

# Leadership Behaviours of Line Managers: Narratives of Followers at a South African Public Department

Jeremy MITONGA-MONGA\*, Realeboga LEKWALO, Mercy Tebogo  
BALOYI, Phumelelo Syria MASHABELA, Nancy Naome MOTHIBI,  
Sinesipho NDZUKUMA and Nyasha MAPIRA

University of Johannesburg, South Africa

*This study sought the narratives of followers on the leadership behaviours of line managers at a South African public department. The study used an exploratory qualitative research approach to explore the narratives of followers at the case South African public department. Data from ten participants who had worked for the South African public department for at least one year were gathered using face to face, semi-structured interviews. The study found that line managers at the South African public department behave both ethically and unethically. Ethical leadership behaviours identified by research participants include people oriented and role clarification. Conversely, dishonesty, nepotism, inconsistent behaviour and unfairness were identified by research participants as unethical leadership behaviours that are also common among managers at the case South African public department. Line managers at the case South African public department are generally encouraged to provide moral advice to their followers, whilst being guided by moral principles of fairness and honesty. The current study recommends that the South African public department should implement necessary mechanisms to eradicate identified unethical behaviours exhibited by managers at the case South African public department.*

**Keywords:** leadership behaviours, ethical leadership, unethical leadership

**JEL Classification:** J22, J41, L61, M54

## 1. Introduction

Due to ethical transgressions like corruption, bribery, and embezzlement scandals, leaders at significant organisations have come under investigation (Hassan et al., 2023; Veetikazhi et al., 2022; Hosain, 2019; Benlahcene et al., 2022; Susser et al., 2019). These unethical behaviours have dominated global news,

---

\*Corresponding Author:  
Jeremy Mitonga-Monga, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

Article History:  
Received 19 October 2023 | Accepted 1 March 2024 | Available online 27 April 2024

Cite Reference:  
Mitonga-Monga, J., Lekwalo, R., Baloyi, M.T., Mashabela, P.S., Mothibi, N.N., Ndzukuma, S., and Mapira, N., 2024. Leadership Behaviours of Line Managers: Narratives of Followers at a South African Public Department. *Expert Journal of Business and Management*, 12(1), pp.1-10.

forcing experts to become interested in examining leadership behaviours (Almeida et al., 2022; Mitonga-Monga and Flotman, 2017; Gan et al., 2020; Fehr et al., 2020; Ahmad et al., 2021; Sam, 2021). The capacity to differentiate between right and wrong while being guided by principles, values, and beliefs is regarded as ethical leadership behaviours (Pandey et al., 2022; Alshammari et al., 2015). Additionally, Mitonga-Monga (2020) argues that ethical leaders have a responsibility to exhibit honesty, fairness, respect, transparency, and democratic interaction. The South African government implemented several policies to curb unethical behaviour and immoral governance within government departments in response to widespread concern about corruption and abuse of office immoralities (Ndlovu, 2021; Lekubu et al., 2021; Ogunyemi et al., 2022). The Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities, Act 12 of 2004, was created to curb unethical leadership behaviours (Mbandlwa et al., 2020). As independent organisations, the Public Protector and the Hawks both contribute significantly to the fight against, and condemnation of, corruption (Bruce, 2020; Georgieva and Krsteski, 2017). Despite the South African government's efforts to curb unethical leadership behaviours, earlier research reveals that bribery, fraud, improper handling of public funds and resources, and irregular procurement practices are widespread in the country's public sector (Mlambo et al., 2020; Mathiba, 2020; Fourie and Malan, 2020; Bowen et al., 2019; Maile and Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2022; Ngcamu and Mantzaris, 2023). South Africa received a score of 45 out of 100 in 2016 on the corruption perception index (Georgieva and Krsteski, 2017), which, according to Alqudah (2017), was not favourable.

