

## **Impact of Authentic Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior by Using The Mediating Effect of Psychological Ownership**

**Erum Shaikh<sup>1\*</sup>, Waqas Ahmed Watto<sup>2</sup>, Muhammad Nawaz Tunio<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University, Sanghar Campus

<sup>2</sup>Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup>Greenwich University, Karachi, Pakistan

<sup>3</sup>Alpen Adria University of Klagenfurt, Austria

E-mail: <sup>1</sup>erumshaikh0@gmail.com, <sup>2</sup>waqasbzu67@gmail.com, <sup>3</sup>m1tunio@edu.aau.at

<sup>\*</sup>Corresponding Author

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### ***JEL Classification:***

D22

M10

M12

*Received: 03 January 2021*

*Revised: 30 January 2021*

*Accepted: 12 March 2021*

### **Abstract**

The study objective was to examine the role of psychological ownership as a mediator concerning organizational citizenship behavior and authentic leadership. A structured questionnaire was selected to gather primary data from 300 respondents of the telecom sector of Lahore; 263 questionnaires were selected valid. This research use employees of four different companies in the telecom sector as samples. This research uses correlation, independent sample t-test, and one-way ANOVA. The empirical result shows that authentic leadership positively relates to organizational citizenship behavior. According to the findings of this study, psychological ownership partially mediates the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and authentic leadership among the employees of the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. The Implication of this study is limited to the telecom sector of Pakistan.

### **Keywords:**

authentic leadership, organizational citizenship behavior, psychological ownership, telecom sector, organization

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### **How to Cite:**

Shaikh, E., Watto, W. A., & Tunio, M. N. (2022). Impact of Authentic Leadership on Organizational Citizenship Behavior by Using The Mediating Effect on Psychological Ownership. *Etikonomi*, 21(1), 89-102. <https://doi.org/10.15408/etk.v21i1.18968>.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Leadership style is a vital tool for management. If this tool is used efficiently and adequately, it can enhance service performance, promote the climate of an organization, and increase the association with the employee (Watts et al., 2019). People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision. Authentic leaders know about their own multifaceted and promote balanced processing and take decisions based on their core values to create strong relationships with followers based on trust (Afsar et al., 2020). Genuine leadership is the targeted topic of multiple practitioners' researchers (Barry et al., 2017) and researchers (Sebastian et al., 2018). The argument is that this leadership style produces positive employee behaviors, which increases the organization's performance. The organization's performance is dependent on employee performance. This paper will help to know whether the authentic leadership style increases employees' performance or not.

Psychological ownership points to that individual's situation when one feels possession and has the sense of being the owner. Psychological ownership denotes that situation, "where one has the sense of ownership about the target," i.e., it is MINE! (Beard, 2018) Self-efficacy refers to the belief that people can effectively apply action and do well with a particular job (Afsar & Masood, 2018). Sense of belongingness refers to the employee's need to believe that he belongs to his organization; Self-identity refers to internalizing the organization's identity as an implication of self. One expands a common sense of connectedness and meaningfulness (Afsar & Masood, 2018).

The study integrates the authentic leadership style with psychological ownership. The critical component of success in an organization for the managers is to motivate the employees to achieve the highest potential, feel ownership, accept the change, and provide them a safe place that full fill their needs (QWL). The wisdom suggests that people will care for things they own (ownership), and the same sense in business could enhance employee performance and give a positive response to that organization that full fills their Work-life satisfaction needs. Efficient leaders give guidance that motivates the employee to have a sense of ownership of work (PSO), think broadly to solve business issues, and construct better decisions that increase the group's performance (Bennett, 2009). Telecommunication companies should accept the magnitude of leadership and use the principle of this skill to enhance Psychological ownership and organizational citizenship behaviors because the failure of leadership could be very costly for the organization in terms of low performance, employee turnover, customer dissatisfaction, and absenteeism (Watts et al., 2019; Shaikh et al., 2019). Good leadership seems to promote psychological ownership and enhance organizational citizenship behaviors, which leads to promoting employee performance and leadership influencing employee well-being (Firth-Cozens & Mowbray, 2001). Nevertheless, very limited study has been conducted on combining these variables like authentic leadership, organizational citizenship behavior, and psychological ownership.

