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Impact of College Teachers' Ethical Leadership on Students' Ethical Development

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Abstract: The evolution of teacher leadership stands as a pivotal aspect of educational development in China, particularly in light of widespread reforms. This study focuses on the pivotal role of college teachers' ethical leadership and its consequential impact on the development of their students. Adopting a quantitative descriptive-comparative research design, this investigation involved the survey of 388 participants to gather and analyze data on various dimensions of ethical leadership and student development. Results indicate substantial agreement among participants on key indicators of ethical leadership, including Ethical Awareness, Ethical-Emotional, Ethical Thinking, Ethical Will, and Ethical Behavior, with Ethical Behavior ranking highest in terms of manifestation. Parallel to this, positive developments were noted in student competencies in Language and Communication Skills, Mental-Emotional Skills, Cognitive Skills, and Moral Aptitude, with Cognitive Skills being the most developed attribute according to the study's participants. The analysis revealed a strong, positive Pearson coefficient ($r = 0.91$) with a p-value of 0.00, signifying a significant relationship between teachers' ethical leadership and the ethical development of students, thereby necessitating the rejection of the null hypothesis. In response to these findings, the "Ethical Leadership in Education Development Program" (ELEDP) has been proposed. The ELEDP is designed to bolster the observed benefits of ethical leadership and broaden its positive influence within the educational landscape. The program aims to solidify and extend the reach of ethical leadership, ensuring that its impact resonates throughout educational practices and student development strategies in Chinese higher education institutions.

Keywords: College Teachers; Ethical Leadership; Ethical Development; Students.

1. Introduction

College education plays a vital role in shaping future leaders and citizens of society. In addition to imparting subject knowledge, college education also assumes the task of transmitting ethical values, ethical standards and social responsibility. The fundamental purpose of higher education is to educate people, and the ethical prerequisite of human beings determines the primary premise and irreplaceability of ethical literacy in the process of young college students moving towards "adults", and also determines the importance of cultivating people with ethicality. It is the leading and controlling nature of higher education goal setting and practical activities. Different types of higher education and different stages of higher education have different paths to cultivate ethical character, but they still have lively ethical education courses and activities. Movement is undoubtedly the main field and main channel to promote the ethical growth and development of young students.

Teachers are engineers of the human soul. They shoulder the heavy responsibilities assigned by society and are the pillars of the motherland. Teachers' ethical education is a social practice activity that transforms a certain society's ideological viewpoints, political norms and ethical norms, and the ethical requirements of the teaching profession into the ethical character of individual teachers. It is also a dialogue process between teachers' inner needs and social ethical principles. It is the basic content of teacher growth and development. In the context of economic globalization, information diversification, and the integration and collision of various social trends of thought, the ethical values of contemporary college students are facing complex situations and various risks and challenges. At this time, it is even more important to pay more attention to the ethical education of college students. and degree of attention. The practical activities of ethical education for college students are the process of allowing college students to correctly treat their own social status and value, face up to their own ethical values, and cultivate college students into young people with ambition, backbone, and confidence.

In the historical context of Chinese culture, teachers have traditionally held a position of high esteem, influenced by Confucianism, where they are perceived as ethical and knowledgeable authorities [1]. The significance of teachers in shaping the future of children is acknowledged by many families, attributing their children's education to the qualities and abilities of teachers. However, the evolving social landscape in China has rendered traditional educational patterns inadequate for the demands of contemporary parents and society [2]. Responding to this transformation, there is a growing call for teachers to take on new leadership roles in educational activities for meaningful reform to occur [3]. This entails active participation in school development, fostering positive relationships with colleagues, and taking responsibility for student development [4].

The study of teacher leadership is deemed crucial for the development of Chinese education. In 2011, the Chinese Ministry of Education initiated educational reforms to meet the demands of the 21st-century global economy, emphasizing the cultivation of lifelong learners with critical thinking and creativity. Similarly, the United States Department of Education advocated for global education to equip students with global competence [5]. Recognizing the importance of teachers in achieving these goals, the Chinese Ministry of Education, in 2018, issued a directive to train high-quality, professional, and innovative teachers capable of

instilling deep educational feelings, possessing a solid professional foundation, and demonstrating the courage to innovate in teaching.

As China underwent comprehensive educational reforms post-2011, decentralization became widespread. Acknowledging teachers as implementers of teaching, there is a push for them to have more power in planning and decision-making to influence better teaching practices. While teacher leadership is widely practiced in Chinese schools, there is a dearth of knowledge on the subject in local and international literature, despite China having the world's most extensive education system [6, 7].

This situation highlights the need for further studies to explore the characteristics of teacher leadership and its influencers in China. Teacher leadership, both formal and informal, exists in various capacities within schools. This study specifically focuses on teachers with formal leadership positions, those in informal leadership roles, and those without any leadership positions, exploring the diverse ways in which they exhibit leadership. Additionally, the study aims to investigate the current status of teacher leadership in Chinese junior-senior high schools, the significant attributes of teacher leadership, and how school context influences its development [7, 8, 9].