Corruption is thought to have started in several South African government departments as a result of unethical leadership behaviours (Bashir and Hassan, 2020; Maile and Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2022; Dorasamy, 2021). It is also known that some government employees, who serve in public offices in South Africa, misused resources that were intended to combat the COVID-19 pandemic (Anessi-Pessina et al., 2020). Furthermore, Anessi-Pessina et al. (2020) state that some public officials upgraded themselves by diverting funds that were meant to fight the COVID-19 virus, making it impossible for the nation to contain the infection (Mlambo and Masuku, 2020). Similar to this, Mkhize (2020) claims that leaders' continued corruption and unethical behaviours have a bad effect on the entire nation. A startling R125 million South African scandal involving COVID-19 PPE tenders was revealed by Makhubele (2020). Over 90 organisations obliged to provide PPEs to the general public are being investigated for unethical business behaviours as a result of the afore-mentioned issue (Makhubele, 2020). These unethical actions and controversies have hurt the South African public department's reputation and viability, which impacted performance and service delivery negatively (Georgieva and Krsteski, 2021; Maile and Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2022; Ngcamu and Mantzaris, 2023). Despite the government's efforts to eradicate unethical practices in public departments, shocking cases of corruption and abuse of public offices are still emerging in South Africa, which is worrisome (Mlambo et al., 2020; Maile and Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2022; Ngcamu and Mantzaris, 2023). Exploring leadership behaviours of line managers at a South African public department may assist to implement specific counter-measures to eradicate unethical leadership behaviours. The study's question is classified as follows: *What are the leadership behaviours of managers?*

## **2. Literature Review**

This study is guided by the social learning theory and leader-member exchange theory.

### **2.1. Social Learning Theory**

The social learning theory has been used to understand how leaders influence followers through a modelling and identification process (Bandura, 1977). Social learning theory assumes that workers learn by observing their leaders' behaviour and its consequences (Bandura, 1977). Employees are inclined to mimic the unethical behavior of leaders because they create a context that supports parallel deviance (Kemper, 1966). The theory also postulates that an organisation's response to its employees' unethical behavior influences ethical behaviour (Brown, 2017; Kretchmar, 2021). In addition, Kretchmar (2021) mentions that employees are likely to emulate leaders' behaviours; hence they are encouraged to exhibit ethical behaviours in the organisation consistently (Kretchmar, 2021). Social learning theory is, therefore, used to teach ethical behaviours, encourage desired actions, and facilitate social change (Cherry, 2021).

## **2.2. Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX)**

The social exchange between leaders and followers is the foundation of the LMX theory (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman and Taylor, 2000). Because it emphasises the traits and behaviours of people as they interact with one another, LMX is recognised as an entity theory (Dachler & Hosking, 1995). Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) aver that the central concept of the LMX theory is that leadership occurs when leaders and followers are able to develop effective relationships that result in incremental influence. The quality of LMX relationships can range from low to high. Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) state that low-quality exchanges are characterised by formal role behaviors and low levels of trust, support, and rewards, whereas high-quality exchanges are characterized by high levels of trust, cooperation, and support.

## **2.3. LMX and Leadership Behaviour**

Rahmat (2022) argues that ethical leadership behaviours result in high-LMX with followers. Leaders who are fair-minded, trustworthy, and honest are regarded as being people-oriented (Jordans et al., 2020; Schulte and Imhof, 2022; Brown et al., 2015). As a result, employees support one another emotionally and reciprocally, whilst developing a devoted attitude towards their leaders (Schulte & Imhof, 2022). This beneficial social interaction results in high-LMX (Erdogan, Liden, and Kraimer, 2006; Wayne et al., 2002). There is no doubt that ethical leaders are more likely to build LMX-high bonds with their followers (Schulte and Imhof, 2022). By contrast, unethical leadership imperils LMX since it goes against the cornerstones of social exchange (Mitonga-Monga, 2020; Wang et al., 2019; Estel et al., 2019). It is well known that unethical leaders are dishonest, cunning, cruel, and narcissistic (Mitonga-Monga, 2020; Brown and Mitchell, 2010). Because of the afore-mentioned immoral actions, employees are forced to perceive their bosses as being unethical and self-centered (Schulte and Imhof, 2022; Ashforth and Anand, 2021). Low LMX is, therefore, caused by unethical behaviours that are at odds with moral principles and standards (Schulte and Imhof, 2022; Mitonga-Monga, 2020; Brown and Mitchell, 2018).

