

# Analyzing the Relationship between Personality Traits and Communication Skills with Job Success and Professional Competencies and Ethical Behavior: Mediating Role of Professional Commitment

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** The present study was conducted with the aim of analyzing the relationship between personality traits and communication skills with career success and professional qualifications and moral behavior of mathematics teachers with the mediation of professional commitment in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq.

**Materials and Methods:** The method of the present research was descriptive-correlation, its statistical population included all secondary school teachers in the number of 460 people, of which 210 people were selected using cluster random sampling method. In order to collect research data from questionnaires including Nabi's Career Success Questionnaire (2001), Molaeinezhad Teachers' Professional Competencies Questionnaire (2011), Clikeman and Henning's Professional Obligations Questionnaire (2000), NEOPI-R Personality Questionnaire, Queendom's Communication Skills (2004) and Lu and Lin's ethical behavior questionnaire (2013) was used. To check the hypotheses, correlation test and structural equations were used using Spss and smart-PLS software.

**Results:** The findings showed that personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion and flexibility) had a significant relationship with teachers' career success and teachers' professional qualifications and moral behavior. Also, communication skills had a significant relationship with job success, professional qualifications and ethical behavior. It was also found that professional commitment plays a significant mediating role in the relationship between research variables.

**Conclusion:** Undoubtedly, personality traits and communication skills can affect job and professional success and moral performance in education. In this regard, professional commitment can play a mediating role because positive personality traits and high-level communication skills can guarantee job success and ethical performance by raising the level of professional commitment.

**Keywords:** Personality traits, Communication skills, Professional qualifications, Ethical behavior, Professional commitment.

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## INTRODUCTION

Those involved in education, especially teachers who have a wide interaction with students, must be transformed, they need to change, it is necessary for them to feel successful in their job

[1]. Career success can be understood as the achievement of professional achievements and personal satisfaction in the chosen field. It often includes a combination of factors such as career advancement, recognition, and financial stability [2]. Successful careers positively contribute to a

person's overall well-being and allow people to feel motivated, engaged, and satisfied with their professional journey [3]. Another factor that contributes to the growth of education is the professional qualifications of teachers. Professional qualifications refer to the formal qualifications, education and skills required for individuals to perform effectively in their chosen occupations [4]. Professional qualifications are credentials and certificates that confirm a person's expertise and competence in a specific field. These are often acquired through formal education, training programs and examinations [5]. Continuing professional competence is a key component of maintaining and improving professional competence, as it allows individuals to keep up with industry trends, technological advances and evolving best practices. Together, these elements ensure that professionals are well prepared to meet the demands of their roles and contribute meaningfully to their fields [6]. Favorable ethical behavior can also help teachers in improving education. Ethical behavior refers to actions and decisions that are consistent with established moral principles and values and shows honesty, integrity, fairness and respect in their interactions with students and colleagues. This includes adhering to professional standards, promoting a safe and inclusive learning environment, and fostering academic integrity. Ethical teachers prioritize the well-being and progress of their students [7]. Therefore, one of the factors that may affect these variables is personality traits. Personality traits are stable patterns of thoughts, feelings and behavior that distinguish people from each other. These characteristics are usually constant in different situations and over time and form the core of a person's personality. The study of personality traits is often built around models such as the Big Five, which include openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism [8]. Understanding personality traits is vital for a

variety of applications, from psychological research to practical areas such as education, career counseling, and mental health treatment. By recognizing and appreciating these characteristics, individuals and professionals can adjust approaches to better achieve personal and professional goals [9].

