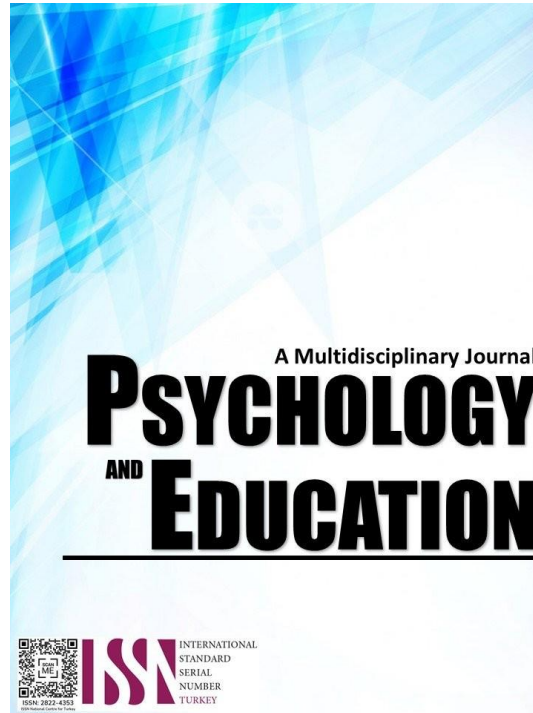


# **ETHICAL LEADERSHIP OF PUBLIC-SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND ITS IMPACT TO TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE: A FRAME OF STRUCTURED ETHICAL PRACTICES**



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## Ethical Leadership of Public-School Principals and its Impact to Teachers' Performance: A Frame of Structured Ethical Practices

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### Abstract

This study aimed to determine the ethical leadership of public school principals and its impact on teachers' performance, which served as the basis for a frame of structured ethical practices for a proposed training program during the school year 2025-2026. The perception of the principals themselves and teachers as regards the ethical leadership of public school principals. Regarding professionalism, the school administrator and teacher-respondents got a composite mean of 3.40, which was verbally interpreted as very satisfactory. Regarding behavior towards colleagues, the school administrator-respondents got a composite mean of 3.37, while the teacher-respondents got 3.45, both of which were verbally interpreted as very satisfactory. Regarding personality development, the school administrator-respondents got a composite mean of 3.49, while the teacher-respondents got 3.52, both were verbally interpreted as very satisfactory. Regarding Training, the school administrator-respondents got a composite mean of 3.45, while the teacher-respondents got 3.48, both verbally interpreted as Very Satisfactory. There is no significant difference between the perceptions of the two respondents on the ethical leadership of public school principals concerning the abovementioned aspects. The performance rating of the teachers during the school year 2023-2024 based on their IPCRF. Most respondents, 55.63%, rated the subject as "Outstanding" (4.1 – 5.0), indicating high satisfaction or performance excellence. Additionally, 44.38% of respondents rated the subject "Very Satisfactory" (3.1 – 4.0), further reinforcing positive sentiment. Importantly, no respondents rated the subject as "Satisfactory," "Unsatisfactory," or "Poor," suggesting a lack of dissatisfaction or critical feedback within the sample. There is no significant relationship between the ethical leadership of public school principals and the teachers' performance (IPCRF-based).

**Keywords:** *ethical leadership, IPCRF, professionalism*

### Introduction

Being a leader means taking responsibility for the success of others. One of the keys to doing well in any profession is living ethically, inside and outside of work. The only way for a leader to demonstrate the importance of ethics to others and the organization is to teach by example. For education leaders, the goal is to promote fair and equitable access to education resources for everyone, regardless of situation or background. Achieving this goal requires creating an ethical climate that communicates a sense of values, norms, behaviors, and attitudes built on respect, openness, and fairness.

As Harsh and Casto (2019) point out, in a school setting, the principal bears the primary responsibility for four fundamental issues. This underscores the crucial role of the school principal in integrating their managerial skills with agreed-upon codes of ethics. While all school personnel share the responsibility for creating and maintaining a conducive community for academic, emotional, and social learning, the principal stands as the chief architect and promoter of the values and standards that ensure the school operates at the highest ethical standards.

Generally speaking, leadership is an individual's power to influence others. However, using the notion of ethics, leadership is defined as "the power to determine what is good and bad or what is right and wrong to achieve common goals" (Bolat&Seymen, 2020). This implies that "ethical leaders lay down rules, follow these rules and seek to enforce them". The domain of ethical leadership is broad, encompassing altruism, trust, integrity, Sabir –Ethical leadership perceptions and its impact on teachers' commitment 32 fairness in rewards distribution, honesty in dealings, being supportive, engaging in open, transparent communication, emphasizing ethical values, setting clear ethical standards and holding those accountable for indulging in unethical practices (Yukl et al., 2020). Although a popular field, Ethical Leadership as a construct has suffered disintegration and confusion regarding its exact philosophy. The Center for Ethical Leadership states, "Ethical leadership is about knowing your core values and having the courage to live them in all parts of your life in service of the common good" (Grace & Grace, 2019).

These significant perspectives have inspired the researcher to undertake this study on the ethical leadership of school principals and its impact on teachers' performance. The study aims to determine the level of ethical leadership among school principals, assess the effective implementation of these ethical leadership practices, and their contribution to improved teachers' performance. The ultimate goal is to develop a structured framework for ethical practices that can empower school principals to enhance their ethical leadership skills.

### Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the ethical leadership of public-school principals and its impact to teachers' performance which served

as basis for a frame of structured ethical practices for a proposed training program during the school year 2025-2026. More specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the perception of the principals themselves and teachers as regards the ethical leadership of public-school principals in terms of the following:
  - 1.1. professionalism;
  - 1.2. behavior towards colleagues;
  - 1.3. personality development; and
  - 1.4. training?
2. Is there a significant difference between the perceptions of the two groups of respondents on the ethical leadership of public-school principals with respect to the above-mentioned aspects?
3. What is the performance rating of the teachers during the school year 2023-2024 based on their IPCRF?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the ethical leadership of public-school principals and the teachers' performance (IPCRF based)?
5. Based on the results of the study, what frame of structured ethical practices program may be proposed?

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study will use a descriptive research design. According to Shona McCombes (2019), Descriptive research aims to describe a population, situation, or phenomenon accurately and systematically. It can answer what, where, when, and how questions, but not why questions.

A descriptive research design can use various research methods to investigate one or more variables. Unlike in experimental research, the researcher does not control or manipulate any variables but only observes and measures them. Also, it is concerned with conditions of existing relationships, practices that prevail, beliefs, processes that are going on, effects that are being felt, or trends that are developing.

Considering this descriptive research design, the researcher would be able to determine the ethical leadership of public school principals and its impact on teachers' performance through a survey questionnaire.

### Respondents

The researcher will use purposive sampling. This will be conducted in the selected schools of District IA and IB, Division of Antipolo City. The study respondents will be school administrators and teachers. Each instrument will be administered to all the respondents. The respondents will be given enough time to answer the research instrument.

The scope of this study will be the 95 school Administrators and 172 teachers from the selected schools of District IA and IB, Division of Antipolo City.

### Instrument

The study will use a researcher-made questionnaire and descriptive questions to serve as indicators for every variable. The survey questionnaire will consist of three parts. The first part will be the evaluation of the respondents. The second part will be the teachers' IPCRF rating, and the third part will include the comments and suggestions of the school administrator and teacher respondents.

Experts will validate the questionnaires that will serve as survey instruments of the study to ensure their correctness and validity. The questionnaire's content will be analyzed and scrutinized by principals, master teachers, English teachers, and education program supervisors. Their comments and feedback will be considered in the final approval of the method and will be examined by the consultant again as the researcher's proofreader.

### Procedure

Permission from the concerned authorities will be sought before the conduct of the study. Upon approval of the schools division superintendent and the principal, the questionnaire – checklist will be administered to the school administrator and teacher-respondents from the selected public elementary schools of District IA and IB, Division of Antipolo City and will be personally retrieved by the researcher.

### Data Analysis

Frequency, Percentage Distribution, and Ranking. This will be used to analyze and summarize the results of the responses from the questionnaire.

t-Test. This will be used to determine the significant difference between the perceptions of the two groups of respondents on the ethical leadership of school principals with respect to professionalism, behavior towards colleagues, personality development, and training.

Pearson r Correlation. This will be used to determine the significant correlation between the ethical leadership of school principals and the teachers' performance (IPCRF based).

## Results and Discussion

This section provided the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the gathered data from the questionnaires answered by the respondents in accordance with the specific questions posited on the objectives of the study.

### Based on School Principal's Perception

#### School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Professionalism

Table 1. *School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Professionalism*

<i>As a principal, I...</i>	<i>A. Professionalism</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. model respectful relationship towards teachers.		3.42	Very Satisfactory	2
2. communicate always to teachers to constantly engage them in professional growth		3.70	Very Satisfactory	1
3. set clear line between private and professional life so that works won't suffer and be affected.		3.27	Very Satisfactory	4
4. present opinions and suggestions in such a way that teachers can understand and accept them.		3.41	Very Satisfactory	3
5. continue to encourage mentoring program including specific activities addressing professionalism among teachers.		3.22	Satisfactory	5
Composite Mean		3.40	Very Satisfactory	

As discussed in Table 1, the respondents stated that they communicate always to teachers to constantly engage them in professional growth, which got the highest weighted mean of 3.70 and the highest rank of 1. The findings indicated that respondents consistently communicated with teachers to actively engage them in professional growth. This ongoing communication underscored a commitment to supporting educators' development and enhancing their teaching practices. By prioritizing regular interaction, respondents facilitated a collaborative environment where teachers received feedback, guidance, and resources to improve their skills and instructional methods. This approach not only demonstrated a dedication to fostering a culture of continuous learning among educators but also ensured that teaching practices remained current and effective. The emphasis on professional growth through consistent communication promoted a sense of accountability and shared responsibility for student success among teachers and respondents alike. Principal ethical leadership positively influences professional learning communities through teacher obligation and participation in decision-making (Liu & Yin, 2020).

However, the said group of respondents stated that they continue to encourage mentoring programs including specific activities addressing professionalism among teachers which yielded the least weighted mean of 3.22 and least rank of 5. The findings indicated that respondents continued to encourage mentoring programs that included specific activities aimed at enhancing professionalism among teachers. These programs were designed to provide structured support and guidance to educators, fostering their professional development and promoting a culture of continuous improvement within the educational community. By emphasizing mentoring, respondents sought to cultivate relationships where experienced educators could share their knowledge and skills with newer teachers. This mentorship facilitated the transfer of best practices, instructional strategies, and effective classroom management techniques, thereby promoting growth and confidence among teachers. Siahaan et al. (2023) stated that school principals play a crucial role in shaping ethical behavior and fostering an ethical climate within organizations by leading by example, using rewards and discipline, and actively communicating about ethics and values.

