

# ***Evaluation of King Faisal University Students' Awareness of the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct: A Student Perspective***

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**Abstract:** During last few years, higher education is going through rapid transformation because of which professional and ethical values have become critical to shape personalities of students. Professional and ethical values are important tools for regulatory behavior. Therefore, this research aimed to explore the level to which professional and ethical code of conduct contributes to provide guidelines of professional and academic behavior for students at King Fahad University. This study is also intended to find out differences on the basis of specialization, gender and academic level among students. Data was collected from the students at King Fahad University using questionnaires. Study employed stratified random sampling to reach and collect data from students. The analysis of the study was conducted through SPSS. The result of the study indicates that awareness of professional and ethical code has overall high score. Also, all the domains show the importance of code to guide professional and academic behavior. There was no statistical difference on the basis of academic specialization or gender. Whereas, significant difference was reported on the basis of academic level, such as Masters and doctoral students over BS level students. This research shows the importance of strengthening awareness programs at the university level.

**Keywords:** Ethical Code, Professional Behavior, Academic Behavior, Saudi University Students, SPSS.

## **1. Introduction**

Presently, the world is experiencing rapid behavioral and cognitive transformation. In this aspect, professional and ethical conduct within universities has become critical as part of responsibilities towards society and students. The professional and ethical code of conduct of the university defines the behaviors, principles and values that are expected for both beyond and within the academic life (Bansal Agarwal, 2023). Awareness regarding this code among students of university is very important as it develops the basis on which positive interaction, respect for regulations, and responsible professional behavior outside and within the community of university are built (Mumtaz et al., 2025).

The emphasis of educationists and society is increasing towards professional values and educational quality. Therefore, most universities globally have issued different codes aiming at mutual respect, fairness, and integrity among all stakeholders of the academic community (Msangya, 2025). Awareness of students regarding professional and ethical values is positively linked to professional and academic behavior. Combined, they have significant effect on the quality of performance in organizations (Chinwe & Chukwuemeka, 2024). Studies also indicated that different awareness programs

designed to improve understanding of students regarding ethical codes play key roles in reducing behavioral violations including fraud, plagiarism, and cheating. Furthermore, participation of students in terms of academic activities has been reflected in enhancing awareness of different professional values remain inconsistent (Prashar, Gupta & Dwivedi, 2024). Moreover, these professional values are influenced by factors including different awareness programs, cultural environment, and academic guidance.

Studies mentioned that ethical and professional code is treated as publicly declared agreements that are based on different professional and ethical obligations, standards, and principles mutually agreed by university members including administrative and academic leadership, students, staff, and faculty members (Lyken-Segosebe, Donald & Braxton, 2023). These standards and principles regulate interactions of students with their fellow students, faculty members, and others regarding their student activities, field training, research activities, and university. The discussion can regard policies and regulations having purpose to create educational environment that reduces conduct that is inconsistent with academic values and promotes ethical behavior (Ahmad, Siddique & Arshad, 2020). It is expected that students adhere to the defined principles of university. Ethical awareness among students is developed with the passage of time. It needs guidance and structured education embedded with curricula and is supported by different awareness programs (Atenas, Havemann & Timmermann, 2023).

Student awareness of professional and ethical code of conduct is based on behavioral dimensions, cognitive dimensions and social dimensions (Martins, 2024). Studies have revealed the importance of these dimensions in terms of responsibility taking, respect to peers, and academic integrity. Students who take part in workshops of professional ethics programs often show high levels of knowledge and awareness of ethical values. In other words, there is strong association between academic performance and ethical awareness (Hassan et al., 2022).

The professional and ethical code of conduct at university mostly focuses on interaction of students with different factors of academic environment (Tripon, Gonça & Bulgac, 2023). Clear guidelines regarding the way students are expected to engage with students, administrative staff, and faculty members regarding academics are provided by it. The main purpose of such code is to develop mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity (Brigue & Orlu, 2023). Therefore, supportive learning and safe environment are developed. The basic purpose of following these codes is to prevent conflicting academic behavior with professional values such as misconduct. It also helps to promote ethical behavior in extracurricular and academic activities. By adopting these principles, students are better equipped to take different decisions showing professional conduct in different situations, contributing positively to society and community at large (Ballangrud & Aas, 2022).