International researchers have delved into the transformation of teachers into leaders for school improvement since the 1980s[10, 11]. Ovando emphasizes that teachers' involvement in leadership contributes to effective school operations and advancements [12]. This transformation not only makes the school environment more collaborative and fosters collegial interaction but also actively enhances teachers' self-efficacy and morale, leading to improved student learning and the realization of the school's vision. Notably, the development of teacher leadership requires addressing organizational and professional barriers. Functioning teacher leadership within organizations requires granting teachers a proper status and formal authority within the organizational structure [13]. Schools need to transition from a hierarchical, top-down structure to a form of democratic governance. Addressing the professional barrier involves overcoming the isolation between teachers and facilitating their engagement in leadership activities [14] can help mitigate the professional barrier.

The impact of international studies on teacher leadership has been profound for Chinese researchers. Researcher highlighted how teacher leadership development empowers teachers by constructing collaborative communities and fostering professional development. Since then, Chinese researchers have dedicated efforts to the study of teacher leadership. They argue that teacher leadership development should focus on creating collaborative and participatory environments, providing development opportunities, sharing professional expertise, and dismantling hierarchical structure barriers[15, 16, 17]. These arguments align with and inherit a series of educational reforms in China aimed at transforming teachers' authority and obligations to enhance student learning and school improvement.

The existing literature generally portrays the implementation of teacher leadership in a positive light, highlighting its perceived success in contributing to school improvement, fostering collegial collaboration, promoting teacher development, and enhancing student achievement [18]. However, despite these optimistic views, many studies in this area remain primarily theoretical. Consequently, there is a pressing need for empirical research not only focused on teacher leadership itself[18,19,20] but also on how opportunities for promoting and developing teacher leadership can be provided within schools[21].

Moreover, the majority of studies on teacher leadership have predominantly centered around Western countries, raising concerns about the generalizability of their findings to other educational systems and contexts[22]. In the context of China, research on teacher leadership started later than in Western countries and faced challenges due to a lack of background knowledge. Existing research has primarily concentrated on principals and formally designated teacher leaders, neglecting the roles of informal teacher leaders and non-positioned teachers. Harris[23] argued that teacher leaders encompass not only formal positions but also informal roles within the school. Lambert[24] advocated for an inclusive perspective, stating that "all teachers have the right, capability, and responsibility to be leaders," emphasizing an environment that encourages teacher leadership across all school contexts.

In today's changing and complex world, important expectations are placed on higher education. University is not only a place where knowledge is imparted, but also a place where ethical character and ethical values are cultivated. The mission of college education is not only to equip students with professional knowledge and skills, but also to cultivate individuals with ethical integrity, social responsibility and citizenship. Therefore, college teachers have a huge influence on students' development. They are not only imparters of knowledge, but also ethical role models and mentors. The ethical leadership of college teachers has become one of the crucial factors in shaping the comprehensive development of students.

However, despite the widely recognized importance of college teachers' ethical leadership in student development, in-depth research on this topic has been relatively limited to date. Existing research mainly focuses on teaching methods, academic achievements and course design, but pays less attention to the role of university teachers in ethics and ethicality. Given the current ethical challenges facing society, including academic dishonesty, multicultural understanding, and social responsibility, there is an urgent need for in-depth research on the ethical leadership of college teachers to better understand how they influence students' ethical development.

In addition, the modern university education environment is becoming increasingly diverse, with students coming from different cultures, backgrounds and values. This diversity requires college teachers not only to impart knowledge, but also to have the ability of multicultural education and ethical education. Therefore, it is also of great significance to conduct in-depth research on the impact of college teachers' ethical leadership on students' multicultural understanding and respect. In the process of researching the leadership of college teachers, we found that there are relatively many research results on curriculum leadership and teaching leadership, but there are relatively few studies on the ethical leadership of college teachers. In this context, this article aims to fill the research gap in the existing literature, explore the ethical leadership of college teachers and its impact on student development, and provide college education with practical and practical guidance on how to better cultivate ethical and ethical literacy. policy suggestion. By delving deeper into this critical topic, we can hopefully better understand the nature of higher education and provide a more effective education

for developing ethically aware future leaders and citizens.

2. Hypotheses

Following the aforementioned questions, this study tested the following hypotheses at the 0.05 level: H1: There is no significant difference in student-respondents' evaluation of teachers' ethical leadership when they are grouped according to their profile; H2: There is no significant difference in the evaluation of student-respondents' ethical leadership development when they are grouped according to their profile; H3: There is no significant relationship between the level of teacher respondents assessing the impact of teacher ethical leadership on student development.

3. Methodology

The research design encompassed the methods and plans utilized when undertaking scientific inquiries, focusing on the study's aims, data gathering, and analysis methodologies, sample selection, timing, and the study's overarching structure. A well-structured research design ensures the scientific integrity, reliability, and validity of the investigation. The study employed a descriptive comparative research strategy that integrated focus group discussions with quantitative methodologies.

