The Effect of Ethical Leadership on Job Satisfaction and Affective Commitment: A Quantitative Case Study

By

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Abstract

This study investigated the effects of ethical leadership on employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment at a selected institution of higher education located in the Northeast Region of the United States of America during the management crisis year of 2021. The conceptualization of ethical leaders by Brown et al. (2005) brings about some aspects of transformational, charismatic, and transactional leadership. This is because ethical leadership accentuates behavioral attributes that create an idealized influence on subordinates, their job-related behaviors, attitudes, and interpersonal relationships. Causal research design was employed to measure the variations among variables and determine the nature of the relationship among them. The study revealed that there was a significant positive correlation among all variables. In particular, there was a significant positive strong relationship between Job Satisfaction and Affective Commitment, while the relationship between both Job Satisfaction and Ethical Leadership and Affective Commitment and Ethical Leadership were moderate. The results of hypothesis testing showed that ethical leadership construct yielded a significant direct positive effect on affective commitment construct. Ethical leadership also yielded a significant direct positive effect on job satisfaction construct. The results of the sub-hypothesis testing showed that care construct yielded a significant direct positive effect on both affective commitment and job satisfaction, while critique construct yielded a significant negative effect on job satisfaction. Meanings from the results based on the data and literature are discussed in recommendations and implications for future research section.

Keywords: ethical leadership; job satisfaction; affective commitment

1. Introduction

Providing the right leadership is considered fundamental in helping organizations instill the right attitudes, values, and behaviors on followers, which can, in turn, drive efficiency and performance achievement. Ethical leadership provides a means to promote job satisfaction and increase commitment among employees towards the organization. As regards ethical leadership, organizations should seek to understand what is expected of their leaders in terms of behaviors, actions, and decision-making processes.

From a normative perspective, ethical leaders are seen as individuals with a high degree of moral approbation who demonstrate high levels of honesty, trustworthiness, altruism, integrity, fairness, good character, concern to others, and positive traits them influential to those they lead. These values provide a silent power through which these leaders can create a positive influence on their followers, leading to increased job satisfaction and affective commitment (Tanner et al., 2015). Organizational leaders who exhibit ethical leadership may have a lot of influence on follower's behaviors. One of the ways to nurture positive behaviors and boost morale among followers encompasses providing ethical leadership. Ethical leaders provide role modeling and emphasize ethics and positive behaviors as an overarching goal in their leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006

A good understanding of ethical leadership and what it entails within an influence market, such as organizational contexts, can considerably help in fostering appropriate behaviors among leaders and their followers. Therefore, a study on ethical leadership should form the core of any leadership studies owing to its importance in the modern-day business contexts (Ciulla, 1995). A look into the ethics of leadership sheds some light on what constitutes good and bad leadership. In this context, good leadership refers to the leaders' ability to portray high standards of ethics and competence. This view brings about morality as part and parcel of ethical leadership (Ciulla, 1995). Northouse (2018) provides a different understanding of ethical leadership by underlining leadership influence and interactions, and the importance of organizational values in driving ethical behaviors. In their empirical study, Brown et al. (2006) defined ethical leaders as individuals who can demonstrate normative ethics by how they act, how they relate with other leaders, their followers, and other stakeholders, and those who can provide role modeling on ethical behaviors through positive reinforcement, direct communication, and decision-making processes (p. 596). Dadhich and Bhal (2008) establish that ethical leadership can have a modeling effect on subordinates' pragmatic behaviors. Some of these behaviors relate to commitment towards specific duties and responsibilities, satisfaction with the organizational leadership, and idealistic behaviors portrayed by the leaders.

Past studies on ethical leadership have focused mainly on exploring how this leadership style can drive normative outcomes such as willingness to share information about unethical violations and misconducts, honesty, trustworthiness, idealized traits, and idealized behaviors. In an empirical study, Mayer et al., (2009) adopt a descriptive approach to exploring behavioral ethics. Notably, there is enough evidence that shows a positive relationship between ethical behaviors portrayed by leaders and idealized influence on the propensity to maintain positive and counterproductive behaviors among employees (Brown & Treviño, 2006). The study by Mayer et al. (2009) indicated some associations between ethical and unethical leadership behaviors and their influence on employee attitudes and behaviors.

Starratt's (1991) study on behavioral ethics underlines critique, care, and justice as essential foundational themes that define ethical leadership. Further, Starratt (1991) asserts that moral leadership can be developed through a learning process to build on cognitive and experiential knowledge. Through learning, leaders gain an opportunity to develop intrinsic integrity, which can, in turn, help in reinforcing their ethical responsibilities as leaders. This vision is framed in the ethics of virtues as envisioned by Aristotle, where ethical leadership is seen as being part of a process of moral character development and increased awareness of ethical issues (Starratt, 1991). Ethical leadership is measured in terms of an individual's capacity to demonstrate acceptable and responsible behaviors in their social and professional practice.

Some of the instruments used to measure ethical leadership in the past include the Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS). Initially developed by Brown et al. (2005), the scale provides a means to test multiple items such as "the leader speaks out against unfair practices," "the leader has the best interests of employees in mind," "the leader establishes trust in my relationships with others," "the leader tries to make people aware that some situations disproportionately privilege some groups," and "the leader sets an example of how to do things the right way in terms of ethics," among others (Ofori, 2009). However, the ELS has some limitations in that its use is limited to individuals who are knowledgeable about leadership ethics and its use among non-experienced individuals can lead to research bias. Secondly, the different items examined by the ELS are abstract and do not accurately measure the leadership

behaviors. Characteristically, ethical leadership involves a great deal of moral judgment where leaders are expected to act judiciously in their professional practice (Langlois et al., 2014). To address some of the limitations associated with ethical leadership scales, this research proposes the use of an ethical leadership questionnaire (ELQ), which provides a means to study the consequences of ethical leadership such as job satisfaction and affective commitment (Langlois et al., 2014).

The ELQ utilizes a descriptive approach to measure the three ethical themes of critique, care, and justice in a tridimensional model. While using the ELQ instrument, the different items allow the researcher to trigger an individual's reflection of their professional conduct while trying to address ethical dilemmas in workplace environments. The Ethical Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ) provides a measurement for the presence of each of the three ethics as defined in the following paragraphs.

Measuring Ethical Leadership Using the ELQ

The application of ELQ is based on the premise that individuals who uphold ethics in leadership roles establish ethical standards that portray them as being altruistic, fair, caring, and concerned about their followers. The ELQ instrument provides a valid measure of important elements that constitute ethical leadership such as integrity, consistency of behaviors that conform with espoused values, honesty, ethical guidance, communication, and altruism. Altogether, these aspects indicate the extent to which a leader upholds ethics of critique, justice, and care in their leadership. Additionally, the ELQ instrument produces high discriminant validity and reliability for task-oriented behaviors like affective commitment and job satisfaction.

Conceptualization of Ethic of Critique

The critiquing dimension of ethical leadership tries to examine how organizational structures, social relations, language use, policies, and corporate laws contribute to various injustices within an organizational setting (Furman, 2003). This ethical dimension illuminates how behavioral perspectives can serve one person's interest at the expense of others. Injustices tend to occur in organizational settings from time to time. However, leaders who utilize the critique dimension of ethics stand in an excellent position to sensitize their followers and balance allocation and access to social benefits. Ethical leaders must uphold a critique stance while dealing with ethical dilemmas relating to social justice, equality, fairness, and human dignity (Langlois et al., 2014). Furman (2003) adds that the ethic of critique provides a clear view of various impediments to fairness within institutional and social settings.

Conceptualization on Ethic of Justice

This ethical perspective tries to look at human dignity as a function of social relations within a community context (Langlois et al., 2014). According to Starratt (1994), the ethic of justice emphasizes uniformity by the manner in which we treat each other. Therefore, leaders who demonstrate the ethic of justice must uphold fairness and abide by certain standards of justice while relating to others. Mainly, this ethical dimension tries to provoke open communication and encourage leaders to demonstrate transparency while relating to others. Further, ethics of justice increases the push for leaders to come up with solutions, even in complex situations where their understanding is challenged. Consequently, this drives responsible autonomy in problem solving and cooperation within a community context.

