

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR: EVIDENCE FROM PAKISTAN

Hassan Khan

*Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Pakistan  
hassan@awkum.edu.pk*

Muhammad Yasir

*Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia*

Halimah Mohd Yusof

*Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia*

Mansoor Nazir Bhatti

*Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia*

Arslan Umar

*Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Malaysia*

## Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between ethical leadership and employees' organizational citizenship behavior among academic staff of a public-sector university in Pakistan. The current study employed a quantitative research design using questionnaires to collect data from 204 academic staff using random sampling. After data collection, 191 questionnaires were received for further analysis. Mean, standard deviation and correlation analysis were conducted using SPSS 21 to test the hypothesis of this study. The results of the study showed that ethical leadership is practiced in public-sector university at a moderate level. Furthermore, based on the perception of academic staff, organizational citizenship behavior was found to be at the moderate level. The study also found a significant and positive correlation between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior, based on the norm of reciprocity, which is supportive of the principles of social exchange theory. In addition, people orientation, fairness, power sharing, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role clarification, and integrity had a significant positive correlation with organizational citizenship behavior. Furthermore, findings of this study have practical implications for leaders of public sector universities as exhibiting ethical leadership behavior can lead towards employees engaging in extra-role behaviors such as OCB. Lastly, suggestions for future studies have also been provided.

**Keywords:** Ethical Leadership, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Pakistan

## 1. Introduction

In the contemporary world, organizations are thriving for higher performance from their employees. This higher performance can only be achieved by providing employees a satisfied workplace, fair treatment, and appraisal (Malik *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, organizations are facing the uphill task of working under conditions which are changing rapidly (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). In such condition, where every organization is looking to get an edge over its competitors by gaining competitive advantage, organizations are left with no other choice but to look upon to its employees to go beyond their job description in helping the organization in achieving its goals (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000). These behaviors where employees go beyond their job description have been termed as organizational citizenship behavior (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986).

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to those behaviors that are not part of an individual job description and include acts like helping other, taking additional responsibilities, putting extra hours, defending organization and openly speaking about important issues of organization (Organ *et al.*, 2006). According to Dekas *et al.* (2013), there has been a growing interest of researchers and scholars on OCB, as more than 650 research articles have been written about it. This interest has been associated with the reason that OCB has been linked with the organizational effectiveness.

Organizational citizenship behavior has been related to different factors of leadership. This implies that for employees having organizational citizenship behaviors, leaders shall be having characteristics such as responsibility, trustworthiness, equality, morality, respect, and awareness of others (Bello, 2012). In any organization when leader depicts the above-mentioned characteristics, employees feel trust in the decisions of the leader and feel secure working in the organization. Thus, the employees willingly reciprocate by working voluntarily beyond their job description and supporting the organization in achieving the overall objective in term of effectiveness and efficiency (Eisenbeiss, 2012). Therefore, scholars suggest that the ability of a leader in inspiring followers can enhance employees engagement in extra-role behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior (Sheraz *et al.*, 2012). Hence, organizational citizenship behavior among employees can be achieved by leader having characteristics such as morality and fairness (Mo & Shi, 2015).

Previous research has attributed leaders' fair and consistent treatment as one of the characteristics of ethical leadership (Burke *et al.*, 2007; Organ, 1990). Researchers have also suggested that ethical leaders can play a significant role in enhancing employees OCB, as these leaders have the ability to improve employees perception regarding fairness and integrity (Mo & Shi, 2015). Thus, organizational citizenship behavior is nurtured by the existence of ethical leadership in the organization (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Eisenbeiss, 2012; Ponnu & Tennakoon, 2009). The ability of a leader to keep the best interest of its employees in mind, and show care towards them stimulates a reciprocating effect in the employees, who may feel obliged and thus engage in behaviors such as OCB, completing a feedback loop (Lu, 2014). Moreover, employees having a perception of their leader as ethical in term of treating them fairly are more likely to reciprocate the same and get engaged in such discretionary extra-role behaviors known as organizational citizenship behavior (Brown & Mitchell, 2010; Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers, 2016; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009).

Moreover, higher education has been termed as vital and needs to be prioritized by policy makers for the development of the country (Jackson & Weathersby, 1975; Khattak *et al.*, 2012), as it is one of the most important institutions of a country, due to its significance in developing a country (Khalid *et al.*, 2012), and serves as the backbone in rising of a nation (Ali & Waqar, 2013). Moreover, Burns and Carpenter (2008) were of the view that in the education sector, leader plays the role of a change agent making the academic staff perform acts of OCB, which will have a positive effect on the organizational effectiveness.

The academic staff of educational institutes, when having a high level of commitment, frequently showing a higher level of involvement with their institution and thus put a higher level of effort and have augmented performance (Chughtai & Zafar, 2006; Noor, 2009). However, when the academic staff of public sector organization develops a perception of lack of support from their leaders, their level of motivation decreases and they are not involved in their jobs leading to dissatisfaction and finally leaving or changing the current job (Smith, 2007). Thus, it is important to have such a workforce that has a higher level of organizational citizenship behavior, because it affects the quality of education and determines the direction of development of a nation (Noor, 2009). This high level of organizational citizenship behavior can be achieved by the behavior of ethical leaders, facilitating employees' positive identification, loyalty and nourishing their engagement in extra-role behavior (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers, 2016).

