# The Effect of Ethical and Altruistic Leadership Behaviors on Job Performance and Turnover Intention: The Case of a Public Hospital

Etik ve Alturistik Liderlik Davranışlarının İş Performansı ve İşten Ayrılma Niyetine Etkisi: Bir Kamu Hastanesi Örneği

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	ÖZET			
Anahtar Kelimeler:	Çalışma, bir kamu hastanesi örnekleminde etik ve alturstik liderlik davranışlarının iş performansı ve işi ayrılma niyetine etkisinin incelenmesidir. Bu çalışmanın amacı sağlık kurumlarında etik ve alturistik lider			
Etik Liderlik,	dayranışlarının sağlık çalışanlarının iş performansı ve işten ayrılma niyetine etkisini incelemektir. Bu amaç doğrultusunda 1 Ocak-1 Şubat 2024 tarihlerinde Kayseri ilinde gerçekleştirilen çalışmaya 346 sağlık çalışanı			
Alturistik Liderlik,	katılmış olup veriler anket tekniği ile toplanmıştır. Araştırmada veri toplama aracı olarak "Etik Liderlik", "Alturistik Liderlik", "İş Performansı" ve "İşten Ayrılma Niyeti" ölçekleri kullanılmıştır. Araştırma			
İş Performansı,	sonucunda etik ve alturistik liderlik davranışlarının sağlık çalışanlarının iş performansları üzerinde pozitif			
İşten Ayrılma Niyeti,	yönde, işten ayrılma niyetleri üzerinde ise negatif yönde etkisinin olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Çalışmada elde edilen bulguların sağlık hizmetleri liderlik alanyazınına ve sağlık yöneticilerine uygulamaya yönelik önemli katkılar sağlayacağı değerlendirilmektedir. Ayrıca bu kapsamda yapılacak yeni çalışmalar için de bir veri			
Sağlık Çalışanları,	oluşturacaktır.			
Keywords:	ABSTRACT			
Reyworus.	The study examines the effects of ethical and altruistic leadership behaviors on job performance and turnover			
Ethical Leadership,	intentions in a public hospital sample. The aim of this study was to examine the effect of ethical and altruistic leadership behaviors in healthcare institutions on the job performance and intention to leave of healthcare			
Altruistic Leadership,	professionals. For this purpose, 346 healthcare workers participated in the study, which was carried out in Kayseri between January 1 and February 1, 2024, and the data were collected via a survey technique. The			
Job Performance,	"ethical leadership", "altruistic leadership", "job performance" and "turnover intention" scales were used as the data collection tools. This research revealed that ethical and altruistic leadership behaviors have a			
Turnover Intention,	positive effect on the job performance of healthcare workers and a negative effect on their turnover intentions. The findings obtained in the study will provide important contributions to the health services			
Healthcare	leadership literature and to the practice of health managers. It will also provide data for new studies to be			
Professionals,	conducted in this context.			

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# **1. INTRODUCTION**

Healthcare institutions are highly complex organizations operating in a matrix structure. The employment of healthcare professionals in various fields sets healthcare institutions apart from other businesses. This situation increases the importance of management activities for businesses and emphasizes the significance of leadership in managing this matrix structure. Leaders, while administering their organizations, are individuals who persuade individuals within the organization, establish rules without relying on the power of their position, and are not questioned for leadership by the group. Additionally, they are individuals who can create common goals for the group, direct them toward objectives, establish their own vision and ensure its pursuit, and motivate others along this goal-oriented line to achieve success (Ceylan, 2011:111). In a competitive environment of constantly changing and evolving conditions, healthcare institutions, the presence of multiple professional groups and areas of expertise leads to complexity in addressing emerging problems and increases the need for professional support. At this point, healthcare managers need to influence healthcare professionals from different fields to act in line with common goals, particularly through their leadership behaviors during the pandemic period.