Besides that, communication skills also play an important role. Communication skills are abilities used to communicate information, thoughts, and feelings effectively between individuals or groups. These skills encompass a wide range of abilities, including verbal communication, such as speaking and writing, and nonverbal communication, such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice [10]. In general, communication skills are the cornerstone of successful interaction and cooperation in any field [11]. But another component that is important in career success is professional commitment. Professional commitment refers to a person's dedication and loyalty to his chosen profession. This dedication includes a deep belief in the values and goals of the profession, a desire to continue developing skills and knowledge, and a commitment to contributing positively to the professional community. It is characterized by a strong sense of identity with the profession, where one's professional role significantly shapes one's personal identity and self-concept. This commitment is often manifested in the desire to go beyond basic job requirements, showing enthusiasm and persistence in professional activities and responsibilities [12]. Basically, professional commitment leads people to excel in their roles and thus improves organizational performance, satisfaction and collective success of the professional community [13]. Considering the importance of the mentioned variables and the internal relationship of these variables, the present study decided to analyze the relationship between personality traits and communication

skills with job success, professional qualifications and moral behavior of mathematics teachers and also measure the mediator role of professional commitment in this connection. This research will undoubtedly enrich educational theories, inform professional development, enhance student outcomes, and promote ethical behavior in educational settings. By focusing on these factors, the study can lead to more effective teaching practices and an overall stronger education system.

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of the sample group

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	84	40
	Female	126	60
Education	Diploma and Associate degree	12	5.7
	B.A	116	55.2
	M.A and higher	82	39.1
Age	Under 30ys	35	16.7
	31-40ys	109	51.9
	41-50ys	54	25.7
	50 and above	12	5.7
Job experience	5ys and less	36	17.1
	6-10ys	30	14.3
	11-15ys	68	32.4
	16-20ys	57	27.1
	More than 20ys	19	9

In this research, a questionnaire is used to collect data, which includes:

**Job Success Questionnaire:** The Job Success Questionnaire was designed by Nabi (2001). This questionnaire includes two dimensions of endogenous and exogenous career success. The meaning of endogenous career success in this questionnaire is the understanding of success in work roles and successful relationship with colleagues, and the meaning of exogenous career success is the understanding of one's own success based on financial progress and promotions in the organization. This questionnaire contains 12 items. The first 7 questions are related to endogenous career success and the second 5 questions are related to exogenous career success.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This article is a descriptive-correlational study. The statistical population of the research is all secondary school teachers in Baghdad, Iraq, in the number of 460 people. Based on the sampling table of Kerjesi and Morgan (1970), 210 people were selected as a sample by random cluster sampling. The demographic characteristics of the sample group are presented in Table 1.

In Nabi's (2001) research, Cronbach's alpha of endogenous career success was 0.82 and exogenous career success was also reported as 0.82 [14].

**Questionnaire of teachers' professional qualifications:** The present questionnaire was designed with the aim of determining teachers' professional qualifications (cognitive-skill, attitude, behavioral and managerial). This 39-question questionnaire is arranged in a five-point Likert scale, the options of which are from very little to very much, and the scoring method is very little or never (score 1), little or it is almost never (score 2), moderately or rarely (score 3), a lot or often (score 4), and very much or always (score 5) and they do not have a reverse score. To check the

reliability of this questionnaire, a preliminary study was conducted on 32 people. Skilled cognitive competence, 91%; The attitudinal and behavioral competence was 0.90, the managerial competence was 0.90, and the reliability of the whole questionnaire was 0.96 [15].

**Communication skills questionnaire:** The communication skills questionnaire was prepared by Queendom in 2004. This tool is a 34-item questionnaire that the respondent completes on a 5-point spectrum. The five sub-skills of listening, regulating emotions, understanding the message, insight and decisiveness are examined in this test; A separate score is calculated for each respondent in each of the mentioned sub-skills, and the sum of the scores of each person in a total of 34 items also shows the total communication skills of the respondent. The minimum score is 34 and the maximum score is 170. It is worth mentioning that some items, due to their nature and content, are scored upside down in the score calculation. He reported the reliability coefficients using Cronbach's alpha method and halving as 0.77 and 0.81, respectively [16].

