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# THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATIONAL IDENTIFICATION: A RESEARCH IN BANKING SECTOR<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is a concept that encourages businesses to actively incorporate environmental and social issues into their daily operations and interactions with their stakeholders. CSR phenomenon not only highlighted the concept of ethical leadership (EL) but also affected organizational identification (OID) of employees by fostering the sense of belonging. There has seen a surge over the years in the research on CSR, EL and OID. In the literature, despite there is research on dual relationships, the tripartite relationship between concepts have not been analyzed. The purpose of this study is to consider this gap by investigating the mediating effect of CSR in the relationship between EL and OID in the context of banking sector in Zahedan city of Iran. The data were collected through the survey method and the study was carried out on 278 employees working in the banks of Zahedan city of Iran. The data gathered are analyzed using Hayes (2013) Model 4 Process plugin. Results of the analysis cleared that EL has a positive and significant effect on CSR and OID. Likewise, CSR has a positive and significant effect on OID. It has been also determined that CSR has a full mediation effect in this relationship between EL and OID. The findings provide an added value for the literature for theory and practice by emphasizing the importance of CSR in the relationship between EL and OID.

**Keywords** : Ethical Leadership, Organizational Identification, Corporate Social Responsibility.

**JEL Classification** : M10, M14, M19

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# ETİK LİDERLİK VE ÖRGÜTSEL ÖZDEŞLEŞME İLİŞKİSİNDE KURUMSAL SOSYAL SORUMLULUĞUN ARACILIK ETKİSİ: BANKACILIK SEKTÖRÜNDE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

## Öz

*Kurumsal sosyal sorumluluk (KSS) işletmeleri günlük operasyonlarının ve paydaşları ile ilişkilerinin içine çevresel ve sosyal konuları dahil etmesi için yüreklendiren bir kavram olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. KSS kavramı sadece etik liderlik (EL) kavramını ön plana çıkartmakla kalmamakta aynı zamanda çalışanların bağlılık duygusunu arttırarak örgütsel özdeşleşmeyi (ÖÖ) etkilemektedir. Son yıllarda, KSS, EL ve ÖÖ üzerine yapılan araştırmalar artış göstermektedir. Literatürde, kavramların ikili ilişkileri üzerine çalışmalar olmasına rağmen, üçlü ilişkinin analiz edilmediği görülmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı, İran'ın Zahidan şehrinde bankacılık sektörü kapsamında EL ve ÖÖ arasındaki ilişkide KSS'nin aracılık etkisini araştırarak bu boşluğu doldurmaktır. Veriler anket yöntemiyle toplanmış ve çalışma İran'ın Zahidan şehrinde bulunan banka şubelerinde çalışan 278 personel üzerinde gerçekleştirilmiştir. Toplanan veriler Hayes (2013) Model 4 Process eklentisi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Analizin sonuçları, EL'nin KSS ve ÖÖ üzerinde olumlu ve anlamlı bir etkiye sahip olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Benzer şekilde, KSS, ÖÖ üzerinde olumlu ve anlamlı bir etkiye sahiptir. Bu ilişkide KSS'nin tam aracılık etkisine sahip olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, EL ve ÖÖ arasındaki ilişkide KSS'nin önemini vurgulayarak, teori ve uygulama literatürüne katma değer sağlamaktadır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler** : Etik Liderlik, Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk, Örgütsel Özdeşleşme.

**JEL Sınıflandırması** : M10, M14, M19

## INTRODUCTION

From the industrial revolution to the present, the remarkable advancements have been essential to the growth of nations and the improvement of people's standard of living. However, organizations working to save the environment and the social order generate significant issues. In this situation, the stakeholders' attitudes and expectations vary, and over time, the corporations have a negative impact on the stakeholders' quality of life. Companies that want to survive in a multi-actor market must be accountable for altering stakeholders' viewpoints and meeting their expectations (Pfajfar et al., 2022). As a result, when accomplishing their financial and commercial goals, businesses should take into account societal expectations. To fulfill these expectations, corporate social responsibility (CSR) plays a critical role.

CSR is a required part of any firm. It was deliberately tried and narrowed down to give a fundamental roadmap for producing positive outcomes and values for people, society, and consequently the environment. CSR is a crucial organizational performance that deals with relationships between businesses and their stakeholders, such as employees and communities (Al-Shammari et al., 2021). CSR is a concept that encourages businesses to actively incorporate environmental and social issues into their daily operations and interactions with their stakeholders (customers, workers, shareholders, local communities, investors, and government) (Pfajfar et al., 2022). It is described as stakeholder concern management for negligent and remorseful behaviors linked to ethical, social, and environmental issues in order to provide business advantages (Vaaland et al., 2008). CSR may be characterized as a corporation's ethical compliances that go above and beyond following state rules (Ullah et al., 2022) Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is known as an organization's commitment to working with the community, its employees, and their families to improve the quality of life while also benefiting the organization (Zhao et al., 2023).

Organizational Identification is defined as “A special sort of social evidence of identity where the people are aligned based on their belonging to a certain class” (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Mael & Ashforth, 1992). Additionally, Organizational Identification covers a lot of similar attitudes and behavior among employees of a certain firm. According to Bauman and Skitka (2012), CSR causes better organizational identification among workers by promoting external assessments of the status and attractiveness of the firm. As a result, by symbolizing adherence to the core principles and fostering a sense of belonging, employees are motivated to join a focal company (Bauman & Skitka, 2012).

Before explaining ethical leadership, it would be useful to state what ethics is. Ethics is a philosophy approach that determines what right and wrong are, how right and wrong should be analyzed and evaluated and how people can reach the truth. Ethical leadership; It is expressed as a type of leadership that manages in normative conformity in interpersonal relations along with individual actions and supports followers' ethical thinking in empowerment, bilateral communication and decision making (Brown et al, 2005). Most typically, the ethical standards of top executives (CEOs) and the culture of significantly contributing are used to explain ethical performance in an organizational environment (DeGeorge, 1986). Employees are encouraged and supported by moral leaders to behave morally and do their jobs effectively (Brown, 2005). Therefore, it was asserted that ethical leaders establish organizational identity as a result of their followers' ethical and moral behavior (Zhu et al., 2015). The need for managers who can best manage the human power of enterprises and who can act in a conscious, human-oriented manner has increased day by day. Compared to other modern leadership styles, the concept of Ethical Leadership, which is an approach with a higher focus on valuing its employees, has increased its importance day by day, especially in the early 21st century, it has come to the core as an approach that takes responsibility in order to prevent the scandals that may emerge in the oil and banking sectors in the future.

This study was conducted to examine the main research areas and the current situation of CSR in the banking sector, due to the insufficient attention shown to the aforementioned issues in the understanding of CSR adopted by the banking sector. The banking sector is a strictly regulated and monitored sector employing an educated workforce. In addition, CSR is expected to find a wide application area in the banking sector, as it plays the most important role in the economic system. Our model adds a lot of valuable insights to the earlier research. First, workers view CSR as ethical, providing more accuracy to the dominant paradigm in earlier research, which immediately results in organizational identification. The association between organizational identification and corporate social responsibility was also greatly influenced by these factors. Our approach, which shows that employee views of ethical leadership are influenced by leaders' actions, advances the literature on CSR, Ethical Leadership and Organizational Identification. Thus, by accumulating information to support the postulated guiding the variable effects in our model, previous researches were found to be considered in the current work.

