

The Enablement of Lecturers' Voice through Shared Leadership: A Moderated Mediation Model

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Abstract. This study explores the association between shared leadership and voice behavior among full-time university lecturers, employing moderated mediation modeling. While the impact of shared leadership on team outcomes is well-documented, limited research delves into its role in fostering employee voice. Findings from a sample of 440 full-time lecturers reveal that shared leadership indirectly promotes both promotive and prohibitive voice by enhancing psychological capital, with organizational identification strengthening these effects. The results offer empirical insights for university administrators seeking to encourage lecturers' voice behavior. However, the study's generalizability may be constrained by the sample and reliance on self-reported measures. Further exploration, comparing shared and traditional leadership, along with more objective assessments, is warranted to substantiate these conclusions.

Key words: Shared leadership, Voice behavior, Psychological capital, Moderated mediation, University full-time lecturer

1. Introduction

In the digital age, organizations face dynamic external circumstances, making it impractical to rely solely on management's intellect to overcome every obstacle (Luo et al., 2023). To ensure business sustainability, it is imperative to cultivate an environment that promotes employee engagement in enterprise development (Morrison, 2023). Empirical research underscores the significance of voice behavior in fostering sustainable development and organizational innovation (Ashiru et al., 2022; Elsetouhi et al., 2023). As a result of voice behavior involving disagreement with the supervisor and a challenge to the status quo, employees frequently refrain from expressing unsolicited ideas and refrain from giving their opinions (Elsetouhi et al., 2018) unless they receive adequate support from leadership.

Consistently, research has provided support for the notion that leadership significantly impacts the voice behavior of employees. As an illustration, Younas et al. (2018) conducted a study that identified a positive correlation between voice behavior and inclusive leadership, defined as "leaders who demonstrate openness, accessibility, and availability in their interactions with followers". Ilyas et al. (2021) hypothesized that the voice behavior of employees is positively correlated with transformational leadership. Morrison (2023) discovered in a meta-analysis that leadership style is a predictor of voice behavior. Research has demonstrated the significance of leadership style in fostering employees' voices.

All research points to leadership as the most crucial situational variable influencing voice behavior (Shepherd et al., 2019). The style of leadership significantly impacts employees' willingness to engage in voice behavior (Wang et al., 2023). As teams become more complex and ambiguous, the traditional model of a single leader managing all functions faces challenges (Wu et al., 2020). This model no longer aligns with the current requirements and growth of higher education institutions, necessitating the introduction of a new leadership paradigm (Luo et al., 2023). In response to this, a dynamic leadership model, known as shared leadership, has emerged, disrupting the notion of a fixed leader enjoying exclusive leadership authority (Chen & Zhang, 2023).

Shared leadership represents an innovative departure from conventional, individualistic organizational structures. Diverging from traditional leadership models, shared leadership is distinguished by a reciprocal process where team members collectively guide each other toward achieving objectives (Han et al., 2021). As leadership undergoes evolution, critical responsibilities are delegated to group members, fostering a dynamic wherein individuals both exert and respond to each other's influence (Siangchokyoo & Klinger, 2022). This implies that leadership within the organization is distributed among staff members rather than solely vested in officially designated individuals or senior officials (Zhu et al., 2018).

The positive impact of shared leadership on team outcomes is significant, with notable increases in innovative behaviors, and task and team satisfaction observed (Chen & Zhang, 2023; Robert & You, 2018). Additionally, shared leadership has been linked to improved objective performance metrics, enhanced employee performance in supplementary capacities (Nordbäck & Espinosa, 2019), and overall team success. Notably, employees exhibit a greater inclination towards engaging in voice behaviors when afforded greater autonomy and opportunities to express their opinions during the decision-making process (Silla et al., 2020). However, it is worth noting that there is a paucity of research specifically examining the influence of shared leadership on the voice behavior of full-time university lecturers.