**Questionnaire of professional obligations:** Questionnaire of professional obligations was created by Clikeman and Henning (2000), which consists of 15 items that are used to measure professional obligations in the organization's employees. The scoring of the questionnaire is on a 5-point Likert scale. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 points are considered for the options "completely disagree", "partially disagree", "neither agree nor disagree", "partially agree" and "completely agree". The minimum possible score will be 15 and the maximum will be 75. The validity of this questionnaire has been reported as favorable and its reliability has been mentioned as above 90 according to Cronbach's alpha [17].

**Ethical Behavior Questionnaire:** The Ethical Behavior Questionnaire of Lu and Lin (2013) was designed and developed to measure ethical behavior. The employee ethical behavior

questionnaire has 16 questions and 2 components of normative ethical behavior and legal ethical behavior and is based on the Likert scale. The score range of this questionnaire will be between 16 and 80. In research [18] the validity of content, form and criteria of this questionnaire has been evaluated. Cronbach's alpha coefficient calculated for this questionnaire was estimated to be above 0.7.

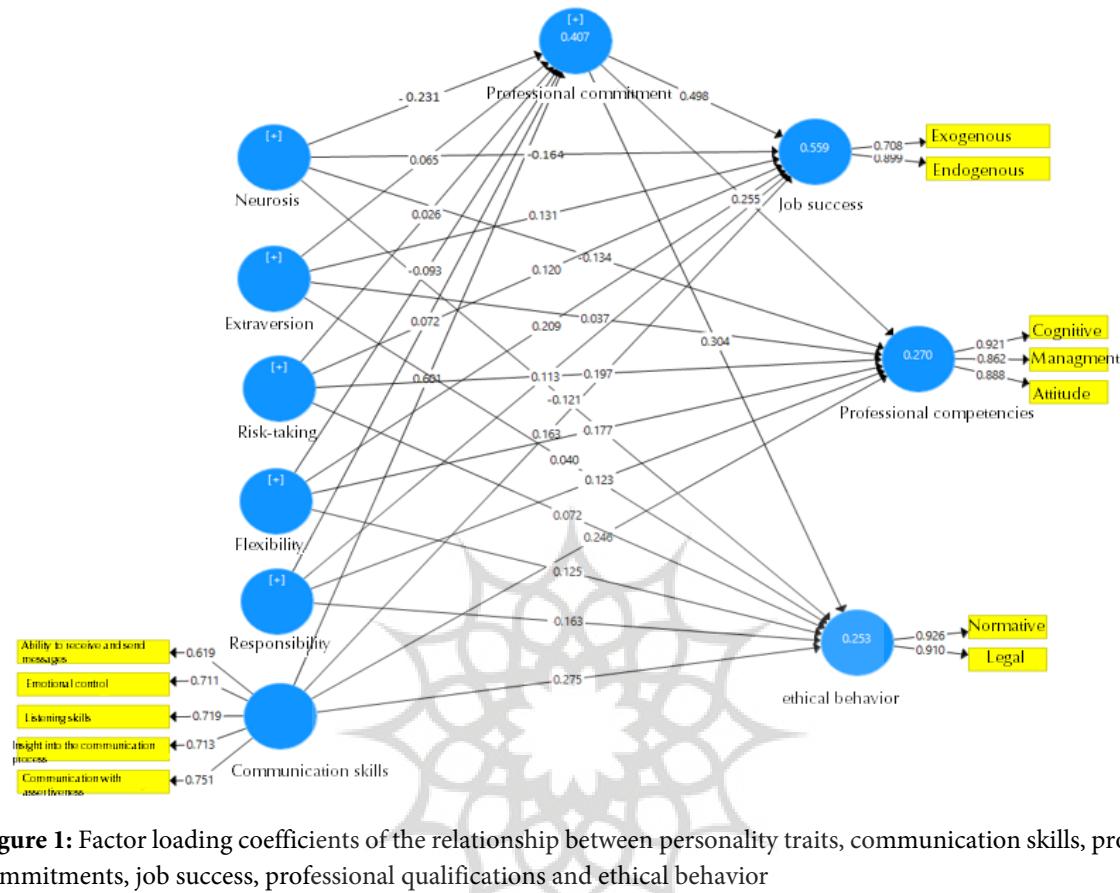
**Personality characteristics:** The NEOPI-R personality questionnaire was prepared by McCrae and Costa in 1985. This questionnaire measures 5 main factors of personality and 6 characteristics in each factor or in other words 30 characteristics. This questionnaire also has a short form called (NEO-FFI), which is a 60-question questionnaire and is used to evaluate 5 main personality factors. The answer sheet of this questionnaire is based on the Likert scale (completely disagree, disagree, indifferent, agree and completely agree). This questionnaire was implemented by McCree and Costa on 208 American students three months apart, and its reliability coefficients were between 0.83 and 0.75. In research [19] using the internal consistency method, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each of the 5 traits (temperament, extroversion, openness, adaptability and conscientiousness) were respectively obtained 0.74, 0.55, 0.27, 0.38 and 0.77.

