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Relationship Between Teachers' Work Ethics and Student's Academic Achievement at The University Level

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Abstract: The ethics of the teachers play a vital role in a teacher's personal and professional development. The objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement at the university level. It was quantitative research that relied upon the survey technique to dig out information from the sample selected. The study was conducted on 150 faculty members of Social Sciences from the University of Lahore. The study employed convenient sampling to select participants and developed a rating scale to gather data on teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievements. With a reliability value of .929, data analysis utilized both descriptive and inferential statistics. The results indicated a modest positive correlation between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievements.

Keywords: Teachers, Students, Work Ethics, Academic achievement

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Introduction

The word "ethics" originates from Greek and encompasses meanings such as "lifestyle" and "the discovery of a wise way to act." It also refers to "a belief that judges subjects' practices" (Badiou, 2004). In a sense, moral choices are frequently made about right and wrong, which makes a person a man of principles, which leads him to follow a moral life. According to Kuçuradi (2000) and Strike & Soltis (2015), it helps to distinguish between ethical statements and factual and subjective judgments or "values" to make the notion clear. First of all, ethical claims do not entail factual assertions that effectively define what is true, such as "Water is liquid." Ethics can be broken but are not fake because statements like "Killing is wicked" do not accurately reflect reality (Strike & Soltis, 2015).

The differences among morality, cultural norms, and ethics involve refining our comprehension of ethics. While morality is a subset of ethical inquiry, ethics deals with broader conceptual frameworks and is expected to include clear, explicit written guidelines and standards for specific professions, such as political ethics, medical ethics, and ethics in psychology. In contrast, unwritten rules that guide behavior according to cultural goals and values fall under the domain of morality (Aydın et al., 2012). Additionally, morality is a quality that develops in human beings via experiences and decisions that are influenced by a variety of outside forces (George, 2017).

The appraisal of a person, through specific actions, and conduct, as well as how oneself or others question and answer professional ethics. Ethical principles in teacher development begins with how one should take a viewpoint act in particular circumstance. In contrast, occupational moral codes, declarations, and contracts frequently contain the answers to professional ethics-related concerns (Kuçuradi, 2000).

For instance, ethical and legal rules governing what is appropriate to do or not do in a specific workplace circumstance give rise to concerns about professional ethics. The fundamental concern, however, is what kind of jobs may be called "professions," while people who carry them out are acknowledged as "professionals." In this context, people who already meet the requirements for a particular line of work, such as doctors, attorneys, psychologists, and teachers, are referred to as "professionals," as opposed to the people who, like sports, are craftspeople, may be called as either "amateur" or "professional" (Carr, 2005).

In both a teacher's private and professional life, teaching ethics are a crucial component of instruction. Teachers' moral position determines how they instruct and evaluate their students. We may consider our preferred professor for a moment. We all have one teacher who has a momentous influence on our lives and whom we deliberate our "favorite." Maybe he or she was our fifth-grade teacher or our science teacher in high school. What characteristics did the teacher possess that made them our favored instructor? Were they notably intelligent or humorous? It remains uncertain whether they intentionally crafted educational experiences that engaged and enriched student learning (Strike & Soltis, 2015)

Every aspect of human life requires ethics, and the fact that a career must include ethical components in order to refer to its workers as "professionals" says a lot about how vital ethics are. Making the proper and healthy decisions for oneself and society, as well as being a kind person, requires professional teaching ethics; thus, simply finishing a university degree with a lot of knowledge is insufficient (Gülcan, 2015). It becomes much more important for teachers to develop their ethical awareness and expertise since they are the ones who help future generations—who represent the future of society—transfer information, skills, and ethical dimensions. Also, it is essential to increase teachers' comprehension of their obligations and ethical responsibilities in order to have practice and higher professionalism (Eryaman, 2007; Campbell, 2000).