Conceptualization on Ethics of Care

The ethic of care emphasizes caring as the foundation of ethical leadership. Leaders have a duty to provide natural and ethical care to their followers. The ethics of care places more

value on human relations and calls absolute respect, fidelity, openness to other persons, and remains loyal to other people within a relationship (Starratt, 1991). According to Hassan (2008), "the ethic of care promotes total engrossment and displacement of one's values in another individual, which is a risky act" (160). In this context, moral development depends on the leaders' ability to influence other individuals to follow their ethical principles even when they have an opportunity to follow self-chosen ethical principles.

Many organizations continue to face challenges in promoting employee commitment and job satisfaction. Providing the right leadership can go a long way in driving positive perceptions and attitudes towards leadership, leading to improved employee outcomes. Ethical leadership provides an essential moral framework that can shape the collective character of everyone within an organization (Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015). These characters relate to laudable attributes, attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors that can drive an organization towards more exceptional performance (Neubert et al., 2009).

Nurturing ethical leadership can have an enhancing effect on workplace environments. Ethical leaders can help reinforce positive attitudes among organizational members towards their daily duties and attachments. That is, managers and employees, develop affective commitment towards their organization and job satisfaction, which, in turn, translates to reduced turnover intentions. Organizational commitment refers to "a belief and acceptance of organizational goals and values, the willingness to exert effort toward organizational goals, accomplishments, and a strong desire to maintain organizational membership" (Demirtas et al., 2015, p. 61). Leaders who demonstrate procedural fairness in treating their subordinates, distributional justice, openness to new perspectives, interactional justice may benefit from the increased commitment from their followers (Lee & Corbett, 2006).

Issues like turnover may result from the organization's failure to implement strategies that contribute to job satisfaction, affective commitment, and loyalty from employees (Kim & Brymer, 2011). Organizations can address such issues by developing leaders who can meet the leadership needs of their organizations and create work environments where everyone feels satisfied and comfortable while interacting with others (Lee & Corbett, 2006).

Inferring from the definition of ethical leadership as the "demonstration of normative appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relations, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement through providing ethical standards, rewarding ethical conduct, and discipline the wrongdoers, and decision-making by understanding the importance of their decisions and making fair decisions" (Brown et al. 2005, p. 120). Ethical leadership plays a central role in eliminating barriers to fairness, promoting standards of justice, and reminding individuals about their duty of care in interpersonal relations (Kim et al., 2011). The dimensions of critique, justice, and care demonstrate how organizations can promote satisfaction and affective commitment among employees.

Ethical leaders are naturally motivated, selfless, and concerned about the welfare of others. These leaders serve as legitimate and credible role models and have a significant influence on their subordinates. The credibility of these leaders relates to the ethics of integrity, transparency, honesty, and trustworthiness, which make them attractive to those they lead (Yates, 2011). Leaders gain credibility by behaving in such a way that their actions sync with what they say. Therefore, leaders who demonstrate virtue ethics of integrity, trustworthiness, care, altruism, and honesty may attract positive perceptions of effectiveness from their followers. Employees' perception of leadership effectiveness and care may foster normative

behaviors and positive attitudes towards work, leading to affective commitment and work satisfaction. In their study, Çelik, Dedeoğlu, and İnanir (2015) found a positive correlation between leadership effectiveness, employee satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and affective commitment. Both the normative and ethical theories of leadership underline ethical dimensions as one of the means through which organizations can achieve leadership efficiency and effectiveness. Ethical leadership in different fields have studied mostly by qualitative research. However, such qualitative inquiry is limited especially in the three-dimension, critique, justice, and care, hence the need to do this study by quantitative method. This research seeks to investigate the effects of ethical leadership on employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment in a private higher education institution located in the Northeast region of the United States of America. Previous studies have attempted to compare ethical leadership and other leadership models and how this type of leadership can help improve job performance. Specifically, this study will elucidate about the ethical dimensions like justice, critique, and care contribute to job satisfaction and affective commitment in the positive and negative sense.

The modern-day organizational contexts have become increasingly complex, with a new set of problems and leadership challenges, thus raising the need for effective leadership. Brown et al. (2006) affirm that "ethical leaders make ethics an explicit part of their leadership agenda by communicating ethics and value messages, by visibly and intentionally role modeling ethical behavior, and using the reward systems (rewards and discipline) to hold followers accountable for ethical conduct" (p. 597). Leaders who demonstrate ethics in their style of leadership are more likely to have a positive influence on their followers, their relationships, and the acceptance of organizational values.

The current research seeks to provide an in-depth probe on how the specific dimensions of leadership ethics such as ethics of critique, justice, and care contribute to job satisfaction and affective commitment towards an organization.

2. Conceptual Framework

Initially, the conceptualization of ethical leadership primarily focused on leaders who demonstrate charismatic behaviors and those who provide transformational leadership in their organizations. Studies on leadership behavior point out to transformational leaders as individuals who inspire appropriate value systems on their followers, hence can be used to predict employees' job behaviors like satisfaction and commitment (Sahu et al., 2018). Leaders should provide inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation by challenging and critiquing ideas and behaviors, idealized influence on their followers, and individual consideration (Sahu et al. , 2018). Other leadership styles, like transactional leadership, are considered ineffective since they allow leaders to use a highly offensive processes that can harm the self-esteem and dignity of their followers. This renders such leadership styles unethical and ineffective in organizational contexts.

Leaders should not focus on their self-interests at the detriment of their followers. Ethical leaders derive their motivation from the desire to demonstrate altruism fairness, justice, and care for others. The conceptualization of ethical leaders by Brown et al. (2005) brings about some aspects of transformational, charismatic, and transactional leadership. This is because ethical leadership accentuates behavioral attributes that create an idealized influence on subordinates, their job-related behaviors, attitudes, and interpersonal relationships. This conceptualization draws from the premise that the leaders' actions and behaviors produce a role-modeling effect on pragmatic, idealistic, and normative behaviors among organizational
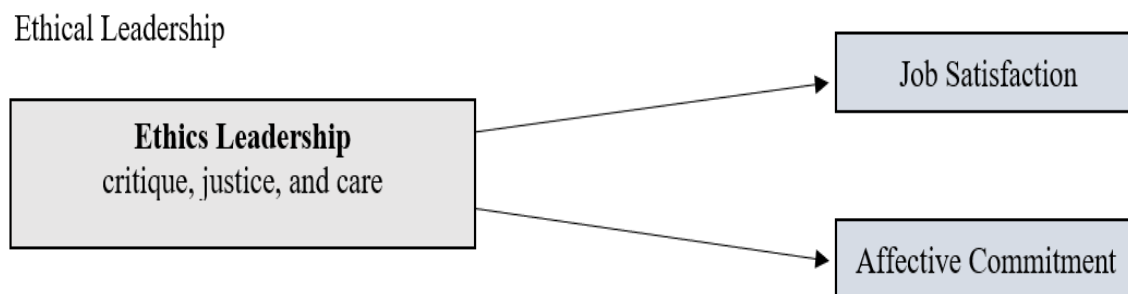
members (Dadhich et al., 2008).

Ethical Leadership

Ethics Leadership
critique, justice, and care

Job Satisfaction

Affective Commitment

Figure 1.0 1. *Conceptual framework on ethical leadership Developed by Mohammed Al Muhannaa, 2021*

The Purpose of The Study
The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of ethical leadership on employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment.

Research Questions
This research intends to answer the following research questions:

1.   To what extent do the ethical leadership dimensions (critique, justice, and care) affect job satisfaction among institution's members?

2.   To what extent do the ethical leadership dimensions (critique, justice, and care) affect affective commitment among institution's members?

Research Hypothesis
Main Hypotheses
H.1: the ethical leadership dimensions (critique, justice, and care) have positive effect on job satisfaction among institution's members.
H.2: the ethical leadership dimensions (critique, justice, and care) have positive effect on affective commitment among institution's members.
Sub-Hypotheses
H1a. the care dimension has positive effect on affective commitment.
H1b. the critique dimension has positive effect on affective commitment.
H1c. the justice dimension has positive effect on affective commitment.
H2a. the care dimension has positive effect on job satisfaction.
H2b. the critique dimension has positive effect on job satisfaction.
H2c. the justice dimension has positive effect on job satisfaction.

