

## The Influence of Ethical Training on Employees' Ethical Behaviour in Tanzania: The Mediating Role of Perceived Organisational Support

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the influence of ethical training outcomes dimensions (compliance with group norms, ethical knowledge, and the ability to address ethical issues) on employees' ethical behaviour in Tanzania, with perceived organisational support as a mediating factor. The social exchange theory was used as a framework that guides the interdependence of organizational components and employees' behaviours. The study adopted a quantitative research approach and utilized a structured questionnaire to collect data. A total of 129 respondents were selected through stratified random sampling. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used for analysis to understand the complex relationship between variables using SPSS AMOS software. Findings revealed that perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between compliance group norms on ethical behavior. Conversely, the perceived organisational support does not mediate the influence of ethical. knowledge on ethical behaviour. Furthermore, resolving ethical issues had a direct influence on ethical behaviour, and the relationship is mediated by perceived organizational support. It concluded that ethical training plays a significant role in impacting employees' ethical behavior, and human resources departments bear the primary responsibility of ensuring perceived organizational support through timely ethical training.

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## 1.0 Introduction

In modern organisations, where there is a highly competitive business environment, pressure from both internal and external sources remains noticeable, and ethical concerns remain significant issues (Sekerka, 2009). Such pressures tend to affect how individuals think and act, corresponding to pressures from their bosses, job demands, workloads, and organisational norms, rules, and regulations. To ensure balance, adhering to ethics is recognised as a preventive measure against political pressure that ultimately leads to undesired behaviour. Garofalo (2003) highlighted that ethical training programmes must be well-structured to ensure obedience to laws and procedures and increase trust between citizens and institutions. However, Mwilongo *et al.* (2024) indicated that the flourishing of unethical practices in the private sector and public services indicates how little emphasis is placed on actual ethical training and programmes, while alarming the potential for ethical awareness through employee ethical training. Mwilongo *et al.* (2024) expanded in detail that when employees engage in timely ethical training, it reduces their likelihood of committing undesired behaviours. Kancharla and Dadhich (2021), who claim that ethical training is the primary method for increasing employees' ethical decision-making and conduct, support this view. Additionally, Manyaka and Sebola (2013) agree that when ethical training is guaranteed, it is possible to shape employees' attitudes, behaviour, competencies, and skills to observe high standards of ethical conduct. Similarly, Remišová *et al.* (2019) show that ethical training ensures standards of behaviour required among employees for the desired performance. To ensure proper and timely ethical training, effective training programmes need to be in place, just as they are in other kinds of training within the organisation. Nevertheless, Roy *et al.* (2024) found organisations with well-structured training programmes are likely to shape employees on the best way to act and deliver services to the agreed standards. This training remained significant for decades due to the nature of daily routines embedded with dilemmas that affect employees' actions and working

behaviour. While Jing & Yan (2022) show that an organisation that ignores ethical training for its employees is at higher risk of inviting unintended behaviours, Mwilongo *et al.* (2024b) revealed that those behaviours, such as fraud, corruption, and harassment among employees, among others, may jeopardise organisational excellence. This implies that employees' contributions are undervalued due to the absence of organisational support for ethical training, which is essential for safeguarding their well-being and health in the workplace.

Empirical evidence leaves no doubt about the crucial role of employee training in fostering individual and organisational performance. However, Sekerka (2009) pointed out that ensuring ethical actions through training remains a challenge for many organisations and those responsible for training and development. Many employers consider ethical training intensive when an employee is hired for the first time, where some organisational values, rules, and regulations are shared during the induction period (Sekerka, 2009). However, Neill and Bowen (2021) disagree with the myth that ethical training is essential to employees who perform normal operations only and that they don't need it after confirmation. Al Halbusi *et al.* (2021) and Eva *et al.* (2020) emphasise by showing that ethical training is required not only by employees but even leaders in senior managerial positions. This is because ethical training is required as long as employees exist within the organisation, and as employees stay longer, they tend to normalise some actions and behaviours that are ethically unacceptable (Kaptein, 2023). Therefore, it is the sole responsibility of employers to ensure their organisation has ethical training programmes that can be implemented throughout and remind employees of rules and regulations and their chance to comply with ethical behaviour. Despite previous studies that have been conducted, this study remains crucial for examining how perceived organisational support mediates the relationship between ethical training and employees' ethical behaviour in complex organisations, especially in Tanzanian public organisations. This study focuses on understanding how the dimensions of ethical training outcomes (compliance with group norms,

