

## **Mediating Effect of Job Experience on the Relation Between Level of Education and Moral Integrity at the Workplace**

Marvi Makdoom<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Tehzeeb Sakina Aamir<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Independent Researcher

marvimakhdoom.mm@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Institute of Professional Psychology, Behria University Karachi Campus

tehzeebsakina.ipp@bahria.edu.pk

### **Abstract**

*Education plays a crucial role in the individual's critical thinking, knowledge, behavior, values, morals, and integrity and is considered an essential qualification in the workplace. On the other hand, moral integrity is to do the right thing and not to be involved in dishonest practices for personal or further gains, even when not being monitored. he presents study investigated the impact of the level of education on individuals' moral integrity and, later, its reflection in the workplace. This study also investigated the mediation effect of job experience on this relationship. Differences in moral integrity between males and females were further analyzed to compare. For data collection, three hundred and fifty-three executives from different industries were approached through convenience sampling. Data was then analyzed through SPSS 24.0 using inferential statistics. The findings showed that the educational level of employees impacts moral integrity, and the mediating effect of job experience was found significant. Moreover, no gender difference could be found, concluding that moral integrity was equally essential for employees of both genders. The study revealed the aspects that can contribute to the moral integrity of individuals, and education seemed to be the most important one. The study further strengthened the HR department to improve their hiring, placement policies and policymakers to invest in education more to combat corruption and keep moral integrity high among employees. It will also help the originations consider individuals' educational levels before hiring. Furthermore, the present study emphasized the inclusion of moral education from the very beginning, so individuals can understand the importance of morals and moral integrity.*

**Keywords:** moral integrity, level of education, job experience, gender differences, Karachi.

## Introduction

Moral integrity is a virtue (Polowczyk, 2017). Moral integrity, for humans, is essential in all aspects of life whether it is personal or professional. We are also taught to show integrity and honesty as core ethics to live and coexist peacefully in society. Researchers showed diverse perspectives or definitions for it. As Turnbull et al. (2010) defined: Integrity is “wholeness, some unbroken state”. It is a core moral virtue and a base where good character is built. An anonymous author says, “It is a virtue that one acts upon even when they are alone”.

On the other hand, education has a crucial yet essential role in making individuals aware of social norms and values like honesty, ethics, or integrity to prepare them for life ahead (Munro & Kirya, 2020). Moral integrity at work seems important for many reasons to serve the organization in which employees work in teams.

Education enables us in moral, spiritual and all other domains. Educational institutes in Pakistan face influence/interference from external and internal factors. Be it political influence or internal manipulation by the bureaucratic system (Mazhar, 2011) favoritism and nepotism are present in almost all matters, i.e., appointments, promotions, transfers, etc. Due to this, the basic framework of Education and educational institutes has been significantly affected (Lewis, 1987). Proper education instilling moral integrity and the importance of moral values are needed to break the chain of corrupt workplace practices.

It had been shown that higher education, for some reason, seems not only to be able to let you know about one’s academia, but it is also important in professional work settings. Along with exposure, you must let organizations know what they offer (Investopedia, 2022). As stated by Kuh (2010) in “*The Chronicle of Higher Education*”, the study suggested that doing a job or working while studying is associated with having such skills. Preferred by employers, which later leads to learning soft skills like teamwork and time management, etc. Added by Kuh (2010), these further help individuals gain firsthand practical knowledge outside the classroom that suggested that job experience and level of education go hand in hand.

Furthermore, the present study intended to find moral integrity and its differences, if it exists between genders, because moral integrity is important for all, whether male or female and the present study wants to identify. If there is any difference present or not and if yes, which gender shows more moral integrity in professional and personal settings.

The lack of literature on the factor behind employees' moral integrity led to the birth of the present research. The present research, therefore, investigated if job experience mediates the impact of the level of education on moral integrity. A study has found that various factors can influence integrity such as, family values, friends, culture, religion, educational institute etc. And with that thought in mind, the present research looked upon other driving factors playing a part in the increased moral integrity of employees and that is how much educated or experience the employees impact the moral integrity or even if there is any impact present or not and if there is any difference in moral integrity between males and females' employees. As there is scarce research in that area in the Pakistani context, the present study wanted to fill that gap by finding the mediating impact of job experience on the relationship between education and moral integrity. And gender differences in terms of individuals' moral integrity.

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is a relationship between moral integrity, level of education, and job experience.
2. Job experience mediates the relationship between the level of education and moral integrity.
3. There is a difference in moral integrity between males and females.

### **Literature Review**

During the last decade, many corruption cases reported in organizations led to criticism towards education as responsible for low morality and failure to inculcate the value system. Further institutes were held responsible for their inability to instill individuals' moral integrity and good conduct (Ong, 2021; Pfeffer, 2005; Pfeffer & Fong, 2004).

The Role of Higher Education, which focused on the practicality of human cores and moral integrity in a real-life scenario, needs to be explored further. A study done by Arfaoui et al. (2016) studied the effectiveness of an ethics intervention and education despite theoretical courses. Findings revealed consequences of low ethical or moral integrity, which has a long-term impact in practical life and led to understanding and importance of moral integrity.