The composite mean of 3.40 implied a high level of School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Professionalism as perceived by themselves. The findings implied a high level of school principals' ethical leadership in terms of professionalism, as perceived by themselves. Principals demonstrated a strong commitment to upholding ethical standards and promoting professionalism among staff through their actions and decisions. They actively modeled ethical behavior and integrity, setting a positive example for teachers and staff to follow. Principals prioritized transparency, fairness, and accountability in their leadership practices, ensuring that professional standards were consistently upheld throughout the school community. According to Milon & Shapira-Lishchinsky (2021), authentic leadership mediates the relationship between professional identity, ethical climate, organizational citizenship behaviors, and political behavior among elementary school principals.

#### School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Behavior Towards Colleagues

As presented in Table 2, the respondents perceived that they encourage teachers to show collaboration and extend help among others which got the highest weighted mean of 3.68 and the highest rank of 1. The findings indicated that school principals actively encouraged teachers to demonstrate collaboration and extend help to their colleagues. This encouragement fostered a supportive and cooperative school culture where educators worked together to achieve common goals and support each other's professional growth. Principals emphasized the importance of teamwork and mutual support among teachers, recognizing that collaboration could enhance teaching practices, student learning outcomes, and overall school effectiveness. They promoted a culture where sharing resources, expertise,

and best practices was encouraged and valued. School principals play a crucial role in shaping ethical behavior and fostering an ethical climate within organizations by leading by example, using rewards and discipline, and actively communicating about ethics and values (Siahaan et al., 2023).

**Table 2. School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Behavior Towards Colleagues**

<i>As a principal, I...</i>	<i>B. Behavior Towards Colleagues</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. demonstrate cheerfulness and confidence to project a pleasing appearance.		3.33	Very Satisfactory	3
2. observe fairness in treating issues and circumstances in the school learning environment.		3.21	Satisfactory	5
3. encourage teachers to show collaboration and extend help among others.		3.68	Very Satisfactory	1
4. help staff/teachers resolve conflicts between and among co-workers.		3.23	Satisfactory	4
5. orient teachers about the essential points to be learned in the code of ethics for professional teachers.		3.42	Very Satisfactory	2
Composite Mean		3.37	Very Satisfactory	

However, the said group of respondents observed that they observe fairness in treating issues and circumstances in the school learning environment which yielded the least weighted mean of 3.21 and least rank of 5. The findings indicated that school principals were perceived to observe fairness in treating issues and circumstances within the school learning environment. Principals demonstrated a commitment to equity and impartiality in their decision-making processes, ensuring that all stakeholders, including students, teachers, and parents, were treated with respect and consideration. Principals maintained open lines of communication and transparency when addressing issues, allowing for fair and unbiased resolutions to conflicts and challenges that arose within the school community. They ensured that policies and disciplinary actions were applied consistently and fairly, regardless of individual circumstances or backgrounds. According to Jia et al. (2022), ethical leadership and well-being positively influence innovative work behavior in the higher education sector, with well-being acting as a mediating factor.

The composite mean of 3.37 implied high level of School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Behavior Towards Colleagues as perceived by themselves. The findings suggested a high level of ethical leadership among school principals in terms of their behavior towards colleagues, as perceived by themselves. Principals demonstrated a strong commitment to fostering a positive and respectful workplace culture where professionalism, collaboration, and mutual support were prioritized. Principals upheld ethical standards by treating colleagues with fairness, respect, and empathy in all interactions. They actively promoted a collegial atmosphere where open communication, constructive feedback, and teamwork flourished. This approach encouraged a sense of camaraderie and unity among staff members, contributing to a supportive environment conducive to professional growth and collaboration. Banks et al. (2020) stated that ethical leadership behavior (ELB) is defined as signaling behavior by leaders targeting stakeholders, consisting of enacting prosocial values and expressing moral emotions.

### School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Personality Development

**Table 3. School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Personality Development**

<i>As a principal, I...</i>	<i>C. Personality Development</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. capacitate teachers on behavioral insights for them to become knowledgeable in carrying themselves as role models.		3.42	Very Satisfactory	4
2. manage to project firmness, friendliness and fairness among colleagues.		3.56	Very Satisfactory	2
3. model confidence and firmness in dealing school with issues.		3.50	Very Satisfactory	3
4. help teachers boost their confidence and uplift their morale.		3.58	Very Satisfactory	1
5. mentor teachers concepts of self-direction, courtesy and personal integrity.		3.37	Very Satisfactory	5
Composite Mean		3.49	Very Satisfactory	

As shown in Table 3, the respondents perceived that they help teachers boost their confidence and uplift their morale which got the highest weighted mean of 3.58 and the highest rank of 1. The findings indicated that school principals actively supported teachers in boosting their confidence and uplifting their morale. Principals recognized the importance of fostering a positive and supportive work environment where educators felt valued, motivated, and empowered to succeed. Principals implemented strategies to enhance teachers' confidence by providing constructive feedback, recognition for achievements, and opportunities for professional growth. They acknowledged teachers' efforts and contributions, highlighting their strengths and encouraging them to take on leadership roles or pursue professional development opportunities that aligned with their interests and career goals. School leadership positively impacts students' personality development, suggesting that candidates with ideal track records should be prioritized for promotion as school principals (Kamal et al., 2020).

