the questionnaire was the predictor of job satisfaction among employees and perceived effectiveness of leaders.

Another measure of ethical leadership used in literature was developed by De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008). Using the interviews and questionnaire, the authors conducted a study on the ethical leadership in top management, the authors concluded that the aspects of fairness and morality were distinctive properties of ethical leadership which differ significantly from power sharing and autocratic behaviours among managers.

Furthermore, the authentic leadership questionnaire used in leadership literature was developed by Walumbwa et al. (2008). The questionnaire primarily measures the core traits of authentic leadership by the means of four scales including self-awareness, related transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing. While each of the scales aims at describing leadership behaviour, it strongly reflects that the internalized moral perspective carries a noteworthy relationship with ethical leadership.

Internalized moral perspective assumes that leader's behaviour is an outcome of his moral standards, beliefs, and values. The other theme in the questionnaire which seems somewhat relevant to ethical leadership is relational transparency, which suggests that leader exhibits her norms, beliefs, and values accurately. In other words, the leader means what he says. Moreover, the other two aspects of authentic leadership questionnaire, however, have no substantial relevance to ethical leadership.

Finally, an instrument called the Servant Leadership Questionnaire also serves as a measure of ethical leadership. The questionnaire was developed by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), and contains five subscales namely: altruism; organizational stewardship; persuasive mapping; wisdom; and emotional intelligence. Each of the scales includes four of five items. In this questionnaire, the subscales relating to altruism has an important bearing in the context of ethical leadership. Leader's personal traits like putting organizational/employee interests ahead of his personal interests; willingness to sacrifice his personal benefits for meeting employees' needs etc. are some essential characteristics defining ethical leadership.

In short, there appears a substantial confusion in the literature on the scope, domain, and measurement of ethical leadership. However, some of the topics which seem most pertinent to ethical leadership include honesty; integrity, enforcing ethical standards; fairness; kindness and concern for others.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Adapted from the work of Kalshoven (2010); and De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008), six dimensions of ethical leadership which include orientation; fairness; power-sharing; ethical guidance; role clarification; and integrity are examined in this study.

Sample and Technique

This study administered the scale validation technique using the sample from the private banks of Pakistan. For this reason, the respondents taken were the private bank employees. The present study followed the multi-stage cluster sampling on the guidelines of Kothari (2004), and Allen et al. (2002). A cluster (a group of population elements), constitutes the sampling unit, instead of a single element of the population. The sampling in this technique is mainly geographically driven and the population is divided into subgroups (clusters) like families. A simple random sample is taken from each cluster.

Using these criteria in this study, first the population is considered at country (Pakistan) level and then it is divided into provinces; from four provinces, Sindh province was selected; furthermore, the population of Sindh province was divided into four major regional fractions including Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana and Sukkur; thus data was collected from banks located in all these four segments of Sindh province (Kothari, 2004; Allen et al., 2002).

The total population for this study according to the Pakistan Banking Association was 70,594, whereas, referring to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the total number of respondents for a population of 50,000 should be 381 and 382 for a population of 75,000. Hence a total number of 382 respondents were minimum required. There is a severe paucity of research on the banking sector and on its services in the Pakistan region (Umrani et al., 2018), especially in the Sindh province. Therefore, finding a specific response rate is very hard.

For responsive and sufficient data collection, researchers extended the original sample size as suggested by Bartlett et al. (2001), and Joseph Hair (2018). Hence 500 questionnaires were circulated amongst the banking employees in Sindh province out of which 323 questionnaires were returned. However, after preliminary data screening (discarding incomplete questionnaires, removing outliers) a total of 191 usable questionnaires were used for the data analysis.