Ethical leadership has been mostly conceptualized and measured on the unidimensional scale developed by Brown *et al.* (2005). The recent literature has suggested for usefulness of examining several distinct dimensions of ethical leadership and its different effect on individual and organizational outcomes (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011b; Mo & Shi, 2015; Piccolo *et al.*, 2010; Shin, 2012; Toor & Ofori, 2009). Similarly, previous studies have used self-reporting scale for measurement of ethical leadership, where leaders may rate themselves

favorably, hence to overcome this bias, Shin (2012) in his study recommended to use such scale, where employees and subordinates can rate their leaders. Thus, this study used the multi-dimensional scale developed by Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b), where employees were asked to rate their leader i.e. immediate supervisor regarding ethical leadership.

Moreover, Khasawneh *et al.* (2016) in their study of ethical leadership, among academic staff of public-sector university of Jordan, suggested that future studies shall focus on relationship of ethical leadership with employees outcomes such as organizational performance, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational citizenship behavior, and workplace deviance. Likewise, Toor and Ofori (2009) in their study also suggested that in future, research shall also focus on the relationship of ethical leadership and employees' behavioral outcomes such as OCB. Moreover, in the context of Pakistan, leadership styles have shown a positive relationship with OCB (Ali & Waqar, 2013; Irshad & Hashmi, 2014; Malik *et al.*, 2012). However, the relationship between ethical leadership and employees' OCB in higher education institutions is still in its infancy (Ali & Waqar, 2013; Irshad & Hashmi, 2014; Malik *et al.*, 2012). Thus, this study attempts to fill this literature gap, by examining the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB among academic staff in a public sector university of Pakistan.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Ethical Leadership**

Brown *et al.* (2005, p.120) defined the term ethical leadership as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision making”. In their study, they identified two dimensions of ethical leadership that are a) moral person and b) moral manager. The dimension of ‘moral person’ reflects the attributes, individual characteristics, and the altruistic motivation of the leader. The perception about ethical leaders is that ethical leaders are honest and upright and their decision making is principled and fair. Moreover, the dimension of “moral manager” focuses on the behavioral side of ethical leadership, as such leaders depict ethical behavior in their personal and professional life and they always show great concern for their followers. These leaders are consistently involved in trying to transform their followers by being a role model in terms of ethical behavior, communication of ethical standards and in holding the followers responsible for ethical actions (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Brown *et al.*, 2005).

In the previous literature, researchers have reviewed ethical leadership critically due to its high degree of conceptual similarity with other leadership styles such as transformational leadership and authentic leadership, raising questions of how to distinguish and differentiate ethical leadership from the other leadership styles (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Brown *et al.*, 2005; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008; Yasir & Mohamad, 2016). Moreover, the individual characteristics of all the three leadership styles have a great deal of similarity as all three leadership styles reflects that leaders are a role model for other, have a great degree of honest and trustworthy, show great care and concern for their followers and their decisions are ethical (Brown & Treviño, 2006). However, according to Brown and Treviño (2006), the ability of ethical leaders in trying to influence its followers by communicating ethical standards and by using rewards and punishments in holding followers responsible for the accomplishment of these standards distinguishes and differentiates this leadership style from others. The element of ‘moral manager’ as ‘transactional’ element serves as an important factor in differentiating and distinguishing ethical leadership from similar and related concepts (Treviño *et al.*, 2003; Trevino *et al.*, 2000). It is due to this fact, that Brown and Treviño (2006) concluded that “ethical leadership is clearly related to, but distinct from these other leadership theories” (p. 600). Moreover, the empirical evidence highlights an additional variance in outcomes in case of ethical leadership as it is found with other leadership styles (Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011a, 2011b).

Treviño *et al.* (2003) conducted a study on 20 executive leaders and 20 officers in a large organization of the United States, with an attempt of determining the basis of defining executive ethical leadership. The selection of executive leaders was conducted on the basis of the role of leader in creating and maintaining of ethical culture within

the organization. It was a qualitative study, wherein, the researcher asked all the participants to imagine an ideal, whom they refer to as ethical executive leader without naming them or the circumstances, and then accordingly answer semi-structured interview questions. In their research, they found the following behaviors in defining ethical leadership “doing the right thing, being a good, open communicator and receptive listener, sticking to principles and standards, holding followers accountable to standards, and not tolerating ethical lapses” (Trevino *et al.*, 2003, p.18). The most common referred traits termed as ethical were “integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness” (Trevino *et al.*, 2003, p. 21).

In their study, Treviño *et al.* (2003) also found that during the ethical leadership process, transformational and transactional leadership are utilized. The two transformational leadership elements of individualized consideration and role model helps in defining ethical leadership. However, none of the participants mentioned the charismatic characteristics of leaders. The key behavioral elements of transactional leadership behaviors such as setting standards for employees, holding employees accountable and conducting performance appraisals were also termed as important components of ethical leadership.