Despite the adoption of professional and ethical codes by different universities having aim to promote effectiveness of these codes and responsible academic conduct remain closely linked to level of awareness of students (Jin et al., 2025). Higher education is an important stage that shapes professional and ethical awareness among students as they are regularly exposed to different situations that require them follow professional responsibility and academic integrity (Odoh, Nwokwu & Ogbuanya, 2025). From this perspective, although King Faisal University has adopted a clear professional and ethical conduct, there is still needed to examine level of awareness of students of this code (Alhaj & Alwadai, 2024). Moreover, there is also needed to examine the level to which these codes contribute to guide professional and academic behavior in light

of different academic factors. Therefore, this study tries to find different answers to questions such as What is the level of King Faisal University students' awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct adopted by the university? To what extent does the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct contribute to guiding King Faisal University students' academic and professional behavior from their perspective? Are there statistically significant differences attributable to academic specialization? Are there statistically significant differences attributable to the academic level (Bachelor's, Master's, Doctorate)? and are there statistically significant differences in students' awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct attributable to gender?

## **2. Literature Review**

Scholars have defined ethical and professional codes in different studies. The research by Trevino and Nelson (2021) has demonstrated this concept as collection of values and principles that provide clarity regarding the expected behaviors of individuals within professional or educational institution responsibility, respect, and fairness. Research conducted by Al-Farsi and Al-Harbi (2026) revealed that following professional ethics within university culture plays key role to strengthen values of respect, discipline and responsibility for regulation of university. Scholars recommended to integrate professional ethics into educational activities and academic programs with purpose to get positive response of students (Liu et al., 2023). Likewise, some studies also demonstrated significant awareness among students having positive correlation with academic awareness and ethical awareness (Liu et al., 2023). The results show that high level of ethical awareness plays key role in minimizing unethical academic behavior such as academic plagiarism and cheating.

Scholars also emphasized that awareness of students regarding ethical rules and vitality to follow them extended outside academic conduct during studies at university level with purpose to influence their behavior at workplace in future. Students with higher ethical awareness were reported to be capable of making professional decisions with responsibility (Gazadinda et al., 2026). Students mostly recognize different negative behaviors such as cheating and plagiarism as ethical violations. Their deep understanding of these mentioned behaviors and mechanism to report is closely linked to the level to which ethical awareness is reinforced among students (Sozon et al., 2024). Studies also mentioned that students having focus on different academic ethics have regularly shown positive association between ethical awareness and reduction of different misconducts (Anzilago, do Prado Daciê & Della Giustina, 2023). Moreover, educational institutions that focus on the practical training regarding ethics of education have reported its key role in enhancing ethical awareness and minimizing unethical behavior (Benlahcene et al., 2022). Studies also demonstrated that ethical awareness could vary as per the theoretical and practical experiences of the students having professional ethics enhancing professional behavior and sensitivity (Bairaktarova & Woodcock, 2017).

Ethical awareness among students at university is recognized as basic element to developing professional and academic behavior (Alnajjar & Abou Hashish, 2021). It is mostly perceived as the beginning stage of ethical decision making that enables students to distinguish unethical actions from ethical ones. Ethical awareness extends beyond the values of one person as it shows the ability to understand basic ethical issues in different situations that contribute to understanding both institutional and natural ethical codes (Milliken & Grace, 2017).

Scholars in past explored the relationship between academic integrity and ethical awareness showing that moral sensitivity among students is associated with low cases of violation of academic integrity. Studies also emphasized that training regarding ethical sensitivity must be important factor of the university, improving decision making skills of students (Usman et al., 2025). Scholars also confirmed that different values such as integrity, responsibility and respect are important predictors of academic performance. Findings also reinforced the opinion that improving ethical awareness of students provide support to ethical behavior along with positive influence on academic achievement (Ansari, Mahmood & Khan, 2025). Scholars also found that students who are opined that handling different misconduct need increased awareness through discussion and workshops regarding academic integrity shed light on the importance of institutional intervention to improve ethical awareness (Zhu, 2025).