ethical knowledge, and ability to resolve ethical issues) influence employees' ethical behaviour through perceived organisational support.

## 2.0 Literature Review

### 2.1 Social Exchange Theory (SET)

The social exchange theory (SET) was introduced in 1958 by George Homans, whose emphasis was on the cost-benefit analysis and rewards (Homans, 1958). The theory was further improved and refined by Emerson and Blau (1962–1964) to reflect modern, complex social relations with organisational dependence. The theory holds the assumption that social behaviour is the function of an exchange process, as individuals within the particular social setting seek to maximise rewards (companionship, financial gain, or support) and minimise costs (time spent, efforts, or emotional investment). Stafford and Kuiper (2021) highlighted that individuals are highly motivated by relationships that offer the most favourable balance between rewards and costs, which makes social behaviour transactional. This implies that to ensure the reciprocal exchange of ethical behaviours among employees, organisations have a sole responsibility of providing meaningful ethical training to their employees. When employees perceive that the organisation values them and supports them, they feel a sense of obligation to reciprocate with positive attitudes and behaviour to influence organisational performance. In this regard, Majka (2024) and Sharp (2025) pointed out that ethical training remains relevant as it fosters the ability to resolve ethical issues, imparts ethical knowledge to employees and enhances compliance with other group norms in the organisation as a standard of ethical behaviours.

### 2.2 Ethical Behaviour

Chaddha and Agrawal (2023) define ethical behaviour as the application of a systematic study of moral principles (honesty, integrity, respect, accountability, among others) that are used to distinguish between what is wrong and what is right. In this regard, the established principles are used to determine what is a right and wrong action while providing the best ways

to avoid unnecessary kinds of behaviour. Treviño *et al.* (2006) depict that ethical behaviour must align with corporate codes, supporting stakeholder trust, to mitigate the gradual damage of organisational culture over time. This acknowledges that right and wrong action is based on the interests of members in the given environment. Vu Lan Oanh *et al.* (2024) agreed that ethical behaviour is considered to be the fair or proper standard of conduct between parties in a particular situation. Furthermore, the contradictions among ethical theories such as deontology (rules, principles, and duty), virtue (personal traits), and utilitarianism (action consequence) in determining what is right and wrong pose the note that what is considered ethical (moral right) at one point may not necessarily be right in another environment or culture, as perceived in ethical relativism. Therefore, ethical behaviour, as the acceptable behaviour, may vary based on the culture, as well as the profession. However, there are some common values which tend to be interwoven among professions, such as a code of ethics, which sets the path for acceptable behaviours (i.e., integrity, professionalism, respect, transparency, and accountability), among others. Therefore, we define ethical behaviour as a collective action that is consistently acceptable as a moral principle to people reflecting their norms, rules, regulations, and laws of the given community.

In Tanzania, public service ethical behaviour remains a concern, as do other organisations around the world. Despite the existing legal frameworks (i.e., the United Republic of Tanzania (1977), Standing Order for Public Service No. 493 of 2009, Public Leadership Code of Ethics Act of 1995, Public Service Act of 2002, Public Service Regulation of 2003, Code of Ethics and Conduct for Public Servants of 2005, and the Prevention and Combating of Corruption Act (CAP. 329 R.E. 2019)) guiding employees on the best way to act, still unethical practices occur. The Zanzibar Anti-Corruption and Economic Crime (ZAECA) report shows that out of 200 reported cases in 2022, 135 instances were related to corruption and unethical behaviour (Said, 2022). This indicates the occurrence of unethical practices such as corruption and its