Employees join an organization to fulfill on-the-job and off-job needs. It is the organization's responsibility to fulfill the needs of the employees. The problem arises when the organization is not fulfilling its needs, and then the behaviors and performance

of employees are also influenced. Studies have shown that leadership style psychological ownership influences the employees' organizational citizenship behaviors (Afsar et al., 2020; Shaikh et al., 2021a; Shaikh et al., 2021b). Therefore, this study is conducted to highlight the impact of authentic leadership style on the employee organizational citizenship behavior with mediating role of psychological ownership.

This study intends to become familiar with the relationship between the authentic leadership style and organizational citizenship behavior through psychological ownership in Pakistan's telecom sector to value the existing gap and problem highlighted above. Therefore, organizations should provide such leadership style that can motivate, direct, and flourish their employees and promote psychological ownership to perform organizational citizenship behaviors. There are several goals from this study. First, to identify the relation of authentic leadership style and psychological ownership. Second, to identify the relation of authentic leadership style and organizational citizenship behaviors. Third, to identify the relation of psychological ownership and organizational citizenship behaviors. Fourth, to identify the mediating role of psychological ownership between authentic leadership style and organizational citizenship behaviors.

It is necessary to have such employees who perform different roles in the present era to remain competitive in the market. The best technique to raise the employees' organizational citizenship behavior is implementing an effective leadership style. This study examined the impact of authentic leadership style on employee organizational citizenship behavior. Therefore, this research study contributes by analyzing the mediating effect of psychological ownership and authentic leadership on organizational citizenship behavior, and the results show that authentic leadership and psychological ownership have positive effects on the organizational citizenship behavior and psychological ownership also has positive results as a mediator on organizational citizenship behavior (Afsar et al., 2020; Shaikh et al., 2021a). This study will help the telecom sector know how a leader can increase employee organizational citizenship behavior. The result of this study could be used to develop the best leadership style that promotes psychological ownership.

Authentic leadership style is described as more oriented towards improving strengths, engaged, caring, and more inclusive climates of an organization (Han & Kwon, 2016). When the followers realize their leader is behaving appropriately, they tend to present more degree of commitment, satisfaction, Organizational practices, and achievement in citizenship (Afsar et al., 2020). Follower's view of genuine management is strongly linked to followers' psychological strength. A higher degree construct involves proficiency, confidence, trust, and spirit (Smith et al., 2009). The first aspect of psychological capital is self-efficacy. So one should predict a good relationship between genuine leadership and self-efficacy as LaRocca et al. (2018) conducted a study to show this relationship. Reliable mentors influence their followers through positive modeling, the primary mechanism (Sebastian et al., 2018). Positive modeling aids in the follower that it is achievable to do the same as their leader does admirably (Hidayat et al., 2020). Authentic leaders shape what they are genuinely conscious of feelings, beliefs, ambitions, motivations, and personality (Carleton et al., 2018; Tunio et al., 2022).

They recognize their identity as leaders and show their awareness of their actions on followers. “That is why; self-awareness should be seen as a guide to true leaders,” opening up the constructive modeling. The outcome of the positive modeling may be such that followers recognize themselves following the leader. Ultimately, followers will internalize their leaders' motives, values, goals, resulting in social identity where individuals figure out a self-concept aspect in the form of the organizational attribute (Ashforth et al., 2008). Authentic leaders draw attention beyond personal identifications to such social identity (Newman et al., 2018; Bruce et al., 2004; Whetten, 2006; Tunio et al., 2021).

The most basic human need is the sense of belongingness (Daniëls et al., 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Individuals give importance to stable and optimistic relationships (Hallinger, 2018). As the honest, trustworthy, and open relationship is the crucial part of authenticity (Kernis, 2003), it can be meaningful to suppose that authentic leaders meet the need for followers, a sense of belongingness. Self-improvement is a crucial requirement of human nature (Hallinger et al., 2018). In general, people are searching for knowledge that will reflect them in a positive light. Authentic leaders encourage their subordinates to raise questions and even facilitate them. It is flattered that transparency continues to diminish Self-improvement (Rudolph et al., 2018).

