"The Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership in Preventing Employees' Burnout"

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Abstract

The organizations are rapidly recognizing the importance of concepts i.e. emotional exhaustion and employee burnout as previous research has proved that these phenomena have detrimental effects on the physical health of the employees, which as a consequence reduce their job productivity and satisfaction. The current study sets out to investigate how work overload causes employees to feel emotionally exhausted which in turn leads them toward burnout. The study explores the moderating impact of ethical leadership on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout such that when ethical leadership is practiced at the workplace the chances of employees to burnout as a result of feeling emotionally exhausted gets reduced, and when ethical leadership is not exercised in the organization the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout becomes stronger. In order to analyze these hypothesis, the primary data was collected from the teachers of public sector universities using the sample size of 385. The rationale behind the sample choice was that previous literature has proved that teaching staff of public sector universities were more prone to experience employee burnout because of the demanding working conditions and increased work load as compared to teachers working in private sector universities. The data was analyzed using SPSS software in order to derive meaningful findings and conclusions. Different types of regression analysis were run to test the proposed hypothesis. Results indicated that all of the hypothesis were confirmed and the model was proved to be significant. The work overload caused employees to feel emotionally exhausted. And the emotional exhaustion lead employees toward employee burnout as a result. The emotional exhaustion significantly mediated the impact of work overload on employee burnout. The ethical leadership moderated the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout. These findings are beneficial and helpful for the organizations as it would enable them to take proper measures to ensure good mental health of their employees so that their productivity can be enhanced. It helps the organizations and mangers in understanding how, if properly practiced, ethical leadership can prevent employees from burning out. Furthermore, the study discusses the conclusions drawn from the results, practical implications of the findings, limitations, and recommendations as far as future research is concerned.

Keywords: Work Overload, Emotional Exhaustion, Employee burnout, Ethical leadership, mental exhaustion, stress, workload, role overload, job burnout, workplace burnout, moral leadership.

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1. Introduction

1.1   Background

Recent global ethical business scandals bring light to and raise awareness of the ethical issues in leadership and the importance of leading ethically in the organizations (Resick et al., 2011; Toor & Ofori, 2009). The past few years express an increased interest and focus on the promotion and development of moral practices and procedures in the organizations (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). The reason why concept of ethical leadership is considered to be incredibly important is because of the strong influence of leaders on the conduct of their subordinates and eventually on the performance of the organization (Kanungo, 2001; Aronson, 2001; Trevino, Brown, & Hartman, 2003). Showing ignorance against ethical leadership can prove to be detrimental and deleterious as it can in turn could hurt the reputation of the organization (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008).

Brown et al. (2005) describes ethical leadership as the ''demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making'' (p. 120). Basically, it demonstrates the way managers employ their given social power (De Hoogh et al., 2008) by not only conducting their personal life in an ethical manner but being mindful of implementing those moral principles in their professional life as well (Brown et al., 2003; Brown et al., 2006; Resick et al., 2006).

The concept of employee burnout came to prominence in the mid-1970s in the United States (Maslach et al., 2001; 2015). The significant impact of this phenomenon is what made it controversial and important topic in the research field (Maslach et al., 2001). Recently a numerous studies on destructive or detrimental employee behavior and attitude such as burnout has emerged (Neubert and Roberts 2013). However, in order to succeed it is important for organizations to have a knowledge about factors that contribute to burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). The leadership has an immense and critical role in preventing employee burnout that results from mental, emotional and physical exhaustion, depletion of energy, feelings of isolation and loneliness, depersonalization, role ambiguity, feelings of cynicism about job, stress caused by work overload, reduced professional efficacy and tendency to undermine worth and achievements. (Maslach et al., 1984, 1981; Chugtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2014)

Previous researches have shown that when the leader is ethical he positively influences the satisfaction and productivity levels of his employees. The ethical leadership forms a significantly positive correlation with employees' well-being (Chugtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2014; Brown et al., 2005). The ethical leader through his moral conduct and principles guides the subordinates in a manner which in turn causes a rise in their productivity levels and job satisfaction, and they stand lower chances of feeling stressed out and exhausted because of demanding work. (Mo & Shi, 2015; Sharif & Scandura, 2013; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Hence, it is concluded that organizations that prioritize ethical leadership and give significant importance to ethical behaviors and practices witness a great reduction in feelings of stress and burnout among employees. Thus, leading to increased job satisfaction, productivity and improved performance (Mo & Shi, 2015; Walumbwa et al., 2011; Resick et al., 2013; Taylor & Pattie, 2014). The subordinates are more willing to trust the leaders who emphasize transparency, honesty, authenticity, credibility, power sharing, fairness, integrity, compassion and empathy, which are the attributes or qualities exhibited by an ethical leader (Trevino, Brown & Harrison., 2005).

Previous literature implies supervisors who exhibit ethical behaviors and promote ethical practices in the organization can easily establish strong and trustworthy rapport with subordinates (Trevino, Brown & Harrison., 2005). This helps in improving the employees' job performance and engagement, and also reducing feelings of mental exhaustion (Chughtai & Buckley, 2011; Hogan et al., 2012).

As noted above, previous studies have found a significant impact of ethical leadership on number of positive outcomes. For instance, ethical leadership has been found to be associated with employee well-being, (Chugtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2014) improved work performance, increased job satisfaction, dedication and efficiency, voice behavior and psychological safety (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009), employees' readiness to communicate concerns to management (Trevino, Brown & Harrison., 2005), intrinsic motivation, job loyalty, trust on top management and organizational optimism (De Hoogh et al., 2008; Piccolo et al., 2010; Resick et al., 2011). In addition, moral leadership has also been linked to employees' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Brandon, 2013), and employee work passion (Ahadiat & Dacko-Pikiewicz, 2020). However, the moderating role of ethical leadership on the burnout was never examined in the previous studies, and especially in Pakistan there exists a major research gap. Therefore, the

present study contributes to the research based knowledge on the topic of ethical leadership with the aim of examining the underlying factors or determinants such as work overload and emotional exhaustion that cause employees to burnout at workplace setting. The aim of the present research is threefold. First, it seeks to establish an association among work overload and emotional exhaustion. Second, it seeks to determine how emotional exhaustion leads the employees toward employee burnout. Furthermore, the research investigates how ethical leadership moderates the direct link between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout. In simple words, how it prevents employees from burning out.

1.2   Significance of the Study

The current study seeks to contribute to the emerging body of research on ethical leadership and Human Resource Management (HRM) with the main objective of enhancing workplace practices and outcomes for both employers and employees by exploring moderating role of ethical leadership in preventing employee burnout, which has been shown to be a phenomenon of interest for organizations and their employees. The employee burnout is considered to be an important concept for the organizations because of its significant implications such as emotional exhaustion. Thence, this study is set out to help organizations and their management to help improve organizational culture or environment by fostering superior ethical leadership practices and behaviors, and in preventing employees from experiencing burnout in the workplace.

1.3   Goal of the Study

The present research sets out to examine the impact of work overload on emotional exhaustion experienced by employees at work. The research further explores the positive effect of emotional exhaustion on employee burnout in the organization settings. Furthermore, this research investigates to identify the moderating effect of ethical leadership in preventing employee burnout.

1.4   Problem Statement

The alarming issue of employee burnout has become a worldwide epidemic. However, the literature available on what kind of relationship ethical leadership forms with employee burnout is still limited. The employee burnout is the emerging and salient phenomenon for the organizations but no research has been done to explore how ethical leadership acts as a moderator on the direct effect that exists between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout. Specifically in Pakistan no

study has been conducted of this sort. This study explores how work overload influences levels and intensity of emotional exhaustion experienced by employees in the workplace and examines how emotional exhaustion further causes employees to burnout in an organization setting. Additionally, the current research investigates the moderating effect that ethical leadership has on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout.

1.5   Research Questions

1. What kind of association work overload has with emotional exhaustion experienced by employees?
2. What kind of association emotional exhaustion has with employee burnout?
3. How does ethical leadership serve as a moderating variable on the direct link between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout?
4. How does emotional exhaustion serve as a mediating variable on the indirect link between work overload and employee burnout?

1.6   Research Objectives

1. To explore the association that exists between work overload and emotional exhaustion experienced by employees.
2. To explore the association that exists between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout.
3. To examine how ethical leadership moderates the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout.
4. To investigate how emotional exhaustion mediates the correlation between work overload and employee burnout.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The literature review covers the previous research on the elements of the study i.e. work overload, emotional exhaustion, employee burnout experienced by employees, and ethical leadership. It seeks to critically scrutinize and review past studies in order to develop deeper and better understanding about the phenomenon under study and how these various multiple variables are related to each other. This chapter aims to help the readers to gain an insight into what all the variables of this study are and what relationship do they form with each other. Different past studies are analyzed in this section that seeks to provide a thorough and deep understanding of the

research topic and research findings. The research findings from various researches are examined to seek help from their research and experience. This section also seeks to build argument to devise the hypothesis of the present study. The literature on work overload is discussed in section 2.1, section 2.2 covers the mediating variable that is emotional exhaustion, section 2.3 explains the dependent variable employee burnout, section 2.4 discusses various consequences or outcomes of employee burnout, section 2.5 seeks to explain the moderating variable that is ethical leadership, section 2.6 covers in detail attributes and behaviors exhibited by an ethical leader, section 2.7 sheds light on how independent variable i.e. work overload is related to mediating variable i.e. emotional exhaustion, section 2.8 elaborates to what extent the presence of emotional exhaustion increases the chances of employees to burnout, and section 2.9 sets out to explain the how ethical leadership moderates the effects of emotional exhaustion and prevents the employees from burning out. How emotional exhaustion is acting as a mediator on the indirect link between independent and dependent variable i.e. work overload and employee burnout is discussed at length in section 2.10. Finally, the theoretical framework is given in last section 2.11.

2.1 Work Overload

Work overload has become a serious and critical issue for organizations now a days that demands immediate attention. This upsurge in work overload causes alarming increase in stress, exhaustion and work-life conflict among employees, decreases their morale and motivation to work which ultimately leads towards poor job performance and low employee engagement. These factors further leads to low job satisfaction among employees. The employees rarely have enough time to relax or function properly while working because of extra work or work overload combined with emotional or mental exhaustion.(Ali & Farooqi, 2014) This is backed by previous researches that overload in work increases occupational stress in employees causing them to have trouble focusing. This results in compromised job performance of the employees which ultimately leads towards lower levels of satisfaction related to one's job (Ali et al., 2014). The studies have proved that factors which contributed to occupational stress include increased workload, insecurity about one's job, and negative working rapport with colleagues and boss are strongly positively associated with job dissatisfaction (Paktinat & Rafeei, 2012). Another study conducted by Obiora & Iwuoha, 2013 claims that the critical issue of work overload is a very serious problem not only for the employee himself but for the organization as well. They also go on and report that work overload

is the primary reason of stress in job that further leads employee towards job dissatisfaction. (Obiora & Iwuoha, 2013) Thus, it can be concluded that when workload increases, it causes employees to fell less satisfied with their jobs (Bozkurt et al., 2012; Ali & Farooqi, 2014; Paktinat & Rafeei, 2012; Obiora & Iwuoha, 2013).