The success of healthcare institutions is directly proportional to the success of healthcare workers. A decrease in employee job performance, lack of focus on tasks, absenteeism, and intention to leave the job will lead to the loss of experienced staff for the organization, resulting in various costs. Therefore, healthcare managers need to meet the desires, needs, and expectations of employees and give necessary importance to this issue. This is because ensuring patient satisfaction and loyalty, increasing employee performance, improving service quality effectiveness and efficiency, and preventing turnover intention require ensuring the satisfaction and loyalty of healthcare workers, whom we evaluate as internal customers (Şeker Öner and Büyükyılmaz, 2021:2). Thus, increasing the profitability and performance of the organization will help it achieve a competitive advantage. One of the important factors affecting this process is ethical and altruistic leadership. When leaders demonstrate ethical behaviors, act fairly, provide assistance without expecting anything in return, show sacrifice, and guide and mentor employees, this enhances employee satisfaction and loyalty and reduces turnover intentions. In this regard, organizations whose leaders exhibit ethical and altruistic leadership behaviors can succeed in their respective industries (Palanski et al., 2014; Erdoğan Aracı, 2019:18; Zheltoukhova, 2016; Özçelikçi and Ocak, 2020:281; Konan and Gedik, 2019:78).

In the literature review, no adequate and up-to-date study in which ethical leadership, altruistic leadership, job performance and turnover intention were used together in the health services sector was found. Accordingly, this study was conducted to reveal the effects of ethical and altruistic leadership behaviours on job performance and turnover intention. In line with this purpose, this study offers fresh insights for businesses seeking to establish a sustainable competitive advantage by enhancing the performance of healthcare workers in health institutions operating in the health services sector in Kayseri Province, thereby filling a significant gap in the existing literature. In addition, this study will make significant contributions to both the leadership literature and the literature on leadership in health services.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Ethical Leadership

Ethics, which is a concept that addresses the philosophical dimension of morality on the basis of truth and honesty, investigates whether human behaviour is right or wrong and provides a basic framework between good and bad in this direction (Akdoğan and Demirtaş, 2014:109; Brown and Trevino, 2006:595). Ethics covers all moral principles that form the basis of human behaviour (Öztürk Başpınar, 2020:471). To create an ethical environment, leadership behaviours are decisive (Dickson, 2001:347). Leadership is defined as a social influence process in which a group is brought together for certain purposes and mobilized in line with goals (Zel, 2001:91; Boztosun, et al., 2022:385).

Ethical leadership is defined as ensuring that followers exhibit behavior in line with moral norms in both individual and organizational relationships and adhering to ethical rules in interpersonal relationships (Brown et al., 2005:120). Brown et al. (2005) explained the concept of ethical leadership based on social learning theory. This theory serves as a guide for understanding how ethical leaders influence followers and why they are

influenced (Brown and Trevino, 2006:597). Accordingly, leaders' behaviors can be observed and learned from, making them role models in the eyes of employees (Mayer et al., 2012).

Akdoğan and Demirtaş (2014) stated that ethical leadership is associated with honesty, mutual justice, consultation, and reliability. An ethical leader is perceived as someone who demonstrates attitudes and behaviors within the framework of moral rules; who prioritizes the desires, needs, and expectations of his or her followers; and who is fair while protecting the rights of his or her followers (Zhu et al., 2004:18). The fundamental source of power for this type of leadership is based on moral and ethical authority (Akdoğan and Demirtaş, 2014:109). Within the organization, it is the leader's responsibility to manage people's behaviors and bring forth ethical norms or principles. In this regard, the role of ethical leadership is critically important for managers to achieve effective leadership and sustainable organizational success (Çıraklı et al., 2014:54). Ethical leadership emphasizes the importance of leaders being honest, setting ethical standards, making ethical decisions, caring for employees, considering their needs, and demonstrating ethical behavior (Brown et al., 2005:117-119).

