Asia Pacific Journal of Research

A peer reviewed international Journal

Print -ISSN -2320 - 5504
Online-E-ISSN - 2347 - 4793

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP: AN EVALUATION OF THE CASE OF LEBANESE PRIVATE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS THROUGH THE TEACHERS' LENSES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify both the ethical leadership qualities and the unethical practices types of Lebanese private school leaders. It also sought to specify the reasons explaining and reinforcing the unethical attitudes and behaviors of these school leaders. For this purpose, an extensive review of the literature of ethical leadership was conducted which constituted the base for the generation of a survey consisting of three sections: section A requested participants to identify the ethical leadership qualities characterized by school principals, section B requested respondents to determine the unethical behavior practiced by these school leaders and section C requested them to identify the causes behind the unethical behavior of the principals and the excuses used by them to justify their unethical practices. The questionnaire was sent to 63 private schools. The total sample consisted of 252 teachers (4 from each school). SPSS 21.0 was utilized to analyze data. The image provided by teachers about applying ethical leadership principles by school principals is relatively dark. The results of this study identify the principals' unethical practices that should be treated and determines the causes that explain and consolidate these practices. Limitations of the study are mentioned and recommendations for future research are suggested. Finally, the study's recommendations help principals enhance their ethical leadership principles and practices.

Key Words: ethics- ethical behavior- unethical behavior- ethical leadership- school leaders- school principals- teachers

Introduction

Ethics "can be defined as the body of knowledge that deals with the study of universal principles that determine right from wrong. Ethics concerns itself with the moral principles that govern behavior." (Oates, 2013, p.1). Ethics revolves around three core concepts: 'self', 'good' and 'other'. Ethical behavior results when one does not merely consider what is good for oneself, but also takes into account what is good for others. It is important that each of these three basic concepts be included in a definition of ethics (Buytendijk, 2012; Ferreira, 2008; Oates, 2013; Rossouw & Van Vuuren, 2004:3; Van Vuuren, 2010). Leadership is about

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serving, guiding, galvanizing and influencing people to act toward achieving a common goal (Al-Jammal & Ghamrawi, 2013; Ghamrawi & Al-Jammal, 2014; Oates, 2013).

By combining the two definitions, one quickly derives a simple definition for ethical leadership: it is serving, guiding, galvanizing and influencing people to achieve a common goal in a morally acceptable way. 'Doing the right thing' underpins the ethical leader's message and, therefore, style of behavior. The Center for Ethical Leadership (CEL) offers a basic definition. According to this center, ethical leadership is knowing self-core values and having the courage to live them in all parts of one's personal life in service of the common good (Lee & Seo, 2012).

Ethical leadership has been discussed by various scholars in the field of organizational behavior and management with respect to its impact on individuals, groups and organizational outcomes (Zhu et al., 2004). However, "Ethics does not need to come at the expense of effectiveness. Ethical leadership theory supports the premise that ethics and performance are compatible concepts."(Yates, 2011, p.85). In other words, ethical leadership is associated with positive impact on employee performance, intrinsic motivation, job satisfaction and willingness of employee to report problems (Bello, 2012; Yates, 2011).

Similarly, in education, ethical leadership is compatible with school effectiveness. Ethical leadership in education is essential for principals and teachers to run effective schools (Allen et al., 2010). Principals must show ethical judgment in dealing with teachers as well as students (Allen et al., 2010). Teachers hold the responsibility of ethical judgment, not just to ensure their well-being, but also to act as an example to their students who learn many of their ethical values at school (Allen et al., 2010).

Purpose of the Study

This study aims to:
1. Identify the ethical leadership qualities characterizing the Lebanese private school principals.
2. Determine the unethical practices types of Lebanese private school leaders.
3. Specify the reasons explaining and reinforcing the unethical attitudes and behaviors of these school leaders.
4. Furnish the recommendations to enhance the ethical attitudes and behaviors of Lebanese private school leaders and ultimately support a healthy working environment at their schools.

Research Questions

This study attempts to explore the following questions:
1. What are the ethical leadership qualities enjoyed by Lebanese private school principals? To what extent their attitudes and behaviors are compatible with the ethical leadership principles?
2. What are the unethical practices types of Lebanese private school leaders?
3. What are the causes explaining and nourishing the unethical attitudes and behaviors of Lebanese school principals?
4. What are the recommendations that can be furnished in this regard to enhance the ethical attitudes and behaviors of Lebanese private school leaders?

Review of Literature

Characteristics of Ethical Leadership

Research in management and leadership has focused on a few traits that are more commonly found in leaders who are rated by their followers as being ethical leaders. These traits are listed in table 1.

Table 1: 10 Characteristics of ethical leadership

	Characteristics	References
1	Acting with integrity	Al-Jammal&Ghamrawi(2013), Berghofer&Schwartz(2012), Hakala(2008), Hopkin(2012), Tracy(2012), Tracy(2013), Williams(2013), Yates(2011).
2	Building community	Abolrous(2008), Bendelta(2014), Carman(2012), Donahue(2013), Whitaker(2012b).
3	Framing ethical actions and sharing power with others	Berghofer&Schwartz(2012), Freeman&Stewart(2006), Goldsmith(2010), Kalshoven(2010), Kalshoven&Den Hartog(2009), Kalshoven et al.(2011b), Whitaker(2012b), Zenger(2012).
4	Having good relationships with the workforce	DeRue et al.(2011), Donahue(2013), Freeman&Stewart(2006), Hakala(2008), Kalshoven(2010), Kalshoven&Den Hartog(2009), Vickery(2013), Wharton Magazine(2014), Whitaker(2012b), Yates(2011), Zenger(2012).
5	Having humility and admitting mistakes	Booher(2014), Freeman&Stewart(2006), Ghosen(2011), McCarthy(2014), Owens&Hekman(2012), Prime&Salib(2014), Shedd(2011), Thomas(2014), Tracy(2012), Watson(2014), Whitaker(2012a), Yates(2011), Zenger(2012).
6	Having trustworthiness	Berghofer&Schwartz(2012), Kalshoven(2010), Kalshoven&Den Hartog(2009), McCarthy(2014), Thornton(2014), Whitaker(2012a), Yates(2011), Zenger(2012).
7	Inspiring others to be ethical	Fox et al.(2007), Nag(2011), Nohria(2013), Seidman(2010), Span(2012), Whitaker(2012b), Whitbourne(2013), Yates(2011).
8	Serving others	Abolrous(2008), Borner(2012), Carman(2012), Donahue(2013), Freeman&Stewart(2006), Ghamrawi&Al-Jammal(2014), Keith(2014), Mirenda(2009), Monroe(2013), Moss(2012), Yates(2011).
9	Showing justice and fairness	Berghofer&Schwartz(2012), Donahue(2013), Hakala(2008), Kalshoven(2010), Kalshoven&Den Hartog(2009), Penn State World Campus(2012), Smith(2013), Vickery(2013), Yates(2011).
10	Working transparently and clarifying expectations	Abolrous(2008), Donahue(2013), Gebler(2011), Kalshoven(2010), Kalshoven&Den Hartog(2009), Kalshoven,et al.(2011a), Rakaeva(2013), Watson(2014), Yates(2011).

Acting with integrity

Integrity is one of the top attributes of an ethical leader (Al-Jammal & Ghamrawi, 2013; Berghofer & Schwartz, 2012; Hakala, 2008; Hopkin, 2012; Tracy, 2013; Tracy, 2012; Williams, 2013; Yates, 2011). According to Hopkin (2012), "It is a concept of consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations and outcomes. It connotes a deep commitment to do the right thing for the right reason, regardless of the circumstances." (p.1).

Berghofer & Schwartz (2012) identify the characteristics of a leader who acts with integrity. According to them, this leader:
  o Keeps promises and commitments and expects others to keep theirs
  o Maintains loyalty to those not present
  o Apologizes sincerely
  o Acts with honesty
  o Takes responsibility and cleans up after mistakes (p.1).

Hakala (2008) argues that "a person of integrity is the same on the outside and on the inside." (p.1). According to the author, "Honest dealings, predictable reactions, well-controlled emotions, and an absence of tantrums and harsh outbursts are all signs of integrity." (p.1). Hakala (2008) assures that "A leader who is centered in integrity will be more approachable by followers." (p.1).

