

## The Impact of Ethical Leadership on Employee Creativity: Moderated Mediation Role of Knowledge Sharing Behavior and Creative Self-Efficacy

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the impact of ethical leadership on employee creativity, the mediating role of knowledge sharing, and the moderating role of creative self-efficacy from a private sector worker's perspective. The impact of ethical leadership on worker creativity was evaluated by utilizing knowledge sharing and creative self-efficacy. The relationships between these variables were analyzed in line with the theory of social learning and social exchange theory. Although there are studies on the mediating role of knowledge sharing behavior in the impact of ethical leadership on employee creativity, no study has analyzed the moderator role of creative self-efficacy in this relationship. This study aims to contribute to the literature. Using the moderated mediation model, hypotheses were tested on a sample of 280 employees from various private sector enterprises. Findings revealed that ethical leadership has a positive impact on employee creativity, knowledge sharing behavior mediates this relationship, and creative self-efficacy moderates this relationship. In addition, research has shown that ethical leadership has a positive impact on knowledge sharing, which in turn has a positive impact on employee creativity.

**Keywords:** Ethical leadership, employee creativity, knowledge sharing behavior, creative self-efficacy, mediation, moderation.

## Etik Liderliğin Çalışan Yaratıcılığı Üzerindeki Etkisi: Bilgi Paylaşımı ve Yaratıcı Öz Yeterliliğin Düzenleyici Aracı Rolü

### ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, etik liderliğin çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerindeki etkisini, bilgi paylaşımının aracılık rolünü ve yaratıcı öz yeterliliğin düzenleyici rolünü özel sektör çalışanı perspektifinden belirlemektir. Etik liderliğin çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerindeki etkisi, bilgi paylaşımı ve yaratıcı öz-yeterlik kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiler sosyal öğrenme ve sosyal değişim teorisi doğrultusunda analiz edilmiştir. Etik liderliğin çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerindeki etkisinde bilgi paylaşımı davranışının aracı rolüne ilişkin çalışmalar olmasına rağmen, bu ilişkide yaratıcı öz-yeterliliğin düzenleyici rolünü inceleyen bir çalışmaya rastlanmamıştır. Bu çalışmayla literatüre katkı sağlamak amaçlanmaktadır. Düzenleyici aracılık modeli kullanılarak, çeşitli özel sektör işletmelerinden 280 çalışan örneklem üzerine hipotezler değerlendirilmiştir. Bulgular, etik liderliğin çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerinde olumlu bir etkiye sahip olduğunu, bilgi paylaşma davranışının bu ilişkiye aracılık ettiğini ve yaratıcı öz-yeterliliğin bu ilişkiyi düzenlediğini ortaya koymuştur. Ayrıca araştırma etik liderliğin bilgi paylaşımı üzerinde ve bilgi paylaşımının da çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerinde olumlu ilişkisi olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Etik liderlik, çalışan yaratıcılığı, bilgi paylaşımı davranışı, yaratıcı öz yeterlilik, aracılık, düzenleyicilik.

### Introduction

Leadership research is crucial in creating employee attitudes that provide strategic advantages in today's competitive environment. Employee creativity generates, promotes, and implements unique and beneficial ideas concerning goods, practices, services, or processes (Carmeli, Gelbard and Reiter-Palmon, 2013, p. 96). Ethical leaders value morality, fairness, freedom, and concern for others, which

may impact employee creativity (Zhou, 2003). Leaders can foster inventiveness in their teams by providing direction, inspiration, and resources, as well as shaping employees' emotional and social environments (Carmeli et al., 2013). The effect of ethical leadership on outcomes is sometimes framed in terms of a social exchange or social learning paradigm (Brown and Trevino, 2006). Ethical leaders' objective choices affect how their followers see a certain social exchange relationship (Brown and Trevino, 2006), leading to reciprocal action (Avey, Palanski and Walumbwa, 2011). Thus, ethical leaders may improve employee self-efficacy via reliability and ethics (Avey, Wernsing and Palanski, 2012). In today's globalized and fast-paced business world, creative employees are crucial for the survival of the company. To make companies innovative and sustainable, leaders must stimulate creativity (Amabile and Pratt 2016). The question of how managers and leaders can foster creativity in their workforce has long occupied the minds of academics and practitioners in the field of organizational studies and executives.

This research examines whether ethical leadership enhances creativity using the factors of knowledge sharing and creative self-efficacy. Manufacturers were chosen as a sample because they are in a competitive industry that requires a steady stream of new ideas, discovery of useful information through research and development efforts, and promotion of employee creative self-efficacy through the dissemination of such findings. In this relationship, the research aims to test the mediating impact of knowledge sharing and the moderating impact of creative self-efficacy. The literature in the area of ethical leadership research is extensive and essential to understanding the relationship between ethical leadership, creativity, knowledge sharing and creative self-efficacy.

