

# Uncertain Supply Chain Management

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## Workplace ethics as an instrument to expedite supply chain management in Bahrain

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### ABSTRACT

Ethics plays an essential role for the success of all business units. These days, it is not sufficient to boost the performance of supply chain companies just by focusing on financial figures but we need to consider the ethical dimensions, particularly at an organizational level. It is evident from the prior investigations that the performance of the supply chain industry in most of the Arab countries has not gained reasonable growth. Most of the Arab countries are facing issues for development good supply chain management in various departments. Bahrain maintains a low performance in the supply chain compared with other Arab countries such as Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia. The logistics index of Bahrain has been decreasing in recent years. Therefore, to address this problem, the objective of this study is to examine the role of workplace ethics in supply chain management among supply chain companies of Bahrain. The study considers three dimensions of ethics, namely; organization culture ethics, leadership ethics, and training ethics. Employees on the managerial positions are selected as the respondents. These respondents are selected from the supply chain companies of Bahrain. Questionnaires are distributed among these employees to collect the data. By using the structural equation modeling, data are analyzed through PLS. The results conclude that workplace ethics has significant contribution in supply chain management. Better implementation of workplace ethics always contributes positively on supply chain management.

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## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, it is not sufficient to only concentrate on the financial performance to boost the performance of supply chain companies but we need to consider the ethical dimensions, particularly at an organizational level. The role of ethics has been discussed in the literature by various studies (Fryer, 2016; Singhapakdi et al., 1996), however, the literature does not fill the gap on the relationship between ethics and supply chain management. Therefore, the current study is an attempt to highlight the role of ethics in supply chain management in Bahrain. Ethics is a subdivision of philosophy which includes organising, defending, and recommending notions of right as well as wrong conducts. Ethics are characterized as the origination of what is right conduct (Carroll, 1991; Freeman & Gilbert, 1988). Ethic is a system of value practices and a description of right and wrong (Raiborn & Payne, 1990).

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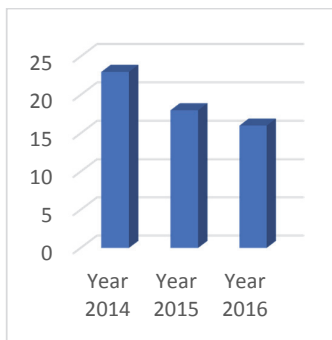
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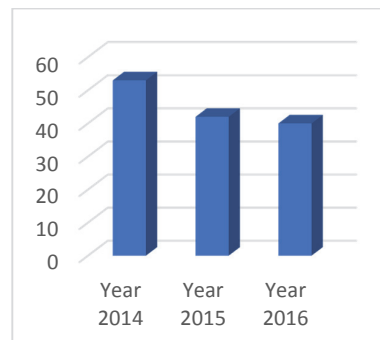
Velasquez (1999) characterized ethics as being worried about judgements engaged with good choices: regulating judgements which state or suggest that something is right or wrong. Accordingly, the statements of ethics endeavour to attribute activities. These ethics determine the engagement of an employee in his/her work, it also determines the commitment to achieve the company's objectives.

Various studies discussed ethics in different fields, for instance, Bash (2015) discussed ethics in public management, Bernardi et al. (2008) discussed ethics in finance as well as marketing field, Desti, and Kumar (2009) described various types of ethics in the field of education, moreover, Gregory (2009) discussed the discipline of military and Eon Rossouw and Van Vuuren (2010) examined the ethics in business perspective. Most of the studies examined the role of ethics in performance, accuracy, development, etc. However, these studies did not discuss the role of employee ethics at work place in supply chain management as the role of employee ethics in the workplace is crucial to bring smoothness in the operations. Therefore, the current study discusses the employee work ethics and supply chain management. Employee work ethics play an important role in supply chain activities. Better ethic development in employees bring new ideas which create innovation, it shows employees' commitment with work and represents the loyalty with the organization. Thus, ethics is the most valuable element in supply chain management. Beamon (2005) discussed sustainability ethics in supply chain management and found that ethics had a crucial role in supply chain management.

