



## Exploring Ethical Leadership, LMX, and Their Impact on Perceived Organisational Support and OCB in the Jordanian Telecom Sector

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### Abstract

This study investigates the interrelationships among ethical leadership, perceived organizational support (POS), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in the context of the Jordanian telecom sector, considering the moderating role of leader-member exchange (LMX). Employing a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional approach, data were collected through a questionnaire survey from 280 employees working in Jordanian telecom industries, and SmartPLS was used for data analysis. The results reveal substantial and meaningful associations between ethical leadership, POS, and OCB. Ethical leadership significantly and positively influences both POS and OCB, signifying that leaders who exemplify ethical conduct, fairness, and integrity contribute to employees' perceptions of organizational support and support their active engagement in citizenship behaviors. Moreover, the findings highlight a positive correlation between POS and OCB, indicating that when employees perceive robust organizational support, they are more inclined to extend their contributions beyond their job descriptions. LMX is shown to play a moderating role in the relationship between ethical leadership and OCB, as well as in the relationship between POS and OCB. These findings underscore the pivotal role that high-quality leader-member relationships play in amplifying the positive impacts of ethical leadership and POS on OCB. This research enriches understanding of ethical leadership, POS, and OCB within the Jordanian telecom sector. The implications of these findings are significant, providing valuable insights for organizations in this industry. These insights include developing and promoting ethical leadership practices, creating a supportive work environment, and strengthening leader-member relationships. The practical implications extend to leadership development programs, performance management systems, and reward structures that aim to encourage and reinforce OCB among employees.

### Keywords

Ethical Leadership, Perceived Organizational Support, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Leader-Member Exchange.

### Article Information

Received 11 December 2023

Revised 08 March 2024

08 April 2024

Accepted 18 April 2024

<https://doi.org/10.54433/JDIIS.2024100035>

ISSN 2749-5965



## 1. Introduction

Organizations in the business landscape recognize the pivotal roles of ethical leadership and positive leader-member connections in shaping employee attitudes and behavior (Ahmad et al., 2023). Ethical leadership, characterized by high moral standards, integrity, and fairness, has demonstrated influence over employee performance, dedication, and job satisfaction. Additionally, positive employee outcomes have been associated with leader-member exchange (LMX), gauging the quality of interactions between leaders and subordinates. Within the Jordanian telecom sector, essential for the

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efficient functioning and success of telecommunications enterprises, managers and staff must navigate technical advancements, market demands, and regulatory changes (Bani-Melhem et al., 2023). In the competitive environment of the Jordanian telecom sector, managers play a crucial role in overseeing operations, resource allocation, strategic planning, and operational decision-making (Abualqumboz, 2022). Ethical leadership, marked by high moral and ethical standards, integrity, and fairness, is a prominent leadership style emphasizing the well-being of workers, stakeholders, and the community (Ahmed et al., 2020). Ethical leaders act as role models, crucial in an industry where fierce competition and ethical decision-making are paramount (Apte et al., 2022). Given the frequent ethical challenges in handling sensitive client information and upholding service quality standards, understanding the interaction between ethical leadership and LMX becomes crucial in influencing how employees perceive organizational support and engage in organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) (Ballangrud & Aas, 2022).

Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) encompass discretionary, voluntary actions that contribute to organizational effectiveness beyond formal job requirements (Deliu, 2020). These behaviors, displayed by employees who go above and beyond, contribute to a positive workplace culture and the organization's goals and objectives. Perceived organizational support (POS), indicating the extent to which employees believe their contributions are valued, their well-being is a priority, and their overall performance is supported, is crucial in understanding employee outcomes (Iqbal et al., 2022). Organizational citizenship behaviors include discretionary actions that go above and beyond the formal work requirements and enhance the organization's overall success. It is critical to look into how ethical leadership and LMX affect employee outcomes in this particular industry, given the cultural background of Jordan, which emphasizes collectivism, deference to authority, and solid interpersonal ties (Khan et al., 2019).

Employees' perceptions of organizational support are shaped by interactions with supervisors, coworkers, and organizational policies (Le & Nguyen, 2023). Positive experiences, such as recognition, rewards, and growth opportunities, contribute to higher POS levels. Conversely, negative experiences, including unfair treatment and limited career advancement prospects, can lower POS (Li et al., 2018). High POS is associated with enhanced job satisfaction, commitment, and performance, showcasing its importance in encouraging employee loyalty and dedication (Jiang et al., 2023; E. Ma et al., 2022). This study investigates the interaction between LMX and ethical leadership in influencing how employees perceive organizational support and engage in OCB within the Jordanian telecom sector. Understanding these linkages provides valuable insights for creating productive workplaces, improving employee well-being, and increasing organizational success. The study introduces its leader-member-exchange theory, emphasizing the investigation of the interaction between a leader's subordinates and the organization as a whole (Liu et al., 2023).

## **2. Literature review**

This study aims to explore the interplay between ethical leadership, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), perceived organizational support (POS), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) in the Jordanian telecom industry.

