

# Organizational Sustainability During Economic Downturn: The LEAD Model Approach to Reducing Citizenship Fatigue

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## Abstract

Leadership driven organization citizenship behavior is a management and sustainability practice that requires employees to do “more with less.” This leadership style is more evident during times of economic downturns precipitated by events such as COVID-19. Leadership-driven OCB initiatives can pressure employees to perform thereby creating stress, burnout, and citizenship fatigue. Consequently, citizenship fatigue has a negative relationship with organizational citizenship behavior. Rather than employees yielding to leadership-driven OCB pressure, this research seeks to investigate ethical leadership decision-making that alleviates stress and burnout that leads to citizenship fatigue outcomes. This research applies the Leader Ethics and Decision-making model to investigate the potential to resist citizenship fatigue within the five dimensions of organizational citizenship. The study consisted of 285 full-time employees in the United States. The findings concluded that LEAD influences the five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. Additionally, citizenship fatigue did not influence LEAD’s ability to influence OCB. Leaders, managers, supervisors, and decision-makers can apply the LEAD model as an ethical leadership strategy that reduces burnout and pressure and positively influences organizational citizenship behavior. Leaders, managers, and supervisors can adopt the LEAD model for sustainability management during economic downturn to foster a resilient, high-functioning, culturally diverse, and sustainable workforce. Therefore, integrating ethical leadership into management and sustainability practices assist in times of economic downturn and ensure long-term organizational viability.

**Keywords:** organizational citizenship behavior, ethical leadership, citizenship fatigue, knowledge-hiding

## 1. Introduction

### *1.1 Leadership Driven Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Employee Citizenship Fatigue*

Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) is the voluntary and self-initiated action that transcends the regular duties and responsibilities of an employee. However, leaders tend to pressure employees to “do more with less” during periods of economic downturns such as COVID-19. This directive is known as leadership-driven OCB. Leadership driven OCB can create additional stress and pressure on employees as they attempt to maintain it (Liu et al., 2021; Fu et al., 2022). Consequently, leadership-driven OCB may explain why 80% of US employees report feeling stress and 52% experience burnout (American Institute of Stress, 2022).

Employees in stressful work and leadership environments are more likely to experience burnout. Burnout influences a destructive behavior known as knowledge-hiding (Meynhardt et al., 2020). The displaced aggression theory (DAT) explains that knowledge-hiding is a result of mistrust in leadership decision-making (Wang et al., 2019). However, knowledge-hiding extends further than DAT into the realm of citizenship fatigue. The expansion into citizenship fatigue suggests that hiding information may be a coping mechanism in response to leadership driven OCB that encourages employees to do “more with less.” The link between mistrust in leadership decision-making, OCB, and citizenship fatigue has profound implications on organizational sustainability strategies.

Employees who experience citizenship fatigue are likely to conceal vital knowledge from each other. DAT explains that employees will rationalize hiding knowledge by concealing valuable information that can hinder goal achievement. These actions indicate that knowledge-hiding may be a symptom of citizenship fatigue as leadership driven OCB can promote employee burnout. Consequently, leadership management techniques that mandate “do more with less” can fatigue employees over time.

OCB is a voluntary commitment by employees to meet the mission and exceed mission goals. Additionally, employees who exhibit OCB will go above and beyond their normal duties and responsibilities without seeking a reward or benefit. Leaders, managers, and supervisors may find OCB attributes necessary during times of economic downturn for sustainability, reducing costs, and improving efficiency. The organizational leadership and management community widely accepts Collette et al. (2005) 3-item scale to account for OCB (Balbaloa et al., 2019). However, research suggests that it is impossible to account for the time and energy employees expend to maintain OCB (King et al., 2021; Sferrazza, 2021). This drawback requires a unique approach to balance employee genuine commitment (self-initiated) and external pressures (leadership-driven OCB). Therefore, this study will investigate Williamson and Anderson's (1991) five dimensions of OCB represented as OCB-Organization (OCBO) and OCB-Individual (OCBI).

Employees who exhibit the five dimensions of OCB exhibit behaviors that surpass individual contributions (OCBI) and fortify the fabric of organizational culture (OCBO). Comparatively, employees with OCBO and OCBI attributes perform unselfish acts such as helping co-workers with additional tasks, caring about team well-being, and sharing vital information (Williamson & Anderson, 1991). Sharing vital information is similar to knowledge sharing suggesting that employees who willingly participate in OCB will less likely hide knowledge from co-workers. Knowledge sharing is a form of organizational commitment which is a self-motivated behavior motivated by ethical leadership practices.

This research will apply the Foundational Leadership Theory (FLT). FLT suggests that ethical leadership is an internal and external examination of decisions and actions using integrity, assurance, and pragmatism (Fuller, 2021). FLT builds on the social exchange and the leader-member exchange (LMX) theories to account for employee perception of leadership decision-making. The Leadership Ethics and Decision-Making (LEAD) model operationalizes FLT. Previous studies confirm that LEAD positively influences organizational identity (Fuller, 2022b) and decreases knowledge-hiding (Fuller, 2021). These previous findings suggest that if LEAD has a positive influence on the five dimensions that make up OCB, then citizenship fatigue is less likely to degrade that relationship.

Research Questions:

RQ1: What is the relationship between LEAD and the five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior that measure individual and organizational attributes?

RQ2: What is the moderating effect of citizenship fatigue on LEAD and the five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior that measure individual and organizational attributes?

### *1.2 Foundational Leadership Theory and Organizational Citizenship Behavior*

Previous research suggests that western societies use social norms to guide moral and ethical behavior (Reimer et al., 2014). The ethical position theory (EPT; Forsyth, 1992) reveals that morals are internal and outward expressions that represent a person's ethical positioning. EPT consists of idealism and relativism, whereby idealism accounts for the welfare of others, and relativism measures the degree to which a leader complies with those moral principles and values. FLT advances EPT using social norm influence on ethics. FLT suggests that employee perception of ethical leadership is based on the leader's ability to conduct an inward and outward examination of that decision-making action (Fuller, 2021). Therefore, FLT operationalizes idealism and relativism using the stepwise method of the LEAD model.