However, the said group of respondents stated that they mentor teachers' concepts of self-direction, courtesy and personal integrity which yielded the least weighted mean of 3.37 and least rank of 5. The findings indicated that school principals played a crucial role in mentoring teachers' concepts of self-direction, courtesy, and personal integrity. Principals recognized the importance of fostering these qualities as foundational elements of professional growth and ethical conduct within the school community. Principals supported



teachers in developing self-direction by encouraging autonomy in decision-making and providing opportunities for professional development that aligned with individual interests and career goals. They promoted a culture of lifelong learning and reflective practice, empowering teachers to take ownership of their professional development and growth. Ningsih (2020) stated that school principals lead in developing teacher resources through personality development, knowledge enhancement, and decision-making through various activities.

The composite mean of 3.49 implied high level of School Principals’ ethical leadership in terms of Personality Development as perceived by themselves. The findings suggested a high level of ethical leadership among school principals in terms of their impact on personality development, as perceived by themselves. Principals recognized their role in shaping a positive school culture where personal growth, character development, and ethical behavior were prioritized. Principals demonstrated a commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where every member of the school community, including students, teachers, and staff, felt valued and respected. They promoted traits such as empathy, integrity, and resilience through their own actions and interactions with others, serving as role models for ethical behavior and personal integrity. According to Sherchand et al. (2023), ethical leadership promotes fairness in society and schools by valuing individuals and crossing structural lines to include and empower followers.

School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Personality Development

Table 4. School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Training

<i>D. Training</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>As a principal, I...</i>			
1. assure that the training course will address teachers’ needs in teaching.	3.37	Very Satisfactory	4
2. implement trainings based on the identified needs of the teachers.	3.57	Very Satisfactory	2
3. provide a conducive educational and training venue.	3.69	Very Satisfactory	1
4. maximize training sessions specific time to make them meaningful and productive.	3.42	Very Satisfactory	3
5. provide appropriate training facilities/equipment.	3.21	Satisfactory	5
Composite Mean	3.45	Very Satisfactory	

As presented in Table 4, the respondents stated that they provide a conducive educational and training venue which got the highest weighted mean of 3.69 and the highest rank of 1. The findings indicated that school principals provided a conducive educational and training venue, emphasizing the importance of creating an environment that supported effective teaching and learning experiences. Principals ensured that educational and training facilities were well-maintained, equipped with appropriate resources, and conducive to various instructional methods and activities. Principals prioritized the physical and environmental aspects of the venue, ensuring that classrooms, laboratories, and other educational spaces were safe, functional, and organized. They collaborated with school staff and stakeholders to address facility needs and implement improvements that enhanced the overall learning environment. Ethical leadership in teachers improves interactions with students, forms positive relationships, and significantly impacts student learning and development (Karamanov & Nesterak, 2023).

However, the said group of respondents that they provide appropriate training facilities/equipment which yielded the least weighted mean of 3.21 and least rank of 5. The findings indicated th at school principals prioritized providing appropriate training facilities and equipment to support effective professional development and learning opportunities for teachers and staff. Principals ensured that training facilities were equipped with modern technology, instructional materials, and resources necessary to facilitate high-quality training sessions and workshops. Principals collaborated with stakeholders to assess training needs and prioritize investments in facilities and equipment that aligned with educational goals and professional development objectives. They allocated resources efficiently to enhance the accessibility and usability of training facilities, promoting a conducive environment for learning and skill development. Bhana & Suknunan (2020) stated that training and development programs can promote more ethical leadership in higher education institutions, positively impacting employees' perception of respect, fairness, transparency, and behavior.

The composite mean of 3.45 implied a high level of School Principals’ ethical leadership in terms of Training as perceived by themselves. The findings suggested a high level of ethical leadership among school principals in terms of their approach to training, as perceived by themselves. Principals recognized training as a pivotal opportunity to support professional growth, enhance skills, and foster a culture of continuous improvement within the school community. Principals emphasized the importance of ethical principles such as fairness, transparency, and inclusivity in their approach to training. They ensured that training opportunities were accessible to all staff members, regardless of their role or seniority, promoting equity and professional development across the board. According to Bláha et al. (2022), ethics education in business schools is crucial for students to develop ethical behaviors and leadership skills, which are crucial for effective management and social responsibility.

Based on Teachers Perception

Principals’ ethical leadership in terms of Professionalism as perceived by the Teachers

As discussed in Table 5, the respondents stated that the school principal present opinions and suggestions in such a way that teachers can understand and accept them, which got the highest weighted mean of 3.51 and the highest rank of 1. The findings indicated that the school principal effectively presented opinions and suggestions in a manner that resonated with teachers, fostering understanding

and acceptance among the participants.

**Table 5. School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Professionalism as perceived by the Teachers**

<i>The principal...</i>	<i>A. Professionalism</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. model respectful relationship towards teachers.		3.42	Very Satisfactory	3
2. communicate always to teachers to constantly engage them in professional growth		3.21	Satisfactory	5
3. set clear line between private and professional life so that works won't suffer and be affected.		3.47	Very Satisfactory	2
4. present opinions and suggestions in such a way that teachers can understand and accept them.		3.51	Very Satisfactory	1
5. continue to encourage mentoring programs including specific activities addressing professionalism among teachers.		3.38	Very Satisfactory	4
Composite Mean		3.40	Very Satisfactory	

Principals demonstrated a communicative approach that prioritized clarity, empathy, and inclusivity, ensuring that their messages were accessible and relevant to the needs and perspectives of the teaching staff. Principals engaged in active listening and sought input from teachers, demonstrating a willingness to consider diverse viewpoints and concerns. By fostering open communication channels, principals created opportunities for dialogue and collaboration, promoting a sense of ownership and shared responsibility among teachers in decision-making processes. Principals in elementary schools employ a wide range of leadership strategies to develop teacher professionalism, including fostering work discipline, motivating teachers, providing educational supervision, and encouraging participation in professional development programs (Nasir et al., 2020).