### **2.1. Leader-Member-Exchange Theory**

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory underscores the dynamic relationship between leaders and their followers, highlighting the formation of distinct groups: the in-group and the out-group (Ullah et al., 2020). In this context, in-group members enjoy a more profound and trust-based connection with the leader, characterized by open communication and mutual support, while out-group members have a more transactional relationship. Studies have shown that in-group members typically exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and overall performance than

their out-group counterparts (Sattar et al., 2020). Ethical leadership plays a pivotal role within the LMX framework. Ethical leaders prioritize moral principles and act with integrity, fairness, and transparency when making decisions (Pradhan et al., 2023). This ethical behavior builds a foundation of trust and mutual respect between leaders and followers, enhancing the quality of member-leader interactions and advancing a more productive work environment.

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) refers to the extent to which employees believe their contributions are valued and their well-being is prioritized within the organization (Y. Ma et al., 2022). Various factors, including leaders' actions and attitudes, influence the level of POS. Employees are more likely to exhibit positive work attitudes and behaviors when they perceive strong organizational support. Notably, high-quality leader-member exchanges can heighten POS, as leaders provide in-group members with additional resources, guidance, and recognition (Kim & Jang, 2022). Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), often referred to as citizenship behavior, encompasses discretionary actions by employees that contribute to the smooth functioning of the organization, such as assisting colleagues, volunteering for additional work, and encouraging a positive work environment (Deliu, 2020). These actions go beyond formal job requirements. Employees who engage in high-quality leader-member exchanges characterized by trust, respect, and support are more likely to act as responsible organizational citizens. This is because they feel valued and appreciated by their organization, encouraging them to participate in citizenship behavior (Al-Madadha et al., 2021).

The Leader-Member Exchange concept underscores the significance of effective collaboration between leaders and followers. Ethical leadership and perceived organizational support play critical roles in shaping the quality of these exchanges. These variables are associated with positive workplace outcomes, including increased job satisfaction, commitment, and performance (Ahmed et al., 2020). Moreover, a positive leader-member relationship and high levels of perceived organizational support can promote a culture of good citizenship, contributing to a more effective and harmonious work environment (Ballangrud & Aas, 2022).

## ***2.2. Ethical Leadership and Perceived Organizational Support***

Ethical leadership, as defined by Jiang et al. (2023). It encompasses leaders within an organization modeling and promoting ethical conduct. Ethical leaders exemplify ethical behavior, making decisions with integrity, fairness, and transparency and prioritizing the welfare of their team members, clients, and stakeholders (Kang-Hwa & Hung-Yi, 2018). They inspire their followers to uphold moral standards and ideals, promoting open communication moral decision-making, and providing guidance and support for ethical behavior. This leadership style offers several advantages for organizations, including promoting a healthy work environment, increased employee morale and commitment, and establishing trust and credibility among colleagues (Le & Nguyen, 2023). Ethical leadership also contributes to the ethical growth of the organizational culture, which, in turn, enhances long-term sustainability and organizational performance (Liu et al., 2021).

Perceived organizational support (POS) pertains to employees' perceptions of how much their employer values and cares about their contributions. It is rooted in the psychological contract between employees and their organization, based on the perceived support and fairness employees receive in exchange for their efforts (Liu & Yin, 2023). When employees perceive strong organizational support, they feel appreciated, respected, and cared for by their company, believing that the organization values their performance and general well-being. This perception of support has several positive consequences, including improved job satisfaction, organizational commitment, motivation, and performance (Liu et al., 2022; Malik et al., 2022). Additionally, employees who experience this support are more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors and exhibit greater loyalty to the company. The perception of organizational support among employees is substantially influenced by

ethical leadership. When executives act ethically and support ethical practices, employees are more inclined to trust and believe in their organization (Saeed et al., 2022).

Notably, Musenze and Mayende (2023) emphasized the favorable impact of ethical leadership on how employees perceive organizational support, which promotes team innovation. Sattar et al. (2020) examined the relationship between moral leadership, perceived organizational support, and employee misconduct, finding that ethical leadership led to a stronger ethical climate and reduced employee misconduct through its positive influence on perceived organizational support. Schuh et al. (2021) explored the mediating role of perceived organizational support in the relationship between ethical leadership and employee outcomes. Ullah et al. (2020) highlighted that moral leadership's positive effect on perceived organizational support leads to enhanced employee well-being and organizational citizenship behaviors. Furthermore, Yang et al. (2021) investigated the impact of ethical leadership on employee work attitudes and behaviors, revealing that ethical leadership significantly influenced how supported employees felt within the organization, subsequently predicting increased job satisfaction and organizational commitment. These studies underscore how ethical leadership significantly impacts how employees perceive organizational support, highlighting the positive influence of ethical leadership on employee perceptions and behaviors (Kang-Hwa & Hung-Yi, 2018; Liu & Yin, 2023). In the Jordanian telecom sector, ethics in leadership and perceived organizational support play crucial roles with profound implications for employee attitudes, behaviors, and overall organizational outcomes (Schuh et al., 2021).

H1: Ethical Leadership significantly impacts Perceived Organizational Support.