Pakistan's future generation is directionless due to issues or dishonest practices in education and its system, which has failed to increase the economic, social, and moral grounds of its citizens (Ahmed et al., 2014), which later, can be seen in terms of dishonest practices at work. Almost every educational system worldwide held that view of letting individuals receive basic mandatory education, but if we look deep into Pakistan literacy rate is quite low, Pakistan Economic Survey 2020-21 has disclosed that the literacy rate here is quite stagnant at 60% only and expenditures related to it is decreased into 29.6 percent in 2019-20. And a smaller number of postgraduates 1.91 million in 2019-20 (United Nations Youth Development, 2020) which is much less than 220.1 million of the total population of Pakistan reported by the UN, which also indicated a smaller number of postgraduates in the country.

Another study revealed that individuals who were not taught or displayed moral integrity/ethics in an educational institute might have the same at work (Nonis & Swift, 2001). A strong relationship was found between education and individuals' attitudes toward greed, corruption, and honesty. Moreover, core values are the essence of any culture though these values are inherited from one generation to another, the role of education cannot minimize. What causes this persistence and enhancement of moral integrity is essential at the university level as it will create awareness about moral values and the management of these values, consequently implementing that in the workplace. The individual with integrity will act consistently and speak cautiously and have noble-mindedness. Moral integrity means the wholeness, completeness and intactness of something, which relates oneself to others showing quality (Horowitz, 2002).

Moral integrity is further realized through a commitment to conformity, actions, principles of morality, norms, and rules that show honesty, which later becomes the foundation and core character (Becker, 1998; Huberts, 2018). The

consistency or togetherness of moral character and actions indicates moral integrity. Mitchell (2015) found that one can only act morally or has moral integrity if he/she has knowledge and attitude of morals, so he needs the concept of moral education, which indicates the integrity notion as values' conception, moral and showing the quality of oneself (Mitchell, 2015). Meanwhile, moral integrity is defined as more than the harmony of values, morals, etc. (Dunn, 2009). Global or formal formalities can illustrate the concept of moral integrity. Formal global relatedness is similar to an individual's moral and personal identity so that it will appear as an identity or being known to others, while environmental integrity is more like one's roles and cases (Musschenga, 2002). Integrity is present in the form of academic honesty (Piascik & Brazeau, 2010) moral integrity in the workplace and government (Huberts, 2018) further related to Human Resource Management practices (Noelliste, 2013) and from leadership to decision-making, it is the driving force at work (Gea, 2014; Karthikeyan, 2017; Schuyler, 2010). These studies highlighted moral integrity as an important base for creating ethics and initiatives for performance at work and throughout one's life.

Furthermore, values in Islamic education are evident, prominent, and relevant to moral integrity that makes one grow into a virtuous human, hold high moral values and display consistent behavior as the beloved Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), who was called honest (Sadiq) and trustworthy (Ameen) even by his enemies. Moral education leads to the formation of citizens' moral values and integrity as part of their curriculum in Indonesia (Setyosari & Kamdi, 2021). However, according to one study, the character of individuals' integrity in today's life is developed rarely. He further found that moral integrity and education are more about one moral judgment than his/her reasoning to work in a moral context (Nucci, 2001). Moral integrity is significant to be taught in academic education apart from other norms or values, which helps to develop habits and potential to become good leaders (Lickona, 2004). Moral internalization implies an intrinsic motivation to act morally without considering external sanctions, including becoming a role model for others (Joyce & Weil, 2003).

Sanders (2013) established that instructors often internalize the model teaching methods or show them examples of being morally integrated, and only a few students make their teacher their role model. However, education at schools, colleges or universities leads to teaching or showing positivity behind moral

integrity and honesty, which later contribute to moral education. Park (2019) observed that higher educational institutions identified an education on character and moral integrity strategy, which highly contributed to the individual's moral values and enhancement at the later stages. These strategies include (1) showing models/ character in teaching, (2) forming a healthy/positive institutional culture at work, and (3) developing education programs for teachers in the higher education system (Koskey, 2014).

According to Lickona (2013), an individual can also have moral integrity if he/she has good knowledge, which comes first. Then other stages like honesty or honest feelings, ethics and that knowledge can only come when he/she is educated and highly affiliated enough and knows the pros and cons of beings honest or having moral integrity. The effectiveness and impact of education for moral integrity only appear when good moral knowledge is integrated through learning and educational experience or exposure. Moreover, Orosz et al. (2018) pointed out a positive relationship between academic dishonesty and corruption. While other studies argued that moral integrity is endemic and related to human nature while solving a problem. However, dishonesty and cheating have always been found and recognized in human interactions (Blankenship & Whitley, 2000; Harding et al., 2004; LaDuke, 2013; Nonis & Swift, 2001; Stephens, 2016).

Ariely (2012) stated that dishonesty and lack of moral integrity are common happenings that one might often experience and use different strategies to tackle or counteract them. Every event creates unique circumstances and fine distinctions that lead to new ways to endanger humans' moral or academic integrity (Bertram-Gallant, 2018). Moral values, integrity and ethics are a part of living that can't be separated from one's life experiences (Kang & Glassman, 2010). Moral Integrity and other core values are adhered to by educational practices taught (Han, 2014). Education and moral lessons for change might be intrinsic and spiritual and comes with the internalization of a universal value system (Halstead, 2007). Educational institutes emphasize theoretical and practical ways to promote moral integrity through cultural values, they establish the will to fight against corruption and cheating practices. The will to know what must be important is not enough but doing what is good in your capacity is all that matters (Amilburu, 2005).

