



ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AS A CATALYST FOR OCB: INSIGHTS FROM A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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RESEARCH ARTICLE



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Abstract

This systematic review employs the PRISMA methodology to explore the impact of ethical leadership on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). By meticulously following PRISMA's four-stage process Identification, Screening, Eligibility, and Inclusion – this study offers a comprehensive analysis of 19 key research articles. These studies reveal how ethical leadership not only fosters a positive organizational culture but also enhances employee commitment and OCB. Despite the positive correlation, the review highlights the complex interplay between ethical leadership, cultural contexts, and sector-specific dynamics, suggesting that the influence of ethical leadership on OCB may vary widely. This investigation underscores the critical role of ethical leadership in promoting ethical climates, while also pointing to the need for more nuanced research to fully understand its impact across different organizational settings.

Keywords: *Ethical Leadership, Leadership, Organizational Citizenship Behaviour, Organizational Performance*

Introduction

In order to achieve organizational performance, organizations have shifted away from using individualized roles and hierarchical structures in favor of team-based work arrangements. According to Le Pine, Erez, and Johnson (2002), its application has boosted the value of individual initiative and teamwork. According to Le Pine et al. (2002), one of the main issues facing companies in the complicated business environment of today is encouraging people to take initiative and work together in order to achieve good organizational functioning. Many organizational and environmental changes have resulted in the evolution and development of the notion of leadership (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016). Many studies have been carried out to assess how leadership affects an organization's performance and how various leadership philosophies influence organizational variables such as motivation, culture, employee effectiveness, retention, and performance (Shaw & Newton, 2014; Siddique, Aslam, Khan, & Fatima, 2011; Yang, 2014; Yang & Islam, 2012). Theoretical frameworks for general leadership are abundant in the literature. Numerous empirical and conceptual investigations have been conducted on it as a key area of psychology research (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2001). Based on Yukl's (1989) research, most leadership studies suggest that leadership has a vital role in determining an organization's efficacy. Leaders have a significant influence on what happens to people individually, in groups, and within organizations (Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007). Effective leaders motivate individuals and groups to surpass the requirements set by the organization (Ilies et al., 2007; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). In general, leadership is the process of motivating a group of individuals to accomplish goals and assisting an organization in becoming more cohesive and coherent (Bass, 1997). To carry out this kind of approach, a leader makes use of their values, beliefs, character, expertise, skills, ethics, experience, and culture. Leaders inspire people, force them to act, and change the world. The social dynamics of leadership are highly complex. Leadership involves setting the group's objectives, motivating and directing task behavior to reach these objectives, and impacting group culture and upkeep (Yukl, 1989). Leaders need to "induce followers to act," according to Burns, in order to attain specified goals that represent the needs and wishes, aspirations and expectations, beliefs and reasons of both followers and leaders (1978). The progression of leadership definitions, including sustainability, ethics, and emotional intelligence, is depicted in Table 1 from hierarchical influence to complex, values-driven leadership.

Table 1: The Progression of Leadership Definitions

Year	Key contributor's	Definition
1930's	Chester Barnard	Leadership is defined as an influence that flows from the top of an organizational hierarchy.

1940's	Kurt Lewin, Ralph Stogdill	Leadership is the ability to direct group effort and influence others toward achieving a common goal.
1950's	Ralph Stogdill, Bernard Bass	Leadership is seen as a relationship between leader and follower, emphasizing personal traits and the leader's ability to motivate and inspire.
1960's	Fred Fiedler, Robert Blake, Jane Mouton	Leadership is defined as a process of influencing group activities and motivating others to achieve organizational objectives.
1970's	James MacGregor Burns, Robert House	Leadership is viewed as a transformational process, focusing on change and vision creation.
1980's	Warren Bennis, John Kotter	Leadership includes the ability to foster relationships, empower others, and adapt to complex environments.
1990's	Peter Senge, Joseph Rost	Leadership is defined as an influence process that occurs within a group setting, emphasizing shared vision and distributed leadership.
2000's	Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis	Leadership is linked to emotional intelligence, focusing on self-awareness, social skills, and empathetic decision-making.
2010's	Bill George, Bruce Avolio, Bernard Bass	Leadership is redefined to incorporate ethical, transformational, and authentic leadership, emphasizing trust, values, and long-term vision.
2020's	Satya Nadella, Jacinda Ardern	Leadership increasingly integrates ethical, spiritual, and sustainability-focused frameworks, addressing global challenges and inclusive leadership.