Work overload has been explained as the "greatness of job tasks and might cause mental distress for employees." (Johari, Ridzoan & Zarefar, 2019) Additionally, this is the phenomena that points out to the amount of assignments and actvities that exceeds the designated responsibilities of an employee. (Ali & Farooqi, 2014) This aspect refers to the degree of work stress experienced by employees because of conception that they are unable to handle or be active with the amount of tasks or work assignments they have been given. (Idris, 2011) Work overload can also exist because of factors that include long hours and time pressure. The previous literature suggests that pressure that stems from extra workload is considered to be a reason behind compromising employees' performance significantly (Schultz et al., 2015). The pressure also tend to increase as employees go up the employment stairs and began to acquire senior level positions. The reason for an increase in pressure is more responsibilities and work overload which in return influences the employee's job performance. (Schultz & Schultz, 2015) Hence, the problem of work overload concerns the organizations which are these days seeking only employees with high performance (Malta, 2004).

2.2   Emotional Exhaustion

Maslach, Leiter & Schaufeli, (2001) defines emotional exhaustion employees experience at workplace as "feelings of being overextended and depleted of one's emotional and physical resources". Emotional exhaustion means reduction in emotional resources (Ertop, 2019). It refers to the feelings of emotional void followed by intense mental pressure, and severe reduction in abilities to cope up with side effects of being exposed to scenarios for a prolonged period that cause constant stress (Maslach et al., 2016). This causes a great decline in the mental, physical and emotional strength and energy level of employees (Leiter, Maslach & Frame, 2015). Emotionally exhausted individuals experience depletion of energy and feel that all of their resources are diminished. Emotional exhaustion also cause employees to feel tensed and frustrated. Feelings of tension and frustration are often combined with feelings of extreme tiredness. When employees feel extremely tired and exhausted, they are not being able to focus properly on their work and

start to withdraw from assigned tasks to protect themselves from burning out. (Ertop, 2019) The withdrawal from work causes employees to feel incompetent and unsuccessful at their job. They start to negatively evaluate the worth of their work and downplay their accomplishments. It occurs when employees' efforts do not result the desired outcome. Employees start to experience intense negative emotions and feel like their efforts make no difference whatsoever (Maslach et al, 2001).

The emotional exhaustion component is the core stress dimension of workplace burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). The previous studies have emphasized this core component so much that it can be easily concluded that emotional exhaustion is the most important phenomenon while investigating the concept of employee burnout (Leiter & Maslach, 2016; Leiter, Maslach & Frame, 2015; Shirom, 1989). Some scholars even argue that other two facets that arise as a result of occupational burnout i.e. depersonalization and feelings of reduced personal accomplishment do not hold much significance as compared to emotional exhaustion. (Shirom, 1989)

Seidler, et al. (2014) refers to emotional exhaustion as "the heart of the burnout". It is the most commonly reported issue among those who are experiencing job burnout (Leiter & Maslach, 2016; Leiter, Maslach & Frame, 2015). It is thought to be most obvious manifestation of occupational burnout (Leiter et al., 2015).

To study the concept of emotional exhaustion is crucial because it is linked to various relevant outcomes for instance job satisfaction, intention to quit (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017), and job performance (Huyghebaert et al., 2018). Past studies indicate that emotional exhaustion has a significant influence on both employee and his or her respective organization (Halbesleben and Buckley 2004). Research shows that it has a significant negative impact on the mental as well as physical health of an employee and can lead to poor and compromised well-being (Chugtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2014), job dissatisfaction and lower job commitment, high turnover rates and lower job performance (Maslach et al. 2001; Lee & Ashforth, 1996).

2.3   Employee Burnout

Employee burnout at workplace has become a critical issue worldwide that requires immediate attention. Employees at all levels report that they feel insecure, undervalued, stressed out, alienated, and misunderstood at their workplace (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Although the phenomenon of job burnout is not new but the term recently grabbed the attention of scholars. The

term burnout initially started to become common during the middle of the 70s in the US (United States) and the main purpose of those initial contributions was to name the basic phenomenon and describe it. The initial studies were conducted in the year 1975 by a notable psychiatrist named Freudenberger who was carrying out his research at an agency that specialized in medical care, followed by another well-known scholar Maslach (1976), who was a social psychologist studying emotions at work. Freudenberger (1975) described effects of the burnout as experiencing mental exhaustion as well as feeling less enthusiastic and committed to one's job. Lastly, he associated these negative effects to the phenomena i.e. employee burnout (Leiter et al., 2001).

Maslach et al. (2001) defines employee burnout as prolonged response to chronic mental, emotional and interpersonal stressors at work, and is comprised of three key dimensions i.e. emotional exhaustion, feelings of cynicism, and diminished personal accomplishment. Among all three facets, emotional exhaustion is the most widely reported problem (Maslach et al., 2001; García-Arroyo et al., 2019). Exhaustion or stress is referred to as a root cause of employees' burnout and it is the first indication that individual is suffering from the burnout syndrome (Seidler, et al., 2014; Maslach et al., 2001; Maslach et al., 2015). It is the most essential criterion of occupational burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). The second aspect, cynicism causes employees to psychologically distance. It leads them to experience negative feelings toward their work and feeling detached and alienated. (Maslach et al., 2015). The third dimension is feelings of reduced personal accomplishment that basically means losing confidence in one's capabilities to efficiently carry out the task and considering their contributions to be worthless. Employees start to view themselves as incompetent for the job and downplay their achievements (Maslach et al., 2001; Maslach et al., 2015).

Employees experience burnout because of the problematic relationships that exist between them and their employed organizations. When organizational processes and structures do not align with the tendencies and capabilities of their employees it causes them to feel stressed out, tensed and frustrated. The stress and tension leads the employees to feel depletion of energy and results in significantly reduced participation. They end up feeling incompetent and inefficient for the job and give up (Maslach & Leiter, 1997).

2.4   Consequences or Outcomes of Burnout

The burnout is of great significance to both the individual and the organization as it is related to number of negative outcomes and consequences that are important to the firm. Most of those outcomes are related to employees' performance and productivity (Schaufeli et al., 2001; Leiter, Maslach, & Frame, 2015). The symptoms of employee burnout involve lack of creativity exhibited by employees, feeling alienated and detached from one's work, reduced job commitment, lost work passion, low levels of emotional and physical energy, negative attitude toward one's job, as well as constantly feeling fatigued because of tiredness and weariness (Cordes et al., 1993; Leiter, Maslach & Frame, 2015). The employees who are experiencing job burnout become detrimental to both themselves and the organization. Previous research reports that employees experiencing burnout tend to show reduced productivity levels, lower self-efficacy, intention to quit the job, higher turnover rates and increased ratios of absenteeism (Jackson & Maslach, 1982; Leiter & Maslach, 1988; Leiter, Maslach & Frame, 2015). Past studies also points out to the fact that employee burnout not only significantly negatively affects employee's personal life but it strongly disrupts their domestic affairs as well (Burke et al., 2001; Schaufeli et al., 2001).

Burnout has also been linked with some health related outcomes as it is an effect of stress and exhaustion (Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2001). It has been linked to various health problems including mental and physical. As far as mental health problems are concerned, job burnout causes several stress-related issues for the employees experiencing burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Some of the health issues include organizational cynicism, and emotional liability (Piedmont, 1993), increased irritability, and reduced self-esteem, insomnia, anxiety, fatigue, depression, unhealthy relationship with family and social group (Zellars, Perrewe, & Hochwarter, 2000; Burke & Deszca, 1986). Employee burnout also has a significant impact on individuals' overall welfare (Maslach et al., 2015). Previous studies also report that employees' burnout can be classified as a syndrome or a mental disorder. Another widely known assumption is that burnout is responsible for causing mental dysfunction which further leads toward many other negative effects, for instance feeling fatigued, anxious, and depressed all the time, feeling low confidence related to one's abilities and many more (Maslach et al., 2001). Other argument states that mentally healthy individuals find it easier to cope up with the occupational stress as they respond to chronic stressors in a more positive

manner. They are less likely to suffer from employee burnout (Jenkins & Maslach 1994, Maslach et al., 2001).

2.5   Ethical Leadership

Ethical scandals in corporates worldwide (Mehta, 2003; Colvin, 2003; Revell, 2003) have brought attention to and raised awareness in the organizations to realize the need for ethical leadership (Resick et al., 2011). The corporate scandals concerning ethical conduct have shed light on the importance of the role leadership plays in forming a workplace culture that promotes ethical values and principles (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005). Previous research point to the fact that most employees tend to look outwards for inspiration of moral conduct rather than inside (Bassberg, 1969; Treviño, 1986). Thus, leaders can be a primary and main provider of such assistance and counselling at work (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005).

"Lead them with virtue and regulate them by the rules of propriety, and they will have a sense of shame and, moreover, set themselves right." -Confucius (551-479 BCE)

The importance of moral leadership for leading effectively in the organization has been a topic of interest since decades (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). This concept emphasizes dignity, being well-informed about ethical duties, integrity, inclination toward collectivism in which leader prioritizes gains of his organization rather than his own personal goals, preference for civilized conduct, perceptive and considering of the needs and rights of others, and accountability management (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005; Trevin˜o et al., 2006; Gini, 1997; Fluker, 2002; Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996; Gottlieb & Sanzgiri, 1996). Brown et al. (2005, p. 120) describes ethical leadership as ''the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making''. Basically it focuses on the way managers utilize the given authority by not only practicing the ethical values in their personal life but in the professional life as well. Hence, they are the ethical persons as well as the ethical supervisors (Resick et al., 2006; De Hoogh et al., 2008; Trevin˜o et al., 2003; Brown & Trevin˜o, 2006).