## 2.2. Altruistic Leadership

The word "*altruism*" in Turkish is derived from the Latin word "*alterihuic*", meaning "*for others*". The concept of altruism was first used by Auguste Comte in the 1830s to denote showing interest and care for others (Green, 2004). According to Durkheim, altruism is defined as being able to act voluntarily without personal gain or the expectation of an external reward (Topses, 2012:61). Batson (1991) defines altruism as a motivating process aimed at increasing the well-being of others (Batson et al., 1991:161). At the core of the concept of altruism lies the behavior of making selfless sacrifices and helping others to be happy. Altruistic leadership is defined as guiding employees toward specific goals by improving the physical and social health of others (Miller, 2005:4).

In another definition, altruistic leadership is described as a leadership style where the leader is motivated to care for and be concerned about the development of his or her followers without seeking any personal benefit (Twemlow, 2001:450). An altruistic leader is someone who cares about the well-being of his or her followers, strives to help them even if it goes against his or her own interests, and tries to make them happy by making any sacrifices necessary. An altruistic leader empathizes with their followers, understands them, acts justly, prevents injustices, and does not allow their followers to be oppressed or exploited (Konan and Gedik, 2019:77). Studies on altruistic behavior have shown that individuals help those in need without any external incentives or motivations (Weiss et al., 1973:390).

In particular, modern organizations provide suitable infrastructure for managers to exhibit altruistic behavior (Sosik et al., 2008:396). When leadership models are evaluated, altruistic behavior holds a significant place at the core of many leadership styles, such as servant, authentic, charismatic, and transformational leadership (Salas Vallina et al., 2018:862). Although altruistic leadership was initially proposed as an element of servant leadership, it has evolved into a distinct leadership style over the historical process. The main difference between them is that while servant leadership focuses on helping behavior, altruistic leadership focuses on the motivation underlying it (Miller et al., 2005:5). Altruistic leadership helps leaders create an atmosphere of interpersonal trust, integrate employees' personal goals with organizational goals, and foster the development of organizational culture (Chin, 2011; Guest, 2017:27). Additionally, it increases employees' job satisfaction, motivation, job performance, and organizational commitment while reducing negative behaviors such as turnover intention (Zhu et al., 2004:19; Mansur and Uysal, 2021:332).

#### **2.3. Turnover Intention**

Turnover intention is defined as a negative action that employees exhibit when they are dissatisfied with the working conditions of their job (Rusbult et al., 1988:599). According to Barlett (1999), turnover intention is a conscious decision made by employees to leave their jobs (Barlett, 1999:337). The intention expressed by employees to leave their job goes through a certain process before turning into actual turnover behavior. This process is influenced by various factors, such as current working conditions, salary, organizational structure, and leader behavior. In this regard, employees evaluate whether leaving their job would be beneficial, compare their current job with alternative options, and then develop turnover intentions (Mobley, 1977).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that turnover intention often culminates in actual turnover behavior (Baruch et al., 2016; Seston et al., 2009). Consequently, employee turnover leads to the loss of a skilled

workforce for the organization, necessitates the recruitment of new employees, and entails dealing with issues related to the training and orientation of new hires (Şahin, 2011:277). In addition to the increased costs associated with recruitment and training due to employee turnover, this also results in decreased motivation among other employees, reduced job performance, decreased service quality, and decreased customer satisfaction (Büyükyılmaz and Çakmak, 2014:85; Cho et al., 2009:374; Yılmaz and Halıcı, 2010:96).

One of the most significant factors influencing employee turnover intention is leadership. In particular, when leaders demonstrate behaviors in accordance with moral and ethical standards, they positively influence employees' attitudes and behaviors toward work, consequently reducing turnover intention. Numerous studies have shown that leadership behaviors decrease turnover intention (Telli et al., 2012; Şahin, 2011; Ferris, 1985; Zhang et al., 2013; Elçi et al., 2012).

# 2.4. Job Performance

The concept of performance, derived from French, is used in Turkish to denote actions and achievements. Performance encompasses all activities that an individual must demonstrate in line with the organization's objectives (Rotundo and Sackett, 2002:68). Another definition describes performance as the degree to which a task, conducted through employees, achieves the objectives and goals of the organization (Çöl, 2008:36). Performance is a crucial concept for businesses to survive in their respective sectors and achieve sustainable competitive advantage through the implementation of new strategies (Özbozkurt, 2018:17-19). When evaluating employees' job performance levels, it is important not to be biased and to accurately share the results, allowing employees to identify their strengths and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats arising from their environment, to become more effective and efficient (Yelboğa, 2006:199).