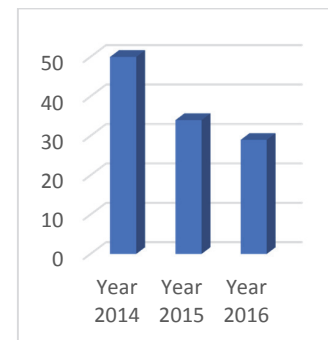
This study considers the three dimensions of ethics, namely; organization culture ethics, leadership ethics, and training ethics. All these ethics are important in the workplace. According to Yanti and Rashid (2016), organization culture ethics, leadership ethics, and training ethics play key contributions to management. Therefore, the better implementation of all these ethical dimensions has the tendency to boost supply chain operation in logistics companies. The study focused on the Bahrain logistics companies. As the performance of Bahrain in logistic is lower than other Arab countries such as United Arab Amirate (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait. Figs. (1-6) show the logistics trade indexes of various Arab countries including Bahrain.



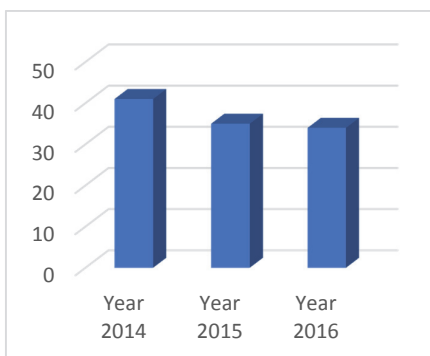
**Fig. 1.** UAE logistics Trade Index



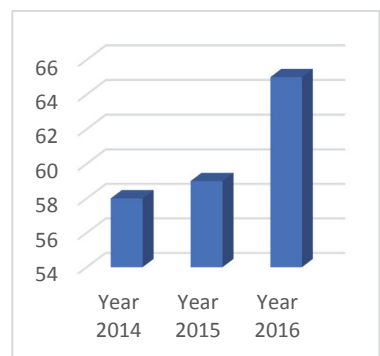
**Fig. 2.** Saudi Arabia logistics Trade Index



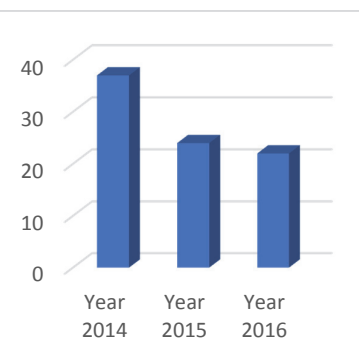
**Fig. 3.** Oman logistics Trade Index



**Fig. 4.** Qatar logistics Trade Index



**Fig. 5.** Kuwait logistics Trade Index



**Fig. 6.** Bahrain logistics Trade Index

From the figures, it is evident that most Arab countries are struggling in logistics practices. As the logistics index is decreasing in recent years. A decrease in the logistics index yields a negative effect on supply chain activities. However, the performance of logistics in Kuwait is increasing, as the logistics trade index is increasing. In comparison to these Arab countries logistics index, Bahrain has low performance. The logistics index of Bahrain is low compared with other countries. Therefore, it needs special intention to overcome the issues and increases the performance of logistic which will automatically enhance the supply chain management.

Thus, this study is an attempt to facilitate supply chain activities of Bahrain supply chain companies with the help of ethics. Ethics has the ability to enhance the accuracy of operations of supply chain and promote better management of the supply chain and ethics have an important role to boost business performance (Aguilar, 1994; Griseri & Seppala, 2010). Fig. 7 shows how ethics influence on supply chain management. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the role of workplace ethics in supply chain management among supply chain companies of Bahrain. The objectives are

1. To investigate the role of organization culture ethics in supply chain operations accuracy,
2. To investigate the role of leadership ethics in supply chain operations accuracy,
3. To investigate the role of training ethics in supply chain operations accuracy,
4. To investigate the role of supply chain operations accuracy in supply chain management.