3.1. Sample and Sampling Technique

For this study, the researcher employed purposive sampling to select 388 students from a total population of 20,000, utilizing the Qualtrix calculator with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. This method, considered crucial for selecting key participants, allowed for judgmental sampling based on specific characteristics[25], ensuring the recruitment of individuals able and willing to provide valuable information due to their expertise or experience[26]. Eligibility criteria for respondents required current enrollment in the university at the college level. The inclusion criteria are enrolled in the university on the time of data gathering, and has no cognitive or language impairment.

3.2. Research Instrument

In the research conducted, data collection was a critical process that enabled researchers to deepen their understanding of the theoretical foundations of the study. The questionnaire served as the primary instrument in the investigation.

The questionnaire was structured into three segments. The initial section collected basic demographic information and details pertaining to the educational institution being surveyed. The subsequent portion encompassed queries aimed at eliciting student respondents' assessments of their teachers' ethical leadership. The final section sought to gauge the degree to which teachers' ethical leadership was developed. The preliminary design of the questionnaire utilized a 4-point Likert Scale for response ratings. Each item on the questionnaire was a positively stated multiple-choice statement, reflecting varying levels of agreement: 1 denoted "did not perform," 2 indicated "not consistent," 3 signified "consistent," and 4 corresponded to "completely consistent." Items scored higher were indicative of a more pronounced presence of the ethical leadership trait in question.

The research categorized the ethical leadership of college teachers into five dimensions: moral perception leadership, moral emotional leadership, moral thinking leadership, moral will leadership, and moral behavior leadership. The survey items within each dimension were crafted based on potential moral interaction scenarios that could occur between teachers and students in a collegiate environment. This researcher-made questionnaires exhibited good psychometric properties in terms of content validity (0.88 for ethical leadership; 0.79 for development) and reliability (0.77 for ethical leadership; 0.86 for development).

Table 1. To facilitate interpretation of the scores, the following scale was used:

1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not Manifested
1.51-2.50	Disagree	Slightly Manifested
2.51-3.50	Agree	Manifested
3.51-4.00	Strongly Agree	Very Manifested

3.3. Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to initiating the data collection, the researcher obtained the requisite approval from the research ethics review board and secured permission from the educational institution involved. Participants were required to provide informed consent, affirming their voluntary participation in the survey.

Throughout the entire research process, data were systematically recorded and securely stored to uphold confidentiality and maintain data integrity. The researcher engaged in thorough data cleaning practices to verify data accuracy and consistency.

In addition, all research materials, encompassing data and documents, were meticulously archived for potential future reference or verification purposes. The importance of maintaining a high degree of organization, transparency, and accuracy throughout the data collection phase was paramount to ensure the credibility of the research outcomes. Concurrently, adherence to ethical standards and the safeguarding of participant privacy were regarded as indispensable components of the research methodology.

3.4. Data Analysis

The researcher engaged in the use of descriptive statistics to comprehend the fundamental characteristics of the data, encompassing calculations of means, medians, standard deviations, and range. Such descriptive measures provided an initial overview of the data's distribution and its inherent trends.

Utilization of statistical software, like SPSS, facilitated the performance of the selected statistical analyses, enabling the interpretation of results in the context of the study's overarching questions and hypotheses. Findings from the study were elucidated through a combination of charts, tables, and narrative descriptions to ensure clarity.

The statistical tools applied in the analysis included frequencies and percentages, weighted mean, standard deviation, t-test, and the Pearson correlation coefficient. Frequencies and percentages were used to depict the occurrence and proportional representation of categorical data. Weighted means, assigning different levels of significance to each data point, were particularly relevant for items on a Likert scale with varying importance. The standard deviation quantified the dispersion of data points from the mean, providing a measure of variability within the dataset. T-tests compared the means of different groups, determining if differences were statistically significant or could be attributed to random chance. The Pearson correlation coefficient assessed the strength and direction of a linear

relationship between continuous variables.

The significance level was established at 0.05 for the study. In instances where the calculated value surpassed the critical value at the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was upheld; otherwise, it was rejected. Through these meticulous statistical processes, the research adhered to a rigorous methodology to arrive at conclusive and trustworthy results.

4. Results And Discussion

This section provides a detailed examination of the data collected from the participants in the study. It highlights the significant findings and their importance in addressing the research questions formulated.

4.1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Profile	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	187	48.20
	Female	201	51.80
	Total	388	100.00
Age	Below 18 years old	4	1.03
	18 to 21 years old	295	76.03
	22 to 24 years old	69	17.78
	Above 25 years old	20	5.15
	Total	388	100.00
Year Level	1st year	123	31.70
	2nd year	131	33.76
	3rd year	90	23.20
	4th year	44	11.34
	Total	388	100.00

Table 2 provides a breakdown of the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents. The table is divided into three main demographic categories: Sex, Age, and Year Level, each detailed with categories, frequencies, and percentages to present a clear picture of the participants' profiles.