As far as moral integrity is concerned concerning gender, one study found

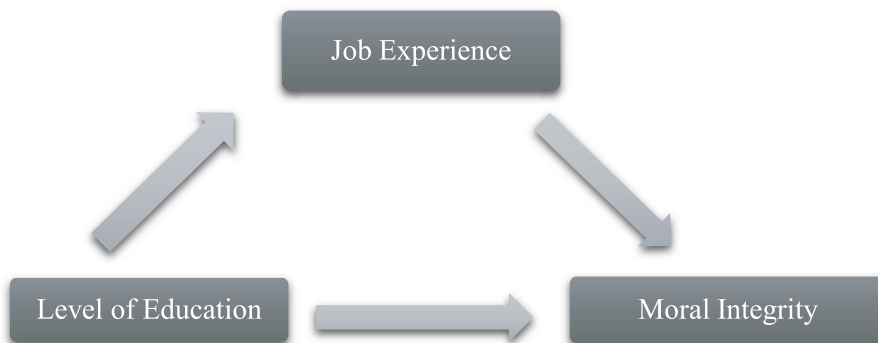
that personal morality differs between gender (Fumagalli et al., 2010). Males and females may differ in moral-related behaviors, i.e. integrity and moral judgments moderately as traditional factors may play a role there (Gibbs, 2021), which further led to the question of whether these differences are present here in Pakistani work culture or not.

The abovementioned literature indirectly supports the idea that moral integrity might be affected by the education one receives which surfaces in the workplace. The present study was undertaken to determine whether there is a relationship between moral integrity and level of education and whether education mediates the relationship. The study attempted to enlighten the said variables in the Pakistani work environment. The present study is important because it gave an overview that an educated individual is important for the job and job-related moral behaviors or even on personal grounds, as such employees contribute to achieving organizational goals. A highly educated individual is likely to bring high moral values, leading to less or no corruption or embezzlement as he would prefer to guard his value system over personal gain.

Literature showed the relationship between educational level and job experience on the moral integrity of individuals.

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Framework*



The conceptual framework shows the mediation relationship of job experience on the level of education and moral integrity, i.e., there might be a

relationship between these variables.

### **Methodology**

The present study adopted an exploratory approach using a quantitative survey method.

### **Research Sample**

A total of three hundred and fifty-three participants (executives) were approached; keeping the anticipated effect size Cohen's  $d$  at 0.5 and probability level at 0.05, the priori sample calculator gave a recommendation of 128 as the sample size. The inclusion criteria of participants were kept having at least one year of working experience with a minimum intermediate education level. Convenience sampling was used to obtain data both physically and online (through Google forms). A detailed sample profiling is showcased in Table 1.

### **Instruments**

Participants were asked to fill out a demographic form, asking for basic information: (1) age (2) gender (3) marital status (4) job designation and (5) educational qualification (6) total job experience.

The moral Integrity Scale (MIS) developed by Schlenker in 2008 was used, having 18 items, including statements (like, "It is foolish, to tell the truth when big profits can be made by lying") which can be marked on 5 points Likert's scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). The Integrity Scale showed strong internal consistency and reliability in previous research, and strong test-retest reliability as well. The current study reported a Cronbach  $\alpha = 0.755$  MIS, establishing the scale as a reliable tool for the current sample.

### **Ethical consideration**

Informed consent was sought from the participants, and they were debriefed at the end of the data collection. They were ensured of the privacy and confidentiality of their information and informed about their withdrawal right. Also, the study had taken the consent of the institution it was being conducted.



## Procedure

Participants were approached in person (46.2%,  $n=163$ ) and through various social media /virtual platforms (53.8%,  $n=190$ ) to fill out the questionnaire. After informed consent, they were assured that their information would be kept confidential and won't be shared for any other purpose except academic one. They were asked to fill out the questionnaire leaving no blanks and later thanked for their contribution to the body of research.

## Statistical Plan

Data were analyzed using SPSS Version 25.0, descriptive statistics, reliability analysis of scale, hierarchal regression analyses, and Pearson Product Moment as inferential statistics were performed to determine the differences, relationships, and mediation effect between the variables under study.

## Results

**Table 1**

*Demographics Profiling of the Participants (n=353)*

<b>Demographic Variables</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	203	57.5
	Female	150	42.5
<b>Education Level</b>	High School	8	2.3
	Bachelors	94	26.6
	Masters/ Postgraduate	251	71.1
<b>Job Experience</b>	2 to 4 years	168	47.6
	5 to 7 years	32	9.1
	8 to 10 years	14	4
	More than 10 years	139	39.4
<b>Marital Status</b>	Married	177	50.1
	Single	171	48.4
	Divorced/separated	5	1.4
<b>Age</b>	21-42 years	190	53.8
	43-56 years	163	46.2

The abovementioned table shows the descriptive statistics of the study demographics. The ages, gender, marital status, job experience and education level of the participants are shown in the percentages.