Source: self-created

An effective leader is one who knows how to take advantage of the possibilities that are given to them by their surroundings, their subordinates, and themselves. According to this point of view, leadership is the ability to involve others in the process of accomplishing a goal within a larger context or system. Over time, a plethora of theories have been established to illuminate the intricacies of leadership, and each one provides valuable insights. However, moral leadership plays a critical role in shaping success, culture, and behavior in today's dynamic business contexts. Scholars and practitioners consistently place a high priority on leaders' ethical behavior whenever ethical issues are discussed. Ciulla (1998) asserts that ethics and integrity are fundamental to leadership and should be given careful consideration in order to ensure the organization's long-term viability as well as its commercial success. Following the widely reported corporate leadership scandals, and particularly the high-profile organization collapses, such as major financial institutions (Treviño, Nieuwenboers, & Kish-Gephart, 2014), which sparked the recent global recession, leaders' ethical behavior is receiving more consideration across the board. Although these recent unethical incidents have piqued the interest of academics and researchers in leadership ethics (Hartog, 2015), leadership ethics has long been studied in a variety of leadership theories (Zhu, Zheng, Riggio, & Zhang, 2015). A lot of research has been done on ethical leadership since it piqued the academics' intense curiosity. Researchers Brown et al. (2005) and Hartog (2015) contend that the increasing attention and curiosity in ethical leadership development can be attributed to recent high-profile crises. Treviño and associates initiated their descriptive work on the subject by conducting a series of studies to identify the characteristics of ethical leaders and those who meet the criteria (Treviño, Brown, & Hartman, 2003; Treviño, Hartman, & Brown, 2000). In response to these findings, Brown et al. (2005) developed the notion of ethical leadership for the first time and showed a link between ethical leadership and several positive organizational and employee outcomes. An increasing number of studies carried out in diverse cultural settings have exhibited the efficacy of moral leadership in inspiring employees. Additionally, research has shown that it is helpful in lowering unfavourable outcomes like deviance and intention to leave as well as positively correlated with favorable employee outcomes like changed attitudes and behavior (Bedi, Alpaslan, & Green, 2016; Chen & Hou, 2016; Chughtai, Byrne, & Flood, 2015; Demirtas & Akdogan, 2015; Ng & Feldman, 2015). OCB, or Organizational Citizenship Behavior, is defined as extra-role and discretionary behaviors that lead workers to go above and beyond the call of duty. This definition is supported by Organ (1988); Ruiz-Palomino, Ruiz-Amaya, & Knörr (2011); Yadav & Punia (2013). Five dimensions are included in the definition of OCB, as stated by Costa & MacCrae (1992), Organ (1988), and Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter (1990). (1) Selflessness The term "outcome-centered behavior" (OCB) describes how much workers help colleagues who are overworked, support them in personal issues, and mentor new hires when they first start. (2) The term "conscientiousness" (OCB) describes actions that surpass the minimal standards, such as being diligent in making effective use of organizational resources. (3) Courtesy OCB refers to actions taken to avert possible conflicts and preventative steps taken to guarantee that others' rights are not infringed. (4) Sportsmanship OCB describes actions that sustain positive working relationships with coworkers, especially in the face of their obnoxious behavior or during difficult times for the company. (5) Civic-virtue OCB pertains to engaging in the organization's activities on a deeper level than typical by attending voluntary events and meetings, as well as reading and staying informed about announcements from the organization. To sum up, the essence of leadership is in utilizing one's own abilities, those of others, and the surrounding circumstances to accomplish group objectives. Because of its profound influence on forming attitudes, cultures, and the general performance of an organization, ethical leadership in particular has become increasingly important in today's complicated organizational environments. The aftermath of high-profile scandals has prompted a resurgence of interest in ethical leadership, highlighting the significance of morality and integrity in leadership positions. Empirical studies have repeatedly demonstrated that moral leadership cultivates beneficial outcomes including Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), which includes civic virtue, civility, benevolence, conscientiousness, and

sportsmanship. It also inspires employees. These actions are essential to creating a collaborative and effective work atmosphere, which in turn supports an organization's long-term viability and success.

Exploring the Relationship Between Ethical Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

These behaviors by workers that go above and beyond the call of duty are known as organizational citizenship behavior, according to Brief and Motowidlo (1986). Organizations today aim for higher worker productivity, according to Organ et al. (2006). The only way to achieve this improved performance, according to Malik et al. (2012), is to provide workers with a happy work environment, fair treatment, and assessments. Thus, companies have to face the difficult problem of functioning in a rapidly changing world (Zhang & Bartol, 2010).