Despite the general consensus and coherence among scholars concerning the conceptualization of voice, the predominant focus of voice researchers has been on promotive voice behavior, often neglecting to explicitly differentiate between prohibitive voice and promotive voice. Consequently, any conclusions drawn from studies treating voice as a unified concept may be incomplete or even inaccurate (Chamberlin et al., 2017; Jada & Mukhopadhyay, 2019). The empirical examination of various voice forms is a relatively recent development in voice research that warrants further investigation (MacMillan et al., 2020).

This study addresses this gap by differentiating between two types of voice: prohibitive voice and promotive voice. The findings reveal that shared leadership exerts distinct influences on these two forms of voice. Utilizing social exchange theory, we seek to comprehend the influences of shared leadership on various voice behaviors. Based on the principles of reciprocity perception, we argue that subordinates are more likely to demonstrate proactive work behaviors, such as actively proposing ideas that align with organizational interests, as a means of expressing reciprocal responsibility and support for their leaders (Azevedo et al., 2021).

Additionally, this study enhances the current body of knowledge by investigating psychological capital as the underlying mechanism that elucidates the varied impacts of shared leadership on both promotive and prohibitive voices among full-time university lecturers. While psychological capital has been suggested by researchers as both a cause and an effect of shared leadership (Chul-In Chang, 2022; Handoyo & Ardi, 2020), it has not yet been empirically examined as a mediator between shared leadership and voice behavior, nor has it been considered the explanatory mechanism for the effects of shared leadership on the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers.

In exploring the influence of shared leadership on the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers, the underlying mechanisms remain unexplored. Social cognitive theory provides a framework to elucidate this relationship, positing three interrelated factors—individual factors, environmental events, and behavior patterns—that exert independent yet mutually influential effects. Within this theoretical framework, voice behavior is characterized as a behavioral pattern, psychological capital as an individual factor, and shared leadership as an environmental event. Social cognitive theory asserts that shared leadership not only directly influences employees' psychological capital but also plays a pivotal role in shaping their voice behavior (Wu & Nguyen, 2019). Both psychological capital and shared leadership are integral elements that contribute to the dynamics of employee voice behavior (Chen & Zhang, 2023).

Organizational identification is rooted in an individual's alignment with the goals and values of the organization. Consequently, employees who identify strongly with the organization tend to prioritize decisions that benefit the organization as a whole, rather than solely focusing on their individual self-interest (Kazmi & Javaid, 2022). This robust organizational identification significantly and positively influences employees' work output, encompassing both psychological and behavioral dimensions. Additionally, it serves as a mitigating factor against negative feelings and behaviors, acting as a deterrent to adverse outcomes within the organization (Wang et al., 2018).

Building upon these premises, we propose that organizational identification moderates the relationship between shared leadership and psychological capital, aligning with the tenets of social exchange theory and social cognitive theory. Our proposition offers insights into the potential reinforcement of voice behavior resulting from psychological capital, integrating existing research on organizational identification and psychological capital. This framework enhances our understanding of the intricate dynamics among organizational identification, shared leadership, and psychological capital.

The theoretical arguments regarding our research framework are developed in the following sections, with findings based on data from a survey of 440 full-time university lecturers in Guangxi, China. Finally, we discuss the theoretical and practical contributions of our research to the understanding of shared leadership and voice behavior.

2. Theoretical Development and Hypotheses

Voice behavior, associated with organizational performance and managerial effectiveness, requires an examination of its antecedents (Xia et al., 2020). This study emphasizes the significance of shared leadership in predicting voice behavior due to its pervasive influence on employee conduct.