forms, absenteeism, misuse of public power and property, conflict of interest, favouritism, among others; it shows that the application of rules, while isolating other factors (i.e., ethical training), cannot be sufficient to foster ethical behaviours among employees in the workplace (Lameck, 2018; Mwilongo *et al.*, 2024b). This phenomenon is because individuals choose to act in ways that they judge to be right, even when faced with personal cost or temptation. Thus, embracing ethical training among employees reduces the likelihood of employees committing unethical practices because it promotes a common understanding of the rules, regulations, and laws in place.

### 2.3 Hypotheses Development

#### 2.3.1 Ethical Training and Employees' Ethical Behaviour

Ethical training programmes are designed to educate employees on ethical conduct and familiarise them with organisational values and moral standards in the workplace. The primary goal is to foster employees' awareness of maintaining ethical standards while improving their decision-making ability regarding appropriate action (right or wrong) to reduce undesired behaviours. According to Trevino *et al.* (2006) and Brown *et al.* (2005), continuous ethical education can increase the chance of flourishing of ethical behaviours among employees, and thus there is a positive correlation between ethical training and employee behaviour. However, employee behaviour is unpredictable because the nature of their action can be determined by personal motives, peer influences, and the convenience of the existing environment. According to Kaptein (2008), ethical training may not always change employees' behaviour and make them act ethically, because after ethical training, employees are left with their own discretion and moral intuition, which increases the risk and the likelihood for unethical behaviour to persist. In contrast, Moore *et al.* (2012) show that when employees are unaware of the organisation's ethics, they may continuously hide behind their ignorance and take the chance to commit unethical behaviours. If they are engaged in ethical training, it can limit them from the

shadow of ignorance of the ethical standards and stimulate them to ethical behaviour intentions within groups. Therefore, ethical training establishes standards and norms that groups use to ensure compliance, thereby influencing behaviours that organisations value and the ethical standards that employees are expected to uphold.

**H1:** Compliance with group norms has a significant influence on employees' ethical behaviour.

The crucial role of ethical training in imparting ethical knowledge among employees in the organisational setting is acknowledged by Warren *et al.* (2014). The evidence by Moore *et al.* (2012) indicated that common undesired behaviour occurs due to insufficient knowledge among people. However, Mitchell *et al.* (2023) emphasised that being unaware does not legitimise unethical behaviours to occur in the organisations. This is because individuals have the innate ability that helps to distinguish between what is good and bad by reflecting the moral context in which they have been raised (Kaptein, 2023). The findings by Yuan *et al.* (2023) show the relationship between individual behaviour and the inner characters/virtues, which are crucial for determining one's actions and neutralising undesirable behaviours. These include wisdom, temperance, integrity, and justice, among others, and play a great role in determining ethical knowledge and action. Similarly, Mwilongo *et al.* (2024a) recommend the need for regular ethical training, as employees can be reminded of the proper behaviours and change their actions based on the knowledge gained. This is to say, the role of ethical training helps employees to acquire ethical knowledge, even for people with inactive virtuous characters, to monitor their actions and behaviours.

**H2:** Ethical knowledge is positively related to employee ethical behaviour.

Attending ethical training increases the confidence and ability of employees to resolve various ethical changes when they encounter

them. Commonly, many organisational leaders fail to resolve complex issues within the organisation because of personal interests, to safeguard relationships with close associates, and to favour certain individuals (Yuan *et al.*, 2023). Despite rules and regulations to guide some of the decisions, Everett *et al.* (2021) pointed out that many leaders lack confidence in making sound judgements when faced with ethical dilemmas despite the power vested in them. Consequently, it attracts more undesired behaviour from the subordinates who imitate some actions from organisational leaders. This significantly posts a note on the continuing need for comprehensive ethical training for institutional members, aimed at broadening their capacity to think contextually while taking into account prevailing circumstances, laws, and principles of justice to ensure that desired decisions reflect ethical values even under the challenging conditions. This is because knowledge of the law alone is insufficient for fostering ethical conduct in resolving moral challenges; rather, the presence of targeted training enhances decision-making confidence in resolving ethical issues and reduces unethical behaviours.