Integration of academic policies and ethical education programs into framework of education contributes to students improving ethical understanding of students that reinforce their commitment to professional conduct and academic activities (Bretag et al., 2019). Some studies have mentioned academic integrity as important component to enhance behavioral and ethical awareness among students at university. The studies focused that improvement of academic integrity cannot depend on university policies. It also requires integration of ethical programs into university curricula. Therefore, students are enabled to develop a deep understanding of standards of ethics. So, they apply these principles and values in their professional and academic practices (Eaton, 2023).

Different studies revealed that academic integrity is effective when it is embedded in curricula of university and different ethical programs. Moreover, the students and faculty of the institutions should be actively engaged in these activities. This type of integration will enhance understanding of students regarding ethical standards and minimize unethical behavior (Artyukhov, 2024; Siaputra & Santosa, 2024). Other studies emphasized that adoption of comprehensive institutional approach by university strengthen academic integrity. This approach goes beyond formulation of policies to include its implementation within student engagement, faculty development and educational process to develop a culture of integrity (Orim & Awala-Ale, 2024). Responsible professional behavior and ethical commitment are enhanced as a result of such efforts.

Institutional ethical code in the form of professional and ethical codes of conduct adopted by educational institutions provide a clear framework for expected behaviors and values among faculty and students (Alizadeh, Dirani & Qiu, 2020). Therefore, a culture of ethical conduct and commitment is reinforced. It is very important that students are informed regarding their responsibilities and rights to enhance professional accountability and self-awareness within the university community (Buwono et al., 2025). Studies have mentioned that research regarding ethical awareness among students in different disciplines such as management, engineering and medicine shows trend aiming towards academic education with professional ethical students (Farhi et al., 2023). Studies demonstrate that there is critical importance in professional and ethical awareness to promote professional and academic behavior among students at university. Whereas some studies did not focus on ethical code of university as educational tool and direct regulatory (Chen, Saharuddin & Muhamad, 2024). Moreover, some of the studies also did not provide detailed measurement of the awareness of students of adopted ethical codes within educational institutions. Most of the past studies focused

on general behavioral and conceptual framework and ignored examining awareness of students towards ethical policies of certain university within context of Saudi Arabia.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Design

Present study used descriptive analytical research design because it suits meeting the objective and nature of the study. By using this approach, the description of student's level of professional and ethical code of conduct was carried out. Moreover, the analysis of students' perceptions in light of academic level, academic specialization and gender was performed. The population of this study was comprised of students who are of enrolled status at King Faisal University of all departments including, applied colleges, humanity, engineering scientific and health were part of research. From these departments, students were having degrees in Doctoral, master's and bachelor's degrees were included as population research. Present study used stratified random sampling with purpose to ensure proper representation of students from all study level and specialization. The sample size of study was 537. Table 1 shows the demographic distribution of study's respondents.

Table 1: Presents The Demographic Characteristics of the Study Sample.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	208	38.7
	Female	329	61.3
Specialization	Health Disciplines	66	12.3
	Scientific and Engineering Disciplines	194	36.1
	Humanities and Applied Disciplines	277	51.6
Academic Level	Bachelor's Degree	353	65.7
	Master's Degree	112	20.9
	Doctoral Degree (PhD)	72	13.4
Total		537	100.0

Present study relied in questionnaire as instrument of study for collection of data. This study instrument is most suitable to meet the objectives of study having purpose of finding out the level of students' awareness of professional and ethical code of conduct handling in terms of their interaction regarding student activities, field training, scientific research with fellow students, faculty members and others (students at King Faisal University). Study developed questionnaires on the basis of past studies. The items were formulated in five-point Likert scale having range from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". For establishment of Instrument's validity, panel experts reviewed the questionnaire. These experts were specific in evaluation in measurement. The experts showed provided clarity of relevance, linguistic accuracy and items of the statements to the domains of study. On the basis of the expert's opinion, this study finalized 27 items for further analysis. The study data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version (26), employing the following statistical techniques: Pearson correlation coefficient, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, means and standard deviations, Pearson correlation to examine the

relationships among variables, independent samples t-test, and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Later, this study examined internal consistency validity through Pearson correlation coefficients among total scores and each item score of every domain from which an item belongs. This was the pilot study in which 60 students were involved. The results of Pilot test are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Item Scores and the Total Score of Their Corresponding Dimension.