Building community

Ethical leaders build a teamwork culture in the workplace (Abolrous, 2008; Bendelta, 2014; Carman, 2012; Donahue, 2013; Whitaker, 2012b). According to Donahue (2013), "Community is the result of shaping an honest, caring, truthful, engaging, fun and authentic culture." (p.1). The author argues that ethical leaders drive themselves and others from narcissism and consumerism to others-centered and creativity-focused. Whitaker (2012b) says, "People associate ethical leadership with a leader that has the ability to bring people together opposed allowing cliques or employee (family) division. This leadership skill of blending individual achievement and community is associated with great leaders that build high-performing teams based on ethical principles." (p.1). Whitaker (2012b) also believes that "Organizing a team of experts requires the leadership skill of valuing team success over individual success. An ethical leader has the ability to take all the talents of those on the team (or in the family) and synergize them into a highly performing team that achieves extraordinary results." (p.1).

Framing ethical actions and sharing power with others

Ethical leaders perceive their leadership as a fully ethical task. Therefore, they frame actions in ethical terms (Berghofer & Schwartz, 2012; Freeman & Stewart, 2006; Goldsmith, 2010; Kalshoven, 2010; Kalshoven & Den Hartog, 2009; Kalshoven et al., 2011b; Whitaker, 2012b; Zenger, 2012). Freeman and Stewart (2006) assure that "This entails taking seriously the rights claims of others, considering the effects of one's actions on others (stakeholders), and understanding how acting or leading in a certain way will have effects on one's character and the character of others. There is nothing amoral about ethical leaders, and they recognize that their own values may sometimes turn out to be a poor guidepost." (p.7). According to Kalshoven and Den Hartog (2009), "Ethical leaders provide subordinates with voice, ask for and listen to their input, and allow them to share in decision making on issues that concern their tasks." (p.104).

Power sharing is labeled as a behavioral component of ethical leadership (Berghofer & Schwartz, 2012; Freeman & Stewart, 2006; Goldsmith, 2010; Kalshoven & Den Hartog, 2009; Kalshoven, 2010; Whitaker, 2012b; Zenger, 2012). Kalshoven, Den Hartog and De Hoogh (2011b) say, "Several authors argue that ethical leadership has an empowering element." (p.351). Goldsmith (2010) assures that leaders should allow their employees to empower themselves. He also says that "Successful leaders and managers today are willing to

exercise their leadership in such a way that their people are empowered to make decisions, share information, and try new things. Most employees (future leaders) see the value in finding empowerment and are willing to take on the responsibilities that come with it." (p.1).

Goldsmith (2010) has 3 suggestions to help leaders to build an environment that empowers people. Leaders should:

- o   Give power to those who have demonstrated the capacity to handle responsibilities.
- o   Create a favorable environment in which people are encouraged to enhance their knowledge, attitudes and skills.
- o   Provide people discretion and autonomy over their tasks and resources.

According to Goldsmith (2010), leaders should not second-guess others' decisions and ideas unless it is absolutely necessary. This only undermines their confidence and keeps them from sharing future ideas with their leader.

Having good relationships with the workforce

Ethical leaders are agreeable; they have good relationships with the workforce (DeRue et al., 2011; Donahue, 2013; Freeman & Stewart, 2006; Hakala, 2008; Kalshoven, 2010; Kalshoven & Den Hartog, 2009; Vickery, 2013; Wharton Magazine, 2014; Whitaker, 2012b; Yates, 2011; Zenger, 2012). According to Wharton Magazine (2014), the agreeable leaders are positive in outlook. They are polite, trusting, and prefer cooperation over competition. They feel compassion for and empathy toward others and eagerness to help them and they believe others will help them in return. Agreeable leaders are straightforward, altruistic, compliant and modest.

According to Donahue (2013), ethical leaders respect others: leaders might think that they have this mastered, but they disrespect others when they interrupt them, show up late to meetings, only seek advice from their kind of people, or ignore the input of people lower in status or rank.

Zenger (2012) argues that ethical leaders "listen with great intensity" (p.1). Freeman and Stewart (2006) assure that these leaders "take a charitable understanding of others' values" (p.6). In other words, they "can understand why different people make different choices, but still have a strong grasp on what they would do and why" (Freeman & Stewart, 2006, p.6).

Moreover, ethical leaders have a sense of humor which is vital to relieve tension and boredom, as well as to defuse hostility (Hakala, 2008). "Ethical leaders know how to use humor to energize people. Humor is a form of power that provides some control over the work environment. And simply put, humor fosters good camaraderie." (Hakala, 2008, p.2).

Hence, Wharton Magazine (2014) assures that the disagreeable or antagonistic leaders in the extreme are egocentric, skeptical of the intention of others, and usually have empathy deficit disorder and are overly competitive. According to Wharton Magazine (2014), "agreeableness increases confidence in the successful leader as positive results become contagious." (p.1).

Having humility and admitting mistakes

Many authors argue that humility is a critical characteristic of effective leaders (Booher, 2014; Freeman & Stewart, 2006; Ghosen, 2011; McCarthy, 2014; Owens & Hekman, 2012; Prime & Salib, 2014; Shedd, 2011; Thomas, 2014; Tracy, 2012; Watson, 2014; Whitaker, 2012a; Yates, 2011; Zenger, 2012). Ghosen (2011) confirms that "Humble leaders are more effective and better liked." (p.1). Tracy (2012) assures that humility does not mean that leaders are weak or unsure of themselves, but it means that they have the needed self-confidence and self-awareness to recognize the value of others without feeling threatened. According to Shedd (2011), humility is the personal honesty that an individual, as a leader, does not know everything and

does not have all the answers. Indeed, humility enables the leader to question people's flattery, to admit one's mistakes and weaknesses, and to be more open to other's opinions and challenges to his/her viewpoints.

Whitaker (2012a) says that humble leaders recognize their dark side. According to her, "The first step to become more self-aware is to be in touch and reflect on what characteristics, traits or habits exist that may not contribute to leadership success. This action requires courage, honesty, and the willingness to recognize that the dark side itself is not negative. It is only when the dark side is suppressed, ignored, and avoided that leadership tendencies may become untrustworthy." (p.1).

Admitting mistakes of themselves and those of others help humility leaders to:
  o Build credibility for times when they are right
  o Show respect for others
  o Show vulnerability and accountability
  o Show poise, confidence, and emotional self-mastery
  o Allow peers and subordinates the opportunity to be honest and then do the same. (Booher, 2014; McCarthy, 2014)

Freeman and Stewart (2006) argue that "Principles, values, cultures, and individual differences often conflict." (p.7). According to them, "Ethical leadership requires an attitude of humility rather than righteousness: a commitment to one's own principles, and at the same time, openness to learning and to having conversations with others who may have a different way of seeing the world." (p.7). Indeed, ethics is best viewed as an open conversation about those values and issues that are most important to leaders and to their business. It is a continual discovery and reaffirmation of one's principles and values, and a realization that the person can improve through encountering new ideas (Freeman & Stewart, 2006).

Shedd (2011) says that the leader's success comes from the success of others. Maintaining humility allows the leader to better keep his/her focus where it needs to be, directed outward towards the team and the customers.

Having trustworthiness

Ethical leaders are trustworthy (Berghofer & Schwartz, 2012; Kalshoven, 2010; Kalshoven & Den Hartog, 2009; McCarthy, 2014; Thornton, 2014; Whitaker, 2012a; Yates, 2011; Zenger, 2012). Berghofer and Schwartz (2013) identify the following characteristics of trustworthy leaders:
  o Developing reliability and dependability
  o Having the willingness to admit mistakes
  o Being true to their word
  o Being worthy of confidence
  o Keeping promises and honoring commitments

Thornton (2014) argues that "Trustworthy leaders know how to create a workplace where everyone is valued, where leadership is sincere and respectful, and where great work can get done." (p.1). The author mentions the main trustworthy leaders' traits as follows:
  o Leading with positive values in each situation
  o Acknowledging complexity and helping people to deal with it
  o Demonstrating and expecting respectful behavior, even when it is a challenge
  o Knowing their own mindsets and assumptions and willing to change them
  o Showing people that they care in all issues
  o Thinking long-term and doing what is most ethical in the long run
  o Extending an open invitation to talk about ethics, bad and news
  o Showing that they care about people and the team success
  o Communicating clear ethical values and embodying them in their life aspects
  o Contributing to the well-being and reducing stress of those who lead

Inspiring others to be ethical

Ethical leaders inspire others to be ethical (Fox et al., 2007; Nag, 2011; Nohria, 2013; Seidman, 2010; Span, 2012; Whitaker, 2012b; Whitbourne, 2013; Yates, 2011). Span (2012) says, "I often stress to leaders in positions of power that their actions, ethics, values, and behaviors have a direct impact on the attitudes and behaviors of those they lead, and thus, on the organizational culture. That impact can be positive or negative." (p.1).