**H3:** Resolving ethical issues significantly improves employees' ethical behaviour.

### *2.3.2 Perceived Organisational Support and Employees' Ethical Behaviour*

The evidence by Rubel *et al.* (2023) shows that when there is perceived organisational support (POS), employees emulate the strong feelings that the organisation values their contributions and they are expected to be loyal and obligated for their actions. Shahid & Siddiqui (2021) illustrated that POS influences high exhibition of ethical behaviour as it fosters moral ownership. Similarly, Hanif & Siddiqui (2021) found that POS predicts moral standards among employees, which in turn drive desired behaviours and reduce the likelihood of turnover intentions within the organisation. This is to say, employees remain in debt when their concerns are taken into account by the organisation, and for that, they feel responsible for doing what is right. Supportively, Mwilongo *et al.* (2024b) show that

unsupported employees feel they are undervalued, unrecognised, and neglected by the organisation as a result of unethical practices. Admittedly, Jing & Yan (2022) pointed out that loss of talent represents a significant setback for any organisation and that POS is a crucial aspect in ensuring resilience and operational competence for the institutions and their people. On the other hand, Rahmadani *et al.* (2024) pointed out that the basis for employees' well-being and quality work life is on POS, which also determines ethical outcomes and performance among organisational members. Similarly, Al-Taie & Khattak (2024) and Radjab *et al.* (2024) point out the level of employee commitment increases as they experience perceived organisational support, which acts as a proper tool in enhancing innovative work behaviours. This is because POS shapes employees' behaviours by promoting a required work atmosphere that values and reinforces ethical conduct. Thus, it is clear that POS is a pivotal root for cultivating ethical behaviour, while the level of commitment may moderate its effectiveness.

**H4:** Perceived organisational support has a positive influence on employees' ethical behaviour.

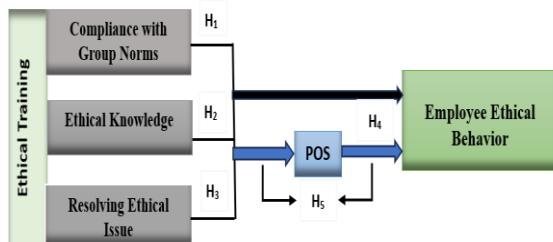
### *2.3.3 Perceived Organisational Support, Ethical Training, and Employee Ethical Behaviour*

The essence of ethical training is to improve organisational quality and the ability of employees to make appropriate decisions and engage in related behaviours. This is because in today's competitive business, employers need employees who can act and bring positive outcomes. Radjab *et al.* (2024) depict that organisations that invest in employees' well-being significantly support the perceived behaviours through training, promotions, and compensation. Abdulkareem *et al.* (2025) support that higher POS is associated with the increasing level of moral bond among employees, limiting the possibility for ethical divergence when ethical training programmes are viewed as a clear path for embracing ethical conduct. Similarly, Winarno *et al.* (2022) found that POS mediates the frequent relationship between organisational practices and employees'

behaviours. This is to say, POS is marked as a linking mechanism between what an organisation does for its employees (i.e., giving training) to enable their performance, make employees feel supported, and thus influence the way they behave. Supportively, Jindal *et al.* (2024) show that POS significantly predicts safety and employee well-being and has a direct influence on ethical performance. Mansouri *et al.* (2025) highlighted that when ethical training is properly designed and delivered as intended, it can enhance POS, and Zagencyk *et al.* (2021) insist that the ethical climate and knowledge imparted to employees can be a strong tool for displaying desired behaviours in the workplace.