### ***2.3. Perceived Organizational Support and Citizenship Behavior***

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is influenced by Perceived Organizational Support (POS) (Al-Madadha et al., 2021). OCB, encompassing voluntary actions beyond formal job descriptions, reflects an employee's commitment to enhancing organizational efficiency and effectiveness. (Jiang et al., 2023), Underline a robust correlation between OCB and POS, demonstrating that employees are more likely to undertake voluntary actions that benefit the organization when they perceive greater support. According to social exchange theory (Kim & Jang, 2022), employees reciprocate organizational assistance by exhibiting commendable behavior. Reduced role ambiguity and clarified role expectations stemming from perceived organizational support enhance the likelihood of employees engaging in discretionary behaviors supportive of organizational goals (Tripathi et al., 2023). Perceived organizational support influences employees' emotional ties to the company and heightens their motivation to contribute to organizational success and engage in behaviors supporting its well-being (Qiu et al., 2021). It significantly shapes employees' attitudes and behaviors, particularly their engagement in organizational citizenship activities. Through a supportive work environment, organizations encourage a culture where employees willingly surpass formal job duties to contribute to organizational objectives actively. (Jiang et al., 2023) laid the groundwork for understanding perceived organizational support and its impact on employee attitudes and behaviors, setting the stage for subsequent studies, such as Kim and Jang (2022) exploration of the positive association between POS and various outcomes, including OCB.

Bani-Melhem et al. (2023) inquired about the reciprocal link between POS and OCB over time, revealing a dynamic connection where higher POS levels predicted increasing OCB, and OCB, in turn, predicted higher POS in the future. Du et al. (2022) explored the mediating effect of job satisfaction on the POS-OCB link. Kim and Jang (2022) further confirmed the positive connection between POS and OCB, highlighting the moderating role of job satisfaction. Iqbal et al. (2022) expanded the exploration, finding POS positively connected to OCB directed toward individuals (OCB-I) and the organization (OCB-O), emphasizing positive affect as a mediator. Creating a supportive work atmosphere is imperative in the Jordanian telecom sector, characterized by challenges such as fierce competition and rapid technological advancements (Ishak et al., 2023). Iqbal et al. (2020) affirm that

POS positively impacts OCB among employees, encouraging loyalty, commitment, and a sense of obligation to contribute to the organization's success. Employees become more loyal, committed, and obligated to give back to their organization when they feel supported by it Jiang et al. (2023).

H2: Perceived organizational support significantly impacts citizenship behavior.

#### **2.4. Leader-Member-Exchange has Moderator**

Leader-Member-Exchange (LMX) refers to the unique relationship between leaders and their followers, characterized by special communication and interactions (Liu et al., 2023). In the context of the interaction between ethical leadership and Perceived Organizational Support (POS), LMX significantly influences how these elements impact employee attitudes and behaviors. LMX can enhance the benefits of ethical leadership on POS, mainly when leaders cultivate strong bonds with their followers based on mutual respect, trust, and personalized interactions (Ishak et al., 2023). Moral leaders who follow fair and transparent procedures within the LMX relationship can enhance employee perceptions of support. The quality of LMX relationships can influence how employees respond to ethical leadership practices, potentially strengthening the positive correlation between ethical leadership and POS (Liu et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2023). Employees with high-quality LMX relationships may be more receptive to ethical leadership behaviors, leading to a stronger connection between ethical leadership and POS. Conversely, employees with poor LMX relationships may be less responsive to ethical leadership, potentially weakening the link between ethical leadership and POS.

In the Jordanian telecom sector context, LMX plays a crucial role in translating ethical leadership practices into tangible forms of support. Effective leader-follower interactions enable leaders to better understand their employees' needs and requirements (To et al., 2021). This understanding allows leaders to provide relevant support, such as direction, resources, and growth opportunities. Strengthening communication channels and trust is essential for leaders to provide support effectively, and LMX facilitates this by reinforcing the connection between ethical leadership and perceived organizational support (Ullah et al., 2020).

The quality of LMX relationships can influence the responses and interpretations of ethical leadership actions. In the Jordanian telecom sector, employees may be more responsive to ethical leadership practices if they perceive them as sincere and trustworthy due to positive LMX interactions, improving their impressions of organizational support (Zheng et al., 2019). Conversely, employees with poorer LMX relationships may respond less favorably to ethical leadership, potentially weakening the link between ethical leadership and POS. Abdullah et al. (2019) examined the moderating role of LMX in the relationship between ethical leadership and various employee outcomes, finding that LMX enhances the connection between perceived support and ethical leadership. Deliu (2020) investigated LMX as a moderator in the link between ethical leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), revealing that a strong leader-follower relationship strengthens the impact of ethical leadership on OCB. Dutta et al. (2023) explored the moderating effect of LMX in the relationship between ethical leadership and follower outcomes. According to Faeq (2022), LMX plays a regulatory role in how ethical leadership influences various outcomes, including perceived support. These studies highlight the significance of considering LMX as a moderator in the relationship between ethical leadership and its impact on organizational support and related outcomes (Iqbal et al., 2022).

H3: Leader-member exchange moderates ethical leadership and perceived organizational support.

#### **2.5. Perceived Organizational Support as Mediator**

Leadership that upholds ethical principles positively influences Perceived Organizational Support (POS) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). Ethical leaders create an environment characterized by fairness, trust, and respect, which encourage positive perceptions of organizational support and

enhances the relationship between leaders and their followers (Wu et al., 2023). POS can serve as a crucial mediator between LMX and ethical leadership. High levels of POS can amplify the impact of ethical leadership on LMX (Huang et al., 2021). Employees who perceive a strong organizational commitment are more likely to trust their leaders and engage in high-quality interactions, ultimately enhancing LMX. Moreover, POS can mitigate the adverse effects of unethical leadership on LMX (Musenze & Mayende, 2023). Even in cases of weak ethical leadership, employees who perceive high levels of organizational support may still maintain a positive LMX due to their belief in the overall support provided by the organization.

