

Basic Leadership Theory: An Ethical Leadership Approach to Developing Positive Lecturer Engagement

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ABSTRACT

This study introduces the foundational leadership theory (FLT), an alternative ethical theory, to better understand the relationship between ethics and work engagement in higher education. The research was conducted at a private university in Pekanbaru City, focusing on the fields of management and accounting. Using a census sampling technique, 195 lecturers participated as respondents. Data analysis explored the predictive power of FLT's components—wisdom, affirmation, and pragmatism—on lecturers' work engagement. The findings revealed that wisdom, affirmation, and pragmatism significantly and positively influence work engagement among lecturers. FLT, as a novel theory, provides a fresh perspective on understanding employee enthusiasm and organizational commitment. Human resource management (HRM) practices that emphasize FLT-based leadership can enhance employees' eagerness and engagement, helping organizations maintain a competitive advantage. The results underscore the relevance of ethical leadership frameworks like FLT in fostering a motivated and engaged workforce. Further exploration of FLT's role in mediating or moderating other ethical leadership practices may expand its applicability. Additionally, demographic factors such as race and income level warrant investigation to assess their impact on work engagement. FLT offers valuable insights into ethical leadership and its effect on employee engagement in higher education. Future research should consider other alternative ethical leadership styles to deepen our understanding of organizational commitment and work engagement dynamics.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Human resources (HR) and business management scholars increasingly emphasize the significance of "work engagement" as a cornerstone of organizational success (Frazier, 2016; Frazier et

al., 2017; Salas-Vallina, Alegre, & Fernández, 2017). Work engagement is defined as the psychological connection and motivation employees have toward their work, characterized by energy, resilience, and a deep sense of involvement in tasks (Colina et al., 2017; Bakker & Woerkmom, 2017). This concept underscores the importance of employees investing effort and enthusiasm in their roles while effectively navigating challenges and aligning personally with their work. Its rising prominence stems from the emphasis on fostering a healthy and sustainable relationship between employees and their work environment, where dedication and high performance coexist with well-being (Elfi, Rahmat, & Arizal, 2023; Rahmat & Oemar, 2023; Rahmat & Seswandi, 2023). Engaged employees demonstrate persistence and productivity, skillfully managing their responsibilities while maintaining a positive work-life balance and mitigating risks of burnout. This balanced approach is essential for driving individual fulfillment and organizational effectiveness.

Having highly engaged employees gives organizations a significant competitive advantage. Engaged employees tend to experience better physical and psychological health, leading to greater job satisfaction and longevity within the organization (M. Rasyid Abdillah & Rahmat, 2022; Yulia, Rahmat, & Asfar, 2023). Additionally, they demonstrate higher job performance, directly benefiting the institution. Consequently, understanding how to foster work engagement is crucial for organizational success.

To explore the factors influencing work engagement, researchers have focused on its antecedents. Personal and job resources have been identified as critical contributors. The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory suggests that employees are motivated to acquire, retain, and protect resources in the workplace. Job resources, such as supportive leadership and a positive work environment, alongside personal resources like skills, self-efficacy, and personality traits, significantly enhance work engagement. These resources not only mitigate workplace stress but also promote employee resilience and motivation.

Research indicates that work engagement manifests as enthusiasm and organizational commitment, both essential for sustained productivity and employee satisfaction. Ethical leadership has been identified as a key predictor of work engagement, alongside other factors. However, existing theories of ethical leadership may not fully capture the complexity of its relationship with work engagement. This underscores the need for alternative ethical leadership frameworks that can provide deeper insights into fostering work engagement in diverse organizational contexts.

Work engagement is a critical factor for organizations as it fosters collaboration among coworkers and strengthens organizational commitment. Ethical leadership plays a central role in enhancing work engagement, yet research on alternative ethical theories in this context remains limited. This study introduces Basic Leadership Theory (BLT), developed by Fuller (2021), as a novel framework to better understand the ethical dimensions of work engagement. BLT focuses on ethical decision-making grounded in wisdom, affirmation, and pragmatism, providing new insights into how leadership can influence employee motivation and commitment.