**H5:** Perceived organisational support mediates the relationship between ethical training and employees' ethical behavior

Figure 1  
*Hypothesised Structural Relationship among Variables*



### 3.0 Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research approach to investigate the influence of ethical training on employees' ethical behaviour, specifically the mediating role of perceived organisational support. This study employs a quantitative research approach to investigate the influence of ethical training on employees' ethical behaviour, specifically examining the mediating role of perceived organisational support. The target population comprises staff from Mzumbe University as a centre of investigation; thus, both teaching and non-teaching staff who have attended ethical training were included. A sample of 129 participants was selected using stratified random sampling (SRS), constituting 60% of the calculated sample of 217. According to Groves (2006), a 60%

response rate is appropriate and acceptable for analysis and reporting in surveys. The use of SRS ensures adequate statistical power for complex modelling (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Thus, the study included employees who attended ethical training regardless of the number of training sessions they attended and excluded employees who never attended ethical training. Data were collected via a structured questionnaire, and a valid measurement for POS was adapted from Eisenberger *et al.* (1986), consisting of a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) with 8 statements, such as "the organisation values my contribution to its well-being." For Employee Ethical Behaviour (EEB), a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used, with 5 statements, such as "I report unethical behaviour or violations I observe, even when it is uncomfortable or might cause personal inconvenience." Furthermore, Compliance with Group Norms (CGN), Ethical Knowledge (EK), and Resolving Ethical Issues (REI) were each measured using 5 statements, for example: "I follow organisational ethical policies even when unsupervised" (CGN), "I am confident in distinguishing ethical from unethical behaviour due to the training" (EK), and "I feel capable of resolving ethical conflicts in the workplace" (REI). Each item was rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), respectively. Data collection utilised both electronic and physical methods, strictly following protocols for informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. Data analysis was also conducted using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), a robust multivariate technique particularly adept at simultaneously analysing complex direct and indirect relationships among latent variables (Kline, 2016). The analysis was performed using Amos statistical software. Subsequently, the measurement model was assessed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to establish the reliability (using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability, aiming for  $\geq 0.70$ ) and validity (convergent validity via factor loadings  $\geq 0.50$  and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)  $\geq 0.50$ ). Overall model fit was evaluated using standard indices such as RMSEA ( $\leq 0.08$ ), SRMR ( $\leq 0.08$ ), CFI ( $\geq 0.90$ ), and

TLI ( $\geq 0.90$ ) (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Following the successful establishment of the measurement model, the structural model was tested to examine the hypothesised relationships. This involves assessing direct effects through standardised path coefficients ( $\beta$ ) and their statistical significance. Crucially, the mediating role of Perceived Organisational Support (POS) was investigated by testing specific indirect effects of CGN, EK, and REI on EEB through POS.

#### 4.0 Results

Table 1  
*Reliability Test Using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR)*

Cronbach's Alpha		Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)
Construct	No. of items		
CGN	5	0.909	0.908
EK	5	0.933	0.900
REI	5	0.895	0.895
POS	8	0.907	
EEB	5	0.863	

Table 1 results depict that all five constructs (CGN, EK, REI, POS, and EEB) demonstrated excellent to satisfactory internal consistency reliability, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.863 to 0.933, all comfortably exceeding the 0.70 threshold. This indicates that the items within each scale are highly interrelated and reliably measure their respective constructs, providing a strong basis for the subsequent structural equation modelling analysis. Moreover, all constructs demonstrated strong to excellent internal consistency reliability, with Composite

Reliability (CR) values well above the generally accepted threshold of 0.70, as Table 2 shows. Specifically, CGN (0.908) and EK (0.900) showed near-perfect reliability, while REI (0.895) also exhibited very adequate reliability. These results indicate that the latent constructs are consistently and reliably measured by their respective indicator items.