According to Koçyiğit et al. (2018), ethical norms and standards, for instance, support the gratitude, certification, and conservation of the authenticity of a profession as well as its prestige and development. Professional ethics also help teachers navigate moral conundrums so that they can protect themselves and those who are important to them. They also give teachers responsibility for helping students change their behavior in a way that is desirable, and they make it possible for teachers to approach their students more sincerely, tenderly, and intimately (Sherpa, 2018). Hence, there is much more to the requirement for pre-service teachers than just providing them with professional ethics codes and standards.

Ethics may not be at the top of my mind when recalling favorite teachers, but I cherished one because of their ethical integrity, though it's seldom acknowledged. Yet, ethics profoundly shape a teacher's personal and professional life. Their ethical stance influences teaching methods, student evaluation, and interactions with all stakeholders. While initial teacher favoritism may not stem from ethics, we implicitly assess their ethical position. For instance, we admire teachers for being "fair" if they champion equality based on principles of fairness. Similarly, teachers who consistently show respect for human life are perceived as genuinely caring. Thus, while ethics may not be overtly considered in selecting favorite teachers, its subtle influence is undeniable, shaping our perceptions and affections (Young, 2011).

As aspiring teachers, recognizing the vital role of ethics in our profession is crucial. We must take time to reflect on our own beliefs and principles to ensure they align with the ethical duties of teaching. Navigating the challenges of being an educator can be daunting, particularly when it comes to ethical considerations. Both inside and outside the classroom, we are expected to exemplify integrity and moral conduct (Campbell, 2018).

Numerous philosophical avenues exist to explore ethics. For instance, Lawrence Kohlberg delineated six stages of moral development, suggesting that individuals possess the capability to evolve morally throughout their lives. Initially, ethical decisions may stem from adherence to rules and avoidance of punishment. However, as moral development progresses, individuals may ascend to a stage where actions are guided by universal principles of justice and reverence for human life. Kohlberg illustrates this progression in his "Essays on Moral Development" (1981) by

presenting scenarios showcasing how individuals at various stages of moral development might respond differently (Kohlberg, 1971).

Teachers' responsibilities and behaviors, influenced by Kohlberg and Gilligan's theories, create a multidimensional ethical framework in the classroom. Kohlberg's stages of moral development inform teachers' efforts to cultivate students' critical thinking and ethical reasoning skills. Meanwhile, Gilligan's emphasis on care-based ethics highlights the importance of nurturing relationships and empathy. In the fiduciary relationship between teachers and students, these theories converge to guide teachers in balancing power dynamics while promoting students' moral growth. By integrating insights from both perspectives, teachers can create a supportive learning environment that fosters not only academic achievement but also empathy, compassion, and social responsibility, preparing students for ethical engagement in society (Weissbourd, 2013).

Every aspect of human life requires ethics, and the fact that a career must include ethical components in order to refer to its workers as "professionals" says a lot about how vital ethics are. Just having a lot of knowledge after graduating from college is insufficient since professional teaching ethics are needed to make moral decisions that will benefit oneself and society (Gülcan, 2015). Professional ethics also help teachers navigate moral conundrums so they can protect themselves and the stakeholders in their immediate environment. They also give teachers responsibility for assisting students in changing their behavior in the direction they want to go and make it easier for them to approach their students with greater commitment, care, and intimacy (Sherpa, 2018). Hence, there is much more of a need than just providing professional ethics codes and standards to pre-service teachers. The teacher code of ethics serves to safeguard the rights of every student, a commitment inherent in accepting a teaching position. Recognizing this, integrating ethics into teacher preparation is crucial. Across Europe, North America, and Australia, nations prioritize educating aspiring teachers about ethics to ensure they become moral exemplars for their students. This emphasis reflects the understanding that teachers play a pivotal role in shaping students' ethical development and fostering a positive learning environment grounded in respect, integrity, and responsibility (Boon & Maxwell, 2016).