**Table 2***Correlation Analysis (n=353)*

		Education Level	Years of Job Experience
Moral Integrity	Pearson Correlation	.611*	-.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.030	.459

\*p&lt;0.05

Table 2 shows a significant positive relationship between moral integrity and education level, while an insignificant negative relationship was found between moral integrity and years of job experience

**Table 3***Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Predictors of Moral Integrity n=353*

Model	Predictor	B	SE	$\beta$	F	p	$\Delta R^2$
1	Constant	59.44*	2.26			.000	
	Level of Education	1.80*	8.27	.116**	4.76	.000	.13
2	Constant	59.91*	2.31		.930	.000	.10
	Level of Education	1.88	.821	.121**		.004	
	Years of job experience	-.29*	.30	-.05		.000	
3	Constant	60.67*	2.22		30.47	.000	.179
	Level of Education	1.58*	.800	.102		.009	
	Years of job experience	-.368	.291	-.065		.206	
	Level of Education*Years of Job Experience	2.32*	.421	.282		.000	

Note: (\*) indicating significant values. \*sig&lt;.05

Table 3 shows the summary of hierarchical regression analyses. The first model which indicates that moral integrity can be predicted by level of education was found to be statistically significant where  $\Delta F=4.76$ ,  $p<.000$ , and  $\Delta R^2=.13$ . In

the second model job experience is added along with educational level as predictors of moral integrity, and with  $\Delta R^2 = .10$ , their combined effect explained an additional 10% variance on the outcome which is moral integrity significant affects. In the third model, the previous two predictors were added with the third predictor which was the interaction between these two variables is insignificant as the value of  $\Delta R^2$  is .179 while sig is greater than 0.05.

**Table 4**  
*Difference*

Measure	Group	n	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
MIS	Male	203	64.12	7.557	-0.359	351	.423
	Female	150	64.42	8.271			

Table 4 shows no significant difference as shown in table 0.432 indicating that there is no difference in moral integrity when it comes to gender.

### Discussion

The research investigated the relationship between moral integrity, level of education, and years of job experience of employees. The findings revealed a significant relationship between moral integrity and level of education. The relationship established the impact of the level of education on employees' moral integrity, which aligns with the previous studies. The role of education has always been neglected in Pakistan, leading to a decline in the overall social value system in almost all spheres of life and a decrease in improvement, whether it's related to values or other aspects in all fields of life.

The budget provided in Pakistan for Education Affairs in the year 2022-23 shows a decrease of 1.5 percent, which is 90bn rupees less than that 91.97bn for the fiscal year 2021-2022. However, according to the Labor Force Survey 2020-21, literacy rate trends show 62.8 percent in 2020-21 compared to 62.4 percent in 2018-19, which is only a 0.4 per cent increase and less than other nearest regions (Federal Budget of Pakistan, 2021-22).

Every educational system worldwide holds that view of letting individuals receive basic mandatory education, but if we look deep into Pakistan's literacy

rate, it is quite alarming. Pakistan Economic Survey 2020-21 has disclosed that the literacy rate here is quite stagnant at 60% only, and fewer number postgraduates got the proper degree in any field (United Nations Youth Development, 2020). According to Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, Pakistan is the 20th most corrupt country out of 180 countries in the world (Corruption Perceptions Index, 2021).

As corruption is considered to be the biggest fraud reported in Pakistan when compared to other countries around the world (Rahman, 2021). The history of Pakistan is full of examples from public-sector organizations like the steel mills, railways, post, electricity organizations and public education colleges where mismanaged. Fraud of trillions in organizations is reported every year and employees with fake degrees and many people get jobs through bribes or connections (Tribune, 2022) that also inclined with our findings that educated individuals might not involve in corrupt practices.

According to one report, Pakistan's government airplane organization is not working effectively later reported, employees having low education and fake educational degrees who got appointed by bribery or influences from higher political parties, which led the organization to lose its potential and involved in corruption inside the organizations (Associate Press of Pakistan, 2021).

Researchers argued that dishonest practices in the educational system have failed to increase the economic, social, and moral grounds of its citizens. They also stated that no change in the educational curriculum of Pakistan is also the driving factor behind the lack of values as it is old and compelled toward rote learning without taking a holistic educational approach like developed countries (Ahmad et al., 2014).

It is noted that the main purpose of education is not only to provide our young generation with enough bookish knowledge but also teach them how to socialize or transfer these moral knowledges into others as it has also been seen as a main factor in the creation of moral values among individuals (Iskarim, 2016).

According to Al-Ghazali teachings, it is a process of exercising which can educate and give rise to progressive human values, ethics and behavior so

that education, whether academic or religious, can instigate high moral values (Maragustam, 2020).

Moral teachings are different from rote learning, it refers to the teaching with the cause of developing a strong moral character (Rissanen et al., 2018), which is generally concealed part of the curriculum, it had been identified that educators do promote academic education/achievement and less or no importance to moral teaching and development (Kraft & Austin, 2015; Segev, 2017) which also supported the findings that you do right if you are taught right.

Moreover, Pakistan's Federal Education Commission, Single National Curriculum was announced on February 2020, which includes moral, personal and social development inclusion starting from early level/classes and, according to their official site, was taken by all educational institutes in 2021 into their syllabi (Single National Curriculum, 2020). However, its implications are still practically unknown, leading to the need for practical reform in the curriculum.

A recent study in Karachi concluded that subjects taught to students at the primary level does not have enough moral values and integrated topics and fewer moral-related outcomes were seen among students. Teachers also highlighted low moral behavior shown by students, which included dishonesty, moral integrity, and disrespect for teachers and their fellows (Siddiqui & Habib, 2021) which suggested that higher Education is important and should include moral education in the curriculum.

The reason may not be just one, but the lack of education perhaps vested interests feeling threatened by the "educated" or knowledgeable people who try to find the truth are major factors. The standard and quality of education in Pakistan is the major issue, and many cases of fake certificates and degrees have been appearing in the press during the last few years. Numerous reports indicate the low quality of education, absent teachers, and ghost schools. It is a considered opinion that substandard or no education, disparities in wealth distribution and injustices in society are some of the root causes of unethical social behavior of young people and their mentors.