Whitaker (2012b) argues that "A true measure of leadership is the ethical influence the leader has on his or her followers or stakeholders." (p.1). According to the author, "An ethical leader is one that considers positive and negative views, the rights of everyone involved, ensures decisions are made in an ethical manner, and members are held accountable. The ethical actions of a leader enhance his or her credibility and integrity which causes followers to trust." (p.1). Therefore, employees, students, and children show faith in their leaders' actions and choices; they get inspired by listening to what their leaders say and observing what they do.

Serving others

An ethical leader serves others (Abolrous, 2008; Borner, 2012; Carman, 2012; Donahue, 2013; Freeman & Stewart, 2006; Ghamrawi & Al-Jammal, 2014; Keith, 2014; Mirenda, 2009; Monroe, 2013; Moss, 2012; Yates, 2011). According to Keith (2014), "Serving others is ethical because it is respectful of the needs of others, and is an effort to treat people right by helping to meet their needs." (p.2). Serving others is also effective. Keith (2014) argued that when leaders identify and meet the needs of their colleagues, their colleagues can perform at higher levels. When they identify and meet the needs of their customers, their customers become happy and likely to come back - and tell their friends.

Ethical leaders are altruistic. According to Carman (2012), "Altruistic leaders will be compelled to set aside their personal interests, schedule, and comfort in order to lead in both a symbolic and substantial way." (p.1). In other words, "Altruism is an ethical theory that holds that individuals have a moral obligation to help, serve, or benefit others, if necessary at the sacrifice of self-interest." (p.1).

According to Freeman & Stewart (2006), ethical leaders "Articulate and embody the purpose and values of the organization" (p.3). These leaders "Focus on organizational success rather than on personal ego" (Freeman & Stewart, 2006, p.4). The authors say that "Ethical leaders understand their place within the larger network of constituents and stakeholders. It is not about the leader as an individual, it is about something bigger –the goals and dreams of the organization. Ethical leaders also recognize that value is in the success of people in the organization." (p.4).

Showing justice and fairness

Ethical leaders are concerned about issues of fairness and justice (Berghofer & Schwartz, 2012; Donahue, 2013; Hakala, 2008; Kalshoven, 2010; Kalshoven & Den Hartog, 2009; Penn State World Campus, 2012; Smith, 2013; Vickery, 2013; Yates, 2011). According to Donahue (2013), "Justice is about 'making things right' and leaders must act justly whenever they notice injustice in the team, community, church or organization." (p.1). Penn State World Campus (2012) confirms that if a leader is just, then he/she is able to treat all the followers in a fair and equal way. No member of a team must be treated differently. All are expected to manage their workloads and get their work done. If things are not completed, the leader must treat the entire team in the same manner.

Kalshoven (2010) says, "Behaviors that are part of the fairness component are making fair choices, showing trustworthy and honest behavior, not practicing favoritism, and taking responsibility for one's own actions."

(p.72). Smith (2013) argues that "People want fairness… fair rules, fair tasks, fair competition, fair discipline, etc. Only the leaders who do their best to be fair in relationships with people can hope to obtain willing responses from associates." (p.1). According to Hakala (2008), "When people feel that they are being treated fairly, they reward a leader with loyalty and dedication." (p.2).

Working transparently and clarifying expectations

Transparency is a core characteristic of ethical leadership (Abolrous, 2008; Donahue, 2013; Gebler, 2011; Kalshoven, 2010; Kalshoven & Den Hartog, 2009; Kalshoven et al., 2011a; Rakaeva, 2013; Watson, 2014; Yates, 2011). According to Gebler (2011), "transparency is about information" (p.1). It is about the ability of the receivers to have full access to the information they want, not just the information the sender is willing to provide. Gebler (2011) stated that "Transparency embodies honesty and open communication because to be transparent someone must be willing to share information when it is uncomfortable to do so." (p.1). Transparency is being an upfront and visible leader about the actions he/she takes, and whether those actions are consistent with the organization's values.

Kalshoven and Den Hartog (2009) argue that "ethical leaders work transparently, clarify expectations, and communicate openly so that followers understand what is desired and expected of them, which is labeled role clarification." (p.104). According to Kalshoven, Den Hartog and De Hoogh (2011a) the 'role clarification':
- Indicates what the performance expectations of each group member are
- Explains what is expected of each group member
- Explains what is expected of me and my colleagues
- Clarifies priorities
- Clarifies who is responsible for what. (p.58)

Rakaeva (2013) assures that the embodiment of the implementation of honest leadership is through transparency. According to the author, "Transparency is an effort to enforce honesty. With transparency, participation in monitoring the entire organization will be accommodated so as to minimize the potential for dishonesty." (p.1). Rakaeva (2013) says, "If leaders cannot show others that they can be trusted in word and deed, the leader will have no followers." (p.1).

Alphabetical List of Ethical Business Terms

Table 2 lists 301 terms related to ethical business. It is adapted from: *Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus*, Third Edition, Philip Lief Group 2013, Retrieved from: http://www.thesaurus.com

Table 2: Alphabetical list of 301 terms related to ethical business

A	Above-board, Above suspicion, Acclaimed, Accurate, Aces, Admirable, All right, All there, Aloof, Always there, Angelic, Applicable, Appropriate, Approved, Apt, Arbitrary, Authentic, Authoritative, Authorized.	19
B	Befitting, Believable, Beneficial, Best, Beyond reproach, Blameless, Bona fide, Boy scout, Bright.	9
C	Candid, Canonical, Card-carrying, Celebrated, Charitable, Chaste, Chivalrous, Christian, Circumspect, Clean, Comely, Comme il faut, Commendable, Condign, Conforming, Conscientious, Continent, Convincing, Correct, Credible, Creditable, Cricket.	22
D	Decent, Decorous, Delicate, Dependable, Deserved, Deserving, Desirable, Devoted, Devout, Dignified, Direct, Disinterested, Dispassionate, Distinguished, Divine, Down home, Due, Dutiful.	18
E	Edifying, Elevated, Eminent, Equal, Equitable, Esteemed, Estimable, Even-handed, Even-steven, Exact, Exalted, Excellent, Exemplary, Exhilarated.	14
F	Factual, Fair, Fair-and-square, Fair-minded, Fair shake, Fair-to-middling, Faithful, Faultless, First-class, First-rate, Fit, Fitting, Fly right, Formal, Forthright, Frank, Full of integrity.	17
G	Genuine, Godlike, Good, Grand, Grandiloquent, Guiltless.	6
H	Hale, Healthful, Health-giving, Healthy, Heavy, Helpful, High, High-flown, High-minded, High-principled, Highly moral, Highly respectable, Holding water, Holy, Honest, Honorable, Honored, Humane, Hygienic.	19
I	Illustrious, Immaculate, Impartial, Impersonal, In fine feather, In the pink, Incorrupt, Incorruptible, Inculpable, Ingenuous, Innocent, Invaluable, Invigorating, Irreprehensible, Irreproachable.	15
J	Just, Justifiable.	2
K	Knightly, Kosher.	2
L	Laudable, Law-abiding, Lawful, Lay it on the line, Legal, Legit, Legitimate, Level-headed, Like it is, Lily-white, Lofty.	11
M	Magistral, Mannerly, Matchless, Mature, Merited, Meritorious, Model, Modest, Moral, Moralistic.	10
N	Nice, No lie, Noble, Nondiscriminatory, Nonpartisan, Normal, Notable.	7
O	Obedient, Objective, Of good repute, Official, On-the-level, On the line, On the up and up, Open, Orthodox, Outright.	10
P	Peerless, Permitted, Philanthropic, Plain, Plausible, Pleasing, Polite, Praiseworthy, Precious, Prescribed, Prescriptive, Presentable, Priceless, Principled, Proper, Proportionate, Prudent, Punctilious, Pure.	19
Q		0
R	Real, Reasonable, Recommended, Reliable, Reputable, Requisite, Reserved, Respectable, Responsible, Restorative, Reverent, Right, Right-minded, Righteous, Rightful, Rock, Rock solid.	17
S	Safe, Saint, Saintly, Salt of the earth, Salubrious, Salutary, Sane, Satisfying, Scrupulous, Secure, Seemly, Sensible, Set as guide, Sincere, Sinless, Solid, Spiritual, Sporting, Sportspersonlike, Spotless, Square, Square deal, Squeaky clean, Stable, Stainless, Standard, Stand-up, Stately, Steadfast, Sterling, Straight, Straight-arrow, Straightforward, Straight shooting, Strengthening, Strict, Sublime, Suitable, Superb.	39
T	Thetic, Thetical, To be trusted, Together, Top-drawer, Top-notch, Tractable, Tried, Tried-and-true, True, True-blue, Trustable, Trustworthy, Trusty, Truthful, Twenty-four carat.	16
U	Unbiased, Unblemished, Uncolored, Uncorrupt, Uncorrupted, Undeceptive, Undefiled, Undisguised, Unfailing, Unfeigned, Unimpeachable, Unprejudiced, Unstained, Untainted, Untarnished, Upfront, Upright, Upstanding.	18
V	Valid, Valuable, Veracious, Veridical, Virtuous.	5
W	Well, Well-behaved, Wholesome, Winning, Worthwhile, Worthy.	6