Research suggests a gap in preparing future teachers for ethical challenges (Boon & Maxwell, 2016). Moral guidelines encompass various aspects, including relationships with students, fostering a safe learning environment, and interactions with colleagues, parents, principals, and society (Turkish Ministry of Education, 2015). Responding to this need, Turkey's Council of Higher Education mandated a "Morality and Ethics in Education" course in 2018, effective from the 2018–2019 academic year. This course is integrated into pre-service teacher education, addressing essential aspects of teacher professional ethics and equipping aspiring educators to navigate ethical dilemmas in their careers.

Research reveals a link between teachers' adherence to ethical standards and university students' academic achievement (Yeşilyurt & Klç, 2014). Ethical conduct by teachers significantly benefits students. Additionally, while fairness is a core ethical principle, it must be applied without discrimination based on gender, race, or other factors. Ensuring equity and impartiality in educational settings is paramount for fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment where all students can thrive (Einarsson & Granstrom, 2002). Overall, there is little research evidence in the literature about the relationship between fundamental demographic factors like gender, educational background/department, age, and so forth and professional teaching ethics.

Problem Statement

The relationship between teachers' work ethics and university students' academic achievement permits further investigation by researchers. Teachers play a pivotal role in knowledge acquisition, guided by ethical principles that govern their conduct, attitudes, and values within the profession. Students closely observe teachers' behavior, including attire, speech, actions, and personal-professional conduct. These observations influence students' perceptions and may impact their academic engagement and achievement. Understanding the intricate dynamics between teachers' ethical practices and students' educational outcomes is essential for enhancing the quality of higher education. Quality education and student's academic achievement are impacted by teachers' ethics. The same is true for universities, which continue to operate as usual but whose impact on student achievement at the university

level is unidentified due to the teaching staff's work ethics. As a result, there is a need to investigate the situation by concentrating on the research question of " the relationship between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement at the university level.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to achieve the following objectives:

1. Identify the teacher's work ethic practices at the university level.
2. Examine the relationship between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement at the university level.
3. Analyze the effect of work ethics on the job performance of the teachers.
4. Identify the differences in teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement at the university level based on gender, qualification, experience, and age.

Research Questions

The questions of the study were to.

1. What were the teachers' work ethic practices at the university level?
2. Is there any difference between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement?
3. What were the effects of work ethics on the job performance of teachers?
4. Is there any difference between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement at the university level based on their gender, qualification, experience, and age?

Significance of the Study

The present study will be beneficial for university teachers, enabling them to enhance their work ethics based on data merged from the study. The teacher's improvement in work ethics will lead to the improvement in the teachers' performance efficiency and, ultimately, the students' academic achievement. It will also be helpful to attract attention by reducing misconceptions and bringing a change in students' and teachers' behaviors, values, and attitudes. It will also be helpful in making the teachers and students punctual and disciplined in their lives.

The study's outcomes could Inspire both teachers and students to prioritize ethical considerations, particularly within education. Moreover, it may encourage future researchers to delve deeper into specific facets of teacher work ethics and their impact on both job performance and student outcomes. Faculty members can benefit by enhancing their ethical understanding and judgment regarding their professional responsibilities. This holistic approach fosters a culture of integrity and accountability within academic settings, ultimately contributing to the advancement of education and the betterment of society.

Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited to both male and female faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Lahore.

Research Methodology

The study design was correlational, and the researcher investigated the relationship between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement at the university level. The study's participants were teachers from the social sciences department at the University of Lahore. A convenient sampling technique was used to draw a sample of the study for data collection.