The honest leaders likely cause themselves to be held accountable as they attempt to interpret facts rationally. Self-improvement is a central motivation for human nature (Hallinger et al., 2018). People prefer to search for knowledge that shows them in a positive light. Authentic leaders are mindful of such innate human frailty and strive to counter it by finding knowledge that threatens their firmly held positions (Afsar et al., 2020). Authentic politicians, in other words, promote and even facilitate questioning of their followers. Accountability is considered to aim to minimize self-enhancement (Eva et al., 2019).

When leaders strive to interpret knowledge rationally, they may be prepared to be kept accountable: ideally, beginning the new partnership is beneficial for citizens (Daniëls et al., 2019). By optimistic modeling, trustworthy leaders will respond favorably to the people. In comparison, most people get their highly optimistic faces exposed early on. Authentic leaders respond in such a way that conveys a secure and honest friendship for those who obey. Afsar et al. (2020) studied the relationship between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. He used samples from three countries. Many studies indicate a positive relation between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. In the meta-analytical research carried out by Podsakoff et al. (2000).

It was found that leadership behaviors positively impact organizational citizenship behavior. It is specifically related to authentic leadership behaviors because these behaviors help in making an open and fair environment which directly affects employees' behaviors, raise levels of employee satisfaction, willingness to execute OCB (Avolio et al., 2004; and K. Cameron et al., 2003; Govindarajo et al., 2021). Afsar et al. (2020) found that authentic leadership behaviors are positively related to OCB. He used a sample of 397 employees, and 129 were supervisors. He used the level of the employees' identification as mediating variable.

The research conducted by Jiang et al. (2017) shows that employee ownership plans have affirmative social and behavioral consequences when the workers are supported to think of themselves as possessors. Furthermore, Klotz et al. (2018) state that ownership, as an individual attitude, is significant in finding which organizational matters are valuable for labor and concentration, that it forms the associations of the individual with their organization, that it influences the choice of the workers in supporting or obstructing change in organization along with numerous presently unfamiliar effects. The study of Miao et al. (2018). states that the feelings of liability, stewardship, caring the nurturance, selflessness, opposition against change, eagerness toward alteration, inspiration, and citizenship build-up through ownership (Deery et al., 2017). They have concluded in their study about a significant positive relationship between psychological ownership and organizational citizenship, attitudes at work, and behaviors (organizational citizenship and performance).

The studies exist in literature in which it has been found that there is a positive relationship between psychological ownership and the workers' attitudes toward their organization (Wagner et al., 2003). One of the research conducted by Lavy et al. (2017) has shown a significant positive relationship between psychological ownership and dysfunctional behaviors. Ozler et al. (2008) studied the relationship between psychological ownership and organizational citizenship behavior. The data was collected by personnel who belonged to state universities by conducting a questionnaire survey. The study results say that there is a direct relationship between psychological ownership and organizational citizenship behavior, which means if the employees remain in the organization for a more extended period, it will enhance their feelings of psychological ownership. Ultimately, the employees exhibit organizational citizenship behaviors.

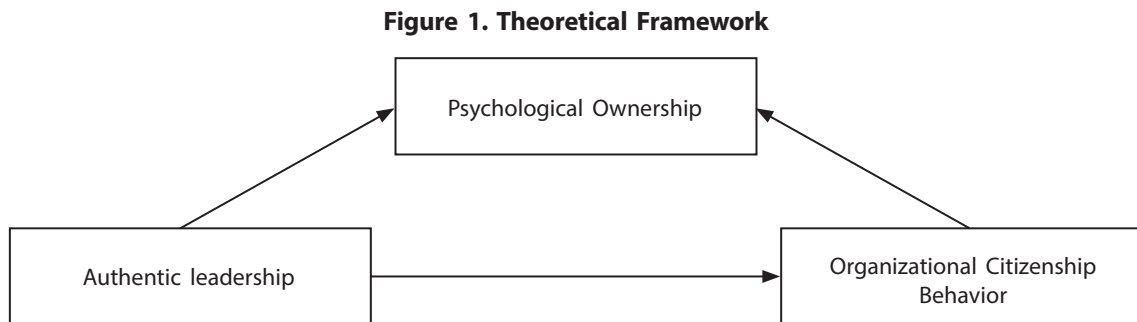
Many studies in the literature show a positive relation between authentic leadership and psychological ownership in the meta-analytical study conducted by Podsakoff et al. (2000). It was found that leadership behaviors positively impact organizational citizenship behavior. When followers observe that their leader acts authentically, they tend to present more degree of commitment, satisfaction, Organizational practices, and achievement in citizenship (Afsar et al., 2020). It means that when the employees are feel good about their leaders, they perform extra-role activities. Ozler et al. (2008) studied the impact of psychological ownership on organizational citizenship behavior. Findings of the research mention a simple relation between psychological ownership and organizational citizenship behavior, which means that with employees' feelings of psychological ownership, employees' exhibition of organizational citizenship behaviors also increases.