In an environment where every company is trying to obtain a competitive edge over its rivals, organizations are obliged to rely on their employees to go above and beyond the call of duty in order to help the organization accomplish its objectives (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Citizenship behavior (OCB) is the term used to characterize behaviors that are outside the scope of a job description. These behaviors can include helping others, taking on more responsibilities, putting in extra time, defending the organization, and being open and honest about important organizational concerns. More than 650 research articles have been written about OCB, according to Dekas et al. (2013), demonstrating that researchers and academics are becoming more interested in the subject. The rationale behind the connection between OCB and organizational effectiveness has been linked to this interest. Numerous facets of organizational citizenship behavior have been connected to traits of leadership. This means that for their subordinates to demonstrate corporate citizenship behaviors, leaders need to model qualities like accountability, dependability, equality, morality, respect, and empathy (Bello, 2012). Any organization's employees feel secure and confident working under a leader who exhibits the aforementioned qualities. In order to help the company reach its overall goal in terms of effectiveness and efficiency, employees willingly go above and beyond the call of duty (Eisenbeiss, 2012). Therefore, studies argue that a leader's ability to inspire followers can increase employees' involvement in extracurricular activities such as corporate citizenship (Sheraz et al., 2012). According to Mo and Shi (2015), a leader who embodies values such as morality and justice can thus assist staff in shaping organizational citizenship behavior. According to Burke et al. (2007) and Organ (1990), among the characteristics of ethical leadership is treating leaders fairly and consistently. Researchers have also suggested that moral leaders can have a significant positive impact on employees' OCB by elevating their sense of fairness and integrity (Mo & Shi, 2015). Consequently, organizational citizenship behavior is encouraged when moral leadership is present within the company (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Eisenbeiss, 2012; Ponnuru & Tennakoon, 2009). When a leader acts in the best interests and well-being of their team, it can lead to a positive feedback loop in which employees feel required to return the favor by engaging in activities such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) (Lu, 2014). Additionally, employees are more inclined to act kindly and take part in optional extra-role activities known as organizational citizenship behavior if they think their supervisor is fair and ethical (Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers, 2016; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). Research has shown that ethical leadership is associated with individual citizenship behavior (Liu et al., 2013), organizational citizenship behavior (Mayer et al., 2009; Avey, Palanski, & Walumbwa 2011), and Kacmar et al. (2011). However, employee opinion of politics and gender have a significant impact on the structure of these partnerships. Additionally, moral leaders model moral behavior for their staff members and foster an ethical environment that enhances their commitment, work happiness, and corporate citizenship (Dinc and Aydemir, 2014). Wang (2014) suggested that how an employee behaves in terms of corporate citizenship depends on how much they believe their supervisor supports them. Surprisingly, Yates (2014) discovered that there were notable distinctions between highly ethical and less ethical leadership behaviors among the employees. According to research done in 2004 by Jahangir et al., factors that come before OCB have the potential to improve or worsen employee performance inside a company. Additionally, empirical studies have shown a positive correlation between OCB and organizational success (p. 75). Furthermore, OCB is linked to individual outcomes including real and intended turnover, absenteeism, reward distribution choices, and management performance reviews of employees. Organizational outcomes such as unit-level turnover, customer satisfaction, productivity, efficiency, and reduced costs are associated with OCB (Podsakoff et al., 2009). The drawbacks of OCBs have been investigated by Bolino et al. (2013). Though it can oftentimes be difficult to pinpoint their negative traits, they believe that OCBs are unquestionably positive in a number of aspects. The results raise questions about the idea that taking part in OCBs will significantly reduce in-role performance. This discrepancy was explained by Bergeron (2007), who noted that there is rarely a negative correlation between OCB and in-role performance in research. She noted, more precisely, that studies on OCB and in-role performance have been carried out in situations when employee resources—like time—are practically boundless. According to her idea, the link between OCBs and in-role performance is really inverse in those situations where time is comparatively a fixed commodity. They noted both behaviors that are often measured and potential methodological problems in evaluating in-role performance and citizenship behavior.

While there is a wealth of evidence that links ethical leadership to organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), this study delves deeper into the critical role that ethical leadership plays in promoting OCB within corporate settings. Ethical leadership inspires employees to do more than just do their given tasks; it also motivates them to take on tasks that increase the effectiveness of the organization. Leaders who respect moral principles such as fairness, honesty, and decency create an environment of trust and commitment that inspires employees to go above and beyond—not just because it's required of them, but because they truly want to see the firm thrive. This study emphasizes ethical leadership as a catalyst for OCB. Businesses need to foster this kind of leadership if they hope to achieve lasting success through the discretionary and voluntary activities of their workforce.

Research Questions

RQ1: To review the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in various organizational settings.

RQ2: To determine the potential benefits and limitations of ethical leadership in fostering organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), with a focus on empirical evidence and theoretical discussions.

This study examines ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) from various aspects, including the impact of ethical leadership on OCB, the mediating roles of intrinsic motivation and organizational justice, and the effects of ethical leadership across different cultural and organizational contexts. It provides a comprehensive picture of ethical leadership and OCB by systematically analyzing the variety of studies, their objectives, and the methodological elements applied in the investigation.

Methodology

Methodologically, the four components of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta analyses (PRISMA) checklist—identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion—are used in this inquiry. Global researchers find PRISMA to be even more beautiful because of its flexibility and comprehensiveness. This protocol delineates the aim of the study and the methodology for the systematic review.