3. Methodology

Research Design
        For this descriptive explanatory study, causal research design is employed. Cause-and-effect relationships will be investigated to measure the variations among variables and determine the nature of the relationship among them (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016).

Population
        The population of the study included all male and female faculty members and employees belonging to a private higher education institution located in the Northeast region

of the United States of America. All faculty members and employees- target population- were asked to complete the survey see the table below(3.1). Target population is all individuals the research results are to be generalized (Dillman et al., 2014).

Table 3.1. *Target Population*

STAFF		FACULTY		DEANS AND PROVOST		VP'S		DIRECTORS	
F	140	F	77	F	9	F	3	F	52
M	96	M	97	M	4	M	4	M	40
Total	236	Total	174	Total	13	Total	7	Total	92
Percentage%		Percentage%		Percentage%		Percentage%		Percentage%	
M	40.677	M	55.747	M	30.7692	M	57.142	M	43.478
F	59.322	F	44.252	F	69.2307	F	42.8571	F	56.521
	100		100		100		100		100

Study Sample

The researcher collected the data from all faculty members and employees in the selected case study private institution located in the Northeast Region of the USA. The study sample was chosen by using nonprobability sampling: a volunteer sampling procedure. Since each individual of the sampling was given an equal chance of being voluntarily included and no sampling frame was used, volunteer sampling was most appropriate for this study (Elder, 2009). The sample size has been calculated by using Krejcie and Morgan Formula (1970): S= X^2NP(1-P) + d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P(1-P). S=129. The responses were very high despite the impact of this pandemic.

The explanation of what these formula letters represent for is as follow: S= required sample size, X^2= the table value of Chi-square for one degree of freedom at the desired confidence level, N= the population size, P= the population proportion, and d= the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05).

Instrumentation

To collect the data from the faculty members and employees who were the participants in this study, the researcher used existence scales that are relevant to the study objective and lead to answer the research questions. A validated ethical leadership questionnaire (ELQ) measuring the three ethical themes of critique, care, and justice in a tridimensional model developed by Langlois et al. (2014) were utilized as an independent variable. To investigate its effect on the other variables: job satisfaction and affective commitment, job satisfaction scale developed by Macdonald and MacIntyre,1997 and affective commitment scale developed by Meyer and Allen, 1990 were employed as dependent variables.Demographic data: age, gender, employment status and education level were also identified.

ELQ with a five - point Likert scale response consisted of three components: leader's reflection on employee's action, leader's way in resolving an ethical dilemma and leader's decision in the resolution of an ethical dilemma. The questionnaire contains 23 items while the job satisfaction scale with a five- point Likert scale response consisted of 10 items and the affective commitment with a five - point Likert scale response scales includes 8 items.

Data Collection

The researcher first got the approval from the authorities of the selected institution of higher education located in the Northeastern Region of the USA and second from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the researcher's institution, Niagara University. To ensure

permission to conduct this case study and for the protection of respondents' confidentiality, the results were reported only in aggregate form.

The ELQ, job satisfaction and affective commitment scales were used to collect the data from all faculty members and employees at the private higher education institution in the Northeast region of the United States of America. The ELQ, job satisfaction and affective commitment scales were disseminated electronically through faculty's and employees' emails. To increase response rates, three follow-up contacts will be used. Following up with participants by sending multiple reminders has increased the response rate to 37% compared with a survey sent with no follow-ups (Dillman et al., 2014).

Data Validity and Analysis Procedures

In this section, the proper statistical tests that were used to answer the research questions are addressed. Descriptive statistics for the demographic data was conducted. The researcher used the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS V26) for both descriptive and inferential statistics. To find the cause-and effect relationships among study variables, the researcher applied structural equation modeling (SmartPLS 3.2.7) for SEM-PLS modeling. The use of SEM presents a convenient way to determine the impact of ethical leadership dimensions (critique, justice, and care) on job satisfaction levels among organizational members. The application of PLS-SEM was presented in the following stages: specifying the structural model, specifying the measurement model, data collection and examination, path model estimation, assessing the measurement model, assessing the structural model, and interpretation of the results and finally drawing conclusions.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Respondents' Demographics

The Institute's targeted population comprises the staff, faculty, deans and provost, VPs, and directors. From the gender perspective, there are 140 female staff and 96 male staff in the university, representing 59% and 41% respectively. It shows that there are more female staff members than males, reflecting the population gender characteristics. The analysis further shows that there are more female faculty members than male members. Based on the analysis, there are 77 female and 97 male faculty, representing 44% and 56% respectively. The gender representation of the faculty from the percentages is also a reflection of the university population. The demographic characteristics of the sample from the analysis represent 64% female and 36% male participants.

Under the deans and provost category, the analysis shows that there are a total of 13 participants. The university has nine (9) female and four (4), male deans and provosts, as part of the population. It shows that the university population has 69% of the deans and provost representing females and 31% representing males. However, out of the sample size in the study, the analysis shows that there were only 82 female and 47 male participants, representing 64% and 36% respectively. It implies that there are more female participants than males in the study, reflecting similar characteristics as the population.

For the VP's category, the analysis shows that there are three (3) female VPs and four (4) male VPs in the university. The percentage frequency analysis indicates that 57% of the VPs are males while 43% represent females. The Institutes population has more male VPS compared to female VPs. Finally, the analysis shows that out of the 92 directors in the Institutes, 52 are female while 40 are male. The demographic characteristics of the population show that 43% of the directors are males while 57% are females. The Institutes population has

more female directors than male ones.

From the demographic characteristics of the respondents, there are 129 participants out of which 82 are female and 47 male. Based on the gender distribution, it shows that the sample has more females (64%) than males (36%). The population data under the different categories validates that the sample is representative of the university's targeted population from the gender perspective. The population data shows that the university has 241 male and 281 female workers, comprising of staff, faculty, deans and provost, VPs, and directors. It shows that from the population, there are more females than males. It shows that 54% of the population were female while 46% were male.

The percentages verify the argument that the survey sample was representative of the "cross-section" of the university staff, faculty, deans, directors, and VPs. From the survey sample, there are more females than males out of the sample size of 129. It shows that the sample had 82 females (64%) and 47 males (36%). From a gender perspective, the individuals in each of the categories and total population of the university had more females than males, reflecting consistency with the sample size. The consistency in the proportion of male and female participants in the survey to the population validates that it is a representation of the Institute's target population from the gender perspective. There is consistency in the proportion of male and female participants in the sample as in the population, validating the assumption that the sample was representative of the university-targeted population in terms of at least gender.

Table 4.1. *Demographic characteristics*

Variable	Category	Frequency	%
Age	Less than 25	4	3.1%
	26-35	18	14.0%
	36-45	31	24.0%
	46-55	32	24.8%
	Over 56	44	34.1%
Gender	Female	82	63.6%
	Male	47	36.4%
Education	High school diploma	8	6.2%
	Associate's degree	8	6.2%
	Bachelor' s degree	19	14.7%
	Master' s degree	59	45.7%
	Doctorate/ post doctorate / J.D. / M.D	35	27.1%
Employment	Faculty member	41	31.8%
	Administration	48	37.2%
	Support Staff	40	31.0%