The decline in moral values has led to intolerance, aggression, and violence among students, like others in society (Rahman et al., 2018).

Research was done to identify the different factors that may cause moral and ethical values to decline among youth found that peer pressure, lack of socialization, media, family, worse education quality etc. are the contributing factors to the decline of these values among individuals (Ahmad et al., 2014).

Highly educated teachers with good moral education may also help individuals to know the importance of moral integrity. As it was found in Africa the likelihood of corruption, dishonesty or low moral integrity might be due to corrupt practices of favoritisms/biases that were shown by teachers or institutional management, which led the individuals to do that same (Kaffenberger, 2012).

Moreover, it also has been seen that academically dishonest individuals often show or engage in behaviors that are counterproductive at work, like misconduct, stealing, dishonesty, noncompliance with authority etc. (Rujoiu & Rujoiu, 2014). On the other hand, higher education has failed to nurture individuals' civic responsibility (Kezar, 2004; Sax, 2000), and further moral education has not been merged successfully as part of the curriculum (Haas, 2005).

Undoubtedly, the significance of higher education in shaping, molding, and forming individuals' personalities and value systems cannot be undermined (Colby et al., 2003; Colby & Sullivan, 2009; Quinlan, 2011). It is the responsibility of educational institutes to not only teach the pupils how to develop moral integrity but also to help them implement it in future in their vocational and personal lives.

The main goal of higher Education is to work development of individuals as morally good citizens with ethical, societal and personal responsibilities (Liddell & Cooper, 2012; Pasquerella, 2019) showing a high level of moral integrity anywhere or everywhere.

Furthermore, a study that was done among hospital professionals found that employees or healthcare professionals showed higher values and gave importance to all values, whether moral or ethical, despite their work experience. Moreover, the study also showed that an increase in years of experience lead to a decrease in

moral and ethical values among nursing staff (Fernández-Feito et al., 2019), which aligned with our findings that job experience alone didn't have any impact on moral values, such as, integrity, which further strengthens our notion that moral values do develop at educational institutes.

Learning and education developing integrity or moral values go hand in hand with the work exposure of employees, which includes internships, and field placements that give rise to experiential learning and a chance to implement the learned knowledge in the organizations, which will bring about tremendous results morally, practically or even professionally as educational institutes have already discussed those ideas at the institute (Kolb, 2014). Another study also suggested that students/individuals look to institutional education to mentor, lead and exemplify integrity (Miron, 2022), which also supported our findings and the mediation role of job experience with education level and moral integrity of employees, means level of education with passing job years may further impact the moral integrity of individuals.

Cultural and religious factors have their part in developing and sustaining moral values. The individual with integrity will act consistently and speak cautiously, give importance to ethics and have noble-mindedness. The consistency or togetherness of moral character and actions indicates moral integrity, and the knowledge that comes with education can also be a driving force toward moral integrity. As highly qualified and educated employees play an essential role in fields of the highly competitive workplace and will eventually lead to productivity (Trel'ová et al., 2016).

Furthermore, the present study also showed that there is no difference in moral integrity when it comes to gender, and both genders have almost the same level of moral Integrity, which aligned with the study done on gender differences (Fakunmoju, 2018; Meriac et al., 2009) in terms of morality. Moreover, a series of studies that Harvard did found that women have more morality and show higher moral integrity than men and two studies of those stated that situational factors like incentives or higher financial gains might decrease the difference between gender and both genders might show the same or less level of ethical or moral behavior (Kennedy et al., 2017).

Different research showed different results, some showed differences between genders do exist in terms of Integrity (Huang & Hung, 2013); that study also found that females show high integrity in an overall setting while males show integrity under conformity or peer/employee pressure and cultural might also influence individuals' integrity. Adding to the finding that integrity is interpreted as maintaining good or healthy association with other employees and increasing one's value as one is considered a genuine person if someone shows high integrity despite of gender one belongs (Koehn, 2005), which proves that integrity is important for everyone.

### **Limitations**

The present study had some limitations which are stated below:

Firstly, it was entirely quantitative research and data was collected using a survey which itself has some limitations like the social desirability effect. A triangulation approach of gathering some qualitative data could enhance the quality of the research and provide in-depth insights into the findings. Data was collected from Karachi only, although a metropolitan city represents well the entire population, results could be more generalized if data could be collected from some other cities of Pakistan. It should be noted that 53.8% of data was collected online as the study was carried out during the Covid'19 pandemic situations, which might have affected the outcomes as that was a time of high job insecurity, fear, and stress.

### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

It is recommended for the future study to approach a diversified sample by collecting data from other cities as well, for more generalizability of the results. Certain organizational variables like culture, structure, and job type could also be stronger variables to impact these relationships; a future study including these could be a step ahead of the present study.

The present study's findings can set guidelines, especially for the Pakistani HR fraternity to include moral integrity assessment as part of their recruitment and placements process. HR must take steps to inculcate moral values as part of their culture in true spirit. This study would help organizations to consider the level of education necessary for individuals while hiring as the requirement of the job if they want to develop a moral-ethical culture. Organizations must also value the



employees who are working with them for a longer period as their experience mediates the relationships between level of education and moral integrity. Findings can further help the government policymakers to revise and review the curriculum embedded with moral values from the early years of education and also work on practical reforms in the development of moral education, as earliest as possible to yield better results.