Research Instrument

A rating scale embracing the various factors of work ethics was developed after reviewing the related literature and consultation with experts in this field. The purpose of this study is to gather information regarding teachers 'ethics and students' academic achievement at the university level. The total reliability of the rating scale was .928. Data were collected by the researcher herself. The data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 1

The descriptive score for the Male and Female Teachers' Work Ethics Subscales in Terms of Gender

Gender		Time Planning	Time Attitudes	Work Pressure	Supportive Environment	Job Description Conflicts
Male	Mean	28.04	30.80	39.03	18.72	17.23
	SD	6.01	5.50	6.96	3.33	3.98
	N	65	65	65	65	65
Female	Mean	30.41	33.44	42.23	19.28	20.28
	SD	4.25	4.31	4.95	3.64	3.92
	N	85	85	85	85	85
Total	Mean	29.38	32.30	40.84	19.04	18.96
	SD	5.20	5.02	6.10	3.51	4.21
	N	150	150	150	150	150

A study employed an independent sample t-test to assess the disparity in mean scores between male and female secondary university teachers concerning work pressure across dimensions such as time planning, work attitude, supportive environment, and job description. Table 1 shows that due to work pressure, the teachers don't focus on proper time planning to develop a work attitude, supportive environment, and job description conflict. The table shows that for both men and women, The mean score for work pressure exceeded the mean scores for time planning, work attitude, supportive environment, and job description conflict. This showed that both male and female teachers were dissatisfied with the amount of work pressure they faced. According to university teachers, work pressure has an impact on both teachers' effectiveness and students' academic achievement.

Table 2

Correlation Between University Teachers' Work Ethics and Students' Academic Achievement

Variables	Time Planning	Work attitudes	Work Pressure	Supportive Environment	Job Description Conflicts
Time Planning	1	.788**	.888**	.417**	.455**
		.000	.000	.000	.000
		150	150	150	150
Work attitudes		1	.978**	.397**	.480**
			.000	.000	.000
			150	150	150
Work Pressure			1	.423**	.490**
				.000	.000
				150	150
Supportive Environment				1	.345**
					.000
					150
Job Description Conflicts					1

The Person Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to examine the relationship between time planning, work attitude, and work pressure. There was a strong, positive correlation between time planning and work attitude (r = 0.788) and work pressure (r = 0.888). The relationship between the time planning, supportive environment (r = 417) and job description conflict (r = 0.455) was investigated. There was a moderate positive correlation. The relationship between work attitude, time planning, and work pressure was investigated. There was a strong, positive correlation between time planning and work pressure (r = 0.788) and work pressure (r = 0.978). The relationship between the work attitude in a supportive environment (r = 0.397) and job description conflict (r = 0.430) was investigated, and there was a moderate positive correlation.

The relationship between work pressure, and time planning and attitude was investigated. There was a strong, positive correlation between work pressure with time planning (r = 0.888) and work attitude (r = 0.978). The relationship between the work pressure in a supportive environment was (r = 0.423) and job description conflict was (r = 0.490). the two instances show a moderate positive correlation.

The relationship between supporting environment, time planning, and work attitude was investigated. There was a moderate, positive correlation between supporting environment with time planning (r = 0.417) and work attitude (r = 0.397). The relationship between the work pressure in a supportive environment (r = 0.423) and job description conflict (r = 0.490) was investigated, and there was a moderate positive correlation. The relationship between job description conflict, time planning, and work attitude was investigated. There was a moderate, positive correlation between supporting environment with time planning (r = 0.455) and work attitude (r = 0.480). The relationship between the job description conflict and work pressure was (r = 0.490). The supportive environment was (r = 0.345). The two instances show a moderate positive correlation. So, it was determined that there was a marginally favorable correlation between academic achievement and teachers' work ethics. As the work ethic increases, the achievement level of the students also elevates.

Table 3

Correlation Between University Teachers' Work Ethics and Students' Academic Achievement

Variables	M	SD	r- value	Sig.
Teachers' Work Ethics	140.53	20.01	.170*	.037
Students' Academic Achievement	3.40	1.79		

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was utilized to examine the connection between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement. Findings indicated a statistically significant weak positive correlation between the two variables (r = 0.170, n = 150, p ≤ 0.05).