Previous research demonstrates that ethical leaders have some qualities i.e. they are straightforward, just, credible, trustworthy and compassionate (Trevino, Brown, & Hartman, 2003; Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005). They make unbiased decisions and are disciplined in their

approach. This moral and fair behavior of leaders is the core component of moral principles and values (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005; De Hoogh et al., 2008). De Hoogh et al., (2008) labels this core component as the concern for fairness and morality, which is basically a primary concern for an ethical leader. In addition to the component of fairness and morality, ethical leaders are believed to be transparent, they facilitate open communication among subordinates, encourage, promote and reward ethical conduct at work (De Hoogh et al., 2008). De Hoogh et al. (2008) also includes role clarification as one of the imperative responsibilities of an ethical leader, they argue that ethical leader lets his followers know what is expected of them and what their responsibilities entail. They labeled this component as ethical role clarification. Finally, previous research points out that ethical leadership provides employees with voice (Brown et al., 2005). It encourages them to give their inputs while making organizational strategies and decisions. Ethical leaders entertain the concerns and suggestions proposed by their followers. This component can be labeled as power sharing (De Hoogh et al., 2008). This decentralized approach is significantly positively related to employee empowerment at work (Spreitzer, 1995) and high job performance (Becker & Huselid, 1998). Such inclusive processes in the workplace enables workers to find a meaning in their work (Feldman & Khademian, 2003).

2.6 Attributes and Behaviors of Ethical Leaders (Themes across Cultures)

Resick et al., (2011) have explained in his study the six attributes and behaviors of an ethical leader, they have identified six main common themes that have emerged across different societies i.e. the United States (the US), Germany, Ireland, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China. These attributes and behaviors are:

2.6.1 Accountability

The first attribute is accountability, which basically implies ethical leaders show adherence to policies and rules, they take responsibility of their conduct and hold their followers responsible for their actions as well (Resick et al., 2011). They set clear standards and boundaries, and hold their subordinates accountable (Gini, 1998). Resick et al., (2011) defines ethical leadership accountability as following professional guidelines, complying with rules and regulations, promoting ethical conduct in the workplace, taking responsibility and holding personal accountability as well as holding others accountable for their actions.

2.6.2 Consideration and Respect for others

It means being considerate and respectful towards other people at work, behaving with them in kind and dignified manner, being thoughtful, welcoming, understanding, as well as empathetic toward the concerns and needs of others (Resick et al., 2011). The aspect of consideration implies being tolerant, good-natured, helpful of others, protective of staff, and people oriented (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005; Christian et al., 2011).

2.6.3 Fairness and Non-Discrimination

This category includes developing neutral and unbiased organizational strategies, policies, rules, attempting to create just environment at work, and by being in general a just and fair leader to their followers (Trevino et al., 2003; De Hoogh et al., 2008; Resick et al., 2011). This aspect highlights the importance of being un-biased or non-discriminatory leader, who does not discriminate among employees. It is one of the most important features of ethical conduct as previous literature refers to this aspect as the core component of ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005; De Hoogh et al., 2008; Resick et al., 2011).

2.6.4 Character

The character component includes demonstrating integrity, honesty, sincerity, credibility, courageousness, authenticness, transparency, trustworthiness and having self-discipline and a personal moral code (Resick et al., 2011). It explains how ethical leaders lead their followers by example and are ethically aware (Resick et al., 2011).

2.6.5 Collective Orientation

An ethical leader has an orientation toward collectivism which means ethical leaders prioritizes the interests of his team and organization above his own self-serving interests (Brown et al., 2005; Brown & Trevin~o, 2006; Resick et al., 2011). This aspect is comprised of showing a deep concern for protecting the interests of the society and organization and being mindful of the impact the decisions have in the long run. They are responsibility taking and they conduct themselves in a manner that their organizations can rely on them (Resick et al., 2011).

2.6.6 Openness and Flexibility

The final component of ethical leadership according to Resick et al. (2011) is openness and flexibility. This category refers to the quality of ethical leaders of being open to diversity and

different opinions, and by being an excellent listener and communicator (Resick et al., 2011). They encourage and engage in open communication and expect their subordinates to do the same (De Hoogh et al., 2008; Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005). They try to increase involvement of employees in their work by being open to their input (De Hoogh et al., 2008).

The emphasis on these determinants varies across different societies and cultures i.e. western or eastern. Despite the fact these attributes or behaviors of ethical leadership can vary in their emphasis, it can be safely concluded that an ethical leader is expected to exhibit these attributes. This claim is supported by study conducted by Resick et al., (2011), where they identified common themes of ethical leadership across various cultures. The results of the research indicate that character is the most dominant theme of ethical leadership (Resick et al., 2011).

2.7   Work Overload and Emotional Exhaustion

The type of relation employees form with their respective jobs and the problems or hardships that emerge as this working relation start to become worse or even unhealthy for the employees, have been recognized as an important phenomena of the contemporary times (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). The changing working conditions and work overload to be specific is the main source of stress and exhaustion in the workplace (Laurence, Fried, & Raub, 2016). The work overload may occur because of the many reasons, some of them include advancement in the technologies, new and challenging market demands, staff restructuring and adjustments (García-Arroyo & Segovia, 2019), and too much extra work (Ali & Farooqi, 2014). This changing environment of work that involves more challenging and greater demands from employees and especially the culture of work overload has put the employees under so much pressure and affecting their work situation (García-Arroyo & Segovia, 2019). These changes can cause the employees to experience symptoms of stress and emotional exhaustion (Maslach et al., 2001; 2015; García-Arroyo & Segovia, 2019).

Emotional exhaustion is said to be the central aspect of the employee burnout and also the most commonly and widely complained about symptom of the employee burnout syndrome (Maslach et al., 2001; 2015; García-Arroyo et al., 2019). Increased work load and occupational stress has become significant phenomena of the current times as research suggests they have been related to number of outcomes that are of interest to organizations such as job performance, job satisfaction, employee motivation, employee engagement (Ali & Farooq, 2014) and intention to quit (Skaalvik

& Skaalvik, 2017; Huyghebaert, 2018). The findings of previous studies show that exhaustion that employees experience because of demanding and extra workload negatively affect employees' satisfaction, commitment and performance (Paktinat & Rafeei, 2012). The stress at work due to work overload can become a serious and harmful issue not only for the employee himself or herself but also for the organization he or she works at as well which then leads the employee toward lower job satisfaction (Ali & Farooqi, 2014).

Stress that results from various job related elements points to the aspects and elements that job entails, as well as the activities and duties being performed by employees at workplace (Nguyen et al., 2018; García-Arroyo & Segovia, 2019). It manifests itself in the form of both qualitative and quantitative terms, particularly in the case of work overload specific situations related to updated systems with the sole purpose to improve quality, increased reliability on advanced technology to perform job tasks, more challenging training demands and requirements (García-Arroyo & Segovia, 2019). Previous literature reports that work overload contributes to many serious psychological and physical health issues (Maslach et al., 2001; García-Arroyo & Segovia, 2019) such as fatigue, insomnia, tension, anxiety, lower self-esteem and depression etc. (Maslach et al., 2001; 2015). Carballo-Penela, Varela & Bande (2018) describes work overload as a job stressor that refers to such work related situations where job responsibilities surpasses the resources available to perform them (Shrimon, Gilboa, Fried, & Cooper, 2008). On the other hand, exhaustion is among the very first symptoms of burnout syndrome which results due to chronic stress caused by work related stress factors such as work overload followed by feelings of reduced energy (Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Lewin & Sager, 2009; Leiter, Maslach & Frame, 2015).

Intense and extra workload along with chronic fatigue and emotional exhaustion causes employees to be less committed and engaged in their work which ultimately leads them toward poor job performance (Qaiser, Gulzar, Hussain & Shabbir, 2015). Research proposes that employees are bound to feel stressful and mentally exhausted when they are met with this dilemma of dealing with too much work and not having enough resources to perform them (De Jonge & Kompier, 1997; Demerouti, Bakker & Bulters, 2004; Karasek, 1979). Work overload not only adversely affect employee's well-being as well as in the context of work it causes them to perform their job ineffectively, commit mistakes and errors, and make poor decisions related to work. These

negative effects become the reason of their compromised and poor health and well-being (Qaiser, Gulzar, Hussain & Shabbir, 2015).

Emotional exhaustion is not merely something that employees experience but rather it brings about set of actions one take to distance himself or herself emotionally and cognitively from his or her job, most likely to deal with increased work demands that extra workload imposes. Previous research indicates that most of the studies that have been conducted to examine the phenomenon of mental exhaustion was done on the workers who were doing "people work". The people work means employees working in human services and health care, whose job requires them to deal with people on everyday basis (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993; Maslach, Leiter & Schaufeli, 2001). Maslach et al., (2001) reports in his study that emotional work is more draining especially for situations where the role demands from the employees to portray emotions that are not consistent with their feelings. The growing demands of the today's work can cause the employees to feel exhausted and can damage their capacity to respond to the changing needs their work demands. Because of such reasons, employees start to use cognitive distancing followed by feelings of cynicism and depersonalization as a coping mechanism when they feel exhausted and emotionally drained. Exhaustion is the ultimate response of work overload that manifests itself in many forms including physiological and psychological problems that were discussed above i.e. tension, fatigue, stress, anxiety, insomnia, cognitive distancing and so forth (Maslach, Leiter & Schaufeli, 2001; Maslach & Frame, 2015). Therefore, the following hypothesis can be developed:

H1: *There is a significant positive impact of work overload on emotional exhaustion experienced by employees.*

2.8   Emotional Exhaustion and Employee Burnout

The emotional exhaustion represents the core feature of employee burnout. Maslach et al., (1993; 1997; 2001; 2015) mention in their studies three main facets that employee burnout constitutes i.e. exhaustion, depersonalization, and feelings of diminished personal achievements etc. and refer to the emotional exhaustion as the most significant one. Out of all these three dimensions, emotional exhaustion is the most commonly complained about problem of the burnout syndrome. The previous literature suggests that most people who report about being suffered from employee burnout, many times they are just referring to the feelings of experiencing emotional exhaustion (Maslach et al., 1993; 1997; 2001; 2015). Some scholars because of this significant association

that emotional exhaustion has with employee burnout even claim that remaining components do not hold much importance as they seem unnecessary and irrelevant (Shirom, 1989). They have labeled this model as "exhaustion-only" model (Maslach et al., 2015).