Among the various factors playing a role in employees' moral integrity, employees' educational level was shown to be more significant and the present study showed that work experience somehow also showed significance. A significant relationship between education level and moral integrity revealed that employees with education hold high moral values. No difference in moral integrity has been seen between genders, which showed its equal importance for all. Hence, it is concluded that education plays a significant role in individuals' moral values i.e., moral integrity, which made moral education and its development important for all of us. Having high moral integrity and honesty go a long way.

### References

- Ahmad, I., Ali, A., Khan, I., & Khan, F. A. (2014). Critical analysis of the problems of education in Pakistan: Possible solutions. *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education*, 3(2), 79-84. DOI:10.11591/ijere.v3i2.1805
- Amilburu, M. G. (2005). Literatura, virtudes y educación moral. *Bordón: Revista de pedagogía*, 57(5), 609-622.
- Arfaoui, F., Damak-Ayadi, S., Ghram, R., & Bouchekoua, A. (2016). Ethics education and accounting students' level of moral development: Experimental design in Tunisian audit context. *Journal of business ethics*, 138(1), 161-173. DOI:10.1007/s10551-015-2643-zhttp://www.jstor.org/stable/24755822
- Ariely, D., & Jones, S. (2012). *The (honest) truth about dishonesty* (pp. 30367-0). New York: Harper Collins Publishers.
- Associate Press of Pakistan, 2021. Retrieved from: <https://www.app.com.pk/national/700-pia-employees-possessing-fake-degrees-terminated-so-far-senate-told/>
- Becker, T. E. (1998). Integrity in organizations: Beyond honesty and conscientiousness. *The Academy of Management Review*, 23(1), 154–161. <https://doi.org/10.2307/259104>
- Bertram-Gallant, T. (2018). Part-time integrity? Contingent faculty and academic integrity. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, (183), 45-54.<https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20316>

- Blankenship, K. L., & Whitley, B. E., Jr. (2000). Relation of general deviance to academic dishonesty. *Ethics & Behavior*, 10(1), 1–12. [https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327019EB1001\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327019EB1001_1)
- Colby, A., and Sullivan, W. M. (2009). Strengthening the foundations of students' excellence, integrity, and social contribution. *Lib. Education*, 95(1), 22–29. Retrieved from: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ861148.pdf>
- Colby, A., Ehrlich, T., Beaumont, E., and Stephens, J. (2003). *Educating Citizens: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Retrieved from: <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.3239521.0010.107>
- Corruption Perception Index 2021, *Transparency International*, retrieved from <https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/pakistan>
- Dunn, P. C. (2009). Integrity matters. *European Pharmaceutical Contractor*, AUTUMN, 114–117.
- Education Budget Cuts. (2022). *Propakistani* retrieved from: <https://propakistani.pk/2022/06/12/govt-cuts-education-budget-by-1-5/#:~:text=74.609%20billion%20has%20been%20allocated,for%202021%2D22%2C%20Rs.>
- Fakunmoju, S. (2018). Work ethic and life satisfaction among social workers in Massachusetts: the moderating effect of gender. *Human Service Organizations: Management, Leadership & Governance*. DOI: 42. 10.1080/23303131.2018.1464994.
- Federal budget Pakistan. (2021-2022) retrieved from: [https://www.finance.gov.pk/budget/Budget\\_2021\\_22/11\\_4\\_Demands\\_for\\_Grants\\_Appropriations\\_Dev\\_Exp\\_Vol\\_IV\\_2021\\_22.pdf](https://www.finance.gov.pk/budget/Budget_2021_22/11_4_Demands_for_Grants_Appropriations_Dev_Exp_Vol_IV_2021_22.pdf)
- Fernández-Feito, A., Palmeiro-Longo, M. D. R., Hoyuelos, S. B., & García-Díaz, V. (2019). How work setting and job experience affect professional nurses' values. *Nursing Ethics*, 26(1), 134-147. Doi: 10.1177/0969733017700238.
- Fumagalli, M., Ferrucci, R., Mameli, F., Marcegaglia, S., Mrakic-Spota, S., Zago, S., ... & Priori, A. (2010). Gender-related differences in moral judgments. *Cognitive Processing*, 11, 219-226. Doi: 10.1007/s10339-009-0335-2.
- Gea, A. A. (2014). Integritas personal dan kepemimpinan etis. *Humaniora*, 5(2), 950-959. <https://doi.org/10.21512/humaniora.v5i2.3197>
- Gibbs, J. (2021). Gender differences in moral judgment and behavior. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Psychology*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190236557.013.527>
- Haas, A. (2005). Now is the time for ethics in education. *CPA Journal*, 75(6) 66.
- Halstead, J. M. (2007). Islamic values: A distinctive framework for moral education?