The research conducted by Treviño *et al.* (2003) was further elaborated by Brown *et al.* (2005) and in their study, they conducted series of seven quantitative studies for validation of their Ethical Leadership Scale (ELS). In their series of studies, the first four were related to checking the validity and internal consistency of the ELS instruments, whereas, the following three studies reviewed the nomological validity of the instrument. Furthermore, the seventh study also examined a prognostic element of the instrument. During their series of seven studies, they found that although ethical leadership consists of an element of both transformational and transactional leadership theories, yet it can be differentiated and distinguished from these theories. In their study, they found certain specific character attributes along with specific behaviors. The characteristics like honesty and integrity referred to as moral person was included in character attributes. Whereas, serving as a role model in the organization and holding employees responsible referred to as moral manager was included in behavior attributes. The aspect of the moral person of ethical leadership had relation with leader behavior as described in transformational leadership theory. Likewise, the moral manager had relation to transactional leadership theory (Brown *et al.*, 2005).

Kaptein *et al.* (2005) found the positive influence of ethical leadership on its followers through measurement of results obtained through their action. In their study, recommendations included that for an overall overview of the condition of ethical leadership in an organization, a survey of the followers should be conducted. Furthermore, their identification also included that “surveys can reveal the extent and possible consequences of unethical behavior in organizations and illuminate the characteristics of ethical leadership” (p. 303). Thus, this will enable a leader in determining the effectiveness of ethics and its implementation in an organization.

Resick *et al.* (2006) in their study analyzed the data of Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project in determining the importance of four aspects of ethical leadership that is character/Integrity, altruism, collective motivation, and encouragement across cross culture. In their study the data of GLOBE project, where the study of leadership and culture was conducted across 62 societies, wherein, a group of 180 social scientists from all over the globe collected data from 17, 000 middle managers from 931 organizations and three different sectors of industries during the middle 1990's. In the GLOBE project, all participants had to complete a questionnaire, where their perception about leaders was measured. In next step, the group of participants was randomly divided into two groups, wherein, one group was given questionnaire designed for assessing organizational culture and the other group filled the questionnaire regarding societal culture. Resick *et al.* (2006) utilized the data for ethical leadership obtained from both the groups of respondents.

The GLOBE project developed leadership scale in order to assess 21 dimensions of leadership and the scale used was composed of hundred attributes like being visionary, ability to nurture, autocratic, benevolent using a 7-point response scale. However, GLOBE project didn't develop a scale for measurement of ethical leadership. Resick *et al.* (2006) in their study, initially asked six graduate students who had completed a seminar on leadership and were enrolled in Organizational Psychology. The graduate students helped in identification of 23 items that were reflective of Ethical Leadership out of the 100 attributes developed in GLOBE project. Resick *et al.* (2006) identified four

factors for an ethical leadership behavior namely character/integrity, altruism, collective motivation, and encouragement using confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modeling procedures, which are universally accepted across all cultures.

De Hoogh and Den Hartog (2008) in their multi-method study identified three different aspects of ethical leadership that are morality and fairness, clarification and power sharing. In their study, they examined the relationship between leaders' social responsibility and these three aspects. The results of their study showed that ethical leadership was very crucial for perceived team effectiveness of top management and optimism of subordinates regarding organization's future and also for determining their own place in the organization.

Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b) in their study argued that the 10 item ELS questionnaire developed by Brown *et al.* (2005) for ethical leadership has its own importance in research. However, the scale developed by Brown *et al.* (2005) is unidimensional which makes it rather difficult to unmask the different mechanisms for development and effectiveness of ethical leadership. Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b) developed a multi-dimensional ethical leadership at work (ELW) questionnaire which had seven different aspects of ethical leader behavior that is fairness, integrity, ethical guidance, people orientation, power sharing, role clarification, and concern for sustainability which are explained below in detail below:

**a. Fairness**

Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b) described fairness as the dimension of ethical leaders who don't practice favoritism, treats others in a manner that is right and with equality and makes principled and fair choices. Fairness has been an important form of behavior of an ethical leader, as these leaders have integrity, are trustworthy and honest and take responsibility for their actions (Brown *et al.*, 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Treviño *et al.*, 2003).

**b. Power Sharing**

Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b) described the second dimension of power sharing as allowing followers to have a say in the decision making and listening to their ideas and concerns. Resick *et al.* (2006) highlighted empowering as an aspect of ethical leadership. Likewise, Brown *et al.* (2005) suggested that ethical leaders provide followers with voice. Yukl (2010) was also of the opinion that power sharing enables employees more control and also make them less dependent on the leaders.

**c. Role Clarification**

The third dimension of role clarification attributes to clarifying responsibilities, expectation, and performance goals. Role clarification enables employees to understand expectations from them and illustrating whether their performance is up to par. This dimension helps employees not to worry unnecessarily about unclear expectations and how employees can meaningfully and effectively contribute to achieving organizational goals. (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011b).

**d. People Orientation**

The fourth dimension of people orientation denotes caring about, respecting, and supporting followers. People orientation has been frequently mentioned and stressed by Treviño *et al.* (2003) & Resick *et al.* (2006) in their respective studies. This component of ethical leadership not only contributes to genuine care, respect, and support for employees but also ensuring that their legitimate needs are met, where possible (Kanungo & Conger, 1993; Treviño *et al.*, 2003).

**e. Integrity**

The fifth-dimension integrity represents consistency of words and acts and the ability to keep promises (Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011b). Integrity in behavior can be termed as the alignment of words with deeds, which implies to the fact that what one says is congruent to what one does (Dineen *et al.*, 2006; Palanski & Yammarino, 2007, 2009). Those leaders who keep their words and have consistent behavior are the one who is trusted as they behave as is expected from them (Simons, 2002). Similarly, Yukl (2010) described ethical leader as someone who has consistent behavior and can keep their promises. Thus ethical leader is consistent, predictable and can be labeled integral (Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011b).