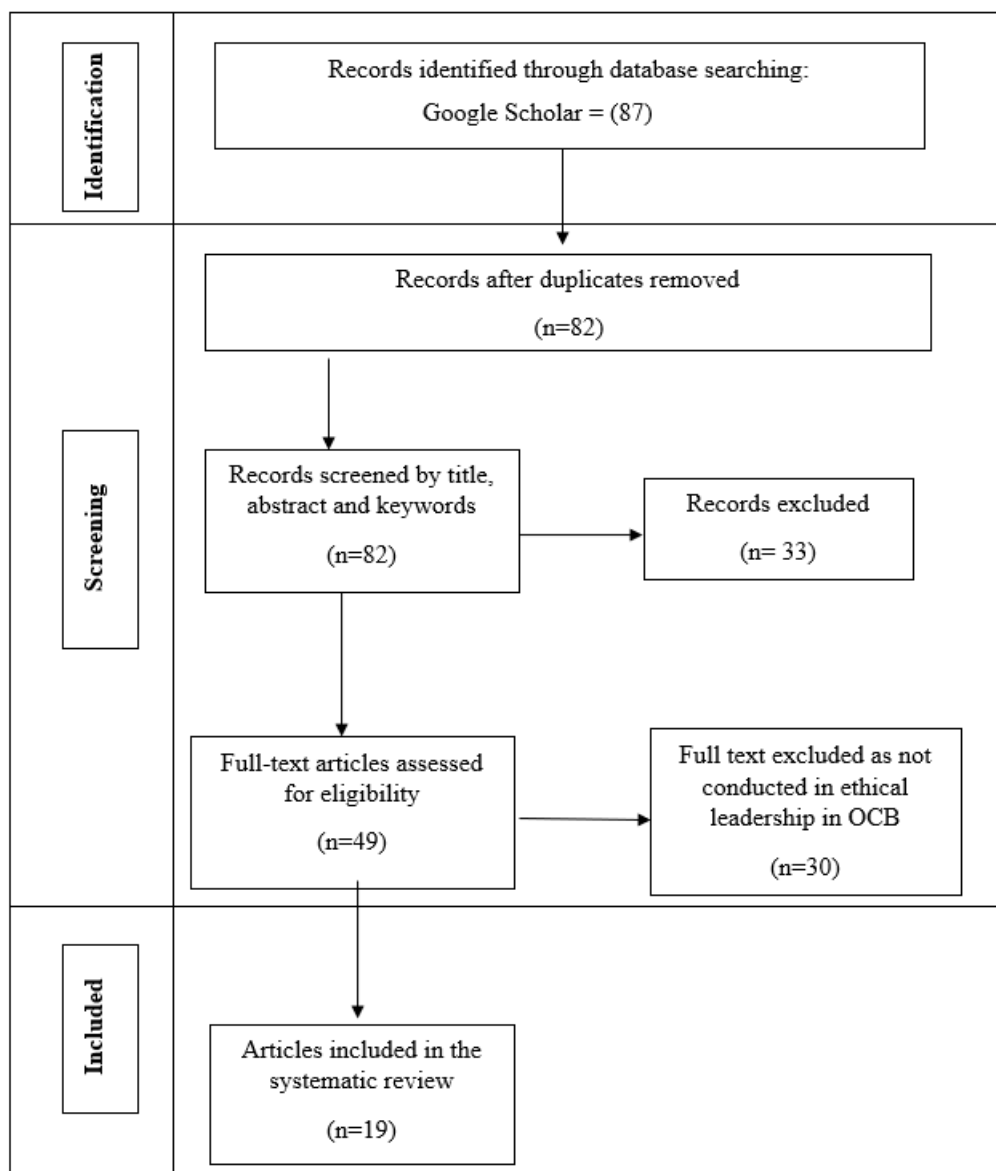


Figure 1: The PRISMA Systematic Review (Page et al., 2021).

Identification

The Identification process, which is the initial step in every systematic review, is outlined in the PRISMA guidelines. Google Scholar was chosen for this study’s objectives. The key terms in the review were carefully crafted to appropriately convey the

ideas that would be looked at. Several words related to organizational behavior (OCB) and ethical leadership. Table 1 presents the search terms that were used in this investigation.

Table 2: Search string used in this study

Database	Search String
Google scholar	Ethical leadership, Ethical leadership in organizational citizenship behaviour

Search String

Screening: Following identification, articles are eliminated by screening. Regarding the theme of “Ethical leadership in organizational behavior,” the abstracts, keywords, and titles of these (82) were reviewed. Based on the screening process, (33) papers were removed because they were not considered relevant to the study’s goals. For the remaining (49) articles, Table 3 shows the outcomes of the inclusion/exclusion screening.

Table 3: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Studies conducted between (2011) and (2024)	Studies before 2011
Articles from recognized journals	Conference papers, book chapters
Articles in English language	Articles not in English language
Related to Ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour	Not related to Ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour

The evaluation of (19) papers, which were initially screened out for eligibility using certain inclusion and exclusion criteria as indicated in the above table, determined inclusion in this systematic review method. We completed the review process, but since book chapters and conference proceedings aren’t yet finished, we didn’t include them (González-Albo and Bordon’s, 2011).