The first category, Sex, shows a near even split with 187 males (48.20%) and 201 females (51.80%), totaling 388 respondents. This balance suggests that the survey sampled a gender-representative group, which might help in minimizing gender bias in the analysis of the survey results regarding ethical leadership.

Under the Age category, the respondents are primarily between 18 to 21 years old, making up 76.03% of the total with 295 individuals. Those aged 22 to 24 years follow with 69 respondents (17.78%), and those above 25 years old are the least represented at 5.15% with 20 individuals. The minor category is those below 18, consisting of only 4 respondents (1.03%). The concentration of respondents in the 18 to 21 age bracket indicates that the majority are traditional college-aged students, which aligns with the typical undergraduate age distribution and may influence the perceptions and impacts of teacher ethical leadership discussed.

The Year Level category details the academic standing of the respondents: 123 are 1st year students (31.70%), 131 are 2nd year students (33.76%), 90 are 3rd year students (23.20%), and 44 are in their 4th year (11.34%). The total again sums to 388 respondents. The higher representation of 1st and 2nd year students could reflect a greater impressionability to ethical leadership styles at the onset of their academic careers, potentially skewing results towards the experiences of younger, less academically experienced students.

Overall, the demographic profile outlined in the table provides foundational insights into the survey population, critical for contextualizing subsequent findings on the influence of teachers' ethical leadership on students' ethical development. The diverse yet skewed age and year level distribution offer an important lens through which the survey results must be interpreted, considering how different stages of student life might perceive leadership ethics variably.

4.2. Ethical Leadership of Teachers

Table 3. Assessment of Ethical Leadership of Teachers – Ethical Awareness

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers integrate ethical values in their lessons.	3.20	0.70	3	Agree/Manifested
Teachers utilize ethical-professional values in establishing rapport with their students.	3.27	0.67	2	Agree/Manifested
Teachers understand their role in the classroom setup and responsibly assumes it every time possible.	3.35	0.65	1	Agree/Manifested
Teachers acknowledge that they do not always have ethical high ground in situations.	3.05	0.81	7	Agree/Manifested
Teachers are responsible and sensitive on how they deliver their lessons and discussions.	3.20	0.69	3	Agree/Manifested
Teachers establish boundaries in building rapport with their students.	3.14	0.75	5	Agree/Manifested
There is always a moment of realization in every discussion of the teacher.	3.09	0.72	6	Agree/Manifested
Ethical Awareness	3.18	0.58	-	Agree/Manifested

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Manifested 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Manifested; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Manifested; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Very Manifested

Table 3 presents the assessment of teachers' ethical leadership with a focus on Ethical Awareness, comprising various indicators. The table quantifies students' perceptions using mean scores, standard deviations (SD), and ranks, complemented by a verbal description or interpretation for each indicator.

The indicators reflect different aspects of how teachers exhibit ethical awareness in their professional conduct. The highest-ranked indicator, with a mean score of 3.35 and an SD of 0.65, suggests that teachers understand and responsibly assume their role in the classroom. It's ranked first and falls under the 'Agree/Manifested' category, indicating a strong

agreement among students that this trait is exhibited by their teachers.

Table 4. Assessment of Ethical Leadership of Teachers– Ethical-Emotional

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers are always open for communication even at times they are not academic in nature.	3.25	0.68	4	Agree/Manifested
Teachers are supportive of their students endeavors as long as they are in the right.	3.34	0.64	1	Agree/Manifested
Teachers adjust themselves to their students' needs as much as they can.	3.26	0.70	3	Agree/Manifested
Teachers assume the role of second parent in the classroom and in classroom setup activities.	3.20	0.72	6	Agree/Manifested
Teachers always temper their emotion when dealing with their students.	3.16	0.72	7	Agree/Manifested
Teachers are open in their perceptions but remain professional in sharing it.	3.34	0.62	1	Agree/Manifested
Teachers make it a priority to always be attentive to their students' needs, especially in being the medium for it to reach administrators.	3.24	0.69	5	Agree/Manifested
Ethical-Emotional	3.25	0.58	-	Agree/Manifested

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Manifested 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Manifested; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Manifested; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Very Manifested

Table 4 outlines the evaluation of teachers' ethical-emotional qualities, with a series of indicators measuring the degree to which teachers exhibit certain behaviors or attitudes. The table uses mean scores and standard deviations (SD) to quantify these attributes, along with assigning a rank to each and providing a verbal description or interpretation categorized as 'Agree/Manifested'.

The highest-rated indicators, both with mean scores of 3.34 and low standard deviations (0.64 and 0.62), highlight teachers' support for students' endeavors and their professionalism in sharing their perceptions, respectively. These are tied for the first rank, indicating a strong consensus among students that their teachers are both supportive and professionally open.