No.	Statement	Correlation Coefficient	Sig
<b>Awareness Toward the University</b>			
1	I represent the university positively in the activities and tasks in which I participate, both within and outside the campus.	.534**	0.000
2	I take pride in my affiliation with the university and strive to reflect a positive image of it.	.506**	0.004
3	I am aware of my academic rights and responsibilities according to the university's regulations and policies, and I adhere to them.	.502**	0.001
4	I preserve public and private property and refrain from any acts of tampering or damage.	.632**	0.000
<b>Awareness Toward Faculty Members</b>			
5	I respect faculty members and adhere to their instructions that govern their interaction with me.	.585**	0.000
6	I maintain focus during lectures and refrain from engaging in side conversations or any distractions that compromise my concentration and attentiveness.	.616**	0.000
7	I make a conscious effort to respond to faculty evaluation surveys with honesty and objectivity.	.586**	0.003
8	I adhere to academic integrity in completing assignments and examinations, avoiding cheating and plagiarism in all academic tasks assigned to me.	.658**	0.000
9	I act with ethical responsibility both inside and outside the classroom.	.641**	0.000
<b>Awareness Toward Fellow Students</b>			
10	I interact with my peers respectfully, courteously, and considerately, maintaining positive relationships without discrimination.	.587**	0.000
11	I collaborate and work with my peers in a spirit of teamwork.	.587**	0.000
12	I adhere to the rules of dialogue when communicating with peers and avoid verbal or physical aggression.	.565**	0.000
13	I refrain from mentioning peers on social media in ways that may harm their feelings, reputation, or dignity.	.498**	0.023
<b>Awareness Toward Scientific Research and Field Training</b>			
14	I ensure honesty and objectivity when preparing academic research and maintain accuracy in citation and referencing.	.673**	0.000
15	I adhere to the deadlines and required hours for field training.	.643**	0.000
16	I strive to fulfill all tasks assigned during field training.	.598**	0.003
17	I comply with professional ethics and all rules and regulations of the training institution.	.617**	0.000
18	I cooperate and exchange knowledge and experiences with colleagues in completing field training tasks.	.475**	0.014
<b>Awareness Toward Student Activities</b>			
19	I actively participate in student activities and programs organized by the university.	.652**	0.000
20	I strive to present a positive image during my participation in student activities.	.467**	0.005
21	I demonstrate sportsmanship and avoid behaviors that undermine fair competition.	.671**	0.000
22	I fulfill all tasks assigned to me in any activity or event and act with a sense of responsibility.	.699**	0.000
<b>The Role of the University in Promoting Awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct</b>			
23	The university contributes to promoting a culture of adherence to the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct among students.	.711**	0.000
24	The university provides awareness programs to enhance students' understanding of the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.	.684**	0.000
25	Student activities contribute to reinforcing adherence to the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.	.657**	0.000
26	Faculty members guide students toward compliance with the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.	.614*	0.023
27	I believe that the university provides a supportive educational environment that encourages adherence to the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.	.698**	0.000
Note: ** Significant at the 0.01 level, * Significant at the 0.05 level			

According to findings given in Table 2, correlation coefficients are significant at (0.05) and (0.01) showing question items show certain level of internal consistency.

Later this study examined Cronbach alpha for the verification of reliability. The results of Cronbach alpha are mentioned in Table 3

Table 3: Reliability Coefficients for the Overall Scale and Sub-Dimensions.

Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Students' Level of Awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct Toward the University	4	0.84
Students' Level of Awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct Toward Faculty Members	5	0.87
Students' Level of Awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct Toward Fellow Students	4	0.91
Students' Level of Awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct Toward Scientific Research and Field Training	5	0.79
Students' Level of Awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct Toward Student Activities	4	0.81
The Role of the University in Promoting Awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct	5	0.78

The results of Cronbach Alpha are mentioned in Table 3, stating that it ranges from 0.78 to 0.91, showing strong consistency among the variables.

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

This section presents the results gathered from the analysis of questions. The results were derived from analyzing the responses of the study sample to the questionnaire domains that measure the level of awareness of King Faisal University students regarding the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct, using appropriate statistical methods, as follows:

##### 4.1. Answer to the First Research Question

The first question of the study was: What is the level of awareness of King Faisal University students regarding the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct adopted by the university?