### Ethic Dimensions

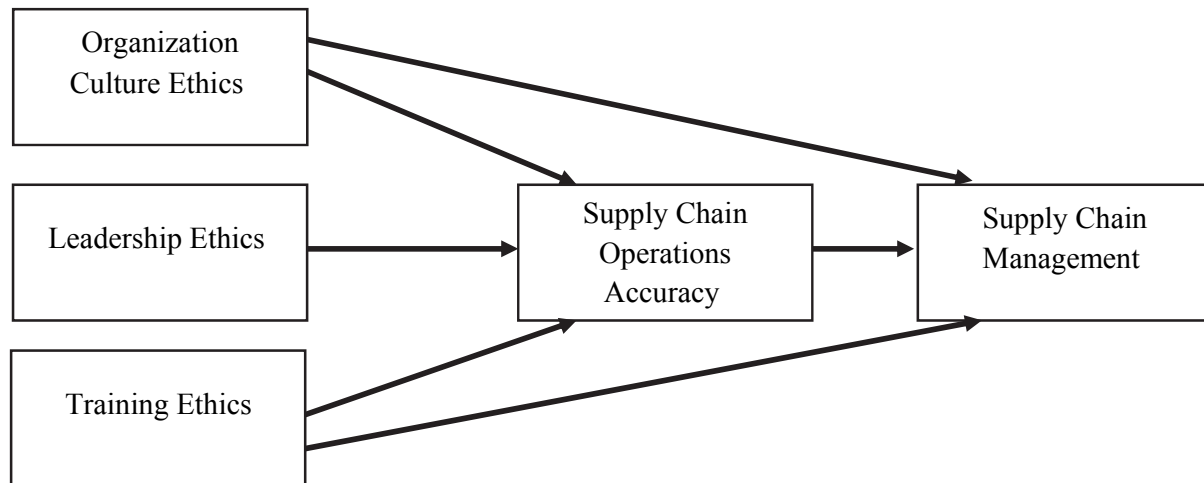


Fig. 7. Theoretical Framework of the study

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Organization Culture Ethics

Organization culture has been extensively studied by various researchers, however, still, it is gaining the attention (Adler & Jelinek, 1986; Hussain & Yousaf, 2011; Golparvar & Rafizadeh, 2014; Iqbal & Yilmaz, 2014; Hazrat, 2015; Bradbury & Hutchinson, 2015; Ater et al., 2016; Mirzajani et al., 2016; Okoli, 2017; Rusomyo et al., 2017; Ipole et al., 2018). It is gaining attention because of extensive development occurred in the industries where the ethics are more important. Good ethics help to develop a good organizational culture. It is a vital importance at the workplace in any organization. Good ethical conduct by the managers and employees with each other develop a friendly environment, which enhances the accuracy of operations. Increases in accuracy among the operation in supply chain company help to develop and manage good supply chain management practices.

Organizational culture is a core value for a system which consists of common values. Personal values begin to advance early in life and, like the more common beliefs, are systematized into hierarchical

arrangements with measurable properties as well as apparent behavioural results (Douglas et al., 2001; Çevik & Özgünay, 2018; Azad et al., 2018; Koumje, 2018; Ling, et al., 2018). Personal values are central, or closer to one's personality as compared with other constructs like attitudes as well as opinions (Ravlin & Meglino, 1987) which are crucial in ethical culture.

Various studies discussed culture in an organizational setting. However, organizational culture with respect to ethics in the supply chain is missing by the researchers. Therefore, this study examines the organizational culture ethics in supply chain management. Denison (1990) discussed the organizational culture and found that it has a major role in operation accuracy and management of the business. Another study conducted by Maloney and Federle (1991) found that there was a strong relationship between organizational culture and management. Good ethical culture in supply chain companies always supports supply chain management practices. Good ethical conduct between employees enhances the productive communication which brings accuracy in operations. Thus, below hypotheses are proposed;

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Organizational culture ethics have a significant relationship with supply chain operations accuracy.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Organizational culture ethics have a significant relationship with supply chain management.

### *2.2 Leadership Ethics*

Leadership is defined as the procedure of influencing different actions of an organized and well managed group towards the achievement of goals. Leadership generally belongs to the personal characteristics of an individual (Drath, 2001). Ethics are also one of the parts of these personal characteristics. Good ethics promote leadership style which have a positive influence on employees. Transformational leadership is based on the behaviours of leaders having a clear empowering impact on employees (Conger & Kanungo, 1998) which is the part of ethical conduct.

According to Lambert and Cooper (2000), inter firm process in a supply chain organization can be well managed with the help of leadership. Therefore, leadership increases the positive effect on the operational accuracy of the supply chain. Lambert et al. (1998) explained that the supply chain has a significant relationship with sustainable learning practices in an integrated framework. Learning through good ethical leadership enhances the accuracy in supply chain operation and develop a well-managed supply chain system. Discovery of electronic communication makes companies capable of leading employees through the internet (Williams et al., 2002) in a better ethical way having a positive effect on supply chain management operations. It also has a significant effect on the social status of employees and awareness level (Basheer et al., 2015; Mahmood et al., 2016).