## **Literature Review**

### **Ethical Leadership**

The word ethics comes from the Greek word for habit or character, "ethos" (Chaudhary, Islam, Ali and Jamil, 2023). It describes and prescribes moral criteria and actions, arguing that there are appropriate and wrong ways to conduct based on philosophical concepts (Gülcan, 2015, p.2622). As Nietzsche and Haase (2012, p.278) claim, ethics is "a dynamic and ongoing action rather than obedience to an established set of moral rules and principles entrenched in formal policy expressions". Ethical leadership (EL) is a term describing the demonstration of morally upstanding conduct in one's professional and personal interactions. Positive reinforcement, inviting subordinates into the decision-making process, and fostering two-way communication are all hallmarks of this style of leadership, which tries to instill a sense of responsibility in its followers (Brown and Treviño, 2006; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing and Peterson, 2008; Yukl, Mahsud, Hassan and Prussia, 2013). Ethical leaders are altruistic, honest, reliable, and principled decision-makers who care about the well-being of employees (Düger, 2020, p.708). Ethical leaders are responsible for creating a culture within which their followers' attitudes and actions may flourish. Leaders model appropriate behavior by their own acts and conversations, and they urge and judge followers to adopt the same standards (Brown, Treviño and Harrison, 2005, p.120). First, an ethical person possesses strong moral ideals such as honesty, integrity, trustworthiness, motivation, and fairness (Hansen, Alge, Brown, Jackson, and Dunford, (2013). From the vantage point of social learning (Bandura and Walters, 1977) and the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), it is easy to comprehend the effect that EL has on the actions of workers. Leadership is a social learning paradigm in which leaders act as role models, according to Brown et. al., (2005) employees identify with and imitate their conduct (including ethical behavior), as stated by Bandura and Walters (1977). Because of this, employees will replicate the good and normative suitable conduct that has been demonstrated. The social exchange hypothesis emphasizes the importance of leaders and employees feeling an obligation to reciprocate either positive or negative actions (Blau, 1964). Workers would be motivated to be truthful as a way to express their appreciation for the trust, respect, and fairness they have received on the job.

## **Employee Creativity**

In most contexts, the term "creativity" refers to "the development of new and constructive ideas or solutions" in the workplace (Zhou and George, 2001, p.683). Creativity is a dispositional variable quality resulting in novelty (Forgionne and Newman, 2007, p.2126). According to Amabile (1988), "creativity" is entails as the "creation of innovative and beneficial ideas" (p.126). Creativity is the ability to think creatively, reason abstractly, generate ideas, and analyze circumstances. To improve the performance of the company, creative thinking may be a key factor in the business model (Gülten, Cambaz and Akkaya, 2021, p.919). Creative thinking, as per Stokols, Clitheroe and Zmuidzinas (2002), may assist an organization in improving its capacity to innovate to better deal with environmental changes and competitive pressures. Often, when people think about creativity, they think of a single genius working alone in an office producing ideas. In modern businesses, however, interaction and influence from others is far more likely to spark original thought than individual reflection alone (Montuori and Purser, 1995). In this regard, there is abundant evidence to suggest that other persons, both inside and outside the firm, have a significant effect on employee creativity (EC) (Amabile, 1996; Madjar, Oldham and Pratt, 2002). Beheshtifar and Zare (2013) emphasize the importance of creativity in businesses for success, as it enhances efficiency, adaptability, growth, and competitiveness.

## **Knowledge Sharing**

Management literature often discusses knowledge sharing behavior (KSB). In the business world, knowledge sharing involves the exchange of knowledge, know-how, and feedback among customers, organizational specialists, and people outside of the group (Cummings, 2004, p.352). In the real world, developing a culture of knowledge sharing may be difficult since it is not possible to convince people to share their expertise with colleagues (Ford and Staples, 2010). If workers' associate with their boss and coworkers, they are more likely to share their knowledge (Constant, Kiesler and Sproull, 1994). When it comes to sharing knowledge, people are most often motivated by personal psychological effects such as increased work participation and job satisfaction. KSB may serve as a foundation for organizational learning by facilitating the development, transfer, and exchange of knowledge (Lee, Kim and Kim, 2012). KSB allows individuals to keep the flow of their learning, increase the number of opportunities they have to learn from one another and integrate what they have learned into operationally applicable practices (Swift and Hwang, 2013).

## **Creative Self-Efficacy**

Creative self-efficacy (CSE) is based on (Bandura, 1997) self-efficacy, which is a person's confidence that he or she will be successful in a specific situation (Mathisen and Bronnick, 2009, p.21). CSE is the confidence that one can finish a mission throughout the innovation process. The concept of CSE was conceived as an extension of self-efficacy, and it depicts one's self-confidence in their skills throughout an imaginative activity (Tierney and Farmer, 2002, p.1138). CSE helps individuals produce the motivation, mental ability, and action plans needed to meet expectations. They spend more time on problem awareness, innovative solutions, and getting backing for their ideas and developing prototypes (Michael, Hou and Fan, 2011, pp. 260-261).

## **Ethical Leadership and Employee Creativity**

Publicly, ethical leaders are sincere, honest, compassionate, altruistic, visible, determined, trustworthy, and supportive of others' rights (Brown and Treviño, 2006). EL has been identified to enhance followers' creative thinking via encouragement and role models (Chen and Hou, 2016). Ethical leaders assist their subordinates in establishing a stimulating environment for creativity at work. To grasp the social relevance of their job, they can address all topics openly, communicate effectively, and clearly explain how their work contributes to the achievement of socially responsible goals (Thompson and Hart, 2006). Ethical leaders who reward excellent behavior, engage workers in decision-making, promote justice, and make decisions in the company's and employees' best interests may boost employee creativity (Amabile, 1983; Brown et al., 2005). Encouraging employees to express their views, ethical

leaders participate in mutual contact (Neubert et al., 2009; Sonenshein, 2007). Thus, EL may encourage subordinates to actively engage in decision-making. This encourages people to take risks, discuss ideas, and come up with new solutions. In the light of these findings, we can propose this hypothesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: Ethical leadership has positive significant impact on employee creativity.

### **Ethical Leadership and Knowledge Sharing Behavior**

Individuals' actions, as per the social exchange theory (SET), should be in accordance with the concept of reciprocity (Emerson, 1976). Reciprocity is a fundamental principle of social exchange theory (SET), according to Gouldner (1960), on the basis of reciprocal costs and benefits, that people will control how they share information about what they value. KSB is impacted by the emotional social and individual environment, but it's ratified by the knowledge sharer's enthusiasm, desire, and cognitive state (Wang and Noe, 2010). Through EL, justice, honesty, transparency, principles, and sincerity are emphasized. Ethics may impact employee KSB in the organization. EL may be a moral leader or ethical governance that promotes KSB (Brown and Treviño, 2006). Knowing how to share knowledge in the workplace refers to the interchange of professional data and information as well as working routines, competences, and personal experiences (Lu, Leung and Koch, 2006). Brown and Treviño (2006) assert that EL enhance two-way communication and trust, leading to increased commitments to KSB in the field by employees. Since both opportunity and incentive are essential for KSB, ethical leaders give chances and incentives to their staff. First and foremost, by implementing strategies/systems that are aligned with principles, EL contributes to the reduction of potential obstacles that prevent workers from participating in KSB. Second, ethical leaders personally mirror the company's morals and ideals (e.g., confidence, outgoingness, caring others, and fairness). In the light of these findings, we can propose this hypothesis:

H<sub>2</sub>: EL has positive significant impact on KSB.