Finally, to check the research hypotheses, correlation test and structural equations were used using SPSS and Smart-PLS software.

## RESULTS

To test the accuracy of the research theoretical model and calculate the effect coefficients, structural equation modeling method using PLS software was used. As can be seen in Figure 1, the factor loadings related to the research model are higher than 0.6, so it can be said that the research model provides appropriate factor structures to

measure the variables and dimensions studied in the research.



**Figure 1:** Factor loading coefficients of the relationship between personality traits, communication skills, professional commitments, job success, professional qualifications and ethical behavior

Based on the results presented in Table 2, the values of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are greater than 0.7 for all variables, and

also the value of convergent validity is greater than 0.5 for all variables, so the reliability of the model is in a favorable condition.

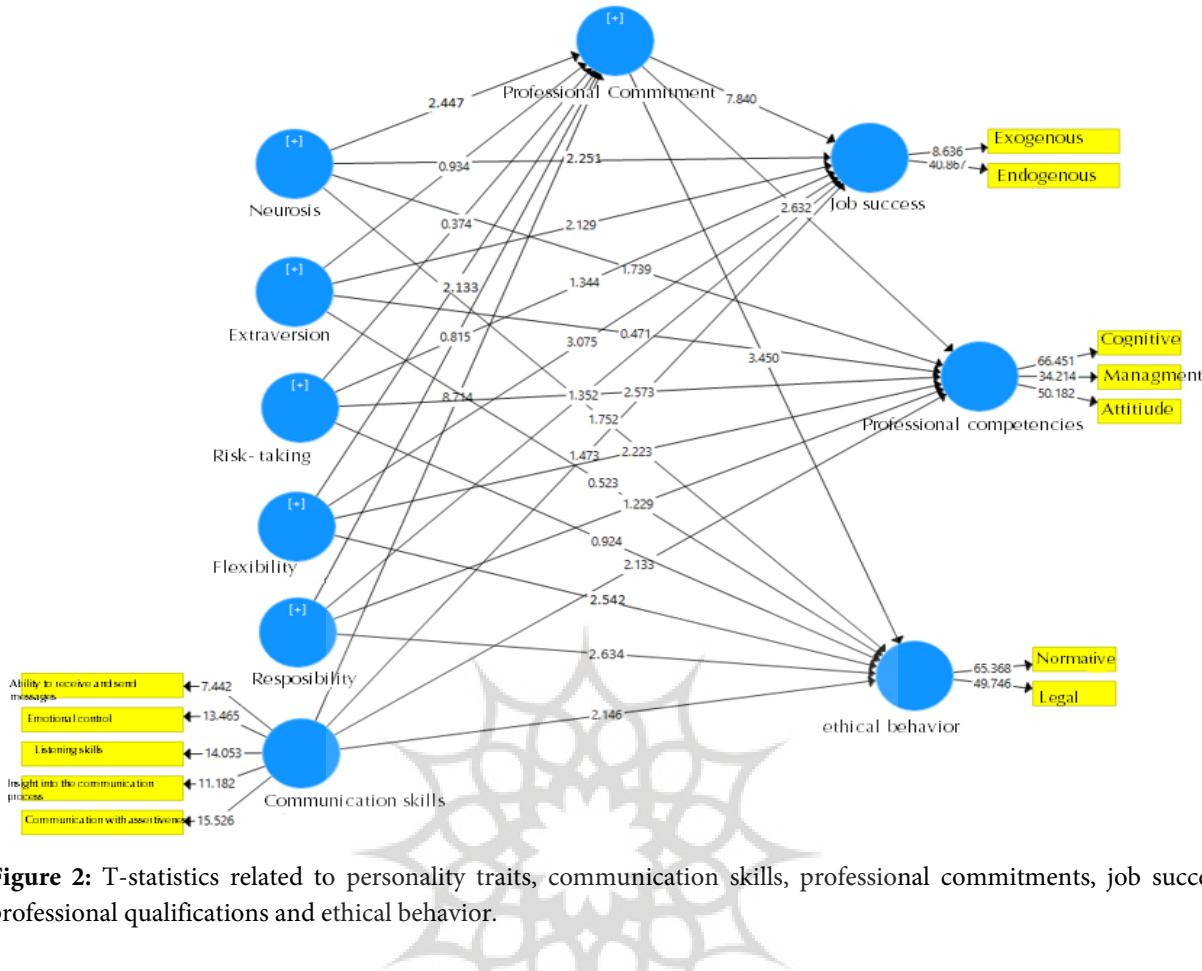
**Table 2:** Values related to the reliability index of personality traits, communication skills, professional commitments, job success, professional qualifications and ethical behavior