## **I. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

In this section of the research, a conceptual evaluation will be made regarding the concepts that form the basis of the research. In this context, the concepts of Corporate Social Responsibility, Ethical Leadership and Organizational Identification will be covered.

### **I.I. Theoretical Foundation**

A review of relevant research literature indicates that many studies have been conducted on the variables of Ethical Leadership (EL), Organizational Identification (OID) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Various studies in the literature reveal the existence of a positive relationship between EL and OID, as well as between CSR and OID. Various studies in the literature reveal the

existence of a positive relationship between EL and OID, as well as between CSR and OID. In previous studies on EL and OID, it has been determined that there is a positive and significant effect between the two concepts (Suifan et al., 2020; Teng et al., 2020; Walumbwa et al., 2011; Zhu et al., 2015). The influence of ethical leaders on organizational policies and practices, especially CSR is one of the important topics in the literature of this research. This issue has been investigated in previous researches (Kim et al., 2021; Ullah et al., 2022; De Roeck & Farooq, 2018). Discretionary behaviors like CSR initiatives may have the ability to increase how much employees identify with the firm (Shah et al., 2021; Luan et al., 2022; Farooq et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2023). More specifically, the beneficial impact of CSR on corporate identity may be boosted by greater ethical leadership levels (De Roeck et al., 2014).

#### **a. Corporate social responsibility (CSR)**

The CSR idea is not yet fully defined and has been given several interpretations that offer a wide range of potential practical applications (García-Sánchez et al., 2022). The activities of CSR affect company performance. Advertising of company activities can positively affect the relationship between CSR activities and financial performance. Since investors in the organizations see CSR as an important basis in their investment decisions, they are expected to equal such social initiatives with the benefits of the company (Al-Shammari et al., 2021).

CSR definitions often center on the premise that businesses take into account their substantial social responsibilities, legal requirements, and profitability. A common theme is that businesses should think about how their actions will affect their employees and the society at large in terms of ethics, social issues, and the environment. When discussing CSR, we frequently view it as a duty that is “social,” not technically ethical, and understood as a response to a need or societal expectation (Zhao et al., 2023; Fatima & Elbanna, 2023). Guarnieri and Kao (2008) assert that the business leaders are important for CSR activities especially for charitable purposes, loosely guided by volunteer work. However, it is a multifaceted strategic endeavor that addresses the complexity of both the company and society.

According to Paruzel et al., (2023), Corporate social responsibility is discussed as a potential for innovation in organizations and they emphasized the importance of CSR as the decisive organizational level of the innovative behavior of employees for cleaner production (Paruzel et al., 2023).

As a result, it is clear that CSR has advanced beyond the realm of volunteer labor and reached the totally unprecedented level of producing significant advantages and values for society. CSR is often regarded as corporate ethics, social influence, and citizenship. A sustainable responsible firm also combines corporate self-regulation with a business strategy (Paruzel et al., 2023). CSR may be characterized as a self-policing internal system utilized by the business to monitor and guarantee active compliance with moral and legal requirements. CSR is a method for assuming accountability for business operations and having a beneficial impact on society, customers, the environment, employees, and all other stakeholders (Khan et al., 2023).

CSR can refer to situations in which a firm breaks the law and engages in activities that put social good ahead of the firm’s interests and legal requirements (McWilliams & Siegel, 2000). The term “CSR” was first coined in the 1950s, and in the 1970s, management literature began to take an odd interest in it. Generally, CSR initiatives fall into three categories: ecological balance, economic expansion, and social advancement (Saeed & Arshad, 2012).

Du et al (2013) defined CSR as “the comprehensive range of operational procedures and strategies produced by a corporation to cope with and generate relationships with the natural environment and its many stakeholders”. A variety of CSR elements include the following: ethics, responsibility, values, authenticity, sustainability, involvement in one’s relationships with others, one’s history, the person’s aspirations, his or her value system, acting on those values, acting true to oneself, value creation in an environmentally sustainable way, treating employees as right holders,

putting CSR into practice, being a good citizen in civil society, and being a good corporate citizen (Dhar et al., 2022).

According to McWilliams and Siegel (2001), CSR is understood to depict situations in which the company prioritizes doing the right thing over adhering to legal obligations and engaging in “activities contributing some societal value” (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). It is only an interpretation of CSR, and the CSR research offered a number of definitions, signifying a condition in which there was no consensus. They do, however, struggle with measurement and theoretical growth (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). For instance, CSR according to McWilliams et al. (2006) includes: first, social aspects of production processes and goods (such as presenting convenient access for the physically-challenging products in public places). Second, implementing human resource management methods and concepts (such as encouraging employee empowerment); third, promoting business-community ties (such as through collaborating with civil society groups); and observance of environmental standards (such as recycling or treatment of waste materials before disposal). Essentially, CSR respects a triple bottom line of the environment, people, and profits and consciously considers public interests in business decision-making (Hsu et al., 2022).

### **b. Ethical leadership**

Ethics in management entail treating people with regard for their rights and dignity (Dey et al., 2022; Ciulla, 2004). Moral ideas and ideals that guide a group's or an individual's behavior based on what is right or wrong are included in ethics (Eluwole et al., 2022; Mahsud et al., 2010). The general public accepts ethical behavior as ethically and legally appropriate (Mayer et al., 2012). The ethical climate in organizations is determined by the senior management and leaders. In actuality, leaders don't concentrate on how to uphold their fundamental moral principles. Their consciousness is, nonetheless, connected to moral standards. The leaders' awareness guides the consultation while facing complicated and foreign tasks each day. Discussions on justice, ethics, and caring for others provide a multifaceted map of the ethical landscape (Zheng et al., 2022). Ethical leaders match the organization's goals with those of the stakeholders and workers (Cheng et al., 2022). Ethical leaders take into account the community and the people, and they are seen by others as fair decision-makers who can be trusted (Koay & Lim, 2021, Shin et al., 2015). Morally acceptable behavior is that which is considered "right" and "good" as opposed to "wrong" or "bad" in a certain circumstance (Jia et al., 2022; Mendonca & Kanungo, 2006). The leader must be both an ethical administrator and an ethical person in order to understand ethical leadership (Nejati et al., 2020). Ethical leaders create a work environment that will ensure that actions and duties comply with ethical rules and procedures, and they do not engage in unethical behavior. Such EL is taken into consideration, and efforts are made to attract ethical leadership (Cheng et al., 2022; Kouzes & Posner, 1992; Costa et al., 2022). Solving the legal issues doesn't always mean that the leaders were acting correctly. Law dictates that leaders be seriously unethical (Wang et al., 2017). One may think about moral leadership based on the energizing and restorative qualities of love. In this definition, a connection of reciprocity with followers constitutes leadership. Ethical leaders incorporate moral values into their actions and outlooks (Kouzes & Posner, 1992; Wu et al, 2015; Saha et al., 2020). In the current corporate environment, it is difficult to simply monitor the consequences of ethical leadership. Furthermore, earlier research found that moral leadership increased moral performance, lowered immoral performance, and had a significant positive impact on employee engagement (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Ciulla claimed that a moral leader is a practical leader (Ciulla, 1995). According to Brown et al. (2005), moral leaders are actively concerned in enhancing followers' ethical behavior and fulfilling it.