Employees who demonstrate high performance in their jobs show increased loyalty to the organization, job satisfaction levels, and level of specialization in their work (Denizli, 2022:165). In this regard, they gain a significant advantage in achieving the organization's objectives and goals (Kurt, 2013). Job performance, a critical factor in ensuring fast, high-quality, and efficient service delivery, is influenced by individual, organizational, and environmental factors, either positively or negatively. In this regard, implementing performance management at both the individual and organizational levels based on predetermined criteria is an important tool for achieving positive outcomes (Bingöl, 2013). The objectives of performance management in a business include creating an organizational climate and culture, defining employees' talents and responsibilities, developing common goals, evaluating employees' individual performances, and providing feedback (Findikçı, 2009).

For job performance to reach the desired level, managers should not overlook the successes and efforts of employees, provide necessary praise and rewards, make employees feel valued, and emphasize the importance of increasing satisfaction and loyalty levels through encouragement (Denizli et al., 2022:946). Examining the relevant literature, a study by B1y1k et al. (2017) aimed to investigate the impact of ethical leadership behaviors on employees' job performance and job satisfaction. The study revealed a significant and positive relationship between ethical leadership, job performance, and job satisfaction. Uçar et al. (2020) conducted a study on healthcare professionals working in a private hospital to examine the relationship between altruistic leadership and turnover intention. The research revealed a significant negative relationship between altruistic leadership and turnover intention.

Salas-Vallina et al. (2018) investigated the impact of altruistic leadership on nurses' innovative behaviors. The study concluded that altruistic leadership plays a significant role in promoting nurses' innovative behaviors. Alper Ay and Keleş (2017) conducted a study to explore the relationships between healthcare managers' interactive and transformational leadership styles, job performance, and turnover intention. The results showed that interactive and transformational leadership styles increase job performance and reduce turnover intention. In a study by Demirtaş and Akdoğan (2015) aiming to elucidate the relationship between ethical leadership and turnover intention, it was found that ethical leadership has a significant negative relationship with turnover intention.

In a study conducted by Avolio and Locke (2002), the impact of egoistic and altruistic leadership behaviors on the motivation and performance of leaders and followers was investigated. The research revealed that altruistic leadership behaviors have a significant positive effect on employee motivation and performance. Ülbeği et al. (2018) conducted a study on employees in the textile sector to examine the effects of ethical leadership on job satisfaction, turnover intention, and organizational commitment. The study concluded that ethical leadership

behaviors have a positive impact on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, while they have a negative impact on turnover intention. Sökmen (2019) conducted a study on nurses to investigate the relationships among ethical leadership, organizational trust, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. The research revealed that ethical leadership has a significant impact on organizational trust, job satisfaction, and turnover intention.

# **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

## **3.1. Purpose and Importance of the Research**

This study was conducted to evaluate the impact of ethical and altruistic leadership behaviors on job performance and turnover intention in healthcare institutions. In line with the review of the relevant literature, it is evaluated that the study will contribute to the relevant literature with up-to-date data on the subject, will be a reference study that health managers can benefit from for practice, and will provide important information in academic studies in the relevant field.

## 3.2. Research Model and Hypotheses

In this regard, the research model and hypotheses are as follows.



- Hypothesis 1: Ethical leadership behaviors positively affect job performance.
- Hypothesis 2: Ethical leadership behaviors negatively affect turnover intention.
- Hypothesis 3: Altruistic leadership behaviors positively affect job performance.
- Hypothesis 4: Altruistic leadership behaviors negatively affect turnover intention.

## **3.3. Research Population and Sampling**

The survey technique was used as the data collection tool, and the quantitative research method was employed as the research approach. The population of the study consisted of 3500 healthcare professionals working in a public hospital in Kayseri Province. Accordingly, the sample size representing the population was 346 using the sample size formula developed by Özdamar (2013). A simple random sampling method was utilized for sampling.