Included: The impact of ethical leadership on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) was the focus of this evaluation of the research. Table (4) lists the research studies that are covered. 19 articles were chosen from Google Scholar based on the information in the preceding table. The outstanding caliber of the instructional content found in the databases led to their selection. Every inquiry focused on a particular aspect of organizational citizenship behavior and ethical leadership. Most of the studies were conducted in academic environments.

Table 4: Included research studies

Author	Date	Title	Database	Purpose	Outcome
Palomino et al.	2011	“Employee Organizational Citizenship Behaviour: The Direct and Indirect Impact of Ethical Leadership”	Google scholar	The aim of the paper is To investigate how employee work satisfaction, emotional commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior in Spain’s banking and insurance industries are directly and favorably correlated with supervisor ethical leadership.	According to the study’s findings, 525 respondents from the banking and insurance industries in Spain discovered that affective commitment and job satisfaction are positively impacted by supervisor ethical leadership, and that these two factors fully moderate the impact of ethical leadership on employee organizational citizenship behavior.
Philipp and Lopez	2013	“The Moderating Role of Ethical Leadership: Investigating Relationships Among Employee Psychological Contracts, Commitment, and Citizenship Behavior”	Google scholar	The study’s goal is to investigate the relationships between organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), psychological contracts, ethical leadership, and organizational commitment. According to the findings, relational and transactional contracts have a moderating	The study found that commitment and OCB were adversely affected by transactional contracts, but these impacts were mitigated by ethical leadership. The detrimental effects of transactional contracts on commitment were mitigated and the beneficial effects of relational contracts on OCB were reinforced by highly ethical leadership.

				influence on organizational outcomes when led by ethical leaders.	
Hartog	2014	Ethical Leadership	Google scholar	This paper's goal is to investigate how ethical leadership has evolved within the field of organizational behavior. It does this by defining ethical leadership, outlining its behaviors, examining its effects on followers, contrasting it with other leadership philosophies, and suggesting areas for future research.	The study discovered that people's awareness of ethical leadership has increased due to high-profile instances of leaders' unethical behavior. This review examines its definition, actions, impact on followers, comparisons with unethical leadership, obstacles, and implications for future research.
Wang and Sung	2014	"Predictors of Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Ethical Leadership and Workplace Jealousy"	Google scholar	The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship between perceived ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) and workplace envy, with a focus on both individuals and organizations (OCBO). In these interactions, it looks at jealousy as a mediator and moral leadership as a moderator.	According to the findings, OCB is impacted by envy being lessened by ethical leadership. Ethical leadership moderates these interactions, with jealousy serving as a partial mediator.
Yildiz and Yildiz	2015	"The Effects of Ethical Leadership, Servant Leadership and Leader-Member Exchange on Compulsory Citizenship Behaviors"	Google scholar	The study's objectives are to examine the idea of required citizenship behavior, create a theoretical framework on variables such leader-member interaction, servant leadership, and ethical leadership, and investigate research and management consequences.	The study's findings indicated that While extra-role actions are generally advantageous, recent research indicates that they can sometimes be the result of pressure, exposing a darker side known as obligatory citizenship behavior. Research on it is scarce despite its significance. After reviewing the literature, this study puts forth a theoretical framework that investigates factors such as leader-member exchange and ethical leadership.
Khan et al.	2016	"The Relationship Between Ethical Leadership And Organizational Citizenship Behaviour:"	Google scholar	The purpose of the study is to investigate the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior	The study discovered a strong positive relationship between corporate citizenship conduct and ethical leadership among academic staff members at a

		Evidence From PAKISTAN”		and ethical leadership among academic staff members at a Pakistani public university. Quantitative approaches will be used to evaluate correlations and identify practical implications.	public institution in Pakistan. There were implications for encouraging extra-role actions in both organizational citizenship and ethical leadership, which were deemed modest.
Monga and Cilliers	2016	“Perceived ethical leadership: Its moderating influence on employees’ organisational commitment and organisational citizenship behaviours”	Google Scholar	This study aims to investigate the ways in which employees’ views of moral leadership influenced their organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment in a Democratic Republic of the Congo railway company.	The study found that employees’ perceptions of moral leadership had a beneficial impact on their citizenship behavior and organizational commitment, strengthening traits including altruism, conscientiousness, and civic virtue as well as psychological attachment and job persistence.
Israr et al.	2017	“A Review of Ethical Leadership and Other Ethics-Related Leadership Theories”	Google scholar	The objective of this study is to review ethics-related leadership theories, compare ethical leadership with other styles, and explore their distinctiveness, aiming to better understand the role of ethics and morality in leadership constructs.	According to the study’s findings, there are strong links between ethical leadership and related categories such as transformational, servant, and authentic leadership, despite the fact that ethical leadership is conceptually different from these theories. The study contends that ethical leadership is nevertheless a unique construct in spite of these associations.
Mo and Shi	2017	“Linking Ethical Leadership to Employees’ Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Testing the Multilevel Mediation Role of Organizational Concern”	Google scholar	This study aims to investigate, empirically, how social learning and social exchange mechanisms, such as perceived procedural justice and organizational concern, affect workers’ organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).	The study found that through social learning and social exchange processes, ethical leadership improves employees’ organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), with perceived procedural justice and organizational care serving as important mediators in this relationship.
Tourigny et al.	2017	“Ethical Leadership and Corporate Social Responsibility in China: A Multilevel Study of Their Effects on Trust and Organizational Citizenship Behavior”	Google scholar	The study’s objective is to use multilevel analysis to examine how ethical leadership by supervisors affects subordinates’ perceptions of organizational trust, personal social	The study found that, moral leadership has a favorable impact on work unit-level corporate social responsibility (CSR), which also raises organizational trust and encourages employees to act more