A significant gap in the literature concerns the mediating and moderating mechanisms that explain how ethical leadership impacts work engagement. While previous studies confirm a positive relationship between ethical leadership and work engagement, there is limited exploration of underlying processes, such as trust, communication, or intrinsic motivation, that mediate this relationship (Bakker & Woerkmom, 2017). Additionally, most studies are rooted in Western cultural contexts, leaving open questions about how collectivist societies or hierarchical organizations influence the dynamics of ethical leadership and work engagement (Bicocca & Aboramadan, 2019). Broader dimensions of ethical leadership—such as empathy, transparency, and sustainability—also remain underexplored despite their potential impact on fostering long-term engagement (Schaufeli, 2017). Further research is needed to examine the long-term effects of ethical leadership, its role at managerial levels, and its interaction with other leadership styles, such as transactional leadership (Tummers & Bakker, 2021; Bakker, Kjelleveid, & Espevik, 2023).

BLT builds upon ethical leadership theories, positing that leaders make decisions based on integrity, affirmation, and pragmatism. It employs a 15-item scale and has shown significant predictive power in organizational commitment. By applying BLT in this study, we aim to explore its potential in

enhancing work engagement, particularly in contexts where ethical decision-making directly impacts organizational well-being. Lecturers in private universities in Indonesia represent a particularly relevant population for this inquiry, as they face unique challenges requiring ethical leadership to foster work engagement.

In Indonesian private universities, lecturers often grapple with accreditation demands, bureaucratic processes, and limited resources, which strain their capacity to maintain educational quality while balancing administrative and teaching obligations (Yusnita, Sunaryo, & Pakuan, 2024). Ethical leadership is crucial in this context to ensure transparent decision-making that prioritizes both academic standards and lecturer well-being. Furthermore, limited funding and infrastructure in many private universities highlight the importance of resource management guided by ethical leadership principles (Mhlongo, Mbatha, Ramatsetse, & Dlamini, 2023). Ethical leaders can also address the pressures lecturers face to balance teaching and research expectations, mitigating risks of unethical practices such as data manipulation (Buerkle et al., 2023).

Additionally, ethical leadership is vital in navigating lecturer-student relationships, ensuring policies prevent favoritism and discrimination while supporting professional interactions (Bicocca & Aboramadan, 2019). Competition with public universities further underscores the importance of ethical leadership in fostering a culture of innovation and integrity, enhancing institutional reputation (Yusnita et al., 2024). Ethical leadership not only creates a supportive work environment for lecturers but also promotes their engagement, ultimately improving the quality of education in private universities. By addressing these challenges through the lens of BLT, this study seeks to provide deeper insights into how ethical leadership can enhance work engagement and organizational success.

2. METHODS

This research employs quantitative methods for data collection and intends to test a research hypothesis using primary data in the form of a questionnaire. The questionnaire will be designed using closed-ended questions, which offer predetermined response options for participants to choose the most appropriate answer. The study aims to gather data by distributing questionnaires to permanent lecturers at private tertiary institutions in the city of Pekanbaru, specifically those affiliated with the economics cluster. The questionnaires will be self-administered. The census sampling method will be employed to distribute the questionnaires, with a total of 194 lecturers selected as the sample for this study.

To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the instrument used to measure the factors in this study, it was adapted from peer-reviewed articles originally written in English. To prevent any loss of meaning or content during the translation process, the "back-translation method" was employed. This procedure involved translating the survey items from English into Indonesian and then translating them back into English to compare and verify the consistency of the content. This meticulous approach ensured the integrity and reliability of the survey items, preserving their original intent and meaning throughout the translation process (Colina et al., 2017; Muhammad Rasyid Abdillah, 2021).

2.1 Instrumentation and Variables

Instrumentation is essential to connect abstract concepts with empirical observations (Neuman, 2011). The variables in this study include: (1) the independent variable, Basic Leadership Theory (FLT), and (2) the dependent variable, work engagement. FLT, developed by Fuller (2021), measures perceived integrity, assurance, and pragmatism in ethical leadership. Ethical decisions grounded in FLT are hypothesized to significantly predict employee job engagement. FLT consists of a 15-item scale assessed using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). For example, "I trust leadership decisions that promote job security."

- a. Basic Leadership Integrity (FLI): FLI evaluates the perceived fairness of leadership, linking it to ethical leadership and organizational commitment through a 5-item scale. Participants

indicate their agreement with statements such as "Leadership decisions should NOT be influenced by receiving personal gifts or money" (Fuller, 2021).