### **Knowledge Sharing Behavior and Employee Creativity**

A substantial amount of research shows that increasing access to others' knowledge sharing motivates both collective and individual creative activity (Ahuja, 2000). KSB is when employees make their knowledge available to others to achieve a goal. Cooperation among workers is essential for numerous reasons, such as the production of fresh ideas, the increase of operational effectiveness, and the resolution of complex challenges (Lo, Tian and Ng, 2021). Employees may become aware of and gain knowledge about topics that are relevant to their jobs by offering and receiving important feedback from peers, which helps them to come up with more creative and beneficial solutions (Anser, Yousaf et al., 2020). In today's dynamic world, EC serves as a primary source of industrial innovation (Zeb, Abdullah, Hussain and Safi, 2019), long-term commitment, constant effort, and a lot of effort (George and Zhou, 2007). The relationship between KSB and EC has been extensively researched in the literature (Liao and Chen, 2018; Thanh, 2020; Zeb et al., 2019). Problem-solving (Alshwayat, MacVaugh and Akbar, 2021), organizational performance (Lee, Tao, Li and Sun, 2020) and self-confidence (Martinez, 2015) are enhanced using KSB. Confident employees are more willing to try new ideas and methods than others. Because of these experimental findings, the following hypotheses were advanced in this study:

H<sub>3</sub>: KSB has positive significant impact on EC.

### **The Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing Behavior**

Per the Social exchange theory (SET) criterion in reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), individuals should govern interpersonal knowledge sharing behavior based on their self-interest (Cabrera and Cabrera, 2005). Employees may share job-related data, life experiences, working methods, and technical expertise (Lu et al., 2006). EL encourages employees KSB (Brown and Treviño, 2006). Carmeli et al. (2013) discovered that KSB increases EC. We postulated that EC would flourish under ethical leadership

because it would promote the exchange of knowledge. Ethical leaders may create a procedure to overcome objections to KSB and foster collaboration (Carmeli et al., 2013). Because of these experimental findings, the following hypothesis were proposed:

H<sub>4</sub>: The relationship between EL and EC is mediated by KSB.

### The Moderating Role of Creative Self-Efficacy

To Tierney and Farmer (2002, p.1138) CSE is the recognition and aptitude to find fresh solutions to challenges. Organizational innovation, creative thinking, and imaginative collective efficacy have made CSE a key organizational priority (Cai, Lin, Yang and Fan, 2021; Jan, Zainal and Lata, 2021). Much research has utilized CSE as a determinant of leadership and job outcomes. Research on the moderating function of CSE is quite limited. Jaiswal and Dhar (2016, p.371) investigated the impact of CSE on TL and EC in India's hotel business. They recommended more studies on CSE's moderating role in relation to EC. Mehmood et al., (2021) recommend studying CSE's moderating effect on KSB and creative ideas. "Knowledge sharing" refers to leader-member knowledge exchange (Van den Hooff, de Ridder and Aukema, 2004), it also has an impact on employees' mental representation, allowing them to become more creative (Taylor and Greve, 2006). In this approach, CSE might be used as a causal variable to inspire creativity in other people. As a result, CSE encourages employees to become more self-assured and creative (Tierney and Farmer, 2002).

H<sub>5</sub>: CSE moderates the relationship between KSB and EC, so those with high CSE are more inclined to enhance it.

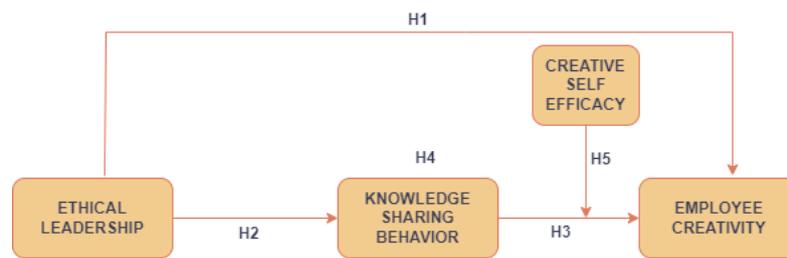


Figure 1. Research Model

Figure 1 presents the conceptual foundation of this research. In the following section, detailed information about the methodology was given.

## Methodology

In the primary data collection, the questionnaire technique was utilized.

### Sample and Demographics

The data gathered for the study came from employees at all levels of private-sector production enterprises in the provinces of Osmaniye, Gaziantep, and Adana. For the scale application process, approvals were secured from the authorized personnel of the companies. Approximately 70% of the employees constituting the research sample are male. Analysis of the individuals' ages reveals that, the highest frequency is between the ages of 21 and 30 with a total of 104 people. Furthermore, approximately 37% of the participants forming the study sample are two-year degree graduates. Table 1 provides further demographic information on the study's sample population.