## **METHODS**

The data that has been collected from the employees of telecommunication sector of Pakistan in order to give study results in form of figures. The purpose of data collection is to study the variables response quantitatively. There are 263 respondents that collected from three telecom companies. This section includes the values resulting from different

tests such as demographics, descriptive statistics, correlation and regression. Reliability of the instrument also has been discussed in detail here. SPSS software as a tool has been used for analysis. The response of the employees regarding authentic leadership, psychological ownership, quality of work life and employee performance also studied quantitatively. Correlation test has been used to see the relationship of variables while regression is used to check the impact of variables on each other.

Figure 1 shows the theoretical framework of this study. This study is going to examine the impact of authentic leadership to organizational citizenship behavior directly and indirect through psychological ownership



**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Table 1 shows the correlation coefficient which describes the link between two variables. Its value ranges from +1 to -1. The value of the correlation coefficient is +1 for a positive association, -1 for a negative relationship, and 0 for no link.

**Table 1 Correlation Matrix**

6-OCB	.079	-.124	-.097	.057	.064	1		
8-Psychological ownership	-.105	-.109	-.042	.013	.040	.569**	1	
9-Authentic leadership	-.018	-.162	-.102	.019	.105	.648**	.612**	1

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Data Processing

The results of correlation matrix in Table 2 show that 2-tailed value of the Authentic Leadership is 0.0000. This value indicating that at 1 % level of significance the relations are significant. At 1% significance level means the above results are true at level of 99 % whereas the rate of tolerance is 1 %. Table 1 shows that there is a positive relation between dependent and independent variables as all the values are positive. There is positive relation between the Authentic Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior and the correlation value is .580. The correlation value of Psychological Ownership is .590 showing that direct relation exists between authentic leadership and psychological ownership.

To find out whether authentic leadership has a major impact on the actions of organizational citizenship or not, analyzes of linear regression have been used and findings discussed below. R value 0.648, from the Table 2 reveals that there is a moderate relation between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior, R values depict the force of relation in results that whether the relation is strong, weak, moderate, or negligible.

**Table 2. Regression Result of Model 1**

Model	R	R square	B	P	F
1	0.648	0.419	.648	0.000	188.53

Source: Data processing

It is mentioned here that the R-value has been represented the correlation coefficients of the independent and dependent variables. So, these figures 0.648 also show the moderate correlation between authentic leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. So, the conclusion from the data forecast that there is a moderate correlation (0.648) between Authentic Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Owing to independent variable, R Square value is the shift division of dependent variable. It is explicitly mentioned in the results from the above table that working environments have a significant effect on worker satisfaction. The above table explicitly shows that OCB improvements of 41.9 percent are due to genuine leadership and that the remaining part can be credited to others Sources/Rounds.

**Table 3. Regression Result of Model 2**

Model	R	R square	B	P	F
1	0.569	0.324	0.569	0.000	125.24

Source: Data processing

Table 3 shows the result from the second hypothesis. The value of R suggests that there is a mild relationship between genuine leadership and psychological possession. Table 3 shows that R square is equivalent to 0.324. It is explicitly mentioned that Authentic leadership has a modest effect on the ownership of psychology. Thus, the research results indicate a mild association (0.569) among Authentic leadership, and psychological ownership has been moderately associated with that.