The LEAD model consists of the inward and outward examination of morals and ethics using integrity, assurance, and pragmatism (Fuller, 2021). McGregor (1960) confirms that integrity is the foundation of societal and organizational justice and promotes fairness in decision-making (Brown & Trevino, 2005; Jordan et al., 2017). Decision-making fairness may motivate employees to apply OCB rather than leadership mandating or directing it. The findings from Fuller's (2021) research conclude that integrity enhances follower perception of a leader's morals and ethics. Previous research reveals that interpersonal trust between leaders and followers is a social relationship. The LEAD model builds on social exchange relationships and includes attributes such as integrity, which determines an employee's perception of fairness and trust in leadership decision-making.

Integrity creates relational trust within the social exchange relationship which directly influences employee perception of leadership intentions and behavior (Wong & Cummings, 2009). The LEAD model describes integrity as the foundation of ethical leadership. LEAD-Integrity examines leadership decision-making to reduce biases, personal favors, and/or unsupported opinions that may lead to unethical decision-making behaviors and actions (Fuller, 2022b). Although employees may perceive leadership integrity as fair, sustainability actions (do more with less) may still produce unwanted stress and anxiety for employees.

Leadership decision-making should reassure employees to reduce stress and anxiety. Low stress and anxiety are essential to increasing workplace productivity (Shahid et al., 2016). Assurance is a quality leadership attribute that motivates performance and positively influences employee commitment. Because assurance motivates and creates commitment in employees, it is more likely to help encourage the five dimensions of OCB, instead of mandating it. The LEAD model's second step is assurance. Leaders can use LEAD-Assurance to discern how well a decision promotes job security in turn reducing anxiety and stress (Fuller, 2022b). Employees perceive LEAD-Assurance influences employee engagement which is a self-motivating behavior found within the five dimensions of OCB. LEAD-Assurance is an external evaluation that promotes employee commitment. Nonetheless, organizational policies or procedures may implement a one size fits all sustainability approach during times of economic downturn. The social exchange theory (SET) provides further insight into practical leadership decision-making.

SET determines that there is no "one size fits all" approach to leadership decision-making. Additionally, SET suggests that employees perceive practical leadership decisions as ethical. Pragmatism is the third step of the LEAD model. LEAD suggests that pragmatism is a necessity to advance employee perception of leadership ethics. Pragmatism is a pragmatic form of leadership, perceived as ethical by employees, and influences organization commitment. Because organizational commitment is self-motivating, it is less likely to create burnout or stress on employees. LEAD-pragmatism allows leaders to measure what is practical which enhances sense-making (Mumford et al., 2017; Crayne & Medeiros, 2021) and improves employee performance (Fuller, 2022a). Therefore, employees are likely to perceive pragmatism as making sense and promote OCB's five dimensions. Leaders, managers, and supervisors who apply the three steps of the LEAD model are more likely to reduce employee stress during sustainability efforts before times of economic downturn.

LEAD is a stepwise ethical decision-making model that includes integrity, assurance, and pragmatism. Leaders who follow the model reduce destructive and deception behaviors such as knowledge hiding (Fuller, 2021) and reduces deviant behavior in the workplace associated with DAT (Fuller, 2022b). Employees who displaced aggression will more likely use knowledge-hiding tactics based on three conditions. First, employees will hide knowledge due to leadership mistreatment. Second, because leadership possesses hiring, firing, and promotion authority, employees will direct feelings of mistreatment toward each other by hiding knowledge. Third, employees hide knowledge by playing dumb, evasive hiding, or rationalized hiding (Connelly et al., 2012). The focus of this research is on rationalized hiding a potential symptom of citizenship fatigue.

Connelly and Zweig (2015) describe withholding knowledge as rationalized hiding. Rationalized hiding suggests that employees blame each other for withholding information. Because organizational leaders cannot account for the time and resources employees invest in maintaining OCB (King et al., 2021; Sferrazzo, 2021), it is plausible that knowledge hiding is an indicator of citizenship fatigue. Additionally, employees perceive rationalized hiding as non-deceptive (Connelly & Zweig, 2015), adding another layer of complexity. Regardless, hiding knowledge involves misinformation or omitting essential knowledge from their peers (Serenko & Bontis, 2016). These actions carry significant weight as vital knowledge is used to identify best practices. Consequently, this phenomenon can erode organizational effectiveness and cast employee doubt, which is a stressor that may degrade OCB.

OCB exists in the realm of organizational psychology. OCB is defined as discretionary conduct employees exhibit that goes above and beyond the purview of a reward or recognition system (Organ, 1997). Dalal (2005) advanced this research, recognizing a dichotomy between OCB and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). While OCB refers to behaviors that can benefit the organization, CWB refers to actions detrimental to organizational well-being. Organ (1997) posits five categories for OCB (see Table 1)

Table 1. Organizational citizenship behavior categories

Category	Definitions
Conscientiousness	Employee actions contribute to the organization's overall well-being and lack focus on specific individuals. Instances of conscientiousness include employees adhering to the established rules and regulations of the organization or refraining from utilizing all allocated vacation or sick days (Organ, 1997).
Sportsmanship	An employee's willingness to handle challenging situations without expressing discontent represents a unique aspect of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). For instance, employees who demonstrate good sportsmanship refrain from gossiping and avoid complaints about office size (Organ, 1997).
Courtesy	Employees who mitigate organizational issues through effective communication and thoughtful consideration. Courtesy behaviors aim to preemptively address potential challenges and avoid unexpected difficulties for other team members (Organ, 1997).
Civic Virtue	Employees who engage in the vitality and cultural aspects of the organization. Civic virtue, for instance, involves attending voluntary company events like meetings or picnics and offering insights on significant organizational matters, which reflects a commitment to the collective well-being of the organization (Organ, 1997).
Helping Behavior	Employees whose actions encompass altruism, peacekeeping, and encouragement. Helping behavior involves activities such as volunteering to guide a new employee, resolving conflicts among colleagues, and recognizing the achievements of fellow employees (Organ, 1997).