## 3.4. Data Collection Method of the Research

In this research, the survey technique was used as the data collection tool. In the first part of the survey, the "*Ethical Leadership Scale*", which consists of 10 statements developed by Brown et al. (2005), was utilized. The second part of the survey included the "*Altruistic Leadership Scale*" which comprises 8 statements developed by Zheltoukhova (2016) and validated in Turkish by Çakmak et al. (2019). The third part of the survey incorporated the "*Job Performance Scale*" which consists of 4 statements developed by Sigler and Pearson (2000) and validated in Turkish by Çöl (2008). Finally, the fourth part of the survey included the "*Turnover Intention Scale*" which consists of 4 statements developed by Rosin and Korabik (1991) and validated in Turkish by Tanriöver (2005). All scales used a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree (1) - Disagree (2) - Neither Agree nor Disagree (3) - Agree (4) - Strongly Agree (5)). Additionally, the last section of the survey included 5 statements to determine the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age group, title, education level, and duration of employment in the institution.

#### 3.5. Data Analysis Methods and Reliability of the Research

The statistical analysis of the obtained data was conducted using SPSS 22. The Cronbach's alpha values for the scales were measured as follows: 0.963 for the ethical leadership scale, 0.958 for the alturistic leadership scale, 0.940 for the job performance scale, and 0.945 for the turnover intention scale. These results indicate that the scales used in the study are highly reliable. According to the normality analysis, the skewness and kurtosis values of the data were found to be within  $\pm 1$ , indicating a normal distribution. Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between scale scores, and regression analysis was employed to determine the causal effect. This study was prepared in accordance with scientific research and publication ethics principles.

#### 4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distributions of the participants according to their demographic characteristics.

Variables	n	%	
Gender			
Woman	171	49 4	
Male	175	50,6	
Age Group			
18-25	96	27,7	
26-35	134	38,7	
36-45	83	24,0	
46 and above	33	9,5	
Title			
Doctor	51	14,7	
Nurse/Midwife	109	31,5	
Health Technician	132	38,2	
Health Officer	54	15,6	
<b>Education Status</b>			
High School	65	18,8	
Associate Degree	57	165	
Bachelor's Degree	143	41,3	
Master's Degree and above	81	23,4	
Working Time			
Less than 1 year	46	13,3	
1-5 years	73	21,1	
6-10 years	114	32,9	
11 years and above	113	32,7	

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

n:346

Of the 346 healthcare workers who participated in the study, 50.6% were male, 38.7% were 26-35 years old, 41.3% were university graduates, 32.2% held the title of a health technician, and 32.9% had 6-10 years of working experience.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis of the Variables

Variables	x	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4
1.Ethical Leadership	3,42	0,993	1			
2.Altruistic Leadership	3,42	0,996	0,927**	1		
3.Job Performance	3,59	1,096	0,620**	0,604**	1	
4. Turnover intention	2,47	1,120	-0,654**	-0,645**	-0,517**	1

In Table 2, correlation analysis revealed that at the 0.01 significance level, there is a positive relationship between ethical leadership behaviors and job performance ( $\beta$ =0.620; p<0.01) and a negative relationship with turnover intention ( $\beta$ =-0.654; p<0.01). Similarly, there is a positive relationship between altruistic leadership

behaviors and job performance ( $\beta$ =0.604; p<0.01) and a negative relationship with turnover intention ( $\beta$ =-0.645;
p<0.01). Table 3 presents the results of the regression analysis that tested the research hypotheses.