Table 5. Assessment of Ethical Leadership of Teachers – Ethical Thinking

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers make it a priority to be honest and open to their students.	3.29	0.67	5	Agree/Manifested
Teachers exhibit the value of integrity to students through their words and actions.	3.33	0.64	3	Agree/Manifested
Teachers remain prudent to basic school policies as role model to students.	3.37	0.61	1	Agree/Manifested
Teachers know how to speak up and stand for themselves if needed.	3.21	0.71	7	Agree/Manifested
Teachers always do their utmost best to utilize fairness in their classes.	3.34	0.63	2	Agree/Manifested
Teachers have enough knowledge and awareness to recognize if there are ethical issues within a classroom or a classroom setup environment.	3.26	0.67	6	Agree/Manifested
Teachers instill to students the importance of their decisions for them to think it over slowly and not rush.	3.30	0.67	4	Agree/Manifested
Ethical Thinking	3.30	0.58	-	Agree/Manifested

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Manifested 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Manifested; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Manifested; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Very Manifested

In Table 5, the assessment of teachers' ethical thinking is methodically presented through several indicators, each accompanied by a mean score, standard deviation (SD), rank, and a descriptive interpretation. The table aims to convey students' perceptions of their teachers' ethical reasoning and decision-making capabilities.

At the forefront, the highest mean score of 3.37 with an SD of 0.61 is given to the indicator that teachers remain prudent to basic school policies, demonstrating their role as models of integrity for their students. It takes the first rank, indicating a robust agreement among students that teachers consistently adhere to school policies, setting an example of ethical behavior.

Table 6. Assessment of Ethical Leadership of Teachers – Ethical Will

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers share their related experiences if it is applicable to their discussion/lesson.	3.32	0.63	1	Agree/Manifested
Teachers do not let their belief get the best of them especially if it is against a certain lesson that they may need to teach.	3.19	0.72	7	Agree/Manifested
Teachers highlight the importance of values, which they have experienced themselves, to their students.	3.28	0.62	2	Agree/Manifested
There are times that teachers opt to personalize a discussion to showcase an important lesson within their discussion.	3.24	0.66	5	Agree/Manifested
Teachers highlight their role in emphasizing the importance of a lesson/discussion.	3.26	0.63	3	Agree/Manifested
Teachers practice their customs according to the demands and policies of their institution, as the institution employs respect and tolerance to them.	3.26	0.64	3	Agree/Manifested
Teachers are aware of the backgrounds of their students which they consider in their discussions and having rapport with them.	3.24	0.66	5	Agree/Manifested
Ethical Will	3.26	0.58	-	Agree/Manifested

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Manifested 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Manifested; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Manifested; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Very Manifested

Table 6 illustrates the assessment of teachers' ethical will, measured across a range of indicators that detail various aspects of teachers' ability to impart ethical values and apply them in educational settings. Each indicator is evaluated based on the mean scores, standard deviations (SD), ranks, and is accompanied by a verbal description or interpretation.

The highest-rated indicator, with a mean score of 3.32 and an SD of 0.63, indicates that teachers often share relevant personal experiences during lessons, which students agree with and see manifested in the classroom. This is ranked first, reflecting the value students place on personalization and relatability in teaching.

Table 7. Assessment of Ethical Leadership of Teachers – Ethical Behavior

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers exhibit utmost respect to their colleagues, students and school administrators.	3.37	0.62	4	Agree/Manifested
Teachers are open to assisting their students in achieving their short-term goals.	3.34	0.60	6	Agree/Manifested
Teachers train their students to be able to achieve their long-term goals.	3.32	0.60	7	Agree/Manifested
Teachers always maintain a professional demeanor whenever in classes and similar setups.	3.35	0.59	5	Agree/Manifested
Punctuality is a must for the teachers.	3.43	0.60	1	Agree/Manifested
Teachers make it a point to respect required conduct in school premises.	3.38	0.62	3	Agree/Manifested
Teachers exercise accountability for themselves and their students.	3.42	0.61	2	Agree/Manifested
Ethical Behavior	3.37	0.55	-	Agree/Manifested

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Manifested 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Manifested; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Manifested; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Very Manifested

Table 7 offers an evaluation of teachers' Ethical Behavior based on students' perceptions, documented through specific indicators. These indicators are assessed for their mean scores and standard deviations, ranked in terms of their perceived presence in the teachers' conduct, and described verbally.

The top-ranked indicator, with a mean score of 3.43 and an SD of 0.60, highlights punctuality as a defining attribute of the teachers, suggesting that timeliness is consistently valued and manifested by the teaching staff.

