

# RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PRINCIPALS' ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE AND TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship among principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and teachers' organizational cynicism at selected high schools in Indaw Township. In this study, a mixed methods approach was used. Quantitative data were collected through three instruments; (i) "*Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS)*" developed by Yilmaz (2006, as cited in Karaköse, 2007) to find out teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, (ii) "*Organizational Justice Scale*," developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993, as cited in Polat 2007) and adapted by Polat (2007) to measure teachers' perception of principals' organizational justice and (iii) "*Organizational Cynicism Scale*" developed by Brandes, Dharwadkar and Dean (2000, as cited in Gerald, 2002) to explore teachers' organizational cynicism. The sample involved 233 teachers from seven selected high schools identified through a purposive sampling process. In order to gather qualitative data, structured interviews were conducted with 24 teachers from four selected high schools. The findings of this study revealed that teachers' perception of principals' "ethical leadership" was positively and highly correlated to teachers' perception of principals' "organizational justice" ( $r=0.934, p<0.01$ ) while it was negatively and highly correlated to teachers' "organizational cynicism" ( $r=-0.669, p<0.01$ ). Similarly, there was also a negatively and highly correlation between teachers' perception of principals' "organizational justice" and their "organizational cynicism" ( $r=-0.658, p<0.01$ ). The qualitative data provided by interviews with teachers were consistent with the findings of quantitative findings. In line with the results, the more principals perform ethical leadership practices in schools, the more their organizational justice increases, and the fewer teachers' organizational cynicism decreases. Therefore, principals should manage and lead the schools ethically. Moreover, a replication of this study should be conducted in other townships.

**Keywords:** Ethical Leadership, Organizational Justice, Organizational Cynicism

## Introduction

With the vision of creating an education system that will generate a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the Knowledge Age, the newly democratic government of Myanmar has also made the education system as national priority. One of the important factors affecting the success of educational institution today is the skills and abilities that the managers have (Demirçelik & Korkmaz, 2017). Since schools are structurally open systems, ethics in school administration is far more important (Özan, Özdemir, & Yirci, 2017).

Research on ethical leadership lagged behind other subjects for most of the past half century (Cuilla, 1998, as cited in Yukl, Mahsud, Hassan & Prussia, 2013), but in the past decade, interest in studying the antecedents, outcomes, and processes of ethical leadership has been growing steadily. In the 1970s and 1980s, interest in the moral dimensions of educational administration grew out (Langlois, Lapointe, Valois, & Leeuw, 2014). Aydın (2001, as cited in Uğurlu & Sincar, 2012) evaluated principals' ethical behaviors under the headings of ethical principles such as observance, justice, responsibility, honesty, democracy, respect. Similarly, Karaköse (2007), Katranci, Sungu and Saglam (2015) and Özan et al. (2017) studied school principals' ethical leadership behaviors from teachers' point of view. In addition, when the field literature is studied, some relations are observed between the ethical leadership behaviors and the organizational justice.

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Most studies recently conducted on the construct organizational justice indicate that it has an impact on organizational outcomes such as employee motivation, commitment, satisfaction, talent attraction and retention, employee and organizational performance leadership, diversity management and ethical behavior (Cropanzano, Bowen, & Gilliland, 2007, as cited in Ledimo, 2015). Therefore, educational institutions are concerned with applying organizational justice in order to achieve important administrative gains, such as strengthening the professionalism of teachers (Dipaola & Guy 2009, as cited in Aldaihani & Alansari, 2016).

Again, organizational cynicism researches started to improve at the end of 1980 and the beginning of 1990 (James, 2005, as cited in Mete, 2013). Cynicism is a notable concept in recent years in the literature of educational administration. Investigating the concept of cynicism that reflects negative attitudes and working to solve it, is important for the organizations (Demirçelik & Korkmaz, 2017). Levent and Keser (2016) examined the organizational cynicism among teachers at schools by using mixed methods approach. In addition, Polat (2013), Polatcan and Titrek (2013) and Yüксе and Şahin (2017) have studied teachers' organizational cynicism relation to other variables.