Unethical Business Practices of Leaders

According to Smith (2013), when a leader breaks or fudges the rules, cheats, lies or indulges in behaviors that reveal a lack of moral principles, he or she loses employees' respect. However, without employees' respect, a leader cannot lead (Abrugar, 2011; Beesley, 2012; Daum, 2012; Half, 2014; Hann, 2012; James, 2012; Smith, 2013).

In addition, leaders have a large impact on both ethical and unethical behavior of employees. In other words, their actions, ethics, values, and behaviors have a direct impact on the attitudes and behaviors of those they lead, and thus, on the organizational culture. That impact can be positive or negative (Fox et al., 2007; Nag, 2011; Nohria, 2013; Seidman, 2010; Span, 2012; Whitaker, 2012; Whitbourne, 2013; Yates, 2011).

According to Pinto (2011), unethical behaviors –that may be directed at single individuals or groups on the basis of race, gender, age, or other attributes– can result in reduced effectiveness at work. Clark (2014) and Smith (2013) stated that when leaders indulge in unethical attitudes or actions, they give their employees permission to do the same. Indeed, findings in recent research suggest that unethical behavior of the leader within a workplace can be contagious and that peer influence is an important factor when it comes to unethical behavior (Clark, 2014).

In addition, unethical behavior of leaders is one of the causes of job burnout (Paiva, 2013; Pigni, 2014; Scandura, 2014). "Research in a variety of different occupations suggests that ethics represents a significant source of stress for employees. Having a job that requires a person to do something that is at odds with their personal values or morals creates psychological strain and burnout. Ethics stress is yet another reason why organizations should adapt a proactive stance on ethics and avoid placing employees in ethics dilemmas." (Scandura, 2014, p.1).

Moreover, unethical behavior of leaders is considered as one of the reasons leading to employee disengagement and employee turnover (Bello, 2012; Bruzzese, 2014; Green, 2013). Bruzzese (2014) assured that one of the top reasons employees leave is because the company or leaders lack honesty and integrity. According to this author, a leader should keep in mind that employees pay attention to what he/she says – and doesn't say – when they judge his/her worth. Bruzzese (2014) said that actions that hint at deceit or underhanded tactics will prompt employees to lose respect for the leader and look for jobs elsewhere.

According to Bello (2012), "Failing to be a good leader can lead to increase employee turnover and decrease the likelihood of attracting new employees. This can also increase the costs associated with employee turnover, increase employee supervision, decrease job satisfaction and decrease the level of employee productivity." (p.229).

In fact, several authors assured that leaders' unethical practices at the workplace are one of the worst of the problems (Bruzzese, 2014; Cogentys, 2013; Mintz, 2011; Odom et al., 2003; Pinto, 2011; Rajeev, 2012; Smith, 2013; Span, 2012). These practices refer to actions directed towards an employee (or a group of employees), which are intended to intimidate, degrade, humiliate, or undermine, or which create a risk to the health or safety of the employee(s) including physical and emotional stress. Following are some of the activities that come under the ambit of unethical practice (Bruzzese, 2014; Mintz, 2011; Odom et al., 2003; Pinto, 2011; Rajeev, 2012; Smith, 2013):
- o Resorting to dishonesty, trickery or deception
- o Distortion of facts to mislead or confuse
- o Lack of transparency and resistance to investigation
- o Spreading malicious rumors or gossip
- o Excluding or isolating someone socially
- o Manipulating others emotionally by exploiting their vulnerabilities
- o Undermining or impeding a person's work or opinions
- o Greed to amass excessive profit
- o Creation of false documents to show increased profits

- o Unjustified exclusion from certain activities and projects
- o Sexual discrimination
- o Removing areas of responsibility without cause
- o Setting impossible deadlines to achieve duties or tasks
- o Invasion of privacy used as leverage, for obtaining personal or professional gains
- o Making fun of a person's habits, age, gender, race, family, nationality, religion, or other personal attributes
- o Sexual harassment

Therefore, "Within a workplace, reducing cheating, stealing, lying and unethical behavior is vital to the organizations health and long-term viability" (Clark, 2014, p.1). In other words, it is vital to improve the performance of employees and the effectiveness of the organization.

Ethical Dilemmas

Common challenges and dilemmas for ethical leadership

Table 3 lists few common challenges and dilemmas for ethical leadership. It is adapted from: Emerging Leaders' Consortium-ELC. (2004). *Ethical Leadership: Dilemmas and Decisions!*, Retrieved from: http://www.nps.gov (Referred to the Association of Community College Trustees, www.acct.org) and from Freeman & Stewart (2006). *Developing Ethical Leadership*, Retrieved from: http://www.corporate-ethics.org.

Table 3: A few common challenges and dilemmas for ethical leadership

Challenges & Dilemmas	Explanation
Hiding behind the excuse of "It's just business." (The end justifies the means.)	It is tempting to take short cuts in decision-making when the end result will be a good thing.
Multiple loyalties	Many people feel that they are obliged to promote the interests of special groups or friends.
Concealment	Many people avoid giving negative feedback or expressing negative opinions because they are afraid to disrespect others
No one will know	Leaders may excuse behavior (using the stature of the position to influence staff, asking for special favors or perks, or sharing confidential information) that might not meet ethical standards because "no one will be hurt".
Everybody's doing it	Others acting in unethical ways is not permission for unethical behavior.

Ethics check

Blanchard (2011) suggests that leaders use the "Ethics Check" to ensure they make ethical decisions. This "Ethics Check" was suggested in a book (The Power of Ethical Management) written by Ken Blanchard and Norman Vincent Peale and published in1988. In their "Ethics Check" the authors suggest that leaders ask the following three questions when making a decision about an ethical problem:

- o Is it legal?

The purpose of this first question is to get leaders look at existing standards. The legality of the decision should be examined not only from the civil law perspective, but also in regards to organization policies or

standards. If the answer to this question is negative, there is no need to ask the following two questions. In other words, many leaders will stop there, where they get into trouble.

- o Is it fair to everyone involved if the leader does this?

By this question, the authors aim to activate the leader's sense of fairness and rationality. Indeed, it is not always possible to make decisions that ensure everybody's satisfaction, but leaders should strive to avoid major relationships' imbalances. In other words, leaders should avoid making decisions that produce 'Big Winners' where others will be 'Big Losers'.

- o How will it make me feel about myself?

This final question, if the leader makes it through the first two, is a self-esteem question. How the leader would feel to have something published on the front page of a newspaper or professional social sites? Would it make the leader and his/her family, friends, employees and peers proud or embarrassed? If the leader is still over the situation, it might mean that his/her conscience is wrestling with the action and its alignment with his/her personal values.

Ethical decision making process

Table 4 shows the 6 steps of an ethical decision making process. It is adapted from Emerging Leaders' Consortium-ELC. (2004). Ethical Leadership: Dilemmas and Decisions!, Retrieved from: http://www.nps.gov (Referred to the Hastings Model for ethical decision making).