#### **f. Ethical Guidance**

The sixth dimension of ethical guidance helps in communicating about ethics and in explaining ethical rules, promoting, and rewarding ethical conduct. Ethical leaders convey standards regarding ethical conduct (Treviño *et al.*, 2003). Organizations and its top management set rules, standards, and code of conduct, providing guidelines for ethical behavior (Beu & Buckley, 2001). Furthermore, Treviño *et al.* (2003) argued that ethical leaders use rewards and punishments for holding subordinates responsible for their actions. Likewise, according to Brown *et al.* (2005), ethical leaders guide employees in prioritizing and ethical dilemmas. This ethical guidance which implies to communicating ethics, explaining ethical rules, promoting and rewarding ethical conducts among employees (Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011b).

#### **g. Concern for Sustainability**

The seventh and last dimension concern for sustainability explains caring about the environment and stimulating recycling. Ethical leaders take responsibility of protecting and promoting the interest of its stakeholders (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Similarly, Kanungo and Mendonca (1996) argued that ethical leaders take the effect of society and environment into account. In congruence to this researcher like Hargreaves and Fink (2004) developed a theoretical view on sustainable leadership specifically for the education sector. This encompasses leaders' paying attention to sustainability issues, considering the impact of their actions beyond the scope of their own workgroup, and demonstrating care about the welfare of the society (Kalshoven *et al.*, 2011b).

Moreover, Yukl *et al.* (2013) based on the past literature described some common behavior of ethical leadership. They were of the view that honesty and integrity, which they described as consistency of actions with espoused values, enforcing ethical standards, fairness, which implies to neither showing favoritism nor using rewards to motivate improper behavior, and behavior such as kindness, compassion, and concern for the needs and feelings of others are common attributes of ethical leadership.

## **2.2 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)**

The history of OCB in literature can be reviewed since last 30 years, where different researchers provided their own perspectives, definition, and instruments for OCB. The first study on OCB was conducted by Smith *et al.* (1983) where they referred a group of performance as citizenship behavior and termed them important for the organization. According to their study, these categories of performance doesn't get explanations from similar incentives which induce entrance, confirmation to the prescription of role or high production. Further, Organ (1988) defined Organizational Citizenship Behavior as "individual behavior that is discretionary not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate, promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization" (p. 4). Organ (1988) identified five key dimensions of OCB which are altruism, courtesy, civic virtue, conscientiousness, and sportsmanship.

Williams and Anderson (1991) in their study suggested two broad categories of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). The first category they termed as Organizational Citizenship Behavior at organization level (OCB-O), which benefits the organization like for instance prior information in case of not being able to attend work or following the informal rules. The second category was called Organizational Citizenship Behavior at Individual level (OCB-I), which has immediate outcomes for the individual but has long term benefits for an organization like helping

others or providing training to a new inductee. A review of previous literature shows that OCB consists of the following key elements: a behavior that is not part of an individual job description, a discretionary behavior, a behavior which neither will have direct reward nor it will be recognized in the formal structure of the organization, yet it is the behavior which has great deal of importance for the performance and operational success of organization (Barroso Castro *et al.*, 2004; Netemeyer *et al.*, 1997; Shahin *et al.*, 2014).

### 2.3 Hypothesis Development

Leadership plays an important role in the success of an organization (Khan *et al.*, 2014; Yasir *et al.*, 2013; Yasir, Imran, *et al.*, 2016; Yasir, Rasli, *et al.*, 2016). And previous literature shows an increasing trend of researches on the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior (Avey *et al.*, 2011; Avey *et al.*, 2012; Kacmar *et al.*, 2011; Mayer *et al.*, 2009; Piccolo *et al.*, 2010; Ruiz *et al.*, 2011; Shin, 2012; Toor & Ofori, 2009). However, each of the studies looked at the effect of ethical leadership on OCB from a different aspect. Most of the studies used the conceptualization and measurement scale of Brown *et al.* (2005) for ethical leadership. The role of ethical leadership in fostering employees OCB in an organization has been observed at doubt by researchers for two reasons. Firstly, looking into the current definitions of ethical leadership, it is clear that ethical leadership plays its role in fostering employee OCB with one of the antecedents of employee OCB being leader support (Brown *et al.*, 2005; Smith *et al.*, 1983; Williams & Anderson, 1991). However, there seems to be lack of consensus as to how employee OCB is developed by ethical leadership, which particular aspects of ethical leadership plays its role in fostering OCB.

Avey *et al.* (2011) conducted a study on follower's impression on ethical leadership among a heterogeneous group of 191 respondents, wherein, respondents were alumni of universities who had been recruited for leadership and organizational behaviors and comprised of business owners, senior managers, or partners in large organizations. Ethical leadership in the study was measured using the scale developed by Brown *et al.* (2005), while OCB was measured using a scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002). The study found that ethical leadership is important in promoting OCB among employees. The result of the study further showed that ethical leadership is positively related to employees' organizational citizenship behavior.