Bağrıyanık and Can (2017) examined the relationship among three variables under the heading of "The relation between teachers' perception of ethical leadership, organizational justice and organizational cynicism". The current study tried to replicate the original study of Bağrıyanık and Can (2017). However, this study is not carried out identically with the original study. In original study, only quantitative method was used but the current study was conducted by using quantitative and qualitative methods. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, in combination, provides a better understanding of the research problem and question than either method by itself (Creswell, 2012). Thus, the present study will provide rich information related to ethical leadership, organizational justice and organizational cynicism. In addition, the results from this study may be important in creating effective education system in Myanmar. It mainly intends to investigate the relation between high school teachers' perception of ethical leadership, organizational justice and organizational cynicism.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to examine the relationships among high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism at Basic Education High Schools in Indaw Township.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the levels of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and teachers' organizational cynicism perceived by high school teachers?
2. Are there any significant relationships between high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism?
3. Are there any predicting relations between high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism?

### **Limitations of the Study**

1. The scope of this study is limited to Basic Education High Schools in Indaw Township because this study was based on the available time and resources of the researcher.
2. The sample schools were those schools in which the principals had at least one year of administrative service at the current schools.
3. The findings may not be generalized to any other schools except the high schools in Indaw Township.

### Definitions of Key Terms

In order to provide an understanding of the concepts and terms related to this study, the following definitions are provided.

- **Ethical Leadership:** Ethical leadership is "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" (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005: 120).
- **Organizational Justice:** Organizational justice is defined as an individual's perceptions of fairness within an organization (Greenberg, 1990, as cited in Thorn, 2010).
- **Organizational Cynicism:** Organizational cynicism can be defined as employees' hopelessness, disappointment and negative attitude about organization (Andersson, 1996, as cited in Bağrıyanık & Can, 2017).

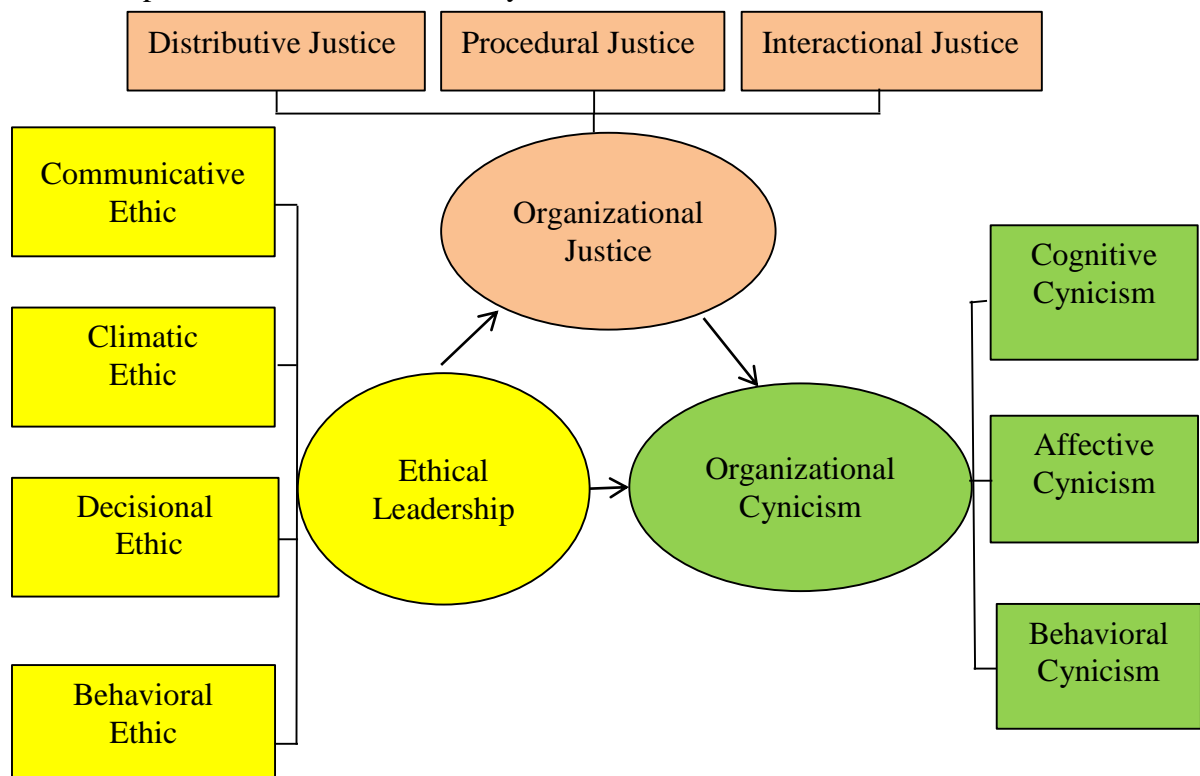
### Operational Definitions

In order to foster a clear understanding of how specific terms were interpreted in this particular study, the following operational definitions are provided.