### **c. Organizational identification**

Identification is characterized as an emotion and internalization linked to a particular identity or set of identities (Foote, 1951). Within the organizational structure, Foote employed the identification word for the first time. He said that joining an organization helped workers understand their own self-concept (Foote, 1951). Organizational identification is a way for employees to define their own feelings, ideas, attitudes and expectations with the corporate identity of the organization. In this way,

employees feel that they are in line with their organization, but the way the organization communicates with its employees is critically important for employees to see similarities with their organization's identities (Topçuoğlu & Kaygın, 2022). Organizational identification creates a basic subtext for defining actions and attitudes in the organization by reducing organizational aspects like standards, objectives, and self-defining and prominent values for the people (Chen et al., 2023; Jaich, 2022; Lee et al., 2015). When an organization and its personnel share the same values and objectives, this circumstance is referred to as organizational identity (Lythreath et al., 2019). According to Pratt (1998), organizational identification is defined as “who am I regarding the organization” while “social identification” is defined as the perception of belonging to a group (Pratt, 1998).

According to Brown (1969), employees may recognize themselves in the following situations: (1) where they hold positions of authority within the organization; (2) where there are no competing sources that would prevent them from identifying with the organization; and (3) where the organizations provide opportunities for personal accomplishments (Brown, 1969).

The notion of organizational identity was also developed by Lee (1971). A person's level of intense personal connection with an organization was used to measure organizational identity (Lee, 1971). He emphasized three aspects, a sense of loyalty, belonging, and shared characteristics, for deeper organizational connection. According to Lee (1971), a sense of belonging can arise when there are existing common shared goals or when an employee feels good about taking action to fulfill his or her personal requirements (Lee, 1971).

Utilizing the significant contributions of Social Identity Theory, Ashforth and Mael originally developed the term organizational identity (Cooper & Thatcher, 2010).

Identification was described by Ashforth and Mael (1989) as “the knowledge of belongingness or oneness to some human aggregate.” In research on organizational identity, this definition appears the most frequently. The organization could answer to the query of who the employees are, according to Ashforth and Mael (1989). They centered their attention on the effects and causes of organizational identity. The distinctness of the group's ideals and practices from those of comparable groups, the group's status, and out-group knowledge are some of the precursors of OID. Additionally, the importance of OID is based on (1) employees choosing activities that are consistent with their identities and organizations that support those identities, (2) social identification leading to the formation of groups, and (3) higher internalization of the group members leading to greater respect for the group's formation (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). According to Van Knippenberg (2000), OID causes a person to think of the organization's objectives and viewpoint as being his or her own.

## **I.II. Hypotheses Development**

This section presents the hypotheses development and conceptual model of the study. The hypothesis development is based on the previous studies. In this regard, the research model and the developed hypotheses will be given. Respectively, the effect of EL on CSR, the effect of EL on OID, the effect of CSR on OID, and the mediating effect of CSR on the relationship between EL and OID based on some theories and propositions will be formed. The model developed within the scope of the study is given in Figure 1.

### **a. Ethical leadership and corporate social responsibility**

The level to which a CEO is involved in boosting the goodwill of the company may be strategically reflected in the improvement of CSR. Themes in ethical leadership include the leader's integrity, regard for others, responsibility, and focus on the whole of society and the company (Resick et al., 2011). As a result, an ethical CEO may employ CSR measures to demonstrate his or her ethical principles.

Kim et al (2021) determined the Influence of CSR on Creativity, the Mediating Function of Psychological Safety, and the Moderating Role of EL. In this study, it was concluded that EL has a

very strong effect on the relationship between CSR and psychological safety. In addition, this article emphasizes the importance of the moderating role of EL in the process of CSR activities.

Ullah et al (2019) examined the CEO EL and CSR in terms of the role of organizational ethical culture and intellectual capital in their study. It has been concluded that the ethical leaders affects the CSR positively (Ullah et al., 2019).

Anwana (2022) studied the relationship between EL, governance and CSR in South Africa companies. The findings of this study show that there is a positive and significant relationship between the EL and CSR. In addition, in this study, it was determined that the ethical leaders are necessary for South African companies to achieve their primary task of implementing strategic CSR (Anwana,2022).

In general, each nation's judicial and regulatory frameworks influence how a community behaves ethically. Leadership and ethics are naturally linked as achieving blessings and happiness is frequently seen as requiring a significant contribution from both (Levine and Boaks, 2014). Through regular conversations about the social and ethical dimensions of the firm's commercial activity throughout the company, a leader focuses on upholding ethical standards (Thomas, 2004). Senior management may develop pertinent and obvious social duties based on the ethical leadership components while encouraging staff to initiate those (Yin & Zhang, 2012).

As stated by Bowie (2000), moral leaders should never judge people only on the basis of their personality and accomplishments. EL is defined as demonstrating appropriate conduct via team interactions and individual actions and encouraging team member behaviors through support and direction, decision-making and two-way communication (Brown et al., 2005). According to Yin and Zhang (2012), managers and senior managers who exhibit ethical leadership are crucial CSR forerunners (Yin and Zhang, 2012). Ethics refers to a set of guidelines on how humans should behave (Choi et al., 2015). An effective relationship between the ideas of appropriate, right, and fair might be used to define ethics (Neubert et al., 2009). It is feasible to utilize ethical leadership as an analytical tool to forecast effective actions in specific settings and to explain the definite impacts of behaviors (Brown et al., 2005).

To satisfy the demands of the stakeholders, ethical leaders will work to increase their social, environmental, and ethical effectiveness. The way that stakeholders see CSR may have an impact on how corporate executives react to CSR activities (Morsing and Schultz, 2006). Numerous criminal cases involving firms demonstrated that even those CSRs who do a good job of upholding company ethics may nonetheless commit crimes. Here, unethical executives' irresponsibility was the cause rather than common misunderstandings about CSR. However, ethical leadership helps followers develop a sense of CSR by encouraging them to consider stakeholder interests beyond their own (Choi et al., 2015). As a result, it was previously believed that CSR initiatives might be driven by Ethical Leadership. We, therefore, suggest this hypothesis:

H1: EL has a positive effect on CSR.

## **b. Corporate social responsibility and organizational identification**

Considering the compelling empirical data, it is clear that most employees uphold pro-social principles and try to make their workplaces reflect these principles (Jones et al., 2014). According to social identity viewpoints, employees are more likely to improve their self-concept and identify more strongly with the business when they sense a close relationship between their values and their workplace (Dutton et al., 1994).

Farooq et al., (2017) in their study argue that OID is made by CSR activities in the organization. The actions of CSR are of great importance for employees because they build the identification from CSR.

Luan et al (2022) found a positive and significant relationship in a study between CSR and organizational identification. Their work explores how CSR influences employee cheating through

employee OID and moral decoupling perceived by the manager. The results show that OID perceived by the manager mediate the relationship between CSR and cheating. CSR activities reflect the ethics in the organization and differentiate it positively from organizations that do not care about CSR and enable employees to identify with it (Luan et al., 2022).