The force generating achievement is the leadership style which creates a combination of process (Andraski, 1998). Additionally, a study carried out by Yanti and Rashid (2016) found that leadership ethics have a significant impact on the financial prospective of companies. Moreover, enterprise risk management is important for companies (Ul-Hameed et al., 2017) which can be handled through ethical leadership among employees and leaders to enhance supply chain operations. Thus, ethical leadership increases the accuracy in operations of supply chain companies which shows a positive effect on overall supply chain management.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** Leadership ethics have a significant relationship with supply chain operations accuracy.

### *2.3 Training Ethics*

Training ethics play major role on the employees' leaning process. A well-managed ethical training increases the learning outcomes. Ethical training has experienced tremendous changes in the previous decades. Worldwide business development and innovative change have assumed a job in the expanding complexity and improvement of ethics projects and specialized devices. These training activities depend on organizational moral basic leadership and experimental research demonstrating the advantages of training in building up a moral organizational culture (LeClair & Ferrell, 2000).

The challenge of training frameworks to perform capably and usefully requires applying methodologies for teaching what individuals need and how it is can be accomplished (Kasenberg et al., 2018). An appropriate ethical training with an ethical code of conduct has a significant association with the organization (Vakilbashi et al., 2017). Now a day, most of the companies focusing to include training ethics in their code of conduct because it is the most important element to enhance the accuracy in operations and performance of the organizations.

Most of the previous studies emphasized that ethics are needed in training activities (Baldick, 1980; Callan, 1992). As the better ethical training motivate employees to learn something new. Ethics in training increases the effectiveness of training (Mumford et al., 2008). Effective learning through ethical training has a positive effect on supply chain operations and overall supply chain management. Therefore, increases or decreases in effective ethics in training has the ability to influence supply operations accuracy.

**H4:** Training ethics have a significant relationship with supply chain operations accuracy.

**H5:** Training ethics have a significant relationship with supply chain management.

Nevertheless, from the above discussion, it is concluded that;

**H6:** Supply chain operations accuracy has a significant relationship with supply chain management.

### 3. Methodology

Inappropriate methodology leads to incorrect results. Therefore, it is the most crucial part of each research study, which should be in line with the problem of the study, objectives of the study as well as nature of the study (Ul-Hameed et al., 2018). The purpose of the study is to examine the role of workplace ethics in supply chain management among supply chain companies of Bahrain, therefore, quantitative research techniques were selected. In quantitative research technique data were collected with a survey in which questionnaires were utilized.

Information obtained during the investigation or study is called data (Polit Denise & Hungler Bernadette, 1999). For the purpose to collect the data, supply chain companies of Bahrain were selected. In these supply chain companies, top level managerial employees were preferred. Self-visit to the supply chain companies was preferred to collect the data in order to find the impact of workplace ethics on supply chain supply operations accuracy and supply chain management.

In this study, the 5-point scale was used. A 5-point Likert scale is most suitable to judge the employees' opinions working in supply chain companies. This scale increases in quality of data as compared with other scale such as 7-point Likert scale, 9-point Likert scale, etc. Three hundred (300) employees were selected as the sample size by using the Comrey and Lee (1992) inferential statistics and total two hundred and fifteen (215) responses were received. According to various prior studies, this response rate is suitable to carry the analysis. Thus, total two hundred and fifteen (215) responses were used to analyse the data. Moreover, all the questionnaires distributed with the help of simple random sampling technique. Additionally, structural equation modeling is used to approach the results of this study.

### 4. Analysis

#### 4.1 Measurement Model

To examine the collected data, instructions of Henseler et al. (2009) was followed. Fig. 8 exhibits the confirmatory factor analysis and Table 1 exhibits the factor loadings of all the items. The items having factor loadings less than 0.5 were not included in the study and deleted from the measurement model of PLS. As we can observe from Fig. 8, one item was deleted from the supply chain, one item was deleted from training ethics and one was deleted from leadership ethics.

