



Workplace ethics and employee performance in Nepalese commercial banks

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Abstract

The study intends to investigate the effect of “Workplace Ethics and Employee Performance in Nepalese Commercial Banks”. Data for the study was collected through convenience sampling technique from 206 employees of Commercial Banks on five points likert scale through a self-administrative questionnaire. Descriptive and causal comparative research design was used to conduct the research study using statistical tools i.e correlation and regression. The results showed that the majority of respondents agreed with statements related to these workplace factors. The correlation analysis revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between respect, teamwork, reward and penalties, discipline, leadership styles, and employee performance. The regression analysis further confirmed that respect, teamwork, and leadership styles have a significant effect on employee performance. These findings suggest that organizations should focus on creating a workplace environment that promotes respect, teamwork, and effective leadership to enhance employee performance. Overall, this study contributes to the existing body of literature on workplace factors and employee performance, and provides insights for managers and policymakers to create a conducive work environment that fosters employee productivity and success.

Keywords: employee performance, problem statement, another issue

Introduction

Workplace ethics is a crucial factor in organizational success, especially in the commercial banking industry, where trust, integrity, and professionalism are essential values. Workplace ethics refers to a set of moral principles that guide individuals' behavior and decision-making in the workplace. Ethical behavior in the workplace creates a positive work environment, fosters collaboration and teamwork, and enhances employee performance. Commercial banks, as service providers, rely heavily on the trust of their customers, making work ethics critical for success (Weaver, Treviño & Cochran, 1999) [42].

According to Agyemang, Narteh, and Boakye (2018) [1], workplace ethics influence employee performance in commercial banks. Ethical behavior fosters a positive work environment, enhances employee motivation, and commitment, leading to increased productivity and improved performance. The study recommends that commercial banks prioritize workplace ethics in their recruitment, training, and performance evaluation processes to enhance employee performance.

In another study by Ali, Hassan, and Nasreen (2020) [2, 3], workplace ethics significantly influence employee performance in the banking industry. The study found that employees who exhibit ethical behavior in the workplace are more committed to their organization, leading to increased productivity and improved performance. The study highlights the importance of ethical behavior in enhancing employee commitment and organizational success.

The banking industry is heavily regulated, and financial institutions are expected to adhere to strict ethical standards. In recent years, the banking industry has faced several ethical challenges, including the global financial crisis, money laundering, and fraud. These challenges have led to increased scrutiny of the industry, and financial institutions

are now expected to prioritize ethical behavior in their operations.

According to research by Ngozi, Okereke, and Udeh (2020) [31], the banking industry's ethical challenges have led to a decline in customer trust and loyalty. The study found that customers are more likely to do business with financial institutions that exhibit ethical behavior in their operations. The study recommends that banks prioritize ethical behavior to restore customer trust and loyalty, leading to improved organizational performance.

Furthermore, the lack of ethical behavior in the banking industry has led to increased regulatory intervention, including fines and sanctions. Financial institutions that fail to adhere to ethical standards risk losing their license to operate, leading to reputational and financial damage.

Despite the importance of work ethics in the banking industry, several issues continue to undermine ethical behavior in the workplace. One of the primary issues is unethical practices, such as embezzlement, fraud, and corruption, which have led to several banking scandals globally. These unethical practices erode customer trust and tarnish the bank's reputation, leading to significant financial losses.

Another issue is the lack of ethical leadership in the banking industry. Ethical leadership is essential in creating a culture of ethical behavior in the workplace. However, some banking leaders prioritize profit over ethics, leading to unethical practices such as aggressive sales tactics and fraudulent activities.

The previous literature and findings highlight the importance of workplace ethics in enhancing employee performance in the banking sector. Ethical behavior fosters a positive work environment, enhances employee motivation and commitment, leading to increased productivity and improved performance. Ethical leadership and behavior are critical for organizational success in the banking sector, and financial institutions must prioritize

workplace ethics in their operations to enhance employee performance and customer trust and loyalty.