Recent academic and managerial interest in employee voice behavior has prompted research into various factors, including managerial, personality, and background considerations (Rubbab et al., 2022). Originating from Hirschman's model of departure, voice, and loyalty, voice serves as a constructive

manifestation aiming to improve the organization's current state (Liang et al., 2019). However, voice, challenging the status quo, is considered provocative and risky, leading to challenges in authority, interpersonal tensions, unintended consequences, and additional errors (Luo et al., 2023). While certain scholarly works have proposed the existence of two distinct types of voice (Liang et al., 2012), the majority of prior investigations concerning voice have failed to establish this differentiation, which may draw incomplete or even inaccurate conclusions (Chamberlin et al., 2017; Jada & Mukhopadhyay, 2019).

The study categorizes variables influencing employee expression into individual, team, and organizational predictors. Personal factors include gender, self-assurance, security, ownership, and organizational identification (Eibl et al., 2020; Ge, 2020; Ruan & Chen, 2021). Team predictors encompass team atmosphere, structure, leadership style, and the leader's emotional state (Athar et al., 2021; Song et al., 2022; Wisanupong & T, 2021). Organizational predictors involve high-performance work systems, organizational culture, type, atmosphere, and human resource management (Ashiru et al., 2022; Azevedo et al., 2021; Zhang & Wang, 2018).

Despite research on employee voice generation, limited attention has been given to the relationship between shared leadership and voice behavior. Shared leadership, characterized by collective leadership authority, has demonstrated positive impacts on various organizational aspects (Ali et al., 2020; D'Innocenzo et al., 2021). Notably, its impact on the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers has not been explored (Kownacki et al., 2023), necessitating an investigation into how shared leadership encourages voice behavior.

Additionally, the positive influence of employees' psychological capital on voice behavior has been recognized (Wu & Nguyen, 2019). Psychological capital, a state-like resource, signifies a favorable psychological condition characterized by self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience (Carter & Youssef-Morgan, 2019). Its impact on voice behavior in the context of higher education is underexplored (Goswami & Goswami, 2023).

Organizational identification, deeply impacting an individual's psychological orientation and behavioral tendencies, correlates positively with employee engagement and performance (Finch et al., 2018). Organizational identification is rooted in loyalty and connection to the organization, influencing decision-making in favor of the organization's collective welfare (Kazmi & Javaid, 2022). This study aims to explore the intricate dynamics among organizational identification, shared leadership, psychological capital, and voice behavior.

The current study employs an innovative moderated mediation model, incorporating organizational identification and psychological capital as moderators and a mediator, respectively. This model seeks to investigate the influence of shared leadership on the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers. By examining this theoretical framework, potential influential moderators and mediators can be identified, enhancing the understanding of the factors that influence university full-time lecturers and providing opportunities for leadership intervention. Fig. 1 illustrates our proposed model.

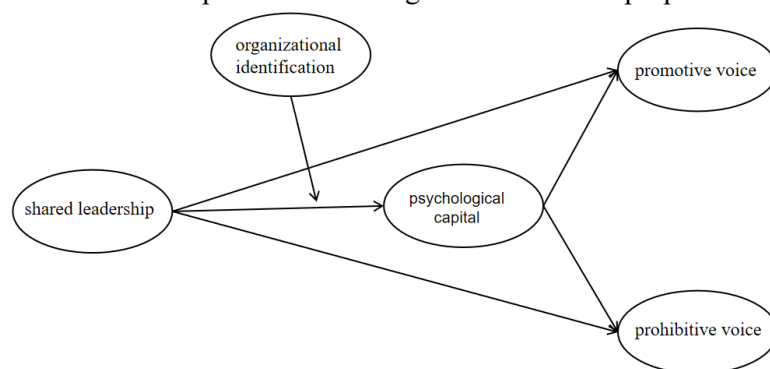


Fig. 1: Proposed theoretical model

2.1. Shared leadership and university full-time lecturer's voice behaviour

The voice behavior of university full-time lecturers, defined as work-related suggestions or ideas intended to enhance organizational performance, is critical in higher education institutions (Rubbab et al., 2022). Leadership, particularly its distinct styles, plays a crucial role as a precursor to voice behavior, with varying influences on university full-time lecturers (Luo et al., 2023).