- **Ethical leadership** refers to communicative ethic, climatic ethic, decisional ethic and behavioral ethic of a principal.
- **Organizational justice** refers to distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice of a principal.
- **Organizational cynicism** refers to cognitive cynicism, affective cynicism and behavioral cynicism of teachers about school.

### Conceptual Framework of this Study

The conceptual framework of this study is summarized as follows.



**Source:** Bağrıyanık, H., & Can, N. (2017). *The relation between high school teachers' perception of ethical leadership, organizational justice and organizational cynicism*

## Review of Related Literature

### Ethical Leadership

- Ethical leadership also is associated with positive influence on employee motivation and work capability which directly affect job performance. The work capability of employees is effectively enriched through subordinates' experience with ethical leadership in a social exchange. The ability of ethical leadership to motivate employee through appreciation care, and support in good quality leader member relationship can improve employee performance (Musyimi, 2016).
- "Ethical Leadership Scale" was designed by Yılmaz (2006, as cited in as cited in Karaköse, 2007) as a four dimensions such as communicative ethic, climatic ethic, decisional ethic and behavioral ethic.
- **Communicative ethic** is about creating a good communication between administrator and employees and providing job satisfaction (Yılmaz, 2006, as cited in Mete, 2013). **Climatic ethic** consists of behaviors like that manager promotes subs, giving concrete goals, making rule of the intuition in a proper way (Bağrıyanık & Can, 2017). **Decisional ethic** examines behaviors in terms of making morally correct decisions, to be able to differentiate what is correct and what is wrong, and being ethical in making decision (Turhan, 2007, as cited in Bağrıyanık & Can, 2017). **Behavioral ethic** expresses administrator's fair and honest behaviors, seeing every one equal in the organization and equal treatments. The administrators exhibit such behavioral ethical behaviours; love trueness, goodness, freedom, tolerance, mercy and altruism (Kidder, 1995; Beckner, 2005, as cited in Mete, 2013).

### Organizational Justice

- Organizational justice is an integral part of any successful organization and the outcomes that result from ideal justice practices are very beneficial to organizations (Cropanzano et al., 2007, as cited in Kedenburg, 2014).
- In this study, to investigate high school teachers' perception of principals' organizational justice, "Organizational Justice Scale" developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993, as cited in Polat 2007) and adapted by Polat (2007) was utilized. This scale involved distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice.
- **Distributive justice** is related to personal gain from allocation of resources in an organization (Colquitt et al., 2005, as cited in Jeon, 2009). **Procedural justice** concerns perceived fairness of the procedures used in the decision making process (Folger & Greenberg, 1985, as cited in Herr, 2015). **Interactional justice** is associated with an individual's perceptions of fairness regarding the interactions with a decision-maker who is responsible for the process of the outcomes allocation (Bies & Moag, 1986, as cited in Oh, 2013).

### Organizational Cynicism

- Organizational cynicism has been associated with such negative consequences as apathy, resignation, alienation, hopelessness, distrust of others, suspicion, contempt, disillusionment, and scorn in addition to decreased performance, interpersonal disputes, absenteeism, job turnover, and burnout (Andersson, 1996; Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Dean et al., 1998, as cited in Polat, 2013).

- Organizational cynicism is also described as person's negative attitudes consist of cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions to his/her organization (Dean, Brandes & Dharwadkar, 1998, as cited in Mete, 2013).
- The **cognitive cynicism** emphasizes the belief that organization and the individuals employed in the organization lack honesty (Polat, 2013). **Affective cynicism** contains some powerful emotional reactions like disrespect, anger, boredom and shame (Abraham, 2000, as cited in Konakli et al., 2013). In **behavioral cynicism** dimension, these cynical people use humor and sarcastic humor to express their cynical attitudes.

## Methodology

### Research Method

Quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to collect the required data in this study.

### Participants

In this study, 233 teachers representing seven high schools (including branch high schools) in Indaw Township participated in quantitative study and 24 teachers (primary, junior and senior teachers) from four selected high schools participated in qualitative study.