Table 1  
Participant's traits

Gender	n	%	Age	n	%
Male	192	68.6	20≤	59	21.1
Female	88	31.4	21-30	104	37.1
			31-40	81	28.9
			41-50	22	7.9
			51≥	14	5.0
Education			Sector		
Elementary	9	3.2	Health	11	3.9
High School	57	20.4	Energy	30	10.7
Two-year degree	105	37.5	Household appliances	39	13.9
Undergraduate	98	35.0	Steel	64	22.9
M.Sc.	11	3.9	Automotive	71	25.4
Tenure (Years)			Electronic	65	23.2
1<	27	9.6			
1-3	55	19.6			
4-6	60	21.4			
7-9	56	20.0			
10-12	38	13.6			
13-15	24	8.6			
16≥	20	7.1			

## Measures

The first of the scales used in the research is EL, originally developed by Brown et al. (2005) and whose Turkish validity and reliability were established by Muharrem, Bircan and Yeşiltaş (2012). The KSB scale was originally developed by Chennamaneni, Teng, and Raja (2012). In this study, the adaptation of the same scale made by Demirel and Ulu (2020) was used. This scale consists of 4 items and one dimension. Another scale used is CSE. Three items make up this scale, which was developed by Tierney and Farmer (2002). The scale items in this research were obtained from Chen and Zhang (2019). EC is a scale consisting of 4 items and one dimension, which was originally developed by Ettlle and O'Keefe (1982) and adapted by Tierney, Farmer and Graen (1999). In this study, the Akgunduz, Alkan, and Gök (2018) adaptation is used.

## Procedure

The research's preliminary report was authorized by the university's ethics committee. After the approval of the ethics committee, the managers of the institutions forming the sample were interviewed and informed about the survey, and the surveys were delivered to the participants on the web voluntarily.

## Data Analysis

In the preliminary analysis phase, correlation analysis and descriptive statistics were performed through the SPSS package program. The AMOS package program was utilized to analyze the relations among the variables. Employing Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macro model 4, the mediating function between these variables was investigated. After that, with the use of Process Macro model 14, it was discovered that self-efficacy moderated the mediation.

## Research Ethics

In this study, all rules were complied with within the scope of the "Higher Education Institutions Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Directive". In addition, for this study, Osmaniye Korkut Ata University Social Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee dated 21.12.2021 and numbered E.46455 ethics committee approval was obtained.

## Results

### Preliminary Examinations

Means, standard deviations, and correlations for the research variables are shown in Table 2. As was hypothesized, all four variables in the model exhibit a positive correlation.

Table 2  
Variables' means, SDs, Cronbach alphas, and correlation coefficients

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev.	1	2	3	4
1. EL	4.3418	0.44898	(.82)			
2. EC	5.0696	1.29327	.410**	(.93)		
3. KSB	3.8375	1.1182	.228**	.317**	(.90)	
4. CSE	4.8120	1.5706	.250**	.368**	.517**	(.92)

\*\* Significant correlation at 0.01 (2-tailed). Parentheses indicate Cronbach alpha.  
Note. EL=Ethical Leadership, EC= Employee Creativity, KSB= Knowledge Sharing Behavior, CSE= Creative Self- Efficacy

Before proceeding with the structural equation model, Table 3 illustrates the confirmatory factor analysis findings for the study variables.

Table 3  
Confirmatory factor analysis

Scale	CMIN/DF	GFI	TLI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA	AGFI
EL	2.255	.949	.914	.935	.0472	.067	.918
EC	1.010	.998	1	1	.0044	.006	.982
KSB	2.527	.987	.987	.994	.0157	.074	.957
CSE	1.359	.997	.999	1	.0013	.036	.981
<b>Acceptable Fit*</b>	<b>≤5</b>	<b>≥.85</b>	<b>≥.90</b>	<b>≥.95</b>	<b>&lt;.05</b>	<b>≤.08</b>	<b>≥.85</b>

Reference: Browne and Cudeck, 1992; MacCallum et al., 1996

### Structural Equation Model

After validating the measurement model, we assessed the hypothesized connections using the latent variable structural model.

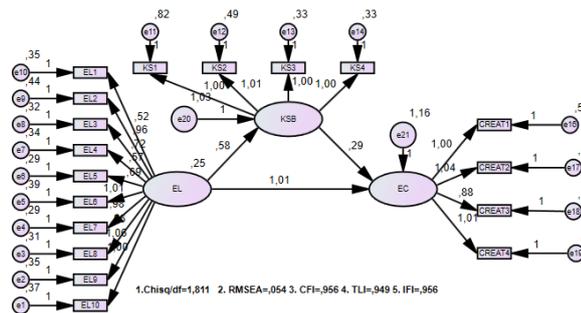


Figure 2. Structural Equation Model

Table 4 shows analysis findings. It is seen that EL predicts ( $\beta=.576$ ,  $p<.001$ ) KSB. Ethical leadership, as defined by its moral features, is predicted to improve team members' skill, willingness to educate others. This implies that managers may encourage sharing of knowledge among their subordinates by setting a good example of ethical conduct and creating an atmosphere of security in which subordinates can do their best work (Wu, 2021). EL has a statistically significant and positive impact ( $\beta=1.014$ ,  $p<.001$ ) on EC, as seen in Table 4 below. Ethical leaders have an impact at every level of the creative work behavior phase by exemplifying traits including truthfulness, transparency,

collective action inspiration, generosity, credibility, fairness, as well as equitable treatment (Tayyar and Ajmal, 2017). It is also true that followers of ethical leaders believe that they have a strong social exchange connection with the leader and are more productive in work (Yidong and Xinxin, 2012). The analysis revealed that knowledge sharing behavior positively impacts employee creativity ( $\beta=.294$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Workers' shared expertise enables them to see a wider range of potential solutions, which should boost their confidence in the organization's ability to implement creative ideas (De Clercq et al., 2013). The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory shows that employees are more likely to use their expertise and interpersonal connections in innovative ways as their organizations expand (Hobfoll, 2001).

Table 4  
Unstandardized regression weights of a structural model

Tested Path	Prediction	Std. Error	Critical Ratio	P
EL → KSB	0.576	0.149	3.858	***
EL → EC	1.014	0.179	5.674	***
KS → EC	.294	0.074	3.97	***

As a consequence of the regression analyses, hypotheses H<sub>1</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>, and H<sub>3</sub> were confirmed. To determine the mediating impact of KSB on EL and EC, research will be continued with PROCESS model 4 macro.