OID is a core feeling of distinctiveness that "defines the people' qualities about the organization" on a psychological level (Lee et al, 2015). People need to closely identify with a social group in order to feel better about them (Tajfel & Turner, 1985). How and why does a company's external CSR among its employees result in a better OID? Prior research largely indicated that employees' behaviors and attitudes are only impacted by CSR (Rupp et al., 2006).

Jones (2010) asserts that company pride toward volunteer initiatives and workers' organizational identity might moderate the link between sentiments of employees. However, Kim et al. (2010) claimed that workers' perceptions of their firm's participation in the community are correlated with their perceived level of external respect for the organization. According to Kim et al. (2010), CSR is in fact linked to employee identity within their company. Despite the alleged association between perceived CSR and organizational identity, it is pointed out that there is incomplete evidence about the precise nature of this link (Glavas and Godwin, 2013; Bauman and Skitka, 2012).

According to De Roeck et al. (2014), workers' views of CSR activities aimed at consumers and their level of corporate affiliation have a moderating effect in how fair such perceptions are on the whole. OID is linked to various advantageous employee behavioral and attitude outcomes (Hekman et al., 2009; Ashforth et al., 2008). Additionally, it can raise worker performance (Ashforth et al., 2008). Employees are also given social and personal connotations through OID (Homburg et al., 2009).

According to Panagopoulos (2015), how employees view their firms' commitment to social responsibility can help them make a positive self-concept and become more emotionally connected to them. Internalized CSR initiatives in businesses offer an almost unique potential for present employees as well as for future employees' favorable perceptions of the businesses (Bauman & Skitka, 2012).

When employees believe that the company is well-respected and has a positive reputation, it helps them feel more confident about themselves (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Pratt, 1998; Dutton et al., 1994). Previous research has shown a significant connection between CSR and societal evaluations of an organization's respect (Brammer & Millington, 2005). According to De Roeck et al. (2014), workers are given normative identity cues through CSR perceptions as an exploration to assess the organization's general credibility and fairness.

Consequently, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: CSR has a positive effect on OID.

### **c. Ethical leadership and organizational identification**

To further understand the OID, it is crucial to look at the function of EL (Suifan et al., 2020; Teng et al., 2020; Brown & Mitchell, 2010). The impact of moral leadership on organizational identity has received little research (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Therefore, determining the link between the two variables is critically needed. The definition of organizational identification is "a sense of belonging or oneness to a certain institution or group" (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Organizational identity has garnered a great deal of attention since it has significant implications for companies (He & Brown, 2013). By concentrating on "normatively suitability," ethical leadership is linked to the followers' subjective assessments of the environment in which it is anchored (Brown et al., 2005). As a result, it is clear that moral standards, organizational values, and leadership principles all have an impact on the actions and perceptions of employees.

An OID of some sort symbolizes the "feeling of belongingness and oneness to a human aggregate" (Asforth & Mael, 1989). Organizational identity and various leadership philosophies, such as transactional and transformational leadership, are related (Cheng & Wang, 2015). Employees will be more inclined to embrace the organization's characteristics and work in its best interests if they feel



more unified with it (Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Indeed, as the leaders further demonstrate moral qualities like justice, dependability, and honesty, the staff will develop a stronger psychological bond with their company (Carmeli et al., 2011). The identities of their followers are significantly influenced by the leaders (Dick, 2012). Moreover, when employees admire their leaders, organizational identity increases (DeConinck, 2014; Edwards, 2005). Thus, it will be anticipated that ethical leadership will have a good impact on organizational identity (Vondey, 2010).

Leadership that upholds moral principles may help workers identify with the organization. Organizational identification does come with a warning, though. Employees who are indisputably affiliated with a company may act unethically in order to gain from it (Umphress et al., 2010). Organizational identification, according to Mael and Ashforth (1992), is the "sense of belongingness to or oneness with an organization, in which the person determines himself/herself as a member" (s). The resulting hypothesis is:

H3: EL has a positive effect on OID.

#### d. Mediating effect of CSR in the relationship between ethical leadership on organizational identification

As established norms and standards in the company, the leader serves as an example of appropriate behavior that is expected of the followers (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 1996). Additionally, a leader serves as the main source of knowledge on the nature of duties for the followers (Wimbush, 1999).

As a result, it is reasonable to assume that the leader's performance will play a significant role in the environment when establishing standards or norms for acceptable workplace conduct. Employees typically look for cues or indications in an organization to increase predictability and decrease ambiguity in their surroundings (Dineen et al, 2006).

In this study, it was argued that CSR would serve as a significant contextual variable that would mediate the relationship between EL and OID. The following justification is given so that our arguments may be developed more rationally. In an organization, leaders have a critical role in shaping the attitudes, perceptions, and performance of the workforce. As a result, by following the rules, employees' organizational identification may be enhanced through CSR. In summary, it was proposed that:

H4: CSR has a mediating effect in the relationship between Ethical Leadership and OID.

### I.III. Model of the Research

The diagram of research model which presents the mediation effect of CSR in the relationship between the EL(X) and OID(Y) variables is displayed in Figure 1 below.

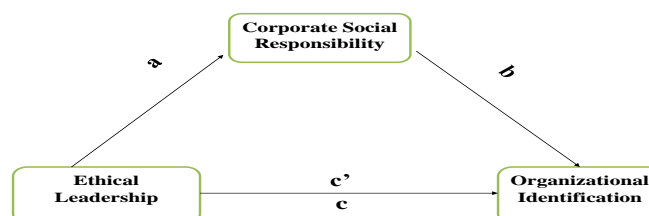
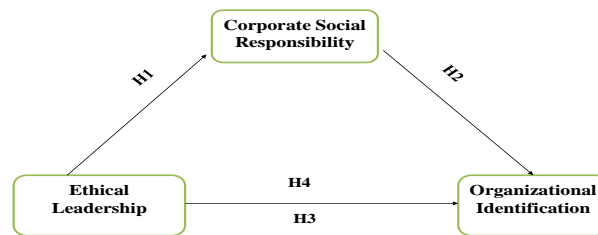


Figure 1. Mediation Model of the Research adapted from Hayes (2017: 585)

The theoretical model of the research, based on the research hypotheses, is shown in Figure 2 below:



**Figure 2. The Theoretical Model of the Research**

## II. Methodology of Research

This is an empirical research. To measure the mediating role of CSR in the effect of EL on OID in banking sector located in Zahedan of Iran, the questionnaire technique and a five-point Likert Scale including 33 items is used.

### II.I. The Importance of the Research

This research investigates the mediating role of CSR in the effect of EL on OID in banks located in Zahedan of Iran. Employees are an important bridge between the institution and society until the organization's production of services and goods and its delivery to the customer. Employees are the first to be affected by the CSR activities that have been and are being made by their institutions. Employees prefer to work in firms that are strong in their own terms, positive about them and have a high corporate social responsibility value. This positive thought affects the organizational identification in the organization. Therefore, investigating this matter is of great importance.

### II.II. Population and Sample Size

This study is aimed to collect data through a questionnaire randomly from banking sector in Zahedan of Iran. The respondents of the questionnaire are employees of banks. Thus, the sample size is 384 employee of banking sector in Zahedan of Iran.