Note. Description: Organizational Citizenship Behavior Categories by Organ (1997).

William and Anderson (1991) advance these five categories by establishing the two paradigms, which are OCBI and OCBO. Employees with OCBI help colleagues with extra tasks, listen to team member problems, and assist others in meeting organizational goals (Williamson & Anderson, 1991). Comparatively, employees with OCBO display altruism, courtesy, peacekeeping, and cheerleading. OCBI relates to employee performance appraisals and rewards, similar to OCB definitions by Organ (1997). Employees typically engage in OCB behaviors to impress leaders and managers (Bowler & Brass, 2006). Employees who intend to impress leadership exhibit helping behaviors such as altruism.

Employees who seek to impress managers and leadership may initially thrive on leadership-driven OCB. However, over time, employees can feel mistreated by leadership and, in turn, hide knowledge from co-workers. Knowledge-hiding is a form of retaliation against leadership (Burmeister, 2019; Hernaus, 2019; Sulistiawan et al., 2022). This form of retaliation is a consequence due to employees feeling leaders undervalue or mistreat their commitment to the organization. Connelly et al. (2012) describe rationalized hiding as the knowledge holder blaming others as the reason for withholding relevant information. Employees are likely to deem rationalized hiding as non-deceptive which is rooted in the social exchange theory (SET). Because the LEAD model accounts for SET and LMX leadership environments, LEAD is more likely to have a leadership style to reduce citizenship fatigue.

Employees are more likely to displace aggression on coworkers in times of poor leadership. However, integrity can mediate employee commitment (Ming et al., 2020) and create a meaningful method for employees to discern what is appropriate (Brown et al., 2005). The LEAD model establishes integrity as the foundation for ethical leadership. It is likely that LEAD is an ethical model that employees will distinguish as appropriate and influence OCB. William and Anderson (1991) apply a two-factor conceptualization using the five behavior dimensions. For example, employees with OCBI exhibit altruism and courtesy. Comparatively, employees with OCBO displays conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. However, leaders who mandate employees operate within these five dimensions are likely to influence fatigue.

This investigation suggests that the LEAD model will influence employees to operate within the five dimensions of OCB without leadership mandates regardless of economic downturns. LEAD builds on the social exchange theory (SET), which proposes that people perceive leadership as an exchange and can significantly persuade employee behaviors and actions.

H10: Leadership Ethics and Decision-making has no influence on the five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior measure by OCBI and OCBO.

H1a: Leadership Ethics and Decision-making positively influence the five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior measure by OCBI and OCBO.

LEAD integrity, assurance, and pragmatism should positively influence motivating behaviors within the five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. However, OCB can emotionally drain employees leading to citizenship fatigue (Weigelt et al., 2022).

### 1.3 Citizenship Fatigue on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Citizenship fatigue is the emotional or affective state of frustration (Bolino et al., 2015). The “do more with less” to remain sustainable may contribute to this affective state. As a result, citizenship fatigue is associated with emotional stability rather than agreeableness (Chiaburu et al., 2011). Less agreeable employees may exhibit destructive attributes such as knowledge-hiding, which confirms that emotional stability affects citizenship fatigue (Liu & Yu, 2018). Liu and Yu (2018) advanced the conservation using the resources theory by Hobfoll (2002) and revealed that exhaustion occurs as time investment is less than resource investment (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). This suggests that “do more with less” may negatively impact the time and resource investment balance. Nonetheless, emotionally stable employees can regulate positive and negative emotions (Caprara et al., 2013), positively associated with citizenship fatigue (Liu & Yu, 2018), and create barriers to coping with job demands (Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Thus, as leaders demand OCB in times of economic downturn, employees under perceived leadership pressure may rationalize hiding knowledge from each other.

Citizenship fatigue contributes to pressures that impact OCB attributes. The feeling of pressure is resource depletion, which explains the negative association between OCB and citizenship pressure (Netchaeva et al., 2023). Additionally, citizenship pressure increases fatigue, translating into social activities drawing from the Model of Human Energy (Quinn et al., 2012). The Model of Human Energy suggests that employees will evaluate the number of resources to meet current or future demands in the workplace. This process suggests that leadership pressures that influence citizenship fatigue are a form of burnout (Bolino et al., 2015; Weigelt et al., 2021). Burnout may result from leadership-driven OCB, which focuses more on the organizational outcomes than individual self-motivated behaviors.

OCBO attributes benefit the organization through conscientiousness, civic virtue, and sportsmanship. OCBI describes employee behaviors that benefit the entire organization, such as creating a positive organizational culture by sharing essential information (Williams & Anderson, 1991). Information sharing is essential in fostering diverse and inclusive work environments. Additionally, employees with OCBO have concerns for the entire organization and advances SET. SET suggests that employees feel obligated to give back to an organization that invests in them. SET reveals that employees believe actions that positively influence the organization improve co-workers (Halbesleben et al., 2010). However, during times of economic downturn “do more with less” is less voluntary and can lead to citizenship fatigue degrading OCBO and OCBI.

OCBO and OCBI employees are not seeking to impress leadership or management by exhibiting these behaviors. Nonetheless, employees feel required to participate in leadership-driven OCB (MacKenzie et al., 1991), regardless of the significant investment to maintain it (Zhang et al., 2020). Therefore, it is plausible that citizenship fatigue will more likely have a negative impact on the five dimensions of OCB.