### Mediation Testing

The table 5 below reveals EL's total and direct impacts on EC. In the next stage, the mediating effect of KSB on the effect of EL on EC was examined.

Table 5  
Direct and Indirect Effects of Ethical Leadership on Employee Creativity

Total Effects of EL on EC			Unstand.	SE	LLCI	ULCI
			1.1813	.1576	.8711	1.4914
Direct Effects of EL on EC			1.0267	.1569	.7179	1.3355
Indirect Effects of EL on EC via KSB						
Independent	Mediator	Dependent	Unstand.	SE	LLCI	ULCI
EL	> KSB	> EC	.1546	.0718	.0465	.3267

The data was analyzed by means of a bootstrap-based regression approach to determine the mediating role of knowledge sharing in the impact of private sector employees' EL perceptions on EC. During the analysis, the bootstrap technique and 5000 resampling method was preferred. The indirect effect shows that Bootstrap confidence interval (BCA CI) does not include zero, indicating a statistically significant (MacKinnon, Lockwood, and Williams, 2004, p. 113) mediation effect ( $\beta=.1546$ , 95% BCA CI [.0465, .3267]). Organizational leaders that are committed to ethics may create a system that encourages employees to share their expertise and work together to solve problems (Carmeli et al., 2013). Ethical leaders generate, sustain, and foster an atmosphere conducive to the development of trustworthy and constructive relationships between themselves and their followers (Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, and May, 2004). In such a setting, followers are more likely to prioritize exchange and teamwork, which in turn boosts morale. The knowledge creating and sharing rely on this (Avey et al., 2012; Carmeli et al., 2013; Wang and Noe, 2010), a practice that fosters creativity in the workplace.

In light of these results, research hypothesis H<sub>4</sub> was supported.

### Testing for Moderated Mediation

PROCESS Model 14 (Hayes, 2013) is used to evaluate whether CSE moderates the relation between KSB and EC.

Table 6  
*Moderated mediation analysis (model 14 of PROCESS macro)*

Model	Explained Variables			Employee Creativity		
	Knowledge Sharing Behavior			Employee Creativity		
	$\beta$	SE	95 % CI LLCI (ULCI)	$\beta$	SE	95 % CI LLCI (ULCI)
<b>Const.</b>	-2.4608**	.6349	-3.7106 (-1.2110)	1.0489**	.6701	-.2703 (2.3680)
<b>Eth. Lead.</b>	.5668**	.1455	.2804 (.8531)	.9058**	.1539	.6028 (1.2088)
<b>Knw. Sh. Bh. (M)</b>				.2376**	.0759	.0881 (.3871)
<b>Crea.Self. Eff. (W)</b>				.2144**	.0512	.1137 (.3152)
<b>M x W</b>				.0975**	.0333	.0320 (.1629)
	R2	.518		R2	.2780	
	F(df)	F(1,278) = 15,1836		F(df)	F(4,275) = 26,4706	

Model 14, mediated moderation, and conditional process analysis were used to investigate the 5th hypothesis (Hayes, 2018). The model described KSB at a rate of %51 ( $R^2= 0.51$ ) of the overall variation of EL  $F(1,278) = 15,1836, p<0.05$ . According to this study, EL positively influences KSB ( $\beta=0.57, p<0.05$ ), [95% CI:=0.28(0.85)] Table 6 also demonstrates that the model explained for 28% ( $R^2= 0.28$ ) of the overall variation in EL when it comes to EC  $F(4,275) = 26,4706, p<0.05$ . Employees' CSE ( $\beta=0.09, p<0.05$ ), [95% CI:=0.03(0.16)] indicated a moderating effect on the indirect relation between EL and EC through KSB ( $\beta=0.24, p<0.05$ ), [95% CI:=0.88(0.38)].

Table 7  
*Moderated mediation analysis index*

	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
<b>Creative Self Efficacy (W)</b>	.0552	.0344	.0026	.1345

The index of moderated mediation is statistics computed about the confirmation of moderated mediation. Moderated mediation index is critical in decision making process that whether or not the moderated mediation effects have occurred, and whether they are significant or not. The index of moderated mediation shows that the value is 0,0552 to the level of the impact and it is significant, that both the lower and upper limits of confidence interval are out of the limits having zero, so the index confirms that the moderation occurred.

Data in Table 7 confirms moderated mediation index was significant [95% CI: = 0.026 (0.13)] suggesting that indirect relation on EC through KSB was moderated by CSE.

Table 8  
*A synopsis of the investigation into the contingent indirect impact*

Creative Self-Efficacy (W)	$\beta$	SE	t	95%CI LLCI(ULCI)
<b>Low (-1SD) = -1.1118</b>	.0845	.0731	1.1553	-.0595 (.2285)
<b>Moderate = .0000</b>	.2376**	.0759	3.1284	.0881 (.3871)
<b>High (+1SD) = 1.1118</b>	.3906***	.1079	3.6200	.1782 (.6031)

According to the standard deviation above (+SD) and below (-SD), Table 8 revealed the conditional indirect impacts on the values of the moderator. The findings revealed a significant indirect impact of moderate creative self-efficacy levels ( $\beta=0.24, p<0.05$ ), [95% CI: = 0.088 (0.38)], and high CSE ( $\beta=0.390, p<0.001$ ), [95% CI: = 0.17 (0.60)]. The low level of creative self-efficacy is insignificant as the lower and upper limits of confidence intervals are in the limits of zero ( $\beta=0.084, p<0.05$ ), [95% CI: = -0.05 (0.22)]. It is shown graphically so that the conclusion of the analysis can be better understood.