Table 4

Differences in Male and Female Teachers' Perceptions of Work Ethics at the University Level

Variables	Gender	N	M	SD	df	t-value	Sig.
Time Planning	Male	65	28.04	6.01	110.078	-2.697	.005
	Female	85	30.41	4.25			
Work attitude	Male	65	30.80	5.50	118.463	-3.197	.001
	Female	85	33.44	4.31			
Work Pressure	Male	65	39.03	6.96	110.541	-3.150	.001
	Female	85	42.23	4.95			
Supportive Environment	Male	65	18.72	3.33	143.147	-.978	.335
	Female	85	19.28	3.64			
Job description Conflicts	Male	65	17.23	3.98	136.762	-4.867	.000
	Female	85	20.28	3.92			

An independent sample t-test was employed to compare the university's mean ratings on a subscale assessing their sentiments regarding work ethics relative to their qualifications. Table 4 illustrates a notable mean difference observed in the Supportive Environment subscale at the p ≤ 0.05 significance level, distinct from other sub-scales. Furthermore, no significant mean difference was observed between the t-values at the p ≤ 0.05 significance level in the scores of male and female teachers' perceptions of work ethics across sub-scales.   Consequently, a significant distinction was observed between male and female teachers' Perceptions of Work Ethics, particularly regarding the Supportive Environment. An independent sample t-test was employed to compare the university's mean ratings on a sub-scale, assessing their sentiments regarding work ethics relative to their qualifications. Table 4 illustrates a notable mean

difference observed in the Supportive Environment sub-scale at the p ≤ 0.05 significance level, distinct from other sub-scales.

Furthermore, no significant mean difference was found between the t-values at the p ≤ 0.05 significance level in the scores of male and female teachers. Perceptions of Work Ethics across sub-scales. Consequently, a significant distinction was observed between male and female teachers' Perceptions of Work Ethics, particularly regarding the Supportive Environment.

Table 5

Differences in University Teachers' Perceptions of Work Ethics based on their Qualification

Variables	Qualification	N	M	SD	Df	t-value	Sig.
Time Planning	MPhil	34	30.29	3.39	148	1.157	.249
	PhD	116	29.12	5.61			
Work attitude	MPhil	34	33.14	3.87	148	1.118	.265
	PhD	116	32.05	5.30			
Work Pressure	MPhil	34	41.94	4.30	148	1.191	.235
	PhD	116	40.52	6.51			
Supportive Environment	MPhil	34	19.38	3.04	148	.645	.520
	PhD	116	18.93	3.64			
Job description Conflicts	MPhil	34	18.52	4.00	148	-.676	.500
	PhD	116	19.08	4.28			

An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of male and female university teachers on a sub-scale related to their perception of work ethics based on their qualifications. Table 5 shows that there was no significant mean difference in the supportive environment sub-scale at the p ≤ 0.05 significance level compared to other sub-scales. Additionally, no significant mean difference was found in the t-values at the p ≤ 0.05 significance level between the scores of male and female teachers' perceptions of work ethics across sub-scales. Therefore, it is apparent that there is no notable difference between male and female teachers' perceptions of work ethics, particularly concerning the Supportive Environment.

Table 6

Differences in University Teachers' Perceptions of Work Ethics based on their Experience

Variables	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Time Planning	409.879	5	81.976	3.250	.008
	3631.694	144	25.220		
	4041.573	149			
Time Attitudes	396.307	5	79.261	3.390	.006
	3367.193	144	23.383		
	3763.500	149			
Work Pressure	610.506	5	122.101	3.563	.005
	4934.968	144	34.271		
	5545.473	149			
Supportive Environment	75.006	5	15.001	1.225	.300
	1762.754	144	12.241		
	1837.760	149			
Job Description Conflicts	276.227	5	55.245	3.352	.007
	2373.533	144	16.483		
	2649.760	149			

An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of male and female university teachers on a sub-scale related to their perception of work ethics, categorized by their experience. Table 6 shows that there was no significant mean difference in the supportive environment at the $p \leq 0.05$ significance level compared to other sub-scales. Furthermore, no significant mean difference was found in the t-values at the $p \leq 0.05$ significance level between the scores of male and female teachers' perceptions of work ethics across sub-scales. Consequently, it indicates that there is no notable difference between male and female teachers' perceptions.