- b. Basic Leadership Assurance (FLA): FLA assesses leadership actions that build trust and alleviate employee concerns, using a 5-item scale. For example, one item states, "I trust leadership decisions that take into account the level of anxiety they might cause" (Fuller, 2021).
- c. Basic Leadership Pragmatism (FLP): FLP measures the practicality and transparency of leadership decisions through a 5-item scale. A sample statement includes, "I believe leadership decisions should be realistic and feasible in the workplace" (Fuller, 2021).
- d. Work Engagement: Assessed using the 9-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), which measures dimensions such as vigor, dedication, and absorption. For instance, an item states, "I feel bursting with energy while working" (Bauer & Hämmig, 2014; Schaufeli, 2017).

2.2 Research Design and Analysis

This study employs descriptive and verification methodologies to explore the research objectives. Descriptive analysis characterizes the participants and variables, while verification analysis tests the hypotheses using the Structural Equation Model (SEM) via WarpPLS software. Descriptive statistics depict participant attributes, and SEM evaluates relationships between variables.

Before analysis, questionnaire data undergo validity, normality, and scale conversion testing to ensure reliability and alignment with interval-scale requirements. Validity tests assess whether the instrument measures its intended constructs (Solimun, Fernandes, & Nurjannah, 2017). Convergent and discriminant validity are calculated, while construct reliability is assessed using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha (thresholds: ≥ 0.70 for composite reliability; ≥ 0.60 for Cronbach's alpha).

2.3 Statistical Methodology

SEM is employed for hypothesis testing, analyzing latent variables, indicator variables, and measurement errors (Solimun et al., 2017; Arfi & Rahmat, 2020). SEM is particularly advantageous for examining complex relationships and accommodates small sample sizes (30–50) while maintaining statistical power (Rahmat, Hadiyati, & Abdillah, 2017; Yadi, Rahmat, & Abdillah, 2022). This multivariate approach allows robust examination of the proposed theoretical model despite limited sample availability.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

The data analysis in this study examined the effects of several independent variables on the dependent variable and the moderator variable. Hypothesis testing was performed using the partial least squares (PLS) method. The partial least squares method is a structural equation modeling (SEM) method. The study used SEM analysis with the WarpPLS 7.0 application for data analysis. The steps of data analysis are as follows.

3.1.1 Convergent Validity

The convergent validity of the measurement model is assessed through the correlation between the indicator scores and the construct score, often represented by the loading factor. According to Chin, as cited in Latan and Ghozali (2012), a loading factor value greater than 0.5 to 0.6 is considered valid in the initial stages of model development. This threshold indicates that the indicator sufficiently explains the construct it is intended to measure. Higher loading factor values suggest stronger relationships between the indicator and the construct, enhancing the overall reliability and validity of the measurement model. For this study, the loading factor values of each indicator are presented as follows, demonstrating their contribution to the construct and ensuring the

robustness of the measurement framework. These values are critical for evaluating whether the indicators effectively represent the theoretical constructs under investigation.

Table 1. Research Variable Loading Factor Value, AVE, and CR

Variabel	Item	Loading	P Value	AVE	CR
FLT	I01	(0.817)	<0.001	0,707	0,830
	I02	(0.762)	<0.001		
	I03	(0.729)	<0.001		
	I04	(0.668)	<0.001		
	I05	(0.623)	<0.001		
	J01	(0.635)	<0.001	0,652	0,787
	J02	(0.741)	<0.001		
	J03	(0.629)	<0.001		
	J04	(0.635)	<0.001		
	J05	(0.613)	<0.001		
	P01	(0.613)	<0.001	0,646	0,779
	P02	(0.676)	<0.001		
	P03	(0.699)	<0.001		
	P04	(0.712)	<0.001		
	P05	(0.608)	<0.001		
KK	S01	(0.631)	<0.001	0,687	0,790
	S02	(0.660)	<0.001		
	S03	(0.860)	<0.001		
	S04	(0.886)	<0.001		
	S05	(0.809)	<0.001		
	D01	(0.637)	<0.001	0,769	0,878
	D02	(0.750)	<0.001		
	D03	(0.839)	<0.001		
	D04	(0.832)	<0.001		
	D05	(0.771)	<0.001		
	PY01	(0.771)	<0.001	0,792	0,893
	PY02	(0.826)	<0.001		
	PY03	(0.840)	<0.001		
	PY04	(0.763)	<0.001		
	PY05	(0.755)	<0.001		

Source: Primary Data, processed (2023)

The convergent validity of the measurement model is determined by examining the correlation between the indicator scores and the construct score, represented by the loading factor. According to Chin, as cited in Latan and Imam Ghozali, a loading factor value of 0.5 to 0.6 is generally acceptable for establishing convergent validity. Based on the data presented in Table 1, all indicators for the research variables exhibit loading factor values greater than 0.6, which exceeds the minimum threshold. Importantly, none of the indicator variables have a loading factor below 0.5, confirming their validity and reliability for use in the study. These results validate that all indicators meet the required convergent validity criteria and are suitable for further analysis in the research.