Emotional exhaustion demonstrates the stress dimension of the employee burnout syndrome (Maslach et al., 2001) and is considered to be most detrimental component of the burnout phenomenon. It includes feelings of drained physical, mental and cognitive energy and can be manifested in the form of lack of resources one needs to efficiently carry out the assigned tasks in the workplace (Maslach et al., 2015). Previous studies indicate that employees who show signs and symptoms of chronic emotional exhaustion display destructive behaviors, higher turnover ratios, lower job satisfaction, compromised employee engagement and performance, and so forth (Maslach et al. 2001; Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Janssen, Lam & Huang, 2010). Maslach et al., (2001) describe in their study that exhausted employees tend to be less responsive and involved with the demands of their job and have trouble focusing on tasks due to drained out energy levels. A predicament with overwhelming job demands that leads employees towards chronic exhaustion is most likely going to negatively affect one's job efficacy. Further, emotional exhaustion disrupts employees' job effectiveness. It seems hard to have a sense of effectiveness and accomplishment when employees are stressed out as well as drained (Maslach, Leiter & Schaufeli, 2001).

Employee burnout is the ultimate response exhibited by employees experiencing feelings of emotional exhaustion and lack of physical and mental energy (Maslach, 1997; Maslach et al., 2001; 2015). It reflects problematic relationship between workers and their work (Ertop, 2019). When organizations fail to effectively align the structures, processes, and resources with the aspirations and tendencies of employees, they feel tensed that consumes their energy, lower participation, and compromise job efficacy (Maslach, 1997). Freudenberger, (1974) defines employee burnout as "mental and physical exhaustion" that occurs in the work settings. The burnout is described as the feeling of tiredness, weariness, fatigue or exhaustion due to making extreme demands on strength, energy and resources (Freudenberger, 1974). When an employee burns out he or she becomes unresponsive and inoperative in effect and his or her ability and capacity to perform efficiently becomes affected. The intensity of burnout can vary from person to person, and different people can claim different symptoms (Freudenberger, 1974) but emotional exhaustion is always common (Maslach et al., 1993; 2001; 2015). The exhaustion is often accompanied by feelings of frustration

and tension (Maslach et al., 2001; 2015; Ertop, 2019). Employee suffering from burnout witnesses some changes in his or her behavior and finds it extremely hard to hold back his emotions or feelings. The behavioral signs include quickness to anger, irritability, easily snapping out and so on. Even the slightest bit of pressure overwhelms him or her and he or she starts to feel overburdened. Soon the paranoia takes over him or her and all these factors lead the employee toward poor decision making (Freudenberger, 1974) and thus poor job performance (Huyghebaert, 2018), motivation to quit and turnover (Maslach et al., 2001). Therefore, the following hypothesis can be derived:

H2: *There is a significant positive impact of emotional exhaustion on employee burnout.*

2.9 The Moderating Effect of Ethical Leadership on the Relationship between Emotional Exhaustion and Employee Burnout

The leadership style has a significant impact on the effectiveness and performance of the both employees and organization (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Ahmadi, Ahmadi & Zohrabi, 2012). During the last few years scholars have brought attention toward importance of leading ethically (Brown et al., 2005). The leadership plays an immense and critical role in shaping and encouraging ethical environment in the organization. Leaders have a crucial impact in determining the conduct of other employees and even the organization itself and then ultimately on the performance of both employees and organization (Trevino, Brown, & Hartman, 2003; Kanungo, 2001; Aronson, 2001). Most of the subordinates look up to their leaders for ethical or moral guidance. Therefore, it can be concluded that leader is responsible for providing ethical counselling to their followers (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005). Ethical leadership describes the way ethical leaders utilize the given authority as ethical supervisors or managers and ethical employees (Trevin˜o et al., 2003; Brown & Trevin˜o, 2006). Ethical leadership is linked to various significant and positive consequences that are of interest to the organization, some of the outcomes include leaders' effectiveness, employee's contentment related to job (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005; De Hoogh et al., 2008), work passion (Ahadiat & Dacko-Pikiewicz, 2020), commitment (Ahmadi, Ahmadi & Zohrabi, 2012), engagement, readiness to put forward issues in front of concerned authorities (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005), positive employee voice behavior (Walumbwa

& Schaubroeck, 2009), organizational citizenship behavior (Brandon, 2013) and so forth. The ethical leadership has also been linked with employee's overall well-being (Chugtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2014), trust and organizational optimism (De Hoogh et al., 2008).

Ethical conduct by the leaders creates an ideal organizational environment and culture that encourages employees to be passionate and committed towards their work (Ahadiat & Dacko-Pikiewicz, 2020). It is evident from above mentioned positive outcomes of ethical leadership that leaders who prioritize ethical behaviors and practices in the workplace allows employees to exhibit positive attitude toward their job and hence preventing them from experiencing negative feelings and ultimately exhaustion. Previous literature suggests that traits possessed by ethical managers include straightforwardness, trustworthiness, honesty and fairness (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005) and it implies that they genuinely care about their followers and puts great emphasis in trying to live by the ethical standards (Chugtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2014). Research indicates employees tend to trust the leaders who show great concern for their followers and emphasize ethical attributes and characteristics such as transparency, integrity, honesty, fairness, authenticity, credibility, empathy, accountability and so on. (Brown et al., 2005). The trust on leadership is manifested in advantageous consequences i.e. improved employees' behaviors as well as attitudes (Burke et al. 2007) and better job performance (Trevino, Brown, & Harrison, 2005; Neves & Caetano, 2009). Previous studies reveal that employees feel less exhausted and stressed out and have higher level of satisfaction when their leader is ethical. This is because of the reason that an ethical leader acts as a primary source of moral guidance (Mo & Shi, 2015; Sharif & Scandura, 2013; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). As a result, ethical leadership that prioritizes ethical or moral conduct in the organization and gives great deal of importance to ethical behaviors and practices witness a huge amount of reduction in feelings of stress, emotional exhaustion and ultimately burnout among employees (Walumbwa et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2014; Resick et al., 2013). Acting as legitimate and credible role models, the ethical leaders have strong influence on their employees and have imperative role in shaping ethical culture of the organization (Brown et al. 2005, Trevino et al. 2000; 2003). The trust based relationship that an ethical leader has with his or her subordinates (Brown et al., 2005) contribute to increased employees' engagement (Chugtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2014; Chughtai & Buckley, 2011) and reduced feelings of emotional exhaustion (Chugtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2014; Lambert et al., 2012). In light of above arguments, the following hypothesis can be developed:

H3: *Ethical leadership negatively moderates the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout such that when ethical leadership is high then it weakens the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout.*

2.10 The Mediating Effect of Emotional Exhaustion on the Relationship between Work Overload and Employee Burnout

Modern age has given birth to changed working environment and conditions especially the phenomenon of work overload has become so common and alarming for the people concerned. But previous studies on the topic of work overload has positively related work overload with chronic stress at workplace and feelings of severe emotional exhaustion (Laurence, Raub, & Fried, 2016). Stress caused by work overload manifests itself in various forms such as fatigue, feelings of alienation and depersonalization etc. and lead to number of not only psychological or mental health problems but also physical health problems which disturbs the individual's job life along with his domestic life (García-Arroyo & Segovia, 2019). Past research proves that work overload establishes a positive correlation with emotional exhaustion (Abbas & Roger, 2013; Pienaar, Rothmann, & De Beer, 2016). Intense and extra workload accompanied with stress and exhaustion reduces employees' engagement and performance (Qaiser, Gulzar, Hussain & Shabbir, 2015). Employees who are overburdened are more likely to make errors in their assigned tasks, feel dissatisfaction and anxiety, and it further causes work-family conflicts (Galinsky E et al., 2001; 2008; Kalleberg AL. et al., 2008).

Research has proven that fatigue and anxiety caused at work because of reasons such as work overload leads the employee toward burnout. Maslach et al. (2001) argues in their study called "Job Burnout" that exhaustion is mostly experienced with the combination of feelings of alienation and depersonalization which basically works as a defense mechanism for the employee dealing with extra burden that is imposed on the employee. When an employee is exhausted it becomes extremely difficult for the employee to meet the demands of the job and his performance becomes ineffective. The inefficiency and exhaustion comes from work overload and lack of resources needed to perform the task (Maslach et al., 2001). It is very critical for organizations and management to know when employees are feeling exhausted and stressed out so they could take important measures to treat the problem otherwise if left untreated exhaustion can further lead to

burnout as past studies have evidence that exhaustion is one of the main and major symptoms of employee burnout (Maslach, 1997; Maslach et al., 2001; 2015).

There has been tremendous studies done on burnout that states that there are some situational factors i.e. work overload that also correlates to employee burnout. In fact extra workload and strict deadlines are the main reasons of job-related stress (Malach et al., 2015). Especially employees whose jobs are demanding and oftentimes require them to deal with job overload such employees are more likely to experience burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). Employee burnout can have an adverse effect on the employees suffering from it and their respective organizations as well (Buckley & Halbesleben, 2004). This is for the reason that past studies have proved that employee burnout leads to compromised well-being and health, lower commitment, reduced level of satisfaction and performance, and increased turnover ratio (Maslach et al. 2001; Lee and Ashforth 1996). Employee burnout not only takes a toll on employee's personal life but it has serious ramifications on employee's professional life as well as employee struggle with concentration and engagement issues (García-Arroyo & Segovia, 2019). In view of these arguments, following hypothesis can be formulated:

H4: *The emotional exhaustion mediates the relationship between work overload and employee burnout such that work overload leads toward heightened emotional exhaustion and presence of emotional exhaustion leads toward increased employee burnout.*
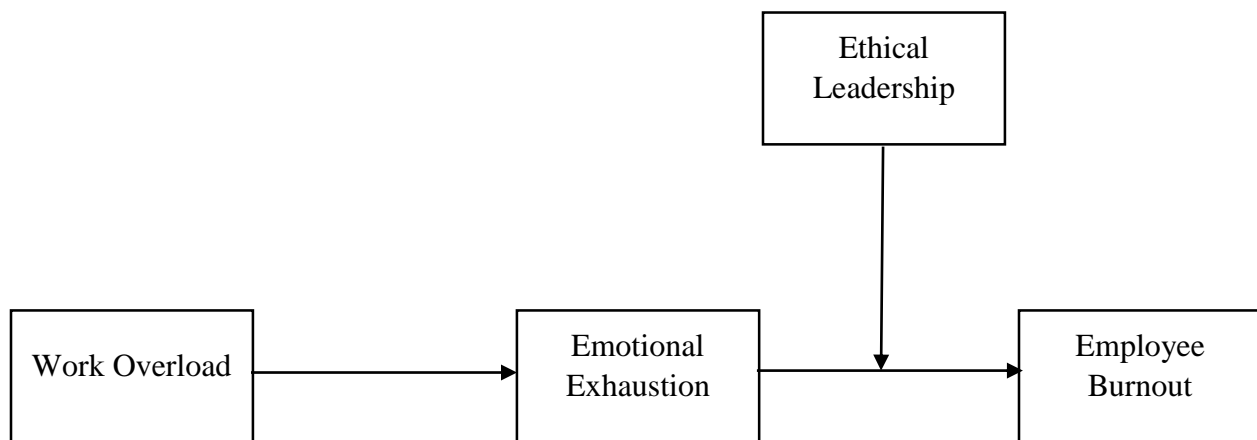
2.11 Research Model