Perceived organizational support can significantly magnify the positive relationship between ethical leadership and Leader-Member Exchange. It mitigates the detrimental impacts of unethical leadership and strengthens the influence of ethical leadership on LMX. Organizations prioritizing ethical leadership and cultivating a supportive culture are more likely to promote positive leader-member interactions and overall employee well-being. Wu et al. (2023) conducted a study involving 194 employees and their immediate supervisors to investigate the impact of ethical leadership on LMX and the moderating role of POS. The results revealed that ethical leadership positively influenced LMX, and this relationship was strengthened when employees perceived strong organizational support. In another study by Li et al. (2018), the moderating effects of POS on the relationship between ethical leadership and employee outcomes were explored. A sample of 354 employees from various companies participated in the survey. The findings indicated that ethical leadership positively correlated with LMX, and POS moderated this association. Consequently, the positive effects of ethical leadership on LMX were more pronounced when employees felt stronger organizational support.

Ishak et al. (2023) examined the connection between ethical leadership, POS, and LMX. The results demonstrated that ethical leadership was positively associated with LMX, and POS acted as a moderator, strengthening the link between ethical leadership and LMX. Furthermore, Liu et al. (2023) discovered that POS partially mediated the relationship between ethical leadership and LMX. This suggests that perceived organizational support contributes to explaining the connection between ethical leadership and positive leader-member relationships. Du et al. (2022) researched the relationship between ethical leadership, POS, and LMX in a sample of 325 Chinese workers. Their study revealed that POS significantly moderated the impact of ethical leadership on LMX. Specifically, individuals who perceived higher organizational support experienced a stronger positive relationship between ethical leadership and LMX (Huang et al., 2021). Collectively, these studies provide evidence that POS acts as a mediator in the relationship between LMX and ethical leadership. It highlights the role of perceived organizational support in strengthening the positive effects of ethical leadership on leader-member interactions, ultimately contributing to a positive work environment.

H4: Perceived organizational support has a mediating impact between ethical leadership and Leader-Member Exchange

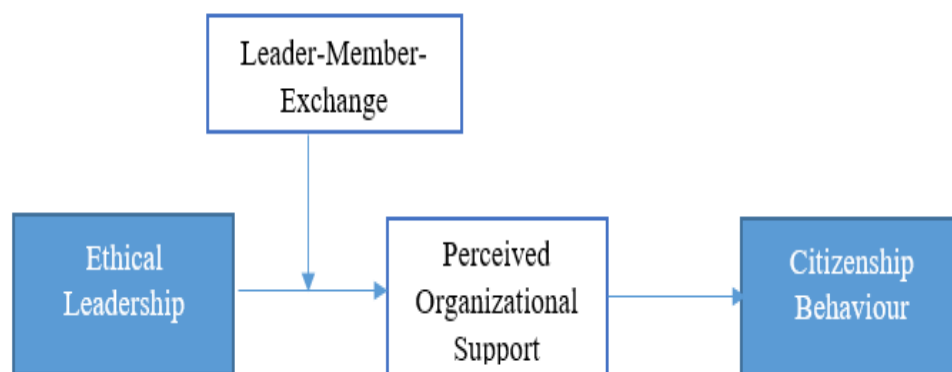




Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

### 3. Methodology

This research employed a quantitative and descriptive approach. Primary data was collected using a cross-sectional time horizon, with respondents responding to a single point in time. The study focused on managers and employees in Jordan's telecom sector as the unit of analysis. Given the challenge of accessing comprehensive records and information for the entire population, a non-probability sampling method, specifically convenience sampling, was utilized. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed to individuals working in Jordan's telecom sector, of which 280 were completed correctly and returned, resulting in an 80% response rate, indicating the appropriateness of the results. The collected data was subjected to statistical analysis using the Smart PLS software, which included the necessary tests for hypothesis testing based on research criteria and parameters.

#### 3.1. Instrument

The research instrument consisted of a questionnaire adapted from various sources to align with the variables and context of the study. The questionnaire included sections for demographics and variable-related items, rated on a 5-point Likert scale. Demographic questions addressed gender, age, qualification, job tenure, and job position, providing closed-ended options for ease of response. To assess the independent variable, ethical leadership, four items were adapted from (Abdullah et al., 2019). Perceived organizational support, the mediator variable, was measured using a 6-item scale developed by Musenze and Mayende (2023). Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) was introduced as a moderator, and measurement employed seven items (Huang et al., 2021). The study's outcome variable, citizenship behavior, was assessed using a 6-item scale from (Al-Madadha et al., 2021). Respondents were given clear instructions and ample time to respond, ensuring a significant response rate. Ethical considerations were taken into account during data collection, with participants providing information voluntarily and being assured that their data would be used solely for research purposes. The instrument's reliability was assessed, with all variables demonstrating significant Cronbach's alpha values.