4.4 Structural Equation Modeling

In this study, the researcher has applied structural equation modeling (SEM) for the model analysis. The SEM is a broad strategy to test hypotheses and to find out the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables. Partial Least Square analysis of SEM (PLS-SEM) is followed in this study. The literature suggests that the PLS method is suitable for studies involving more realistic settings in social science research (Kline, 2005; Tenenhaus et al., 2005). In essence, PLS is a structural equation modeling (SEM) technique similar to covariance-based SEM. This type of model analysis approach, at the same time, tests both the measurement model and path that helps to develop more realistic assumptions (Abdi, 2010;
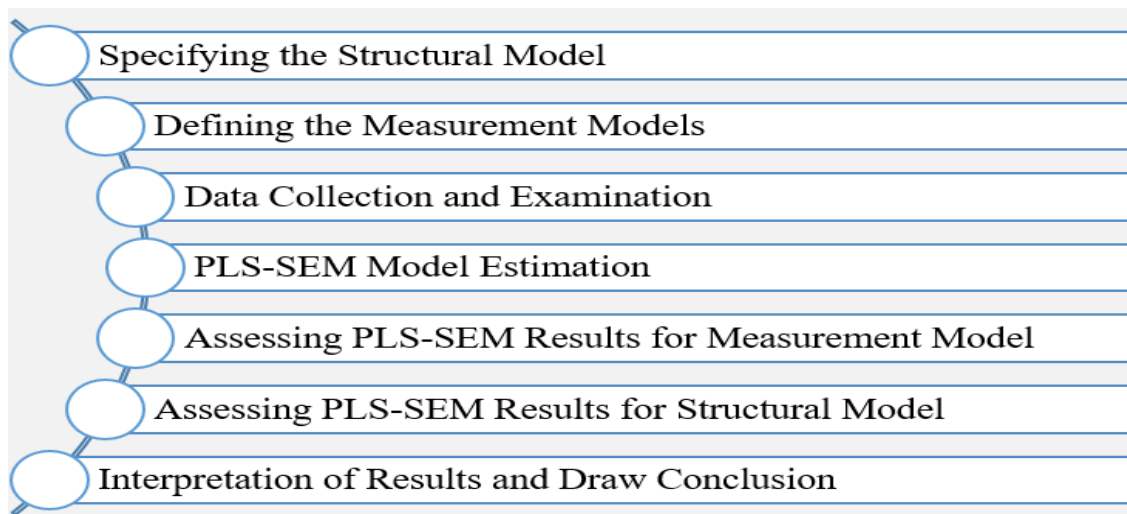
Hair et al., 2017).

Figure 4. 1. *A Systematic Procedure for Applying PLS-SEM Source: Hair et al. (2017)*

Hence, this study focuses on examining the prediction of the dependent variable, and the emphasis is on explaining the endogenous constructs. The results of PLS-SEM analysis are presented in the following sub-sections. The previous sections included discussions about the assumptions of SEM and how they were met. The following sections will illustrate the application of PLS-SEM in seven stages. These stages were identified by Hair et al. (2016). Fig. (4.1) shows the stages for applying PLS-SEM. The first stage is concerned with specifying the structural model, while the second stage is about defining the measurement models, and the third stage focuses on collecting and examining the data. These three stages have been previously implemented. The fourth stage involves PLS path model estimation, while the fifth stage requires the assessment of the measurement model's results. The sixth stage is for assessing the results of the structural model. The final stage is making final interpretations of the results and conclusions.

Stage One: Specifying the structural model

This stage involves preparing the structural model, which is also known as the inner model. The structural model illustrates the relationships between the factors. The structural model is developed based on an extensive literature review, and the order of the constructs must be based on theory, logic, or observations (Hair et al., 2016). The relationship in the structural model in this study is the causal relationship. Causal links or relationships are direct relationships between factors in which one factor predicts the other. The structural model for this study was specified in chapter three.

Stage Two: Specifying the measurement models

The measurement model, which is also known as the outer model, describes the relationships between the constructs and their variables. Measurement models could be reflective or formative. Reflective measurement models are commonly used in social science research. The variables in such models reflect the effect of the underlying construct, which means the causal effect, is initiated from the construct to its variables. As all of the variables measuring one construct are caused by the same construct, there must be a high correlation between these variables. Moreover, all of the variables measuring a specific construct must be interchangeable, so that if one of the variables were removed, as long as the reliability is acceptable, the meaning of the construct would not change (Hair et al., 2016). We are dealing with a reflective measurement model in our research.

Stage Three: Data Collection and Examination

After specifying the measurement models, data collection and examination are required. This stage involves selecting the target population and collects the required data through an appropriate sampling technique. The collected data will be used to test the structural and measurement models. This stage has already been implemented. The processes of defining the target population and data collection were discussed in chapter three, while data examination was discussed earlier in this chapter.

Stage Four: Path Model Estimation

After data collection and examination, the data is used in the path model estimation. This stage requires the selection of the parameter settings based on understanding the PLS-SEM algorithm and its statistical properties. There are three structural model weighing schemes: the centroid weighting scheme, the factor weighting scheme, and the path weighing scheme. Although the results of using these schemes do not differ vastly, it is recommended to select the path weighing scheme as it produces the highest R^2 value for the endogenous construct. Moreover, the path weighing scheme is applicable to all the different kinds of path model specifications and estimations (Hair et al., 2016).
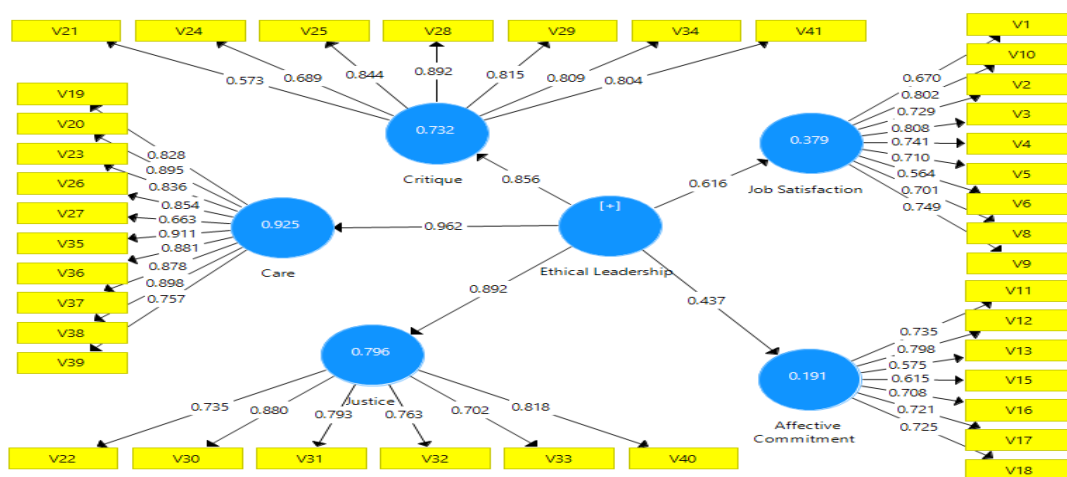

Figure 4.2. *Output loading factor research model*

Stage Five: Assessing the Measurement Model

The assessment of the reflective measurement models in PLS-SEM requires evaluating the internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity. Adapted from previous research studies, table (4.6) summarizes the rules of evaluating and finishing the model (Hair et al., 2011; Nachtigall et al., 2003; Xiong et al., 2015; Garson, 2016). Once the reliability and validity of the measurement model have been established, the structural model will be assessed. The following subsections will discuss the reliability and validity of the measurement model.

Table 4.6. *Rules of Goodness of Fit Assessment and Model Estimates*

Evaluation Items	Measurement Items	Fitting Criteria
Internal Consistency and reliability	Cronbach's alpha, Jöreskog rho & Composite Reliability (CR)	> 0.70
Indicator Reliability	Indicator Loadings	> 0.40
Convergent Validity	Average Variance Extracted	> 0.50
Discriminant Validity	HTMT	< 0.9

4.4.4 Descriptive statistics and multiple correlations

The descriptive statistics for the dependent variable "Job Satisfaction" were $(M = 3.99, SD = 0.780, CV = 19.5\%)$, and for the other dependent variable "Affective Commitment" were as follows: $(M = 3.70, SD = 0.862, CV = 23.33\%)$. Finally the descriptive statistics for the independent variable "Ethical Leadership" were $(M = 3.87, SD = 0.764, CV = 19.73\%)$.

