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# ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AMONG GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

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**ABSTRACT**
The study was conducted to determine the Ethical Leadership in internal communication among government entities. Ethical Leadership, encompassing principles of transparency, integrity, and accountability, is crucial in shaping organizational culture and communication practices.
The study employed a survey-based approach to collect employee data across various government-level levels. It adopted a descriptive comparative method of research using 50 employees from the government entities of the Davao Region as respondents. Mean and T-tests were the statistical tools used in the study. The survey instrument measures perceptions of ethical leadership practices and assesses the perceived effectiveness of internal communication channels and processes.
The finding of the study revealed that ethical leadership in internal communication among government entities is high. It reflected a high level regarding people orientation, fair treatment, power sharing, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role clarification, and integrity. Furthermore, they manifested nonsignificant differences in their level of Ethical Leadership in internal communication when grouped by sex, years of service, and salary grade.

**Keywords:**
Ethical Leadership, internal communication, fair treatment, government entities

## INTRODUCTION
Ethical leadership within government entities has gained unprecedented significance in the dynamic landscape of contemporary governance. As governments navigate complex challenges and engage with diverse stakeholders, how leaders communicate internally plays a pivotal role in shaping organizational culture, promoting transparency, and fostering public trust.
Ethical Leadership, as delineated by Baquillas, J. (2018), plays a vital role in setting the ethical climate of the company. It shows a linear relationship as the level of Ethical Leadership becomes greater while the level of employee deviance decreases. Leadership in the public sector influences workplace outcomes such as employee commitment, engagement, and satisfaction. Moreover, the performance of a local government unit is ultimately affected by the practice of a particular leadership style (Rayan et al., 2015).
Within government entities, the internal communication process constitutes a multifaceted mechanism influencing organizational behavior, employee engagement, and, ultimately, the quality of public services. According to Government.se, good internal communication is a central part of the management and governance of the organization and the Government Offices' internal preparatory processes.
Studies have underscored the repercussions of inadequate Ethical Leadership and communication within government agencies. The research by Benedicto & Caelian (2021) suggested that the HR program should create an ethics advisory board, conduct a reality check, ethics audit, ethics manual and integrity testing, and performance rewards. Government employees can provide outstanding services when empowered, given the enabling environment. Therefore, the imperative for ethical leaders to prioritize transparent, honest, and inclusive communication strategies has become paramount.

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This quantitative research contributes to the ongoing discourse on Ethical Leadership in the public sector by focusing on its implications for internal communication within government entities. Through applying quantitative methodologies, statistical analysis, and the synthesis of relevant indicators, the study aims to offer empirically supported insights for government leaders, policymakers, and scholars striving to enhance the ethical foundations of governance in an era of heightened scrutiny and accountability.

## OBJECTIVES

This study aims to determine the Ethical Leadership in internal communication among government entities. Specifically, it seeks to determine if there is a significant difference between the government employees' level of Ethical Leadership in the following indicators: a) people orientation, b) fair treatment, c) power-sharing, d) concern for sustainability, e) ethical guidance; f) role clarification; and g) integrity, when compared based on sex, years of service, and salary grade.

The study findings would be valuable for employers' organizations in examining the role of Ethical Leadership in internal communication efficacy, which directly impacts employee performance. It may eventually assist them in establishing leadership credibility to maintain an effective working environment without affecting the organization's aims and objectives.

## METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental research design. This descriptive comparative research method was adopted using 50 employees from the government entities of the Davao Region as respondents. Mean and T-tests were the statistical tools used in the study. The research instrument used in this study was a survey questionnaire adapted from the study of Men (2015), The Role of Ethical Leadership in Internal Communication: Influences on Communication Symmetry, leader credibility, and employee engagement. The researchers analyzed data collected from the survey questionnaire using descriptive statistics, such as the mean and standard deviation.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS
*Table 1. Level of Ethical Leadership in Internal Communication among Government Entities*

| Indicators | Standard Deviation | Mean | Descriptive Level |
|---|---|---|---|
| People orientation | 0.80 | 3.84 | High |
| Fair treatment | 1.23 | 2.50 | High |
| Power sharing | 0.56 | 3.52 | High |
| Concern for sustainability | 0.76 | 4.24 | High |
| Ethical guidance | 0.75 | 4.14 | High |
| Role clarification | 0.76 | 4.05 | High |
| Integrity | 0.95 | 4.01 | High |
| **Overall** | 0.50 | 3.76 | High |

Shown in Table 1 is the level of Ethical Leadership in internal communication among government entities. The result shows that the 50 respondents perceived a high level of Ethical Leadership as evidenced by the overall mean of 3.76 with a variability of .50. Generally, all seven ethical leadership indicators: people orientation with a mean rating of 3.84, 2.50 for fair treatment, 3.52 for power sharing, 4.24 for concern sustainability, 4.14 for ethical guidance, 4.05 for role clarification, and 4.01 for integrity scored the same high level among the respondents. This

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means that all respondents from government entities perceived these ethical leadership indicators in their internal communication.