### 4. Result

#### 4.1. Demographics

Table 1 presents the demographic details and descriptive statistics of the sample for the current study (N=280) based on a preliminary analysis of respondent data.

Table 1: Demographic profile

	Description	No. of Responses	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	170	61
	Female	110	39
<b>Age</b>	20-28	80	29
	28-39	110	39
	Above 40	90	32
<b>Qualification</b>	Masters	120	43
	Bachelors'	110	39
	Diploma	50	18
<b>Job Tenure</b>	1-2 Years	100	36
	2-4 Years	90	32
	More than 4 Years	90	32
<b>Job position</b>	Top level Managers	90	32
	Line Managers	110	39
	Employees	80	29

Managers and employees working in the Telkom sector in Jordan were 61% male and 39% female, according to Table 1. The age distribution reveals that 29% were aged 20 to 28, 39% were aged 28 to 39, and 32% were above 40. Regarding qualifications, 43% had a master's degree, 39% had a bachelor's degree, and 18% had a diploma. Job tenure indicated that 36% had 1-2 years, 32% had 2-4 years, and 32% had more than 4 years. Job positions were distributed with 32% in top-level management, 39% as line managers, and 29% as employees.

#### 4.2. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics enumerate and describe the primary properties of a dataset. Table 2 provides means, standard deviations, and highest and lowest values for four variables from the descriptive analysis of the current study.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
<b>EL</b>	280	1	4	3.87	0.84
<b>POS</b>	280	1	4	3.81	0.82
<b>LMX</b>	280	1	4	3.79	0.80
<b>CB</b>	280	1	4	3.77	0.79

Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for four variables: Ethical Leadership (EL), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), and Citizenship Behavior (CB). The table includes the number of responses, minimum and maximum values, means, and standard deviations, providing an overview of the dataset properties. The study encompassed both the demographic profile of the participants and the descriptive statistics of the variables, offering valuable insights into the sample and the dataset's characteristics.

#### 4.3. Measurement Model

A critical aspect of quantitative research involves assessing the measurement qualities of observed variables or indicators using a measurement model commonly referred to as a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) model (Hair et al., 2019).

##### 4.3.1. Composite reliability, cronbach's alpha, and discriminant validity

Two widely used internal consistency reliability measures are Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha, which evaluate the reliability and consistency of a set of observed variables on a measurement scale. These measures are commonly employed in psychometrics to assess the validity of scales and questionnaires. Table 3 presents the values of composite reliability, Cronbach's Alpha, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity.



Table 3: Composite reliability, Cronbach's Alpha and AVE values

	PDL	TDE	TTP	TTI	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
<b>Citizenship Behaviour</b>	0.812				0.897	0.921	0.660
<b>Ethical Leadership</b>	-0.768	0.849			0.868	0.911	0.720
<b>LMX</b>	-0.556	0.659	0.747		0.867	0.898	0.558
<b>Perceived Organizational Support</b>	-0.605	0.686	0.704	0.760	0.849	0.890	0.578

Note: CR=composite reliability; AVE=average variance extracted; CA= Cronbach's Alpha

Table 3 displays the values of composite reliability (CR), Cronbach's Alpha (CA), and AVE for the variables in the study, including Citizenship Behavior, Ethical Leadership, LMX, and Perceived Organizational Support. These statistics are essential for evaluating the reliability and validity of the measurement model.

#### 4.4. Structural Equation Model

The PLS-SEM bootstrapping method assessed the structural model, which examined the relationships among ethical leadership, perceived organizational support, and citizenship behavior. The analysis revealed significant findings for several relationships. Specifically, the relationship between ethical leadership and perceived organizational support was found to be significant ( $\beta = 0.408$ ,  $t = 7.069$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), leading to the acceptance of H1. Additionally, the relationship between perceived organizational support and citizenship behavior was found to be significant, albeit negatively ( $\beta = -0.605$ ,  $t = 15.647$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), supporting H2. The  $R^2$  values for citizenship behavior and perceived organizational support were 0.366 and 0.583, respectively. Detailed results can be found in Table 4.

Table 4: Direct Relation

		Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
<b>Direct Relation</b>	Ethical Leadership -> Perceived Organizational Support	0.408	7.069	0.000	Supported
	Perceived Organizational Support -> Citizenship Behaviour	-0.605	15.647	0.000	Supported
<b>Mediating Effect</b>	Ethical Leadership -> Perceived Organizational Support -> Citizenship Behaviour	-0.247	5.465	0.000	Supported
<b>Moderating Effect</b>	Ethical Leadership* LMX -> Perceived Organizational Support	-0.075	2.151	0.032	Supported

Furthermore, Table 4 demonstrates the mediating role of perceived organizational support between ethical leadership and citizenship behavior, with a significant relationship ( $\beta = -0.247$ ,  $t = 5.465$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), resulting in the acceptance of H3. A moderation effect, indicating the influence of a third variable, in this case, LMX, on the relationship between ethical leadership and perceived organizational support was also found to be significant ( $\beta = 0.195$ ,  $t = 4.236$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), thereby confirming H4.