However, the said group of respondents stated that the school principal communicates always to teachers to constantly engage them in professional growth which yielded the least weighted mean of 3.21 and least rank of 5. The findings indicated that the school principal consistently communicated with teachers to actively engage them in professional growth. This ongoing communication underscored the principal's commitment to supporting and promoting continuous professional development among the teaching staff. The principal emphasized the importance of lifelong learning and encouraged teachers to pursue opportunities for professional growth, such as workshops, seminars, and advanced training programs. By actively promoting these avenues for development, the principal demonstrated a proactive approach to enhancing teaching practices and staying abreast of current educational trends. Papaloi et al. (2023) stated that ethical leadership in education emphasizes developing responsibility and moral values, promoting core values like honesty, sincerity, integrity, altruism, trust, and rewarding ethical contributions and responsibility.

The composite mean of 3.40 implied a high level of School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Professionalism as perceived by the teachers. The findings suggested a high level of ethical leadership among school principals in terms of professionalism, as perceived by teachers within the school community. Principals were perceived to uphold and model ethical standards of conduct, integrity, and accountability in their interactions and decision-making processes. Teachers recognized principals' commitment to fostering a professional environment characterized by fairness, transparency, and respect for diverse perspectives. Principals demonstrated consistency in applying policies and procedures, ensuring that all staff members were treated equitably and with dignity. According to Habibi et al. (2022), professionalism among academic educational leaders is characterized by care ethics, justice-oriented ethics, and ethics of criticism, and is influenced by personal characteristics, professional capabilities, and a systemic view.

### **School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Behavior Towards Colleagues as perceived by the Teachers**

**Table 6. School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Behavior Towards Colleagues as perceived by the Teachers**

<i>The principal...</i>	<i>B. Behavior Towards Colleagues</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1. demonstrate cheerfulness and confidence to project a pleasing appearance.		3.54	Very Satisfactory	2
2. observe fairness in treating issues and circumstances in the school learning environment.		3.20	Satisfactory	4
3. encourage teachers to show collaboration and extend help among others.		3.67	Very Satisfactory	1
4. help staff/teachers resolve conflicts between and among co-workers.		3.31	Very Satisfactory	3
5. orient teachers about the essential points to be learned in the code of ethics for professional teachers.		3.54	Very Satisfactory	2
Composite Mean		3.45	Very Satisfactory	

As presented in Table 6, the respondents perceived that the school principal encourage teachers to show collaboration and extend help among others which got the highest weighted mean of 3.67 and the highest rank of 1. The findings indicated that the school principal actively encouraged teachers to demonstrate collaboration and extend help to their colleagues within the school community. Principals recognized the importance of fostering a supportive and cooperative environment where teachers could work together effectively to enhance student learning outcomes and professional growth. Principals promoted a culture of teamwork and mutual support by emphasizing the benefits of collaboration in achieving common goals and overcoming challenges. They encouraged teachers to share resources, ideas, and best practices, facilitating opportunities for peer learning and mentorship. School principals' ethical leadership



behaviors positively impact organizational health, indicating that ethical behaviors in management are crucial for high organizational health in schools (Özgenel & Aksu, 2020).

However, the said group of respondents observed that the school principal observes fairness in treating issues and circumstances in the school learning environment which yielded the least weighted mean of 3.3789 and least rank of 4. The findings indicated that the school principal was perceived to consistently observe fairness in addressing issues and circumstances within the school learning environment. Principals prioritized equity, transparency, and consistency in their approach to resolving challenges and making decisions that impacted students, teachers, and staff. Principals ensured that policies and procedures were applied uniformly and fairly, regardless of individual circumstances or backgrounds. They maintained open lines of communication with stakeholders, seeking input and feedback to inform their decisions and ensure that all voices were heard and considered. According to Webster & Litchka (2020), school principals' overall leadership abilities and ethical behaviors are strongly linked, but there are significant differences in perceptions based on gender, ethnicity, experience, school type, and jurisdiction.

The composite mean of 3.45 implied a high level of School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Behavior Towards Colleagues as perceived by the teachers. The findings suggested a high level of ethical leadership among school principals in terms of their behavior towards colleagues, as perceived by teachers within the school community. Principals were perceived to exemplify qualities of respect, fairness, and professionalism in their interactions with staff members. Teachers acknowledged principals' commitment to fostering a positive and supportive work environment where collegiality and collaboration were valued. Principals demonstrated empathy and understanding in their interactions, listening attentively to colleagues' perspectives and concerns, and offering support and encouragement when needed. According to Acidera et al. (2023), ethical leadership is significantly correlated with task performance and counterproductive work behavior, but not contextual performance.

School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Personality Development as perceived by the Teachers

Table 7. School Principals as regards to the ethical leadership in terms of Personality Development as perceived by the Teachers

	C. Personality Development	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
The principal...				
1. capacitate teachers on behavioral insights for them to become knowledgeable in carrying themselves as role models.		3.22	Satisfactory	4
2. manage to project firmness, friendliness and fairness among colleagues.		3.37	Very Satisfactory	3
3. model confidence and firmness in dealing school with issues.		3.65	Very Satisfactory	2
4. help teachers boost their confidence and uplift their morale.		3.69	Very Satisfactory	1
5. mentor teachers concepts of self-direction, courtesy and personal integrity.		3.65	Very Satisfactory	2
	Composite Mean	3.52	Very Satisfactory	

As shown in Table 7, the respondents perceived that the school principal help teachers boost their confidence and uplift their morale which got the highest weighted mean of 3.69 and the highest rank of 1. The findings indicated that school principals played a crucial role in helping teachers boost their confidence and uplift their morale within the school community. Principals actively supported and encouraged teachers through various means, fostering a positive and supportive work environment. Principals provided regular feedback and recognition for teachers' efforts and achievements, reinforcing their value and contributions to the school community. By acknowledging teachers' successes and strengths, principals helped build confidence and motivation among staff members. According to Vikaraman et al. (2020), some school principals lack an understanding of ethical leadership style but practice several dimensions, suggesting a need for ethical leadership integration and improved teacher work performance.