Promotive and prohibitive voices, both representing extra-role behaviors aimed at advancing team interests, share common qualities: a) they extend beyond regular job duties; b) they are constructive, expressing views for organizational improvement; and c) they are motivated by a sense of accountability. Promotive voice suggests novel approaches for improvement, while prohibitive voice highlights concerns about potential flaws in thinking, procedures, or practices (Liang et al., 2012). Due to the challenging nature of prohibitive voice content, it carries higher employee risk.

Shared leadership, a modern organizational approach, dismantles the conventional one-person leadership model, establishing a team structure where members have equal status, lead one another, and collaboratively fulfill leadership responsibilities (Mi et al., 2023; Siangchokyoo & Klinger, 2022). This study aligns with Khasawneh's (2011) research perspective, recognizing three dimensions of shared leadership: communication, participative decision-making, and power.

According to social exchange theory, participative decision-making extends beyond economic contracts, fostering gratitude and trust (Rubbab et al., 2022). Promotive voice, involving proposing innovative solutions, aligns with full-time lecturers' ability to generate novel ideas (Carnevale et al., 2020). Reciprocity theory suggests that participative decision-making establishes a foundation for social exchange, likely leading to reciprocation through promotive voice behavior (Silla et al., 2020).

Different from promotive voice, prohibitive voice addresses potential dysfunctions, carrying higher employee risk (Chamberlin et al., 2017). Human motivation theory posits that participative decision-making satisfies higher-level needs, enhances trust, and fosters a sense of being valued and appreciated, enabling employees to voice their opinions and concerns (Mi et al., 2023).

Communication is crucial for shared leadership, sending positive signals supporting voice behavior, particularly promotive voice. In shared leadership teams, distributed functions and responsibilities empower employees, fostering behaviors aligned with promotive voice (Chen & Zhang, 2023; Lin et al., 2019).

Having power activates behavioral approach systems, encouraging goal-oriented behaviors, including voicing opinions. Despite the sensitivity of prohibitive voices, power stimulates goal orientation, encouraging individuals to take risks (Chamberlin et al., 2017). Thus, we put forth the subsequent hypotheses within the domain of higher education:

H1a: Shared leadership significantly positively impacts promotive voice behavior among university full-time lecturers.

H1b: Shared leadership significantly positively impacts prohibitive voice behavior among university full-time lecturers.

2.2. Psychological capital as a mediator

Scholarly examinations of psychological capital have predominantly focused on its effects rather than its causes (Mao et al., 2021). Leadership emerges as a primary precursor to psychological capital (Wu & Nguyen, 2019). As psychological capital increases, employees perceiving organizational support exhibit positivity, self-assurance, and optimism (Goswami & Goswami, 2023).

In shared leadership teams, employee participative decision-making entails the delegation of authority and accountability, signaling trust and enhancing the sense of duty and commitment (Antonella et al., 2023; Silla et al., 2020). Heightened awareness of accountability fosters greater psychological capital development, as individuals perceive their work as more purposeful, resulting in a more positive effect (Papacharalampous & Papadimitriou, 2021). Effective inter-team communication is pivotal for shared leadership realization (Khasawneh, 2011), facilitating the sharing of knowledge linked to optimism, resilience, and self-efficacy (Usman et al., 2021). As shared leadership's foundation,

sharing power and responsibility, stimulates an individual's behavioral approach system, resulting in positive self-evaluations, increased self-efficacy, and enhanced confidence and optimism, fundamental elements of psychological capital (Korman et al., 2022; Lin et al., 2019; Luo et al., 2023; Ma et al., 2023).

Voice behavior, inherently unpredictable and risky, demands substantial psychological capital to navigate associated obstacles. Promotive voice entails spontaneous actions aimed at organizational improvement, involving suggestions for efficiency, novel concepts, and innovative ideas for business growth. Prohibitive voice behavior addresses irrational phenomena or challenges within the organization, likely causing offense and heightening risks and stress (Liang et al., 2019).