Table 8. Summary of Ethical Leadership

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Ethical Awareness	3.18	0.58	5	Agree/Manifested
Ethical-Emotional	3.25	0.58	4	Agree/Manifested
Ethical Thinking	3.30	0.58	2	Agree/Manifested
Ethical Will	3.26	0.58	3	Agree/Manifested
Ethical Behavior	3.37	0.55	1	Agree/Manifested
Ethical Leadership	3.27	0.54	-	Agree/Manifested

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Manifested 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Manifested; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Manifested; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Very Manifested

Table 8 consolidates the overall assessment of Ethical Leadership by ranking various dimensions of ethical attributes in teachers, as perceived by students. The table lists indicators such as Ethical Awareness, Ethical-Emotional, Ethical Thinking, Ethical Will, and Ethical Behavior, each evaluated by mean scores and standard deviations. A final aggregate score for Ethical Leadership is also provided, and each is accompanied by a verbal interpretation.

The dimension with the highest mean score, ranking first, is Ethical Behavior, with a score of 3.37 and a standard deviation of 0.55. This score suggests that students most strongly notice and agree that their teachers exhibit ethical behavior in their professional roles.

4.3. Difference in Ethical Leadership

Table 9. Difference in Transformational Leadership Style Based on Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Categories	Mean	SD	Stat. Value	p- value	Interpretation/ Decision
Sex	Male	3.27	0.61	t= 0.06	0.95	Not significant/ Accept H_0
	Female	3.27	0.45			
Age	Below 18 years old	3.00	1.38	F= 0.79	0.50	Not significant/ Accept H_0
	18 to 21 years old	3.26	0.54			
	22 to 24 years old	3.34	0.52			
	Above 25 years old	3.27	0.34			
Year Level	1st year	3.36	0.54	F= 2.65	0.06	Not significant/ Accept H_0
	2nd year	3.17	0.58			
	3rd year	3.29	0.46			
	4th year	3.30	0.49			

Table 9 assesses the differences in Transformational Leadership style among teachers based on various demographic profiles such as Sex, Age, and Year Level. The table employs statistical values such as means and standard deviations, along with t-tests and F-tests, to determine if there are statistically significant differences in leadership styles corresponding to these demographic categories. The p-value is used to inform the interpretation or decision regarding the null hypothesis (H0).

In terms of Age, the table shows four age categories with varying mean scores: below 18 years old (3.00), 18 to 21 years old (3.26), 22 to 24 years old (3.34), and above 25 years old (3.27). The F-test statistic value is 0.79 with a p-value of 0.50, which again indicates no significant difference in the leadership style across different age groups, resulting in the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

Finally, for the Year Level demographic, 1st-year students rated their teachers with the highest mean score of 3.36, followed by 3rd year (3.29), above 25 years old (3.27), and 2nd year (3.17). The F-test used to compare the means among these groups results in a statistic value of 2.65 and a p-value of 0.06. Despite being the closest to indicating a potential significant difference, it is still above the typical threshold of 0.05, and hence it is interpreted as not significant, leading to the acceptance of the null hypothesis.

Overall, Table 8 suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in the Transformational Leadership style of teachers when compared across the demographics of Sex, Age, and Year Level as perceived by the students. The consistency in the style of leadership across these categories may imply a standardized approach to leadership within the educational institution or sample surveyed. The lack of significant differences in transformational leadership style by demographics may reflect the universal approach to teacher leadership post-reform, as the system moves away from hierarchical structures [8].

4.4. Ethical Development of Students

Table 10. Assessment of Ethical Development –Language and Communication Skills

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers have trained students to be polite in speaking	3.37	0.63	1	Agree/Developed
Teachers foster transparent communication in their classes, which reflect to students language outside.	3.35	0.62	2	Agree/Developed
Teachers reminders make students learn value of trust and confidentiality.	3.35	0.61	2	Agree/Developed
Teachers have instilled students a proper understanding and respect for cultural differences.	3.35	0.62	2	Agree/Developed
Teachers gave students sensitivity in different cultural aspects in communicating with people.	3.33	0.62	5	Agree/Developed
Teachers trained students to listen properly and the right time to respond.	3.33	0.63	5	Agree/Developed
Teachers trained students to listen to comprehend, not listen to reply.	3.30	0.66	7	Agree/Developed
Language and Communication Skills	3.34	0.57	-	Agree/Developed

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Developed; 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Developed; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Developed; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Well-Developed

Table 10 summarizes the assessment of students' ethical development in the realm of Language and Communication Skills as influenced by their teachers. Overall, the collective category of Language and Communication Skills has a mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 0.57, which implies that, across the board, students agree that their teachers have significantly developed their communication skills. The findings in Table 9, which show that teachers are perceived to have effectively trained students in polite speaking and foster transparent communication, align with the ethos of the 2001 Curriculum Reform. This reform emphasizes the cultivation of individuals with integrity and discipline, a goal that is supported by the development of strong language and communication skills.