### Instruments

In this study, quantitative data were collected through three instruments. "*Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS)*" developed by Yilmaz (2006, as cited in Karaköse, 2007) was used to find out high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership. This scale included 44 items and measured four dimensions such as communicative ethic, climatic ethic, decisional ethic and behavioral ethic. "*Organizational Justice Scale*" developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993, as cited in Polat 2007) and adapted by Polat (2007) was utilized to explore high school teachers' perception of principals' organizational justice. This scale included 19 items and measured three dimensions, namely, distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice.

In order to examine high school teachers' perception of organizational cynicism, "*Organizational Cynicism Scale*" developed by Brandes, Dharwadkar, and Dean (2000, as cited in Gerald, 2002) was used. This scale included 13 items and measured three dimensions such as cognitive cynicism, affective cynicism and behavioral cynicism. Additionally, "*Interview Questions for Teachers*" were used to collect qualitative data. It included 10 items.

### Data Collection Procedure

Before field testing the instruments with a sample of teachers, the instruments used in this study were reviewed by a panel of experts. The review panel scrutinized the instruments for format, dimension presentation, item clarity, instruction coherency, and grammar and syntax usages. In this study, the Pearson product-moment correlation method (*Average Item Total Correlation*) was used for internal consistency reliability. According to the data, the coefficient of correlation for "*Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS)*" was ranged from 0.95 to 0.98 and the average was 0.97. Similarly, the coefficient of correlation for "*Organizational Justice Scale*" was ranged from 0.94 to 0.97 and the average was 0.96. Lastly, the coefficient of correlation for "*Organizational Cynicism Scale*" was ranged from 0.75 to 0.92 and the average was 0.84.

In order to collect quantitative data, questionnaires were distributed to seven Basic Education High Schools in Indaw Township from 8th November, 2018 to 16th November, 2018

and collected them after lasting 10 days. After analyzing quantitative data, selected principals and high school teachers were interviewed from 30th November, 2018 to 5th December, 2018.

## Data Analysis

The Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) was utilized to statically analyze the quantitative data collected from selected high schools. Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were computed to determine perception level of high school teachers on principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism. According to KabakciYurdakul (2012, as cited in Efiltili & Coklar, 2016) the mean value from 1.00 to 2.33 was defined as "low level", the mean value from 2.34 to 3.67 was defined as "moderate level", and the mean value from 3.68 to 5.00 was defined as "high level".

Furthermore, in order to determine if any correlational relationships existed among three variables, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were also utilized. Moreover, multiple regressions were also calculated to determine whether there were any predicting relations between high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism. Besides, quantitative analysis, data collected from qualitative analysis such as interviews were categorized and analyzed to fulfil the quantitative findings on principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and teachers' organizational cynicism.

## Findings

### Quantitative Findings

#### (i) Ethical Leadership

Mean values of principals' ethical leadership perceived by teachers in selected high schools are described in Table 1.

**Table 1 Mean Values of Principals' Ethical Leadership Perceived by Teachers in Selected High Schools**

Dimensions	High Schools							Composite Mean (N=233)
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	
Communicative Ethic	2.33	3.03	2.88	3.79	3.88	3.51	4.19	<b>3.65</b>
Climatic Ethic	2.64	3.37	3.23	4.05	4.16	3.73	4.07	<b>3.85</b>
Decisional Ethic	2.88	3.56	3.41	4.13	4.21	3.89	4.23	<b>3.97</b>
Behavioral Ethic	2.59	3.13	3.08	3.98	4.17	3.65	4.13	<b>3.81</b>
<b>Overall Ethical Leadership</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>3.12</b>	<b>3.96</b>	<b>4.08</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>3.80</b>

1.00-2.33 = low level, 2.34-3.67 = moderate level, 3.68-5.00 = high level

According to the statistical information in Table 1, "communicative ethic" was at low level and the remaining dimensions of ethical leadership were at moderate levels in S1. Again, the principals from S2 and S3 practiced moderate level of ethical leadership because mean values for all dimensions of principals' ethical leadership were between 2.34 and 3.67 respectively. In addition, the levels of principals' ethical leadership for S4, S5 and S7 were high because mean values of all dimensions of ethical leadership indicated that there were high levels of performance in those schools. When analyzing the ethical leadership practice of principal from S6, moderate practices were found in "communicative ethic" and "behavioral ethic" and high practices were found in "climatic ethic" and "decisional ethic".