Table 2  
*Convergent Validity Test via Loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE)*

Construct	Path	Loadings	AVE
CGN	CGN1 <--- CGN	0.812	0.663
	CGN2 <--- CGN	0.837	
	CGN3 <--- CGN	0.766	
	CGN4 <--- CGN	0.788	
	CGN5 <--- CGN	0.865	
EK	EK5 <--- EK	0.855	0.737
	EK4 <--- EK	0.879	
	EK3 <--- EK	0.844	
	EK2 <--- EK	0.863	
REI	EK1 <--- EK	0.852	0.630
	REI5 <--- REI	0.752	
	REI4 <--- REI	0.835	
	REI3 <--- REI	0.767	
	REI2 <--- REI	0.765	
	REI1 <--- REI	0.845	

All constructs demonstrated strong convergent validity, as indicated by their standardised factor loads and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. All standardised factor loadings were consistently above the recommended 0.70 threshold, ranging from 0.752 to 0.879. Furthermore, the AVE values for CGN (0.663), EK (0.737), and REI (0.630) all exceeded the 0.50 threshold, collectively confirming that the latent constructs explain a substantial proportion of variance in their respective indicator items.

Table 3  
*Overall Model Fit*

Fit indices	Recommended value	Source(s)	Obtained value
P	Insignificant	Bagozzi and Yi (1988)	.000
CMIN/DF	3-5	Less than 2 (Ullman, 2001) to 5 (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004)	3.335
CFI	>.90	Bentler (1990)	.982
TLI	>.90	Bentler (1990)	.957
SRMR	<.08	Hu and Bentler (1998)	.0392
RMSEA	<.08	Hu and Bentler (1998)	.035

Despite the statistically significant chi-square p-value (0.000), typical in large samples, the remaining fit indices collectively indicate a satisfactory and acceptable model fit. The CMIN/DF ratio of 3.335 is within the acceptable

range. CFI (0.982) and TLI (0.957) are excellent, exceeding the 0.95 threshold. Furthermore, SRMR (0.0392) and RMSEA (0.035) are well below their 0.08 thresholds, signifying excellent absolute fit. Thus, the measurement model

demonstrates a good and acceptable fit to the data.

Figure 2  
Measurement Model

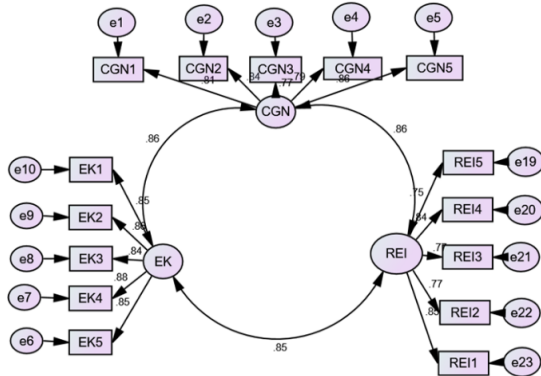
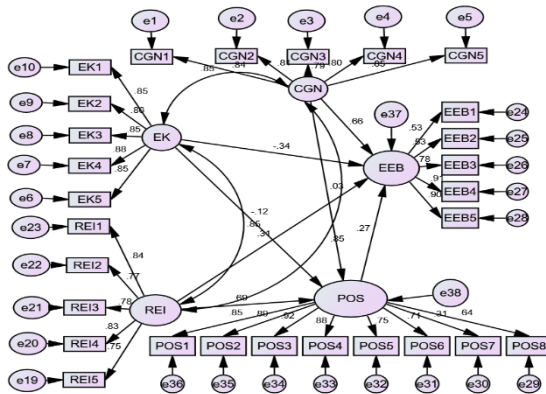