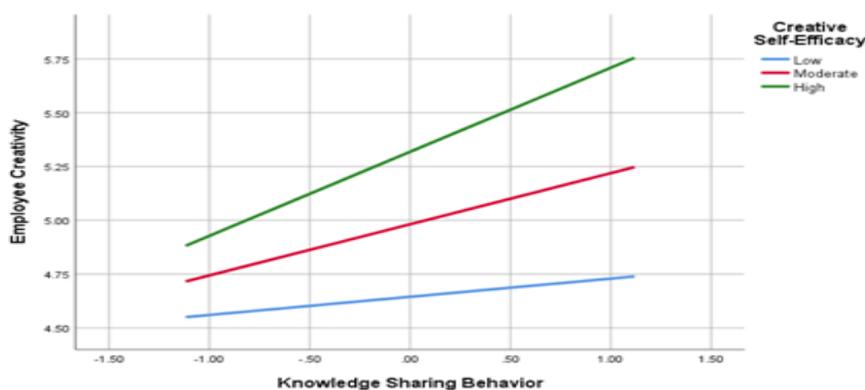


Figure 3. Conditional effect of Employee Creativity as a function of Knowledge Sharing Behavior and Creative Self- Efficacy.

### Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

This research adds insights and methodologies to prior scientific investigations on EL and EC to improve the literature. The study discovered that enterprises in the health, energy, Household appliances, steel, automotive, electronics administrators to manage the KSB of employees must act within the framework of ethical standards and the employed personnel must have CSE. Because such practices show that businesses can shape their social context, which in turn can affect businesses' ability to create new knowledge (Collins and Smith, 2006, p.557). It has been found that the EL perception of employees positively effects EC. This finding is in line with the previous studies of Chen and Hou, (2016); Duan, Liu, and Che, (2018); Javed, Khan, Bashir and Arjoon (2017); Lei, Ha, and Le (2019); Shafique, Ahmad and Kalyar (2019); Ma, Cheng, Ribbens and Zhou (2013). Recent study indicates that EL is positively related to KSB. This finding is in line with the previous studies of Bhatti et al., (2020); Bhatti, Kiyani, Dust, and Zakariya, (2021). Another finding is that KSB increases EC. This finding is in line with the previous studies of He et al. (2013); Liao and Chen (2018); Islam et al. (2021); Suwanti (2019). KSB mediates the positive relationship between EL and EC. This finding is in line with the previous studies of Ma et al., (2013); Lei, et al. (2019). The last finding of our study is that CSE plays a moderator role in the relationship between KSB and EC. As a result, our study has offered evidence of a moderating relationship between KSB and EC, therefore contributing to the body of academic work on EL. Our study contributes theoretically to private sector workers' creative work in published publications. To begin, the findings of this study provide credence to the idea that the act of sharing one's knowledge serves as a mediating role in the relationship between EL and the creative output of employees. The current study stresses the role of CSE, which complements the empirical evidence on the contributions to EC. By demonstrating the mediating role of knowledge sharing, we have given managers a clue as to where they should focus their efforts to boost EC. To motivate its staff to think beyond the box, leaders should implement rules that reward those who come up with new ideas by giving them exclusive rights to their creations. Leaders may encourage more innovative behavior from their teams by eliminating roadblocks that inhibit employees from a societal approach that is completely new and creative, thinking outside the box, and developing novel solutions to problems. And also, creative self-efficacy moderates the relationship between KSB and EC. Differently, ethical leaders should foster activities and behaviors that emphasize CSE and KSB. Organizations should fortify EL practices to increase and sustain workers' faith in them as a means of encouraging KSB. Our research has also produced several helpful recommendations for actual practice. To begin with, since EL is amongst the most significant criteria in regulating the creative output of employees, ethical leaders could encourage EC by serving as a role model for desirable characteristics (Elqassaby, 2018; Li, 2013; Ma and Cheng, 2013). Therefore, ethical leaders must provide a role model for followers and make sure that their followers identify, absorb, and adopt the behaviors that they model. Businesses and other organizations need to consider a candidate's moral identity when making managerial hiring or promotion decisions. In addition to implementing programs that improve the EL, ethical criteria should be included in the performance evaluation of the supervisors (Zhou, Jin and Ma, 2015). The other finding that emerged from our research was that EL has positive impacts, both directly and indirectly, on KS. This

indicates that managers can effectively promote their followers' knowledge behaviors if they can successfully serve as ethical role models for their workers and foster a moral workplace for their followers. The results show that sharing knowledge encourages the creativity of employees, finding new and useful ideas will increase with having CSE (Ma et. al., 2013). It is reasonable to say that the knowledge sharing process is very important for solving problems creatively, as well as expanding the cognitive capacities of individuals (Yuan and Woodman, 2010). Employees that have a high level of CSE are more effective in initiating the development of original concepts and the adoption of novel approaches. Hsu, Hou, and Fan (2011) discovered that CSE increases employee creativity. When it comes to management outcomes, many businesses may improve their CSE as well as the self-efficacy of their workers by giving training courses inside the organization to enable KSB (Gist and Mitchell, 1992). This can be beneficial for both parties. For several reasons, the scope of our investigation is somewhat restricted. To begin, the study had a limited number of participants. While this volume of data is sufficient for quantitative analysis, more striking impacts and distinct patterns may emerge with a larger volume of data collection. Second, there is a potential bias in the common technique since all measurements, except for employees' creative output, were self-reported by the members of the staff. Therefore, the most productive course of action for future academics is to collect data on predicting characteristics from a variety of different sources. Last but not least, research is required to further investigate the processes between EL and EC.

### **Author Contribution Statement**

The first author has a 50% contribution, and the second author has a 50% contribution to this article.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

There is no conflict of interest in this study.