## **2.4. Ethical Leadership**

Brown et al. (2005) claim that ethical leadership involves modelling right behaviour through one's behaviors and interpersonal interactions, whilst encouraging followers to do the same through two-way communication, empowerment, and decision-making. Ethical leadership can be examined from the perspectives of a moral person and a moral manager (Den Hartog, 2015; Trevio et al., 2000). The moral person dimension considers an ethical leader's personal moral principles, conduct, and interpersonal traits (Brown et al., 2005). Moral people exhibit virtues like honesty, friendliness, and dependability (Den Hartog, 2015). According to Trevio et al. (2000), moral people are also known for being fair and principled, both in private and in the workplace. The moral manager dimension considers ways in which leaders exert influence and power to encourage moral behaviour. Moral managers are renowned for setting high standards for ethical behaviours at work and for serving as role models (Kaptein, 2019). Simply said, moral managers uphold moral principles, honour moral behaviour, and impose consequences on non-compliant employees. To accomplish the above, moral managers modify their behaviour to conform to moral norms (Trevio, Brown, and Hartman, 2003). Kalshoven et al. (2011) found seven elements of ethical leadership behaviours in their study, which include fairness, power-sharing, role clarity, people-orientation, concern for sustainability, ethical advice, and integrity. Fairness considers how managers handle their staff in an honest and impartial manner while making judgments (Wang et al., 2017). Role clarification is defined as the behaviour of an ethical leader to speak honestly and formally while outlining responsibilities, goals, and performance criteria (Kalshoven et al., 2011). People-oriented leaders show concern for subordinates primarily, including caring for and supporting them, and upholding moral standards through rewards and punishment (Kim and Nadeem, 2019). According to recent research, ethical leadership is linked favorably to job happiness, organisational commitment, and leader satisfaction (Brown et al., 2005).

## **2.5. Unethical Leadership**

Hassan et al., (2023) defines unethical behavior as acting in a way that is morally improper for the greater community. According to Brown and Mitchell (2010), unethical leadership consists of behaviours by leaders that are inconsistent with morality and decisions that impose rules and regulations that encourage

followers to act unethically. Researchers have identified unethical leadership traits as egotism, corruption, abuse, violence, purposeful disruption of an organisation’s operations, retaliation, and leaving others behind (Lašáková and Remišová, 2015; Ruiz-Palomino and Linuesa-Langreo, 2018). Tyranny, toxic leadership, and abusive supervision were all named by Liu, Liao, and Loi (2012) as being unethical leadership behaviours. It is important to note that unethical leadership behaviours can disrupt organisational and employee performance (Schilling, 2009; Tepper et al., 2006).

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Approach

This study used the qualitative research approach to explore the narratives of followers on the leadership behaviours of line managers at a South African public department. Creswell (2014) defines qualitative research as an inquiry used to understand social and human problems by using words and detailed accounts of informants in a natural setting. Saunders et al. (2019) argue that the qualitative research approach enables the researcher to consider those who partake in the research as participants and not merely as respondents. The study adopted the qualitative research approach because it helps researchers to explore the narratives of followers on leadership behaviours of line managers at a South African public department.

#### 3.2. Sampling and Profiles of Research Participants

Harland (2014) states that sample sizes for case studies are usually between 1 and 25. The researchers reached data saturation after conducting ten interviews. This, therefore, means that the researchers purposively selected a total of ten participants. An eligibility criterion was based on participants aged between 18 and 65, with at least one year of work at a South African public department.

The letter "F" was used to identify research participants who participated in the study. The research participants’ profiles and interview length are summarized in Table 1 below.

*Table 1. Participants’ profiles and interview length*

No.	Pseudonyms	Age	Sex	Experience	Highest Qualification	Interview time
1	F1	23	M	2years	Diploma	10mins
2	F2	33	M	5years	Bachelor’s	11 mins
3	F3	29	F	1year	Bachelor’s degree	12mins
4	F4	24	F	4year	Diploma	10mins
5	F5	33	F	5 years	Bachelor’s degree	9mins
6	F6	34	M	4years	Bachelor’s degree	13mins
7	F7	30	F	2years	Bachelor’s degree	12mins
8	F8	31	M	3years	Bachelor’s degree	10mins
9	F9	25	F	1year	Diploma	12mins
10	F10	26	F	3years	Diploma	114mins

Source: Author’s fieldwork

Research participants’ highest qualifications, as stated in Table 1 above, include diplomas and bachelor’s degrees. Only four research participants had Diploma certificates and six had bachelor’s degrees. The participants had been employed by the case organisation for at least one year.