	Cronbach's alpha	compositional reliability	AVE
Ethical behavior	0.814	0.915	0.843
Professional competencies	0.870	0.920	0.794
Personality traits	0.790	0.789	0.653
Communication skills	0.749	0.830	0.596
Job success	0.792	0.789	0.654

Hypothesis testing:

In Figure 2, which has been tested for research hypotheses and based on the results obtained, it

can be seen that the paths are significant and the value of the t statistic is greater than 1.96.



**Figure 2:** T-statistics related to personality traits, communication skills, professional commitments, job success, professional qualifications and ethical behavior.

## DISCUSSION

First hypothesis: The findings showed that the correlation coefficient of personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion and flexibility) has a significant relationship with the career success of math teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq. There is no relationship between personality traits (risk-taking and responsibility) and the career success of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq. The results of this study are consistent with the results of some studies [14-20]. In explaining this hypothesis, it can be said that personality traits significantly affect job success by influencing how people deal with work-related challenges and opportunities. Neuroticism, characterized by emotional instability and anxiety, often hinders career advancement because it may lead to stress and difficulty managing workplace pressure. In

contrast, extroversion, which includes extroversion and being energetic, generally enhances career advancement through networking and teamwork skills. Extroverts tend to thrive in roles that require frequent social interactions and leadership, often achieving higher positions and recognition as a result.

Second hypothesis: personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion, risk-taking, flexibility, responsibility) have an effect on professional qualifications. Personality traits (neuroticism, risk-taking, flexibility, responsibility) have a significant relationship with the professional qualifications of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq. There is no relationship between personality traits (extroversion) and professional qualifications of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq. The results

of this research are in line with the results of some researches [14, 19-21]. In explaining this hypothesis, it can be said that personality traits play an important role in the formation of professional qualifications by affecting the way of developing skills, acquiring knowledge and showing competence in their fields. Neuroticism, which includes a tendency to be anxious and emotionally unstable, can negatively affect a person's ability to focus and perform under pressure, potentially hindering the pursuit of advanced degrees. In contrast, extroversion, characterized by sociability and assertiveness, often enhances professional competence through improved communication skills and the ability to build a strong professional network.