However, the said group of respondents stated that the school principal capacitates teachers on behavioral insights for them to become knowledgeable in carrying themselves as role models which yielded the least weighted mean of 3.22 and least rank of 4. The findings indicated that the school principal actively capacitated teachers on behavioral insights, equipping them with knowledge and skills to effectively carry themselves as role models within the school community. Principals recognized the importance of teachers' behavior in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors, and they emphasized the role of educators as influential figures in students' lives. Principals facilitated professional development opportunities that focused on behavioral insights, such as workshops, training sessions, and seminars. These initiatives provided teachers with practical strategies and techniques to promote positive behavior, cultivate respectful interactions, and model ethical conduct in their daily interactions with students and colleagues. Teachers in public schools perceive their principals as more ethical leaders, but both public and private school principals score low in respecting social values (Topaloglu et al., 2023).

The composite mean of 3.52 implied a high level of School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Personality Development as perceived by the teachers. The findings suggested a high level of ethical leadership among school principals in terms of personality development, as perceived by teachers within the school community. Principals were recognized for their commitment to nurturing a supportive and inclusive environment that fostered personal growth, character development, and ethical behavior among staff members. Principals promoted a culture of respect and empathy, where teachers felt valued and appreciated for their unique contributions to the school community. They emphasized the importance of integrity, fairness, and accountability in all aspects of professional conduct,

serving as role models for ethical behavior and positive interpersonal relationships. Fresco (2020) stated that elementary school principals with high leadership qualities and strong supervision skills are more effective in enhancing the quality of education in their schools.

### School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Personality Development as perceived by the Teachers

Table 8. *School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Training as perceived by the Teachers*

<i>D. Training</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>The principal...</i>			
1. assure that the training course will address teachers' needs in teaching.	3.66	Very Satisfactory	1
2. implement trainings based on the identified needs of the teachers.	3.45	Very Satisfactory	3
3. provide a conducive educational and training venue.	3.43	Very Satisfactory	4
4. maximize training sessions specific time to make them meaningful and productive.	3.52	Very Satisfactory	2
5. provide appropriate training facilities/equipment.	3.37	Very Satisfactory	5
Composite Mean	3.48	Very Satisfactory	

As presented in Table 8, the respondents stated that the school principal assure that the training course will address teachers' needs in teaching which got the highest weighted mean of 3.66 and the highest rank of 1. The findings indicated that the school principal ensured that training courses addressed teachers' specific needs in teaching effectively within the school community. Principals recognized the importance of tailored professional development opportunities that aligned with teachers' instructional challenges, goals, and professional growth aspirations. Principals conducted needs assessments and collaborated with teachers to identify areas where additional support and training were needed. They sought input from educators to understand their instructional needs, learning preferences, and areas of interest, ensuring that training courses were relevant, engaging, and impactful. Moral and ethical leadership in educational institutions is essential for success, guiding actions based on values like integrity, fairness, equity, social justice, and respect for diversity (Davidson & Hughes, 2020).

However, the said group of respondents stated that the school principals provide appropriate training facilities/equipment which yielded the least weighted mean of 3.37 and least rank of 5. The findings indicated that school principals prioritized providing appropriate training facilities and equipment to support effective professional development and learning opportunities for teachers within the school community. Principals recognized that well-equipped training facilities and resources were essential in facilitating engaging and impactful training sessions. Principals ensured that training facilities were equipped with modern technology, instructional materials, and resources necessary to support diverse learning needs and instructional methods. They collaborated with stakeholders, including teachers and administrative staff, to assess training requirements and allocate resources effectively. Gikonyo (2020) stated that ethical leadership is crucial for secondary school management in Kenya, promoting value-based leadership and enhancing staff job satisfaction, leading to better performance for both staff and students.

The composite mean of 3.48 implied a high level of School Principals' ethical leadership in terms of Training as perceived by the teachers. The findings suggested a high level of ethical leadership among school principals in terms of their approach to training, as perceived by teachers within the school community. Principals were recognized for their commitment to fostering a supportive and enriching learning environment that prioritized professional growth and development. Principals demonstrated ethical leadership by ensuring that training initiatives were aligned with teachers' needs and professional goals. They actively sought input from educators to understand their interests, challenges, and aspirations, tailoring training programs accordingly to maximize relevance and impact. Phumitanon et al. (2023) stated that a model for developing ethical leadership in school administrators was developed, prioritizing fairness, citizenship, responsibility, respect, and trust.