Table 4.11. *Descriptive statistic for the selected variables*

Variable	Symb.	Mean	SD	CV
Job Satisfaction	Y1	3.9931	0.7801	19.54%
Affective Commitment	Y2	3.6988	0.86275	23.33%
Ethical Leadership	X	3.871	0.76365	19.73%
Care	x1	4.0969	0.86403	21.09%
Critique	x2	3.5936	0.88306	24.57%
Justice	x3	3.9225	0.78976	20.13%

The descriptive for the dimensions of ethical leadership were as follows: for *Care* we have $(M = 4.097, SD = 0.864, CV = 21.09\%)$, for *Critique* we have $(M = 3.594, SD = 0.883, CV = 24.57\%)$, and for *Justice* we have $(M = 3.923, SD = 0.790, CV = 20.13\%)$.

Table 4.12. *Bivariate correlation*

	Job Satisfaction	Affective Commitment	Ethical Leadership	Care	Critique	Justice
Job Satisfaction	1	.759***	.531***	.607***	.362***	.471***
Affective Commitment		1	.401***	.470***	.228**	.395***
Ethical Leadership			1	.926***	.885***	.899***
Care				1	.716***	.790***
Critique					1	.665***
Justice						1

***P<0.001; **P<0.01

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the strength and the direction of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. Table (4.12) shows the matrix of Pearson correlation coefficients between all variables in the study. The correlation coefficients suggest that there is a significant positive correlation among all variables. Of particular interest is the correlation between the main constructs of this study. It is also observed from table (4.12) that there is a significant positive strong relationship between *Job Satisfaction* and *Affective Commitment* since $(r(129) = .759, P < 0.001)$, while the relationship between *Job Satisfaction* and *Ethical Leadership* is moderate since $(r(129) = 0.531, P < 0.001)$. Finally, the relationship between *Affective Commitment* and *Ethical Leadership* is also moderate since $(r(129) = .401, P < 0.001)$.

Stage Six: Assessing the Structural Model

After establishing the reliability and validity of the measurement models, it is time to assess the structural model. This includes inspecting the predictive power of the model and relationships between the constructs. The structural model, also known as inner model, refers to the relationships between the constructs themselves (Hair et al., 2014; Benitez-Amado et al., 2017), and its assessment includes evaluating the relationships between the constructs in the model (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013; Hair et al., 2011; Henseler et al., 2009). Researchers (Hair

et al., 2017; Hair et al., 2013; Hair et al., 2011; Henseler et al., 2009; Hair, Sarstedt et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2015) provided guidelines for evaluating and reporting the structural model, including collinearity, path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), Effect Size (f^2), and Predictive Relevance (Q^2).

Table (4.13) summarises the criteria used for evaluating the structural model in this study. Review studies on PLS-SEM (Ringle et al., 2012; Hair et al., 2012; Ringle, Sarstedt et al., 2018; Ali et al., 2018; Hair et al., 2014; Hair et al, 2017) found that researchers usually report those criteria when examining the structural model.

Table 4.13. *Criteria of Structural Model Assessment*

Criteria	Guidelines	References
Collinearity	VIF < 5	(Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017)
Path coefficients	Significance: p ≤ 0.05	(Hair, Hollingsworth, Randolph, & Chong, 2017; Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017)
Coefficient of determination (R^2)	Weak effect: R^2 = 0.19 Moderate effect: R^2 = 0.33 High effect: R^2 = 0.67	(Chin, 1998)
Effect Size (f^2)	f^2 between 0.02-0.14, small; f^2 between 0.15-0.34, moderate ; f^2 ≥ 0.35, High.	Cohen (1988)
Cross-validated redundancy (Q^2)	Predictive Relevance Using blindfolding Q^2 > 0	(Chin, 1998)
Goodness of Fit (GoF)	GoF less than 0.1, no fit; GoF between 0.1 to 0.25, small; GoF between 0.25 to 0.36, medium; GoF between 0.25 to 0.36, large.	(Wetzels, Odekerken-Schröder, & Van Oppen, 2009)

Given those criteria and guidelines, the results of those assessments are presented in the following subsections.

4.4.5 Collinearity

Collinearity occurs when there is a high correlation between two constructs, which produces interpretation issues (Hair et al., 2017). If more than two constructs are involved, it refers to collinearity or multicollinearity. Collinearity can be assessed using the variance inflation factor (VIF), which is obtained by dividing one by tolerance referring to the variance explained by one independent construct not explained by the other independent constructs (Hair et al. , 2017; Benitez-Amado et al., 2017). A VIF value of 5 or higher indicates a high collinearity (Hair et al., 2011; Hair et al., 2017). Table (4.14) shows that all VIF values are below the cut-off point providing evidence that the collinearity between independent constructs does not exists.

Table 4.14. *Variance inflation factors*

	Affective Commitment	Care	Critique	Job Satisfaction	Justice
Ethical Leadership	1	1	1	1	1
Decision			No problem exists		

4.4.6 Path Coefficients

Path coefficients refer to the estimates of the relationships between the model's

constructs (Hair et al., 2014). Those coefficients range from +1 to -1, where +1 means a strong positive relationship, 0 means a weak or non-existence relationship, and -1 means a strong negative relationship (Garson, 2016). When assessing PLS path, studies should report path coefficients beside the significance level, t-value, and p-value (Hair et al., 2012). The hypothesis testing has been done to understand the signs, size, and statistical significance of the estimated path coefficients between the constructs. Higher path coefficients suggest stronger effects between the predictor and predicted variables. The significance of the supposed relationships has been established by measuring the significance of the p-values for each path with threshold $p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$, $p < 0.001$ be used to assess the significance of the path coefficient estimations (Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2017). Later, the inferences have been drawn for all hypotheses based on the significance of p-values at the above-mentioned conventional levels. The p-values and inference of hypotheses, as well as the confidence level for each estimate, are shown in Table 4.15.
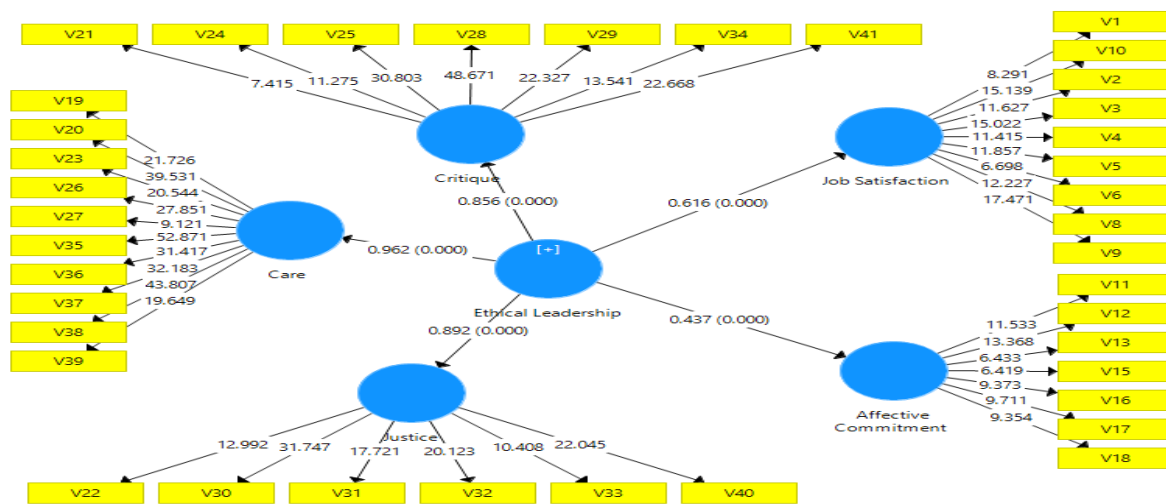