- Journal of Moral Education*, 36(3), 283-296. DOI:10.1080/03057240701643056
- Harding, T. S., Passow, H. J., Carpenter, D. D., & Finelli, C. J. (2004). An examination of the relationship between academic dishonesty and professional behavior. *Antennas Propagation Magazine, IEEE* 46. <https://doi.org/10.1109/MAP.2004.1388860>
- Horowitz, M. (2002). Defining character integrity. *J Am Psychoanal Assoc.*50(2):551-73. Doi: 10.1177/00030651020500021601. PMID: 12206543
- Huberts, L. W. J. C. (2018). Integrity: What it is and why it is Important. *Public Integrity*,20(1), 18–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10999922.2018.1477404>
- Investopedia. (2022). Understanding income equality. “Education vs. Experience: Which one gets the job?” *INVESTOPEDIA*, Retrieved from: <https://www.investopedia.com/financial-edge/0511/work-experience-vs.-education-which-lands-you-the-best-job.aspx>
- Iskarim, M. (2016). Dekadensi moral di kalangan pelajar (Revitalisasi strategi pai dalam menumbuhkan moralitas generasi bangsa). *Jurnal Edukasia Islamika: Vol I, 1438*.
- Joyce, B, & Weil, M. (2003). *Model of Teaching (Fifth Edition)*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited
- Kaffenberger, M. (2012). The effect of educational attainment on corruption participation in sub-Saharan Africa (*Doctoral dissertation*).
- Kang, M. J., & Glassman, M. (2010). Moral action as social capital, moral thought as cultural capital. *Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240903528592>
- Karthikeyan, P. C. (2017). A meta analytical study on leadership integrity: A leadership ethics perspective. *International Journal of Management, IT and Engineering*, 7(4), 240–263. Retrieved from: <http://www.ijmra.us>.
- Kennedy, J.A., Kray, L.J., & Ku, G. (2017). A social-cognitive approach to understanding gender differences in negotiator ethics: The role of moral identity. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 138, 28-44.
- Kezar, A. J. (2004). Obtaining integrity? Reviewing and examining the charter between higher education and society. *Rev. High. Educ.* 27(4), 429–459. DOI: 10.1353/rhe.2004.0013
- Koehn, D. (2005). Integrity as a Business Asset. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 58(1), 125–136. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-005-1391-x>
- Kolb, D. A. (2014). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the source of Learning and Development* Second Edition. FT press.
- Koskey, J. (2014). The centrality of character and integrity education in kenya’s institutions of higher learning. *Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary*

- Research*, 2(1), 47–56. <http://oaji.net/articles/2014/1543-1418694306.pdf>
- Kraft, C. R., & Austin, K. (2015). The character of achievement: an analysis of teachers' instructional practices for character education. *Journal of Character Education*, 3(2), 109-128.
- Kuh, G. D. (2010). "Maybe experience really can be the best teacher." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Available at: <https://www.chronicle.com/article/maybe-experience-really-can-be-the-best-teacher/>
- LaDuke, R. D. (2013). Academic dishonesty today, unethical practices tomorrow? *Journal of Prof Nursing*, 29(6), 402-406. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.profnurs.2012.10.009>
- Lewis, H. B. (1987). Introduction: Shame—the “sleeper” in psychopathology. In H. B. Lewis (Ed.), *The Role of Shame in Symptom Formation* (pp. 1–28). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Lickona, T. (2004). *Character matters: How to help our children develop good judgment, integrity, and other essential virtues*. Simon and Schuster.
- Lickona, T. (2013). Education for Character Mendidik untuk Membentuk Karakter Bagaimana Sekolah dapat Mengajarkan Sikap Hormat dan Tanggung Jawab. Pemenang Christopher Award 1992. Penerjemah: Juma Abdu Wamaungo. Editor Ahli: Uyu Wahyudin.
- Liddell, D., & Cooper, D. (2012). Moral development in higher education. *New Directions for Student Services*, 139, 1–12. DOI:10.1002/SS.20018
- Maragustam, S. (2020). Filsafat pendidikan islam menuju pembentukan karakter. *In Inspiratif Pendidikan* (Vol. 6, Issue 2). <https://doi.org/10.24252/ip.v6i2.5231>
- Mazhar, H. (2011). Good supervision key to quality education. *The Dawn, Karachi*, 23.
- Meriac, J. P., Poling, T. L., & Woehr, D. J. (2009). Are there gender differences in work ethic? An examination of the measurement equivalence of the multidimensional work ethic profile. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 47(3), 209–213. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2009.03.001>
- Miron, J. (2022). Academic integrity in work-integrated learning (wil) settings. in: Eaton, S.E., Christensen Hughes, J. (eds) *Academic Integrity in Canada. Ethics and Integrity in Educational Contexts*, 1. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83255-1\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-83255-1_12)
- Mitchell, L. A. (2015). Integrity and virtue: The forming of good character. *Linacre Quarterly*, 82(2), 149–169. <https://doi.org/10.1179/2050854915Y.0000000001>
- Munro, C. & Kirya, M. (2020) Values education for public integrity. Bergen: U4 Anti-Corruption Resource Centre, Chr. Michelsen Institute (U4 Issue 2020:8)
- Musschenga, A.W. (2002). Integrity - personal, moral, and professional. In: Musschenga,