To answer this question, means and standard deviations were calculated to determine the level of awareness of King Faisal University students regarding the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct. The results of the study are mentioned in Table 4.

The results indicated that the overall mean score of the domain students' level of awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct toward the university was high. The findings of the study show that students' awareness regarding the university values. Students give respect to the instructions and regulations of the university. These findings show the effectiveness of the university's environment to instill values of university. It also reflects students' clarity regarding behavioral regulation to govern the relationship between educational institutions and students. These findings are similar to the findings of Nuriddin (2019) in past who presented similar results in context of education sector.

The outcomes of the study also demonstrate the ethical awareness level of students towards faculty members is high. It shows that students give respect to professional and academic roles of faculty members. They also show commitment to their actions outside and inside the classroom. These results indicate the interactive relationship between faculty members and students showing mutual respect. Additionally, the results represent the professional and ethical role of the professors at university. This result is aligned to the findings of Wali (2025) from literature.

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations.

No.	Statement	Mean	SD	Level of Satisfaction
1	I represent the university positively in the activities and tasks in which I participate, both within and outside the campus.	3.57	0.65	Moderate
2	I take pride in my affiliation with the university and strive to reflect a positive image of it.	4.00	0.64	High
3	I am aware of my academic rights and responsibilities according to the university's regulations and policies, and I adhere to them.	3.84	0.85	High
4	I preserve public and private property and refrain from any acts of tampering or damage.	3.52	0.52	Moderate
<b>Awareness Toward the University</b>		<b>3.73</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>High</b>
5	I respect faculty members and adhere to their instructions that govern their interaction with me.	3.68	0.81	High
6	I maintain focus during lectures and refrain from engaging in side conversations or any distractions that compromise my concentration and attentiveness.	3.80	0.79	High
7	I make a conscious effort to respond to faculty evaluation surveys with honesty and objectivity.	3.80	0.83	High
8	I adhere to academic integrity in completing assignments and examinations, avoiding cheating and plagiarism in all academic tasks assigned to me.	3.80	0.72	High
9	I act with ethical responsibility both inside and outside the classroom.	4.18	0.74	High
<b>Awareness Toward Faculty Members</b>		<b>3.85</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>High</b>
10	I interact with my peers respectfully, courteously, and considerately, maintaining positive relationships without discrimination.	3.72	0.77	High
11	I collaborate and work with my peers in a spirit of teamwork.	4.04	0.65	High
12	I adhere to the rules of dialogue when communicating with peers and avoid verbal or physical aggression.	3.82	0.87	High
13	I refrain from mentioning peers on social media in ways that may harm their feelings, reputation, or dignity.	3.58	0.68	Moderate
<b>Awareness Toward Fellow Students</b>		<b>3.79</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>High</b>
14	I ensure honesty and objectivity when preparing academic research and maintain accuracy in citation and referencing.	3.85	0.83	High
15	I adhere to the deadlines and require hours for field training.	3.97	0.76	High
16	I strive to fulfill all tasks assigned during field training.	3.86	0.85	High
17	I comply with professional ethics and all rules and regulations of the training institution.	3.96	0.74	High
18	I cooperate and exchange knowledge and experiences with colleagues in completing field training tasks.	3.89	0.87	High
<b>Awareness Toward Scientific Research and Field Training</b>		<b>3.91</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>High</b>
19	I actively participate in student activities and programs organized by the university.	3.67	0.74	High
20	I strive to present a positive image during my participation in student activities.	4.01	0.66	High
21	I demonstrate sportsmanship and avoid behaviors that undermine fair competition.	3.82	0.83	High
22	I fulfill all tasks assigned to me in any activity or event and act with a sense of responsibility.	3.66	0.69	Moderate
<b>Awareness Toward Student Activities</b>		<b>3.79</b>	<b>0.36</b>	<b>High</b>
23	The university contributes to promoting a culture of adherence to the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct among students.	3.74	0.77	High
24	The university provides awareness programs to enhance students' understanding of the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.	4.05	0.65	High
25	Student activities contribute to reinforcing adherence to the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.	3.82	0.88	High
26	Faculty members guide students toward compliance with the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.	3.56	0.69	Moderate
27	I believe that the university provides a supportive educational environment that encourages adherence to the Code of Ethical and Professional Conduct.	4.02	1.03	High
28	The Role of the University in Promoting Awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct	3.84	0.36	High
<b>Overall Mean of the Scale</b>		<b>3.82</b>	<b>0.15</b>	<b>High</b>