In summing up, work ethics is a critical factor in the banking industry, influencing customer trust, employee commitment, and organizational success. Despite its importance, several issues continue to undermine ethical behavior in the workplace. Commercial banks must prioritize work ethics in their operations to enhance employee performance and organizational success.

Problem Statement

The banking industry has been facing several ethical challenges in recent years, leading to increased scrutiny of the industry and financial institutions' operations. These ethical challenges have undermined workplace ethics, which has adversely affected employee performance in the industry. Despite the critical role of workplace ethics in enhancing employee performance, several issues continue to undermine ethical behavior in the workplace, leading to reduced employee performance in the banking sector (Agyemang *et al.*, 2018)^[1].

Overall, the issues affecting workplace ethics in the banking industry significantly impact employee performance. These issues, including lack of respect, poor teamwork, poorly designed reward and penalty systems, lack of discipline, and poor leadership styles, affect employee motivation, commitment, and productivity. Therefore, there is a need to address these issues to enhance workplace ethics and improve employee performance in the banking industry (Kostova & Roth, 2003)^[23].

The problems that have been addressed in this stipulated research are as mentioned below:

- Is there any relationship between Respect, Teamwork, Reward and Penalties, Discipline, Leadership Styles and Employee Performance?
- Do Respect, Teamwork, Reward and Penalties, Discipline, Leadership Styles affects Employee Performance?

Objective of the Study

The objectives of the proposed study are as mentioned below

- To measure the relationship between Respect, Teamwork, Reward and Penalties, Discipline, Leadership Styles and Employee Performance.
- To examine the effect of Respect, Teamwork, Reward and Penalties, Discipline, and Leadership Styles on Employee Performance.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis is the statement of assumption or guess of final outcome. It has to be tested once the analysis of data is completed. Considering the above-mentioned research framework, the hypotheses of the study are as mentioned below:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between Respect and Employee Performance
- H2: There is a significant relationship between Team work and Employee Performance
- H3: There is a significant relationship between Reward and Penalties and Employee Performance
- H4: There is a significant relationship between Discipline and Employee Performance

- H5: There is a significant relationship between Leadership Styles and Employee Performance
- H6: There is a significant impact of Respect on Employee Performance
- H7: There is a significant impact of Teamwork on Employee Performance
- H8: There is a significant impact of Reward and Penalties on Employee Performance
- H9: There is a significant impact of Discipline on Employee Performance
- H10: There is a significant impact of Leadership Styles on Employee Performance.

Rationale of the Study

The study on the Effect of Workplace Ethics on Employee Performance in Commercial Banks has significance for various stakeholders, including organizations, policymakers, academia, and further researchers.

Organizations can benefit from the study by gaining insights into the role of workplace ethics in enhancing employee performance. The findings of the study can help organizations in formulating and implementing ethical codes and policies that can contribute to a more positive workplace culture and better employee performance.

Further researchers can also benefit from the study by using it as a basis for future research on the topic. The study's findings can stimulate further investigations on the effect of workplace ethics on other aspects of organizational behavior, such as employee retention, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior.

Theoretical Framework

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between ethical leadership and employee performance in the workplace. Methodology: A cross-sectional survey of employees from various industries was conducted, and data was analyzed using structural equation modeling. Findings: Ethical leadership was found to have a positive and significant relationship with employee performance (Miao *et al.*, 2019)^[29].

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between ethical climate and employee job stress in the workplace. Methodology: A survey of employees from various industries was conducted, and data was analyzed using structural equation modeling. Findings: Ethical climate was found to have a negative and significant relationship with employee job stress, particularly for those in high-stress roles (Kuipers *et al.*, 2017)^[24].

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of ethical leadership on employee job performance and organizational commitment. Methodology: A survey of employees from various industries was conducted, and data was analyzed using structural equation modeling. Findings: Ethical leadership was found to have a positive and significant impact on employee job performance and organizational commitment (Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011)^[18].

This study aimed to investigate the impact of workplace ethics on employee performance. Methodology: A quantitative research approach was used to collect data from 300 employees using a structured questionnaire. Findings: The study found that workplace ethics had a significant positive impact on employee performance (Ng & Feldman, 2012)^[30].