When studying the overall principals' ethical leadership at selected high schools in Indaw Township, high levels of ethical leadership practices were found in School 4, 5, and 7 but moderate levels of ethical leadership practices were found in School 1, 2, 3, and 6.

Similarly, when studying the dimensions of principals' ethical leadership at selected high schools in Indaw Township, high levels of ethical leadership practices were found in three dimensions; "climatic ethic", "decisional ethic" and "behavioral ethic" and moderate level of ethical leadership practices was found in only one dimension, "communicative ethic". However, the mean value for "overall ethical leadership" of selected principals indicated that high level of ethical leadership was found in those schools.

**(ii) Organizational Justice**

Table 2 presents mean values of principals' organizational justice perceived by high school teachers of selected high schools.

**Table 2 Mean Values of Principals' Organizational Justice Perceived by High School Teachers in Selected High Schools**

Dimensions	High Schools							Composite Mean (N=233)
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	
Distributive Justice	2.62	3.44	3.10	3.85	4.01	3.55	4.16	<b>3.76</b>
Procedural Justice	2.39	3.10	3.07	3.86	3.96	3.62	4.10	<b>3.70</b>
Interactional Justice	2.18	2.75	2.88	3.62	3.87	3.32	4.04	<b>3.54</b>
<b>Overall Organizational Justice</b>	2.42	3.13	3.04	3.81	3.96	3.53	4.11	<b>3.69</b>

1.00-2.33 = low level, 2.34-3.67 = moderate level, 3.68-5.00 = high level

When analyzing the results of Table 2, it was seen that "distributive justice" dimension and "procedural justice" dimension perceived by teachers from S1 were at moderate levels and the remaining "interactional justice" dimension was at low level. Additionally, the performance levels for organizational justice of principals from S2, S3 and S6 were at moderate levels. On the other hand, two dimensions of principals' organizational justice such as "distributive justice" and "procedural justice" fell in the high band and the remaining one dimension, "interactional justice", fell in the moderate band in S4. Furthermore, the mean values of all dimensions of principals' organizational justice perceived by high school teachers from S5 and S7 were at high levels.

When studying the overall principals' organizational justice at selected high schools in Indaw Township, high levels of organizational justice practices were found in School 4, 5, and 7 but moderate levels of organizational justice practices were found in School 1, 2, 3, and 6.

Similarly, when studying the dimensions of principals' organizational justice at selected high schools in Indaw Township, high levels of perception were found in principals' "distributive justice" and "procedural justice" dimensions and moderate level of perception was found in principals' "interactional justice" in selected high schools of Indaw Township. Nevertheless, the mean value of the "overall organizational justice" was 3.69 and it showed that the principals from selected high schools in Indaw Township had high level of organizational justice.

**(iii) Organizational Cynicism**

Table 3 provides mean values of organizational cynicism perceived by teachers themselves in selected high schools. As shown in Table 3, teachers from S1, S2 and S3 rated that they had moderate levels of perception on all dimensions of organizational cynicism. On the

other hand, teachers from S4, S5 and S7 rated that they had low levels of perception on all dimensions of organizational cynicism. Again, teachers from S6 rated that they had moderate levels of perception on two dimensions, "cognitive cynicism" and "behavioral cynicism", but they had low level of perception on the remaining dimension, "affective cynicism".

**Table 3 Mean Values of Organizational Cynicism Perceived by Teachers themselves in Selected High Schools**

Dimensions	High Schools							Composite Mean (N=233)
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7	
Cognitive Cynicism	3.49	2.92	2.83	1.97	1.70	2.53	2.06	2.20
Affective Cynicism	3.23	2.78	2.79	1.60	1.73	2.32	1.88	2.07
Behavioral Cynicism	2.95	2.47	2.93	2.03	2.33	2.77	2.28	2.42
<b>Overall Organizational Cynicism</b>	<b>3.24</b>	<b>2.74</b>	<b>2.85</b>	<b>1.89</b>	<b>1.90</b>	<b>2.54</b>	<b>2.07</b>	<b>2.23</b>

1.00-2.33 = low level, 2.34-3.67 = moderate level, 3.68-5.00 = high level

When analyzing the overall teachers' organizational cynicism in selected high schools, moderate levels of organizational cynicism were found in S1, S2, S3 and S6 and low levels of organizational cynicism were found in S4, S5, and S7.