Figure 3  
Structural Model



The full structural model examines the direct and indirect influences of ethical training dimensions on employee ethical behaviour, mediated by perceived organisational support. Starting with direct effects on Employee Ethical Behaviour (EEB), Compliance with Group Norms (CGN) exhibits a strong positive relationship (0.66), suggesting that adherence to ethical group norms significantly enhances ethical conduct. Conversely, ethical knowledge (EK) presents a counterintuitive moderately strong negative effect (-0.34) on EEB, implying that increased knowledge may paradoxically decrease observed ethical behaviour. Resolving Ethical Issues (REI) shows only a very weak positive direct effect (0.03) on EEB, likely indicating non-significance. Regarding the direct effects on Perceived Organisational Support (POS), CGN

demonstrates an exceptionally strong positive influence (0.85), indicating that strong ethical group norms profoundly enhance perceptions of organisational support. EK again presents a weak negative effect (-0.12) on POS, an unexpected finding where higher ethical knowledge slightly diminishes perceived support. In contrast, REI shows a moderate positive effect (0.31) on POS, suggesting that the ability to resolve ethical issues contributes positively to employees' perception of organisational backing. Finally, POS exerts a moderate positive direct effect (0.27) on EEB, highlighting its role in fostering ethical conduct.

#### 4.1 Mediation Effect

The mediating role of perceived organisational support is evident through several indirect effects. CGN has a substantial positive indirect influence on EEB via POS (0.85 \* 0.27 = 0.2295). This indicates that ethical group norms improve ethical behaviour partly by enhancing organisational support. EK's indirect effect via POS is small and negative (-0.12 \* 0.27 = -0.0324), mirroring its direct paths. REI also exerts a small positive indirect effect on EEB through POS (0.31 \* 0.27 = 0.0837). Overall, CGN appears to be the most influential factor, strongly predicting both POS and EEB, while the negative relationships involving EK warrant detailed discussion and further investigation. All interpretations of effect magnitudes are based on standardised path coefficients; their statistical significance would require reference to p-values from the model output.

Table 4

Direct Effects, Indirect Effects, and Total Effects of CGN, EK, and REI on EEB via the Mediation of POS

Path	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
CGN→POS→EEB	0.66***	0.2295**	0.8895***
EK→POS→EEB	-0.34***	-0.0324	-0.3724***
REI→POS→EEB	0.03	0.0837*	0.1137*

Signif. Codes: \* P<.05 \*\* P<.01 \*\*\* P<.001

## 5.0 Discussion

The findings revealed a complex and insightful dynamic relationship between the ethical training

dimensions assessed (CGN, EK, REI) and (EEB), while POS served as a mediating variable. Foremost, the findings show the positive and significant influence of compliance with group norms on employees' ethical behaviour, and when perceived organisational support is added, it still plays a role in mediating the relationship. This is to say, CGN has both direct and indirect influence on employees' ethical behaviour, even when POS serves as a mediator. This implies that when there are clear, established group norms with no external influence, employees will always follow them and act ethically. When they perceive these norms as friendly to them and view the organisation as caring about their concerns, they ultimately embrace ethical behaviours. This is supported by Chung and Lapinski (2024) with the opinion that organisational norms, if created to reflect individual demands, then they influence the behaviour and commitments among employees. This conflicts with Warren *et al.* (2014), which found that employees' perceptions of values are not driving sustained behavioural improvements. Ammari and Gantare (2024) insisted that well-shared group norms are a part of organisational culture, and for that, they foster a sense of belonging and reduce turnover behaviours. Additionally, Majka (2024) highlighted that when organisational norms signal valuing ethical conduct such as integrity, professionalism, transparency, and fairness and recognise those who work to embrace such ethical practices, employees perceive there is high support. This is to say, when the norms exist and there is no organisational mechanism to support their application, employees experience difficulty in upholding them as they don't provide a sense of belonging. This is supported by Lee *et al.* (2014), showing repeatedly that unethical practices are due to the unsupported nature of organisational norms. On the other hand, Al-Taie and Khattak (2024) found POS to have a positive relationship with employee innovative behaviour. Supportively, Hanif and Siddiqui (2021) showed that employees' ethical behaviour is positively predicted by the perceived organisational support in many firms in Pakistan, where employees feel morally responsible to impact desirable behaviours. Further, Shahid and

Siddiqui (2021) found that POS directly influences ethical behaviour. However, POS can work independently from moral ownership because its effects on moral ownership may not always impact ethical behaviours.