This study aimed to explore the relationship between ethical leadership and employee job satisfaction in the workplace. Methodology: A survey was conducted among 200 employees using a structured questionnaire. Findings: The study found that ethical leadership was positively related to employee job satisfaction (Mhatre & Riggio, 2014) [28].

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between perceived organizational ethical climate and employee job satisfaction. Methodology: A survey was conducted among 200 employees using a structured questionnaire. Findings: The study found that perceived organizational ethical climate was positively related to employee job satisfaction (Ng & Feldman, 2012) [30].

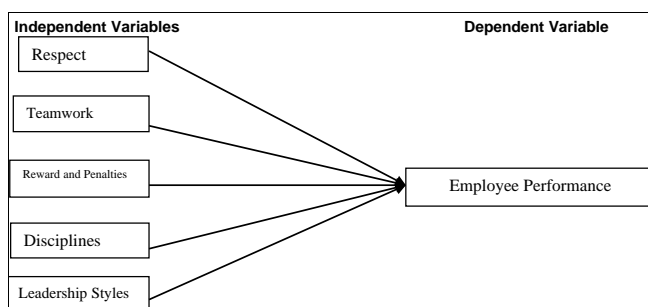
This study aimed to investigate the impact of workplace ethics on employee engagement. Methodology: A survey was conducted among 250 employees in a retail company. Findings: Workplace ethics was found to have a positive impact on employee engagement, as employees who perceived their workplace as ethical were more engaged and committed to their job (Lin & Chen, 2019).

This study aimed to explore the impact of workplace ethics on employee creativity. Methodology: A survey was conducted among 150 employees in a technology company. Findings: Workplace ethics was found to have a positive impact on employee creativity, as employees who perceived their workplace as ethical were more likely to engage in innovative behaviors (Lin & Chen, 2018).

This study aimed to investigate the impact of workplace ethics on employee commitment. Methodology: A survey was conducted among 200 employees in a financial institution. Findings: Workplace ethics was found to have a positive impact on employee commitment, as employees who perceived their workplace as ethical were more committed to their job and the organization (Kim *et al.*, 2013) [22].

Research Framework

Theoretical framework is the structure which shows the relation between different variable. The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study.



Note: Adapted from Adhikari and Prasad, 2021

Fig 1: Research Frameworks

Research Methodology

This section deals with the research methodology of the study.

Research design

This study utilized a descriptive research design, which aims to provide a detailed description or definition of a subject, often by creating a profile of a group of problems, people, or

events through data collection and tabulation of frequencies on research variables or their interactions. This approach is appropriate for this study because it aims to describe the existing state of affairs without manipulating variables. Additionally, the study also employed a causal-comparative design to establish relationships between independent and dependent variables after an event or action has occurred. The goal of this design is to determine if the independent variable affected the outcome, or dependent variable, by comparing two or more groups of individuals based on demographic variables. The data for this study was collected through a survey method.

Population and Sample and Sampling design

There are altogether 21 commercial banks in Butwal sub-metropolitan city. The total employees in these 21 commercial banks were 461 based on field survey, 2023. Therefore the population of the study is 461.

The sample size for the study has been determined based on Cochran's formula which is as mentioned below:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + (n_0 - 1)/N}$$

Where,

- $n_0 = \frac{t^2 PQ}{d^2}$, P=0.5, Q=0.5, d=5%, $\alpha=5\%$, t=1.96 and N=461
- Where N= Total employee of the organization (461)
- d= permissible error (5%=0.05)
- P= Proportion of satisfaction or dissatisfaction (0.5, from normal area of table)
- t= (1.96, from Normal area of table)
- The calculated sample size is 214 (rounded of).

Sampling is a procedure, process or technique of choosing a sub-group from a population to participate in the study (Ogula, 2005). It is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the large group from which they were selected. Sampling method is selected to approach the sample respondent for data collection. In this process, convenience sampling method has been selected to approach the sample respondent for data collection.

Nature and Sources of Data and Instrument for Data Collection

The Primary data for the study has been collected through questionnaire method to approach the sample respondent of the research study.