In a study conducted by Mayer *et al.* (2009) in the southeast part of US, where they had 891 respondents from 150 different organizations, with the aim of determining the relationship between the ethical leadership of top rank leaders, supervisors, and OCB of employees at the group level. The study used the instrument developed by Smith *et al.* (1983) for measurement of OCB. In the study, employee rated their supervisors on ethical leadership and supervisors rated their employees' OCB. The result of the study showed that supervisors have a greater influence on employee OCB rather than top rank leaders which led to the conclusion of trickle-down effect, where the behavior of top management influences supervisors and the behavior of supervisor has its influence on the employees (Mayer *et al.*, 2009).

The findings of Mayer *et al.* (2009) were challenged in a subsequent study by Ruiz *et al.* (2011), wherein, they conducted a study of similar nature in Spain. Ruiz *et al.* (2011) had 525 respondents, who were employees of insurance and banking industries. The instrument used in this study was of Cardona *et al.* (2004). In the study, employees ranked their own level of OCB and also ranked their supervisor on ethical leadership. The employees rated their supervisor using the ELS instrument developed by Brown *et al.* (2005), while, Ruiz *et al.* (2011) developed their own instrument for the measurement of the ethical leadership of top level leaders. The result of the study showed a similar trend to the findings of Mayer *et al.* (2009) in the sense that the top management ethical leadership positive influences the supervisor level ethical leadership. However, contrary to the findings of Mayer *et al.* (2009), the result also showed that the lower level employees were more influenced by top level leaders rather than supervisory level leadership (Ruiz *et al.*, 2011).

Shin (2012) conducted a study on the relationship of ethical leadership and employees' organizational citizenship behavior among 6,000 respondents from 263 medium-sized and large companies in South Korea. In the study, he measured both OCB-I and OCB-O element of OCB using the instrument of Williams and Anderson (1991).

Shin (2012) took a different approach and asked the supervisors to rate their own level of ethical leadership and likewise, employees were asked to rate their own level of OCB. The result of the study showed that ethical leadership had indirect role in promotion of ethical behavior in an organization. The result of the study also showed that ethical leadership had least direct influence on employee OCB (Shin, 2012).

Lu (2014) in his study examined the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior in the context of China. According to his study, the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior has yet been tested globally and little attention has been paid to its relationship. Lu (2014) conducted his study on public sector employees in Eastern China and used supervisor-employee pairing. In the first phase, Lu (2014) distributed a questionnaire to 150 employees, who were enrolled in a part-time program of Master of Public Administration. In the second phase, Lu (2014) distributed questionnaire among the supervisor of an equal number of the same employees in such a manner that ensured confidentiality. For the measurement of ethical leadership, Lu (2014) used the ELS 10-item five-point Likert scale developed by Brown *et al.* (2005) and for measurement of OCB (OCB-O & OCB-I) used the 7-items five-point scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). The result of the study showed that ethical leadership had a positive relationship to both the OCB-O and OCB-I component of organizational citizenship behavior (Lu, 2014).

Mitonga-Monga and Cilliers (2016) in his study of ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior focused on a developing country of Democratic Republic of Congo. Mitonga-Monga and Cilliers (2016) used purposive nonprobability sampling and had a sample size of 839 females from the railway department. In the study, ethical leadership was measured by the 10-item five-point Likert scale developed by Brown *et al.* (2005), while OCB was measured by the 20 item five point Likert scale developed by Organ *et al.* (2006). The result of the study showed that ethical leadership had a positive effect on OCB, as employees who perceive their leaders as role models, reciprocated with a high level of OCB (Mitonga-Monga & Cilliers, 2016).

A study of Chinese companies to examine the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB was conducted by Ko *et al.* (2016). The respondents of the study were 502 employees of Chinese companies, who were asked to assess their relationship with their immediate supervisor and were also asked to assess their own level of OCB. In the study, Ko *et al.* (2016) took the services of a professional survey company, who randomly selected respondents for the study. In the study 7-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used for measurement of both ethical leadership and OCB. Ethical leadership was measured by the 10-items scale developed by Brown *et al.* (2005) while for measurement of OCB, 11 items were adopted from the scale developed by Farh *et al.* (2004), which has elements from western literature combined with dimensions specifically in the Chinese context. The result of the study also showed that ethical leadership has a positive relationship with OCB performance. The more the leader exhibits ethical behavior, higher will be the willingness of the employees to exhibit OCB (Ko *et al.*, 2016; Mayer *et al.*, 2009; Shin, 2012). Thus, this study intends to further examine the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Ethical leadership is positively related to OCB in public sector university of Pakistan.

### **3. Methodology**

A random sampling technique was applied for the selection of respondents from the academic staff of a public-sector university of Pakistan. The total population of this study was 431 employees. Hence, based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) the sample size for the understudy population is 204 respondents.

#### **3.1 Research Instrument**

In this study, the questionnaire has been used to collect data, due to its widespread utilization and popularity in the field. Furthermore, according to Goodwin (2009), the questionnaire can help in measurement of attitudes,



beliefs, values, and tendencies to act by giving it to a group of people. Babbie (2013) termed the use of the questionnaire in social science as most common because questionnaire saves time and allows respondents to complete it without any influence or interference of the researcher. The questionnaire developed in this study has been divided into three sections Section A, Section B and Section C.