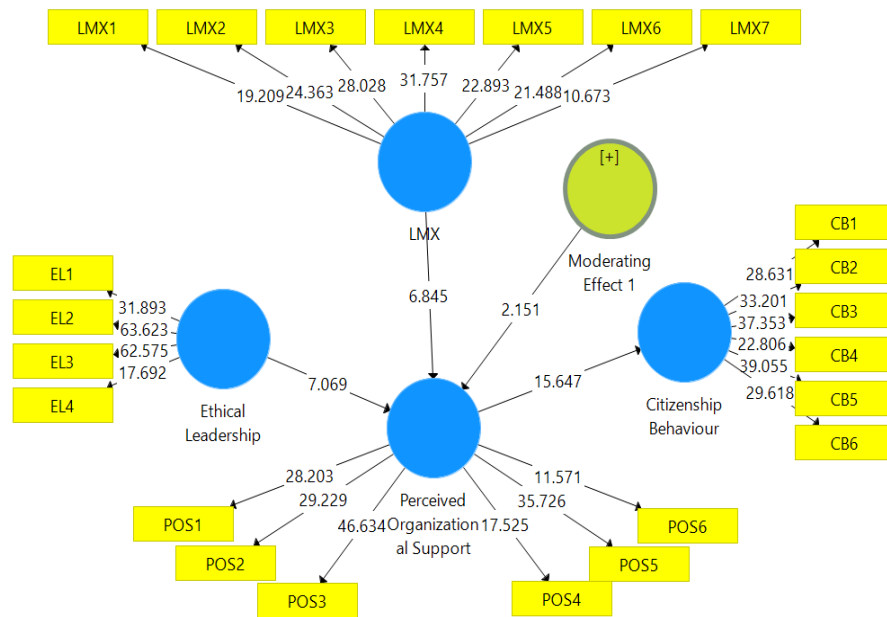


Figure 2: Assessment of Bootstrapping

The final bootstrapping significance analysis with moderation is presented in figure 3.

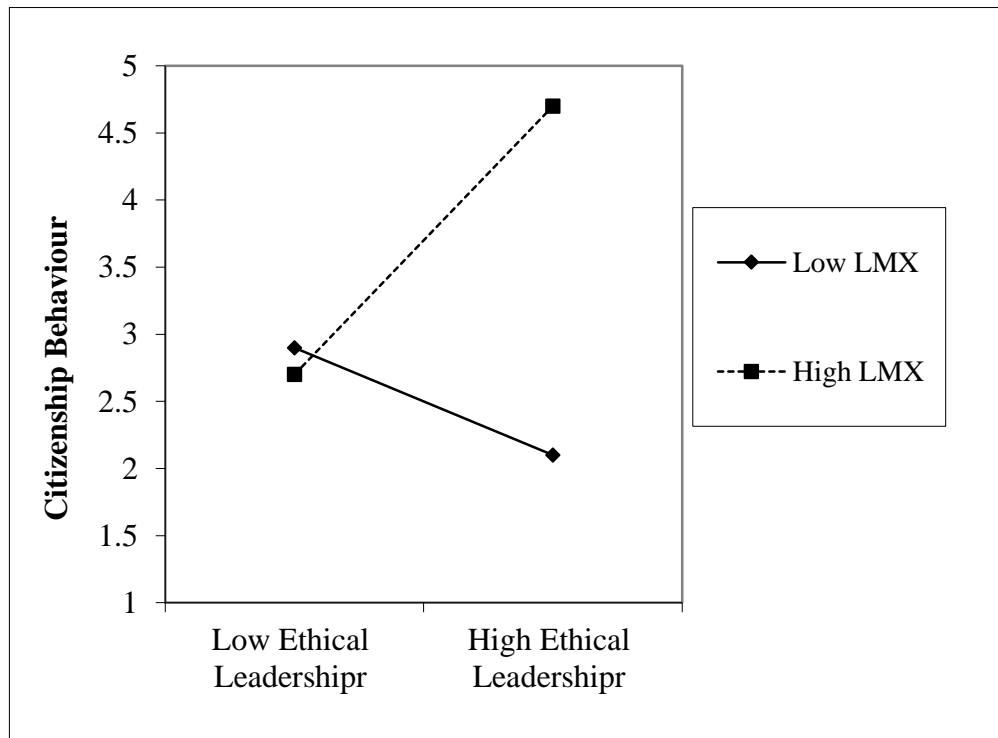


Figure 3: Moderation Graph

Notably, the slopes of the correlations affected by moderation are significant for low, moderate, and high findings, as depicted in Figure 1. In essence, LMX significantly affects the link between ethical leadership and citizenship behavior, with lower LMX levels associated with a negative perception of

this relationship. This signifies that employees who experienced greater improvements in the relationship between ethical leadership and citizenship behavior did so through leader-member exchange, highlighting the significance of this moderating effect in the structural model (Dash & Paul, 2021).