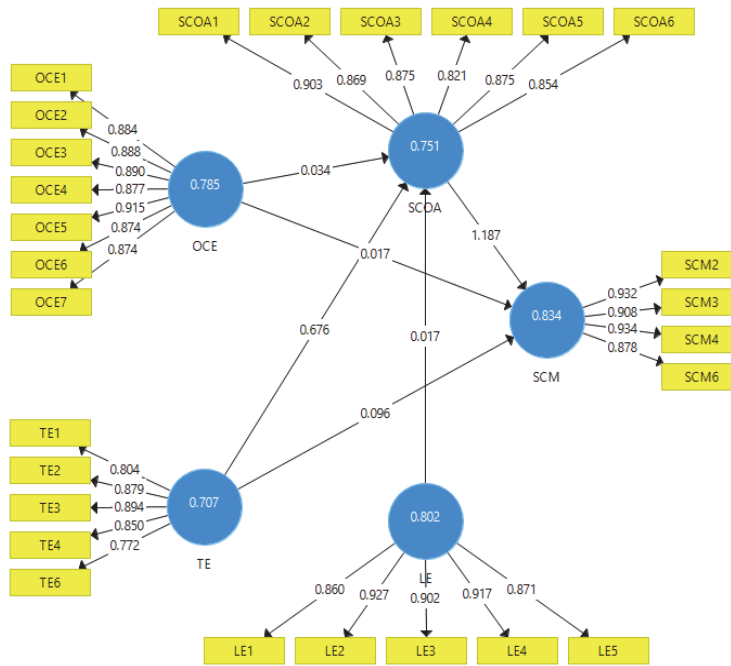


Fig. 8. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 1  
Factor Loadings

	LE	OCE	SCM	SCOA	TE
LE1	0.860				
LE2	0.927				
LE3	0.902				
LE4	0.917				
LE5	0.871				
OCE1		0.884			
OCE2		0.888			
OCE3		0.890			
OCE4		0.877			
OCE5		0.915			
OCE6		0.874			
OCE7		0.874			
SCM2			0.932		
SCM3			0.908		
SCM4			0.934		
SCM6			0.878		
SCOA1				0.903	
SCOA2				0.869	
SCOA3				0.875	
SCOA4				0.821	
SCOA5				0.875	
SCOA6				0.854	
TE1					0.804
TE2					0.879
TE3					0.894
TE4					0.850
TE6					0.772

Table 2 exhibits the results of a measurement model shown in Fig. 8. In the measurement model, convergent validity was attained through AVE. AVE above 0.5 is the indication of convergent validity achievement (F. Hair Jr et al., 2014). Additionally, discriminant validity was attained with the help of cross loadings as shown in Table 3.

**Table 2**  
Results of Measurement Model

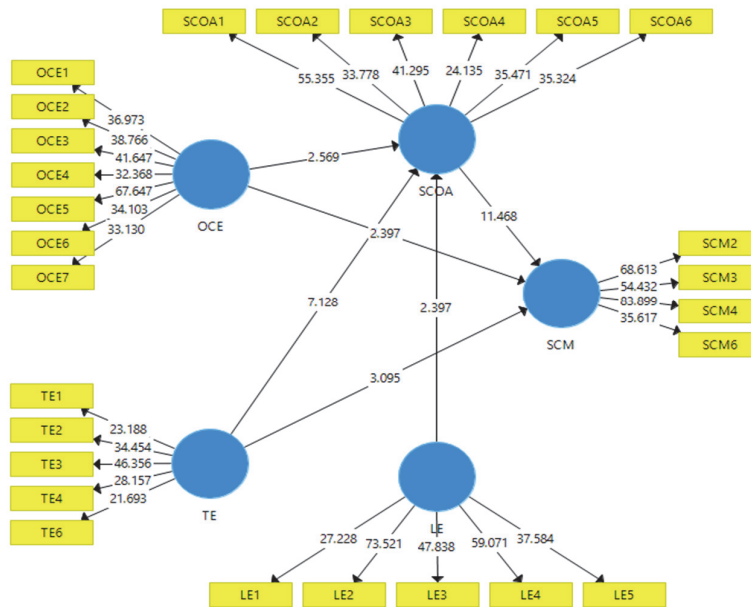
	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	(AVE)
LE	0.938	0.942	0.953	0.802
OCE	0.954	0.956	0.962	0.785
SCM	0.934	0.936	0.953	0.834
SCOA	0.933	0.934	0.948	0.751
TE	0.897	0.907	0.923	0.707