Zhang (2019) validated these five behavior factors and the interconnectedness between OCB-I and OCB-O. Individual and organizational OCB attributes are considered one variable based on interconnectedness. Also, Dalal (2005) identified a negative relationship between OCB and CWB. If CWB is a counterproductive work behavior and knowledge hiding is counterproductive, then hiding knowledge is a symptom of citizenship fatigue.

The LEAD model has a positive influence on OCB 3-item measurement by Linden et al. (2005), validated by Babalola et al. (2019) with a Cronbach’s alpha score of .80. Additionally, the LEAD model reduces knowledge-hiding in organizations (Fuller, 2021). However, the moderating effect of citizenship fatigue on OCB (individual/organization) is unknown. I. Thus, the research will test the following hypotheses.

H20: Citizenship fatigue will have no moderating effect on LEAD and employees who possess individual and organizational OCB attributes.

H2a: Citizenship fatigue will moderate the effect of LEAD and employees who possess individual and organizational OCB attributes.

Figure 1 contains the LEAD, OCB, Citizenship Fatigue conceptual model.

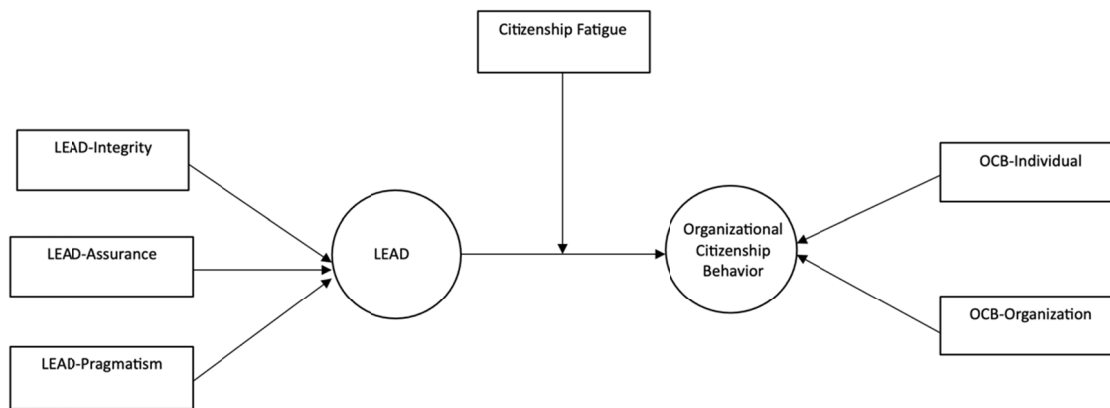


Figure 1. Conceptual Moderation Model

Citizenship Fatigue on Leadership Ethics and Decision-making and Organizational Citizenship Behavior Conceptual Model.

## 2. Method

This study was a cross-sectional, correlational study to measure the LEAD model, which consists of integrity, assurance, and pragmatism and the ability to moderate the potentially negative association between knowledge-hiding and organizational citizenship behavior as a symptom of citizenship fatigue. The research will collect responses from full-time employees from across the United States. The study will not collect responses from part-time, seasonal, or remote employees. These employee categories may introduce errors in the analysis due to leadership-to-employee communication, trust, and motivation, which are essential in establishing organizational citizenship behavior. However, this does not suggest that part-time or remote employees must possess organizational citizenship behavior. Instead, additional studies should focus on these areas to establish a more streamlined approach to present findings.

Currently, the US Bureau of Labor and Statistics calculated that approximately 134 million full-time employees are between the ages of 18-to-> 65. Cochran's (1977) sample size formula was used based on a 95% confidence interval (CI) and a 6% margin of error. The analysis suggested that the research required > 269 participants. Therefore, 290 participants were contacted via SurveyMonkey to account for missing, outlier, and incomplete data. The research employed a systematic approach to measure various constructs. Initially, the LEAD model, as identified by Fuller (2021), was utilized, consisting of a 15-item measurement on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Participants were asked to express their level of agreement with statements such as "I trust leadership decisions that promote job security."

Subsequently, I-OCB and O-OCB were assessed using a 7-item scale each for 14 items, developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). The Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), gauged participants' agreement with statements like "I help co-workers who have been absent" for OCB-I and "I give advance notice when unable to come to work" for OCB-O. OCB-I and O-OCB were transformed and represented as OCB which are the five traits of OCB. OCB five dimensions are presented using a 14-item scale. In the third phase, Citizenship fatigue was assessed using a 7-item scale by Bolino et al. (2015). The Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), measured participants' responses to statements such as "I feel worn out because I go beyond the call of duty for my organization."

The study employed Microsoft Excel and IBM Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) for data analysis and hypothesis testing. The initial step in the methodology involved addressing missing and outlier data. The reliability of measurement scales for empathetic leadership, direction-giving/uncertainty reduction, meaning-making, and organizational citizenship behavior was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

In the subsequent phase, the items were appropriately transformed into variables. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between empathetic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. A simple linear regression was applied to ascertain the potential predictability of the LEAD model on OCB-I and OCB-O. To further explore the relationships, regression analysis was employed to investigate the

strength between citizenship fatigue and the five dimensions of OCB. Additionally, a moderation test using the LEAD 15-item scale was introduced into the model. This moderation analysis aimed to determine if citizenship fatigue affects the positive relationship between LEAD and TOCB.