#### 3.3. Data Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) define data analysis as the process of identifying, interpreting, and reporting data patterns. The researchers were guided by Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six stages of thematic analysis, namely to become acquainted with the data, initial code generation, theme search, theme review, defining and labelling themes, and producing a report. The researchers used NVivo 12 data analysis software to enhance thematic data analysis.

### 3.4. Ensuring Research Quality and Rigor and Ethical Consideration

According to Allen (2017), research rigor is the degree to which research methods are rigorously and precisely followed during the study process. The researchers’ ensured quality and study rigour by applying four aspects of research rigor, namely dependability, credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Credibility was ensured through prolonged engagement with the participants, while transferability was maintained by providing thick descriptions of the interviews. To ensure confirmability, the findings were interpreted objectively, without the influence of researchers’ personal opinions.

Arifin (2018) states that researchers must apply appropriate ethical norms with the aim of protecting human subjects. Researchers considered the following ethical considerations: participant anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent.

## 4. Findings and Discussion

The theme analysis resulted in two underlying themes and four sub-themes. The themes and sub-themes are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Themes and sub-themes

Theme	Sub-themes
Ethical leadership behaviours	-Fairness and honesty -People-oriented -Role clarity -Moral advice
Unethical leadership behaviours	-Nepotism -Dishonesty -Corruption -Lack of concern for workers

Source: Author’s fieldwork

Table 2 above shows ethical and unethical leadership behaviours as the main themes of the study. Subthemes that emerged under ethical leadership behaviours theme include fairness, people oriented, role clarity and morale advice. Nepotism, dishonesty, corruption emerged under unethical leadership behaviours.

### 4.1. Fairness and Honesty

Most of the research participants admitted that line managers at the case South African public department are not honest and do not uphold the principle of fairness. Below are responses from F3 and F4 in this regard. *“Line managers are not fair and honest; nepotism is the order of the day here”* (F3).

*“Unfortunately, there is no such thing like fairness and honest(y) here. The reality is favouritism, although the ideal work culture would be that the manager should apply fairness”* (F4).

The above quotes contradict Mitonga-Monga (2020), who argues that ethical leaders must display honesty, fairness, respect and transparency. In addition, the above quotes oppose the sentiments of Wang et al. (2017), who posit that fairness exemplifies how leaders employ honesty when engaging with their co-workers and make decisions without bias. Contrarily, one participant indicated that line managers at the case South African public department are honest and respect fair work practices. In this regard, F7, said: *“Yes, they are fair, honest and consistent”* (F7). The above viewpoints are supported by Engelbrecht et al. (2017), who state that ethical leaders are honest, reliable, truthful, and reasonably moral people. Trevio et al. (2000) concur, saying that ethical leaders are also known for being fair and principled both in private and in the workplace.

### 4.2. Role Clarity

Kalshoven et al. (2011) postulate that role clarification requires that an ethical leader should communicate effectively to clarify duties, objectives, and performance standards. Jena (2020) also argues that job clarity allows workers to understand exactly what the organisation expects them to deliver. Wijnands (2022) concurs, positing that leaders must clarify workers’ duties and roles to reduce role conflicts. He further states that role clarity enables workers tounderstand their responsibilities, details of their jobs, work processes,

and priorities. The above extant literature supports the sentiments of the overwhelming majority of the participants. In this regard, F6 stated: *“Yes, managers do explain to subordinates what is expected of them in their roles. There are systems here that ensure that everyone understands what is expected of him or her”* (F6).

It is evident that line managers at the case organisation should clarify workers’ roles and establish systems to ensure that employees are aware of what is expected of them and the outcomes that they are expected to deliver. Regardless of the positive remarks shown above, a few participants indicated that line managers do not have time to clarify workers’ roles. F1 has this to say: *“When employees join this company, they are expected to hit the ground running, workers end up being confused on what is expected of them. Managers do not have time to explain and clarify workers’ roles and duties”* (F1).

### **4.3. People-Orientated**

The term ‘people-oriented’ denotes concern for subordinates (Kim and Nadeem, 2019). Scholars argue that person-oriented leaders maintain good relations with their employees. To be people-oriented, leaders need to understand the importance of establishing a strong bond with the employee (Amabile et al., 2004). A study by Robbins and Judge (2013) suggests that a person-oriented leadership style encourages leaders to form mutual respect, trust, and confidence amongst their followers, whilst motivating and inspiring them to accomplish the organisation’s strategic vision and mission. The above literature supports the following responses from a majority of the participants. *“Line managers have empathy and are concerned about employee wellbeing”* (F2).