University full-time lecturers, with substantial psychological capital, can confidently identify detrimental trends within the institution. Following psychological resource theory, psychological capital serves as an incentive for voicing views and alleviating work-related anxiety and stress (Al-Nasrawi, 2023). Social cognitive theory suggests that lecturers with high psychological capital are more likely to express opinions, given their positive perception of problem-solving capabilities and anticipation of positive feedback (Ma et al., 2023). The subsequent hypotheses are formulated accordingly:

H2a: Psychological capital serves as a mediator in the association between shared leadership and promotive voice behavior among full-time university lecturers.

H2b: Psychological capital acts as a mediator in the relationship between shared leadership and prohibitive voice behavior among full-time university lecturers.

2.3. The moderating role of organizational identification

Organizational identification signifies the extent to which members align themselves emotionally, invest their commitment, and actively engage with their organization and its objectives. In this context, individuals define themselves based on their membership in a specific organization, cultivating a sense of sameness and belonging (Weisman et al., 2023). This concept establishes a psychological connection between employees and the organization, providing the groundwork for the development of a communal bond. Organizational identification further encapsulates the degree to which individuals integrate organizational characteristics into their self-concepts (Li & Zhang, 2020), standing as a pivotal situational factor that influences their behavior (Scholl et al., 2018).

According to the conservation of resources theory, individuals enhance their psychological capital by participating in decision-making or execution, collaborating with colleagues, and experiencing empowerment. Simultaneously, interactions with the external environment replenish psychological resources, with organizational identification emerging as a vital source for external capability replenishment (Ortega et al., 2023). Research findings consistently indicate a positive correlation between shared leadership and psychological capital, highlighting the pivotal role of organizational identification (Ma et al., 2023; Vijayaraghavan et al., 2023).

Individuals with a heightened sense of organizational identification internalize the organization's interests, leading to a sense of pride and belonging. This internalization, stemming from active involvement in organizational activities, contributes to elevated psychological capital (Ma et al., 2023). Building upon these insights, we posit a hypothesis regarding the moderating role of organizational identification in the association between shared leadership and psychological capital:

Hypothesis 3: Organizational identification moderates the association between shared leadership and psychological capital, suggesting a stronger relationship when organizational identification is high compared to when it is low.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants and procedures

The current study investigates the impact of shared leadership on the voice behavior of full-time university lecturers, focusing on their perceptions of shared leadership and their voice behaviors directed at the university or supervisors. The study intentionally excluded top managers, such as principals, and concentrated solely on evaluating full-time teachers.

As of May 31, 2022, the Ministry of Education of China reported 36 general undergraduate colleges and universities with a total of 51,529 full-time lecturers in Guangxi (Education, 2023). The study employed the quota sampling method, considering sample representativeness, sampling complexity, time and energy constraints, and budget limitations. The allocation of participants in each university was determined proportionally based on the total population.

Hair et al. (2017) cautioned that a larger sample size does not necessarily guarantee better survey results. In accordance with Roscoe's (1975) guidelines for determining sample size, a sample size ranging from larger than 30 to less than 500 is deemed suitable for most research. The study adheres to Isreal's (1992) recommendation, setting a sample size of 398 with a precision level of 5% and a confidence level of 95%. To ensure an adequate sample size for the model and considering potential missing data, the survey questionnaire was distributed to 747 full-time university lecturers in Guangxi, China. Participation was entirely voluntary, and participants were guaranteed the confidentiality of their responses.