Moreover, the results show that level of awareness among students towards their fellows was high as well. Results reflect that students give importance to diversity, mutual respect and cooperation within the environment of university. These results can be supported by the large usage of social interaction, collaborative activities and group work at university level that contributes to building towards the ethical responsibility

of university. These findings are aligned with the results of Kim and Vandenberghe (2020) from past.

These findings also indicate that students' ethical awareness level regarding field training and scientific research is also high. These results show positive indicators of students' commitment to professional application, research ethics, avoidance of plagiarism and academic integrity. These findings are consistent with the results of Resnik (2024), highlighting the importance of university policies to improve awareness of students. Furthermore, the level of awareness of professional and ethical code of conduct toward field training was higher showing recognition of students of following professional and ethical values during their training experiences in applied settings. This level of awareness of students shows the awareness of students regarding professional responsibilities. They also respect instructions and regulations at education institutions. The findings also show commitment towards professional ethics while dealing with teachers and others. The possible reason for these findings is that training is the important link between practical application and theoretical knowledge as students go through real-life situations that need ethical decision making. It also shows adherence to professional standards of values and conduct, therefore improving ethical awareness in practical and commutative manner. Additionally, the supervision of universities regarding availability of clear ethical standards and training programs plays important role in reinforcing these ethical values among students. These results are aligned with the findings of Rowe and Zegwaard (2017) who showed same findings in past.

The results also indicate that students' awareness regarding professional behavior impacts their personal performance and reputation of university along with society. Thus, the findings reinforce the values of ethical commitment, responsibility, and discipline in professional practice. These findings are consistent with the results of Vanuytrecht, Goossens and Franck (2026) from the past. Findings further confirm the student's level of awareness regarding ethics of activities of students was high showing students' recognition of importance of ethical conduct during participation in volunteer activities, social activities and cultural activities. This can be defined as the role of activities of students to reinforce sense of social responsibility and belongings. Also, the supervision of universities regarding these activities clearly reflects ethical framework. The study of Astin and Antonio (2012) showed same findings in literature as well.

Moreover, the results showed evaluation of students regarding role of university to promote professional and ethical code of conduct was high. Results show that university effectiveness is to show ethical values and culture through academic courses, awareness programs and regulations. Findings also show that role of university to extend beyond the academic instructions to hold a comprehensive humanistic and educational role to build professional and ethical character of students. These outcomes aligned to the results of Boni, Lopez-Fogues and Walker (2016). In terms of this scale as a whole, the findings indicate that awareness level of students of professional and ethical code of conduct was also high, suggesting the way students at university possess satisfactory level of professional and ethical maturity. The results reflect that university is successful in providing value oriented educational environment in order to prepare students so they can reflect responsible behavior. The outcomes also indicates that improving ethical awareness is basic component to show quality of higher education contributing to students who are ethically responsible and academically competent, as discussed in past by Mohi Ud Din et al. (2025).

#### 4.2. Answer to the Second Research Question:

Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the responses of the study sample regarding the level of awareness of King Faisal University students of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct attributable to gender (male, female)?

This study used standard deviations and means to calculate the awareness of professional and ethical code of conduct among students at King Faisal University. Whereas independent sample T- test was conducted to determine statistical significance between mean response as per gender of study (see Table 5).

Table 5: Results of the Independent Samples T-Test to Examine the Effect of Gende.

Variable	Categories	N	Mean	SD	T	Sig.
Gender	Male	208	3.84	.152	0.160	.132
	Female	329	3.82	.139		

The study results indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between male and female students in their level of awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct. This can be because of several different factors including academic socialization and equitable learning opportunities as both female and male students are following same curriculum. Students of both genders follow the same regulations, and they take part in same awareness programs ensuring comparable levels of professional practice and ethical learning. The findings reflect the success of unified policies of universities which are promoting professional behavior and ethical values along with the impact of standardized environment of university that encourage participation in social and academic activities. It also participates to interact with faculty members as per shared ethical standards contributing to uniform ethical awareness of all genders (Kim & Vandenberghe, 2020).