3.1.2 Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity of a model is considered stronger when the square root of the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) for each construct exceeds the correlation between any pair of constructs in the model. This criterion ensures that each construct is distinct and measures a unique aspect of the theoretical framework. As shown in Table 1, the AVE values for all constructs in the tested model are greater than 0.50, indicating that a sufficient proportion of variance is captured by the constructs

relative to the variance shared with other constructs. These results confirm that the tested model does not have any issues with discriminant validity, reinforcing the reliability of the constructs for further analysis. Establishing robust discriminant validity is critical in ensuring that the constructs are conceptually distinct and contribute uniquely to the overall model, enhancing the accuracy and interpretability of the findings.

3.1.3 Composite Reliability

Based on the data presented in Table 1, it is evident that the composite reliability values for all research variables exceed the threshold of 0.7. These results indicate that each variable has achieved a high level of composite reliability, demonstrating strong internal consistency. Therefore, it can be concluded that all variables exhibit a high degree of reliability.

Table 2. Model Fit and Quality Indices

Quality Indices Criteria	Mark	Rule of thumb
"Average path coefficient (APC)"	0.358 ***	p-value of 0.05
"Average R-squared (ARS)"	0.489 ***	p-value of 0.05
"Average block VIF (AVIF)"	1.525	Smaller than 3.3
"Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)"	0.726	0.10 (small effect size), 0.25 (medium effect size), and 0.36 (large effect size)
Q-squared () coefficient:Q ²		Bigger than 0 (predictive models are acceptable)
• FLT	0.995	
• KK	0.988	

Source: Primary Data, processed (2023)

The GoF (Goodness of Fit) value in this study was calculated to be 0.726, exceeding the threshold value of 0.36. This result indicates that the model demonstrates a strong overall fit and performs effectively in representing the data. Additionally, the Q-square coefficient presented in Table 2 reveals a value greater than zero, suggesting that the model possesses satisfactory predictive relevance, as supported by O'Cass and Weerawardena (2010). A Q-square value above zero indicates that the model can reliably predict the dependent variables based on the independent variables included in the analysis.

Following the evaluation of model fit and predictive accuracy, the study proceeds with hypothesis testing, which, in the context of SEM (Structural Equation Modeling), is referred to as structural model analysis. This stage is critical for examining the relationships between latent variables and determining whether the hypothesized pathways are supported by the data. By integrating model fit assessments with hypothesis testing, the research ensures both the reliability of the constructs and the validity of the theoretical relationships, thereby enhancing the robustness and interpretability of the findings.

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Results

Direct Influence	Path Coefficient	P Values
FLT→KK	0.45	Significant at the 0.01
<i>R-Squared</i>		
R ² (KK)	0.20	

Source: Primary Data, processed (2023)

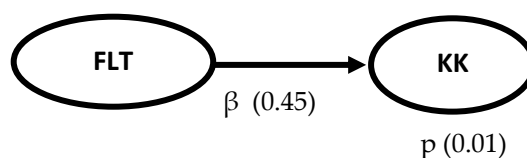


Figure 1. Direct effect

The overall impact of EL on KH behavior is measured at 7.64%. When considering both the direct and indirect effects, EL contributes a total of 17.64% to KH behavior.

3.2 Discussion

This study underscores the significance of pragmatism in the prediction of lecturer behavior, emphasizing its role as a component of Ethical Leadership Theory (FLT) and its association with organizational commitment (Fuller, 2021). Pragmatism is characterized by its reflective and foundational nature in the decision-making process of leaders (Maarouf, 2019). Consequently, pragmatic leadership fosters organizational commitment (Wang & Sung, 2016) and elucidates the ability of FLT to predict work engagement in this particular investigation. The findings of the study have affirmed that the inclusion of pragmatism as a characteristic of ethical leadership exerts a substantial and positive impact on employee engagement.