Alamelu *et al.* (2014) stated that the different demographic information is vital for research as it helps in identification of different employees' perspective. Furthermore, it is also helpful in illustrating the characteristics of individual who are studied (McIntyre, 2005). The data of respondents regarding age, gender, race, qualification, experience, and length of service. In this study ethical leadership is measured using a scale developed by Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b). It is a multidimensional scale having 38-items measuring seven dimensions of ethical leadership. OCB has been measured using the scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002). The scale developed by Lee and Allen (2002) has two dimensions of OCB-O and OCB-I, each having eight items. The respondents were requested to rate each statement on the five-point Likert scale depending on their level of agreement and disagreement to each statement (1= Strongly Disagree to 5= Strongly Agree).

### 3.2 Response Rate

Out of the emailed 204 questionnaires, 191 questionnaires were filled and submitted through online form/survey using Google Form. The response rate of the research was 93.62 % which is deemed as appropriate for analysis (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

### 3.3 Normality Test

After collecting data, the data obtained from the respondents was exported to SPSS. However, before proceeding with data analysis, it is important to first check whether the data is normal, equally distributed, and well-modelled. In this study, kurtosis and skewness have been used to check the normality of data. Hence, the value of skewness and kurtosis are between +2 and -2, thus the data is considered normally distributed (see Table 1) and fit for analysis (Kline, 2015).

**Table 1: Skewness and Kurtosis of Ethical Leadership and OCB**

Dimension	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
People Orientation	-.439	.176	-.745	.350
Fairness	-.433	.176	-.321	.350
Power Sharing	-.488	.176	-.527	.350
Concern for sustainability	-.464	.176	-.628	.350
Ethical Guidance	-.801	.176	-.043	.350
Role Clarification	-.525	.176	-.320	.350
Integrity	-.661	.176	-.190	.350
OCB-Individual	-.519	.176	-.958	.350
OCB-Organization	-.625	.176	-.833	.350

### 3.4 Respondents Demographics

The first part of the demographic represents gender, which indicates that more than seventy percent respondents are male ( $f = 143, 74.9\%$ ). Meanwhile, the female representation in the research is 48 respondents with a percentage of 25.1%. Moreover, out of total 191 respondents, the majority of the respondents were having age between 26 to 35 years ( $f = 113, 59.2\%$ ), followed by 41 respondents having age between 36 to 45 years (21.5 %). There were 25 respondents which fall in the age between 25 or less than 25 years (13.1%) and lastly there are 12 respondents having an age of 46 years of above (6.3%). Likewise, as the sampling has been conducted using random sampling, Lecturers represent the majority of the respondents ( $f = 93, \% = 48.7$ ). Likewise, the respondents include

82 Assistant Professor (42.9%), 9 Associate Professors (4.7%) and 7 Professors (3.7%). Besides, as illustrated in Table 2, the majority of the participants have 4 or less than four years of experience ( $f = 124$ , Percentage = 64.9 %). Moreover, 49 respondents are having experience of 5 to 8 years (25.7%), 10 respondents are having experience of more than 13 years (5.2%) and 8 respondents are having experience between 9 to 12 years (4.2%). The last part of demographic represents the education level of the respondents. Majority of the respondents have master or equivalent having 16 years of education ( $f = 73$ , 38.2%). 66 respondents are having Ph.D. degree. as their qualification (34.6%), 41 respondents have MS/MPhil/LLM or equivalent to 18 years of education (41%) and 11 respondents have Post-Doctorate (5.8%).

**Table 2: Demographic Description of Respondents**

Demographic	Description	Frequency ( <i>f</i> )	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	143	74.9
	Female	48	25.1
<b>Age</b>	25 years or less than 25 years	25	13.1
	26 to 35 years	113	59.2
	36 to 45 years	41	21.5
	46 years or above	12	6.3
<b>Designation</b>	Lecturer (BPS-18)	93	48.7
	Assistant Professor (BPS-19)	82	42.9
	Associate Professor (BPS-20)	9	4.7
	Professor (BPS-21)	7	3.7
<b>Experience</b>	4 or less than 4 years	124	64.9
	5 to 8 years	49	25.7
	9 to 12 years	8	4.2
	13 years or above	10	5.2
<b>Education</b>	Master or equivalent	73	38.2
	MS/MPhil/LLM or equivalent	41	21.5
	Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)	66	34.6
	Post-Doctorate	11	5.8

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

The Table 3 depicts that all the seven dimensions of ethical leadership which are at the moderate level. The highest mean score is of people orientation with a mean score of 3.32, followed by concern for sustainability and power sharing which has a mean score of 3.31 & 3.29 respectively. Fairness is also at a moderate level with a mean score of 3.27. Integrity and Role clarification have a mean score of 3.23 and 3.21 respectively. While the lowest mean score is of ethical guidance with a mean score of 3.11.