Table 4: The 6 steps of an ethical decision making process

Ethical leaders should
1. Identify the ethical question(s) raised by the dilemma.
2. List all the relevant facts of the dilemma.
3. Identify the stakeholders in the dilemma.
4. Identify the principles of ethical conduct that play a role in the dilemma.
5. List several possible solutions to resolve the conflict (What could the leader do?).
6. Choose the best solution(s) and justify (What should the leader do? What does the leader feel he/she ought to do?).

Methodology

Research tool

Data was collected via a questionnaire for the purpose of this quantitative study. Based on an extensive review of the literature of "ethical leadership", the researcher developed a questionnaire consisting of 52 items. The questionnaire was sent to private school teachers. The instrument was piloted on a sample comprised of 20 teachers and few amendments for language and syntax were introduced.

The survey instrument consisted of three sections: A, B, and C. Section A (consisting of 30 items) requested participants to identify the ethical leadership qualities characterized by private school principals, section B (consisting of 14 items) requested respondents to determine the unethical behavior practiced by these school leaders, and section C (consisting of 8 items) requested them to identify the causes behind the unethical behavior of the principals and the excuses used by them to justify their unethical practices.

In sections A, B, and C, a four point likert scale was used to rank participants' responses. Response choices were: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree.

The sample

The sample of this study consisted of 350 teachers who are equally distributed in 70 private schools located in Beirut (5 participants from each). Along with the survey, a cover letter and an informed consent form were attached in addition to the full contact information of the researcher. The cover letter detailed the purpose of the study and guaranteed the anonymity of the participants and explained how the data will be used.

Teachers were invited to complete the questionnaire and return it, along with the signed consent form, to the given address by regular mail, as a scanned document via email or fax. If this way is not available, respondents were invited to return the questionnaire, along with the signed consent form, to the assistant researcher. Only 297 surveys were returned, out of which 252 questionnaires were usable.

Finally, it should be noted that the empirical work of this study was conducted between the 15th of October and the 25th November 2014.

Data analysis

Data was analyzed using SPSS 21.0 for windows. Descriptive statistics were used to describe and summarize the properties of the mass of data collected from the respondents. Means scores, standard deviations and percentages were calculated per each item of the survey instrument.

Results and Discussions

This part of the study includes the following three sections:
  o   Ethical leadership qualities characterized by private school principals
  o   Types of bad or unethical behavior of private school principals
  o   Reasons underlying the bad or unethical behavior of private school principals

Ethical leadership qualities characterized by private school principals

Tables 5 and 6 present data collection on Section A of the questionnaire.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics about the ethical leadership qualities enjoyed by private school principals

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	252	2.71	.660
2	252	2.42	.918
3	252	2.47	.744
4	252	2.47	.744
5	252	2.14	.897
6	252	2.14	.897
7	252	2.14	.897
8	252	2.14	.897
9	252	2.04	.924
10	252	2.48	.854
11	252	2.14	.897
12	252	1.43	.662
13	252	2.48	.854
14	252	2.14	.897
15	252	2.14	.897
16	252	3.05	.541
17	252	2.48	.854
18	252	2.48	.854
19	252	2.48	.854
20	252	2.48	.854
21	252	2.48	.854
22	252	2.48	.854
23	252	2.48	.854
24	252	2.29	.586
25	252	1.43	.662
26	252	1.43	.662
27	252	1.43	.662
28	252	2.29	.586
29	252	1.43	.662
30	252	1.43	.662

Table 5 shows that the mean score of 1 of 30 items is more than 3.00 (> 3): Having good relations with employees: being lovable, courteous, tactful, and respecting everyone (Item 16: M=3.05, SD=.541).

According to table 5, the mean score of another item is more than 2.50 (> 2.5): Respecting his/her obligations and promises and urging others to respect their commitments and promises (Item 1: M=2.71, SD=.660).

Moreover, it is quite clear from the results that the mean of 22 items is more than 2.00 (> 2); it varies between 2.04 and 2.48 as follows (respectively):

The mean score related to 9 of these 22 items is 2.48 (SD=.854). These items are:

1. Providing others the opportunities to express their opinions and suggestions (Item 10).
2. Creating a motivating work environment that provides employees a certain margin of autonomy (in completing their tasks and in using available resources), and allowing them to test and exercise their innovative ideas (Item 13).
3. Understanding and respecting cultural differences and affiliations of others: religious, sectarian, national, regional, and family affiliations (Item 17).
4. Being humble and courageous, so not claiming knowing everything and then having to answer all the questions (Item 18).
5. Having integrity and self-confidence: admitting his/her mistakes and failures instead of throwing them on others (Item 19).
6. Not preying on the mistakes of others but transforming them into learning opportunities (Item 20).
7. Recognizing the efforts of others and considering that the staff has the main merit in his/her success and the success of the organization as well (Item 21).
8. Having the love and trust of the school staff (Item 22).
9. Clinging to his/her convictions and moral principles, and not giving them up for whatever reason: material temptations, bias for a political party or a religious community (Item 23).

The mean score of 2 other items is 2.47 (SD=.744):

1. Attaching to his/her principles, convictions and commitments: because of this, others can anticipate what his/her reactions will be in different situations and circumstances (Item 3).
2. Being credible: there is congruence between his/her attitudes and behavior (Item 4).

The mean of another item is 2.42 (SD=.918):

1. Having the ability to control his/her emotions (Item 2).

The mean score related to 2 others is 2.29 (SD=.586):

1. Being a model on the ethical level: strongly inspiring others and making them cling to professional ethics in their attitudes and behavior (Item 24).
2. Clearly defining for each individual what his/her duties are and what is expected of him/her, and not questioning or punishing anyone for a task which is not within his/her responsibilities (Item 28).

The mean score of 7 other items is 2.14 (SD=.897):

1. Having the ability to enhance the collaborative culture rather than individualism at the workplace –not accepting the occurrence of any form of tension and division among employees (Item 5).
2. Being interested to build high-performance teams – being keen to choose people who have high moral qualities, not just professional competencies (Item 6).
3. Being keen on that team members adhere to ethical principles when carrying out their work: listening to each other, respecting different points of view, ensuring that every member does the required tasks, etc. (Item 7).
4. Taking seriously the demanded rights of others (Item 8).
5. Being sometimes convinced about some suggestions presented from others and committing to apply them, even though they initially seemed inconsistent with his/her views (Item 11).
6. Delegating tasks and authorities to employees who have proven that they have good professional ethics and abilities to take on responsibilities (Item 14).
7. Having a sense of humor which helps employees to relieve their stress and boredom in the workplace, and motivating them to improve their work (Item 15).

The mean of the remaining item is 2.04 (SD=.924): Taking into account the implications and effects of his/her decisions and actions on others (Item 9).

Table 5 indicates that the mean score value of 6 of the 30 items is less than 1.50 (< 1.5): M=1.43, SD=.662. These items are:

1. Allowing others to participate in making decisions, particularly those relating to their functions and tasks (Item 12).

2. Considering having the duty to serve others, empower them, develop them professionally, and insure their needs (Item 25).
3. Not only focusing on his/her personal success - he/she does not have a "love me" - but also focusing on the success of others and the success of the organization - he/she does not attribute every effort to himself/herself or marginalize talented and creative people in the school (Item 26).
4. Treating everyone (teachers, administrative staff, students, and parents) fairly and equally regardless of their socio-cultural affiliations (religion, political party, region, family, etc.) and regardless of age, gender or any other personal consideration (Item 27).
5. Having transparency and integrity in terms of providing others with the needed information –the information provided to others is correct, accurate, and complete (Item 29).
6. Considering that apologizing to the ill-treated person is a moral core feature of great people: offering apologies for that person when misbehaving with him/her (Item 30).