This research offers significant practical implications. Firstly, the Cronbach's alpha results reinforce prior findings by Fuller (2021), validating the effectiveness of integrity, assurance, and pragmatism as core components of the foundational leadership theory (FLT). Additionally, this study corroborates the reliability of enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption, as outlined by Bauer and Hämmig (2014) and Schaufeli (2017), as robust measures of work engagement. The findings demonstrate a positive relationship between employee enthusiasm and perceptions of leadership attributes grounded in integrity, assurance, and pragmatism. This relationship deepens our understanding of how ethical leadership influences employee engagement by fostering enthusiasm and commitment to their roles.

Moreover, the study confirms FLT's predictive capacity for organizational commitment and extends this influence to work engagement, as previously suggested by Colina et al. (2017) and Bakker and Woerkom (2017). This aligns with the literature emphasizing the need for alternative ethical leadership theories to enhance our understanding of work engagement. FLT emerges as a significant predictor, suggesting that leaders who consistently evaluate their decisions through the ethical dimensions of integrity, assurance, and pragmatism can effectively enhance work engagement.

Furthermore, the findings validate previous research on work engagement (Bakker, Kjellevoid, & Espevik, 2023; Tummers & Bakker, 2021), affirming fairness as a fundamental component of integrity and its role in fostering positive work engagement. Ethical leaders who assess decisions through these ethical lenses not only promote fairness but also inspire greater engagement among employees (Bicocca & Aboramadan, 2019). This underscores the importance of ethical decision-making as a cornerstone of effective leadership and employee engagement.

Leaders who evaluate their decisions through the ethical dimensions of integrity, assurance, and pragmatism foster an environment where employees feel valued, engaged, and aligned with organizational goals. This study highlights that foundational leadership theory (FLT), with its focus on ethical decision-making, is particularly effective in promoting long-term employee engagement. In contrast, other leadership styles, such as Transactional or Laissez-Faire Leadership, may lack the ethical emphasis or prioritization of employee well-being required for sustained engagement. For example, university leaders, especially in private institutions in Indonesia, can apply FLT by integrating its core components into practice. By demonstrating integrity, leaders can make faculty performance evaluations transparent and fair and based on objective criteria such as teaching effectiveness, research output, and community service. Implementing a 360-degree feedback system

that includes input from peers, students, and department heads ensures a comprehensive and equitable evaluation process. By adopting such ethical practices, leaders not only enhance trust and motivation among faculty but also align institutional practices with the principles of fairness and inclusivity central to FLT.

Specific actions that demonstrate integrity include ensuring that decisions are not influenced by personal relationships or non-academic considerations, such as favoritism or external pressure. For example, if a faculty member has underperformed in teaching or research, even if they have a close relationship with university management, the leader should make decisions based solely on objective data without special treatment or exceptions.

In the context of assurance, university leaders need to provide security and long-term support to faculty and staff. For example, when facing financial uncertainty or curriculum changes, leaders can communicate openly about the university's financial situation and the steps being taken to ensure the welfare of staff. They could also provide training and professional development opportunities for faculty to enhance their teaching and research capabilities, as well as mental health support for staff dealing with high levels of stress.

An example of assurance is holding regular meetings with faculty to ensure they feel valued and have the opportunity to discuss any challenges they are facing. Additionally, recognizing and rewarding faculty members for their achievements in teaching and research can also be a way to show assurance.

Pragmatism in the context of university leadership is reflected in how leaders manage limited resources in the most efficient and realistic way while maintaining educational quality. For example, in curriculum planning, leaders can adjust course offerings and degree programs based on market needs, student interests, and developments in technology and industry. A pragmatic leader would adapt the curriculum to reflect the reality that resources are limited, and might decide to develop more applied programs that utilize existing facilities or partner with industry to provide practical experience for students.

Another example of pragmatism is in resource allocation for teaching or research programs. If the university faces budget constraints, leaders can choose to allocate more funds to areas that are most urgent, such as developing digital learning platforms or funding research with high potential to enhance the university's reputation, while other areas may receive more limited funding. In this case, the decision is driven by efficiency and real-world needs, not personal preferences or traditional practices.

University leaders should also apply pragmatism when making decisions related to the welfare of students and faculty. For example, when deciding to increase faculty workload to accommodate more courses or new programs, a pragmatic leader will carefully consider factors like work-life balance, as well as the quality of teaching that can be maintained under such conditions. Leaders might adjust the evaluation system or faculty workload to reduce undue stress, ensuring that academic standards remain high while preventing burnout.