### Significant Difference Between the Perceptions of the Two Groups of Respondents

Table 9. *Difference observed between the perception School Principals and teachers*

<i>Difference observed between the perception of School Principals and teachers in terms ethical leadership:</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>	<i>Std. Error Mean</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Decision</i>
Professionalism	0.01684	0.32781	0.03149	0.535	Not Significant	Accept Ho
Behavior Towards Colleagues	-0.16784	0.28218	0.03004	-5.883	Not Significant	Accept Ho
Personality Development	0.02794	0.31431	0.03325	0.588	Not Significant	Accept Ho
Training	-0.0632	0.33482	0.03606	-0.596	Not Significant	Accept Ho

Table 9 presented the comparison of the perceptions of School Principals and teachers on ethical leadership dimensions: Professionalism, Behavior Towards Colleagues, Personality Development, and Training, the findings indicate several insights. The statistical analysis, characterized by t-values and associated interpretations, reveals that there were no statistically significant differences in perception between Principals and teachers across these dimensions.

Specifically, both Principals and teachers showed similar perceptions regarding professionalism, behavior towards colleagues, personality development, and training within the context of ethical leadership. The acceptance of the null hypothesis in each dimension suggests a consensus or alignment in how both groups view these aspects of leadership.

This alignment is crucial as it underscores a shared understanding and agreement on key ethical leadership practices within the school environment. Such findings are valuable for fostering collaborative leadership approaches and promoting cohesive organizational cultures that prioritize ethical conduct and professional development among school staff. Ethical leadership positively impacts teaching performance in public higher learning institutions, with role clarification and integrity positively impacting academic staff's performance (Mseti, 2023).

Teachers’ Performance Rating (IPCRF)

Table 10. *Teachers’ Performance Rating (IPCRF)*

Rating	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
4.1 – 5.0	Outstanding	89	55.63%
3.1 – 4.0	Very Satisfactory	71	44.38%
2.1 – 3.0	Satisfactory	0	0
1.1 – 2.0	Unsatisfactory	0	0
0.1 – 1.0	Poor	0	0
Total		160	100%

Shown in Table 10 was the Teachers’ Performance Rating (IPCRF). The majority of respondents, 55.63%, rated the subject as "Outstanding" (4.1 – 5.0), indicating a high level of satisfaction or performance excellence. Additionally, 44.38% of respondents rated the subject as "Very Satisfactory" (3.1 – 4.0), further reinforcing positive sentiment. Importantly, no respondents rated the subject as "Satisfactory," "Unsatisfactory," or "Poor," suggesting a lack of dissatisfaction or critical feedback within the sample.

These findings indicated a strong consensus among respondents regarding the subject's high performance or quality, as reflected in their overwhelmingly positive ratings. This high level of satisfaction underscored the subject's effectiveness or desirability, as perceived by the responses. Teacher performance in educational contexts is influenced by their role in management, leadership, competitiveness, and academic training, with professional training and skills being crucial for achieving educational quality (Llovio et al., 2023).

Relationship between the ethical leadership of school principals and teachers’ performance rating

Table 11. *Relationship between the ethical leadership of school principals and teachers’ performance rating*

Variable	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Ethical leadership of school principals and Teachers’ Performance Rating	0.063	0.262	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Table 11 presented the examination of the relationship between Ethical Leadership of School Principals and Teacher Performance Rating, the findings indicated a r-value of 0.063 and a corresponding p-value of 0.262. These values suggested a weak positive correlation between ethical leadership and teacher performance rating.

The decision was made to accept the null hypothesis (Ho), indicating that the observed relationship was not statistically significant. This implied that variations in ethical leadership among school principals did not reliably predict or explain variations in teacher performance ratings based on the data analyzed.

While the positive r-value suggested a tendency for higher ethical leadership to coincide with slightly higher teacher performance ratings, the lack of statistical significance ( $p > 0.05$ ) suggested that this relationship could have been due to chance or other factors not accounted for in the study.

Therefore, while ethical leadership is an important aspect of school management, as indicated by its positive correlation with teacher performance ratings, it did not conclusively demonstrate a significant impact on teacher performance in the context analyzed. Future research could explore additional variables or employ different methodologies to further elucidate the nuanced relationship between ethical leadership and teacher outcomes.

Authentic leadership of school heads positively influences teachers' work ethics, which in turn improves their task performance in public elementary schools (Ricaplaza & Quines, 2022).

Structured Ethical Practices Programs

Table 12 outlined five structured ethical leadership programs aimed at enhancing school principals' leadership practices, based on the study's recommendations. First, the Continuous Professional Development program focuses on mentoring, workshops, and seminars to continually improve teaching methodologies and skills among educators, fostering a culture of lifelong learning. The Principal and HR Team lead this initiative, ensuring it aligns with teachers' needs. Second, Transparent Communication Channels emphasize establishing open dialogues between principals and teachers, aiming to build trust and empower teachers in decision-making processes, with the Principal taking charge of fostering transparent communication. Third, the Ethical Leadership Training program equips principals with decision-making skills, conflict resolution, and ethical principles application through specialized external training sessions. Fourth, the 360-Degree Feedback Mechanism collects feedback from teachers, students, and parents to assess leadership

effectiveness and school climate, overseen by the School Administrator to ensure structured and confidential feedback processes.