Figure 1: Research Model

As it is evident from the above research model, the work overload is the independent variable whose presence in the workplace causes mediating variable emotional exhaustion among employees. Whenever employees are faced with the dilemma of work overload it causes them to experience feelings of emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion in return has an impact on the dependent variable that is employee burnout. It has a severe impact on the well-being of employees leading them towards burnout. The emotional exhaustion mediates the relationship between independent variable i.e. work overload and the dependent variable i.e. employee burnout. The ethical leadership is the moderating variable which has a negative moderating effect on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLGY

3.1 Nature of the Study

Literature review conducted for the present study that is "The moderating role of ethical leadership in preventing employees' burnout" reveals that previously done researches related to the topic at hand were of quantitative nature. Hence, the current study also aims to follow the traditional approach and research will be quantitative nature wise. Questionnaire will be used in order to collect primary data from the participants who will be the teaching staff working in Public higher education sector of Islamabad and Wah Cantt, Pakistan. This data will provide the basis for the research findings and conclusions of the present study.

3.2 Population Frame

The research has proved that teachers working in a Public higher education sector of Pakistan are more dissatisfied with their jobs as compared to the teaching staff working in a private higher education sector of Pakistan. The stress and exhaustion are the major reasons for this job dissatisfaction (Ayub, 2010). For this reason, the teaching faculty of Public higher education sector of Islamabad and Wah Cantt was chosen as the target population of the study.

3.3 Sampling Technique

The convenience sampling method is used for data collection in this current study. The reason for choosing this type of sampling is the presence of certain limitations in the data collection that are faced such as being a student researcher imposes some restrictions as research needs to be done in

the time period of four months and limited access to the resources i.e. money and so on. Convenience sampling is the best technique to opt for when you have a time and cost constraint as it is saves you a lot of time in collecting data from participants who are easily available to you and is extremely cost effective as well. Thus, making this technique the best choice for student researchers.

3.4 Sample Selection

The data was collected from the 17 Public sector higher educational institutes operating in Islamabad and Wah Cantt, Pakistan, from which 16 institutes were located in Islamabad and 1 was in Wah Cantt.

3.5 Sample Size

The sample size is about 385 at the confidence level of 95% and confidence interval or margin of error of 5%. As the population size is unknown; as there is no data available indicating the total number of teaching faculty working in Public sector universities or higher educational institutes in Islamabad and Wah Cantt, Pakistan, it is safe to take sample size of 385.

3.6 Instrument Selection

The questionnaire used for data collection was subdivided into two parts, the first part was related to participant's demographics and second one consisted of all the variables of the study i.e. work overload, emotional exhaustion, ethical leadership, and employee burnout. The second part was all about these variables and questions related to them. The demographics portion of the survey questionnaire included items such as age, gender, designation, qualification and experience etc. The section after that enlisted all the variables. Work Overload is evaluated utilizing four items derived from Buckingham (2004) scale. The items are assessed utilizing four point Likert Scale response that ranged from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". Emotional exhaustion was measured using 7 items, and employee burnout was assessed with 11 items extracted from the "The measurement of experienced burnout" (Maslach, & Jackson, 1981). The items were listed with 7-point Likert Scale response that ranged from "1= Strongly Disagree" to "7= Strongly Agree". To measure ethical leadership, Brown and Trevino et al.'s (2005) ten item scale was used. In order to evaluate the response given by the participants, five-point Likert Scale response was used in which 1 was for "Strongly Disagree"' and 5 for "Strongly Agree".

3.7 Likert Scale

The Likert scale was used for the adapted questionnaire in order to collect data and evaluate responses, the points ranged from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The middle value in the scale indicated that that option is "Neutral". Including the option of neutral in a scale allows the respondent to express their feelings or attitude regarding the asked question more accurately. The Likert scale gives participants the freedom to express the degree or extent to which they disagree or agree with something. Thus, allowing the researcher to draw more accurate and precise results.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

3.8.1 Primary Data

The primary data was collected using questionnaires from various teachers working in Public sector higher educational institutes in Islamabad and Wah Cantt, Pakistan. The conclusion and findings will be based on data gathered from the participants.

3.8.2 Time Horizon

The time horizon for the current study is cross sectional as the data was collected from respondents only for one time. In order to save restrain from data redundancy and keeping into consideration the time and cost constraint data was collected only one time. Also, as a student researcher it was best to use cross sectional approach due to the fact that respondents would not allow you to meet them for more than one time.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis Techniques

According to the criteria of this current study, regression model that is a quantitative data analysis technique will be used for the evaluation and analysis of results and findings. The software SPSS is used for data entry and statistical analysis of the data.

3.9.1 Instrument Reliability

Cronbach's alpha coefficient in SPSS is used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire used for the present study. It is important to test the reliability of the scale selected for the research to ensure that items of the scale are consistent and coherent.

3.9.2 Normality

Statistical models generally assume that sample data selected for the research is normally distributed. If that assumption is not fulfilled, then the findings and results of the analysis might be unreliable. For that purpose, the normality test is done in the SPSS software so that it can confirmed that data is normally distributed. Shapiro-Wilk or Kolmogorov-Smirnov test are two notable and famous approaches which are used to make sure that data meets the normality requirement. But when the sample size is greater or larger than 300 the Shapiro-Wilk or Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test is not a reliable method to ensure normality of the data. As in our case the sample size is 385, the more dependable way to test the normality is by scrutinizing the statistics of Skewness, Kurtosis and graphical methods i.e. scatter plot, histogram, and normal P-P plot etc. In this study all these measures are looked at to test the normality.

3.9.3 Simple Linear Regression Analysis

The simple linear regression is performed to test the first two hypothesis of the study. The linear regression measures the effect of predictor variable on the outcome variable. In this study, first the relationship between work overload and emotional exhaustion is examined where work overload is treated as the independent variable, and the mediating variable i.e. emotional exhaustion as the outcome variable. Then for the second hypothesis, the emotional exhaustion played the role of independent variable and its impact on dependent variable which is employee burnout is explored. The results of linear regression analysis lets us know that whether the hypothesis is accepted or not, and it also explains the significance of the model.

3.9.4 Correlation

The correlation analysis is used in the present study to measure how two variables are related to each other and it also checks the strength and direction of the linear relationship that exists between the variables. Moreover, it also indicates the significance of the results of the data.

3.9.5 Mediation Analysis

Mediation analysis is performed to investigate and confirm the indirect effect of independent variable on the outcome variable is being mediated through intervening variable. As the model of this study has one independent variable, one dependent and one mediating variable. To test this indirect relationship mediation analysis is run in the SPSS software by using PROCESS macro

and its model no. 4 which is specifically designed to test the mediation effect. This model was proposed by Andrew Hayes.

3.9.6 Moderation Analysis

Moderation analysis is used to make sure that whether the correlation between two variables is moderated by the presence of the third variable. In this study moderation analysis is used with the aim to determine that the relationship that exists between the mediating variable i.e. emotional exhaustion and dependent variable i.e. employee burnout depends on the value of the moderating variable i.e. ethical leadership. For this purpose, moderated multiple regression is run in SPSS software by utilizing PROCESS macro introduced by Andrew Hayes.

3.9.7 Moderated Mediation Analysis

Moderated mediation analysis is done to examine the indirect effect caused by an independent variable on a dependent variable via a mediating variable that varies depending on the value or levels of a moderating variable. In simple words, this analysis analyzes that whether indirect effect is altered as the value of the moderating variable is changing. This study used moderated mediation analysis in the SPSS software using Andrew Hayes' Process macro (process model no. 14).

4. Results and Analysis

4.1   Normality Test

Table 1: **Normality Analysis of the variables**

Variables	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	**S.E**	**Statistic**	**S.E**
Work Overload	-.290	.124	.475	.248
Emotional Exhaustion	-.923	.124	-.360	.248
Employee Burnout	-.158	.124	-1.097	.248
Ethical Leadership	.360	.124	-1.412	.248

Generally to test the normality of the sample data, the Shapiro-Wilk test or Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test is performed. But for the sample data (n) larger than 300, such tests may seem to be proven unreliable. The acceptable value range for the skewness and kurtosis in order for the sample data

to be considered normally distributed is between -2 and +2 (George et al., 2010). Although the statistics for all the variables lie between the acceptable ranges such as work overload has skewness of -.290 and kurtosis of .475. The emotional exhaustion's skewness value is -.923 and kurtosis value is .475. The skewness and kurtosis for the employee burnout is -.158 and -1.097. The ethical leadership has skewness value of .360 and kurtosis value of -1.412. The skewness values for all the variables lie between -1 and +1 and are really close to 0 which indicates data is moderately normally distributed. Hence, it proves that the data is normally distributed.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis is done to measure the internal consistency of scales that have been used in this study. Cronbach's alpha tells that whether the various items of a scale hold any relatedness with each other or not. In simple words, how closely related the different items are. If the value of the alpha is greater than or equal to 0.6 then the scale is considered to be a reliable measure. But it is important to note that, if the number of items (N) are less than 10 then in order for a scale to be considered reliable, the coefficient should be greater than 0.5. Because for items less than 10 it is difficult to get a higher alpha.

The Cronbach's alpha for the work overload scale is 0.623, which indicates that it is acceptable, as the number of items were only 4 (as for number of items fewer than 10, the alpha should be >0.5). The cronbach's alpha for the seven items of emotional exhaustion is 0.968 which implies that items have higher internal consistency. The cronbach's coefficient is 0.926 for employee burnout scale which suggests that reliability is high. And lastly, the value of cronbach's alpha for the ethical leadership is 0.978, this suggests that the internal consistency exists and the scale is highly reliable.

The cronbach's alpha for all four variables' scales of the study is greater than 0.60, which represents internal consistency. Thus, data set can be considered reliable.