*“Line managers are people oriented and they are concerned about employee welfare. We have an Employee Wellness Program Unit that addresses the well-being of employees here”* (F8).

However, there were a few participants who indicated that line managers are not people-oriented. F9 has this to say: *“They just expect you to work, and they are not bothered by your personal issues”* (F9).

Similarly, F10 argued that: *“What is only important for them is to make sure that we do the work”* (F10).

### **4.4. Moral Advice**

Most of the research participants admitted that line managers at the case South African public department does not provide moral advice. Some of their responses are shown below.

*“They do not provide moral advice because most of them are corrupt and they abuse public funds”* (F6)

*“Line managers do not give ethical guidance at all; they just talk about moral guidance”* (F1).

The above participants’ responses oppose extant literature on moral advice. Engelbrecht et al. (2017) argue that ethical leaders must provide moral advice and assist subordinates’ moral conduct by conveying moral norms and training workers who show unpredictable ways of behaving. Similarly, Ahmad et al. (2021) mention that ethical leaders should possess some sense of social responsibility and be concerned with their subordinates’ behaviour and ethical conduct. Supporting the above literature, Naidoo’s (2012) study shows that leaders are perceived as role models by followers; thus, giving employees moral advice and exhibiting ethical behaviours help them to learn what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is.

Conversely, a few research participants indicated that line managers at the case South African public department provide moral advice to their followers. In this regard, F5 remarked: *“Yes, they provide moral advice”* (F5).

The above quote is supported by Mayende and Musenze (2018), who posit that ethical leaders must provide morale advice which inspires them and build a culture of trust and respect. Sharing the same sentiments is Kaptein (2019), who posits that ethical leaders are renowned for giving morale advice, setting high standards for ethical behaviours at work and serving as role models.

## 5. Conclusions

### 5.1. Contribution of the Study

This study is essential, considering the increase in unethical behaviours and scandals in South African organizations. This study provided a significant theoretical contribution by filling the research gap on leadership behaviours of managers at South African Public department. The study will benefit employers and the government, as it will make them aware of common unethical behaviours and assist them to implement specific mechanisms to eradicate unethical leadership practices. For academics, the study serves as a cornerstone for comparable studies.

### 5.2. Limitations and Direction for Future Studies

The leader-member exchange theory and social learning theory served as the only theoretical foundations for this investigation. Due to methodological restrictions, several employee leadership behaviour theories and models were mentioned but not considered for this study. The findings of the study cannot be generalised to all South African public departments since it only considered the views of followers at a single South African public department.

### 5.3. Final Conclusion

The study's findings revealed that managers at the case South African public department exhibit both ethical and unethical behaviours. It emerged from the study that some managers at the case South African public department exhibit dishonesty, are not guided by the principle of fairness and do not provide moral advice to their followers. Managers at the case South African public department are generally encouraged to provide moral advice to their workers, whilst being guided by moral principles of fairness and honesty. Conversely, the study also found that some other managers exhibit ethical leadership behaviours through role clarification and by being people-oriented. This study suggests that the South African public department should implement necessary mechanisms to eradicate identified unethical behaviours exhibited by some line managers.

**Author Contributions:** Lekwalo R; Baloyi MT; Mashabela PS; Mothibi NN and Ndzukuma S: Writing - original draft, review and editing. Mitonga-Monga Jeremy: Writing, supervision, review and editing. Mapira Nyasha: Writing, review and editing.

**Acknowledgements:** The Authors acknowledge the study's participants.

**Funding:** This research was funded by the Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management, College of Business and Economics, University of Johannesburg.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors state that they have no conflicts of interest.

## References

- Ahmad, I., Donia, M. B., Khan, A., and Waris, M., 2019. Do as I say and do as I do? The mediating role of psychological contract fulfilment in the relationship between ethical leadership and employee extra-role performance. *Personnel Review*, 48(1), pp.98-117.
- Ahmad, M.G., Klotz, A.C. and Bolino, M.C., 2021. Can good followers create unethical leaders? How follower citizenship leads to leader moral licensing and unethical behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 106(9), p.1374.
- Allen, M. (Ed.), 2017. *The SAGE encyclopaedia of communication research methods*. SAGE Publications.
- Almeida, J.G., Hartog, D.N.D., De Hoogh, A.H., Franco, V.R. and Porto, J.B., 2022. Harmful leader behaviors: Toward an increased understanding of how different forms of unethical leader behavior can harm subordinates. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 180(1), pp.215-244.