Table 12. *Proposed Structured Ethical Practices Programs*

<i>Program Name</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Person In Charge</i>
Continuous Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhance teaching methodologies and skills through tailored mentoring, workshops, and seminars.</li> <li>- Foster a culture of lifelong learning among educators.</li> </ul>	Principal and HR Team
Transparent Communication Channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure teachers are updated with current educational advancements.</li> <li>- Establish clear and open channels for dialogue and feedback between principals and teachers.</li> <li>- Build trust and mutual respect within the school community.</li> </ul>	Principal
Ethical Leadership Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Empower teachers to contribute to decision-making processes.</li> <li>- Equip principals with skills in ethical decision-making, conflict resolution, and application of core ethical principles.</li> <li>- Ensure consistency in ethical standards across school practices.</li> </ul>	External Ethical Trainer
360-Degree Feedback Mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhance principals' confidence in navigating ethical dilemmas.</li> <li>- Solicit feedback from teachers, students, and parents to assess perceptions of fairness, trust, and satisfaction.</li> <li>- Identify strengths and areas for improvement in leadership practices.</li> </ul>	School Administrator
Regular Evaluation of Ethical Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Foster a culture of continuous improvement and accountability.</li> <li>- Conduct periodic assessments to measure the impact of ethical leadership on teacher satisfaction and school climate.</li> <li>- Use qualitative and quantitative measures to capture subjective perceptions and objective outcomes.</li> <li>- Refine leadership strategies based on evaluation findings.</li> </ul>	Evaluation Committee

Lastly, Regular Evaluation of Ethical Practices conducts periodic assessments to measure leadership impact on teacher satisfaction and school climate, guided by an Evaluation Committee responsible for designing evaluation frameworks and presenting findings for strategic decision-making. These programs are designed to systematically promote ethical leadership, aligning with educational goals, cultivating a positive school culture, and enhancing overall leadership effectiveness through targeted implementation and continuous improvement efforts.

## Conclusions

The study delved into the perceptions of both school principals and teachers regarding ethical leadership across key dimensions: professionalism, behavior towards colleagues, personality development, and training. Principals were found to actively engage teachers in professional growth through consistent communication and structured mentoring programs. This approach emphasized the importance of collaboration and facilitated ongoing learning and development among educators. Principals demonstrated a clear commitment to upholding ethical standards promoting fairness, transparency, and accountability in their decision-making processes. The acceptance of the null hypothesis across all dimensions indicates a notable alignment between principals' self-perceived ethical leadership and teachers' perceptions. This alignment underscores a shared understanding within the school community regarding the crucial aspects of ethical leadership. It suggests that both principals and teachers recognize and value professionalism, supportive behavior towards colleagues, efforts in personality development, and the provision of effective training opportunities as integral components of ethical leadership.

Furthermore, the study revealed high satisfaction among respondents regarding teachers' performance ratings. This positive evaluation reflects the effectiveness and quality of teachers' contributions within their respective roles, reinforcing the impact of ethical leadership practices on overall school performance and satisfaction. In terms of the relationship between ethical leadership and teacher performance ratings, while a positive correlation was observed, the study did not establish a statistically significant impact on teacher performance. This suggests that while ethical leadership is highly regarded and contributes positively to the school environment, its direct influence on measurable teacher outcomes may require further exploration through additional variables or research methodologies. The findings underscore the pivotal role of ethical leadership in shaping a positive and supportive school climate. Principals' proactive engagement in fostering professional growth, promoting a collaborative culture, and upholding ethical standards contributes significantly to creating an environment conducive to teacher satisfaction and effective educational outcomes. Continuing research could explore nuanced aspects of ethical leadership and its implications for diverse educational settings to enhance leadership practices and educational effectiveness further.

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study on ethical leadership in schools, several key recommendations emerge to enhance the effectiveness of school principals in fostering ethical leadership practices. Firstly, it is crucial to prioritize continuous professional development initiatives tailored to the needs of teachers. Principals should expand existing mentoring programs and facilitate regular workshops and seminars to enhance teaching methodologies and keep educators abreast of current educational advancements. By investing in ongoing professional growth, principals support teachers in refining their skills and cultivating a culture of continuous improvement within the school community. This approach demonstrates a commitment to the development of educators

but also ensures that teaching practices remain dynamic and effective in meeting evolving educational standards. Secondly, strengthening communication and collaboration channels between principals and teachers is essential. Principals should maintain transparent communication channels that encourage open dialogue and feedback from teachers on school policies and decision-making processes. This inclusive approach fosters a sense of ownership and mutual respect, empowering teachers to contribute meaningfully to the school's strategic direction. By valuing teacher input and involving them in decision-making, principals can build trust and cooperation, enhancing overall school climate and morale. Thirdly, ethical leadership training programs should be integrated into professional development plans for school leaders. These programs should emphasize core ethical principles such as fairness, integrity, and accountability. Schools can consistently apply ethical standards in daily practices by equipping principals with the necessary skills and frameworks. Training should also focus on effective decision-making and conflict-resolution strategies, preparing principals to navigate complex ethical dilemmas with confidence and integrity. Furthermore, implementing 360-degree feedback mechanisms can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of ethical leadership practices. Principals should solicit feedback from teachers, students, and parents to assess perceptions of fairness, trust, and overall satisfaction within the school community. This feedback is a valuable tool for principals to identify strengths and areas for improvement in their leadership approach, enabling them to make informed adjustments that enhance organizational cohesion and morale. Lastly, regular evaluation of ethical leadership practices is essential to ensure continuous improvement. Principals should conduct periodic assessments to measure the impact of their leadership on teacher satisfaction, professional growth, and school climate. These evaluations should encompass qualitative and quantitative measures to capture subjective perceptions and objective outcomes. By regularly evaluating and refining their leadership strategies, principals can cultivate a supportive and inclusive school environment where ethical conduct, professionalism, and collaboration thrive. By implementing these recommendations, school principals can strengthen their ethical leadership practices, foster a positive organizational culture, and ultimately enhance student educational outcomes. Emphasizing continuous professional development, transparent communication, ethical leadership training, feedback mechanisms, and regular evaluation are critical to nurturing effective and ethical leadership within schools.

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