Table 6: Frequency results about the ethical leadership qualities enjoyed by private school principals

	Items *The school principal*	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
1	Respects his/her obligations and promises and he/she urges others to respect their commitments and promises.	1	98	125	28
2	Has the ability to control his/her emotions.	41	97	80	34
3	Attaches to his/her principles, convictions and commitments: because of this others can anticipate what his/her reactions will be in different situations and circumstances.	16	123	91	22
4	Is credible: there is congruence between his/her attitudes and behavior.	16	123	91	22
5	Has the ability to enhance the collaborative culture rather than individualism at the workplace – he/she does not accept the occurrence of any form of tension and division among employees.	60	123	43	26
6	Is interested to build high-performance teams – he/she is keen to choose people who have high moral qualities, not just professional competencies.	60	123	43	26
7	Is keen on that team members adhere to ethical principles when carrying out their work (listening to each other, respecting different points of view, ensuring that every member does the required tasks ...).	60	123	43	26
8	Takes seriously the demanded rights of others.	60	123	43	26
9	Takes into account the implications and effects of his/her decisions and actions on others.	72	127	23	30
10	Provides others the opportunities to express their opinions and suggestions.	39	75	117	21
11	Is sometimes convinced about some suggestions presented from others and he/she commits to applying them, even though they initially seemed inconsistent with his/her views.	60	123	43	26
12	Allows others to participate in making decisions, particularly those relating to their functions and tasks.	161	79	6	6
13	Creates a motivating work environment that provides employees a certain margin of autonomy (in completing their tasks and in using available resources), and allows them to test and exercise their innovative ideas.	39	75	117	21
14	Delegates tasks and authorities to employees who have proven that they have good professional ethics and abilities to take on responsibilities.	60	123	43	26

15	Has a sense of humor which helps employees to relieve their stress and boredom in the workplace, and he/she motivates them to improve their work.	60	123	43	26
16	Has good relations with employees: he/she is lovable, courteous, tactful, and he/she respects everyone.	0	31	178	43
17	Understands and respects cultural differences and affiliations of others (religious, sectarian, national, regional, and family affiliations).	39	75	117	21
18	Possesses humility and courage, so he/she does not claim knowing everything and then having to answer all the questions.	39	75	117	21
19	Possesses integrity and self-confidence; he/she admits his/her mistakes and failures instead of throwing them on others.	39	75	117	21
20	Does not prey on the mistakes of others but he/she transforms them into learning opportunities.	39	75	117	21
21	Recognizes the efforts of others and considers that the staff has the main merit in his/her success and the success of the organization as well.	39	75	117	21
22	Has the love and trust of the school staff.	39	75	117	21
23	Clings to his/her convictions and moral principles, and he/she does not give them up for whatever reason (material temptations, bias for a political party or a religious community).	39	75	117	21
24	Is a model on the ethical level: he/she strongly inspires others and makes them cling to professional ethics in their attitudes and behavior.	16	147	88	1
25	Considers that he/she has the duty to serve others, empower them, develop them professionally, and insure their needs.	161	79	6	6
26	Does not only focus on his/her personal success (he/she does not have a "love me") but he/she also focuses on the success of others and the success of the organization (he/she does not attribute every effort to himself/herself or marginalize talented and creative people in the school).	161	79	6	6
27	Treats everyone (teachers, administrative staff, students, and parents) fairly and equally regardless of their socio-cultural affiliations (religion, political party, region, family, etc.) and regardless of age, gender or any other personal consideration.	161	79	6	6
28	Clearly defines for each individual what his/her duties are and what is expected of him/her, and he/she does not question or punish anyone for a task which is not within his/her responsibilities.	16	147	88	1
29	Has transparency and integrity in terms of providing others with the needed information (the information provided to others is correct, accurate, and complete).	161	79	6	6
30	Considers that apologizing to the ill-treated person is a moral core feature of great people; therefore, he/she offers apologies for that person if he/she misbehaved with him/her.	161	79	6	6

Table 6 shows that if "agree" responses are grouped with "strongly agree" ones, then the overwhelming majority of teachers (221 of 252 participants) agreed/strongly agreed that private school principals have this ethical leadership quality: Having good relations with employees: being lovable, courteous, tactful, and respecting everyone (16).

In addition, if "agree" responses are grouped with "strongly agree" ones, this implies that the majority of teachers (153 respondents) have a positive/very positive perception about the following ethical leadership attribute that should be enjoyed by their school leaders: Respecting his/her obligations and promises and urging others to respect their commitments and promises (1).

Moreover, table 6 indicates that if "agree" responses are grouped with "strongly agree" ones, then the majority of teachers (138 participants) considered that private school leaders enjoyed/strongly enjoyed the following 9 ethical qualities:

1. Providing others the opportunities to express their opinions and suggestions (10).
2. Creating a motivating work environment that provides employees a certain margin of autonomy (in completing their tasks and in using available resources), and allowing them to test and exercise their innovative ideas (13).
3. Understanding and respecting cultural differences and affiliations of others: religious, sectarian, national, regional, and family affiliations (17).
4. Being humble and courageous, so not claiming knowing everything and then having to answer all the questions (18).
5. Having integrity and self-confidence: admitting his/her mistakes and failures instead of throwing them on others (19).
6. Not preying on the mistakes of others but transforming them into learning opportunities (20).
7. Recognizing the efforts of others and considering that the staff has the main merit in his/her success and the success of the organization as well (21).
8. Having the love and trust of the school staff (22).
9. Clinging to his/her convictions and moral principles, and not giving them up for whatever reason: material temptations, bias for a political party or a religious community (23).

Conversely, table 6 shows that if "disagree" responses are grouped with "strongly disagree" ones, then the overwhelming majority of participants (240 of 252 teachers) have a negative/very negative perception about the following 6 ethical leadership qualities that should be enjoyed by private school principals:

1. Allowing others to participate in making decisions, particularly those relating to their functions and tasks (12).
2. Considering having the duty to serve others, empower them, develop them professionally, and insure their needs (25).
3. Not only focusing on his/her personal success - he/she does not have a "love me" - but also focusing on the success of others and the success of the organization - he/she does not attribute every effort to himself/herself or marginalize talented and creative people in the school (26).
4. Treating everyone (teachers, administrative staff, students, and parents) fairly and equally regardless of their socio-cultural affiliations (religion, political party, region, family, etc.) and regardless of age, gender or any other personal consideration (27).
5. Having transparency and integrity in terms of providing others with the needed information - the information provided to others is correct, accurate, and complete (29).
6. Considering that apologizing to the ill-treated person is a moral core feature of great people: offering apologies for that person when misbehaving with him/her (30).

In addition, if "disagree" responses are grouped with "strongly disagree" ones, this implies that the overwhelming majority of participants (199 teachers) have a negative/very negative perception about having this ethical leadership quality by private school principals: Taking into account the implications and effects of his/her decisions and actions on others (9).

Moreover, if "disagree" responses are grouped with "strongly disagree" ones, this implies that the majority of participants (183 teachers) have a negative/very negative perception about the following 7 ethical leadership qualities that should be enjoyed by private school principals:

1. Having the ability to enhance the collaborative culture rather than individualism at the workplace –not accepting the occurrence of any form of tension and division among employees (5).
2. Being interested to build high-performance teams – being keen to choose people who have high moral qualities, not just professional competencies (6).
3. Being keen on that team members adhere to ethical principles when carrying out their work: listening to each other, respecting different points of view, ensuring that every member does the required tasks, etc. (7).
4. Taking seriously the demanded rights of others (8).

5. Being sometimes convinced about some suggestions presented from others and committing to apply them, even though they initially seemed inconsistent with his/her views (11).
6. Delegating tasks and authorities to employees who have proven that they have good professional ethics and abilities to take on responsibilities (14).
7. Having a sense of humor which helps employees to relieve their stress and boredom in the workplace, and motivating them to improve their work (15).

Finally, if "disagree" responses are grouped with "strongly disagree" ones, then the majority of respondents (it varies between 138 and 163 teachers) disagreed/strongly disagreed that the principals possess other 5 ethical leadership qualities (respectively):
1. Having the ability to control his/her emotions (2).
2. Attaching to his/her principles, convictions and commitments: because of this others can anticipate what his/her reactions will be in different situations and circumstances (3).
3. Being credible: there is congruence between his/her attitudes and behavior (4).
4. Being a model on the ethical level: strongly inspiring others and making them cling to professional ethics in their attitudes and behavior (24).
5. Clearly defining for each individual what is his/her duties and what is expected of him/her, and not questioning or punishing anyone for a task which is not within his/her responsibilities (28).

Types of bad or unethical behavior of private school principals

Tables 7 and 8 present data collection on Section B of the questionnaire.