### 3. Results

The analysis suggested that the research required > 269 participants. Consent to participate was sent to 290 participants via SurveyMonkey, and 285 agreed to contribute to the study. Therefore, 285 responses accounted for missing, outlier, and incomplete data. An analysis was conducted, and there were no missing or outlier data FLI, FLA, FLP, CF, OCB-I, and OCB-O using the values range of +/- 3.29 standard deviations from the mean (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). The most frequently observed category of Gender was Female (n = 149, 52.28%). The most frequently observed category of Age was 30–44 (n = 123, 43.16%). The most frequently observed category of Household Annual Income was \$25K–\$49999 (n = 65, 22.81%). Frequencies and percentages are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency table for variables

Variable	n	%
Gender		
Female	149	52.28
Male	136	47.72
Age		
> 60	28	9.82
45–60	103	36.14
30–44	123	43.16
18–29	31	10.88
Annual Household Income		
no_answer	13	4.56
\$25K–\$49999	65	22.81
\$50K–\$74999	53	18.60
\$100K–124999	39	13.68
\$75K–\$99999	34	11.93
\$200K >	9	3.16
\$175K–\$199999	8	2.81
\$125K–\$149999	23	8.07
\$0–\$9999	11	3.86
\$150K–\$174999	16	5.61
\$10K–\$24999	14	4.91
Missing	0	0.00

Note. Due to rounding errors, percentages may not equal 100%.

A Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated for LEAD-Integrity, LEAD-Assurance, LEAD Pragmatism, Citizenship Fatigue, OCBI, and OCBO. The Cronbach coefficient was evaluated using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2018) where > .9 = excellent, > .8 = good, > .7 = acceptable, < .6 = questionable, < .5 = poor, and > .5 = unacceptable. All items met at > .7 indicating acceptable reliability. Table 3 presents the results of the reliability analysis.

Table 3. Reliability table for LEAD-Integrity, LEAD-Assurance, LEAD-Pragmatism, citizenship fatigue, OCB-Individual, and OCB-Organization

Scale	No. of Items	$\alpha$	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
LEAD-Integrity	5	.91	.90	.92
LEAD-Assurance	5	.90	.88	.91
LEAD-Pragmatism	5	.93	.91	.94
Citizenship Fatigue	7	.94	.93	.95
OCB-Individual	7	.92	.91	.93
OCB-Organization	7	.75	.71	.79

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  were calculated using a 95.00% confidence interval.

The researcher conducted a Pearson Correlation to better explain LEAD's influence on O-OCB and I-OCB separately. LEAD was separated into LEAD-Integrity, LEAD-Assurance, and LEAD-Pragmatism. Additionally, OCB was separated into OCB-I and OCB-O. The data met the assumptions for normality, linearity, and a Holm correction to adjust for multiple comparisons using the alpha value of .05. LEAD-Integrity, LEAD-Assurance, and LEAD-Pragmatism had significant relationships with both OCB-I and OCB-O. Table 4 presents the results of these correlations.

Table 4. Pearson correlation results among LEAD-Integrity, LEAD-Assurance, and LEAD-Pragmatism, OCB-I, and OCB-O

Combination	<i>r</i>	95.00% CI	<i>n</i>	<i>p</i>
LEAD-Integrity – OCB-I	.65	[.57, .71]	285	< .001
LEAD-Integrity – OCB-O	.54	[.45, .62]	285	< .001
LEAD-Assurance – OCB-I	.73	[.67, .78]	285	< .001
LEAD-Assurance – OCB-O	.46	[.37, .55]	285	< .001
LEAD-Pragmatism – OCB-I	.74	[.68, .79]	285	< .001
LEAD-Pragmatism – OCB-O	.52	[.43, .60]	285	< .001

Note. P-values were adjusted using the Holm correction.

The researcher conducted an additional Pearson correlation to determine the LEAD-Integrity, Assurance, and Pragmatism on OCB five dimensions. The assumptions for Pearson correlation were met, and results conclude that LEAD-Integrity, Assurance, and Pragmatism separately had a significant positive relationship at  $> .72$ , indicating a large effect size at  $< .001$ , 95% CI. Table 5 presents the results of the correlations.

Table 5. Pearson correlation results among LEAD-Integrity, LEAD-Assurance, and LEAD-Pragmatism, and Total OCB

Combination	<i>r</i>	95.00% CI	<i>n</i>	<i>p</i>
LEAD-Integrity - OCB	.72	[.66, .77]	285	< .001
LEAD-Assurance - OCB	.73	[.67, .78]	285	< .001
LEAD-Pragmatism - OCB	.77	[.71, .81]	285	< .001

Note. P-values were adjusted using the Holm correction.

Pearson correlation was conducted to investigate if there is a positive relationship between the three LEAD ethical constructs. However, the goal is to determine LEAD's ability to influence the five dimensions of OCB measured by OCBI and OCB-O. OCBI and OCB-O was transformed using the "TRANSFORM > COMPUTE VARIABLE" function in SPSS. A Cronbach's alpha calculated for LEAD (15-items) and the five dimensions of OCB (14-items) using guidelines by George and Mallery (2018). The items for each variable measure at  $> .8$  indicating good reliability. Table 6 represents the reliability analysis.

Table 6. Reliability Table for LEAD and TOCB

Scale	No. of Items	$\alpha$	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
LEAD	15	.96	.96	.97
OCB	14	.88	.87	.90

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's  $\alpha$  were calculated using a 95.00% confidence interval.

A correlation analysis was conducted on LEAD and the five dimensions of OCB. The result of the correlation was examined based on an alpha value of .05. A significant positive correlation was observed between LEAD and OCB, with a correlation of .78, indicating a large effect size ( $p < .001$ , 95.00% CI = [.74, .83]). This suggests that as LEAD increases, the five dimensions of OCB tend to increase.

A regression was conducted to determine whether LEAD significantly predicted OCB. The normality



assumption was assessed by plotting the quantiles of the model residuals against the quantiles of a Chi-square distribution, also called a Q-Q scatterplot (DeCarlo, 1997). The assumption of normality was met, and the quantiles of the residuals did not strongly deviate from the theoretical quantiles. Homoscedasticity was evaluated by plotting the residuals against the predicted values (Bates et al., 2014; Field, 2017; Osborne & Walters, 2002), and points appeared randomly distributed with a mean of zero and no apparent curvature.