The third hypothesis: personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion, risk-taking, flexibility, responsibility) have an effect on moral behavior. Personality traits (neuroticism, flexibility, responsibility) have a significant relationship with the moral behavior of math teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = 0.121, 0.125, 0.163$ ). There is no relationship between personality traits (extroversion, risk-taking) and moral behavior of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq. The results of this study are consistent with the results of some studies [22, 23]. In explaining this hypothesis, it can be said that personality traits significantly affect moral behavior and affect the way people understand and respond to moral dilemmas and social norms. Neuroticism, with its tendency toward anxiety and emotional instability, can lead to morally inconsistent behavior as individuals struggle with stress and emotional turmoil. This may lead to decisions that are driven by fear or insecurity rather than clear moral reasoning. Conversely, extraversion, characterized by sociability and assertiveness, often promotes ethical behavior through increased empathy and connection. Extroverts are generally more involved with others and more

aware of the social impact of their actions, which can encourage adherence to ethical standards and a greater willingness to behave ethically.

The fourth hypothesis: Communication skills have an effect on career success. Communication skills have a significant relationship with the career success of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = 0.163$ ).

The fifth hypothesis: communication skills have an effect on professional qualifications. Communication skills have a significant relationship with the professional qualifications of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = 0.246$ ). The results of this study are in line with the results of some studies [14, 15, 23, 24].

Sixth hypothesis: communication skills have an effect on ethical behavior. That is, communication skills have a significant relationship with the moral behavior of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r=0.275$ ).

The seventh hypothesis: Professional commitment has an effect on career success. That is, professional commitment has a significant relationship with the career success of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r=0.498$ ).

The eighth hypothesis: professional commitment has an effect on professional qualifications. That is, professional commitment has a significant relationship with the professional qualifications of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = 0.255$ ). In explaining this hypothesis, it can be said that professional commitment significantly affects the acquisition and maintenance of professional qualifications, because it leads people to seek continuous learning and increase skills. A strong commitment to one's career encourages individuals to pursue the certifications, degrees, and advanced training programs necessary to remain competitive in their field. This

commitment ensures that they keep up with the latest industry standards, technological advancements and best practices.

Ninth hypothesis: Professional commitment has an effect on ethical behavior. Professional commitment has a significant relationship with the moral behavior of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r=0.304$ ).

Tenth hypothesis: personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion, risk-taking, flexibility, responsibility) have an effect on professional commitment. Personality traits (neuroticism) have a significant relationship with the professional commitment of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = -0.231$ ). There is no relationship between personality traits (extroversion, risk-taking, flexibility, responsibility) and professional commitment of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq. The results of this research are in line with the results of some researchers [23, 24]. Risk-takers are often more willing to embrace new challenges and opportunities, which can deepen their involvement and commitment to their careers as they navigate and overcome these challenges. Flexibility, the ability to adapt to changes and new situations, supports professional commitment and allows individuals to remain flexible and engaged even when faced with changing job demands or organizational changes. Finally, responsibility, characterized by reliability and conscientiousness, is perhaps one of the strongest predictors of professional commitment. Responsible individuals are more likely to take their professional duties seriously, demonstrate consistent performance, and demonstrate long-term commitment to their career goals and organizational goals. Together, these personality traits shape the degree to which a person is committed to their career path and influence their ability to maintain that commitment over time.

Eleventh hypothesis: communication skills have an effect on professional commitment. That is, communication skills have a significant relationship with the professional commitment of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = 0.275$ ).

Twelfth hypothesis: There is an indirect effect between personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion, risk-taking, flexibility, responsibility) with career success with the mediating role of professional commitment. Personality traits (neuroticism and flexibility) have a significant relationship with career success and the role of professional commitment of mathematics teachers in secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = 0.082, 0.104$ ).