Figure 4.7. *Model path coefficent estimation of the main hypothesis*

The results of hypothesis testing in table (4.15) and figure (4.7) showed that ethical leadership construct yielded a significant direct positive effect on affective commitment construct since $(\beta = 0.437, t = 5.254, P < 0.001, 95\% \ CI \ for \ \beta = [0.283, 0.602])$, consequently, the first hypothesis is confirmed. Ethical leadership also yielded a significant direct positive effect on job satisfaction construct since $(\beta = 0.616, t = 8.867, P < 0.001, 95\% \ CI \ for \ \beta = [0.475, 0.746])$, consequently, the second hypothesis is confirmed.
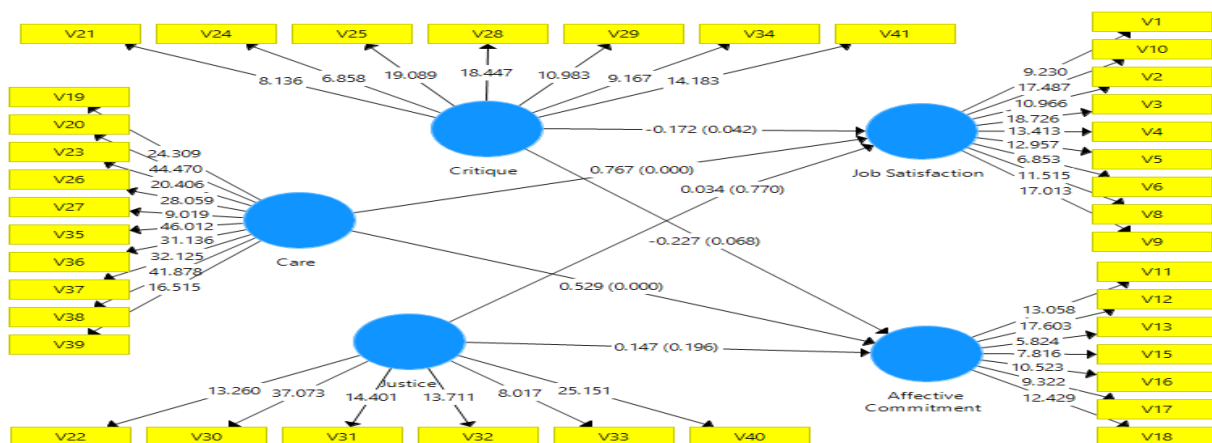

Figure 4.8. *Model path coefficent estimation of the sub-hypothesis*

The results of the sub-hypothesis testing in table (4.15) and figure (4.8) showed that care construct yielded a significant direct positive effect on both affective commitment and job satisfaction constructs as follows; for affective commitment we have ($\beta = 0.529, t = 4.029, P < 0.001, 95\% \ CI \ for \ \beta = [0.26, 0.775]$) , for job satisfaction we have ($\beta = 0.767, t = 6.751, P < 0.001, 95\% \ CI \ for \ \beta = [0.532, 0.971]$), therefore H1a and H2a were accepted. On the other hand, the results showed that critique construct yielded a significant negative effect on job satisfaction since ($\beta = -0.172, t = 2.036, P < 0.05, 95\% \ CI \ for \ \beta = [-0.311, 0.015]$), so H2b was rejected. The other three sub-hypotheses also were rejected since p-value greater than 0.05.

Table 4.15. *Results of Hypothesis testing*

	Path	B	t-statistic	P-value	95% CI for B LL	UL	Remark
	Main Hypotheses						
H1	Ethical Leadership -> Affective Commitment	0.437	5.254	0.000**	0.283	0.602	Accepted
H2	Ethical Leadership -> Job Satisfaction	0.616	8.867	0.000**	0.475	0.746	Accepted
	Sub-Hypotheses						
H1a	Care -> Affective Commitment	0.529	4.029	0.000**	0.26	0.775	Accepted
H1b	Critique -> Affective Commitment	-0.227	1.823	0.068NS	-0.445	0.036	Rejected
H1c	Justice -> Affective Commitment	0.147	1.293	0.196 NS	-0.102	0.355	Rejected
H2a	Care -> Job Satisfaction	0.767	6.751	0.000**	0.532	0.971	Accepted
H2b	Critique -> Job Satisfaction	-0.172	2.036	0.042*	-0.311	0.015	Accepted
H2c	Justice -> Job Satisfaction	0.034	0.293	0.77 NS	-0.186	0.256	Rejected

***P < 0.001; **P < 0.01; *P < 0.05; NS Not Significant; LL= Lower Limit; UL= Upper Limit; CI= Confidence Interval

4.4.7 Coefficient of Determination

Coefficient of determination (R^2) refers to the effect of independent variables on the dependent latent variables (Hair et al., 2012), which is one of the quality measures of the structural model (Hair et al., 2014). R^2 estimates vary from 0 to 1, in which 0 means low explained variance and 1 means high explained variance. Researchers have used a different cut-off of R^2 value. For example, Hair et al. (2011) in marketing research described that R^2 values of 0.25, 0.50, or 0.75 are low, moderate, or high, respectively. In business research, Chin (1998) suggested that R^2 with 0.19, 0.33, or 0.67 are low, moderate, or high, respectively.

Table 4.16. *R Square and Associated R Square Adjusted*

Variable	R Square		R Square Adjusted	
Hypothesis	Main	Sub	Main	Sub
Affective Commitment	0.191	0.255	0.185	0.237
Job Satisfaction	0.379	0.457	0.374	0.444

The results of R Square are reported in table (4.16). For the main hypothesis, the R-Square of the affective commitment were 0.191 meaning that about 19% of the variations in affective commitment ware explained by the variation in the ethical leadership. Moreover, the R-Square of the job satisfaction were 0.379 meaning that about 38% of the variations in job satisfaction ware explained by the variations in the ethical leadership.

4.4.8 Effect Size (f^2)

The f^2 effect size is the measure of how much impact the endogenous construct will have if an exogenous construct was removed from the model. A construct is considered to have a small effect if its f^2 value is between 0.02 and 0.14, while it is considered to have a medium effect if its f^2 value is between 0.15 and 0.34, and a large effect if its f^2 value $\geq$ 0.35. A construct with an f^2 value < 0.02 means it has no effect on the endogenous construct (Hair et al., 2016).

Table 4.17. *f² Effect Size*

	Construct	Affective Commitment	Job Satisfaction
Main Hypothesis	Ethical Leadership	0.237 (Medium)	0.61 (Large)
	Care	0.105 (Small)	0.304 (Medium)
Sub -hypotheses	Critique	0.03 (Small)	0.023 (Small)
	Justice	0.01 (No Effect)	0.001 (No Effect)

Table (4.17) presents the f^2 effect size of the constructs. The results illustrate that ethical leadership have medium effect on affective commitment and large effect on job satisfaction. The results of the sub-hypotheses revealed that care has small effect on affective commitment and medium effect on job satisfaction, while critique has small effect on both variables. On the other hand justice has no effect on both variables.

4.4.9 Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Q^2 value indicates the model's out-of-sample predictive power. When a model is said to have a predictive power or predictive relevance, it means that it can accurately predict data not used in the model estimation. The Q^2 value is calculated through running a blindfolding procedure. Prior running this procedure, an omission distance (*D*) must be specified. Researchers suggest specifying a *D* between 5 and 10, while being careful that the sample size divided by the selected *D* would not produce an integer. The omission distance indicates that while running the blindfolding procedure, every x data point of the items will be omitted and then predicted, with x being the specified *D* value. A *D* of 5 means that about 20% of the data points have been omitted per blindfolding round. Similarly, a *D* of 10 indicates that about 10% of the data points were omitted per blindfolding round. An endogenous construct's Q^2 value that is larger than 0 indicates the model's predictive relevance for this construct (Hair et al., 2016). An omission distance of 7 was selected to examine the predictive power of the model. Table (4.18) presents the Q^2 values obtained from the analysis. The values of Q^2 are higher than 0, so it can be safely concluded that the research model has a good predictive relevance.