RESULTS

Table 1. Respondent's Profile

Respondent's profile frequency	
Gender	
Male	101
Female	90
Education	
Master	127
Bachelor	11
Diploma	48
Others	5
Age	
20-30	110
31-40	58
41-50	19
51-60	4

Table 1 shows the ratio of 101 males and 90 female employees in the bank which indicates the presence of male employees almost equal to that of female employees. The table indicates that 127 employees have master's degree during employment in the bank, while the number of employees holding bachelors, diplomas, and others was 11, 48, and 5 respectively. Therefore, the sample is dominated by the employees having a masters degree. Considering the age distribution, the category under 20-30 includes 110 employees, 30-40 category includes 58, 41-50 category contains 19 respondents, while 51-60 category included only 4 employees. The age distribution suggests that more than half of the sample consists of young employees between 20 to 30 years of age.

ANALYSIS & RESULTS

In order to examine the dimensions of ethical leadership in the banking sector of Pakistan, Partial Least Squares (PLS) path modeling was adopted. The analysis was carried out using Smart-PLS 2.0 developed by Ringle et al. (2005). The Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique is gaining popularity in research for its user-friendly approach and other powerful mechanics. Besides its numerous other powerful functions, this approach is highly advised as a useful tool when the objective of the study is to test and validate the models (Hair et al., 2012; Henseler et al., 2009). The present study used Smart-PLS 2.0 for examining the psychometric properties of the ethical leadership questionnaire through validating measurement model. In this regard, the study has established and reported individual item reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity; Table 2 and Table 3 depict the results of the measurement.

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Ethical Leadership

Code	Indicators	PO	FN	PS	EG	RC	IN
	People Orientation						
PO1	Is interested in how I feel and how I am doing	0.94					
PO2	Takes time for personal contact	0.72					
PO3	Pays attention to my personal needs.	0.79					
PO4	Takes time to talk about work-related emotions.	0.87					
PO5	Is genuinely concerned about my personal development.	0.69					
PO6	Sympathizes with me when I have problems.	0.67					
PO5	Cares about his/her followers.	0.76					

	Fairness						
FN1	Holds me accountable for problems over which I have no control.		0.82				
FN2	Holds me responsible for work that I have no control over.		0.83				
FN3	Holds me responsible for things that are not my fault.		0.72				
FN4	Pursues his/her own success at the expense of others.		0.75				
FN5	Is focused mainly on reaching his/her own goals.		0.63				
FN6	Manipulates subordinates		0.69				
	Power Sharing						
PS1	Allows subordinates to influence critical decisions.			0.92			
PS2	Does not allow others to participate in decision making			0.71			
PS3	Seeks advice from subordinates concerning organizational strategy			0.87			
PS4	Will reconsider decisions on the basis of recommendations			0.81			
PS5	Delegates challenging responsibilities to subordinates			0.86			
PS6	Permits me to play a key role in setting my own performance goals			0.75			
PS7	Concern for sustainability			0.73			
PS8	Would like to work in an environmentally friendly manner			0.82			
PS9	Shows concern for sustainability issues			0.93			
PS10	Stimulates recycling of items and materials in our department			0.65			
	Ethical Guidance						
EG1	Clearly explains integrity related codes of conduct				0.69		
EG2	Explains what is expected from employees in terms of behaving with integrity			0.68			
EG3	Clarifies integrity guidelines				0.72		
EG4	Ensures that employees follow codes of integrity				0.87		

EG5	Clarifies the likely consequences of possible unethical behavior by myself and my colleagues				0.67		
EG6	Stimulates the discussion of integrity issues among employees				0.81		
EG7	Compliments employees who behave according to the integrity guidelines			0.73			
	Role Clarification						
RC1	Indicates what the performance expectations of each group member are					0.82	
RC2	Explains what is expected of each group member					0.87	
RC3	Explains what is expected of me and my colleagues					0.69	
RC4	Clarifies priorities					0.65	
RC5	Clarifies who is responsible for what					0.83	
	Integrity						
IN1	Keeps his/her promises						0.68
IN2	Can be trusted to do the things he/she says						0.69
IN3	Can be relied on to honors his						0.92
IN4	Always keeps his/her words						0.65
	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	0.921	0.720	0.740	0.707	0.821	0.813
	Composite Reliability (CR)	0.930	0.881	0.780	0.901	0.791	0.960

Individual Item Reliability

The individual item reliability, obtained using confirmatory factor analysis, is ascertained though factor loadings whereby an item loading has to be greater 0.50 or more (Hair et al., 2012). Table 2 presents the results of individual item reliability which range from 0.61 to 0.94. Hence, it is concluded that the present study demonstrates adequate inter-item reliability.