**Table 3: Level of Ethical Leadership**

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
<b>People Orientation</b>	3.32	0.615	Moderate
<b>Fairness</b>	3.27	0.419	Moderate
<b>Power Sharing</b>	3.29	0.598	Moderate
<b>Concern for sustainability</b>	3.31	0.637	Moderate
<b>Ethical Guidance</b>	3.11	0.753	Moderate
<b>Role Clarification</b>	3.21	0.721	Moderate

<b>Integrity</b>	3.23	0.624	Moderate
<b>Ethical Leadership</b>	<b>3.25</b>	<b>0.492</b>	<b>Moderate</b>

Table 3 shows that ethical leadership is practiced in the organization at the moderate level. The finding represents the fact that presence of ethical leadership plays an important role in creating trust, legitimacy, and credibility among employees and helps the organization in achievement of long-term strategic organizational objectives (Brown *et al.*, 2005; Hansen *et al.*, 2011; Khasawneh *et al.*, 2016). The findings of this study are also supported by Khalid and Bano (2015), who studied ethical leadership among academicians in public sector universities of Pakistan. The findings of their study showed that behavior of an ethical leader, such as fairness, communicating expectation, having the essence of ethics and morality, and concern not only for the organization but for the environment helps in retaining and motivating highly qualified faculty members. Likewise, Singh and Rathore (2014) voiced the same in their study of ethical leadership in universities in India, whereas, they were of opinion that, the organization is what the leader is, and the presence of ethical leadership in universities plays a vital role in shaping the attitude and behavior of employees.

**Table 4: Level of Organizational Citizenship Behavior**

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Level
<b>OCB-Individual</b>	3.34	0.731	Moderate
<b>OCB-Organization</b>	3.40	0.597	Moderate
<b>Organizational Citizenship Behavior</b>	3.34	0.642	Moderate

Table 4 shows that the mean score of both the dimensions of OCB are at the moderate level, with OCB-Organization having higher mean score of 3.40 and OCB-Individual having slightly lower mean score of 3.34.

Mohammad *et al.* (2011) study shows that the existence of extra-role behaviors in educational institutions helps in generating a better working environment and enhancing work performance. These findings are also supported by previous researchers, that when faculty members of higher education institutions are provided with satisfying and rewarding relationship at the workplace, they are ready to go extra mile by engaging in organizational citizenship behavior towards the organization or individuals such as colleagues or supervisors within the organization (LePine *et al.*, 2002; Teh *et al.*, 2012; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Likewise, faculty members practicing organizational citizenship behavior are likely to have a positive influence on the workplace, thus improving overall organization performance and effectiveness (Chughtai & Zafar, 2006). Moreover, in line with previous studies, this study also shows that when faculty members are engaged in the extra-role behavior, they positively contribute to organization efficiency, effectiveness, and competitiveness (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000).

**Table 5: Relationship between Ethical Leadership and OCB**

	People orientation	Fairness	Power sharing	Concern for sustainability	Ethical guidance	Role clarification	Integrity	OCB
People orientation	1	.325**	.532**	.738**	.642**	.641**	.687**	.545**
		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Fairness	.325**	1	.226**	.376**	.399**	.284**	.289**	.311**
	.000		.002	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Power sharing	.532**	.226**	1	.586**	.426**	.458**	.603**	.372**
	.000	.002		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Concern for sustainability	.738**	.376**	.586**	1	.628**	.589**	.697**	.521**
	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
Ethical guidance	.642**	.399**	.426**	.628**	1	.665**	.678**	.717**
	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000

Role clarification	.641**	.284**	.458**	.589**	.665**	1	.673**	.636**
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
Integrity	.687**	.289**	.603**	.697**	.678**	.673**	1	.628**
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
OCB	.545**	.311**	.372**	.521**	.717**	.636**	.628**	1
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	

**\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**  
**N=191**

Table 5 shows the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB. In this study, the seven dimensions of ethical leadership namely people orientation, fairness, power sharing, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role clarification, and integrity were found to have a positive significant relationship with organizational citizenship behavior. Fairness in the study has a positive significant relationship with OCB. This finding is supported by a study of Colquitt *et al.* (2001), who showed that fair procedures of a leader stimulate extra-role behaviors such as OCB. Likewise, Iqbal *et al.* (2012) also voiced the same in their study of higher education institutions of Pakistan, showing that leader's fair procedures, influences employees in such way that they readily perform beyond the job description, resulting in the existence of OCB. Moreover, Alotaibi (2001) in his study stated that employees exhibit OCB when they see their leader as a fair person who has concern for employees. He further stated that employees who observe that procedures in the organization are fair exhibits OCB. Furthermore, the positive relationship of ethical guidance and role clarification with employees OCB are in line with studies of Brown *et al.* (2005) and Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b), who in their respective studies concluded that leaders guide employees regarding ethical standards and appropriate behaviours, which results in employee engaging in OCB. Similarly, the positive significant relationship of people orientation with OCB is supported by Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), which showed that characteristics of a leader such as people orientation enhance a strong social relationship between leader and employees, resulting in OCB. They also showed that employees may reciprocate the leader's positive and caring treatment by imitating it.

The positive significant relationship between ethical leadership and OCB is supported by Mitonga-Monga and Cilliers (2016), which showed that when employees perceive that their leader is fair, they become emotionally and cognitively attached to the organization, and in turn devote more time and energy to the organization by practicing discretionary behaviors such as OCB. The same findings were also shown by Zeinabadi (2010), who conducted a study among teachers in Iran, and found out that leader's fair treatment encourages extra-role behavior among employees. Likewise, Lu (2014) in the study of public sector organizations of China, found a significant relationship between ethical leadership and both dimensions of OCB (OCB-Individual and OCB-Organization). Their study found that when employees of public-sector organizations are led by leaders having ethical characteristics, they exhibit discretionary behavior through a reciprocal exchange. The same was also voiced by Williams *et al.* (2002), that the ability of an ethical leader to treat his/her employees with care, trust, and fairness, cultivates employees not only to help each other but also in solving difficulties together. In their study, they were further of the view that the leader fairness is associated with employees' intentions to engage in extra-role behaviors such as OCB.