#### 4.3. Answer to the Third Research Question:

Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the responses of the study sample regarding the level of awareness of King Faisal University students of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct attributable to academic specialization (health, scientific and engineering, humanities and applied)?

To answer this question, means and standard deviations were calculated, and a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between the mean responses of the study sample attributable to academic specialization. To examine the effect of this variable, means and standard deviations were extracted as presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Mean Scores and Standard Deviations by Academic Specialization.

Levels of academic specialization	N	Mean	SD
Health Disciplines	66	3.8391	.17725
Scientific and Engineering Disciplines	194	3.8271	.15209
Humanities and Applied Disciplines	277	3.8095	.13236
<b>Total</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>3.8195</b>	<b>.14588</b>

Results show that the mean scores across academic specializations exhibit apparent differences, indicating a preliminary effect of academic specialization across all its categories. To determine whether these observed differences are statistically significant, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted, as presented in Table (7).

Table 7: Results of the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Students' Responses According to Academic Specialization.

Variable	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Academic Specialization	Between Groups	.064	2	.032	1,509	.222
	Within Groups	11.342	534	.021		

The findings of the study show that there exists not statistically significant different ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the mean scores regarding the impact of academic specialization on the students' awareness of King Faisal University regarding professional and ethical code of conduct. The results show that the integration of institutional efforts of university to promote a unified ethical culture in all disciplines, based on the policy of integrity, ethical conduct and professional responsibility. The results of this study support the outcomes of Boni et al. (2016), indicating that universities are adopting comprehensive value based vision to be successful in achieving ethical alignment among students of all disciplines.

#### 4.4. Answer to the Fourth Research Question

Are there statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the responses of the study sample regarding the level of awareness of King Faisal University students of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct attributable to the level of study (Bachelor's, Master's, PhD)? To answer this question, means and standard deviations were calculated, and a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between the mean responses of the study sample attributable to the level of study. To examine the effect of this variable, means and standard deviations were extracted as presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Means and Standard Deviations According to Level of Study.

Academic Level	N	Mean	SD
Bachelor's Degree	353	3.7204	.15433
Master's Degree	112	3.8102	.12869
Doctoral Degree (PhD)	72	3.8348	.13107
<b>Total</b>		3.7885	.14588

Table (6) indicates that the mean scores across levels of study show apparent differences, suggesting a preliminary effect of the level of study across all its categories. To determine whether these observed differences are statistically significant, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted, as presented in Table (9).

Table 9: Results of the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Students' Responses According to Level of Study.

Variable	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Level of Study	Between Groups	.239	2	.120	5.724	.003
	Within Groups	11.167	534	.021		

The results revealed that there were statistically significant differences at the significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) between the mean scores regarding the effect of the level of study on King Faisal University students' awareness of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct. To identify the direction of these differences and determine which level of study favored higher mean scores, Scheffe's method was employed to conduct post hoc comparisons among the mean scores of the different levels of study. The results of these comparisons are presented in Table 10.

Table 10: Results of Scheffe's Post Hoc Test for Multiple Comparisons of Mean Scores According to Level of Study.

Variable	Level of Study		Mean Difference	Sig.
Level of Study	Bachelor's Degree	Doctoral Degree (PhD)	-0.1144	0.018
		Master's Degree	-0.0898	0.028

The result of the study indicates that the differences were significant at level of 0.05, revealing level of awareness of student of professional and ethical code of conduct has variation as per level of study. These results show difference as: there was no difference between students of Master and PhD, there was difference in favor of Master students as compared to BS students, and difference favored for PhD students as compared to BS students. The findings show that professional and ethical awareness enhances with the passage of time as students move forward in higher education and reach at the comparable level between MS and PhD stage. One of the possible reasons that can explain these findings is accumulation of research and academic experiences, enhanced engagement with adherence to research ethics, field training, and scientific research, all of which intensify at the level of PhD and MS as compared to BS stage. Moreover, Students at the BS level are not aware and mature to be aware of professional responsibilities. From the humanistic perspective, these findings show that ethical awareness is not inborn fixed trait. In fact, it is developed as outcome of educational process that grows with academic exposure and experience. These findings show the importance of having strong culture at BS level in the form of foundational stage to shape professional behavior of students. In literature, Brigue and Orlu (2023) revealed same findings, showing ethical and professional identity getting clearer at the higher stage of education.