Table 4.18. *Predictive Relevance*

Construct		SSO	SSE	Q² (=1-SSE/SSO)	Remark
Affective Commitment	Main Hypothesis	903	825.965	0.085	Accepted
	Sub-hypothesis	903	799.743	0.114	Accepted
Job Satisfaction	Main Hypothesis	1161	964.09	0.17	Accepted
	Sub-hypothesis	1161	919.724	0.208	Accepted

4.4.10 Goodness of Fit of the Model

Tenenhaus et al. (2005), proposed the Goodness of Fit (GoF) as a global fit indicator; it is the geometric mean of both the average R^2 the average variance extracted of the endogenous variables. The aim of GoF's is to take into consideration the research model at all stages, i.e. the measurement model and the structural model, with an emphasis on the overall model performance (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013). The GoF index for the main hypothesis can be calculated as follow:

$$GOF = \sqrt{\overline{R^2} \times \overline{AVE}} = \sqrt{0.285 \times 0.583} = 0.408.$$
For the sub-hypothesis
$$GOF = \sqrt{\overline{R^2} \times \overline{AVE}} = \sqrt{0.356 \times 0.583} = 0.455$$

The criteria of GoF for deciding whether GoF values are not acceptable, small, moderate, or high to be regarded as a globally appropriate PLS model have been given in table (4.13). According to these criteria, and the values of the GoF (0.408-0.455), it can be safly concluded that the GoF model is large enough to considered as sufficient valid global PLS model.

5. Discussion

Explanations of the Findings
Discussion

The study established a clear correlation between all the study variables and the positive effect of ethical leadership, especially between the care dimension and job satisfaction and affective commitment. Application of the principles of ethical leadership assist in creating a harmonious environment where all employees feel valued and satisfied with their work. Such workers are likely to be highly motivated to meet the set expectations, with job performance also being linked to the leadership approach in place. The validated ethical leadership questionnaire (ELQ) used to investigate the role of ethical leadership in enhancing job satisfaction among staff members indicated consistency among the participants in their perception of the importance of leadership, with a significant percentage preferring to work in an environment where the manager demonstrates various aspects of ethical leadership. Similar studies, such as one by Akaarir and Asarkaya (2021) focusing on workers in the Turkish tourism sector, have established a strong connection between leadership style and employee attitudes. Ethical leaders act as role models to their juniors by leading ethically as well as requiring workers to adhere to ethical standards (Ozden et al., 2019). Thus, these individuals directly influence the attitudes of the workforce by consistently promoting ethics at the workplace. Additionally, the research suggested the possibility that employees who are handled ethically behave in a similar way. Ethical leadership transcends the organizational framework of a firm, promoting a culture of respect and commitment to work.

Job satisfaction among employees involves the interplay of several factors, such as the work environment and leadership. The way leaders behave towards workers is crucial in determining their feelings about their duties. The results of this study showed that care and justice had an important effect on job satisfaction, while the critique dimension was undesirable among employees. This finding was in line with a study by Akaarir and Asarkaya (2021). They identified that different aspects of leadership, such as credibility, integrity, fairness, respect, and consideration, ensured employees were comfortable in their workplace, thus, increasing their job satisfaction (Akaarir & Asarkaya, 2021). Ethical leadership promotes a supportive environment for workers, where they can freely interact and seek assistance when required.

Many studies have been done to determine the impact of ethical leadership dimensions on job satisfaction (Akaarir & Asarkaya, 2021; Ozden et al., 2019; Akar, 2018; Benevene et al., 2018), and most of them support the hypotheses of this study. Ethical leadership promotes respect and understanding among employees and assists in amicably addressing situations that may otherwise result in conflict.

Ethical leadership ensures fairness and eliminates injustices within an organization. Managers practicing this leadership theory are focused on prioritizing relationships with the workforce based on ethical principles and values. Ethical standards are implemented to guide behaviors among workers and obligate them to maintain positive relationships with their colleagues. Akar (2018) asserted that an ethical leadership strategy promotes positive criticism by employing the ethics of critique and eliminating any incidences of bias. This aspect of ethical leadership is controversial because this study found a negative effect of critique on job satisfaction. Therefore, leaders should be aware of the ethics of critique in order to fully achieve ethical leadership. In the findings, the justice dimension was the second most impactful dimension, after care, in promoting job satisfaction and affective commitment. This value has been mentioned in studies by Akar (2018), Ozden et al. (2019), and Benevene et al. (2018). They highlighted some identifiable aspects of an ethical leader, including striving to spread desirable values, sincerity, fairness and impartiality, respecting individual characteristics of other people, politeness and understanding, and the ability to differentiate between right and wrong. These leaders are also intensively involved in trying to promote these values. Most respondents indicated their appreciation for the ethical approach to leadership and highlighted respect as the main factor determining the level of job satisfaction. Social injustices lead to toxic work environments, exposing employees to mistreatment and fear of victimization. An ethical leader is committed to determining which factors or common cultures at a firm are likely to promote injustices in order to address them and promote a hospitable workplace.

The ethics of care are crucial in fostering constructive relationships in the workplace. These standards work to ensure that respect is maintained and that no employee engages in activities that amount to the abuse of others. Ethical leadership encourages teamwork by requiring workers to contribute equally to the realization of the set goals. This study established that most individuals prefer working with cooperative colleagues, citing the possibility of finishing assignments within a shorter timeframe and fewer challenges as the main reasons for this. Shafique et al. (2018) emphasized that workers operating under an ethical leader who treats them fairly and disciplines wrong-doers accordingly are likely to exhibit high job satisfaction. An ethical leader is sincere, fair, honest, and open, with these qualities facilitating better job satisfaction among his or her subordinates. Employees are proud to be part of an organization that cares for their well-being and is fair to all individuals regardless of any differences. The decision-making processes affecting the workforce, such as job evaluation, job designing, and promotions, also have a significant influence on the level of job satisfaction. Ethical standards ensure impartiality in all aspects of a firm in order to build trust and create pleasant feelings among the employees. Research by Benevene et al. (2018) seemingly confirms the findings of this study by indicating that ethical leadership can generate satisfaction among workers through the creation of relational attachment. Appropriate leadership is necessary to enhance motivation within the workforce and inspire commitment in an organization.

The ELQ also incorporated questions to gauge the impact of ethics of justice on job satisfaction among workers in various industries. The findings indicated a strong correlation. Ethical leaders apply appropriate and fair procedures while making ethical decisions to avoid

any contradictions that may negatively affect the operations of a firm. These individuals implement sufficient mechanisms to prevent influence from external stakeholders that may promote unfairness. Employees are more comfortable working with trustworthy superiors who are willing to listen to and address their concerns. A firm's commitment to protecting and upholding the rights of employees is regarded as important in determining job satisfaction (Charoensap et al., 2018). Workers often form unions to oversee protection of their rights and consolidate their voice within a company. Ethical leaders understand the importance of these arrangements and engage with them in making crucial decisions on the well-being of the workforce. A workplace that is respectful and concerned about the welfare of its staff is likely to be more attractive and satisfying for the members. Furthermore, workers showed appreciation for regular debates and consultations that allowed them to express their concerns and ensured they were addressed amicably. Ethical leaders display a high sensitivity to workforce concerns as well as a willingness to handle these issues by applying the requisite principles of ethics.

The clear correlation between ethical leadership and affective commitment and job satisfaction has also been confirmed by several other studies. Benevene et al. (2018) note that dedication, loyalty, and internalization of a firm's values influence affective commitment. Individuals portraying high affective commitment are also likely to be satisfied with their work. A number of articles suggest that high levels of job satisfaction are important in realizing high affective commitment (Benevene et al., 2018; Shafique et al., 2018; Akaarir & Asarkaya, 2021). Benevene et al. (2018) also highlighted the mediating role that job satisfaction plays between worker turnover and affective commitment on one side and an organization's ethical dimensions on the other. Ethical leadership ensures employees understand their value to an organization as well as their contribution. As mentioned earlier, ethical leaders involve employees in the decision-making processes by allowing them to contribute and inform them of any future changes. These workers participate in setting the objectives of the firm, and thus commit to ensuring they are achieved. Regular consultations serve to highlight their importance and encourage them to take ownership of the organization. Ethical leadership promotes accountability and discipline among the workforce. By following the example of the leader, workers observe ethical standards while executing their duties and interacting with their colleagues. The environment is friendly and enjoyable for all workers, as respect and fairness are maintained.