Table 11. Assessment of Ethical Development – Mental-Emotional Skills

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers take time to listen to their students stories and other communication, which is emulated by the students.	3.26	0.67	5	Agree/Developed
Teachers instill into their students how to recognize emotions but not use them in making reasonable decisions.	3.26	0.65	5	Agree/Developed
Teachers express concern and empathy in dealing and talking with students, which is emulated by the students.	3.30	0.63	3	Agree/Developed
Teachers treat their students how they want themselves to be treated, which is emulated by the students.	3.27	0.65	4	Agree/Developed
Teachers highlight the value of fairness and parity in a community.	3.31	0.62	2	Agree/Developed
Teachers acknowledge theirs and their students roles in the classroom, which translates to a similar treatment in the community.	3.24	0.68	7	Agree/Developed
Teachers exhibit genuine care for their students.	3.37	0.59	1	Agree/Developed
Mental-Emotional Skills	3.29	0.58	-	Agree/Developed

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Developed; 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Developed; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Developed; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Well-Developed

Table 11 provides an evaluation of the Ethical Development of students in Mental-Emotional Skills, showcasing how teachers' actions and behaviors translate into students' development in this area. The highest mean score is for the indicator that teachers exhibit genuine care for their students, which stands at 3.37 with a standard deviation of 0.59, ranking it first among the indicators. This suggests that students feel a strong sense of being cared for by their teachers, which is crucial for their mental and emotional development.

Table 12. Assessment of Ethical Development – Cognitive Skills

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers remind students of their responsibilities as fellow members of the academe.	3.36	0.60	4	Agree/Developed
Teachers teach their students the basic academic ethics.	3.38	0.59	1	Agree/Developed
Students are made aware of their responsibilities in research, especially if they have human subjects in their study.	3.33	0.61	7	Agree/Developed
Teachers are able guide their students through their respective specializations.	3.35	0.61	6	Agree/Developed
Teachers share their professional experience as tips to their students.	3.37	0.59	2	Agree/Developed
Teachers utilize a professional teaching approach during classes.	3.36	0.61	4	Agree/Developed
Teachers highlight professional qualities and skills in practical settings in teaching their students.	3.37	0.58	2	Agree/Developed
Cognitive Skills	3.36	0.55	-	Agree/Developed

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Developed; 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Developed; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Developed; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Well-Developed

Table 12 assesses students' ethical development in terms of Cognitive Skills. Teachers teaching their students the basic academic ethics is the top-ranked indicator, with the highest mean score of 3.38 and a standard deviation of 0.59, emphasizing the priority given to academic integrity in the educational setting.

Table 13. Assessment of Ethical Development – Moral Aptitude

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Teachers encourage their students to evaluate themselves especially in how their daily practices.	3.33	0.65	3	Agree/Developed
Teachers recognize the feedback of their students and vice versa.	3.34	0.62	1	Agree/Developed
Teachers and students consider each other's strengths and weaknesses.	3.29	0.66	7	Agree/Developed
Teachers acknowledge their needs for further development, which students emulate and see themselves as ever-growing works in progress.	3.33	0.60	3	Agree/Developed
Teachers know their limits in discussing lessons and experiences in class, as students are aware of their limits in respecting their teachings.	3.33	0.59	3	Agree/Developed
Teachers become role model to students in their behavior as citizens of a community.	3.31	0.64	6	Agree/Developed
Teachers apply to themselves any improvement that they sink is suitable for students to emulate or be inspired and motivated with.	3.34	0.62	1	Agree/Developed
Moral Aptitude	3.32	0.57	-	Agree/Developed

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Developed; 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Developed; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Developed; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Well-Developed

Table 13 examines the Ethical Development of students in the domain of Moral Aptitude. Two indicators are tied for the highest rank, each with a mean of 3.34, suggesting that teachers are effective both in recognizing student feedback and in applying to themselves improvements that students can emulate or find inspirational. These indicators share a standard deviation of 0.62, indicating a strong and consistent agreement among students on these aspects.

Table 14. Level of Ethical Development

Indicators	Mean	SD	Rank	Verbal Description/ Interpretation
Language and Communication Skills	3.34	0.57	2	Agree/Developed
Mental-Emotional Skills	3.29	0.58	4	Agree/Developed
Cognitive Skills	3.36	0.55	1	Agree/Developed
Moral Aptitude	3.32	0.57	3	Agree/Developed
Ethical Development	3.33	0.55	-	Agree/Developed

Scale: 1-1.50: Strongly Disagree/Not Developed; 1.51-2.50: Disagree/Slightly Developed; 2.51-3.50: Agree/Developed; 3.51-4.00: Strongly Agree/Well-Developed

Table 14 summarizes the overall Level of Ethical Development in students based on the impact of their teachers' ethical leadership. Cognitive Skills lead the ranks with the highest mean score of 3.36 and the lowest standard deviation of 0.55, indicating that students perceive the greatest development in their cognitive abilities and that this perception is quite consistent across respondents.