A linear regression analysis was conducted to assess whether LEAD significantly predicted OCB. The normality assumption was assessed by plotting the quantiles of the model residuals against the quantiles of a Chi-square distribution, also called a Q-Q scatterplot. The assumption of normality was met. The assumption of homoscedasticity was met, and there was no apparent curvature. The results of the linear regression model were significant,  $F(1,283) = 453.09$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .62$ , indicating that approximately 61.55% of the variance in OCB is explainable by LEAD. LEAD significantly predicted OCB,  $B = 0.60$ ,  $t(283) = 21.29$ ,  $p < .001$ . This indicates that, on average, a one-unit increase of LEAD will increase the value of OCB by 0.60 units.

Because there was a significant positive regression analysis, moderation will be conducted to test H3 and determine if Citizenship fatigue moderates LEAD and OCB. The overall moderation model was significant,  $R^2 = 0.64$ ,  $F(3, 281) = 169.63$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating that the predictors accounted for 64.43% of the variance in OCB. Since the overall model was significant, moderation was assessed by examining the interaction between LEAD and CF. A significant interaction is considered evidence of a moderating effect when the overall model is significant (Netemeyer et al., 2001).

The interaction between LEAD and CF was not significant,  $B = -0.002$ ,  $t(281) = -0.83$ ,  $p = .408$ , indicating a lack of evidence that CF moderates the relationship between LEAD and OCB. The main effect for LEAD was significant,  $B = 0.62$ ,  $t(281) = 17.40$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating that a one-unit increase in LEAD will result in a 0.62 change in OCB on average when CF has a value of 0.

The main effect for CF was significant,  $B = -0.19$ ,  $t(281) = -4.45$ ,  $p < .001$ , indicating that a one-unit increase in CF will result in a -0.19 change in OCB on average when LEAD has a value of 0. The result of this study confirms that citizenship fatigue does not moderate the positive influence of LEAD on the five dimensions of OCB (see Figure 2).

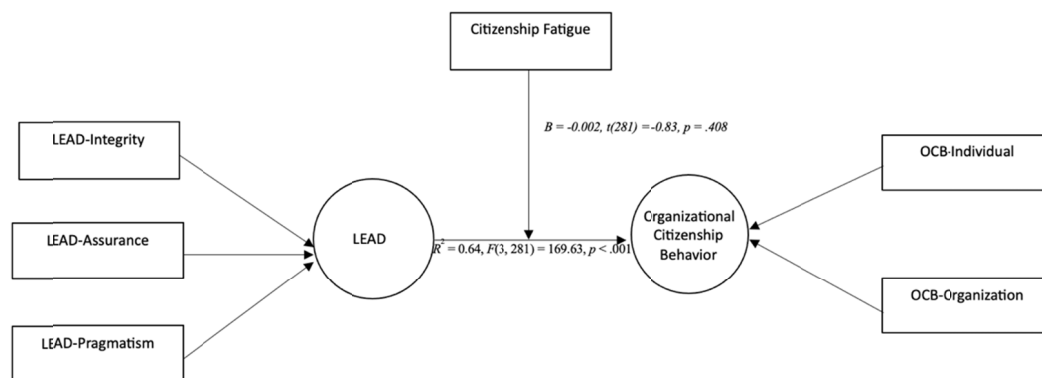


Figure 2. Final Regression Moderation Model

Final Citizenship Fatigue on Leadership Ethics and Decision-making and Organizational Citizenship Behavior Model.

#### 4. Discussion

Leadership-driven OCB is a “do more with less” concept typically instituted during times of economic downturn. Employees feel pressured to maintain this type of OCB which fatigues them over time (Netchaeva et al., 2023). These findings are consistent with previous research that pressure associated with citizenship fatigue is a form of burnout (Bolino et al., 2015; Weigelt et al., 2021). Additionally, burnout is explaining why employees hide knowledge from co-workers (Meynhardt et al., 2020). The purpose of this research was to introduce LEAD and

how applying this decision-making model can motivate OCB behaviors rather than having leadership mandate it. The theoretical and practical implications presented in the following sections will provide evidence to support LEAD's overall relationship with the five dimensions of OCB (I-OCB and O-OCB) and if citizenship fatigue will impact that relationship.

#### *4.1 Theoretical Implications*

The investigation into the dynamics of leadership decision-making and its impact on employee behavior has revealed theoretical implications rooted in various frameworks. This exploration not only advances Social Identity Theory (SIT) but also delves into Social Exchange Theory (SET), Displaced Aggression Theory (DAT), and Foundational Leadership Theory (FLT). These theoretical implications lay the foundation for practical insights that can guide organizational practices and enhance leadership effectiveness within the OCB realm.

The first theoretical implication advances SIT, emphasizing the overall impact of leadership decision-making on employee behavior. Research suggests that leadership decision-making plays a pivotal role in shaping employee behavior, as posited by SIT (Li, 2013). Confirming Li's findings, the positive correlation between leadership (LEAD) and OCB is statistically significant ( $p < .001$ , 95.00% CI = [.74, .83]). This statistical analysis provides robust support for this relationship, indicating a statistically significant correlation ( $p < .001$ ) with a 95.00% confidence interval ranging from .74 to .83. The magnitude of this correlation is noteworthy, suggesting that LEAD contributes to a substantial 78% increase in OCB. The significant impact of leadership decision-making on organizational citizenship behavior advances insights into SIT. It warrants a deeper exploration into SET to illuminate the undercurrents of interpersonal relationships and knowledge sharing within the workplace.