## 5. Discussion

This study investigates into the leader-member exchange dynamics, the perceptions of organizational support, and organizational citizenship behaviors within the Jordanian telecom sector. The findings of our investigation have unveiled essential connections among ethical leadership, perceived organizational support, and organizational citizenship behavior, with a noteworthy influence from the moderating facet of leader-member exchange. The outcomes of the analysis underscore the substantial impact of ethical leadership on perceived organizational support. The Jordanian telecom industry exhibits compelling evidence to support the influential role of ethical leadership in how employees perceive organizational support. Ethical leaders in this sector make fair, transparent, and considerate decisions, treating their workforce with attention and respect. Consequently, this ethical behavior engenders positive perceptions of organizational support among employees. An environment in which employees feel valued and cared for by both their leaders and the organization nurtures positive impressions of organizational support. This, in turn, propels employees to perceive high levels of organizational support, reinforcing their conviction that their contributions are esteemed and their well-being is prioritized. Ethical leadership thus stimulates employee engagement, commitment, and loyalty, increasing perceptions of organizational support. Organizations are encouraged to facilitate open dialogue, honesty, and justice to bolster employee perceptions of organizational support, and they should actively engage employees in feedback and decision-making processes, further enhancing organizational support perception.

Another key discovery lies in perceived organizational support's significant and negative impact on organizational citizenship behavior within the Jordanian telecom sector. Our research underscores the substantial effect of perceived organizational support on employee citizenship behavior. This influence, while negative, reveals the detrimental impact of inadequate support on the voluntary, extra-role behaviors of employees, who may perceive their contributions as undervalued and unappreciated. This diminishing motivation is likely to result in decreased involvement in discretionary actions that benefit the organization and its members. Moreover, the study indicates that trust and commitment are intrinsically linked to perceived organizational support, and if employees feel their needs are neglected, commitment decreases, eroding their faith in the organization. Consequently, this reduced commitment leads to less enthusiasm for contributing additional effort to benefit the organization, dampening citizenship behavior. A workplace with poor morale and limited perceived organizational support is thus likely to discourage employee participation in citizenship behaviors. Organizations should employ strategies like promoting open communication, offering feedback, acknowledging employee efforts, providing growth opportunities, ensuring fair and transparent decision-making processes, and promoting a culture of collaboration and continuous development to enhance the perception of organizational support.

Furthermore, our research underlines the significant and negative moderating effect of leader-member exchange on the relationship between ethical leadership and perceived organizational support within the Jordanian telecom industry. Ethical leadership promotes a positive perception of organizational support when high-quality leader-member interactions are maintained. Employees feel valued and cared for in environments where leaders establish positive and personalized connections with subordinates, significantly enhancing their perception of organizational support. However, when leader-member exchanges are of low quality and characterized by strained relationships, lacking trust, and open communication, the positive impact of ethical leadership on perceived organizational support

is mitigated. Effective leader-member relationships based on open communication and trust are crucial for cultivating strong employee perceptions of organizational support. In contrast, poor relationships can undermine trust and hinder productive communication, diminishing organizational support perception. Organizations can encourage ethical leadership by establishing clear ethical standards, devising procedures for ethical decision-making, and holding leaders accountable for their actions. Promoting an environment that values ethical behavior and supports ethical leadership, organizations can maintain the beneficial effects of ethical leadership on perceived organizational support, even in the presence of moderating factors.

Lastly, the research highlights the significant and negative mediating effect of perceived organizational support between ethical leadership and leader-member exchange in the Jordanian telecom sector. Perceived organizational support emerges as a mediator in the relationship between ethical leadership and leader-member exchange, playing a significant and unfavorable role in this dynamic. Ethical leaders who exhibit fairness, integrity, and transparency in their conduct at the workplace promote high-quality leader-member exchanges, as employees feel valued and cared for by their leaders. However, the mediating role of perceived organizational support appears to influence this relationship negatively. This implies that the role of perceived organizational support may overshadow the direct influence of ethical leadership on leader-member exchange. Perceived organizational support profoundly influences employees' perceptions and behaviors, which strengthens the bond between leaders and their subordinates. As employees perceive strong organizational support, their sense of trust, commitment, and satisfaction grows, enhancing their interactions with their leaders. Consequently, organizations should invest in leadership training programs emphasizing ethical conduct and building robust relationships with subordinates. Leaders should be trained in ethical behavior, the development of rapport with their teams, and the importance of open communication to promote strong perceived organizational support. Additionally, organizations should implement processes for gathering employee feedback and acting on it to encourage a culture of collaboration and ongoing development.

### ***5.1. Implications of Study***

The study makes significant contributions to the Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory by shedding light on its moderating role in the interplay between ethical leadership, perceived organizational support (POS), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). This empirical evidence underscores how LMX reinforces the positive influences of ethical leadership and POS on OCB, emphasizing the vital role that high-quality leader-member relationships play in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors. The findings underscore the importance of promoting ethical leadership within organizations, as leaders who exemplify ethical conduct, fairness, and integrity are shown to impact employees' perceptions of organizational support positively. This influence, in turn, encourages employees to engage in citizenship behaviors. Therefore, organizations should prioritize cultivating and promoting ethical leadership practices to bolster employee attitudes and behaviors. Moreover, the study underscores the role of POS in promoting OCB. When employees perceive high levels of organizational support, they are more inclined to go beyond their formal job requirements and engage in behaviors that benefit the organization. Consequently, organizations should invest in creating a supportive work environment that values and appreciates employees' contributions, ultimately enhancing OCB.