**Table 4 Regression**

Model	R	R square	B	P	F
1	0.612	0.375	0.612	0.000	156.435

Source: Data processing

Table 3 specifically shows that relational ownership shifts of 32.4 percent are due to Authentic leadership and the remaining part can be attributed to other sources/reasons. P-value is stated as .000, meaning that the true p-value is smaller than.001 and is rounded off in this situation. Thus, it is inferred that the null hypothesis H0 would be denied i.e. Authentic Leadership was essentially not strongly linked to psychological Ownership, the results confirm H2 hypothesis. Good relationships exist between Psychological Ownership and Authentic Leadership.

From Table 4, the value of R about 0.612 indicates that there is a mild association between psychological ownership and actions of corporate/organizational citizenship. In the results from Table 4, R square is equivalent to 0.375, it is explicitly mentioned that the quality of working life has a significant effect on the output of the workers. The table above explicitly shows that 37.5 percent improvements in the actions of organizational citizenship are related to psychological ownership and other sources/reasons can be related to the remaining section. P-value is stated as .000, meaning that the true p-value is smaller than.001 and is rounded off in this situation. Thus, it is inferred that the null hypothesis H0 would be denied i.e. psychological ownership was essentially not directly linked to the actions of organizational citizenship behavior, the results support hypothesis H3. Good relationships occur between organizational citizenship and psychological ownership.

**Table 5 Regression**

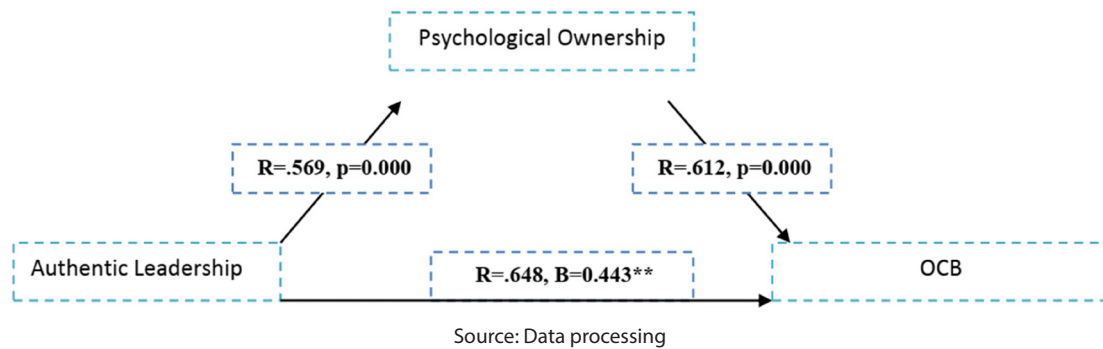
Testing steps	R	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change	P-Value	B
<b>Analysis 1</b> X=Authentic leadership Y=OCB	0.648	0.419	0.000	0.648	
<b>Analysis 2</b> X=Authentic leadership Y=Psychological ownership	0.569	0.324	0.000	0.569	
<b>Analysis 3</b> X=Psychological ownership Y=OCB	0.612	0.375	0.000	0.612	
Analysis 4					
Block 1: Psychological ownership	0.612	0.375	0.375	0.000	0.360**
Block 2: Authentic leadership	0.712	0.507	0.132	0.000	0.443**

Note:\*p<0.01; \*\*p<0.001  
Source: Data processing

Firstly, regression is done by considering authentic leadership as independent variables and employee performance as dependent variables, which give the positive and significant association. In the second step, authentic leadership is considered an independent variable to affect the quality of work life. In the third step, quality of work-life is regressed on employee performance. As shown in the second row, the results of this regression tell there is a significant relationship among variables (See Table 5). Figure 2 shows the relationship among variables in this research.



Figure 2. The Relationship among variables



The object of the study was to observe the mediating role of psychological ownership between the relationship of authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. The outcomes demonstrate a positive relationship between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. The study's findings reveal that psychological ownership partially mediates the relation between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior among the employees of the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. There is a considerable relation between authentic leadership and psychological ownership. Positive relation has been found between authentic leadership and psychological ownership.