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## Genişletilmiş Özet

### Giriş

Çalışan yaratıcılığı, ürünler, uygulamalar, hizmetler veya prosedürler hakkında yeni, yararlı fikirlerin üretilmesi, tanıtılması ve uygulanması anlamına gelmektedir (Zhou, 2003). Etik liderler, iş yapısı, pozitif enerji ve kaynaklar sunarak çalışanların yaratıcılığını teşvik edebilmektedirler (Carmeli vd., 2013). Bununla birlikte, liderlik tarzının çalışanların yaratıcılığını nasıl etkilediği tam olarak ortaya konamamasına rağmen, çoğu araştırmacı, etik liderliğin sonuçsal sonuçlar üzerindeki etkisini bir sosyal değişim veya sosyal öğrenme süreci olarak açıklamaktadırlar (Brown ve Treviño, 2006). Brown vd. (2005) etik liderliği “kişisel eylemler ve kişiler arası ilişkiler yoluyla normatif olarak uygun davranışın gösterilmesi ve bu tür davranışların iki yönlü iletişim, pekiştirme ve karar verme yoluyla takipçilere teşvik edilmesi” olarak tanımlamaktadır (s. 120). Etik liderler, dürüstlük, sevecenlik, fedakârlık, açıklık, kolektif motivasyon, güvenilirlik ve adalet gibi özelliklerle ve dengeli kararlar veren ilkeli bireyler olarak davranışlarıyla karakterize edilmektedirler (Brown vd., 2005). Özellikle, etik liderlerin adil ve dengeli karar vermeleri sonucunda sosyal değişim ilişkisi algısı (Brown ve Treviño, 2006; Mayer vd., 2009), takipçilerin bu davranışa karşılık vermesiyle sonuçlanmaktadır (Avey vd., 2011). Etik liderler, güvenilirlikleri ve etik standartları aracılığıyla takipçilerinin öz yeterlikleri üzerinde bir pozitif bir etkiye sahip olabilmektedirler (Avey, Wernsing ve Palanski, 2012). Çalışmamızda etik liderliğin çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerindeki etkisi, bilgi paylaşımı ve yaratıcı öz-yeterlilik kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Bu değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiler sosyal öğrenme ve sosyal değişim teorisi doğrultusunda analiz edilmiştir. Etik liderliğin çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerindeki etkisinde bilgi paylaşımı davranışının aracı rolüne ilişkin çalışmalar olmasına rağmen, bu ilişkide yaratıcı öz-yeterliliğin düzenleyici rolünü inceleyen herhangi bir çalışmaya rastlanmamıştır. Bu çalışmayla literatüre katkı sağlamak amaçlanmaktadır.

### Yöntem

Araştırmada kullanılan ölçeklerden ilki, Brown vd. (2005), tarafından geliştirilen etik liderliktir. Türkçe geçerlik ve güvenilirliği Muharrem, Bircan ve Yeşiltaş (2012) tarafından yapılmıştır. Katılımcıların çalıştıkları kurumdaki yöneticilerine ve liderlerine yönelik etik algılarını 5'li likert ölçekle, toplam 10 madde ile ölçmektedir. Bilgi paylaşımı davranışı ölçeği Chennamaneni, Teng ve Raja (2012) tarafından geliştirilmiştir. Bu çalışmada aynı ölçeğin Demirel ve Ulu (2020) tarafından yapılan uyarlaması kullanılmıştır. Bu ölçek 4 madde ve tek boyuttan oluşmaktadır. Kullanılan diğer bir ölçek yaratıcı öz yeterliliktir. Tierney ve Farmer (2002) tarafından geliştirilen bu ölçek üç maddeden oluşmaktadır. Bu araştırmadaki ölçek maddeleri Chen ve Zhang'ın (2019) çalışmasından alınmıştır. Çalışmada kullanılan son ölçek, ilk olarak Ettlle ve O'Keefe (1982) tarafından geliştirilen ve Tierney vd., (1999) ve Akgunduz, Alkan ve Gök (2018) tarafından uyarlanan ve çalışanların yaratıcılığını ölçmeyi amaçlayan 4 madde ve tek boyuttan oluşan bir ölçektir. Üniversite etik kurulunun onayından sonra örnekleme oluşturan kurumların yöneticileri ile görüşülerek anket hakkında bilgilendirilmiş, anketler gönüllülük esasına göre internet üzerinden katılımcılara ulaştırılmıştır. Veri analizinin ilk aşamasında, betimsel istatistikler ve değişkenler arası korelasyon analizi SPSS programı ile yapılmıştır. Değişkenler arasındaki ilişkileri analiz etmek için AMOS programından yararlanılmıştır. Yapısal eşitlik modeli yardımıyla tüm değişkenlerin doğrulayıcı faktör analizleri yapılmıştır. Değişkenlerin güvenilirliği tespit edildikten sonra yapısal eşitlik modeli kurularak değişkenler arasındaki regresyon analizleri gerçekleştirilmiştir. Hayes'in (2013) Process makro modeli 4 kullanılarak, bu değişkenler arasındaki aracılık rolü araştırılmıştır. Daha sonra Process makro modeli 14 kullanılarak yaratıcı öz yeterliliğin düzenleyici rolü araştırılmıştır. Düzenleyici etkiyi daha iyi göstermek için grafik kullanılmıştır.

### Bulgular

Hipoteze dayalı ilişkiler, ölçüm modeli doğrulandıktan sonra yapısal model üzerinde değerlendirilmiştir. Etik liderliğin bilgi paylaşımı davranışı üzerindeki pozitif etkisi doğrulanmıştır ( $\beta=.576$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Etik liderliğin çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerindeki pozitif ve anlamlı etkisi de tespit

edilmiştir ( $\beta=1.014$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Bilgi paylaşımı davranışının çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerindeki pozitif etkisi doğrulanmıştır ( $\beta=.294$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Dolaylı etki, Bootstrap güven aralığının (BCA CI) sıfır içermemesi istatistiksel olarak anlamlı ve (MacKinnon, Lockwood ve Williams, 2004, s. 113) aracılık rolü olduğunu ( $\beta=.1546$ , %95 BCA CI [.0465, .3267]) göstermektedir. Çalışma verileri, etik liderliğin, bilgi paylaşımı davranışını olumlu yönde etkilediğini ( $\beta=0.57$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), [% 95 CI: = 0.28 (0.85)] ayrıca modelin çalışan yaratıcılığı  $F(4.275) = 26.4706$ ,  $p<0.05$  söz konusu olduğunda, etik liderliğin genel varyansın % 28'ini ( $R^2 = 0.28$ ) açıkladığını göstermektedir. Çalışanların Yaratıcı özyeterliliğinin ( $\beta=0.09$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), [%95 CI: =0.03(0.16)], bilgi paylaşımı davranışının çalışan yaratıcılığı üzerinde etkisinde düzenleyici bir rolü olduğu tespit edilmiştir ( $\beta=0.24$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), [%95 CI: =0.88(0.38)].