Table 1: **Reliability Statistics**

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
Work Overload	.623	.668	4
Emotional Exhaustion	.968	.968	7
Employee Burnout	.926	.926	11
Ethical Leadership	.978	.978	10

4.3 Simple Linear Regression Analysis

4.3.1 Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 1

Table 3: **Residuals Statistics**[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	1.7332	7.4211	5.2998	1.18103	385
Residual	-3.47969	2.51372	.00000	1.24704	385
Std. Predicted Value	-3.020	1.796	.000	1.000	385
Std. Residual	-2.787	2.013	.000	.999	385

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

First, the linear regression is run to test our first hypothesis that says there is a positive relationship between work overload and emotional exhaustion. For this hypothesis, we treated work overload as independent variable and the emotional exhaustion was assumed to be dependent variable. In order to perform the linear regression analysis, there are certain assumptions that need to be met i.e. there should be a linear relationship between variables, there should not be an outlier etc. The minimum and maximum value for standardized residual should lie between -3.29 or +3.29 respectively. The minimum standardized residual value was   -2.787 and maximum was +2.013, which satisfies the criteria that there are no outliers in the data. To make sure that the relationship among the variables was linear, the scatter plot was computed. The following scatter plot graph confirms the linearity among respective variables.
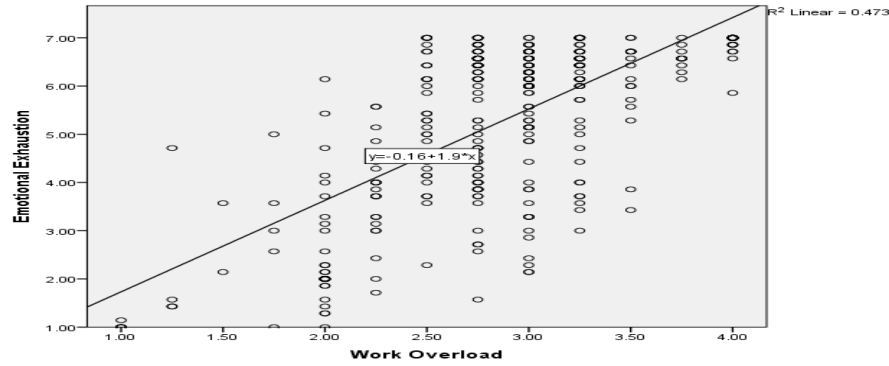
The third assumption is that the data should have independence of observations which is indicated by Durbin-Watson value or statistic. It should be between 1 and 3. The value of Durbin Watson is 1.137, so the assumption has been met. The assumption of normality has also been met, as graphs i.e. PP plot, histogram and scatter plot etc. given below illustrate that data is normally distributed.
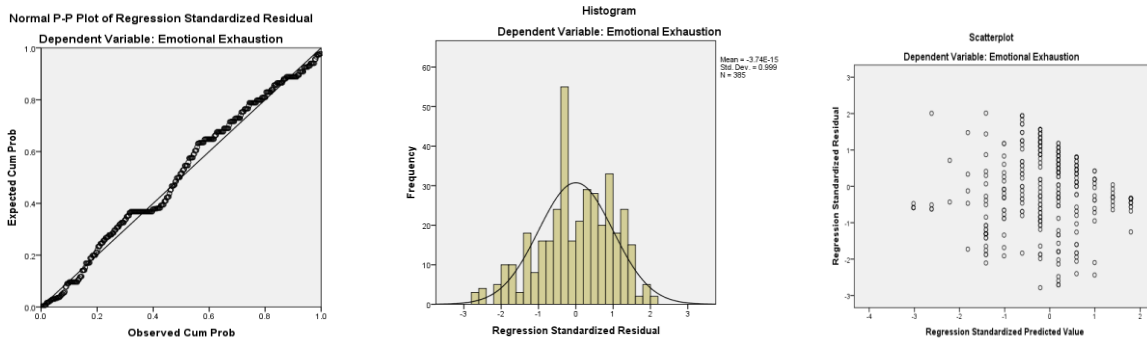
The Pearson Correlation value is 0.688, which indicates that work overload and emotional exhibit a moderately strong positive correlation.

Table 4: **Correlations for Work Overload and Emotional Exhaustion**

		Emotional Exhaustion	Work Overload
Pearson Correlation	Emotional Exhaustion	1.000	.688
	Work Overload	.688	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Emotional Exhaustion	.	.000
	Work Overload	.000	.

Table 5: **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.688[a]	.473	.471	1.24867	1.137

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Overload

Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

Table 6: **ANOVA**[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	535.617	1	535.617	343.527	.000[b]
	Residual	597.163	383	1.559		
	Total	1132.781	384			

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

b. Predictors: (Constant), Work Overload

The R Square (Co-efficient of determination) statistic tells that to what degree a variation occurring in the outcome or dependent variable could be explained by the predictor variable. The value is .473, which means that 47.3% variance in ones's level of emotional exhaustion can be predicted from the degree of work overload.

The significance value (which is also refereed as p-value) is 0.000 which indicates that the variables work overload and emotional exhaustion form a significant relationship with each other, confirming the formulated hypothesis. The p-value or significance value should be less than or equal to 0.05 in order for the tested relationship to be considered significant. The F-value is 343.527 that is extremely higher than 4, which represents the significance of the model.

Table 7: **Coefficients**[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	-.163	.302		-.540	.590
Work Overload	1.896	.102	.688	18.534	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Emotional Exhaustion

The value of standardized coefficient share similarity with the correlation coefficient and the value should lie between -1 and +1. It should be closer to -1, or +1, in order to form a strong relationship. The value is 0.688, which represents the model has a strong relationship. The standardized coefficient beta suggests that for every one standard deviation increase in work overload will be followed by 0.688 of a standard deviation increase in emotional exhaustion.

The sign of unstandardized beta is positive, it means that emotional exhaustion among employees increases as the work overload increases. Hence, it can be said that, for every 1 unit increase in the work overload, the emotional exhaustion increases by 1.896 points.

4.3.2 Regression Analysis for Hypothesis 2

Table 8: **Residuals Statistics**[a]

	Minimum	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**N**
Predicted Value	1.3443	5.7414	4.4954	1.25868	385
Residual	-3.01819	2.09086	.00000	.93886	385
Std. Predicted Value	-2.503	.990	.000	1.000	385
Std. Residual	-3.042	2.224	.000	.999	385

a.   Dependent Variable: Employee Burnout

The linear regression analysis is performed to check the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout. The emotional exhaustion here is treated as independent variable and employee burnout is assumed to be dependent variable. In order to satisfy the assumption criteria required for running the linear regression, first scatter plot has been constructed on the SPSS. The results confirm that there is a linear relationship between the variables, as the line is linear on the scatter plot (refer to the scatter plot graph given below). The minimum standardized residual value is -3.042 and maximum one is 2.224, which implies the data does not have any outliers.
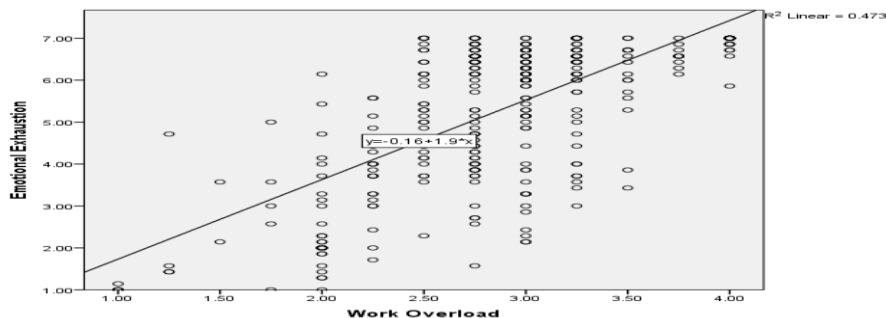
The Durbin Watson value is 1.145, so it can be assumed that data meets the criteria of independence of observations as the value is greater than 1 and less than 3. The normal P-P plot shows that dots are lined up along a 45 degree line that indicates that the data has normality of residuals. The histogram shows that employee burnout that is dependent variable is normally distributed. For normality, these three graphs were constructed i.e. histogram, normal P-P plot, and scatter plot.
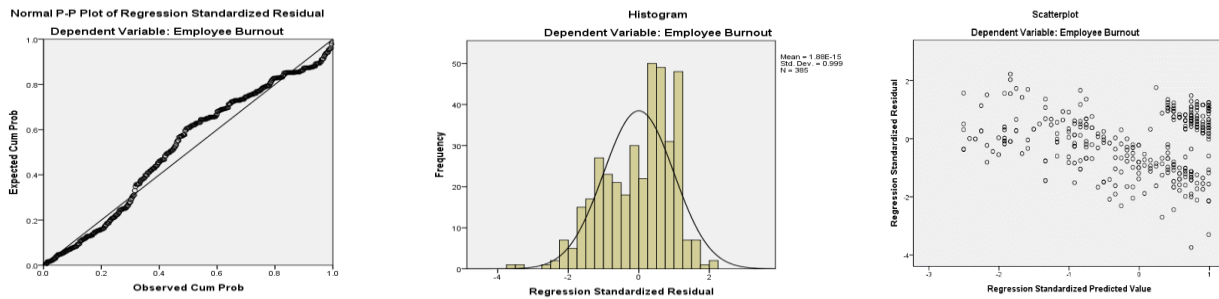
The Pearson Correlation is 0.802 which suggests that higher level of emotional exhaustion indicates increased chances of employee burnout, as both variables depicts an extremely strong positive correlation. The sign is positive meaning that as the emotional exhaustion increases so does the employee burnout. The significance is 0.000 that implies the model is highly significant.

Table 9: **Correlations for Emotional Exhaustion and Employee Burnout**

		Employee Burnout	Emotional Exhaustion
Pearson Correlation	Employee Burnout	1.000	.802
	Emotional Exhaustion	.802	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Employee Burnout	.	.000
	Emotional Exhaustion	.000	.

Table 10: **Model Summary[b]**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.802[a]	.643	.642	.94008	1.145

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Exhaustion

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Burnout

Table 11: **ANOVA**[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	**Regression**	608.357	1	608.357	688.375	.000[b]
	Residual	338.479	383	.884		
	Total	946.837	384			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Burnout

b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Exhaustion

Table 12: **Coefficients**[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	**(Constant)**	.612	.156		3.930	.000
	Emotional Exhaustion	.733	.028	.802	26.237	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Burnout

The coefficient of determination or R-Square is 0.643 that means that 64.3% variability in the employee burnout can be predicted or explained by the emotional exhaustion.

The p value or significance value is 0.000 that means that the model is significant as p value is smaller than 0.005. The F value is 688.375 which is immensely larger value than 4, which again implies the significance of the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout.