Questionnaire has been as a research instrument for primary data collection. The reason for choosing questionnaire as the data collection instruments is primarily due to its practicability, applicability to the research problem and the size of the population. A self-administered questionnaire with closed ended questions has been developed and administered to obtain information from the 214 respondents. Out of 214 questionnaires 206 questionnaires were collected and 8 questionnaires were not collected having response rate 96 percent. The questionnaires have two major sections. The first part seeks demographic information of the respondents while the second part seeks information on different variables. Similarly, the questionnaire has been used to collect data on different

independent and dependent variable by using five point likert scale where 5= Strongly Agree, 4=Agree, 3=Neutral, 2= Disagree and 1=Strongly Disagree.

Method for Data Analysis

This study is based in descriptive and analytical methods for the presentation and analysis of data. Tables, simple percentages, mean, SD, Correlation and regression have been used for the purpose of presentation and analysis of data.

Research Model

$$Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + b_5x_5$$

Whereas

- Y = Employee Performance
- X1 = Respect
- X2 = Teamwork

- X3 = Reward and Penalties
- X4 = Discipline
- X5 = Leadership Styles

Results and Discussion

Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation

The respondents from Table 1 showed a moderate level of agreement with statements related to respect in the workplace, with an average mean score of 3.4223 and a standard deviation of 1.37337. This suggests that there is some variation in the responses, but the majority of respondents showed relatively consistent levels of agreement across the statements.

The respondents from Table 1 showed a relatively high level of agreement with statements related to teamwork, with an average mean score of 3.6126 and a standard deviation of 1.30292. This suggests that the respondents generally agreed with statements related to teamwork.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach Alpha
Respect	206	3.4223	1.37337	.991
Teamwork	206	3.6126	1.30292	.982
Reward and Penalties	206	3.5485	1.31612	.982
Discipline	206	3.5194	1.34415	.984
Leadership Styles	206	3.3524	.91228	.724
Employee Performance	206	3.4553	1.00002	.728

The respondents showed a moderate level of agreement with statements related to reward and penalties, with an average mean score of 3.5485 and a standard deviation of 1.31612. This suggests that there is some variation in the responses, but the majority of respondents showed relatively consistent levels of agreement across the statements.

The respondents showed a moderate level of agreement with statements related to discipline, with an average mean score of 3.5194 and a standard deviation of 1.34415. This suggests that there is some variation in the responses, but the majority of respondents showed relatively consistent levels of agreement across the statements.

The respondents showed a moderate level of agreement with statements related to leadership styles, with an average mean score of 3.3524 and a standard deviation of 0.91228. This suggests that there is some variation in the responses, but the majority of respondents showed relatively consistent levels of agreement across the statements.

The respondents showed a moderate level of agreement with statements related to employee performance, with an

average mean score of 3.4553 and a standard deviation of 1.00002. This suggests that there is some variation in the performance ratings, but the majority of respondents showed relatively consistent levels of agreement in their ratings.

A high Cronbach's alpha coefficient indicates that the items or variables in the scale are highly correlated with each other, suggesting that they measure a single construct or dimension. Therefore, the variables Respect, Reward and Penalties, Leadership Styles, and Teamwork have high internal consistency and are reliable measures.

On the other hand, the variables Discipline and Employee Performance have relatively lower Cronbach's alpha values, which suggests that there may be some issues with their internal consistency. This could be due to the fact that these variables are complex and multidimensional, and may need to be measured with more items or sub-scales to improve their reliability.

Correlation

Table 2: Correlation

		Respect	Teamwork	Reward and Penalties	Discipline	Leadership Styles	Employee Performance
Respect	Pearson Correlation	1	.928**	.958**	.922**	.345**	.417**
Teamwork	Pearson Correlation		1	.984**	.946**	.376**	.512**
Reward and Penalties	Pearson Correlation			1	.970**	.204**	.477**
Discipline	Pearson Correlation				1	.396**	.500**
Leadership Styles	Pearson Correlation					1	.934**
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation						1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation coefficient between Respect and Employee Performance is positive and significant at a 0.01 level (r = 0.417). It suggests that Respect has a moderate positive relationship with Employee Performance. Hence, we can

infer that employees who are treated with respect tend to perform better. The P value of Respect and Employee Performance is less than 0.01 so it is inferred that alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted so it can be said that there is a

significant relationship between Respect and Employee Performance.