In conclusion, teachers from all selected high schools perceived that they had low levels in two dimensions of organizational cynicism, namely, "cognitive cynicism" and "affective cynicism" while they had moderate level in only one dimension of organizational cynicism, "behavioral cynicism". However, the mean value for "overall organizational cynicism" of teachers from selected high schools in Indaw Township indicated that they had low level of organizational cynicism.

#### (iv) Relationship among Principals' Ethical Leadership, Organizational Justice and Teachers' Organizational Cynicism

The correlations between high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism in selected high schools can be seen in Table 4.

**Table 4 Correlations between High School Teachers' Perception of Principals' Ethical Leadership, Organizational Justice and their Organizational Cynicism in Selected High Schools**

Variables	1	2	3
1. Ethical Leadership	1		
2. Organizational Justice	<b>.934**</b>	1	
3. Organizational Cynicism	<b>-.669**</b>	<b>-.658**</b>	1

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed).

According to the Table 4, there was a high, positive and significant relationship between principals' "ethical leadership" and "organizational justice" ( $r=0.934$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). However, high school teachers' perception of principals' "ethical leadership" was negatively and highly correlated with teachers' "organizational cynicism" ( $r=-0.669$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Similarly, there was a negatively and highly correlation between high school teachers' perception of principals' "organizational justice" and their "organizational cynicism" ( $r=-0.658$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) at selected high schools in Indaw Township.



**(v) Multiple Regressions of Variables**

A multiple regression was run to determine whether or not there were any predicting relations between high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism.

**Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis for Dimensions of Ethical Leadership Predicting Organizational Justice**

Independent Variable's Dimensions	Dependent Variable	B	$\beta$	Std Error	<i>p</i>	Adjusted $R^2$
Communicative Ethic Climatic Ethic Decisional Ethic Behavioral Ethic	Organizational Justice	.530	.582	.058	.000***	.877
		.212	.197	.068	.002**	
		.077	.064	.075	.307	
		.123	.123	.084	.144	

Note: \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$

According to the findings shown in Table 5, there were prediction relations between two dimensions of principals' ethical leadership, "communicative ethic" ( $\beta = .582, p < .001$ ) and "climatic ethic" ( $\beta = .197, p < .01$ ), and principals' "organizational justice". Based on the results, the adjusted  $R^2$  was .877 indicating 87.7 % of the variance of principals' organizational justice can be explained by the model.

**Table 6 Multiple Regression Analysis for Dimensions of Principals' Ethical Leadership Predicting High School Teachers' Organizational Cynicism**

Independent Variable's Dimensions	Dependent Variable	B	$\beta$	Std Error	<i>p</i>	Adjusted $R^2$
Communicative Ethic Climatic Ethic Decisional Ethic Behavioral Ethic	Organizational Cynicism	-.076	-.085	.255	.532	.445
		-.108	-.102	.121	.446	
		-.125	-.106	.142	.424	
		-.390	-.399	.156	.026*	

Note: \*  $p < .05$

Table 6 shows multiple regression analysis for dimensions of principals' ethical leadership predicting high school teachers' organizational cynicism. The analysis results shown in Table 6 indicated that "behavioral ethic" ( $\beta = -.399, p < .05$ ) significantly and negatively predicted teachers' "organizational cynicism" when all dimensions of principals' ethical leadership were included. The adjusted  $R^2$  was 0.445 which indicated 44.5% of the variance in high school teachers' "organizational cynicism" was explained by the model.

**Table 7 Multiple Regression Analysis for Dimensions of Principals' Organizational Justice Predicting High School Teachers' Organizational Cynicism**

Independent Variable's Dimensions	Dependent Variable	B	$\beta$	Std Error	<i>p</i>	Adjusted $R^2$
Distributive Justice Procedural Justice Interactional Justice	Organizational Cynicism	-.314	-.320	.101	.002**	.428
		-.258	-.227	.112	.023*	
		-.083	.093	.105	.429	

Note: \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$

As shown in Table 7, two dimensions of principals' organizational justice, "distributive justice" ( $\beta = -.320, p < .01$ ) and "procedural justice" ( $\beta = -.227, p < .05$ ), significantly and negatively predicted high school teachers' "organizational cynicism" when all dimensions of principals' organizational justice were included. The adjusted  $R^2$  was 0.428 indicating 42.8% of the variance of high school teachers' organizational cynicism was explained by the model.

### Qualitative Findings

In order to gather qualitative data, 24 teachers at all levels (primary, junior and senior teachers) from four high schools were randomly selected and their responses were shown as below.

