



# THE MODERATING EFFECT OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKPLACE STRESSORS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR IN HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS

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## ABSTRACT

*The healthcare sector is often characterized by high-pressure environments that can negatively impact employees' performance and well-being. This paper examines the moderating role of ethical leadership in mitigating workplace stressors and enhancing organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) among healthcare workers. Through a review of existing literature and analysis, we find that ethical leadership provides a supportive environment, fostering resilience and improving OCB despite workplace stressors.*

**Keywords:** Ethical leadership, Workplace stressors, Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB), Healthcare organizations, Employee well-being.

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## 1. Introduction

Healthcare organizations face unique challenges, including intense workloads, emotional demands, and organizational complexities. These workplace stressors often impair employees' abilities to engage in extra-role behaviors like organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which are vital for operational effectiveness.

Ethical leadership emerges as a critical moderating factor that helps healthcare workers navigate these stressors. Leaders who demonstrate fairness, transparency, and moral integrity can create a culture of trust and support, enabling employees to go beyond their formal duties. This paper explores how ethical leadership can buffer the effects of workplace stressors on OCB, offering insights into leadership strategies for improving organizational outcomes.

## 2. Literature Review

A review of literature reveals several studies focusing on workplace stress, OCB, and ethical leadership. Workplace stressors, such as role ambiguity and workload, are linked to lower levels of OCB (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Healthcare-specific research highlights the psychological and physical toll of such stressors (Shanafelt et al., 2015).

Ethical leadership is consistently associated with positive organizational outcomes, including enhanced employee engagement and morale (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Moreover, ethical leadership has been found to mitigate stress-related factors, fostering a culture conducive to OCB (Mayer et al., 2012). However, the moderating role of ethical leadership in healthcare settings requires further exploration, given the sector's unique stressors.

## 3. Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis

The study hypothesizes that ethical leadership moderates the relationship between workplace stressors and OCB. The framework assumes that ethical leaders mitigate the impact of stressors, enabling employees to maintain high levels of OCB.

## Hypothesis:

- **H1:** Workplace stressors negatively affect OCB.
- **H2:** Ethical leadership positively moderates the relationship between workplace stressors and OCB.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

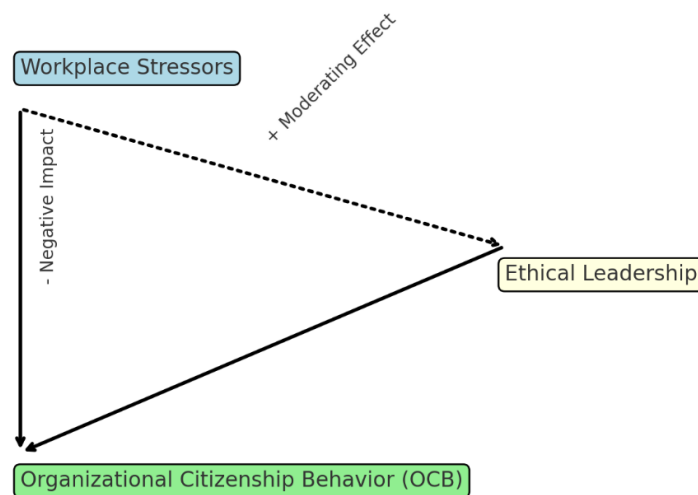


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

**Figure 1:** The illustrating the relationship between workplace stressors, ethical leadership, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Ethical leadership is depicted as a moderating factor, reducing the negative impact of stressors on OCB.

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Workplace Stressors → (-) → Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Ethical Leadership → (+) → Moderates → OCB

## 4. Methodology

A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. Data were collected from 150 healthcare employees in hospitals across three regions. Workplace stressors were measured using a standardized stress inventory, while OCB was assessed through a validated scale.

Statistical analyses, including regression and moderation analysis, were conducted to test the hypotheses. Qualitative data provided additional insights into employees' experiences with ethical leadership.

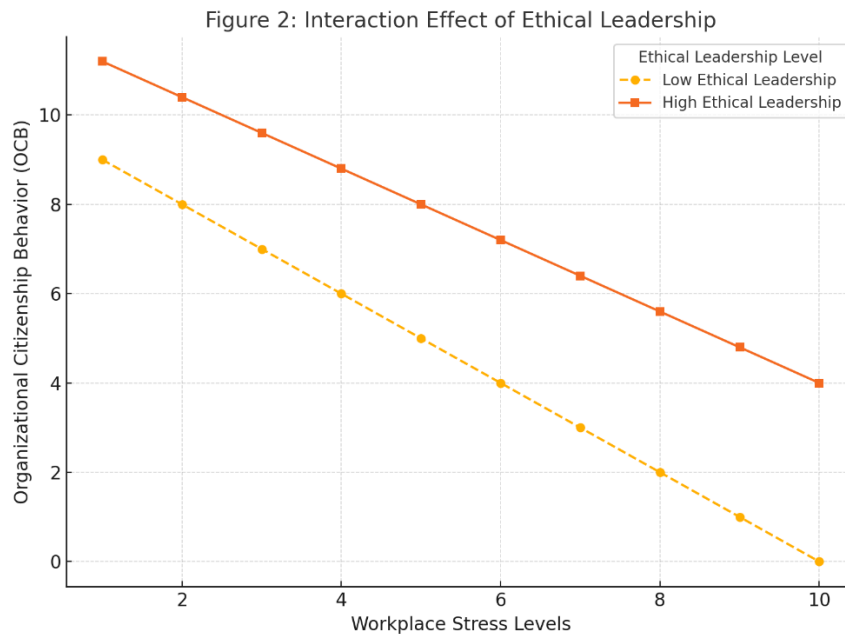
**Table 1: Sample Demographics**

Demographic Variable	Percentage (%)
Gender (Male/Female)	40/60
Age (20-40 years)	75
Tenure (<5 years)	65

## 5. Results and Discussion

### 5.1 Quantitative Results

The results reveal a significant negative relationship between workplace stressors and OCB ( $\beta = -0.45$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). However, ethical leadership moderated this relationship, reducing the negative impact of stressors on OCB ( $\beta = 0.30$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).



**Figure 2: Interaction Effect of Ethical Leadership**

**Figure 2:** Demonstrating how ethical leadership moderates the relationship between workplace stress levels and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The figure shows that high ethical leadership reduces the negative impact of stress on OCB compared to low ethical leadership. The interaction effect highlights that under high ethical leadership, the adverse effect of stressors on OCB is minimized.

## 5.2 Qualitative Insights

Interviews highlighted that employees perceive ethical leaders as role models who provide emotional and instrumental support. Participants noted that such leaders foster a sense of belonging, which motivates them to engage in OCB despite challenges.

## 6. Conclusion

This study underscores the critical role of ethical leadership in moderating workplace stressors and enhancing OCB in healthcare organizations. Leaders who adopt ethical practices can mitigate stress and promote a positive work culture, driving both employee well-being and organizational success.

**Practical Implications:** Healthcare leaders should focus on ethical training and emotional intelligence to support employees effectively.

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