University leaders must foster innovation in teaching and research while maintaining high ethical standards. For instance, in facing pressures to boost research publications or enhance the university's academic reputation, an ethical and pragmatic leader will avoid unethical practices, such as data manipulation or publishing questionable results, while seeking ways to optimize available resources. They may encourage collaboration with foreign universities or industries to generate impactful research without compromising research integrity or quality.

In practice, the application of Balanced Leadership Theory (BLT) by leaders in private universities in Indonesia is highly relevant in addressing the complex and dynamic challenges in the education sector. By emphasizing integrity, assurance, and pragmatism, university leaders can create an academic environment that is not only effective and efficient but also ethical, supportive of faculty and student welfare, and committed to enhancing educational quality overall. Through this approach,

leaders can help maintain the institution's reputation, foster innovation, and navigate the various challenges that arise in higher education.

Overall, the study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on work engagement by validating FLT as an effective predictor of employee engagement and organizational commitment. It reinforces the idea that ethical leadership, grounded in integrity and fairness, has a lasting positive impact on both individual and organizational performance.

Future research on Balanced Leadership Theory (BLT) could be expanded by exploring its relationship with several key variables that can provide deeper insights into the impact of balanced leadership on various organizational outcomes. One important variable to investigate is organizational commitment, where studies could examine how leaders who apply the principles of BLT—emphasizing integrity, assurance, and pragmatism—affect the loyalty and attachment of employees or faculty members to the organization's goals. Research could explore whether BLT contributes to stronger organizational commitment compared to other leadership approaches, such as Transformational Leadership or Servant Leadership.

Another relevant variable is organizational resilience, which refers to an organization's ability to adapt and thrive amidst challenges or crises. Given that BLT emphasizes ethical decision-making and a balanced approach to leadership, research could assess how leaders who embody these principles are more effective in guiding their organizations through periods of uncertainty or transformation. Studies could explore whether BLT enhances the organization's resilience compared to other leadership models that may be more focused on short-term adaptability or crisis management.

Additionally, the relationship between BLT and organizational justice could be another interesting area for future research. Since BLT stresses the importance of fairness, ethical behavior, and transparent decision-making, examining how leaders who apply these principles influence perceptions of justice within the organization would provide valuable insights. Research could explore whether leaders practicing BLT are perceived as fairer and whether this perception contributes to higher levels of employee trust and cooperation.

Lastly, creativity and innovation could also be an important variable to link with BLT. The balance between ethical considerations and pragmatic decision-making in BLT might foster an environment that encourages creativity, especially in academic or research-focused settings. Studies could investigate whether BLT, by creating an ethical yet flexible leadership style, helps stimulate innovation and encourages new ideas and solutions within the organization. Understanding how BLT impacts creativity could have important implications for industries or sectors that rely heavily on innovation, such as higher education or technology.

By connecting BLT with these variables, future research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how balanced leadership contributes to various organizational and individual outcomes. These studies could offer practical guidance for leaders aiming to implement a balanced, ethical approach to leadership in complex and dynamic environments.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study highlight that effective leadership is strongly correlated with job involvement, with leaders who inspire, empower, and support team members achieving enhanced productivity, job satisfaction, and institutional performance. However, job involvement is influenced not only by leadership but also by individual factors, such as personal characteristics, motivation, and employees' perceptions of their work. This suggests that maximizing job involvement requires a holistic approach that considers the interplay of leadership, individual, and situational factors. The research underscores the potential of Followership Theory (FLT) as an alternative ethical leadership framework, emphasizing constructs such as assurance to reduce employee stress and uncertainty. FLT advances ethical position theory by proposing that ethical leadership has a predictive role in job involvement.

The study's implications suggest that ethical leadership practices should prioritize effective communication to build trust and foster engagement.

The research is limited by its scope, focusing on specific leadership practices and not fully exploring demographic factors such as race, income level, or cultural context, which may influence job involvement. Future research should investigate FLT's role as a mediator or moderator in the relationship between ethical leadership practices and work engagement, and examine alternative leadership styles to provide a more comprehensive understanding of organizational commitment. Additionally, longitudinal studies could explore the long-term impacts of ethical leadership on job involvement, considering demographic and cultural variations. These avenues of exploration will further refine ethical leadership frameworks and their application in diverse organizational settings.

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