The **first** interview question asked teachers to describe how their principals communicated and behaved towards teachers.

- Fifteen (62.50%) teachers described that  
*"Their principals communicated friendly and behaved fairly towards them."*
- In addition, four (16.67%) teachers stated that  
*"Their principals act and tell teachers as leader when school tasks are carried out."*
- On the other hand, four (16.67%) teachers responded that  
*"Their principals treat them differently from another in an unfair way."*
- The only one (4.16%) female teacher concluded that  
*"Teachers are sometimes well treated by her principal."*

The **second** interview question asked teachers to express whether or not their principals provided some help for them when they encountered difficulties in their classes and if their principals helped them, they were requested to describe an example.

- Twenty-one (87.50%) teachers reported that  
*"Their principals provide them with some helps in financial, personal and teaching difficulties."*
- On the other hand, three (12.50%) teachers reported that  
*"Their principals do not help difficulties of teachers."*

The **third** question asked teachers whether or not their principals accepted the opinions or advice of teachers when carrying out school tasks. If the principals accepted their opinions and advice, they are requested to mention an example.

- Twenty (83.33%) teachers indicated that  
*"Their principals listen and accept reasonable opinions or advice of teachers."*
- Two (8.33%) teachers answered that  
*"Their principals sometimes accept their opinions or advice."*
- Moreover, two (8.33%) teachers indicated that  
*"Their principals do not accept their opinions or advice."*

The **fourth** interview question asked teachers to state one of their principals' characteristics that they like the best.

- Twenty-three (95.83%) teachers gave different answers about principals' good characteristics such as

*“Listening and considering of teachers' opinions, having incisiveness, fairness, openness and compassion, being accountable for their decisions, keeping the promises, obeying the rules and disciplines, being punctual and working hard”.*

- However, only one (4.17%) teacher responded that  
*“She does not like any characteristics of her principal.”*

The **fifth** interview question asked teachers to explain how their principals solved a serious problem when it occurred in their schools.

- Eighteen (75%) teachers explained that  
*“When a serious problem occurs in their schools, the principals solve it with class teachers, subject deans, members of disciplinary committee and if necessary, parents, members of Parent-Teacher Association and administrators.”*
- Furthermore, five (20.83%) teachers explained that  
*“Firstly, their principals seek the roots of a problem and then explain the bad effects of the problem calmly.”*
- In addition, another one (4.17%) teacher answered that  
*“When a serious problem occurs in her school, the principal not only asks teachers' advice but also gets experts' advice to solve that problem.”*

The **sixth** interview question asked teachers to describe how their principals delegated teaching subjects to teachers.

- Fourteen (58.33%) teachers expressed that  
*“Their principals delegate teaching subjects to teachers according to their specialized subjects and draw the time table fairly.”*
- Ten (41.67%) teachers stated that  
*“Their principals allow teachers to delegate teaching subjects by themselves.”*

The **seventh** interview question asked teachers to express how their principals managed the schools in accordance with school rules and regulations.

- Twenty-three (95.83%) teachers answered that  
*“Their principals manage the school in accordance with school rules and regulations.”*
- On the other hand, only one (4.17%) teacher answered that  
*“The principal does not manage the school in accordance with rules and regulations.”*

The **eighth** question asked teachers whether or not their principals informed teachers when they made important decisions about schools, and teachers are requested to give an example.

- Twenty-one (87.50%) teachers mentioned that  
*“Their principals inform them about important decisions of school such as spending money on school activities, setting school rules, examining students' learning, explaining the instructions of Township Education Officer to teachers.”*
- On the other hand, three (12.50%) teachers answered that  
*“Their principals do not inform them about important decisions of schools.”*

The **ninth** interview question asked teachers to mention their opinions and suggestions about the practices of their schools.

- Thirteen (54.17%) teachers indicated that  
*“Their schools' practices are better than before.”*

- In addition, seven (29.17%) teachers commented that  
*"Their principals are trying hard to improve their schools."*
- Two (8.33%) teachers reported that  
*"The practices of their school are weak."*
- Two (8.33%) teachers did not express their opinions about the practices of the school, but they expressed their suggestions that  
*"Enough teachers should be appointed in their schools and school library should be built."*
- Moreover, other teachers suggested their principals to build a stand for motorcycles, to buy sports equipment for indoor sports and to build new classrooms.