Internal Consistency Reliability

The internal consistency reliability denotes the degree to which every item in an individual scale measures the same concept (Bijttebier et al., 2000). Hair et al. (2011), stated that a construct meets the composite reliability criterion when it scores 0.7 or more. The composite reliability coefficients are shown in Table 2, which depict that all the constructs of the present study (ranged between 0.780 to 0.960) have met the criterion. Therefore, the results indicate that all constructs meet the minimum requirement of acceptability.

Convergent Validity

The concept of convergent validity denotes that items truly represent

the intended latent constructs and correlate with other measures of the same latent construct (Joseph Hair, 2018). This validity was ascertained on the basis of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the latent variables following the guidelines of Chin (1998); according to him, the suggested minimum AVE threshold is 0.5 or above for each of the latent construct. Table 2 outlines that the average variance extracted for the dimensions ranged between 0.720 to 0.921 respectively. It, therefore, suggests that the current study has successfully demonstrated the convergent validity.

Discriminant Validity

Lastly, the current study attempted to assess the discriminant validity of all the latent variables. The discriminant validity denotes the degree to which a given latent variable is different from other latent variables (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). The discriminant validity was assessed by drawing upon the guidelines suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). According to the authors, the square root of average variance extracted should be above the correlations among latent variables. The square-root of AVE (in the boldface values) and correlations among latent constructs are provided in Table 3.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6
People orientation	**0.844**					
Fairness	0.253	**0.781**				
Power sharing	0.712	0.276	**0.821**			
Ethical guidance	0.623	0.761	0.602	**0.901**		
Role clarification	0.521	0.673	-0.73	0.359	**0.790**	
Integrity	0.631	0.501	.0261	0.198	0.419	**0.793**

The square root of the AVE value suggest that all the latent constructs have successfully demonstrated a satisfactory level of discriminant validity; as all the values of the square root of AVE were greater than the correlations. Therefore, the findings confirm that all the dimensions of ethical leadership construct have sufficiently met the requirement of discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009).

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the psychometric properties of ethical leadership in the banking sector of Pakistan. The main aim of this study was to contribute to the ethical leadership literature in establishing its psychometric properties. Five dimensions of ethical leadership were tested

which include orientation, fairness, power-sharing, ethical guidance, role clarification, and integrity. The study confirmed that the ethical leadership questionnaire demonstrated adequate psychometric properties. Furthermore, previous findings have also supported this multi-dimensional ethical leadership scale (Yukl et al., 2013; Langlois & Lapointe, 2010; Langlois & Lapointe, 2007). This study confirms that ethical leadership instrument/questionnaire has high reliability and discriminant validity. Hence, it encourages using ethical leadership measurement in future research. Previous studies on ethical leadership dimensions, were examined in the developed countries with specific samples and limited focus on the industries (Yang, et al., 2016), whereas this study examined the psychometric properties of ethical leadership in developing country (Pakistan). Finally, the result of this study confirmed that all the constructs of ethical leadership meet the criteria in the banking sector of Pakistan.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The authors of this study also came across some limitations. Due to time and cost constraints, the sample for this study was limited to only one province of Pakistan. Moreover, it is probable that some of the respondents have hesitated to provide the requested information. Care should also be taken to generalize the findings of this study as it is based on the banking sector only. Hence, it is recommended that the data collection may be made possibly at the country level; across the service sector industry and in other industries too. Finally, the present study applies cross-sectional data. It would be useful to apply longitudinal data to study the same sector or different sectors.

IMPLICATIONS OF STUDY

The present study encourages using the ethical leadership measurement in organization. The banking sector has become increasingly cognizant of the importance of ethical leadership. Hence, bank managers need to consider and play the due role in the cultivating and understanding the ethical leadership within the organization.

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