Since the participants were from the same sector and the number of population was not known clearly, simple random sampling method and Cochran formula were used to calculate the sample size. Based on the formula, the minimum sample size that could represent the population at the 95% confidence interval is 384. Accordingly, questionnaires were distributed to 400 personnel working in Zahedan banking sector.

### II.III. Data Collection Tools

The scales used for the questionnaire were adapted from the previous studies.

The scale of EL adopted from Brown et al. (2005)'s work with a 5-point Likert-style which is a 10-item scale , While CSR was represented by a 17-item scale adopted by Turker, D. (2009). OID was

measured by a 6 – item scale developed by Mael, F., & Ashforth, B. E. (1992). For each statement respondents are required to respond from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this part, the analysis of data is presented. The data were collected through questionnaires and the research was conducted on 278 employees working in the banks of Zahedan city in Iran. Demographic characteristics of the employees participating in the research and descriptive statistics are included. Factor analysis was conducted to examine the validity and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used to measure the reliability of the scales. Also, Hayes (2013) Model 4 Process plugin was used to test the hypothesis of the research.

#### III.I. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

In the research, firstly, frequency analysis of the questions was made aimed to know the participants. Table 1 includes the findings to determine the demographic features of the respondents. Accordingly, 74.8% of the participants are male, 85.3% are married, 72.3% are between the ages of 36-49, 48.6% are bachelor degree, and 52.5% of them are in an employee position.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics**

Gender	Frequency	% (Percent)	Marital status	Frequency	% (Percent)
Male	208	74.8	Married	237	85,3
Female	70	25.2	Single	41	14.7
Total	278	100	Total	278	100
Age	Frequency	% (Percent)	Education	Frequency	% (Percent)
25-35	28	10.1	Associate Degree	63	22.7
36-49	201	72.3	Bachelor Degree	135	48.6
50-65	49	17.6	Master degree	59	21.2
Total	278	100	Ph.D.	21	7.6
			Total	278	100
	Position	Frequency	% (Percent)		
	Asst	7	2.5		
	Unit Manager	42	15.1		
	Supervisor	83	29.9		
	Employee	146	52.5		
	Total	278	100		

### III.II. Validity, Reliability and Descriptive Statistics of the Research

Factor analysis was conducted to investigate the structural validity of the scales used in the research.

**Table 2. CSR Factor Analysis**

CSR scale	Items	1	2	3	4
Customers	q13	0.723			
	q15	0.66			
	q14	0.595			
Employees	q8		0.814		
	q9		0.748		
	q11		0.694		
	q10		0.666		
	q12		0.6		
Society	q5			0.784	
	q3			0.755	
	q2			0.754	
	q1			0.712	
	q6			0.702	
	q7			0.651	
	q4			0.481	
Government	q17				0.761
	q16				0.593
	Eigenvalue	3.865	3.668	2.681	2.174
	Explained Variance (%)	22.732	21.579	15.768	12.786
	Total Explained Variance (%)	72.865			
	KMO	0.893			
	Barlett Test	3656.505			
	p	<0.01			

Table 2 shows that the results of the KMO and Barlett Test for the CSR scale are statistically significant. Therefore, the validity of the CSR scale was ensured. The CSR scale was perceived by the participants in 4 sub-dimensions in line with the original scale. These dimensions are named Customers, Employees, Society and Government. The customers dimension has 22,732% of the CSR, the employees dimension 21.579%, the Society dimension 15.768% and the government dimension 12.786%, with a total explanatory power of 72.865%.

**Table 3. OID Factor Analysis**

scale	Items	1
OID	q18	0.841
	q21	0.83
	q19	0.778
	q20	0.751
	q23	0.746
	q22	0.635
	Eigenvalue	3.526
	Explained Variance (%)	58.761
	Total Explained Variance (%)	58.761
	KMO	0.851
	Barlett Test	700.368
	p	<0.01

According to Table 3, the results of the KMO and Barlett Test for the OID scale were found to be statistically significant. Thus, the validity of the OID scale was ensured. The OID scale was perceived by the participants in 1 dimension in line with the original scale. The expressions discussed explain OID with a rate of 58.761%.

**Table 4. EL Factor Analysis**

Scale	Items	1
EL	q24	0.959
	q29	0.947
	q28	0.897
	q26	0.89
	q25	0.87
	q33	0.866
	q31	0.825
	q27	0.796
	q30	0.793
	q32	0.759
	Eigenvalue	7.437
	Explained Variance (%)	74.369
	Total Explained Variance (%)	74.369
	KMO	0.91
	Barlett Test	3528.666
	p	<0.01

Table 4 shows that the results of the KMO and Barlett Test for the EL scale are statistically significant. Accordingly, the validity of the EL scale was ensured. The EL scale was perceived by the participants in 1 dimension in line with the original scale. The expressions discussed explain EL with a rate of 74.369%.

It is seen that the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha) values in Table 5 are above 0.70, which is the acceptable value for all dimensions and scales except government sub-dimension. In addition, since the number of items constituting the government sub-dimension is low (2 items), the acceptable value for reliability in this dimension is 0.60. Accordingly, it can be said that the scales are reliable for analysis.

On the other hand, Table 5 gives the descriptive values of the mean and standard deviation of the scales. Accordingly, in the statements of the CSR scale consisting of 4 sub-dimensions, the mean of the Society dimension is 3.70; the mean of the employees dimension is 3.70; the mean of the customers is 3.74; government dimension mean was 3.72. Considering the mean values, the highest participation was in the sub-dimension of customers, while the least participation was in the sub-dimension of society and employees. Again, when we look at the expressions across the scale, it is seen that the highest participation (q16) is for the statement “Our bank always pays its taxes on a regular and continuing basis”. On the other hand, the participants generally agree with the statements on the CSR scale (mean=3.72).

When we look at the answers given by the participants to the statements in the one-dimensional OID scale, it is seen that the highest level of participation (q18) is for the statement “When someone criticizes this organization, it feels like a personal insult” and they generally agree with all statements (mean 3.35>3).

When we look at the answers given by the participants to the statements in the one-dimensional EL scale, it is seen that the highest participation (q33) is "When making decisions asks what is the right thing to do?" It is seen that the statement is true and it is generally agreed with all statements (mean 3.74>3).