The correlation coefficient between Teamwork and Employee Performance is also positive and significant at a 0.01 level ($r = 0.512$). It suggests that Teamwork has a moderate positive relationship with Employee Performance. This means that working in a team can lead to better employee performance. The P value of Teamwork and Employee Performance is less than 0.01 so it is inferred that alternative hypothesis (H2) is accepted so it can be said that there is a significant relationship between Teamwork and Employee Performance.

The correlation coefficient between Reward and Penalties and Employee Performance is positive and significant at a 0.01 level ($r = 0.477$). It suggests that Reward and Penalties have a moderate positive relationship with Employee Performance. Hence, we can infer that providing appropriate rewards and penalties can motivate employees to perform better. The P value of Reward and Penalties and Employee Performance is less than 0.01 so it is inferred that alternative hypothesis (H3) is accepted so it can be said that there is a significant relationship between Reward and Penalties and Employee Performance.

The correlation coefficient between Discipline and Employee Performance is positive and significant at a 0.01

level ($r = 0.500$). It suggests that Discipline has a moderate positive relationship with Employee Performance. Therefore, we can infer that maintaining discipline in the workplace can lead to better employee performance. The P value of Discipline and Employee Performance is less than 0.01 so it is inferred that alternative hypothesis (H4) is accepted so it can be said that there is a significant relationship between Discipline and Employee Performance. The correlation coefficient between Leadership Styles and Employee Performance is positive and significant at a 0.01 level ($r = 0.934$). It suggests that Leadership Styles have a strong positive relationship with Employee Performance. Hence, we can infer that effective leadership can result in better employee performance. The P value of Leadership Styles and Employee Performance is less than 0.01 so it is inferred that alternative hypothesis (H5) is accepted so it can be said that there is a significant relationship between Leadership Styles and Employee Performance.

In summary, all the independent variables, namely Respect, Teamwork, Reward and Penalties, Discipline, and Leadership Styles, have a significant positive relationship with Employee Performance.

**Regression
Overall Regression**

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.962 ^a	.926	.925	.278

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Styles, Discipline, Respect, Teamwork, Reward and Penalties

Table 4: ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	339.236	5	67.847	880.791	.000 ^b
	Residual	27.192	353	.077		
	Total	366.427	205			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Styles, Discipline, Respect, Teamwork, Reward and Penalties

Table 5: Coefficient

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.286	.062		-4.640	.000
	Respect	.334	.034	.449	-9.841	.000
	Teamwork	.050	.050	.065	-.990	.323
	Reward and Penalties	.370	.068	.464	5.468	.000
	Discipline	.940	.018	.857	52.530	.000
	Leadership Styles	.161	.102	.205	1.574	.116

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Interpretation of overall factors of Workplace Ethics in relation to Employee Performance

$$Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + b_5x_5$$

$$EP = 0.286 + 0.334x_1 + 0.050x_2 + 0.370x_3 + 0.940x_4 + 0.161x_5$$

$$R = 0.962, R^2 = .926$$

In the above equation the value of R^2 is 0.926 which means that 92.6 percent variation in Employee Performance is explained by Teamwork, Reward and Penalties, Discipline, Respect and Leadership Styles.

The regression equation can be explained as one unit change in Respect will lead Employee Performance to change with 0.334 keeping all variables constant and so on for other variables.

Discussion

Research has shown that respect in the workplace can have a significant impact on employee performance (Farh *et al.*, 2012; Harris *et al.*, 2017). When employees feel respected by their colleagues and supervisors, they are more likely to feel valued and motivated to perform their job duties effectively. This is supported by a study by Farh *et al.* (2012) which found that employee job satisfaction and commitment were positively related to perceived organizational support, which included respect for employees.