The standardized coefficient beta is 0.802, this value indicates a highly strong relationship among emotional exhaustion and employee burnout. By looking at the value it can said that for every one standard deviation increase in emotional exhaustion, employee burnout increases by 0.802 of a standard deviation. The sign of unstandardized beta is positive, it means that employee burnout increases as the emotional exhaustion increases. Hence, it can be said that, for every 1 unit increase in the emotional exhaustion, the employee burnout increases by 0.733 points.

4.4   Mediation Analysis

The process model 4 of PROCESS macro by Andrew Hayes is run to test the mediation effect.

Model: 4

Y: Employee Burnout

X: Work Overload

M: Emotional Exhaustion

Table 13: **Total effect of X on Y**

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI	c_cs
1.7052	.0949	17.9744	.0000	1.5187	1.8917	.6764

Table 14: **Indirect effect(s) of X on Y**

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Emotional Exhaustion	1.1062	.0854	.9459	1.2798

The above table (Indirect effect(s) of X on Y) demonstrates the indirect effect of work overload on employee burnout through emotional exhaustion. The effect (co-efficient) value is 1.1062, and that is significant. Because the bootstrap confidence intervals indicate that both values i.e. lower and upper bound do not include zero, both are higher than zero as the effect is positive (because when the effect is positive and bootstrap intervals are greater than zero this implies that effect is significant). The values are 0.9459 to 1.2798. Thus, it concludes that mediation effect exists and it is significant. The significance value that is 0.0000 also confirms this conclusion.

The "Total effect of X on Y" table 14 shows the total value of co-efficient which is 1.7052. And the indirect effect is 1.1062. The indirect effect accounts for a certain percentage of the total effect that x has on y. In order to understand that, the calculation is done by dividing indirect effect from total effect (1.1062/1.7052=0.6487). The value computed after calculation is 0.6487 or 64.87%, it basically indicates that the proportion of the total effect of work overload on employee burnout that operates indirectly is 64.87%. The remaining percentage that is (100-64.87) 35.13% of the relationship operates directly. So the work overload accounts 35.13% of the outcome of the employee burnout but 64.87% is managed through the emotional exhaustion.

4.5   Moderation Analysis

In order to test the third hypothesis of the study, the moderation analysis was performed using PROCESS macro by Andrew F. Hayes.

Model: 1

Y: Employee Burnout

X: Emotional Exhaustion

W: Ethical Leadership

Table 15: **Covariance matrix of regression parameter estimates**

	Constant	Emotional Exhaustion	Ethical Leadership	Int_1
Constant	.2727	-.0414	-.0657	.0098
Emotional Exhaustion	-.0414	.0065	.0101	-.0016
Ethical Leadership	-.0657	.0101	.0170	-.0026
Int_1	.0098	-.0016	-.0026	.0005

Table 16: **Model Summary**

R	R-Square	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.8864	.7857	.5325	465.7109	3.0000	381.0000	.0000

Table 17: **Model**

	Unstandardized Co-efficient	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	2.6478	.5222	5.0706	.0000	1.6211	3.6745
Emotional Exhaustion	.6453	.0809	7.9771	.0000	.4862	.8044
Ethical Leadership	-.2708	.1302	-2.0792	.0383	-.5268	-.0147
Int_1	-.0637	.0213	-2.9881	.0030	-.1056	-.0218

*Int_1   :   Emotional Exhaustion * Ethical Leadership*

Table 18: **Model Summary**

	R2 Change	F	df1	df2	p
X ×W	.0050	8.9286	1.0000	381.0000	.0030

The above tables show the results of regression that are generated after executing moderation analysis in SPSS. The value of R-Square is 0.7857 which basically means that 78.57% variance in employee burnout is explained by the interaction between emotional exhaustion and ethical leadership. The overall value of significance (p-value) is 0.0000 which implies that the model is significant.

To check the moderation effect, the interaction term is examined and individual values of coefficients and p are usually ignored. The interaction term indicates the interaction between emotional exhaustion and ethical leadership on employee burnout. Emotional exhaustion in this model is assumed to be independent variable. The interaction term is significant which suggests that impact of emotional exhaustion on employee burnout is moderated by ethical leadership, thus confirming the hypothesis 3. The value of significance or p-value for the interaction term is 0.0030 which indicates that this interaction effect is significant. The unstandardized coefficient is -.0637, negative sign implies that when the ethical leadership is practiced in the workplace, it weakens the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout. Hence again, it confirms our hypothesis.

The F value is 465.7109 which is immensely greater number than 4 meaning that model is significant. The same sign of LLCI and ULCI points out that our hypothesis of moderation effect is accepted.

4.6   Moderated Mediation Analysis

The process model 14 of Andrew Hayes is used to test the moderated mediation effect on the model of the study.

Model: 14

   Y: Employee Burnout

   X: Work Overload

   M: Emotional Exhaustion

   W: Ethical Leadership

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

 Emotional Exhaustion

<div align="center">Table 19: **Model Summary**</div>

R	R-Square	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.6876	.4728	1.5592	343.5266	1.0000	383.0000	.0000

<div align="center">Table 20: **Model**</div>

	Unstandardized Co-efficient	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	-5.4626	.3015	-18.1170	.0000	-6.0555	-4.8698
Work Overload	1.8960	.1023	18.5345	.0000	1.6948	2.0971

The above table 20 shows the relationship between independent variable i.e. work overload and mediating variable i.e. emotional exhaustion. The value of unstandardized co-efficient is 1.896 and the p-value is 0.0000 which indicates that the model is significant (these values are same as we computed in linear regression analysis for hypothesis 1). This implies that work overload emerges as a significant and positive predictor of emotional exhaustion.

OUTCOME VARIABLE: Employee Burnout

<div align="center">Table 21: **Model Summary**</div>

R	R-Square	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.8963	.8034	.4898	388.2479	4.0000	380.0000	.0000

<div align="center">Table 22: **Model**</div>

	Unstandardized Co-efficient	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	3.0475	.2366	12.8832	.0000	2.5824	3.5126
Work Overload	.4665	.0798	5.8465	.0000	.3096	.6233
Emotional Exhaustion	.3756	.0365	10.2916	.0000	.3039	.4474
Ethical Leadership	-.5754	.0409	-14.0743	.0000	-.6558	-.4950
Int_1	-.0723	.0205	-3.5280	.0005	-.1126	-.0320

Int_1   :   Emotional Exhaustion x Ethical Leadership

The above given model table 22 shows that work overload emerged as a significant and positive predictor of employee burnout as value of significance (p-value) is 0.000. The unstandardized coefficient is 0.4665 which suggests that for every 1 unit increase in work overload, the employee

burnout level rises by 0.4665 points. The significance value of emotional exhaustion and ethical leadership indicates that both variables are significant predictor of employee burnout as their p-value is 0.0000. The unstandardized co-efficient statistic for the interaction term is -0.0723. The significance (p-value) is 0.0005 which is less than 0.05, thus indicates that the model is significant. This implies that it is evident from the co-efficient of the interaction term (-.0723) that ethical leadership is moderating the effect of emotional exhaustion on employee burnout.

Table 23: **Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s)**

	R2-chng	**F**	**df1**	**df2**	**p**
M*W	.0064	12.4468	1.0000	380.0000	.0005

M = Focal predict: Emotional Exhaustion
W= Moderating variable: Ethical Leadership

Table 24: **Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s)**

Ethical Leadership	**Effect**	**se**	**t**	**p**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**
-1.2388	.4652	.0524	8.8793	.0000	.3622	.5682
.0000	.3756	.0365	10.2916	.0000	.3039	.4474
1.2388	.2860	.0348	8.2274	.0000	.2177	.3544
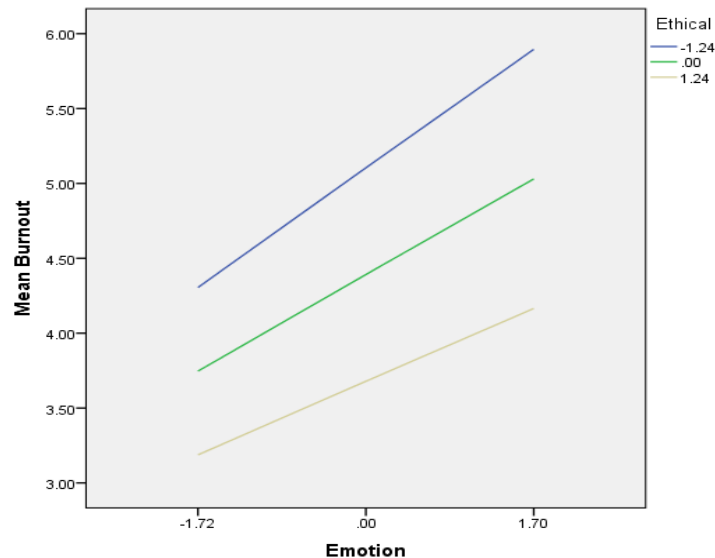
INDIRECT EFFECT:

 Work   ->   Emotion   ->   Burnout

Table 25: **Conditional indirect effects of X on Y**

Ethical Leadership	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
-1.2388	.8820	.0892	.7330	1.0875
.0000	.7122	.0658	.5965	.8533
1.2388	.5423	.0637	.4203	.6687

Table 26: **Index of moderated mediation**

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Ethical Leadership	-.1371	.0331	-.2081	-.0773

The results shown in index of moderated mediation table 26 determines that whether the moderated mediation is taking place in the model or not. In order to confirm this, the bootstrap confidence intervals are examined. If zero falls between lower and upper bound i.e. LLCI and ULCI of the confidence intervals then it infers that moderated mediation does not exist in the population. If zero falls outside of the lower and the upper bound then it implies that moderated mediation effect that's taking place is significant. The values of LLCI and ULCI (confidence intervals) lies outside of the zero or are a nonzero values as the values are -0.2081 and -0.0773, which indicates that moderated mediation effect is significant. As the upper bound (ULCI) is negative it can be concluded that indirect effect through mediating variable is being negatively moderated by ethical leadership. The index value (which is co-efficient value) of moderated mediation effect is -0.1371. The negative sign of index indicates that indirect effect of work overload on employee burnout through emotional exhaustion decreases with higher levels of ethical leadership.

5. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to examine the moderating role of ethical leadership on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and burnout among employees. The primary data was collected and then examined in order to draw conclusions. The sample chosen for the study was teaching staff of public sector universities, as public universities' teachers were assumed to be more prone to burning out because of the demanding and increased work load and they exhibited lower levels of job satisfaction according to research. The data was collected from public

university teachers working in Islamabad and Wah Cantt. The reason data was collected from only these two cities was because of the limited time and resources.