- Alshammari, A., Almutairi, N. N., and Thuwaini, S. F., 2015. Ethical leadership: The effect on employees. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 10(3), pp.108.
- Amabile, T. M., Schatzel, E. A., Moneta, G. B., and Kramer, S. J., 2004. Leader behaviors and the work environment for creativity: Perceived leader support. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15(1), pp.5-32.
- Arifin, M. B. U. B., Rais, P., and Nurdyansyah, N., 2018. An Evaluation of Graduate Competency in Elementary School. *Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo*, 125, pp.95-97.
- Bandura, A., and Walters, R. H., 1977. *Social learning theory* (Vol. 1). Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs.
- Bashir, M., and Hassan, S., 2020. The need for ethical leadership in combating corruption. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 86(4), 673–690. Behaviours. And the work environment for creativity: Perceived leader support.
- Benlahcene, A., Saoula, O. and Ramdani, A., 2022. Unethical leadership behaviour in Algerian public organizations: unravelling social and organizational factors. *International Journal of Ethics and Systems*.
- Bowen, P., Akintoye, A., Pearl, R., and Edwards, P. J., 2007. Ethical behaviour in the South African construction industry. *Construction Management and Economy*, 25(6), pp.631–648.
- Braun, V., and Clarke, V., 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), pp.77-101.
- Brown, M. E., and Mitchell, M. S., 2010. Ethical and unethical leadership: Exploring new avenues for future research. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 20(4), pp.583-616.
- Cherry, C., 2021. How Does Observational Learning Actually Work? Very well Mind. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 10(3), p.108.
- Creswell, J. W., 2014. *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. SAGE Publications.
- Deliversky, J., 2016. Preventing corruption in the education system. *Journal of Educational and Instructional Studies in the World*, 6(1), pp.141-146.
- Den Hartog, D.N., 2015. Ethical leadership. *Annu. Rev. Organ. Psychol. Organ. Behav.*, 2(1), pp.409-434.
- Dorasamy, N., 2010. Enhancing an ethical culture through purpose-directed leadership for improved public service delivery: A case for South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management*.
- Engelbrecht, A. S., Heine, G., and Mahembe, B., 2017. Integrity, ethical leadership, trust and work engagement. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 38(3), pp.368-379.
- Erdogan, B., and Liden, R. C., 2006. Collectivism as a moderator of responses to organizational justice: Implications for leader-member exchange and ingratiation. *Journal of Organizational Behavior: The International Journal of Industrial, Occupational and Organizational Psychology and Behavior*, 27(1), 1-17.
- Estel, V., Schulte, E.M., Spurk, D. and Kauffeld, S., 2019. LMX differentiation is good for some and bad for others: A multilevel analysis of effects of LMX differentiation in innovation teams. *Cogent Psychology*, 6(1), p.1614306.
- Fehr, R., Fulmer, A. and Keng-Highberger, F.T., 2020. How do employees react to leaders' unethical behavior? The role of moral disengagement. *Personnel Psychology*, 73(1), pp.73-93.
- Fourie, D. and Malan, C., 2020. Public procurement in the South African economy: Addressing the systemic issues. *Sustainability*, 12(20), p.8692.
- Gan, C., Guo, W., Chai, Y. and Wang, D., 2020. Unethical leader behavior and employee performance: a deontic justice perspective. *Personnel Review*, 49(1), pp.188-201.
- Georgieva, I., 2017. *Using Transparency Against Corruption in Public Procurement* (Vol. 167). Springer International Publishing AG.
- Graen, G. B., and Uhl-Bien, M. 1995. Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 6(2), pp.219-247.
- Harland, T., 2014. Learning about case study methodology to research higher education. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 33(6), pp.1113-1122.
- Hassan, S., Kaur, P., Muchiri, M., Ogbonnaya, C. and Dhir, A., 2023. Unethical leadership: Review, synthesis and directions for future research. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 183(2), pp.511-550.
- Hosain, M.S., 2019. Unethical pro-organisational behaviour: Concepts, motives and unintended consequences. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Management Research and Innovation*, 15(4), pp.133-137.
- Jabeen, Q., Nadeem, M. S., Raziq, M. M., and Sajjad, A., 2022. Linking individuals' resources with (perceived) sustainable employability: Perspectives from conservation of resources and social information processing theory. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 24(2), pp.233-254.