				responsibility, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) in China's manufacturing sector.	responsibly toward one another and as a group.
Khokhar and Rehman	2017	"Linking Ethical Leadership to Employees' Performance: Mediating Role of Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Counterproductive Work Behavior"	Google scholar	The study aims to explore the relationship between unproductive work behavior and corporate citizenship behavior as well as how ethical leadership influences employee performance. The findings show that, although counterproductive work conduct partially mediates the link, ethical leadership and employee performance are positively correlated.	The study found that, there is a positive correlation between employee performance and ethical leadership, and this relationship is largely mediated by unproductive work conduct. Reliability was not mediated by organizational citizenship conduct. The results further the theoretical framework for investigating ethical leadership.
Cingoz and Akdogan	2018	"A Study on Determining the Relationships Among Corporate Social Responsibility, Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Ethical Leadership"	Google scholar	The study's objective is to investigate how organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and ethical leadership are affected by corporate social responsibility (CSR) in a sample of sixty workers in Nevşehir, Turkey.	The study found that, among 60 workers from Nevşehir, Turkey, CSR had a favorable impact on ethical leadership; however, neither CSR nor organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) were shown to be significantly correlated with ethical leadership.
Ali et al.	2018	"Ethical Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Mediating Role of Organizational Justice: A Case Study of Education Sector"	Google scholar	The aim of the study is to empirically examine, using organizational justice as a mediating variable, the relationship between ethical leadership and employee work outcomes, with a particular emphasis on the effects on the education sector in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.	The study found a strong correlation between organizational citizenship behavior (OCBI) and ethical leadership. Furthermore, a positive correlation was seen between organizational justice determinants and OCBI, suggesting that ethical leadership plays a significant role in enhancing employment outcomes.
Mostafa	2018	"Ethical Leadership and Organisational Citizenship Behaviours: The Moderating Role of Organizational Identification"	Google scholar	The aim of the study is to determine how organizational identification influences the relationship between organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) and ethical	The results of the study showed that employees with low organizational identification are more likely than those with high identification to exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) when they are led ethically. The

				leadership. Hierarchical linear modeling is used, and Egyptian financial personnel are involved.	beneficial effects of ethical leadership on OCBs are lessened by organizational identity.
Arshad et al.	2020	“Impact of prosocial motivation on organizational citizenship behavior: the mediating role of ethical leadership and leader–member exchange”	Google scholar	The aim of the study is to provide theoretical and practical implications by conducting an empirical investigation into the mediating roles that leader-member interchange and ethical leadership play in the relationship between prosocial motivation and organizational citizenship behavior in Pakistan’s TVET sector.	The study found that, prosocial motivation and organizational citizenship behavior are mediated by ethical leadership and leader-member interchange, which benefits Pakistani TVET sector personnel. Promoting these leadership behaviors is advantageous for organizational citizenship.
Danish et al.	2020	“Impact of Ethical Leadership on Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior with Mediating role of Intrinsic Motivation”	Google scholar	The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between ethical leadership and citizenship behavior, the impact of intrinsic motivation as a mediator, and the reasons behind the lack of mediation of intrinsic motivation in the banking industry.	The results of the study showed that intrinsic motivation mediates the relationship between ethical leadership and citizenship behavior, which is positively influenced by both. Nevertheless, in the banking industry, corporate citizenship behavior and moral leadership are not mediated by intrinsic incentive.
Fatima and Siddiqui	2020	“Ethical Leadership and OCB: The mediating role of Ethical Climate, Trust, and Justice”	Google scholar	The aim of the study is to investigate the mediating roles of distributive justice, procedural justice environment, trust, and ethical climate in relation to organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).	The study found that, ethical leadership at the top of the management chain has a beneficial impact on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) by fostering trust and an ethical environment, both of which improve procedural fairness and distributive justice.
Novitasari, D et al.	2021	The moderation role of ethical leadership on organisational justice, professional commitment, and organisational citizenship behaviour among academicians	Google scholar	The aim of the study is to investigate the moderating role of ethical leadership in the academic community of private universities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, as well as the relationship between ethical leadership, professional	The study found that, the association between professional dedication and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and between organizational justice and OCB is negatively moderated by ethical leadership. Professional commitment and organizational fairness both have a favorable impact on OCB.