Moreover, the findings revealed EK has a significant negative influence on EBB both directly and indirectly, where EK did not interact with perceived organisational support (POS) in influencing employees' ethical behaviours (EBB). This suggests that when employees are ethically aware, they automatically behave ethically without being weakened or strengthened by perceived organisational support and vice versa. Kim and Loewenstein (2021) support that by showing employees with a stronger foundation of ethical knowledge are more likely to behave ethically. On the contrary, Moore *et al.* (2012) found that being aware of what is right and/or what is wrong does not make an employee exhibit ethical behaviours. This is because things like personal interest and peer influences could blind one's judgement ability despite being ethically aware of the outcome and still choose to act unethically (Mwilongo *et al.*, 2024a). Arguably, Roy *et al.* (2024) insisted that for ethical training to be more effective, it must be accompanied by structural and cultural support within organisations to have a broader impact. This sheds light on the fact that ethical knowledge is not sufficient unless it is complemented by an institutional reinforcement mechanism to properly impact ethical behaviour. This aligns with the fact that support from the organisation remains a crucial factor in impacting employees' ethical behaviour, as indicated by Butt and Ahmad (2020). Nevertheless, Saleem *et al.* (2024) point out that the leader's ethical behaviour ensures ethical decision-making and fair organisational practices. Its role in facilitating employee well-being and behaviour imitation is remarkable, as leaders influence the perceived support to organisational members and awareness, leading to positive behavioural outcomes.

Ultimately, the results indicated that resolving ethical issues (REI) has a significant indirect effect on employees' ethical behaviour through POS, while the direct effect is minimal. This suggests that when ethical training is primarily meant to

equip employees with the ability to resolve ethical issues, their ethical behaviours improve as they perceive organisational support and act ethically. Moore *et al.* (2012) support that employees' ability to resolve ethical dilemmas doesn't make them act ethically unless they feel their organisation supports, values, and encourages those ethical actions. This highlights the crucial role played by POS in enhancing ethical behaviour among employees in the workplace. Furthermore, Al Halbusi *et al.* (2021b) emphasised that ethical climate is a strong tool for detecting ethical behaviours among employees, only when there is a shared perception of what constitutes ethical behaviour. On the other hand, Trevino & Nelson (2021) claim that resolving ethical challenges becomes easier as the manner of handling ethical concerns is treated the same among organisational members. Nevertheless, Sheedy *et al.* (2021) highlighted the unsupported ethical climate limits the ability of employees to tackle ethical issues and makes them vulnerable to committing unethical acts as they encounter moral stress, fear, and retaliation. Lastly, Warren *et al.* (2014) highlighted that comprehensive ethics training may decrease unethical behaviour by raising awareness of moral issues and by providing models of normatively appropriate responses to ethical dilemmas as well as information on rules and laws. Thus, practical training remains a basis for effective application of rules, regulations, and laws when resolving ethical issues in the workplace.

## 6.0 Conclusion

Generally, the study findings revealed that ethical training significantly influences ethical behaviour when employees perceive there is organisational support. The higher employees receive ethical training, the more they enhance their ethical awareness and skills in resolving ethical issues and become familiar with the established group norms and simplify their compliance to impact ethical behaviours. Therefore, human resource management departments and units bear the sole responsibility of ensuring that all human resource practices, including recruitment and selection, compensation and rewards, performance

management, among others, are implemented with equal emphasis, and so does ethical training, as it comforts employees to feel perceived organisational support. Thus, to ensure ethical behaviour among employees, organisations need to nurture pro-ethical group norms while ensuring full support and strong communication for employees to uphold such norms. Nevertheless, it is more crucial for ethical training to be grounded in realities, as this will give sense to effectively addressing and resolving ethical issues in the workplace. Also, providing repeated and timely ethical training is crucial in fostering common knowledge of what is wrong and what is right. Such practices, when applied continuously, keep reminding employees of the best way to act to avoid unethical behaviours.

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The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## 10.0 References

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