- Jones, P. R. (2018). Critical analysis of Robert K. Greenleaf's servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness. *International Journal of Language and Literature*, 6(1), pp.10-15.
- Jordans, E., Ng'weno, B., Spencer-Oatey, H., Mutooni, K., Ng'weno, B. and Jordans, E., 2020. Changing Leadership Perceptions: Leaders in the Private Sector in Kenya. *Developing Global Leaders: Insights from African Case Studies*, pp.211-257.
- Kalshoven, K., Den Hartog, D. N., and De Hoogh, A. H., 2011. Ethical leader behavior and big five factors of personality. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 100(2), pp.349-366.
- Kaptein, M., 2019. The moral entrepreneur: A new component of ethical leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 156, pp.1135-1150.
- Karim, S., and Nadeem, S., 2019. Understanding the unique impact of dimensions of ethical leadership on employee attitudes. *Ethics & Behavior*, 29(7), pp.572-594.
- Kemper, T. D., 1978. Toward a sociology of emotions: Some problems and some solutions. *The American Sociologist*, pp.30-41.
- Kim, Y. J., Fu Lam, C., Oh, J., and Sohn, W., 2019. Employee Constructive Voice: An Integrative Review and a Dyadic Approach. *Journal of Management*, 49(1), pp.430-473.
- Lašáková, A. and Remišová, A., 2015. Unethical leadership: Current theoretical trends and conceptualization. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 34, pp.319-328.
- Lean Keng, S., and AlQudah, H. N. I., 2017. Assessment of cognitive bias in decision-making and leadership styles among critical care nurses: a mixed methods study. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 73(2), pp.465-481.
- Lekubu, B.K. and Sibanda, O.S., 2021. Moral values and ethics as antidotes for corruption in the South African public service and administration. *Koers: Bulletin for Christian Scholarship= Koers: Bulletin vir Christelike Wetenskap*, 86(1), pp.1-12.
- Liu, Y., and Loi, R., 2012. Ethical leadership and workplace deviance: The role of moral disengagement. In *Advances in global leadership*. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Maile, K.V. and Vyas-Doorgapersad, S., 2022. Organisational Ethics Management to Promote Good Governance in the South African Public Service.
- Masterson, S. S., Lewis, K., Goldman, B. M., and Taylor, M. S., 2000. Integrating justice and social exchange: The differing effects of fair procedures and treatment on work relationships. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43(4), pp.738-748.
- Mathiba, G., 2020. Corruption, public sector procurement and COVID-19 in South Africa: negotiating the new normal. *Journal of Public Administration*, 55(4), pp.642-661.
- Mayer, D. M., Wang, P., Wang, H., Workman, K., and Christensen, A. L., 2009. Linking ethical leadership to employee performance: The roles of leader-member exchange, self-efficacy, and organizational identification. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 115(2), pp.204-213.
- Mbandlwa, Z., Dorasamy, N., and Fagbadebo, O., 2020. Ethical leadership and the challenge of service delivery in South Africa: A discourse. *TEST Engineering & Management Magazine*.
- Mishra, T., and Jena, L. K., 2020. Virtual workplaces and lean leadership: integrative conceptualization and organizational implications. *Strategic HR Review*, 19(4), pp.177-181.
- Mitonga-Monga, J., and Flotman, A. P., 2017. Gender and work ethics culture as predictors of employees' organisational commitment. *Journal of Contemporary Management*, 14(1), pp.270-290.
- Mitonga-Monga, J., 2020. Social exchange influences on ethical leadership and employee commitment in a developing country setting. *Journal of Psychology in Africa*, 30(6), pp.485-491.
- Mitonga-Monga, J., Flotman, A. P., and Moerane, E. M., 2019. Influencing ethical leadership and job satisfaction through work ethics culture. *Journal of Contemporary Management*, 16(2), pp.673-694.
- Mlambo, V. H., and Masuku, M. M., 2020. Governance, corruption and COVID-19: the final nail in the coffin for South Africa's dwindling public finances. *Journal of Public Administration*, 55(3-1), pp.549-565.
- Naidoo, G., 2012. The critical need for ethical leadership to curb corruption and promote good governance in the South African public sector. *Journal of Public Administration*, 47(3), pp.656-683.
- Ndlovu, S.L., 2021. *An ethical leadership framework to curb corruption and promote good governance in South Africa: a case of selected KwaZulu-Natal municipalities* (Doctoral dissertation).
- Ngcamu, B.S. and Mantzaris, E., 2023. Corruption detection systems and skills, and employee retention in South African universities. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 21(3), pp.519-539.
- Ogunyemi, K., Adisa, I. and Hinson, R.E., 2022. Ethics and Accountable Governance in Africa: An Introduction. In *Ethics and Accountable Governance in Africa's Public Sector, Volume I: Ethical Compliance and Institutional Performance* (pp. 3-17). Cham: Springer International Publishing.