The second theoretical implication extends SET by observing the intricate relationship between leadership and management decision-making within an organizational context. Building upon SET, the research emphasizes the nuanced nature of leadership decision-making. It reveals that pragmatism in decision-making positively correlates with the five dimensions of OCB ( $p < .001$ , 95.00% CI = [.71, .81]). The research underscores the importance of pragmatism in decision-making, revealing a positive correlation with the five dimensions of OCB. This correlation, coupled with the LEAD model's emphasis on pragmatism, provides empirical support for SET's assertion that leadership decisions are not universally applicable, and that pragmatism enhances self-motivating behaviors, such as commitment (Mumford et al., 2017). This statistical analysis supports the association between pragmatism and the five dimensions of OCB and aligns with SET's assertion that leadership and management decisions are more likely context dependent. The LEAD model's emphasis on pragmatism serves as empirical evidence, emphasizing that pragmatic decision-making enhances self-motivating behaviors, including commitment, which is an essential attribute of OCB (Mumford et al., 2017). Due to the precise CI and robust correlation, it is beneficial for leaders and managers to understand the impact of LEAD from a DAT perspective and the impact of citizenship fatigue that influences knowledge hiding.

The third theoretical implication provides insights into DAT and offers valuable insights into the concealment of knowledge amongst employees. Employees who conceal knowledge from team members are a phenomenon due to an increase in stress and anxiety influenced by leadership and management decision-making (Wang et al., 2019). This research findings aligns with Wang et al.'s (2019) conclusion, highlighting that effective leadership mitigates knowledge-hiding behaviors associated with DAT. Additionally, the findings reveal that employee perception of ethical leadership and management decision-making can alleviate deceptive behaviors such as knowledge-hiding in organizational settings. Leaders, managers, and supervisors who apply LEAD can reduce citizenship fatigue and knowledge-hiding due to the non-significant interaction between LEAD and citizenship fatigue (CF) on the five dimensions of OCB. Therefore, LEAD indicates that ethical leadership decision-making distinctly and positively influences the five dimensions of OCB and is resistant to CF's moderation of that relationship. The non-significant interaction between LEAD and CF emphasizes the importance of applying the LEAD framework during times of economic crises to reduce OCB fatigue.

Furthermore, LEAD's non-significant interaction on CF citizenship fatigue (CF) suggests that leadership is crucial in mitigating citizenship fatigue among employees. First, LEAD-Integrity implies ethical conduct, LEAD-Assurance instills employee confidence in leaders and managers, and LEAD-Pragmatism ensures practicality in decision-making. These three qualities collectively contribute to a positive work environment, reducing the likelihood of citizenship fatigue. Therefore, ethical decision-makers promote a moral climate, which suggests broader implications of decision-making on organizational ethics, further enhancing our understanding of effective leadership practices in times of economic downturn in the United States.

The fourth theoretical implication is exploring FLT, which emphasizes the significance of ethical decision-making to reduce citizenship fatigue during leadership-driven OCB initiatives that promote "do more

with less.” The study confirms that LEAD is a robust measure of ethical leadership, with a high Cronbach’s alpha of .96 and a substantial variance in OCB (61.55%). The high variance percentage suggests that the ethical dimensions of LEAD are likely to promote the five dimensions of OCB and support the premise that integrity, assurance, and pragmatism are integral to ethical leadership in times of economic crises. Additionally, the ethical dimensions captured by LEAD are suitable decision-making strategies that reduces the likelihood of citizenship fatigue associated with employees maintaining OCB overtime.

In practical terms, organizations should consider these theoretical insights when developing leadership training programs and interventions. Addressing the nuanced aspects of decision-making, promoting ethical considerations, and mitigating stress-inducing factors can contribute to a more positive organizational culture and foster employee commitment and citizenship behaviors. Furthermore, applying a comprehensive OCB measurement, as suggested by William and Anderson (1991), may provide a more accurate representation of self-motivated behaviors that benefit both individuals and the organization. As organizations navigate the complexities of leadership decision-making, these theoretical implications offer valuable guidance for promoting a conducive work environment.

#### *4.2 Practical Implications*

Previous investigations unequivocally affirm the emergence of an economic downturn precipitated by events like the COVID-19 pandemic. Within such challenging economic climates, leadership inevitably pressures employees to accomplish more with fewer resources. This heightened pressure manifests as a predominant source of adversity, with 80% of US employees experiencing stress and 52% reporting burnout in the workplace, as documented by the American Institute of Stress in 2022. Supporting evidence from Liu et al. (2021) and Fu et al. (2022) establishes that leadership-driven OCB imposes performance pressure on employees, significantly contributing to workplace stress. Paradoxically, heightened stress and burnout compel employees to withhold critical knowledge from their colleagues, as Meynhardt et al. (2020) indicated.

OCB is validated by Linden et al.’s (2005) 3-item scale and confirmed by Babalola et al. (2019), which seeks to decipher leadership’s impact on self-motivating behaviors. Nonetheless, this research applies OCB by William and Anderson (1991), which suggests there are five dimensions of OCB that can be categorized into OCB-individual and OCB-organizational attributes. Incorporating William and Anderson’s framework offers a nuanced understanding of OCB, allowing leaders, managers, and supervisors to consider individual and organizational attributes within OCB. This comprehensive approach to measuring OCB provides a more accurate reflection of the impact of ethical leadership practices on employee behaviors.

Integrity is essential for societal and organizational justice, and it shapes equitable decision-making (McGregor, 1960; Jordan et al., 2017). Leaders adopting LEAD-Integrity can significantly influence the five dimensions of OCB and elevate employees’ perceptions of leadership ethics. The significant correlation between LEAD-Integrity and the five dimensions of OCB at .77 substantiates integrity’s central role in ethical leadership. The strong correlation between LEAD-Integrity and OCB indicates that employees are more likely to engage in citizenship behaviors as leaders exhibit higher levels of integrity. The findings accommodate the pivotal role of integrity in ethical decision-making (Wong et al., 2008). This underscores the importance of integrity in fostering ethical leadership and positive employee behaviors and is more likely to reduce employee fatigue within leadership-driven OCB that fosters a “do more with less” initiative. Additionally, LEAD-Assurance exhibits a higher correlation with OCB than LEAD-Integrity, suggesting its potential to enhance overall organizational success and mitigate citizenship fatigue. Therefore, leaders, managers, and supervisors perceived as having integrity and promoting assurance among employees improve on the five dimensions of OCB while minimizing citizenship fatigue.