This research uses the data collected from the employees of the telecommunication sector of Pakistan to examine the mediating role of psychological ownership on employees. The results show a positive relationship between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior. According to the study's findings, psychological ownership partially mediates the relation between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior among the employees of the telecommunication sector of Pakistan. There is a significant relationship between authentic leadership and psychological ownership. Positive relation has been found between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior.

There is a relationship between authentic leadership style and psychological ownership. The literature supports it (Kara et al., 2013). So the hypothesis is accepted that there is a significant relationship between authentic leadership style and psychological ownership. There is a significant relationship. When leaders value the employee's needs, they increase psychological ownership. The relationship between authentic leadership and psychological ownership is solid and significant. It is consistent with previous literature in which it was considered that authentic leadership has a strong positive relationship with psychological ownership (Alok, 2014; Afsar et al., 2020). Employee considers their leader authentic, and they enhance the sense of ownership. The relationship between authentic leadership and organizational citizenship behavior is solid and significant. It is consistent with previous literature in which it was considered that authentic leadership has a strong positive relation with Organizational citizenship behavior (Alok, 2014; Afsar et al., 2020). Employees consider their leader authentic and look more committed to the organizational goals.

Psychological ownership and Organizational citizenship behavior have a significant relationship. Research in the literature shows a beneficial relationship between psychological

ownership and employees' attitudes about their company (Wagner et al., 2003; Olckers & Koekmoer, 2021). Psychological ownership has a significant impact on the organizational citizenship behavior of employees. It is consistent with the previous research. Psychological ownership showed a more significant impact on organizational citizenship behavior. If the employees have been provided a sense of psychological ownership, they tend to enhance their Organizational citizenship behavior. Tsai (2021) has shown a substantial positive relationship between psychological ownership and organizational citizenship, attitudes at work, and actions in their research.

Psychological ownership mediates the relationship between authentic Leadership Style and Organizational citizenship behavior. The finding of this study is to support the mediation effect of psychological ownership. According to research by Podsakoff et al. (2000), Kuncoro & Wilbowo (2018), leadership behaviors positively influence corporate citizenship behavior. The influence of psychological ownership on organizational citizenship behavior was investigated by (Ozler et al., 2008; Jnaneswar & Ranjit, 2021). According to their findings, there is a clear link between psychological ownership and organizational citizenship behavior, meaning that as workers' sentiments of psychological ownership grow, so do their displays of organizational citizenship behaviors.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research paper adds importance to current studies by explaining the antecedents and implications of genuine leadership and the psychological ownership of telecom sector employees. The current study intends to determine the relationship between the leadership style, psychological ownership, and its ultimate effect on Organizational citizenship behavior. A topology of the independent variable named authentic leadership style is for boosting psychological ownership in a change of organizational citizenship behavior. For data collection, the targeted population of the telecom sector is selected to check their psychological ownership and organizational citizenship behavior outcomes. The organizations selected for the study are PTCL, Mobilink, Zong in Lahore. These organizations are initially contacted for data collection. Detailed analysis of the theoretical model is developed for all organizations.

A leader should focus on its authentic style to enhance organizational citizenship behavior. Based on data analysis, it can be suggested that it is quite helpful for managers. First, if leaders in the organization adopt the authentic leadership style and promote the employee's psychological ownership needs, employees feel engaged in Organizational citizenship behavior and will be more dedicated to organizational goals. Second, there should be a plan to fulfill the employee's needs. Third, there should be a mechanism to promote the sense of psychological ownership among employees. Fourth, in the era of continuous change and a diverse workforce, there must be employees who can perform better, which is one of the most important factors predicting the employees in the organization. Moreover, this study highlights that organizations that focus on boosting up psychological ownership have improved Organizational citizenship behavior than those employees who do not heed these terms.

The future study should focus on the data collection from the managers to focus on Organizational citizenship behavior. Self-rating about the Organizational citizenship behavior was used. Data collection can be made by the leaders how they feel about it. The level of psychological ownership varies from person to person, one person may work better by the feeling of ownership, and one may not. Data analysis can be improved by using more sophisticated techniques.

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