The **last** interview question asked teachers to describe how they thought about the practices of their schools.

- Twenty (83.33%) teachers indicated that  
*"They were very satisfied with the practices of their schools."*
- On the other hand, four (16.67%) teachers answered that  
*"They are sometimes satisfied with the practices of their schools."*

### Discussion and Conclusion

**Research question one** examined the high school teachers' perceived levels of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism at selected high schools in Indaw Township. According to the results, the principals from S1, S2, S3 and S6 moderately performed ethical leadership and organizational justice in their schools. Therefore, the principals from S1, S2, S3 and S6 should revise their leadership style and need to practice ethical leadership and organizational justice in their schools. In other words, the principals should more focus on their behaviors such as accepting own failures, not being selfish, being fair, being constructive in discussions, being patient, fair, respectful, sincere and modest. Accordingly, the principals should pay more attention to behave teachers gently, respectfully, proudly and care their personal needs. When studying high school teachers' organizational cynicism level, teachers from those high schools perceived that they had moderate level of organizational cynicism. Both principals and teachers from those high schools should perform to reduce organizational cynicism. Especially, teachers should control their "behavioral cynicism" because their negative behaviors towards schools can lead low performance and affect academic achievement.

**Research question two** explored the relationships between high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism. It was found that positive and high relationship between high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership and organizational justice. This finding was similar to findings of Gökhan, Metin and Şahin (2012) and Bağrıyanık and Can (2017). In line with that result, the higher principals' ethical leadership level increases, the higher their organizational justice level will increase or vice versa.

On the contrary, there was a negative and high relationship between high school teachers' ethical leadership perception and their organizational cynicism. This finding was consistent with the findings of Mete (2013) and Bağrıyanık and Can (2017). It can be stated that when principals' ethical leadership is increased, high school teachers' organizational cynicism will be decreased. Therefore, when principals manage and lead the schools in accordance with ethical leadership, consequently, teachers' organizational cynicism attitudes towards schools will be reduced.

Likewise, high school teachers' perception of principals' organizational justice negatively and highly correlated to their organizational cynicism. This result was parallel to the findings by Alkış and Kılınc (2016), Bağrıyanık and Can (2017) and Girgin and Gümüşeli (2018). In line with this result, the more principals show organizational justice in schools, the fewer teachers have organizational cynicism towards their schools. Thus, when principals delegate instructional tasks and school tasks fairly, make necessary and enough explanations about decisions of the schools, treat teachers fairly and respectfully, teachers' possible negative attitude and behaviors towards the schools will be decreased.

**Research question three** examined whether there were any predicting relations between high school teachers' perception of principals' ethical leadership, organizational justice and their organizational cynicism or not. Based on the findings, it can be interpreted that 87.7% of principals' "organizational justice" depended on their "ethical leadership". Moreover, it was observed that two sub-dimensions of principals' ethical leadership, "communicative ethic" and "climatic ethic", could significantly and positively predict principals' "organizational justice".

On the other hand, independent variable, principals' "ethical leadership", predicted 44.5% of the variance in dependent variable, high school teachers' "organizational cynicism". As for comparison of this finding with other studies, Bağrıyanık and Can (2017), in their study, stated that 30% of the variance of the organizational cynicism's general average can be explained by teachers' ethical leadership perception while Mete (2013) found that 78 % academics' cynicism attitudes depend on administrators' ethical leadership behaviors. In line with the result in this study, it can be said that principals' "ethical leadership" in schools influenced teachers' "organizational cynicism" related to schools almost by half. In addition, one sub-dimension of principals' "ethical leadership", "behavioral ethic", could significantly and negatively predict teachers' organizational cynicism".

Again, according to the results of the regression analysis, principals' "organizational justice" explained 42.8% of the variance of high school teachers' "organizational cynicism". It was also found that "distributive justice" and "procedural justice" significantly and negatively predicted high school teachers' "organizational cynicism" when all dimensions of principals' organizational justice were included.

Based on the interview responses of principals and teachers, it can be concluded that the principals in Indaw Township practised ethical leadership and had organizational justice. In addition, their organizational cynicism level was low because they answered that they felt very satisfied with the practices of their schools according to teachers' interview responses.

Moreover, because there was a high and negative relationship between principals' "organizational justice" and high school teachers' "organizational cynicism", principals should have "organizational justice" in order to protect schools from cynical thought and effects of cynicism attitudes.

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