				commitment, and organizational justice in organizational citizenship behavior (OCB).	
Alhaidani et al.	2024	“Navigating Organizational Justice and Ethical Leadership: Empirical Evidence from Saudi Arabia”	Google scholar	The study’s objective is to ascertain how ethical leadership influences the association between the ethical behavior of Saudi Arabian banking industry personnel and the organizational justice dimensions (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice).	According to the study, ethical leadership enhances the influence of justice dimensions by moderating the association between organizational justice and employees’ ethical behavior. Its negligible relationship to interpersonal justice, however, emphasizes the critical role managerial ethics play in encouraging moral behavior.

Analysis and Discussion

The emphasis on moral behavior, openness, and a dedication to ethical norms that set ethical leadership apart from other leadership philosophies. According to Israr et al. (2017), moral leadership is essential for separating leaders who value moral behavior from those who might be more focused on achieving their goals at the expense of morality. The body of research highlights that ethical leadership entails not just a leader’s personal ethics but also their capacity to create an ethical culture within the company, which has a big impact on staff conduct and organizational results. On the other hand, the literature consistently emphasizes the beneficial connection between moral leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Research has shown that ethical leadership improves overconsumption behavior (OCB) through mediating elements including intrinsic motivation and leader-member exchange (Arshad et al., 2020; Danish et al., 2020). Since OCB stands for the voluntary, above-and-beyond acts that enhance organizational effectiveness but are not formally acknowledged or rewarded, this relationship is important. As a result of increased dedication, fairness, and trust, ethical leadership creates a culture where workers are more inclined to participate in OCB. The relationship between organizational justice and ethical behavior is examined by Alhaidani et al. (2024). They find that ethical behavior and the justice components (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational) are moderated by ethical leadership. This interaction shows that fair and equitable work environments can be promoted by ethical leadership, which can enhance the beneficial impacts of organizational justice on employee behavior. Nonetheless, the negligible correlation with interpersonal justice suggests that the effects of ethical leadership might differ based on the particular justice dimension, necessitating additional research.

Another crucial area of study is the function that intrinsic motivation plays as a mediator in the connection between moral leadership and organizational results. Danish et al. (2020) discover that intrinsic motivation plays a critical mediating function, even while ethical leadership favorably promotes organizational commitment and OCB. As demonstrated by the banking industry, where intrinsic motivation does not mediate the link, this mediation does not occur consistently across industries. This conclusion emphasizes the necessity for contextualized leadership methods by implying that industry-specific characteristics may have an impact on how ethical leadership translates into employee motivation and behavior.

In the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational outcomes, trust and organizational commitment emerge as critical mediators. According to studies by Philipp and Lopez (2013) and Mo and Shi (2017), moral leadership increases organizational trust, which in turn increases workers’ commitment to and desire to participate in OCB. The aforementioned relationship highlights the significance of moral leadership in establishing a dependable workplace where workers feel appreciated and are inclined to respond positively with constructive organizational actions.

Nonetheless, research on the relationship between moral leadership and organizational success also looks at the moderating and mediating effects of many elements. According to Raini et al. (2021), for example, ethical leadership is found to adversely buffer the association between organizational justice and OCB. This finding suggests that, depending on the situation, ethical leadership may be able to mitigate the consequences of justice on employee behavior. If employees have a strong organizational identity, they may already be inclined toward OCB, which lessens the additional influence of ethical leadership. On the other hand, Mostafa (2018) identifies organizational identity as a moderator that weakens the positive impact of ethical leadership on OCB. In order to comprehend ethical leadership, the review emphasizes the significance of cross-cultural and industry-specific factors. Research conducted in a variety of cultural contexts shows that cultural norms and values can influence how ethical leadership is perceived and eventually affect organizational behavior. Examples of these studies include Wang and Sung’s (2014) study on ethical leadership and workplace jealousy in China and Monga and Cilliers’ (2016) study in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. According to these results, an understanding of ethical leadership cannot be completely achieved without taking into account the sectoral and cultural context in which it is engaged. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) and ethical leadership are