**Table 5. Descriptive Information and Reliability of Scales**

CSR Scale	Mean	S.S.	C.A	OID Scale	Mean	S.S.	C.A.
q2	3.92	0.88	7 items	q18	3.70	1.06	6 items
q7	3.80	0.98		q21	3.41	1.07	
q1	3.72	1.04		q23	3.40	1.00	
q6	3.69	0.96		q20	3.33	1.05	
q3	3.65	1.11		q19	3.25	1.17	
q5	3.60	0.99		q22	3.04	1.03	
q4	3.49	1.08		OID	3.35	0.82	
Society	3.70	0.77	0.88				
q11	3.76	0.95	5 items	EL Scale	Mean	S.S.	C.A.
q12	3.74	1.06		q33	3.90	1.07	10 items
q10	3.69	0.94		q26	3.86	1.03	
q9	3.65	0.96		q28	3.83	1.09	
q8	3.64	1.16		q25	3.82	1.02	
Employess	3.70	0.84	0.88	q29	3.77	1.00	
q14	3.81	0.96	3 items	q31	3.77	1.13	
q15	3.77	1.00		q24	3.76	1.04	
q13	3.63	1.25		q27	3.65	0.90	
Customers	3.74	0.90	0.79	q30	3.55	0.88	
q16	3.94	0.99	2 items	q32	3.46	0.94	
q17	3.78	1.01		EL	3.74	0.87	0.96
Government	3.86	0.85	0.63				
CSR (17 madde)	3.72	0.75	0.95				

Note: i) n=278 and on the scale 1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree.  
ii)  $\chi^2=107.936$  for the CSR scale according to the Friedman Two-Way Anova Test;  $p=0.00<0.05$ ;  $\chi^2=91.793$  for the OID scale;  $p=0.00<0.05$ ;  $\chi^2=202.042$  for the EL scale;  $p=0.00<0.05$ ; the results are statistically significant.

### III.III. Relationships between Variables

Table 6 shows the results of the correlation analysis investigating the relationship between the variables. Accordingly, there is a positive and significant relationship at level of 1% between the variables of CSR, OID and EL, which are the main variables of the study.

**Table 6. Correlation Analysis**

	CSR	OID	EL
CSR	1	0.333**	0.326**
OID		1	0.211**
EL			1
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

### III.IV. Findings of Hypothesis Testing

In this section, hypothesis analysis was done to investigate the effect of EL on OID, EL on CSR and CSR on OID. Finally, an analysis was conducted to examine the mediating effect of CSR in the relationship between EL and OID.

The established model and hypothesis was tested to investigate the mediating effect of CSR in the relationship between EL and OID using the Process plugin of model 4 methodology of Hayes (2013). The analysis results are given in Table 7 step by step.

According to the results in Table 7, firstly, EL and OID (c path), secondly EL and CSR (a path), and thirdly, EL, CSR and OID (c' path) causality has been explored.

**Table 7. Causal Relationships Between Variables**

EL and OID Relation (X-Y/c Path)								
OID	$\beta^*$	Std. Error	t	R2	F	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant Term	2.6181	0.2115	12.3799	0.0443	12.7970	0	2.2018	3.0344
EL	0.1971	0.0551	3.5773				0.0886	0.3056
Notes:*Unstandardized coefficients are interpreted.								
Ethical Leadership and Corporate Social Responsibility Relationship (X-M / a Path)								
CSR	$\beta^*$	Std. Error	t	R2	F	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant Term	2.6665	0.1893	14.0869	0.1064	32.8530	0	2.2939	3.0391
EL	0.2827	0.0493	5.7318				0.1856	0.3798
Notes:*Unstandardized coefficients are interpreted.								
Ethical Leadership, Corporate Social Responsibility and Organizational Identification Relationship (X,M-Y / c' path)								
OID	$\beta^*$	Std. Error	t	R2	F	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant Term	1.7659	0.2662	6.6346	0.1225	19.1979	0	1.2419	2.2899
CSR	0.3194	0.0646	4.9506				0.1925	0.4467
EL	0.1064	0.0560	1.9081				-0.0034	0.2169
Notes:*Unstandardized coefficients are interpreted.								

The 3 models in Table 7, which examine the causal relationships between the variables, are statistically significant according to the significance values of F and p (<0.05). In other words, it is statistically significant to explain the OID variable with the EL Variable according to model 1, the CSR variable with the EL Variable according to model 2, and It is statistically possible to explain the OID variable with at least one of the CSR and EL variables according to model 3.

On the other hand, the significance of the independent variables in the model, that is, whether they should be included in the model or not, is determined according to the LLCI-ULCI interval in the mediation methodology. Accordingly, the fact that the confidence interval (LLCI-ULCI) does not contain zero at the 95% confidence level indicates that the inclusion of that variable in the model is significant. When the confidence intervals are examined, it is seen that the independent variable in model 1 and model 2, the EL variable, should be included in the models (confidence interval does not contain zero), while the EL variable in model 3 should not be included in the model (confidence interval contains zero). In addition, it is seen that the CSR variable in model 3 should also be included in the model (confidence interval does not contain zero).

The effect of EL on OID is given in Table 7 as model 1. Accordingly, the beta coefficient was 0.1971, the t value was 3.5773, the F statistic was 12.7970 ( $p < 0.01$ ), and the confidence interval was CI [0.0886-0.3056] at the 95% confidence level. In addition, EL explains OID by 4.43%. The results of model 1 in Table 7 confirm the existence of the total effect expressed by path c in Hayes (2013)'s Model 4 methodology, that is, the effect of EL on OID. Accordingly, the hypothesis "H3: EL has a positive effect on OID" was accepted.

The effect of EL on CSR is given in Table 7 as model 2. Accordingly, beta coefficient was found to be 0.2827, t value was 5.7318, F statistic was 32.8530 ( $p < 0.01$ ) and the confidence interval was CI [0.1856-0.3789] at the 95% confidence level.. In addition, EL explains CSR at a rate of 10.64%. The results of Model 2 confirm the existence of the total effect expressed by path a in Hayes (2013)'s Model 4 methodology, that is, the effect of EL on CSR. Accordingly, the hypothesis "H1: EL has a positive effect on CSR" was accepted.

The relationship examining the mediating role of CSR in the effect of EL on OID is given as model 3 in Table 7. While the EL variable was found to be significant in explaining the OID variable in model 1 explained in Table 7 (CI [0.0886-0.3056]), the addition of CSR which is the mediating variable in model 3, impaired this significance (CI [-0.0034-0.2169]) and it was concluded that the inclusion of EL in the model is not significant. This result shows that the effect of path b in the model is significant, that is, the hypothesis of "H2: CSR has a positive effect on OID" is accepted. In addition, this situation informs us about the full mediation role of CSR.

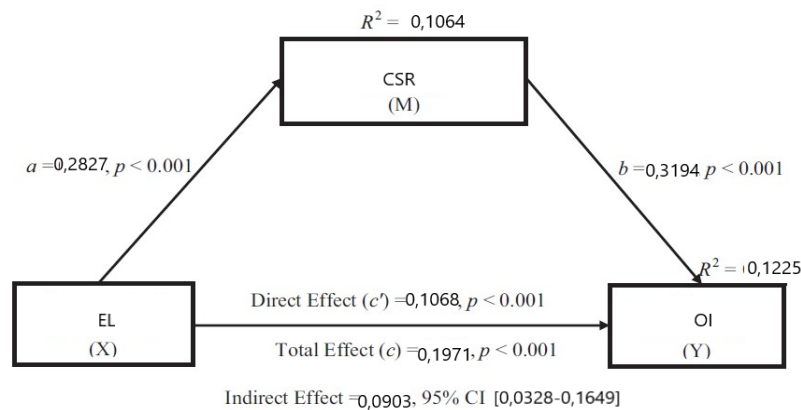
**Table 8. Effect Values**

Effects	Effect	Std. Error	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Total effect of EL on OID (path c)	0.1971	0.0551	3.5773	0	0.0886	0.3056
Direct effect of EL on OID (c'path)	0.1068	0.0560	1.9081	0.0574	-0.0034	0.2169
Indirect effect of EL on OID (axb path)	0.0903	-	-	-	0.0328	0.1649
Fully standardized effect of EL on OID	0.0965	-	-	-	0.0341	0.1787

Table 8 and figure 2 shows the effects (direct and indirect effect) of independent variable (X) on dependent variable (Y) via the mediating variable (M). Table 8 shows the beta coefficient of 0.1068, t-value 1.9081 and  $p < 0.05$ . It clearly shows that EL has a statistically significant direct effect on OID. In addition, EL has a statistically significant indirect effect on OID through CSR, as is clear in  $b = 0.0903$  and 95% CI [0.0328–0.1649]. Therefore, it can be stated that there is a mediating effect of CSR in the relationship between the predictor variable (EL) and the outcome variable(OID).