Employees' perception of the workplace environment is indicative of their level of job satisfaction and affective commitment. The study identified and utilized two hypotheses to analyze the impact of ethical leadership on the organizational performance of a firm. Job satisfaction and affective commitment are important factors influencing the rate of employee turnover in various companies. Significant research has been done on the topic, and this study reinforces crucial findings pointing to the strong relationship between ethical leadership and the key parameters tested (Ozden et al., 2019; Benevene et al., 2018). Managers should leverage ethical standards to enhance the performance of their companies by inspiring appropriate conduct and affective commitment. Workers displaying high affective commitment are likely to perform better at their roles. Ethical leaders contribute to improved job satisfaction by promoting fairness, honesty, and transparency in the operations of a firm. Most employees appreciate constructive criticism and view it as crucial to their growth at their workplace.

In 2016, Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 was announced. It was a new era in the Kingdom's history. One of the most important steps that lead to the successful implementation of Vision 2030 is the fight against corruption. Moreover, the development of government administrative

leaders is one of the pillars of the Kingdom's Vision 2030. Therefore, Vision 2030 attached great importance to this point by encouraging companies and institutions to create a motivating work environment for employees through the application of transformational leadership as well as ethical leadership, which in turn works to achieve outstanding performance in the organization by raising the level of efficiency, production, effectiveness, and job satisfaction at work. The performance of employees by increasing their skills, producing work with fewer errors, meeting deadlines for completion and delivery of work, and continuous improvement of work, including renewal and creativity.

Leaders should be creative and thoughtful about the leadership approach in any given context. A proper leadership plan should not permit corruption because it impairs the ability to be objective in organizational roles. It is necessary to consider justice and care in ethical leadership even as a leader strives to fight corruption, quality of life in workplaces, and bolster job satisfaction.

Ethical justice aids in ensuring that leaders showcase an appropriate example while at work. Engelbrecht, Heine, and Mahembe (2017) state that leaders should showcase the highest level of integrity in dispensing their duties. Administrative corruption can only be ended by an ethically sound person and determined to avoid such vices. Such steps give entities an excellent reputation since individuals will be aware that the management cannot support unscrupulous activities within the establishment.

Ethical justice improves the quality of life in workplaces. Workers should not be mistreated in the different places where they offer their services. An employee who is treated appropriately will not have time to think about other issues. Instead, they will be dedicated to realizing organizational objectives without being diverted. Such a decision also showcases the magnitude of care a leader has for their followers in a given organization. Employee-oriented leadership is central in ensuring that workers work in the safest places.

Increased job satisfaction is a product of ethical leadership in organizations. Torlak et al. (2020) reiterate that employee commitment arises from the treatment provided at the workplace. Therefore, leaders must create the required atmosphere that does not impair worker dedication in any task. Once employees are satisfied, there will be few turnover cases within the organization. This situation is further buoyed by the belief that the situation will not worsen anytime soon; individuals are driven to continue offering their services since they cannot imagine working elsewhere. Hence, humane treatment triggers workers' satisfaction; ethical leadership concepts also aid in this effect.

6. Conclusions

The study contributes to the wide range of literature analyzing the roles of various aspects of leadership on employees' perception of their jobs and their performance. Job satisfaction and affective commitment are key determinants of the ability of a firm to realize its goals (Ozden et al., 2019). Job satisfaction, for instance, is an indication of the feelings employees have towards their duties and their motivation to continue working for the firm. A motivated workforce is likely to report high levels of job satisfaction. Thus, this study provides critical information that can be applied by managers in various industries to determine appropriate measures for enhancing job satisfaction among their employees.

The hypothesis design was informed by the need to determine the impact of ethical leadership on important aspects of an organization. This research incorporates previous studies

that highlight the critical role played by management in promoting appropriate organizational culture, with ethical leadership being strongly linked to the desired behavioral outcomes within the workplace. The study contributes to the literature on ethical leadership and its role in business. Managers are expected to be able to motivate and inspire their subordinates. The theory of ethical leadership emphasizes ethical conduct among managers, requiring them to practice honesty, fairness, and transparency in their dealings (Varner, 2020). The findings also stress the obligation of these leaders to act as role models and encourage workers to integrate ethical standards.

Adequate knowledge of the dimensions of ethical leadership is important for managers intending to utilize it to effectively undertake their duties. This study contributes to this by defining and highlighting crucial aspects of an ethical leader. These individuals are required to be disciplined, fair, just, and constructive in their criticism. This study aimed to highlight specific personal attributes of an ethical leader crucial in enhancing job satisfaction and affective commitment. These individuals prioritize building trust among their workers and making them feel valued. Isik (2020) determined one important factor leading to high job satisfaction and affective commitment: the ability of leaders to motivate employees. Ethical conduct also ensures that the leader respects and appreciates the personal characteristics of other individuals in the workplace. These leaders are focused on establishing a harmonious environment by promoting tolerance and respect (Celik et al., 2015).

The management, as the main policy-making body in various organizations, can leverage the findings of these studies to effectively unite all stakeholders in a focus on attaining common goals. The research highlights specific attributes of ethical leadership that are crucial in promoting teamwork. The ethical dimension of care emphasizes collaboration and fairness within a firm. A leader is required to treat all employees fairly and encourage cooperation as workers are more satisfied working in environment where they contribute equally towards the realization of set goals (Varner, 2020). Therefore, the findings of this study can contribute to the understanding of appropriate leadership strategies that can be adopted to enhance the profitability of a firm. Ethical leaders set fair regulations to guide their workforces and ensure appropriate conduct. These individuals also educate their subordinates on ethical conduct and implement measures to ensure they adhere to these standards.

Considering the significance of ethical leadership as confirmed by this study, the employing authority in various firms should aim to identify aspects of ethical leadership among their employees. Individuals assuming managerial roles should demonstrate ethical leadership qualities to ensure they can unite all stakeholders in a focus on attaining set objectives. These individuals are well prepared to handle conflicts amicably and avoid situations that may prevent a firm from realizing its financial goals (Naiyananont & Smuthranond, 2017; Celik et al., 2015). They focus on promoting peace and respect within a company. Managers can easily influence organizational culture, and ethical leadership is highly linked with desired behaviors. Thus, leaders should be selected on the basis of their ability to maintain ethical standards and inspire others within their workplaces.

Organizations should train their workforces on ethical standards and utilize various measures such as incentives to encourage them to practice ethical behavior at their places of work. This study also highlighted the importance of fair disciplinary action in enhancing job satisfaction. Punishing wrong-doers helps to discourage inappropriate behaviors and promote accountability in the workplace. Firms should implement ethical standards to minimize misuse of resources and increase their profit margins. Transparency, as a critical element of an ethical leader, assist in eliminating cases of corruption in a company. Promotions, job designing, and

evaluations are fair and transparent in an environment that observes ethics. Therefore, the management should practice ethical conduct to create trust among their stakeholders and improve the reputation of the company. Most literature analyzed in the research indicated a strong link between motivation among employees and ethical leadership with individuals showing high preference for firms displaying honesty, fairness, and openness (Benevene et al., 2018; Akaarir & Asarkaya, 2021). The conclusions of this study are relevant to companies operating in highly competitive environments that intend to revise their organizational cultures and improve their image.

Future research should aim to determine the relationship between affective commitment and job satisfaction. Benevene et al. (2018) indicated that workers showing high job satisfaction are also likely to perform well with regards to affective commitment. Evaluating the relationship between these two factors may help in understanding the role of ethical leadership in business. These parameters are key to understanding how ethical conduct facilitates the improvement of firms. For instance, particular aspects of ethical leadership such as fairness, honesty, and transparency have been determined to have a huge influence on job satisfaction. Considering the paucity of information on affective commitment and the processes facilitating its development, further research should be done to understand its relationship with ethical leadership.

The reliability of the findings of this study could be enhanced by employing more than one tool to collect data. For instance, interviewing professionals in various fields would have contributed to a more accurate understanding of the dimensions of ethical leadership and their role in influencing job satisfaction and affective commitment. Interviews would have allowed the researcher to enquire about other concerns that may be difficult to capture in questionnaires. Future research should also consider a meta-analysis approach to testing the hypotheses. This strategy allows each parameter to be evaluated independently and findings to be combined to establish accurate conclusions and avoid potential sources of bias that may limit the credibility of the study.

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