#### 4.5. Answer to the Fifth Research Question:

*To what extent does the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct contribute to guiding the academic and professional behavior of King Faisal University students from their perspective?*

The study results indicate that the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct contributes significantly and effectively to guiding the academic and professional behavior of King Faisal University students. The mean scores for all domains of the scale were high, reflecting students' awareness of the role of the Code in regulating their conduct both within and outside the university environment. The results also showed that students perceive the Code as a clear reference framework guiding their interactions with the university, faculty members, and fellow students. It enhances their adherence to research ethics, field training standards, and appropriate conduct

during participation in student activities. This suggests that the Code is not merely a regulatory document but rather an educational tool that builds ethical and professional awareness and supports positive behavioral practices.

Moreover, students highly valued the university's institutional role in promoting the culture of the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct. This institutional support enhances the effectiveness of the Code in guiding academic and professional behavior. The integration of university regulations, curricula, awareness programs, and academic supervision contributes to consolidating ethical values and translating them into practical behaviors.

These results reflect students' awareness of their ethical responsibilities toward themselves and the university community and their recognition of the importance of professional values in preparing for future careers. The findings confirm that the Ethical and Professional Code of Conduct plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of academic behavior, developing professional consciousness, and shaping balanced individuals capable of making ethical and informed decisions in diverse educational and professional situations.

The result of the study indicates that professional and ethical code of conduct plays key role to guide the professional and academic behavior of students at King Faisal University, regardless of their academic specialization or gender. Whereas level of study impacts the student's level of awareness. The results confirm that comprehensive policies of universities have succeeded in achieving value equity for students. These results also heightened the need to improve awareness programs at the beginning stage of study at university level. As students advance in terms of level of study, professional and ethical awareness regarding higher education also gets higher.

The outcome of study also reflects that students at King Faisal university have high levels of professional and ethical awareness, showing the success of university environment to enforce core values regarding responsible academic behaviour. The results show that ethical awareness is enhanced with the help of positive interaction with supportive environment of university and faculty members. Findings also confirm that promotion of ethical values is not the responsibility of individuals, whereas it is the responsibility of institutions that required integrated effort of all stakeholders including students, faculty members and administrators (Brigue & Orlu, 2023).

#### *4.6. Limitations and Recommendations*

There are few limitations of study, despite massive theoretical contribution. Present study examined ethical awareness in context of King Faisal University based in KSA. It is recommended to conduct same types of research in other universities of KSA like King Fahad university within KSA. Moreover, in terms of geographical area, this study is limited only to KSA. Future studies should extend the scope of study and add students at universities of other countries. Moreover, study used SPSS for the analysis of collected data. It is proposed to develop a proper framework having Independent, mediating and dependent variables. Also, future studies should use tools like Smart PLS 4 and AMOS for analysis purposes. In the end, this study collected data through questionnaire as instrument. It is proposed to collect data through interviews in future for more in depth opinion of respondents.

#### 4.7. Theoretical and Managerial Contribution

This study contributes significantly by enriching body of literature through assessment of different factors that create awareness regarding professional and ethical codes of conduct from the perspective of Saudi Universities. Based on findings, present study is different from others by focusing on measurement of King Faisal University's students' awareness of professional and ethical code of conduct. Rather than treating ethical awareness only as concept and analyzing policies of university theoretically, present study focused on understanding students at university code as educational outcome and regulations. By following these steps, this research addresses the gap linked to lack of studies focused on linking institutional code of ethics to awareness level of students. Therefore, present study contributes managerially and theoretically to the literature by providing findings that can support development of strategies to promote academic integrity and professional ethics within Saudi Universities. These findings can also assist decision makers to activate professional and ethical codes of conduct effectively. The results also provide guidelines for decision makers of universities in developing programs that can strengthen ethical decision making among students.

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