### Sonuç, Tartışma ve Öneriler

Bu araştırma, literatürü geliştirmek için etik liderlik ve çalışan yaratıcılığı ile ilgili önceki bilimsel araştırmalara içgörüler ve metodolojiler eklemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Çalışmada, işletmelerin sağlık, enerji, dayanıklı beyaz eşya, çelik, otomotiv, elektronik, finans, perakende ve ulaştırma sektörlerindeki yöneticilerin bilgi paylaşımını yönetebilmeleri için çalışanların etik standartlar çerçevesinde hareket etmeleri ve istihdam edilen personelin yaratıcı öz yeterliliğe sahip olmaları gerektiği tespit edilmiştir. Çalışanların etik liderlik algısının çalışan yaratıcılığını olumlu yönde etkilediği tespit edilmiştir. Bu bulgu, Ma vd. (2013), Chen ve Hou, (2016), Javed vd., (2017), Shafique vd., (2019), Duan, Liu ve Che, (2018) ve Lei vd. (2019) çalışma bulguları ile doğrulanmaktadır. Etik liderliğin bilgi paylaşımı davranışı ile pozitif ilişkili olduğu bulgusu Bhatti vd., (2020); Bhatti, Kiyani, Dust ve Zakariya'nın, (2021) çalışmalarıyla örtüşmektedir. Çalışmanın bir diğer bulgusu bilgi paylaşımı davranışının çalışan yaratıcılığını pozitif yönde etkilediğidir. Bu bulgu da He vd. (2013), Liao ve Chen (2018), İslam vd. (2021), Suwanti'nin (2019) çalışma bulguları ile desteklenmektedir. Bilgi paylaşımı davranışının, etik liderlik ve çalışan yaratıcılığı arasındaki ilişkiye aracılık ettiği bulgusu Ma vd. (2013), Lei, Ha ve Le (2019) çalışmalarıyla örtüşmektedir. Çalışmamızın son bulgusu, bilgi paylaşımı davranışı ile çalışan yaratıcılığı arasındaki ilişkide yaratıcı özyeterliliğin düzenleyici bir rol oynadığıdır. Sonuç olarak, çalışmamız bilgi paylaşımı ve çalışan yaratıcılığı arasında düzenleyici bir ilişki olduğuna dair kanıt sunmuş, dolayısıyla etik liderlik üzerine akademik çalışmalara katkıda bulunmayı hedeflemiştir. Bulgularımızın örgüt yöneticileri için önemli etkileri vardır. Araştırmamız aynı zamanda fiili uygulamalar için birkaç faydalı öneri de sunmuştur. Öncelikle, etik liderlik çalışanların yaratıcı çıktılarını belirlemede en önemli kriterlerden biri olduğundan, etik liderler arzu edilen özellikler için bir rol model olarak hizmet etmeli ve çalışanların yaratıcılığını teşvik etmelidir (Elqassaby, 2018; Li, 2013; Ma ve Cheng, 2013). Bu nedenle, etik lider takipçileri için bir rol modeli sağlamalı ve takipçilerinin model aldıkları davranışları tanımlamalarını, özümsemelerini ve benimsemelerini sağlamalıdır. İşletmelerin ve diğer kuruluşların, yönetici işe alma veya terfi kararları verirken bir adayın ahlaki kimliğini göz önünde bulundurmaları önemlidir. Etik liderliği geliştiren programların uygulanmasının yanı sıra, yöneticilerin performans değerlendirmesinde de etik kriterlere yer verilmelidir (Zhou, Jin and Ma, 2015). Araştırmamızda ortaya çıkan bir diğer bulgu ise Etik liderliğin bilgi paylaşımı üzerinde hem doğrudan hem de dolaylı olarak olumlu etkileri olduğudur. Bu durum, yöneticilerin, çalışanları için etik rol modelleri olarak başarılı bir şekilde hizmet edebilmeleri ve takipçileri için ahlaki bir çalışma ortamı sağlayabilmeleri halinde, takipçilerinin bilgi paylaşma davranışlarını etkili bir şekilde teşvik edebileceklerini göstermektedir. Örnekleminizde 280 farklı üst ve ast eşleşmesi olması araştırmamızın sınırlılıklarından biridir. Veriler nicel analiz için yeterli olsa da daha büyük veri setleri daha belirgin etkilerle daha net eğilimler sağlayabilir. Veriler kısa bir süre içinde toplanması değişkenlerin birbirleriyle olan etkileşimlerinin dinamik sürecini betimlemede yetersizliğe sebep olabilecektir. Geleceğin araştırmacılarının boylamsal araştırmalar yürütmesi şiddetle tavsiye edilmektedir. Gelecekteki çalışmalarda, etik liderlik ve çalışan yaratıcılığı arasındaki ilişkiyi daha derinlemesine analiz etmek için modele duygusal bağlılık ve işe tutkunluk değişkenlerinin eklenmesi önerilmektedir. Nitel analiz yöntemleriyle veri toplanmasının literatüre yeni bilgilerle katkıda bulunacağı öngörülmektedir.