**Table 3**  
Cross Loadings

	LE	OCE	SCM	SCOA	TE
LE1	<b>0.860</b>	0.787	0.542	0.490	0.740
LE2	<b>0.927</b>	0.828	0.643	0.598	0.804
LE3	<b>0.902</b>	0.826	0.619	0.563	0.797
LE4	<b>0.917</b>	0.827	0.667	0.602	0.821
LE5	<b>0.871</b>	0.781	0.638	0.603	0.795
OCE1	0.824	<b>0.884</b>	0.601	0.561	0.809
OCE2	0.753	<b>0.888</b>	0.580	0.612	0.795
OCE3	0.802	<b>0.890</b>	0.577	0.551	0.812
OCE4	0.739	<b>0.877</b>	0.582	0.594	0.787
OCE5	0.819	<b>0.915</b>	0.670	0.650	0.853
OCE6	0.810	<b>0.874</b>	0.593	0.580	0.786
OCE7	0.857	<b>0.874</b>	0.631	0.590	0.839
SCM2	0.660	0.658	<b>0.932</b>	0.844	0.757
SCM3	0.640	0.619	<b>0.908</b>	0.861	0.773
SCM4	0.650	0.643	<b>0.934</b>	0.862	0.768
SCM6	0.597	0.576	<b>0.878</b>	0.777	0.690
SCOA1	0.580	0.607	0.817	<b>0.903</b>	0.714
SCOA2	0.568	0.591	0.808	<b>0.869</b>	0.715
SCOA3	0.604	0.615	0.815	<b>0.875</b>	0.723
SCOA4	0.487	0.555	0.737	<b>0.821</b>	0.660
SCOA5	0.572	0.567	0.811	<b>0.875</b>	0.679
SCOA6	0.515	0.537	0.773	<b>0.854</b>	0.672
TE1	0.750	0.789	0.619	0.538	<b>0.804</b>
TE2	0.805	0.811	0.655	0.633	<b>0.879</b>
TE3	0.817	0.836	0.664	0.654	<b>0.894</b>
TE4	0.832	0.822	0.607	0.572	<b>0.850</b>
TE6	0.560	0.624	0.823	0.869	<b>0.872</b>

#### 4.2 Structural Model

In the structural model, hypotheses were examined. Six hypotheses were formulated and tested with the help of bootstrapping technique in PLS. This process of bootstrapping is given in Fig. 9. The t-value is shown in Fig. 9 and it is clear that all the hypotheses are accepted as the t-value for each hypothesis is above 1.96. All the results including beta values are given in Table 4.



**Fig. 9. Structural Model**

**Table 4**  
Results

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ((O/STDEV)	P Values	Decision
LE → SCOA	0.183	0.171	0.077	2.397	0.030	Supported
OCE → SCM	0.126	0.115	0.054	2.397	0.030	Supported
OCE → SCOA	0.304	0.308	0.121	2.569	0.018	Supported
SCOA → SCM	0.703	0.701	0.061	11.468	0.000	Supported
TE → SCM	0.371	0.363	0.120	3.095	0.005	Supported
TE → SCOA	1.242	1.237	0.174	7.128	0.000	Supported

Table 5 exhibits the R<sup>2</sup> value, which indicates that all the variables, namely; organization culture ethics, leadership ethics, training ethics, and supply chain operations accuracy are expected to bring 86% change in supply chain management (Chin, 1998). Moreover, predicative relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>) also is given in Table 6. It is greater than 0.5 which is the minimum level is achieved (Henseler et al., 2009).

**Table 5**  
The results of R<sup>2</sup>

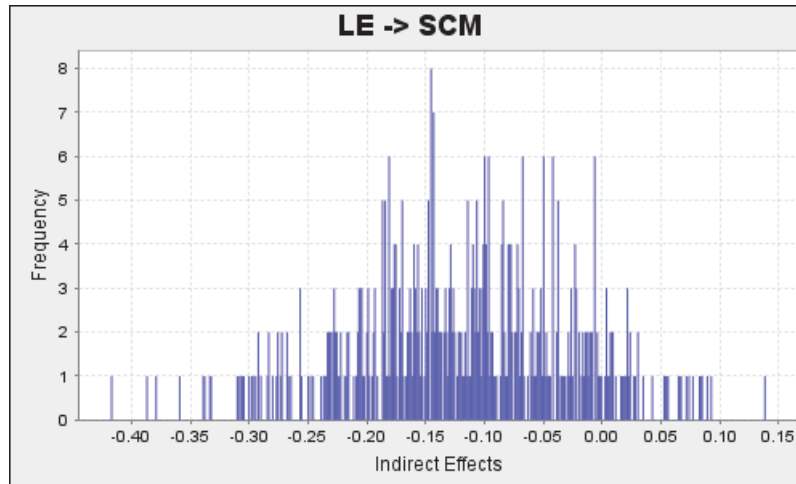
	R-Square
Supply Chain Management	0.860

**Table 6**  
Predicative reliance (Q<sup>2</sup>)

Dependent Variable	SSO	SSE	Q <sup>2</sup> = (1-SSE/SSO)
Supply Chain Management	808.000	265.891	0.671