According to Table 8, the indirect effect formed by adding the CSR variable, which is thought to be a mediator variable, to the model examining the relationship between EL and OID was found to be significant. According to these result, it has been clarified that CSR has a mediating effect on the effect of EL on OID, and the results demonstrate that the indirect effect is significant, while the direct effect is not; Meanwhile, it has full mediation effect. In this context the hypothesis H4: “CSR has a mediating effect in the relationship between EL and OID” was accepted.





**Figure 1. Mediation Role of CSR**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

A questionnaire was applied to the employees of the banks operating in Zahedan city of Iran , having 278 employees and the “Mediating effect of CSR in the effect of EL on OID” in the banking sector was investigated. The Cronbach's Alpha values are above 0.70, which is the acceptable value for all scales. The results of demographic characteristics show that the rate of male participants was 74.8%, the rate of female participants was 25.2%. 85.3% are married. The 36-49 age group participated in the survey with 72.3%, and it is possible to say that the rate of young participants is high. 48.6% % of the participants are bachelor degree and 52.5% of them are in an employee position.

Findings of the research hypothesis indicate that EL has a significant effect on OID ( $\beta = 0.1971$ ,  $t = 3.5773$ ,  $F = 12.7970$ ), EL has a significant effect on on CSR ( $\beta = 0.2827$ ,  $t = 5.7318$ ,  $F = 32.8530$ ). Also the results demonstrate that the effect of CSR on OID is significant ( $\beta = 0.3194$ ,  $t = 4.9506$ ,  $F = 19.1979$ ). According to the results, it has been determined that there is a mediating effect of CSR in the effect of EL on OID.

### Discussion

This research findings confirms that the OID and CSR are affected by EL and CSR mediates the effect of EL on OID.

As for H1, the findings revealed that the EL has a positive effect on CSR. in line with the literature of EL, it has been verified that there is a relationship between EL and CSR. CSR activities are influenced by EL positively. As indicated in the findings, the analysis of 2nd hypothesis shows that the relationship between EL and CSR was clarified in a strongly positive way. Based on the research findings it has been specified that EL affects the implementation of CSR in the organization. More than this, EL has a strong awareness of CSR for the operation of CSR. These findings are consistent with the previous works on the subject of CSR and EL (Nguyen et al., 2021; Nejati et al., 2020; Levine and Boaks, 2014; Angus-Leppan et al., 2010). Kim and Thapa (2018) found that EL significantly affects CSR, and that CSR has a positive effect on operational and commercial performances in their study in South Korea. Leadership behaviors that exhibit fair and reliable behaviors and transfer ethical standards to their employees positively affect the CSR activities in the businesses. Tourigny et al. (2017) revealed that EL in the manufacturing sector in China affects CSR, and at the individual level CSR affects organizational trust. According to Lin and Liu (2017), EL behaviors are related to the

perception of CSR. A healthy leadership style that is supported and appreciated by employees will enhance job satisfaction and reduces employee turnover intention. The findings of De Roeck and Farooq (2018) show that there is a stable relationship between CSR and EL, and that EL increases employees' tendency to make social benefits.

The results of H2 clear that CSR has a positive effect on OID. The findings of this research indicate that CSR has a significant effect on OID. Participants argue that success in voluntary activities such as CSR causes them to achieve OID. The results of our study are in line with the findings of previous researches. In the literature, it is seen that the employees' perceptions of CSR are related to OID (Doğanalp & Kaplan, 2018; Mozes et al., 2011). Özdemir (2007) in his research on Opet company employees; revealed that CSR has a significant and positive effect on OID (Özdemir, 2007). According to the results of this study CSR leads to a strong OID among employees by enabling them to bond with the organization and to show commitment to important values. CSR practices affect the employees' positive perceptions about the corporate image and at the same time cause the society to develop a positive image about the institution and cause the employees to identify more with their institutions. The reasons for corporate social responsibility and its importance for all stakeholders are clear. In order to consolidate organizational identification and provide the expected benefits, businesses should perform social responsibility activities and inform all their stakeholders.

The findings of H3 disclosed that the EL has a significant effect on the OID. The findings of this research matches the results from previous studies. There are many studies in the literature in line with EL's impact on OID. These studies determined that EL has positive effects on OID (Zhu et al., 2015; Kuru, 2020; Mihci & Uzun, 2020; O'Keefe et al., 2019). At this point, leaders in the organization have important duties. A leader is like the soul of an organization. The leaders' vision reveals the organization's mission; offers the basis for the goals and objectives of organizations; it makes connections with the beliefs that affect and shape organizational culture and form the basis for corporate policies, procedures and strategies, (Kanungo and Mendonca, 1996). Leadership has an important role in the positive and negative behaviors of employees. Since the employees will evaluate the organization with the behavior of the leader, the leadership has a great effect on the evaluation of the individual and organization. Ethical leaders, with their values such as morality, honesty, fairness, impartiality, dedication, self-sacrifice, and consistency, can ensure the harmony between the employee and organization. The findings obtained from the research data support the positive relationship between EL and OID. According to the previous studies, leaders have a serious role in the positive and negative behaviors of employees. Since the employees will evaluate the firm with the behavior of the leader, the EL has a great effect on the OID.

H4 looked into the mediating role of CSR in the relationship between EL and OID. The results of the regression analysis of the mediator variable; as a whole, CSR has a mediating effect on the effect of EL on OID. The direct and indirect effect of the EL on the OID through the CSR has been investigated. Findings clearly shows that EL has a statistically significant direct effect on OID with the beta coefficient of 0.1068, t-value 1.9081 and  $p < 0.05$ . Accordingly results illustrate that EL has a statistically significant indirect effect on OID through CSR, as is clear in  $\beta = 0.0903$  and 95% CI [0.0328–0.1649]. Therefore, it can be stated that CSR has a mediating effect on the relationship between the EL and OID. The findings show that the influence of EL on OID is a mediated connection in which CSR plays a complete role in the effect of their interactions. In a regression analysis undertaken to assess the mediating impact, CSR was found to play a full mediating effect in the relationship between EL and OID. These finding shows that ethical leaders emphasizing organizational and individual values enable employees contribute to organizational processes and recognize the goals of the organization. The results showed that the EL can increase OID. Suppose an Ethical Leadership style is implemented in the organization. In that case, it can help OID in the organization because Ethical leadership can encourage employees to reveal their views. Ethical leaders systematically transfer common values and ethical rules to the employees, helping them to understand and adopt them. Ethical leaders give responsibility to employees to determine whether they and their employees behave in accordance with ethical values. In this context, employees who act against

ethical values are responsible for this situation. Ethical leaders treat their employees the way they would like to be treated. For example; they think that they have the right to be a role model by behaving honestly to their employees and to expect their employees to behave in the same way. Therefore, leaders of organizations can improve OID by using the Ethical Leadership style. These findings suggest that organizations looking for effective strategies to succeed should consider the advantages of EL and CSR.