- A.W., van Haaften, W., Spiecker, B., Slors, M. (eds) Personal and Moral Identity. *Library of Ethics and Applied Philosophy, vol. 11*. Springer, Dordrecht. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-015-9954-2\\_8](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-015-9954-2_8)
- Noelliste, M. (2013). Integrity: An intrapersonal perspective. *Human Resource Development Review, 12*(4), 474–499. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484313492333>
- Nonis, S., Swift, C. O. (2001). An examination of the relationship between academic dishonesty and workplace dishonesty: a multi-campus investigation. *Journal of Educational Business, 77*(2), 69-77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08832320109599052>
- Nucci, L. P. (2001). Education in the moral domain. *Cambridge University Press* (Vol. 39, Issue 04). <https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.39->
- Ong, L. T. (2021). Overcoming shortage of second-career academics in business schools. In *SHS Web of Conferences* (Vol. 124, p. 11003). EDP Sciences. Doi. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202112411003>
- Orosz, G., Tóth-Király, I., Bóthe, B., Paskuj, B., Berkics, M., Fülöp, M., & Roland-Lévy, C. (2018). Linking cheating in school and corruption. *European Review of Applied Psychology, 68*(2), 89-97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erap.2018.02.001>
- Park, G. Y. (2019). Contents for integrity education at the elementary school in South Korea using 4 components theory of morality made by J. Rest. *The Journal of the Korea Contents Association, 19*(11), 653-663.
- Pasquerella, L. (2019). The purpose of higher education and its future. *Liberal Education, 105*(3-4), 2-3. <https://www.aacu.org/liberaleducation/2019/summer-fall/president>
- Pfeffer, J. (2005). Why do bad management theories persist? A comment on Ghoshal. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 4*(1), 96-100. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amle.2005.16132570>
- Pfeffer, J., & Fong, C. T. (2004). The business school ‘business’: Some lessons from the US experience. *Journal of Management Studies, 41*(8), 1501–1520. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2004.00484.x>
- Piasek, P. and Brazeau, G.A. (2010), “Promoting a culture of academic integrity”, *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, Vol. 74 No. 6, p. 113, Doi: 10.5688/aj7406113.
- Polowczyk, P. Ł. (2017). Organizational ethical integrity: Good and bad illusions. *Palgrave Communications, 3*(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-017-0044-x>
- Quinlan, K. M. (2011). Developing the whole student: leading higher education initiatives that integrate mind and heart. *London: Leadership Foundation for Higher Education*. Retrieved from: <https://kar.kent.ac.uk/id/eprint/60322>
- Rahman, A. 2021, A critical review of fraud discourse – A case study of pakistan, *ECOSAI*

- Circular Spring Issue*. Retrieved from: [http://www.ecosai.org.pk/docs/circulars/ECOSAI%20Circular%20\(Spring\)%202021.pdf](http://www.ecosai.org.pk/docs/circulars/ECOSAI%20Circular%20(Spring)%202021.pdf)
- Rahman, A., Aftab, S., & Khan, U. A. (2018). Effective moral ethics education at the undergraduate level in Pakistan: The role of curriculum. *The International Research Journal of Usooluddin*, 2(1), 1-11.
- Rissanen, I., Kuusisto, E., Hanhimäki, E., & Tirri, K. (2018). The implications of teachers' implicit theories for Moral Education: A case study from Finland. *Journal of Moral Education*, 47(1), 63-77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057240.2017.1374244>
- Rujoiu, O., and Rujoiu, V. (2014). Academic dishonesty and workplace dishonesty: an overview. *Proc. Int. Manage. Conf.* 8, 928–938. <http://conferinta.management.ase.ro/archives/2014/pdf/91.pdf>
- Sax, L. J. (2000). "Citizenship development and the American college student," in *Civic Responsibility and Higher Education*, ed. T. Ehrlich (Westport, CT: The American Council on Education and The Onyx Press), 3–18. DOI:10.1002/IR.110
- Schlenker, B. R. (2008). Integrity and character: Implications of principled and expedient ethical ideologies. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 27(10), 1078 – 1125. DOI: 10.1521/jscp.2008.27.10.1078 1591/ijere. v3i2.1805
- Schuyler, K. G. (2010). Increasing leadership integrity through mind training and embodied learning. *Consulting Psychology Journal*, 62(1), 21–38. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018081>
- Segev, A. (2017). Does classic school curriculum contribute to morality? Integrating school curriculum with moral and intellectual education. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 49(1), 89-98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2016.1194736>
- Setyosari, P., & Kamdi, W. (2021). Exploration of moral integrity education and superior cadre leadership at madrasah boarding school Indonesia. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(4), 753-774. DOI:10.29333/iji.2021.14443a.
- Siddiqui, R., & Habib, Z. (2021). Moral education at primary level in selected private schools of karachi: role of teachers and parents. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 9(2), 59–73. <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2021.0901.0113>
- Single National Curriculum, 2020. Ministry of Federal Education Pakistan.  
Retrieved From: <http://www.mofept.gov.pk/ProjectDetail/MzkyNdc2MjMtY2VjYy00ZDA4LTk5OTUtNzUyNDI3ZWZmZmZm>
- Stephens, J. M. (2016). *Creating cultures of integrity: a multilevel intervention model for promoting academic honesty*. In: Bretag T (ed) Handbook of academic integrity (First, pp. 995–1008). Springer, Singapore. DOI:10.1007/978-981-287-098-8\_13
- Turnbull, J., Lea, D., Parkinson, D., Phillips, P., Francis, B., Webb, S., ... & Ashby, M.

- (2010). Oxford advanced learner's dictionary. *International Student's Edition*.  
<https://doc1.bibliothek.li/aav/FLMA142353.pdf>
- Treřová, S., & Olřavský, F. (2016). The impact of education on employees productivity and job satisfaction. In *ICERI2016 Proceedings* (pp. 2053-2058). IATED. 2053-2058. Doi: 10.21125/iceri.2016.1462.
- Tribune (2022). <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2240712/crisis-decision-making-real-test>
- United Nation Youth Development, (2020) retrieved from <https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/>