Apart from all these results, additionally, it is found that supply chain operations accuracy is also one of the mediating variables. Mediation effect of supply chain operations accuracy between leadership ethics and supply chain management yields a t-value of 5.213 with positive beta value. The meditation effect histogram is shown in Fig. 10.





**Fig. 10.** Histogram showing the mediation effect of supply chain operations accuracy between leadership ethics and supply chain management

## 5. Findings

The aim of this study has been to scrutinise the role of workplace ethics in supply chain management among supply chain companies of Bahrain. This study has carried out based on the reason that the performance of supply chain companies in Bahrain was low performance compared with the other Arab countries. Therefore, total six hypotheses were proposed to examine the role of workplace ethics on supply chain management. First, three hypotheses were proposed concerning the relationship between organizational culture ethics, leadership ethics, training ethics, and supply chain operations accuracy. Second three hypotheses were proposed to establish the relationship between organizational culture ethics, leadership ethics, training ethics and supply chain management. Finally, the sixth hypotheses were proposed to examine the relationship between ethics, supply chain operations accuracy and supply chain management.

While examining the direct hypothesis between organization culture ethics and supply chain operations accuracy which yields a t-value of 2.569 and beta value of 0.304 which are significant ( $\alpha = 0.5$ ). Beta value shows a positive relationship between organizational culture ethics and supply chain operations accuracy. Good organizational culture ethics increases the supply chain operations accuracy. Moreover, the results on the relationship between leadership ethics and supply chain operations accuracy yield a t-value of 2.397 and a beta value of 0.183. In line with these results, the effect of training ethics on supply chain operations accuracy was also found significant positive with t-value of 7.128 and beta value of 1.242. Therefore, in all three cases, better organization culture ethics, better leadership ethics and better training ethics at workplace enhances the operations accuracy of the supply chain. However, low level ethics can decrease the operation accuracy.

While examining the relationship between organization culture ethics and supply chain management, the study yields a t-value of 2.397 and beta value of 0.126, which means that both have a direct relationships. An increase in the quality of organization culture ethics increase the supply chain management. Moreover, increases in leadership ethics promote supply chain. Consistent with the previous hypotheses results, it is found a t-value of 3.095 and beta value of 0.371 for the relationship of training and supply chain management. Hence, organizational culture ethics, better leadership ethics and better training enhance the supply chain management. Finally, the relationship between supply chain operations accuracy and supply chain management was found significant positive with t-value of 11.468 and beta value of 0.703. An increase in supply chain operations accuracy increases the ability to promote supply chain management. Therefore, it is found that workplace ethics in supply chain companies increases the operations accuracy which enhances the supply chain management practices.

## 6. Conclusion

It is concluded that workplace ethics can be one of the instruments to decrease the declining performance of supply chain companies of Bahrain. Workplace ethics may have the ability to enhance supply chain management practices by decreasing various issues at the workplace. Organizational culture with good ethics shows positive influence in the operations of the supply chain. Moreover, as the leaders have significant influence in performance, therefore, better ethical conduct by the leaders can foster supply chain management activities. An increase in good ethical culture and ethical leadership shows a positive influence on the accuracy of supply chain operation which ultimately increases the supply chain management. Additionally, training is another important part of every organization. It has a significant effect on the operations of the supply chain. Ethical training enhances operational accuracy and supply chain management. Hence, better ethical practices related to organization culture, leadership and training show important contribution in supply chain operation which promotes supply chain management among the supply chain companies of Bahrain.

Thus, the supply chain companies must insurance good ethical practices in culture, leadership, and training to insurance better supply chain management. This study is quite beneficial to help managers while making the strategies to enhance the supply chain management practices, particularly it is important for supply chain companies of Bahrain.

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