Several studies have shown that teamwork is positively related to employee performance (Gebauer *et al.*, 2013; Van der Vegt & Bunderson, 2005). When employees work

together effectively and collaboratively, they can achieve more and produce better outcomes. A study by Gebauer *et al.* (2013) found that teamwork was positively related to job satisfaction, which in turn was positively related to job performance.

Leadership styles can have a significant impact on employee performance (Avolio *et al.*, 2009; Wang & Cheng, 2019) [26]. When leaders are able to inspire and motivate their employees, they are more likely to achieve their goals and perform well. A study by Wang & Cheng (2019) [26] found that transformational leadership was positively related to employee job satisfaction, which in turn was positively related to job performance.

Several studies have shown that respect has a significant impact on employee performance. According to a study by Brown and colleagues (2015), employees who feel respected by their supervisors are more motivated, committed, and engaged in their work, which leads to improved job performance. Another study by Porath and Erez (2007) found that employees who experience incivility and disrespect from their co-workers or supervisors exhibit lower job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Thus, it is evident that respect plays a vital role in enhancing employee performance.

Teamwork is a crucial factor in organizational success, and several studies have shown that it has a positive impact on employee performance. According to a study by Katzenbach and Smith (1993), team-based work enhances employee motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity, which leads to improved job performance. Another study by West and Anderson (1996) found that teams that exhibit high levels of cooperation, communication, and coordination are more effective and efficient, which leads to better performance. Therefore, it is evident that teamwork has a significant impact on employee performance.

Rewards and penalties are often used as motivators to enhance employee performance. Several empirical studies have shown that they have a significant impact on employee performance. According to a study by Lawler and colleagues (2001), organizations that use performance-based rewards have higher levels of productivity and profitability, which leads to improved employee performance. Another study by Kelloway and colleagues (2003) found that organizations that use disciplinary actions such as penalties for poor performance have higher levels of job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Thus, it is evident that rewards and penalties have a significant impact on employee performance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study investigated the relationship between workplace factors such as respect, teamwork, reward and penalties, discipline, and leadership styles with employee performance. The results showed that the majority of respondents agreed with statements related to these workplace factors. The correlation analysis revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between respect, teamwork, reward and penalties, discipline, leadership styles, and employee performance. The regression analysis further confirmed that respect, teamwork, and leadership styles have a significant effect on employee performance. These findings suggest that organizations should focus on creating a workplace environment that promotes respect, teamwork, and effective

leadership to enhance employee performance. Overall, this study contributes to the existing body of literature on workplace factors and employee performance, and provides insights for managers and policymakers to create a conducive work environment that fosters employee productivity and success.

Implications

On the basis of findings, following implications have been put forward.

Implications for policy makers

- The study's findings can support policymakers in developing policies that encourage the creation of a workplace environment that promotes respect, teamwork, and effective leadership.
- Policymakers can use the study's results to identify key areas that require attention when it comes to workplace factors and employee performance.
- The study can also be used as a basis for developing regulations or guidelines that organizations must adhere to when it comes to creating a conducive work environment for employees.

Implications for banking sector

- The banking sector can use the study's findings to develop strategies that focus on promoting respect, teamwork, and effective leadership to enhance employee performance.
- The study's results can also guide the development of training programs and workshops for managers and supervisors to help them understand the importance of these workplace factors and how they can improve employee performance.
- The findings can be used to establish metrics for evaluating employee performance and setting goals for enhancing workplace factors that contribute to performance.

Future scope

- The study's results can be used as a foundation for future research on workplace factors and employee performance in other sectors.
- Further studies can explore the impact of individual workplace factors on employee performance and how they interact with one another.
- Future studies can also investigate the impact of external factors, such as economic conditions, on the relationship between workplace factors and employee performance.

Implications for academia

- The study's results can contribute to the academic literature on workplace factors and employee performance, providing a basis for further research in this field.
- The study can also serve as a reference for students and researchers studying human resources management, organizational behavior, and leadership.
- The findings can be used to develop course material and case studies for academic programs focused on these areas.

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