Furthermore, Podsakoff *et al.* (2000) also voiced the same in their studies, which showed that employees are likely to behave cooperatively by engaging in extra-role behaviors when leaders show support towards them. Power sharing in the study has a positive significant relationship with OCB. This finding is supported by Zellars *et al.* (2002), which showed that leaders having characteristics such as power sharing results in employees experiencing more control, responsibility, and involvement at work, thus willingly engaging in discretionary behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior. Concern for sustainability has a positive significant relationship in the study. This finding is supported by Ferdig (2007), who argued that when leaders become aware of their efforts on the surroundings, they become role models of environmentally responsible behavior, resulting in stimulation of behaviors in employees such as organizational citizenship behavior.

#### 4.1 Implication for Theory

In this study, the concept of ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior has been explained, tested, and analyzed. There have been only a few studies on the relationship of ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. However, the findings of previous research on the relationship of ethical leadership and OCB is fragmented and lacks consensus. Thus, this study is an attempt to add to the current body of knowledge by further studying this relationship in detail. Furthermore, in this study ethical leadership has been conceptualized as a multi-dimensional concept and the study has been focused on the relationship of each of the dimension of ethical leadership with organizational citizenship behavior. This study highlights the importance of fairness, people orientation, power sharing, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role clarification, and integrity as core characteristics of ethical leadership, which can influence employees to engage in extra-role behaviors such as OCB. This study tries to fill the gap on the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior based on the norm of reciprocity, which is supportive of the principles of social exchange theory. Furthermore, this study attempts to fill the gap on the relationship between ethical leadership and employees' OCB among academicians of public sector universities as highlighted by Singh and Rathore (2014) and Khasawneh *et al.* (2016), who suggested that leader characteristics can lead to extra-role behaviors among academic staff of public sector universities, but recommended further research to confirm the findings of this research, and to better understand the relationship of ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.

#### **4.2 Implications for Practice**

The findings of this study also have implications for practitioners. The findings demonstrate the importance of ethical leadership on employees' organizational citizenship behavior. Many organizations and leaders are not aware that characteristics of leader such as being fair, power sharing, people orientation, ethical guidance, concern for sustainable environment, role clarification, and integrity could contribute to satisfied employees at workplace, which in turn can influence employees not only to perform to best of the abilities but practice discretionary behaviors such as OCB. This can help the organization to be efficient, effective, and competitive. The findings of the study emphasize that leader in an organization should have fair procedure for reward and punishment, think of its' employees, delegate responsibilities, clarify roles and expectations to employees, provide ethical guidance, show concern towards the external environment and society, and have consistency of words and actions, thereby increases the level of employees being engaged in extra-role behaviors. When the employees perceive their leader as being ethical in-term of the above-mentioned characteristics, the employee will reciprocate the same, by engaging in extra-role behaviors.

#### **4.3 Limitations and Future Recommendations**

The first limitation is that the sample frame of the study is the academic staff of the only one public sector university of Pakistan. Hence, the study is limited to a specific group, who have specific work settings and job description and the results obtained in the study may not be generalized for other work settings or countries. Future research needs to focus on broader sample across various organizations such as private sector universities in other cities and countries, and other sectors namely manufacturing, non-government and military organizations, to be able to generalize the findings.

Secondly, in this study data has been collected using mono-method namely quantitative approach, which may not provide the in-depth perception of academic staff. Future research shall consider other methods like a qualitative or mixed method to establish a causal relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.

Thirdly, this study has only focused on the relationship between ethical leadership and employees' organizational citizenship behavior among academician. However, there can be other related factors which can contribute to employees engaging in organizational citizenship behavior such as organizational justice, organizational culture, and organizational climate. Thirdly, in order to have a further in-depth understanding on the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB, future research should look into intervening variables such as culture, politics, trust, justice and organizational climate which may influence the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB.

Finally, in this study, ethical leadership has been conceptualized and measured by the multi-dimension scale of Kalshoven *et al.* (2011b). However, as mentioned by Yukl *et al.* (2013), future study should be conducted to compare different ethical leadership scales with regard to their content validity and assess the consistency of ethical leadership in different cultures in both the private and public sector.

## 5. Conclusion

From aforementioned discussion, it can be concluded that ethical leadership has a positive relationship with employees' organizational citizenship behavior among academic staff in a public-sector university of Pakistan. This implies that when leader in a public-sector university is ethical and is being fair, clarifies role and responsibilities, employees oriented, has concern for the sustainability of environment, delegates duties, provide ethical guidance and has consistency in words and action, thereby academic staff based on the norm of reciprocity, will be engaged in extra-role behaviors such as OCB. Furthermore, the results of this study show that ethical leadership is practiced in public sector organizations at a moderate level. And the academic staff are engaged in discretionary behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior also at a moderate level. This study also shows that there is a positive relationship between fairness, people orientation, power sharing, concern for sustainability, ethical guidance, role clarification and integrity with OCB.

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