Decisions promoting assurance within leadership can alleviate employee stress and anxiety, fostering improved self-motivating behaviors like OCB. LEAD-Assurance’s positive relationships with I-OCBI (.73), OCBO (.46), and the overall five dimensions of OCB at (.73) confirm its efficacy in promoting job security and reducing stress, as posited by Fuller (2021, 2022a). The positive correlations between LEAD-Assurance and various dimensions of OCB highlight the role of assurance in influencing employee behaviors. LEAD-Assurance fosters a sense of security that reduces stress and anxiety. This may explain why LEAD enhances self-motivating behaviors such as OCB while reducing citizenship fatigue. Decision-makers prioritizing LEAD-Assurance in management and sustainability practices can create a positive work environment and improve employee well-being.

The pragmatic dimension of LEAD emphasizes a flexible, context-specific approach to decision-making, which is precious during economic downturns. LEAD-Pragmatism recorded having a substantial positive relationship

with OCBI (.74), OCBO (.52), and the overall five dimensions of OCB (.84). The strong positive relationships between LEAD-Pragmatism OCBI and OCBO represent the effectiveness of how pragmatic decision-making influences self-motivating employee behavior. Therefore, during economic downturns or crises, pragmatic leadership provides a sense of direction and adaptability without mandating employees contribute to OCB during economic crises. This approach enables organizations to navigate challenges effectively, promoting resilience and long-term sustainability.

Pragmatic decision-making within leadership proves vital during economic downturns, mitigating employee pressure, burnout, and fatigue. LEAD-Pragmatism provides a context-specific approach that can adapt to dynamic conditions, such as mandating employees do more with less resources. LEAD-Pragmatism reduces employee burnout and fatigue while promoting adaptability and resilience, as highlighted by Driskell et al. (2006) and Liu and Yu (2019). LEAD-Pragmatism is a sustainability strategy that is less likely to influence citizenship fatigue as employees operate within the five dimensions of OCB.

Citizenship fatigue, an emotional state of frustration (Bolino et al., 2015) and often stems from leadership-driven OCB. Citizenship fatigue is a symptom that exists as employees experience frustration that is mainly linked to leadership-driven OCB. However, LEAD-Assurance reduces stress and anxiety and creates a more positive work environment. Comparatively, LEAD-Integrity improves employees' perception of fairness, reducing citizenship fatigue's effect on OCB. Additionally, LEAD-Pragmatism reduces employee burnout and promotes resiliency among employees. Collectively, integrity, assurance, and pragmatism synergistically reduce the emotional strain associated with citizenship fatigue created by leadership-driven OCB.

The LEAD model is an ethical leadership strategy that reduces burnout and pressure and positively influences the five dimensions of OCB. The LEAD model is a comprehensive ethical leadership strategy that reduces burnout and pressure influencing employee behavior. Leaders, managers, and supervisors adopting the LEAD model can effectively navigate economic crises while reducing citizenship fatigue. Applying LEAD Integrity, Assurance, and Pragmatism dimensions is instrumental in fostering a resilient, high-functioning, diverse, and sustainable workforce. Therefore, the LEAD model is a valuable framework for navigating complex and uncertain situations while prioritizing the well-being of their employees.

#### *4.3 Limitations and Future Directions*

First, this research is cross-sectional, correlational, and moderation in design. Cross-sectional studies suggest that responses can change over time. Because sustained OCB can create citizenship fatigue, future research should focus on time on the job to determine the potential impact of sustained OCB. Secondly, not all full-time employees could be surveyed for this research. Therefore, additional research should focus on employees in other industries to determine LEAD's ability to continue influencing OCB-I and OCB-O. Thirdly, recent empirical evidence suggests the significant influence of LEAD on the five dimensions of OCB and its potential to curtail knowledge hiding (Fuller, 2021). However, the extent to which LEAD can mitigate citizenship fatigue remains to be discovered on other variables such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The call for further research aims to illuminate these complexities and provide insights into practical, ethical leadership strategies during economic downturns. Such insights are vital for leaders, managers, and supervisors seeking to foster a knowledge-sharing culture and navigate organizational challenges successfully.

### **5. Conclusion**

In the intricate landscape of organizational dynamics, the concept of OCB has been explored, highlighting both self-initiated actions by employees and, notably, leadership-driven OCB initiatives during economic crises. Liu et al. (2021) and Fu et al. (2022) underscore the stress and pressure induced by leadership-driven OCB, which may contribute to the alarming statistics of 80% of US employees experiencing stress and 52% reporting burnout (American Institute of Stress, 2022). Leadership-driven OCB heightened stress, leading to knowledge-hiding as employees cope with citizenship fatigue. The interplay between leadership actions, citizenship fatigue, and knowledge-hiding reveals the delicate balance required during economic downturns. As exemplified by the Leadership Ethical and Decision-making (LEAD) model, ethical leadership emerges as a potential solution to mitigate these challenges.

In conclusion, the LEAD model emerges as a valuable ethical leadership strategy for organizations facing or preparing for future economic crises. By incorporating the dimensions of Integrity, Assurance, and Pragmatism, leaders can positively influence OCB and diminish employee citizenship fatigue. This proactive approach addresses the challenges posed by leadership-driven OCB and contributes to a resilient, high-functioning, diverse, and sustainable workforce. As organizations grapple with unprecedented difficulties, applying ethical leadership practices like the LEAD model becomes indispensable for promoting a workplace culture of openness, trust, and

collaboration.

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