Organizations in the Jordanian telecom sector can utilize the insights from this study to design leadership development programs that emphasize moral leadership. These programs should focus on promoting leaders' ethical behavior, fairness, and integrity. Nurturing moral leadership, organizations can enhance employee perceptions of support and encourage OCB. The research suggests that organizations should also invest in creating a supportive work environment. This can be achieved through practices such as providing resources, recognizing employee achievements, promoting work-life balance, and involving employees in decision-making processes. Enhancing POS can motivate

employees to engage in OCB, positively contributing to the organization. Recognizing the importance of strong leader-member relationships, organizations should emphasize the development of high-quality relationships between leaders and their subordinates. This can be achieved through strategies such as promoting open communication, providing opportunities for mentorship and coaching, and recognizing and valuing employees' contributions. Strengthening LMX can amplify the positive effects of ethical leadership and POS on OCB. Additionally, organizations should align their performance management and reward systems with OCB. Recognizing and rewarding employees who consistently engage in citizenship behaviors can further encourage such behaviors. This can be done through performance evaluations, promotions, bonuses, and public recognition.

### ***5.2. Future Research***

While insightful, the findings of this study are constrained to the Jordanian telecom sector, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other industries or cultural contexts. Different industries and cultural settings may have unique dynamics that influence the relationships between ethical leadership, POS, LMX, and OCB. To broaden the applicability of these findings, it would be valuable to replicate this study in diverse settings. Moreover, this research utilizes a cross-sectional design, which captures data at a single point in time, thus constraining the establishment of causality and understanding of these relationships' dynamic nature. Future research could employ longitudinal or experimental designs to provide more robust evidence regarding the causal connections between ethical leadership, POS, LMX, and OCB. This study's sample size of 280 participants may limit its statistical power and generalizability. A larger sample size would offer more representative and reliable results, and thus, future research could consider increasing the sample size to enhance validity.

Additionally, this study relies on self-reported measures, potentially subject to biases like common method bias and social desirability bias. To enhance the validity of the findings, future research could incorporate multiple sources of data, such as supervisor ratings and objective performance measures. Future research could replicate the study in different industries and cultural contexts to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Examining how ethical leadership, POS, and LMX influence OCB in diverse settings would provide a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. Longitudinal studies could provide insights into the causal relationships between ethical leadership, POS, LMX, and OCB over time, yielding a deeper understanding of their dynamics. In conjunction with quantitative research, employing qualitative approaches like interviews or focus groups could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the underlying mechanisms and processes involved. Considering the hierarchical nature of organizations, future research could adopt a multilevel analysis approach to explore how ethical leadership, POS, LMX, and OCB operate at both the individual and organizational levels, accounting for potential cross-level interactions. Comparative studies across different industries or countries could help identify contextual factors influencing the relationships between ethical leadership, POS, LMX, and OCB. These comparisons could provide valuable insights.

### ***5.3. Conclusion***

In conclusion, this study offers empirical evidence supporting the interplay between ethical leadership, POS, and OCB, with the moderating role of LMX. The findings highlight the significance of ethical leadership in shaping employee perceptions of support and encouraging OCB. Moreover, a positive association was found between POS and OCB, emphasizing the importance of a supportive work environment in promoting citizenship behaviors. The study also demonstrates that LMX moderates these relationships, strengthening the positive effects of ethical leadership and POS on employee engagement in citizenship behaviors. This research enriches our understanding of ethical leadership, POS, LMX, and OCB and their interconnected roles. From a practical standpoint, organizations should prioritize the development of ethical leadership practices, cultivate a supportive work environment, and strengthen leader-member relationships. Doing so can enhance employee perceptions of support and promote a culture of OCB. It is essential to acknowledge the study's

limitations, such as the specific context, cross-sectional design, and sample size, which may affect the generalizability and causality of the findings. Hence, future research should aim to replicate the study in different contexts, adopt longitudinal designs, employ mixed-methods approaches, consider multilevel analyses, and conduct comparative studies to enrich our understanding of these vital constructs. This study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on ethical leadership, POS, LMX, and OCB, offering valuable insights for organizations seeking to promote positive employee attitudes and behaviors, ultimately enhancing organizational performance and effectiveness.



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## Questions

### **Ethical Leadership** (Abdullah et al., 2019)

1. My superior conducts his/her personal life in an ethical manner.
2. My superior has the best interests of employees in mind.
3. My supervisor discusses business ethics or values with employees.
4. When making decisions, my principal asks what the right thing to do is.'

### **Organizational Support** (Musenze & Mayende, 2023)

1. My organization cares about my opinions.
2. My organization cares about my well-being.
3. My organization appreciates any extra effort from me.
4. My organization cannot ignore any complaint from me.
5. Even if I did the best job possible, my organization would fail to notice.
6. My organization cares about my general satisfaction at work

### **Leader-Member-Exchange** (Huang et al., 2021)

1. I usually know whether or not my leader is satisfied with what I do.
2. My leader understands my job problems and needs very well.
3. My leader recognizes my potential very well.
4. At the workplace, my leader would help me to solve difficult problems.
5. At the workplace, my leader would "bail me out" at their expense.
6. I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify their decision if they were not present to do so.
7. I have very good relationships with my leader

### **Citizenship Behaviour** (Al-Madadha et al., 2021)

1. Employee helps customers with problems beyond what is expected or required.
2. I count around here.
3. I am taken seriously around here.
4. I am important around here.
5. Employee willingly goes out of his/her way to make a customer satisfied.
6. Employee voluntarily assists customers even if it means going beyond job requirements.