There were four variables in total in the study, and the conceptual model constituted moderated mediation relationship among variables. All four hypothesis were proven to be true after running regression analysis. First, the normality and reliability of the sample data was examined and properly analyzed. For reliability test the Cronabch's alpha was examined and it met the criteria to qualify as the reliable scale. The data proved to be normally distributed and the measurement scales for the variables were reliable. The first hypothesis was confirmed by running simple linear regression, and it was deducted that work overload causes employees to feel emotionally exhausted. Both variables formed positive relationship, which suggested that when work load becomes increased, so does levels of emotional exhaustion experienced by employees. Second hypothesis was also approved as the results of the simple linear regression for the second hypothesis implied that emotional exhaustion is positive significant predictor of employee burnout. For the third hypothesis, the mediation analysis using PROCESS macro was run which is also a form of regression analysis. This hypothesis was also validated as both the confidence intervals (LLCI and ULCI) were non-zero (both were lower than zero means both were negative values), thus, the mediation effect of emotional exhaustion was significant. The moderation analysis confirmed that ethical leadership was acting as a moderator on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout such that when ethical leadership was high it weakened the relationship between the two and when it was low the relationship was stronger. In order to test the conceptual model of the study, which was whether the indirect effect of work overload on employee burnout differs as the levels of ethical leadership varies, where ethical leadership is acting as a moderator on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout, the moderated mediation analysis was performed. The test results indicated that the model was significant. So the conclusion can be made that indirect effect through emotional exhaustion was being moderated by ethical leadership.

5.1　Practical Implications

1. The findings of this study will help the managers to better understand the concepts of work overload and the direct and serious impact it has on the mental health of employees. It will allow them to take necessary steps i.e. practicing ethical leadership, adapting more

employee friendly policies, reducing work load, redirecting focus on creating more relaxed working environment etc. to avoid employees from burning out so their satisfaction and productivity can be enhanced.

2. The research gives insight about how work overload escalates the chances of employees to feel emotionally exhausted. The managers can learn from these insights and can formulate better and effective strategies for their employees in a way that they won't feel stressed out because of increasing work load.

3. It will allow them to formulate better working conditions and policies for the employees so they could feel more relaxed and mentally at ease.

4. The study emphasizes the importance of practicing ethical leadership at the workplace. Ethical leadership has proved to have the moderating effect on employee burnout. So managers can learn from the findings of the study and they can practice ethical leadership to save the employees from burning out.

5.2 Contribution

As far as I know this is the first study that examines the moderating effect of ethical leadership on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and employee burnout. There has only been study done on the ethical leadership and employee burnout and it explored the direct relationship between the two. So this study adds to the knowledge of the effective leadership practices i.e. ethical leadership and improved working conditions that can be applied in the organizations so that levels of emotional exhaustion among employees could reduce and as a result employee burnout.

5.3 Limitations

This research has certain limitations. First, the sample chosen for the study was teaching staff working at public sector universities, and this restricts us from making generalizations about other occupations or professions. Then the data was collected from the public sector universities of two cities of Pakistan only i.e. Islamabad and Wah Cantt, this also imposes some limitations. As there was a time constraint and sample size could not be expanded. Future studies could try to be more inclusive of other occupations and they can reach other cities as well.

5.4   Future Research and Recommendations

The future research can focus on including occupations other than teachers of public sector universities. Both sectors, public and private sector employees could be chosen as a sample to draw more meaningful conclusions and findings that would be applicable on all kinds of employees. That would help managers and concerned organizations in better and more accurate conceptualization of the phenomena i.e. emotional exhaustion and employee burnout. The future work should explore the conceptual model of this research in different work contexts so that external validity of the results of this research can be enhanced. The future studies could conduct research including the sample from all the cities of Pakistan to make the findings more generalizable.

The current study examined one independent variable i.e. work overload that caused emotional exhaustion which was acting a mediating variable. The future research should also explore other determinants of emotional exhaustion and employee burnout that might cause these phenomena among employees i.e. ostracism, depersonalization etc. The present study explored the effect of one mediating variable. Although, the results indicated that emotional exhaustion was significantly mediating the relationship between work overload and employee burnout. But there might be some other variables that might be acting as the mediator between work overload and employee burnout, the future studies should focus on identifying those mediators.

The future studies can be longitudinal study in nature. As the concepts of emotional exhaustion and employee burnout are difficult to assess, studying these behaviors at different points in time would allow to draw more significant and meaningful conclusions.

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Questionnaires

For Work Overload

(Screenshot taken from Buckingham, 2004 study called "ASSOCIATIONS AMONG STRESS, WORK OVERLOAD, ROLE CONFLICT, AND SELF-EFFICACY IN MAINE PRINCIPALS")

WORK OVERLOAD

WORK OVERLOAD is a cluster of items that was hypothesized to meet tests for both face validity and reliability. Cronbach's alpha for this composite was .78. Factor analysis revealed no additional items for inclusion.

WORK OVERLOAD consists of four items:

- Item Gm   *My job intrudes too much on my personal life.*
- Item Gt   *Because of the long hours required by my job, I have little time left for myself.*
- Item Gz   *I often wonder if the long hours involved in the job are worth it.*
- Item Gdd.r   *I find it easy to balance my commitments to job and family. (reverse coded)*

For Emotional Exhaustion

(Screenshot taken from Maslach & Jackson, 1981 study called 'The measurement of Experienced Burnout)

I. Emotional Exhaustion
I feel emotionally drained from my work
I feel used up at the end of the workday
I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job
Working with people all day is really a strain for me
I feel burned out from my work
I feel frustrated by my job
I feel I'm working too hard on my job
Working with people directly puts too much stress on me
I feel like I'm at the end of my rope

For Employee Burnout

(Screenshot taken from Maslach & Jackson, 1981 study called 'The measurement of Experienced Burnout)

I. Emotional Exhaustion
I feel emotionally drained from my work
I feel used up at the end of the workday
I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job
Working with people all day is really a strain for me
I feel burned out from my work
I feel frustrated by my job
I feel I'm working too hard on my job
Working with people directly puts too much stress on me
I feel like I'm at the end of my rope

II. Personal Accomplishment
I can easily understand how my recipients feel about things
I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients
I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work
I feel very energetic

I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere
with my recipients
I feel exhilarated after working closely
with my recipients
I have accomplished many worthwhile things
in this job
In my work, I deal with emotional problems
very calmly

III. Depersonalization
I feel I treat some recipients as if they were
impersonal 'objects'
I've become more callous toward people
since I took this job
I worry that this job is hardening me
emotionally
I don't really care what happens to some
recipients
I feel recipients blame me for some of their
problems

Optional items (fourth factor)

IV. Involvement
I feel similar to my recipients in many ways
I feel personally involved with my recipients'
problems
I feel uncomfortable about the way I have
treated some recipients

For Ethical Leadership

(Screenshot taken from Brown et al., 2005 study called "Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing")

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Table 3
Items and item loadings from exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses

Items	Study 1 (EFA)	Study 2 (EFA)	Study 3 (CFA)	Study 4 (CFA)	Study 5 (CFA)	Study 7 (CFA)
Listens to what employees have to say	.71	.75	.75	.77	.69	.77
Disciplines employees who violate ethical standards	.49	.57	.44	.63	.69	.47
Conducts his/her personal life in an ethical manner	.66	.61	.59	.69	.76	.56
Has the best interests of employees in mind	.79	.88	.83	.79	.82	.85
Makes fair and balanced decisions	.88	.80	.80	.84	.86	.84
Can be trusted	.87	.82	.87	.89	.86	.72
Discusses business ethics or values with employees	.49	.70	.72	.68	.57	.60
Sets an example of how to do things the right way in terms of ethics	.88	.81	.79	.87	.82	.78
Defines success not just by results but also the way that they are obtained	.77	.74	.78	.81	.75	.73
When making decisions, asks "what is the right thing to do?"	.85	.75	.73	.78	.71	.70
NNFI			.97	.90	.93	.95
CFI			.98	.91	.94	.95
SRMR			.04	.07	.07	.06
RMSEA			.06	.08	.08	.06

Note. Standardized item loadings reported for CFA. $p < .001$ for all loadings.

Survey Questionnaire to Measure the Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership in Preventing Employees' Burnout

Dear Participant!

You are requested to fill out this survey form to the best of your knowledge. Your survey responses will be strictly confidential and data from this research will be used for academic purposes only. If you have any queries regarding this research, you may reach me at farihazahra47@gmail.com.

The survey will only take about 2-3 minutes to complete. Your participation is appreciated!

1. **Demographics:**

AGE:	☐ 21-25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 45-50 ☐ ABOVE 50
Gender:	☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other

Level of Education:	☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ PhD	
Designation:	☐ Lecturer	☐ Associate Professor
	☐ Senior Lecturer	☐ Senior Associate Professor
	☐ Assistant Professor	☐ Professor
	☐ Senior Assistant Professor	
Experience (In Years): ☐ 0-4 ☐ 5-9 ☐ 10-14 ☐ Above 14		

	Rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
	Work Overload				
1.	My job intrudes too much on my personal life.	1	2	3	4
2.	Because of the long hours required by my job, I have little time left for myself	1	2	3	4
3.	I often wonder if the long hours involved in the job are worth it.	1	2	3	4
4.	I find it easy to balance my commitments to job and family.	1	2	3	4

	Emotional Exhaustion	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
5.	I feel emotionally drained from my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I feel used up at the end of the workday.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I feel burned out from my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I feel frustrated by my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	I feel I'm working too hard on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	Employee Burnout							
12.	I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	I feel very energetic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal 'objects'.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19.	I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	I don't really care what happens to some students.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	I feel students blame me for some of their problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Ethical Leadership	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
23.	My supervisor listens to what employees have to say.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	My supervisor disciplines employees who violate ethical standards.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	My supervisor conducts his/her personal life in an ethical manner.	1	2	3	4	5

26.	My supervisor has the best interests of employees in mind.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	My supervisor makes fair and balanced decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	My supervisor can be trusted.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	My supervisor discusses business ethics or values with employees.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	My supervisor sets an example of how to do things the right way in terms of ethics.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	My supervisor defines success not just by results but also the way that they are obtained.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	When making decisions, my supervisor asks "what is the right thing to do?"	1	2	3	4	5

Plagiarism Report (Similarity Index Page)

F.z