*Table 2. Significant Difference in the Level of Ethical Leadership in Internal Communication among Government Entities when They Are Grouped by Sex*

| Indicators | Male | Female | t-value | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| People orientation | 4.04 | 3.63 | 1.874 | .067 |
| Fair treatment | 2.60 | 2.40 | .572 | .570 |
| Power sharing | 3.59 | 3.45 | .880 | .383 |
| Concern for sustainability | 4.23 | 4.25 | .088 | .930 |
| Ethical guidance | 4.09 | 4.20 | .500 | .619 |
| Role clarification | 3.97 | 4.13 | .705 | .484 |
| Integrity | 4.05 | 3.97 | .317 | .753 |
| **Overall** | 3.79 | 3.72 | .556 | .581 |

Presented in Table 2 is the nonsignificant in Ethical Leadership when grouped by sex. This is reflected in the t-value 0.556 with a p-value of 0.581, more significant than the 0.05 significance level. The result is nonsignificant, and the acceptance of the null hypothesis infers that male and female government employee demonstrated equal levels of Ethical Leadership in internal communication.

This result parallels the study of Workman-Stark (2021) that personal characteristics, such as gender, are influenced by people's interpretations through their workplace experiences. It also demonstrated that when people perceive they are treated fairly, they are more likely to perceive that the workplace is psychologically safe.

Given its importance as a guiding principle for Ethical Leadership in government organizations, indicators like people orientation, fair treatment, power sharing, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role clarification, and integrity on the gender of public employees have a practical significance and potential effects on their morale and performance.

*Table 3. Significant Difference in the Level of Ethical Leadership in Internal Communication among Government Entities when they are Grouped by*
*Years of Service*

| Indicators | Less - 10 years | 11-20 years | t-value | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| People orientation | 3.81 | 4.07 | .737 | .465 |
| Fair treatment | 2.56 | 2.04 | .974 | .335 |
| Power sharing | 3.51 | 3.63 | .490 | .626 |
| Concern for sustainability | 4.20 | 4.56 | 1.080 | .286 |
| Ethical guidance | 4.10 | 4.47 | 1.119 | .269 |

| Role clarification | 4.04 | 4.11 | .223 | .825 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Integrity | 4.03 | 3.90 | .326 | .746 |
| **Overall** | 3.75 | 3.82 | .338 | .737 |

The data disclosed in Table 3 is nonsignificant in Ethical Leadership when grouped by years of service. This is reflected in the t-value of .338 with a p-value of 0.737, more significant than the 0.05 significance level. The result is nonsignificant, and the acceptance of the null hypothesis implies that employees with less than ten years and 11-20 years of service manifested equal levels of Ethical Leadership.

This result is comparable with the study of Yusuf et al. (2015) that suggested that workers with a short length of service were not significantly different in attitude to work from workers with an extended length of service. This, in turn, results in employees becoming more involved in their work and remaining in their workplace for an extended period.

*Table 4. Significant Difference in the Level of Ethical Leadership in Internal Communication among Government Entities when they are Grouped by*
*Salary Grade*

| **Indicators** | **Grade -10** | **Grade 11-20** | **t-value** | **p-value** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| People orientation | 3.92 | 3.73 | .800 | .427 |
| Fair treatment | 2.59 | 2.38 | .579 | .565 |
| Power sharing | 3.48 | 3.57 | .553 | .583 |
| Concern for sustainability | 4.37 | 4.06 | 1.408 | .166 |
| Ethical guidance | 4.14 | 4.15 | .066 | .948 |
| Role clarification | 3.99 | 4.13 | .637 | .527 |
| Integrity | 3.93 | 4.13 | .736 | .466 |
| **Overall** | 3.78 | 3.74 | .247 | .806 |

Disclosed in Table 4 is the nonsignificant in Ethical Leadership when grouped by salary grade. This is reflected in the t-value 0.247 with a p-value of 0.806, more significant than the 0.05 significance level. The result is nonsignificant, and the acceptance of the null hypothesis implies that a salary grade of -10 and a salary grade of 11-20 demonstrate equal levels of Ethical Leadership in internal communication.

This result is supported by Men's (2015) study, which shows that ethical leaders are fair, concerned with the needs of their followers, and willing to share power with employees. This finding also provided insight into how fairness perceptions lead to positive outcomes and prevent negative organizational consequences.

## CONCLUSION
Based on the statistical result, the researchers conclude that Ethical Leadership in internal communication among government entities is high. More so, it suggests that people orientation, fair treatment, power sharing, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role clarification, and integrity have nonsignificant differences in the level of Ethical Leadership in internal communication when grouped by sex, years of service, and salary grade.

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