Table 7: Descriptive statistics about the types of bad or unethical behavior practiced by private school principals

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	252	1.58	.541
2	252	1.46	.499
3	252	3.13	.724
4	252	3.36	.551
5	252	1.34	.500
6	252	2.56	.586
7	252	2.62	1.096
8	252	2.40	.621
9	252	1.95	.737
10	252	2.95	.666
11	252	3.33	.864
12	252	3.16	.630
13	252	3.21	.725
14	252	3.21	.725

Table 7 shows that the mean score value of 6 items is more than 3.00 (> 3); it varies between 3.13 and 3.36 as follows (respectively):
1. Discrimination between people on the basis of belonging to a political party (Item 4: M=3.36, SD=.551).
2. Obstructing others to prevent them to accomplish their tasks successfully (Item 11: M=3.33, SD=.864).
3. Usage of verbal violence in dealing with others (Item 13: M=3.21, SD=.725).
4. Strongly focusing on productivity (or profit) –lack of attention to the staff's humanitarian aspect (Item 14: M=3.21, SD=.725).
5. Not focusing on the other's achievements and attributing these achievements to someone else (Item 12: M=3.16, SD=.630).

6. Discrimination between people on the basis of culture: nationalism, religion, etc. (Item 3: M=3.13, SD=.724).

According to this table, the mean score of 4 other items is more than 2.00 (> 2); it varies between 2.40 and 2.95 (respectively):
1. Blackmailing others and exploiting their kindness and their inability to say "no" (Item 10: M=2.95, SD=.666).
2. Setting impossible deadlines for school staff to achieve duties or tasks (Item 7: M=2.62, SD=1.096).
3. Broadcasting false rumors against the other persons and using these rumors to pressure and discredit them (Item 6: M=2.56, SD=.586).
4. Changing responsibilities and positions of some teachers and administrators for non-professional reasons (Item 8: M=2.40, SD=.621).

Regarding the remaining 4 items, their mean score value is less than 2.00 (< 2); it varies between 1.34 and 1.95 (respectively):
1. Not involving some teachers or administrators in the activities and projects arbitrarily, without a professional or objective justification (Item 9: M=1.95, SD=.737).
2. Discrimination between people on the basis of age (Item 1: M=1.58, SD=.541).
3. Discrimination between people on the basis of gender (Item 2: M=1.46, SD=.499).
4. Sexual harassment (Item 5: M=1.34, SD=.500).

Table 8: Frequency results about bad behavior practiced by private school principals

	Items	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
1	Discrimination between people on the basis of age	113	133	6	0
2	Discrimination between people on the basis of gender	136	116	0	0
3	Discrimination between people on the basis of culture (nationalism, religion, etc.)	17	0	167	68
4	Discrimination between people on the basis of belonging to a political party	0	9	143	100
5	Sexual harassment	168	83	0	1
6	Broadcasting false rumors against the other persons and using these rumors to pressure and discredit them	12	87	153	0
7	Setting impossible deadlines for school staff to achieve duties or tasks	55	52	79	66
8	Changing responsibilities and positions of some teachers and administrators for non-professional reasons	18	114	120	0
9	Not involving some teachers or administrators in the activities and projects arbitrarily, without a professional or objective justification	75	115	62	0
10	Blackmailing others and exploiting their kindness and their inability to say "no"	4	50	152	46
11	Obstructing others to prevent them to accomplish their tasks successfully	22	0	104	126
12	Not focusing on the other's achievements and attributing these achievements to someone else	1	30	149	72
13	Usage of verbal violence in dealing with others	5	30	124	93
14	Strongly focusing on productivity (or profit) - lack of attention to the humanitarian aspect (staffs welfare, their needs, their dignity, their feelings)	5	30	124	93

According to table 8, if "agree" responses are grouped with "strongly agree" ones, then the overwhelming majority of participants (it varies between 198 and 243 teachers) assured/strongly assured that private school principals practice the following 7 unethical behavior (respectively):
1. Discrimination between people on the basis of belonging to a political party (Item 4).
2. Discrimination between people on the basis of culture: nationalism, religion, etc. (Item 3).
3. Obstructing others to prevent them to accomplish their tasks successfully (Item 11).

4. Not focusing on the other's achievements and attributing these achievements to someone else (Item 12).
5. Using of verbal violence in dealing with others (Item 13).
6. Strongly focusing on productivity (or profit) –lack of attention to the staff's humanitarian aspect (Item 14).
7. Blackmailing others and exploiting their kindness and their inability to say "no" (Item 10).

In addition, table 8 shows that the majority of respondents (153 teachers) agreed that their principals have the following bad behavior: Broadcasting false rumors against the other persons and using these rumors to pressure and discredit them (Item 6).

Moreover, if "agree" responses are grouped with "strongly agree" ones, then the majority of participants (145 teachers) argued/strongly argued that the private school leaders practice this bad behavior: Setting impossible deadlines for school staff to achieve duties or tasks (Item 7).

Conversely, it is quite clear from the results that all the participants (252 teachers) disagreed/strongly disagreed that school leaders have this bad behavior: Discrimination between people on the basis of gender (Item 2).

In addition, data indicate that almost all teachers disagreed/strongly disagreed that principals practice these 2 unethical behaviors:
1. Sexual harassment (Item 5: 251 participants).
2. Discrimination between people on the basis of age (Item 1: 246 participants).

Moreover, table 8 shows that the vast majority of teachers (190 participants) disagreed/strongly disagreed that their principals have this bad behavior: Not involving some teachers or administrators in the activities and projects arbitrarily, without a professional or objective justification (Item 9).

Finally, table 8 indicates that the majority of respondents (132 teachers) disagreed/strongly disagreed that their school leaders have the following unethical behavior: Changing responsibilities and positions of some teachers and administrators for non-professional reasons (Item 8).

Reasons underlying the bad or unethical behavior of private school principals

Tables 9 and 10 present data collection on Section C of the questionnaire.

Table 9: Descriptive statistics about reasons underlying the unethical behavior of principals

Items	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	252	3.64	.480
2	252	3.10	.719
3	252	2.44	.875
4	252	2.94	.697
5	252	3.11	.895
6	252	2.94	.697
7	252	3.11	.895
8	252	2.94	.328

Table 9 shows that the mean score value of 4 items is more than 3.00 (> 3); it varies between 3.10 and 3.64. These items are (respectively):

1. Pleasing others to keep his/her position (such as superiors, political figures, and political parties), then using ways contrary to the ethical principles (such as harming the reputation of others, attributing others' achievements to oneself, and adulation). (Item 1: M=3.64, SD=.480)
2. Justifying his/her actions by saying: *"Everyone does that"* or *"We cannot do otherwise"* (Item 5: M=3.11, SD=.895).
3. Practicing a principle that says *"The end justifies the means"* - treating employees as if they were machines in order to increase productivity or profit, seeking to stay in his/her position by resorting to fawning, adulation or gossiping (Item 7: M=3.11, SD=.895).
4. Tending to dominate the personal considerations on the principles of justice and equality: he/she is influenced by friendship or kinship (Item 2: M=3.10, SD=.719).

According to this table, the mean score of the 3 other items is 2.94 ($\approx$ 3):
1. Tending to use the authoritarian style − he/she does not practice the democratic or the participatory style sufficiently (Item 4: SD=.697).
2. Having a low self-esteem and lack of confidence in his/her abilities and qualifications which consolidates his/her negative behavior: verbal violence, lack of respect for others, not sharing others in decision making, etc. (Item 6: SD=.697).
3. Justifying his/her actions (verbal violence, isolation, marginalization, etc.) by saying: *"That's what we must do with such people"* (Item 8: SD=.328).

Regarding the remaining item, its mean score is more than 2.00 (> 2): Tending to dominate political and sectarian considerations on the principles of justice and equality (Item 3: M=2.44, SD=.875).

Table 10: Frequency results of the reasons underlying the unethical behavior of principals

	Items *The school principal*	**SD**	**D**	**A**	**SA**
1	Pleases others to keep his/her position (such as superiors, political figures, and political parties), so he/she uses ways contrary to the ethical principles (such as harming the reputation of others, attributing others' achievements to oneself, and adulation).	0	0	90	162
2	Tends to dominate the personal considerations on the principles of justice and equality (he/she is influenced by friendship or kinship).	18	0	174	60
3	Tends to dominate political and sectarian considerations on the principles of justice and equality.	47	65	122	18
4	Tends to use the authoritarian style − he/she does not practice the democratic or the participatory style sufficiently.	12	33	165	42
5	Justifies his/her actions by saying: *"Everyone does that"* or *"We cannot do otherwise"*.	6	70	66	110
6	Has a low self-esteem and lack of confidence in his/her abilities and qualifications, which consolidates his/her negative behavior (verbal violence, lack of respect for others, not sharing others in decision making).	12	33	165	42
7	Practices the principle that says *"The end justifies the means"* (treating employees as if they were machines in order to increase productivity or profit, seeking to stay in his/her position by resorting to fawning, adulation or gossiping).	6	70	66	110
8	Justifies his/her actions by saying: *"That's what we must do with such people"* (verbal violence, isolation, marginalization, etc.).	0	22	224	6

According to table 10, all participants (252 teachers) agreed/strongly agreed that the following reason explains and reinforces the unethical behavior of school leaders: Pleasing others to keep his/her position (such as superiors, political figures, and political parties), then using ways contrary to the ethical principles (such as harming the reputation of others, attributing others' achievements to oneself, and adulation) (Item 1).