- Pandey, S., DeHart-Davis, L., Pandey, S. and Ahlawat, S., 2022. Fight or flight: How gender influences follower responses to unethical leader behaviour. *Public Management Review*, pp.1-21.
- Rahmat, A., 2022. Ethical Leadership and Innovative Behaviour: Mediation Role of Leader Member Exchange and Perceived Organizational Support. *Jurnal Manajemen dan Bisnis*, 11(1), pp.169-179.
- Robbins, S. P., Judge, T. A., and Vohra, N., 2013. *Organizational behavior*. Pearson Education.
- Ruiz-Palomino, P. and Linuesa-Langreo, J., 2018. Implications of person–situation interactions for Machiavellians’ unethical tendencies: The buffering role of managerial ethical leadership. *European Management Journal*, 36(2), pp.243-253.
- Sam, C.H., 2021. What are the practices of unethical leaders? Exploring how teachers experience the “dark side” of administrative leadership. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 49(2), pp.303-320.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A., 2019. *Research methods. Business Students*. 4th edition. London: Pearson Education.
- Schilling, J., 2009. From ineffectiveness to destruction: A qualitative study on the meaning of negative leadership. *Leadership*, 5(1), pp.102-128.
- Schulte, V. and Imhof, P., 2022. Ethical Cornerstones of People-Oriented Leadership. In *Mindful Leadership in Practice: Tradition Leads to the Future* (pp. 43-55). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Stanley, M. J., Banks, S., Matthew, W., and Brown, S., 2020. Operationalization of bandura’s social learning theory to guide interprofessional simulation. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*, 10, 10-61.
- Susser, I., 2020. “They are stealing the state”: Commoning and the Gilets Jaunes in France. In *Urban Ethics* (pp. 277-293). Routledge.
- Treviño, L. K., and Brown, M. E., 2005. The role of leaders in influencing unethical behavior in the workplace. *Managing Organizational Deviance*, 69, p.87.
- Uhl-Bien, M., 2006. Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6), pp.654-676.
- Veetikazhi, R., Kamalanabhan, T.J., Malhotra, P., Arora, R. and Mueller, A., 2022. Unethical employee behaviour: a review and typology. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 33(10), pp.1976-2018.
- Walumbwa, F. O., Cropanzano, R., and Goldman, B. M., 2011. How leader–member exchange influences effective work behaviors: Social exchange and internal–external efficacy perspectives. *Personnel Psychology*, 64(3), pp.739-770.
- Wang, P. Q., Kim, P. B., and Milne, S., 2017. Leader–member exchange (LMX) and its work outcomes: The moderating role of gender. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 26(2), pp.125-143.
- Wang, T., Long, L., Zhang, Y. and He, W., 2019. A social exchange perspective of employee–organization relationships and employee unethical pro-organizational behavior: The moderating role of individual moral identity. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 159, pp.473-489.
- Wayne, S. J., Shore, L. M., Bommer, W. H., and Tetrick, L. E., 2002. The role of fair treatment and rewards in perceptions of organizational support and leader-member exchange. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(3), p.590.



**Disclaimer/Publisher’s Note:** The views, statements, opinions, data and information presented in all publications belong exclusively to the respective Author/s and Contributor/s, and not to Sprint Investify, the journal, and/or the editorial team. Hence, the publisher and editors disclaim responsibility for any harm and/or injury to individuals or property arising from the ideas, methodologies, propositions, instructions, or products mentioned in this content.