4.5. Difference in Ethical Development

Table 15. Difference in Ethical Development Based on Demographic Profile

Demographic Profile	Categories	Mean	SD	Stat. Value	p-value	Interpretation/ Decision
Sex	Male	3.32	0.61	t= -0.20	0.84	Not significant/ Accept H_0
	Female	3.33	0.48			
Age	Below 18 years old	3.04	1.35	F= 1.53	0.21	Not significant/ Accept H_0
	18 to 21 years old	3.31	0.55			
	22 to 24 years old	3.43	0.51			
	Above 25 years old	3.22	0.44			
Year Level	1st year	3.38	0.56	F= 1.91	0.13	Not significant/ Accept H_0
	2nd year	3.24	0.60			
	3rd year	3.38	0.48			
	4th year	3.34	0.45			

Table 15 presents the data on the perceived ethical development among students, differentiated across demographic profiles including Sex, Age, and Year Level. The analysis is based on mean scores, standard deviations, statistical values, p-values, and concludes with an interpretation or decision regarding the hypothesis tested.

For the Sex category, mean scores are nearly identical, with males at 3.32 and females slightly higher at 3.33, and standard deviations of 0.61 and 0.48 respectively. The t-test produces a statistic value of -0.20 with a p-value of 0.84, leading to the interpretation that there is no significant difference in the ethical development based on the sex of the students; thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

When examining Age as a variable, the means range from 3.04 for those below 18 years old to 3.43 for those aged 22 to 24 years old, indicating a potential trend where ethical development might be perceived differently across age groups. However, the F-test statistic value of 1.53 with a p-value of 0.21 suggests these differences are not statistically significant, and the null hypothesis is accepted.

The Year Level demographics show that 1st and 3rd-year students rate the ethical development highest with means of 3.38, while 2nd-year students have the lowest mean at 3.24. The F-test statistic value of 1.91 with a p-value of 0.13 again indicates no statistically significant difference in perceptions of inclusivity across different academic years.

4.6. Relationship between Ethical Leadership and Development

Table 16. Relationship between the Ethical Leadership and Development

Pearson *r* Coefficient	P-Value	Decision/ Interpretation
0.91 (strong, positive)	0.00	Significant/ Reject H_0

Table 16 displays the results of a statistical analysis exploring the relationship between the Ethical Leadership of teachers and the Ethical Development of students. It uses the Pearson r Correlation Coefficient to quantify the strength and direction of this relationship, along with a p-value to assess its statistical significance.

The Pearson r Coefficient is 0.91, which indicates a strong, positive correlation between Ethical Leadership and Development. This high correlation suggests that as the presence or quality of Ethical Leadership increases, so does the level of Ethical Development in students. The p-value is 0.00, which is less than the standard threshold of 0.05, indicating that the results are statistically significant. With such a low p-value, the probability that the observed correlation is due to random chance is extremely low.

In summary, Table 15 provides statistical evidence that there is a significant and strong positive relationship between teachers' Ethical Leadership and the Ethical Development of

their students. The data supports the notion that effective ethical leadership is likely an important factor contributing to the ethical growth of students.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the study offers insightful revelations into the nature and efficacy of ethical leadership in the context of China's educational reforms. The survey results across various tables have consistently highlighted that students perceive their teachers as embodying and promoting the principles of ethical leadership. Such leadership isn't only observable but also significantly correlated with students' ethical development in multiple domains, including language and communication, mental-emotional skills, cognitive abilities, and moral aptitude.

The uniform effectiveness of ethical leadership practices across demographic profiles suggests that educational reforms have successfully empowered teachers to transcend traditional didactic roles, instead positioning them as ethical role models and facilitators for a diverse student body. This supports the educational reforms' goal of cultivating individuals equipped with integrity, knowledge, and discipline, capable of thriving in a global context.

Moreover, the lack of significant demographic differences in ethical development reinforces the idea that ethical leadership and its effects on student development have been integrated successfully across various student populations, irrespective of gender, age, or academic standing. This finding resonates with the inclusive nature of the reforms and the push for a decentralized, equitable educational experience for all students.

The strong, positive correlation between ethical leadership and development, as presented in the study, underlines the vital role that teachers play in shaping not just the academic prowess but also the holistic growth of students. It signifies a shift in educational philosophy and practice from a centralized power structure towards a participatory, collaborative, and ethically driven approach.

This study, thereby, fills a critical gap in the existing literature by providing empirical evidence of the positive impact of ethical leadership on student development within the Chinese education system. It underscores the importance of continuing to foster ethical leadership in educational settings, both as a means to enhance educational outcomes and as a fundamental component of developing ethically aware future leaders and citizens.

The results of this study advocate for sustained efforts in promoting ethical leadership across all educational levels, emphasizing the need for ongoing discussions, reforms, and research initiatives aimed at addressing the complex ethical challenges within the Chinese education system and beyond.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, which indicate a strong positive correlation between ethical leadership and the ethical development of students, a comprehensive program is suggested:

I. Program Title: Ethical Leadership in Education Development Program (ELEDP)

II. Program Objectives:

1. To enhance teachers' capabilities in ethical leadership and influence within the classroom.

2. To integrate ethical leadership principles into the core pedagogical framework.

3. To cultivate a sustainable, collaborative environment that encourages ethical decision-making and behavior among students.

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