In addition, more than 200 of 252 teachers (the number varies between 207 and 234 respondents) agreed/strongly agreed that the following 4 reasons explain and nourish the unethical behavior of school principals:

1. Tending to dominate the personal considerations on the principles of justice and equality: he/she is influenced by friendship or kinship (Item 2).
2. Justifying his/her actions (verbal violence, isolation, marginalization, etc.) by saying: *"That's what we must do with such people"* (Item 8).
3. Tending to use the authoritarian style – he/she does not practice the democratic or the participatory style sufficiently (Item 4).
4. Having a low self-esteem and lack of confidence in his/her abilities and qualifications which consolidates his/her negative behavior: verbal violence, lack of respect for others, not sharing others in decision making, etc. (Item 6).

Moreover, the majority of teachers (176 participants) agreed/strongly agreed that the 2 other reasons explain and consolidate the unethical behavior of their school leaders:

1. Justifying his/her actions by saying: *"Everyone does that"* or *"We cannot do otherwise"* (Item 5).
2. Practicing a principle that says *"The end justifies the means"* –treating employees as if they were machines in order to increase productivity or profit, seeking to stay in his/her position by resorting to fawning, adulation or gossiping (Item 7).

Finally, the majority of teachers (140 respondents) agreed/strongly agreed that the remaining reason explaining and supporting the unethical practices of principals is: Tending to dominate political and sectarian considerations on the principles of justice and equality (Item 3).

Conclusion

The image provided by teachers about applying ethical leadership principles by Lebanese private school principals is relatively dark. Indeed, 19 of the 30 ethical leadership principles are not practiced by principals (12, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 9, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 14, 15, 2, 3, 4, 24, and 28). Only 11 principles are enjoyed by them (16, 1, 10, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23).

The number of participants who symbolize the "vast majority" (more than 189 of 252 teachers) of the first group (disagree/strongly disagree responses) is also clearly higher than those who represent the vast majority of the second one (agree/strongly agree responses). In fact, 240 of 252 participants chose disagree/strongly disagree responses for 6 items (12, 25, 26, 27, 29, and 30), and 199 of them chose the same response for 1 item (9); while 221 participants chose agree/strongly agree responses for only 1 item (16).

Similarly, the number of participants who symbolize the "majority" (more than 126 of 252 teachers) of the first group (disagree/strongly disagree responses) is clearly higher than those who represent the majority of the second one (agree/strongly agree responses). In fact, 183 of 252 teachers chose disagree/strongly disagree responses for 7 items (5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 14, and 15), and a number varying between 138 and 163 of them chose the same response for 5 items (2, 3, 4, 24, and 28) while 153 teachers chose agree/strongly agree responses for 1 item (1), and 138 of them chose the same response for 9 items (10, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23).

Moreover, what assures the incompetence of Lebanese private school principals as ethical leaders is that these principals practice 9 of the 14 unethical behaviors mentioned in the questionnaire (4, 3, 11, 12, 13, 14, 10, 6, and 7).

Indeed, 7 of the 9 unethical behaviors (4, 3, 11, 12, 13, 14, and 10) are identified (agree/strongly agree response) by the vast majority of teachers (it varies between 198 and 243 participants), while the 2 others are mentioned by a small majority: one item (6) is identified (agree response) by 153 teachers, while another one (7) is mentioned (agree/strongly agree response) by 145 of them.

Similarly, a big number of participants, varying between 190 and 252 participants, disagreed/strongly disagreed that their school leaders practice 4 of the 5 other unethical behaviors (2, 5, 1, and 9); a small majority of them disagreed/strongly disagreed that their principals practice the remaining unethical behavior (8).

Therefore, in the two cases, the big number tends to show the widespread and non widespread unethical practices. In other words, the results of this study clearly diagnose the principals' unethical practices that should be treated.

However, to treat these 9 unethical practices, it is necessary to determine the causes that are behind them. According to this study, all the 8 reasons that explain and consolidate the unethical behaviors and mentioned in the survey are identified by teachers. 5 of these reasons (1, 2, 8, 4, and 6) are recognized by a big number of teachers varying between 207 and 252 respondents. 2 others (5 and 7) are mentioned by the majority of teachers (176 participants). Regarding the remaining reason (3), it is identified by 140 of them. Yet, the question that remains is: which cause(s) for which unethical behavior?

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The sample of this study is one of the limitations confronting the validity of this study. In fact, geographically, the sample was localized in the *Mohafazat* (Governorate) of Beirut; the other five Lebanese *Mohafazats* were not represented in the sample. Future research should attempt to involve a larger and more representative sample of teachers across Lebanon.

In addition, the sample included only private school teachers. No teachers from the public school sector were involved. Future research should involve such participants so that a more comprehensive understanding of practicing both the ethical and unethical behaviors by school leaders is derived.

On the other hand, only teachers took part in the sample. In fact, school principals were not represented in the sample of this study to avoid the negative effects of self-rating. However, future research should attempt to involve the principals, not only to ask them about their own practice of the ethical leadership principles, the types of their unethical behaviors, and the reasons explaining and consolidating their unethical practices, but also to ask them to spot other school leaders (such as supervisors, coordinators, heads of departments), teachers and administrators in the mentioned three areas. Indeed, the variety of information sources and variables could help to provide a wider objective image about the ethical and unethical practices at schools.

For this reason, future study should involve groups of people who were not represented in the sample. In fact, various school customer groups, especially the pupils and their parents, should take part in the sample of future research.

Regarding the methodology, it could be improved. In fact, the current study has employed the quantitative methodology. It would be more valid to employ the qualitative methodology as well. In other words, the conduction of a semi-structured interview with some teachers would be an added value for this study because this instrument allows the researcher to have his own objective perception on the same items of the questionnaire. Future research should take this point into consideration.

Recommendations

This study suggests, through a selected sample of private school teachers in Beirut, that practicing ethical leadership principles by school principals is not effective.

Principals should be convinced that professional ethics and productivity can be compatible. They should be persuaded that the repercussion of the unethical attitudes and behaviors at the workplace could be the most harmful for an organization.

School principals should be motivated to use modeling as a learning tool. Modeling is a form of learning where individuals ascertain how to act or perform by observing other individuals (Bandura, 1994; 1997):
- o Principals can take great ethical leaders in various fields as learning models. They can read about them or be in direct contact with them to be influenced by their attitudes and behaviors.
- o Principals can learn from the experiences of other school principals (peer models). This can be done through several ways, such as: engaging in direct discussions or joining a forum online discussion.

In addition, school principals can use behavior-focused strategies to eliminate their bad and unethical attitudes and behaviors, such as self-observation and self-reward (Clegg, 2012; Esposito, 2010; Gohari, 2012; Ricketts et al., 2012; Tatum, 2012; Tuovinen, 2010):
- o Observing one's own behavior may lead to understanding when and why one does specific behaviors, and it may lead the individual to be able to reinforce, change or eliminate certain behaviors.
- o Self-reward is about using something tangible or abstract to effectively reinforce desirable behaviors and goal attainments.

Moreover, school leaders who evaluate the school staff's performance are requested to ask others (administrators, teachers, pupils and parents) to regularly express their opinions about their attitudes and practices in different areas. Thus, they can mention both ethical and unethical attitudes and behaviors. In the second case, the respondents can freely specify the problems they face and the recommendations they propose. This can be done by several ways and techniques including the questionnaire (Satisfaction Scale) and the "Box of Claims and Recommendations" (BCR) which can be created by principals.

On the other hand, school leaders are called to participate in formal training sessions to enhance their knowledge, attitudes and practices about ethical leadership. This can be done through interactive learning or by participating in online professional development programs.

Finally, training providers and colleges of education are encouraged to make use of the findings of this study in designing their curricula related to school management (or school leadership), educational supervision, teaching diploma, and training of trainers (ToT).

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