Thirteenth hypothesis: There is an indirect effect between personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion, risk-taking, flexibility, responsibility) with professional qualifications with a mediating role of professional commitment. Personality traits (risk taking and flexibility) have a significant relationship with professional qualifications and the role of professional commitment of mathematics teachers in secondary schools of Baghdad, Iraq ( $r=0.050, 0.045$ ).

14th hypothesis: There is an indirect effect between personality traits (neuroticism, extroversion, risk-taking, flexibility, responsibility) and ethical behavior with the mediating role of professional commitment. Personality traits (responsibility) have a significant relationship with ethical behavior and the role of professional commitment of mathematics teachers in secondary schools of Baghdad, Iraq ( $r=0.050$ ).

15th hypothesis: there is an indirect effect between communication skills and career success with the mediating role of professional commitment. Communication skills have a significant relationship with job success and the mediating role of professional commitment of

mathematics teachers in secondary schools of Baghdad, Iraq ( $r=0.299$ ).

Sixteenth hypothesis: There is an indirect effect between communication skills and professional qualifications with the mediating role of professional commitment. Communication skills with professional qualifications have a significant relationship with the mediating role of professional commitment of mathematics teachers in secondary schools of Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = 0.062$ ).

Seventeenth hypothesis: There is an indirect effect between communication skills and ethical behavior with the mediating role of professional commitment. Communication skills and ethical behavior have a significant relationship with the mediating role of professional commitment of mathematics teachers in secondary schools of Baghdad, Iraq ( $r = 0.183$ ). In explaining this hypothesis, it can be said that communication skills have a significant effect on ethical behavior and professional commitment acts as a key mediator in this relationship. Effective communication skills enable individuals to express ethical concerns, seek guidance on ethical dilemmas, and discuss ethical practices with colleagues and supervisors. This facilitates an open dialogue about standards and ethical issues in the workplace. However, the direct effect of communication skills on ethical behavior is greatly influenced by the level of professional commitment of the individual. When employees are deeply committed to their profession, they are more likely to adhere to ethical guidelines and foster a culture of integrity. Their commitment ensures that they use their communication skills to maintain and promote ethical standards, not just in workplace challenges. Professional commitment acts as a critical mediator by fostering the alignment between communication skills and ethical behavior. A committed individual is motivated to maintain high ethical standards and use their communication skills to

proactively and responsibly address ethical concerns. This commitment strengthens the resolve to act ethically even in complex or stressful situations. In contrast, without a strong sense of professional commitment, communication skills alone may not be sufficient to ensure ethical behavior, as individuals may lack the commitment to consistently apply ethical principles. Therefore, while effective communication skills are necessary to discuss and implement ethical practices, professional commitment is critical to ensure that these skills are directed toward maintaining and enhancing ethical behavior in the organization.

Limitations of this article include that the use of self-report surveys or questionnaires can introduce biases, as teachers may underestimate or underestimate their own skills, competencies, and ethical behaviors. This can affect the validity of the collected data.

Factors such as external curricula, government policies, and non-school-related influences may also affect the professional development and behavior of mathematics teachers, complicating the attribution of effects solely to personality traits, communication skills, and professional commitment. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers should use their flexibility to adapt to new teaching methods and educational technologies. This adaptability can help them stay abreast of educational trends and improve their professional credentials. Maintaining a positive and active attitude towards training and professional challenges can strengthen professional commitment and improve overall job satisfaction. Teachers should model ethical behavior by demonstrating honesty, fairness, and respect in all interactions. Compliance with ethical standards in their professional behavior can be a strong example for students and colleagues.

## CONCLUSION

Undoubtedly, personality traits and communication skills can affect job and professional success and moral performance in education. In this regard, professional commitment can play a mediating role because positive personality traits and high-level communication skills can guarantee job success and ethical performance by raising the level of professional commitment.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical issues (such as plagiarism, conscious satisfaction, misleading, making and or forging data, publishing or sending to two places, redundancy and etc.) have been fully considered by the writers.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

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