Variables	Model 1a(β)	Model 1b(β)	Model 2a(β)	Model 2b(β)
	EL-JP*	EL-TUR*	AL-JP*	AL-TUR*
Ethical Leadership	620	-0,654		
Altruistic Leadership			0,604	-0,645
Adj R <sup>2</sup>	0,382	0,426	0,363	0,414
Sig.	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
Durbin Watson	1,531	1,731	1,447	1,649
F(df)	214,602	257,395	197,771	244,966

Table	3	Regression	Δnal	veie
Table	э.	Regression	Alla	VSIS

Dependent Variable\*= Job Performance (JP), Turnover Intention (TUR)

\*\* p<0.01; EL: Ethical leadership; AL: Altruistic leadership; JP: Job performance; TUR: Turnover intention

According to the results obtained in Table 3, there is no autocorrelation based on the Durbin-Watson values. The regression analysis results reveal that ethical leadership positively influences job performance ( $\beta$ =0.620; p<0.01) and negatively affects turnover intention ( $\beta$ =-0.654; p<0.01). Therefore, hypotheses 1 and 2 are accepted. These findings show that health care workers exhibit higher job performance and reduced turnover intentions with ethical leadership behaviors. In particular, ethical values such as trust, honesty and equality exhibited by the leader increase employees' commitment and decrease their turnover intentions. Similarly, altruistic leadership positively affects job performance ( $\beta$ =0.604; p<0.01) and negatively influences turnover intention ( $\beta$ =-0.645; p<0.01). Consequently, Hypotheses 3 and 4 are accepted. These findings reveal that selfless and gratuitous alturistic leadership behaviors exhibited by leaders increase the performance of health care workers and reduce their turnover intentions. In line with these findings, it is seen that ethical leadership leadership behaviors have a stronger effect on employees.

#### **5. CONCLUSION**

This study aimed to investigate the effects of ethical and altruistic leadership behaviors on job performance and turnover intention. The majority of the participants were in the 26-35 year age group, held the title of health technician, had received undergraduate-level education, had 6-10 years of work experience, and were predominantly male healthcare workers.

This study revealed that ethical leadership behaviors positively influence job performance and negatively influence turnover intention, thus confirming hypotheses H1 and H2. Ethical leadership behaviors, such as trust, collaboration, and honesty, were found to enhance healthcare workers' job performance, strengthen their commitment, and consequently reduce negative behaviors such as turnover intention. These findings are consistent with the results of studies conducted by B1y1k et al. (2017), Sökmen (2019), Ülbeği et al. (2018), and Demirtaş and Akdoğan (2015). As a result, it was determined that altruistic leadership behaviors positively influence job performance and negatively influence turnover intention, thus confirming hypotheses H3 and H4. Behaviors such as altruism, selflessness, and guidance provided by leaders without expecting anything in return were found to enhance healthcare workers' job performance and reduce their intention to leave the job. These findings are consistent with the results of studies conducted by Uçar et al. (2020), Avolio and Locke (2002), and Algaraawi and Naji (2023).

The findings obtained in the study provide significant contributions to the leadership literature on healthcare services. In this regard, it can be stated that the positive leadership behaviors exhibited by managers in healthcare institutions, leading to an increase in healthcare workers' job performance and a decrease in turnover rates, will positively enhance the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of provided healthcare services. Especially in the healthcare services sector, where the output is human health, adopting leadership behaviors that are in line with ethical values and supportive of employees will significantly increase both job performance and employee commitment. In this context, planners and policymakers need to develop leadership policies focusing on ethical and altruistic leadership, organize training sessions, establish a reward system that encourages leadership behaviors, and create a strong organizational culture. Additionally, it is considered important to establish feedback mechanisms for measuring, evaluating, and disseminating the effects of ethical and altruistic leadership behaviors.

This study is limited to healthcare workers serving in a public hospital in Kayseri Province and the measurement tool used. For future studies to achieve more comprehensive results, it is recommended that similar research be conducted in different regions and sectors. By comparing the results of studies conducted in different regions and sectors with the results of this study, similarities or differences can be identified, and their long-term effects can be examined. In conclusion, the adoption and implementation of ethical and altruistic leadership behaviors by healthcare managers will create a healthier work environment by increasing job performance and commitment, thereby contributing significantly to organizational success by providing sustainable competitive advantage in the long run.

#### YAZAR BEYANI / AUTHORS' DECLARATION:

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#### YAZAR KATKILARI / AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS:

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