Table 7

Differences in University Teachers' Perceptions of Work Ethics based on their Age

Variables	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Time Planning	674.432	5	134.886	5.729	.000
	3366.991	143	23.545		
	4041.423	148			
Work attitudes	634.046	5	126.809	5.808	.000
	3122.115	143	21.833		
	3756.161	148			
Work Pressure	1048.053	5	209.611	6.672	.000
	4492.753	143	31.418		
	5540.805	148			
Supportive Environment	97.994	5	19.599	1.620	.159
	1730.463	143	12.101		
	1828.456	148			
Job Description Conflicts	292.551	5	58.510	3.587	.004
	2332.442	143	16.311		
	2624.993	148			

An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of male and female university teachers on a sub-scale related to their perception of work ethics, categorized by their experience. Table 7 shows that there was no significant mean difference in the supportive environment sub-scale at the $p \leq 0.05$ significance level compared to other sub-scales. Additionally, no significant mean difference was found in the t-values at the $p \leq 0.05$ significance level between the scores of male and female teachers' perceptions of work ethics across sub-scales. Therefore, it is evident that there is no noticeable distinction between male and female teachers' perceptions of work ethics, particularly concerning the Supportive Environment.

Discussion

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between work ethics and academic achievement among university-level students. The study's main goal was to investigate the correlation between demographic factors and academic achievement. It's a more recent idea that teachers' work ethics affect their academic achievement. Work ethics is the moral practice of seeing your job as rewarding rather than a burden. Teachers who value their work ethics prioritize it over other activities. Teachers typically put in a lot of effort and put in long hours to do their lectures because it has become their aim. They develop greater commitment, accountability, and focus. The findings of the study will help determine that work ethics play a major role in the achievement of the students (Abbasi & Mir, 2012). It was also made clear from earlier studies that the study's conclusions will make it clear that work ethics are crucial to students' academic achievement. Therefore, having a good work ethic aids students in improving their academic achievement. According to the study's findings, having a high level of ethical awareness among students benefits their academics and gives them a sense of community. Therefore, we hypothesize that there is a link between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement. The findings of the study concluded that there was a significant strong positive correlation among the sub-scales of work ethics. However, a significant weak positive correlation was also found between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement. Findings

further concluded that a significant difference was found between male and female teachers regarding work ethics based on their gender, experience, and age. There was no significant difference in teachers' perceptions of work ethics based on their qualifications. A teacher's qualification goes a long way in determining the academic achievement of a student. A well-grounded teacher would engage in the questions and doubts of the students critically, thereby encouraging them to question, study, and read more and giving them more than the needed clarification.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement at the university level. The findings of the study concluded that a significant positive correlation existed among the sub-scales of work ethics. However, a significant weak positive correlation was found between teachers' work ethics and students' academic achievement. It is further concluded that a significant difference is found between male and female teachers regarding work ethics based on their gender, experience, and age. There is no significant difference in teachers' perceptions of work ethics based on their qualifications.

Recommendation

1. In order to raise students' academic achievement, teachers must show a strong dedication to their work, adopt the proper work ethic, and give it their all zeal when carrying out instructional responsibilities.
2. The Ministry of Education and State and Federal Governments may pay enough attention to conferences, seminars, workshops, and pre-service and in-service training programs for teachers.
3. Professional bodies may arrange intensive and frequent seminars and workshops to build teachers' capacity and improve the standard of the teaching-learning process in universities.
4. To increase teachers' performance in their teaching duties and students' academic achievement in universities, the government should provide suitable learning facilities and resources.

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