## **Conclusion**

In today's business life, organizations need both management and leadership within the framework of the situations they are in. In the 21st century, immoral regulations and behaviors and corruptions encountered in the management world have revealed the necessity of both ethical understanding in management and ethical quality of employees in managerial positions.

In this study, it was revealed the existence of the relationship between the EL, corporate CSR and OID of the employees of the banks in Zahedan. EL gives importance to the social and psychological aspects and makes important contributions to individual and organizational outcomes. In this context, an inclusive field study that can contribute to the literature was carried out by considering the concepts of EL, CSR and OID in the literature.

Based on the results of the research, it was determined that there is a positive effect of EL on CSR. In addition, it was determined that there is a positive effect of CSR on OID. Similarly, it was detected that it is a positive effect of EL on OID. Furthermore, as a result of the analysis conducted to test the mediating effect, it has been shown that employees can identify with their organization by the existence of EL and compliance with CSR.

## **Managerial implications of the study**

In line with the results obtained from the research, various offers were presented. First of all, one of the ways in which sector employees achieve their corporate goals under intense performance pressure is a high level of OID between the employee and the organization. Leaders have to pay more attention to CSR activities in the organization. While performing CSR activities, it is necessary not to carry out remarkable activities for direct business interests, to be evaluated only within the scope of philanthropic activities without any expectations, and to this extent they should be carried out away from monetary benefits. They should reveal the requirements of EL behavior. In case of OID, employees will see the success of their organization as their own success. Employees who have a sense of "we" rather than "me" will exert more effort to achieve organizational goals. At this point, leaders should reveal the requirements of ethical leadership behavior. The leader must gain the trust of his employees and try to act by considering ethical values such as honesty, fairness, fairness and impartiality. His/her behavior and actions must be consistent and compatible with the ethical values he/she expresses.

## **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Researches**

The fact that this study was applied only to banking sector in Zahedan of Iran is one of the limitations of the study, and it will be beneficial to carry out the study by expanding the sample size in other sectors in different places in future studies. In future studies, it is thought that applying the subject in different sectors and businesses of different sizes with a larger sample size will allow reaching more comprehensive information. Researchers who want to work in the banking sector, on the other hand, can include branch employees and different provinces by keeping the sample larger. In the literature, it was concluded that subjects such as organizational commitment, trust and job

satisfaction are related to the study. In this context, the relationship between the related variables can be examined in future studies.

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**Appendix: Questionnaire**

Demographic Characteristics:

What is your gender?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	What is your marital status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> Single
What is your Age?	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> 18-24		<input type="checkbox"/> 25-35 <input type="checkbox"/> 36-49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50-65		<input type="checkbox"/> Above 65
What is your education level?	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary school <input type="checkbox"/> Junior Secondary School <input type="checkbox"/> Senior High School <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational high School <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Master degree <input type="checkbox"/> Ph.D. (Doctorate)				
What is your current position?	<input type="checkbox"/> Branch manager <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Branch manager <input type="checkbox"/> bank teller <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Service Representative <input type="checkbox"/> Loan Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Clerk <input type="checkbox"/> Bookkeeper <input type="checkbox"/> Other: .....				

**Corporate Social Responsibility Scale**

Response options ranged from 1, “strongly disagree” to 5, “strongly agree”.

Our bank:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Our bank participates in activities which aim to protect and improve the quality of the natural environment.	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. Our bank makes investment to create a better life for future generations.	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. Our bank implements special programs to minimize its negative impact on the natural environment.	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. Our bank targets sustainable growth which considers future generations.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. Our bank supports nongovernmental organizations working in problematic areas.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. Our bank contributes to campaigns and projects that promote the well-being of the society.	①	②	③	④	⑤
7. Our bank encourages its employees to participate in voluntarily activities.	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. Our bank policies encourage the employees to develop their skills and careers.	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. The management of our bank is primarily concerned with employees’ needs and wants.	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. Our bank implements flexible policies to provide a good work & life balance for its employees	①	②	③	④	⑤
11. The managerial decisions related with the employees are usually fair	①	②	③	④	⑤
12. Our bank supports employees who want to acquire additional education	①	②	③	④	⑤
13. Our bank respects consumer rights beyond the legal requirements	①	②	③	④	⑤
14. Our bank provides full and accurate information about its products to its customers	①	②	③	④	⑤
15. Customer satisfaction is highly important for our bank	①	②	③	④	⑤
16. Our bank always pays its taxes on a regular and continuing basis	①	②	③	④	⑤
17. Our bank complies with legal regulations completely and promptly	①	②	③	④	⑤

### Organizational Identification Questionnaire

1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree

Organizational Identification	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. When someone criticizes this organization, it feels like a personal insult	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. I am very interested in what others think about this organization	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. When I talk about this organization, I usually say "we" rather than "they".	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. This organization's successes are my successes.	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. When someone praises this organization, it feels like a personal compliment.	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. If a story in the media criticized the organization, I would feel embarrassed.	①	②	③	④	⑤

### Ethical Leadership Questionnaire

The scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

Our bank's CEO	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Conducts his/her personal life in an ethical manner	①	②	③	④	⑤
2. Defines success not just by results but also by the way that they are obtained	①	②	③	④	⑤
3. Listens to what employees have to say	①	②	③	④	⑤
4. Disciplines employees who violate ethical standards	①	②	③	④	⑤
5. Makes fair and balanced decisions	①	②	③	④	⑤
6. Can be trusted	①	②	③	④	⑤
7. Discusses business ethics or values with employees	①	②	③	④	⑤
8. Sets an example of how to do things the right way in terms of ethics	①	②	③	④	⑤
9. Has the best interest of employees in mind	①	②	③	④	⑤
10. When Making decisions asks "what is the right thing to do?"	①	②	③	④	⑤

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**Etik Beyanı** : Bu çalışmanın tüm hazırlanma süreçlerinde etik kurallara uyulduğunu yazarlar beyan eder. Aksi bir durumun tespiti halinde ÖHÜİBF Dergisinin hiçbir sorumluluğu olmayıp, tüm sorumluluk çalışmanın yazar(lar)ına aittir.

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**Çıkar Beyanı** : Yazarlar arasında çıkar çatışması yoktur.

**Ethics Statement** : The authors declare that ethical rules are followed in all preparation processes of this study. In case of detection of a contrary situation, ÖHÜİBF Journal does not have any responsibility and all responsibility belongs to the author (s) of the study.

In the this study, the necessary permission that is dated 14.02.2023 and numbered E-22752295-300-466897 were obtained from the ethics committee of Selçuk University.

**Author Contributions** : Both authors contributed equally to all sections and stages of the study. Contribution rate of the 1st author: 50%, contribution rate of the 2nd author: 50%.

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