related topics of interest. Tourigny et al. (2017) and Cingoz and Akdogan (2018) investigate the relationship between ethical leadership and CSR initiatives, concluding that the former improves views of the latter, which in turn promotes OCB and organizational trust. Cingoz and Akdogan's study, which revealed no significant correlation between CSR and OCB, illustrates that the relationship between CSR and OCB is not always clear-cut. This suggests that while CSR may be promoted by ethical leadership, other factors like company culture and employee views may operate as a mediating factor in the impact of ethical leadership on OCB. Yildiz and Yildiz (2015) present the idea of obligatory civic behavior, which happens when workers feel under pressure to engage in OCB because of organizational norms or expectations, despite the majority of the literature focusing on the benefits of ethical leadership. Given this more sinister side of civic engagement, moral leadership ought to strike a balance between encouraging admirable organizational practices and making sure they are chosen voluntarily rather than forced. It is vital to comprehend this equilibrium in order to create moral leadership approaches that genuinely assist the company and its staff. An important theme is the effect of moral leadership on the performance of the organization as a whole. According to Khokhar and Rehman (2017), counterproductive work conduct acts as a partial mediating factor in the favorable association between ethical leadership and employee performance. The absence of OCB mediation in this situation, however, suggests that although moral leadership improves performance, more civic engagement may not follow immediately from it. This research casts doubt on the notion that moral leadership inevitably raises OCB and raises the possibility that moral leadership may have a greater direct impact on other variables like affective commitment and work satisfaction.

Limitations of the Study

A number of the studies were carried out within particular cultural and organizational contexts, such as the banking sector in Saudi Arabia, the academic sector in Pakistan, or the manufacturing sector in China. This geographic and sectoral concentration limits the generalizability of the findings. The impact of ethical leadership on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) may vary in other contexts, such as non-profit organizations, different industries, or regions with distinct cultural norms and values. Despite providing insightful information, the studies have several limitations that should be acknowledged. In contrast to individualistic cultures, collectivist societies may place a greater emphasis on the role that ethical leadership plays in fostering OCB. The majority of the research strongly depend on cross-sectional designs, which makes it more difficult to determine the causal links between OCB and ethical leadership. Although correlations are found, it is unclear which way causation is directed. A more thorough knowledge of how ethical leadership affects OCB over time would be possible with longitudinal research. Furthermore, self-reported data was used in several studies, which raises the possibility of bias because of social desirability or respondents' erroneous self-evaluations.

While some research has looked at organizational justice, intrinsic motivation, and organizational identification as mediating and moderating variables, a more thorough investigation of possible mediators and moderators is still required. The relationship between ethical leadership and OCB may be further clarified by taking into account factors like psychological safety, company culture, and individual variations like personality traits. Additionally, little is known about how various leadership philosophies—such as transformational, ethical, and servant leadership—interact and how this affects OCB as a whole. A number of research were carried out with limited sample numbers or within particular demographic groupings, which might not be an accurate representation of larger populations. The diversity of experiences across different sectors or demographic groups, for example, may not be captured by research that concentrate on a single business or a homogenous population (such as personnel from the same industry). This restriction raises the possibility that the results might not hold true for bigger or more diverse populations. Still, the majority of the research focuses on the advantages of moral leadership, like improved OCB and increased job satisfaction. Nevertheless, there is insufficient discussion of the possible drawbacks or unforeseen implications of ethical leadership, such as heightened pressure on staff members to uphold moral principles or possible clashes with alternative leadership philosophies. By taking these factors into consideration, the role of ethical leadership in corporate contexts may become more fully understood. Additionally, a lot of research ignores the larger organizational dynamics that can have an impact on how ethical leadership and OCB interact. Understanding how ethical leadership functions within an organization depends on a number of factors, including resource availability, power relations, and organizational structure. To give a more comprehensive picture of the influence of ethical leadership on OCB, future studies should take these dynamics in to account. In conclusion, future research should address these shortcomings to provide a more thorough and broadly applicable knowledge base, even though the evaluated studies greatly advance our understanding of ethical leadership and its relationship to OCB.

Future Research Directions

The literature suggests a number of directions for further investigation. More research is needed, according to Hartog (2014) and other academics, to determine how ethical leadership affects employee behavior and organizational culture over the long run. This is especially important in non-Western situations where cultural norms may differ dramatically. Furthermore, little is known about how ethical leadership interacts with other leadership philosophies, like transformational and servant leadership, which may shed more light on how various leadership philosophies can work together to advance moral behavior in the workplace.

Conclusion

In conclusion, ethical leadership emerges as a powerful force in fostering organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), encouraging employees to go beyond their formal roles for the greater good of the organization. The review highlights the positive influence of ethical leadership on OCB, emphasizing the roles of intrinsic motivation, leader-member exchange, and organizational justice as key mediators in this relationship. However, the research also uncovers significant gaps, such as the

need for studies across diverse cultural and organizational settings, as well as longitudinal research to better capture the causal dynamics at play. Moreover, the potential negative consequences of ethical leadership and the interactions between various leadership styles remain underexplored areas that warrant further investigation. Addressing these research gaps will deepen our understanding of how ethical leadership can be leveraged to optimize organizational outcomes, ultimately contributing to the development of more effective and adaptive leadership practices in today's complex and varied organizational landscapes.

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