Table 1. Demographic information about respondents

Demographic	Category	Frequency (n=440)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	235	53.40%
	Female	205	46.60%
Age	Under 30 years old	133	30.20%
	31-40 years old	164	37.30%
	41-50 years old	112	25.50%
	More than 51 years old	31	7.00%
Qualification	Bachelor	188	42.70%
	Master	202	45.90%
	Doctor	50	11.40%
Tenure	Less than 1 year	111	25.23%
	1-3 years	148	33.64%
	3-5 years	55	12.50%
	More than 5 years	126	28.63%
Academic ranks	Teaching assistants	321	73.0%
	Lecturers	60	13.60%
	Associate professors	36	8.20%
	Professors	23	5.20%

The collected data underwent screening, leading to the exclusion of incomplete or incorrect information, regular response patterns, blank answers, or obvious answer patterns. The final dataset included information from 440 individuals, resulting in an effective response rate of 58.9%. Demographic details in Table 1 indicate that 54.7% of respondents were male, and 45.3% were female. The age distribution was less than 30 years old (30.2%), 31-40 years old (37.3%), 41-50 years old (25.5%), and over 51 years old (7.0%). In terms of degrees, 42.7% had a bachelor's degree, 45.9% had a master's degree, and 11.4% had a doctorate. Regarding tenure, the majority (33.64%) had 1 to 3 years of work experience, while 25.23% had less than 1 year, 12.5% had 3 to 5 years, and 28.63% had more than 5 years. Academic ranks included 73.0% teaching assistants, 13.6% lecturers, 8.2% associate professors, and 5.2% professors.

3.2. Measures

The measurement scales for the variables in this study were meticulously established and underwent a translation-back-translation process to ensure semantic accuracy, taking into account the nuances of Chinese organizational culture. All conceptual measures in this study were assessed using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 indicates 'strongly disagree,' and 7 indicates 'strongly agree.'

Shared Leadership The shared leadership scale employed in this study, developed by Khasawneh (2011), encompasses three dimensions: participative decision-making (six items), communication (six items), and power (four items). Example items include 'I participate with my superiors in setting organizational direction' and 'We have an atmosphere of proactive communication that supports the engagement of all' (Khasawneh, 2011). The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's α of 0.943, and the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) results indicated a good fit of the data ($\chi^2/df = 2.66$, TLI = 0.96, CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.04).

Promotive Voice Behavior Adapted from Liang et al. (2012), the five-item scale measuring university full-time lecturers' promotive voice behavior underwent some modifications for relevance in the university setting. Sample items include 'Raise suggestions to improve the university's working procedure' (Liang et al., 2012). The reliability analysis resulted in a Cronbach's α of 0.929, and the CFA demonstrated a good fit ($\chi^2/df = 1.66$, TLI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.04, SRMR = 0.01).

Prohibitive Voice Behavior Also adapted from Liang et al. (2012), the five-item scale assessing prohibitive voice behavior among university full-time lecturers underwent adjustments for university settings. Sample items include 'Speak up honestly with problems that might cause serious loss to the university, even when/though dissenting opinions exist' (Liang et al., 2012). The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's α of 0.917, and the CFA indicated a good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.59$, TLI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.01).

Psychological Capital Utilizing the CPC-12R scale by Kačmár et al. (2022), psychological capital was measured with 12 items, covering self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience. Sample items include 'I am looking forward to the life ahead of me', 'I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events', and 'I tend to bounce back quickly after serious life difficulties' (Kačmár et al., 2022). The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's α of 0.917, and the CFA results indicated a good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.9$, TLI = 0.96, CFI = 0.97, RMSEA = 0.07, SRMR = 0.04).

Organizational Identification Adapted from Smidts et al. (2001), the five-item scale assessing organizational identification among university full-time lecturers included representative questions like 'I feel strong ties with ____' (SMIDTS et al., 2001). The reliability analysis resulted in a Cronbach's α of 0.949, and the CFA demonstrated a good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.47$, TLI = 0.99, CFI = 0.99, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.01).

Control Variables Previous research has identified several demographic variables, including gender and age, as factors influencing teachers' voice behavior (Zhang et al., 2021). Gender may impact voice behavior, with men facing fewer psychological barriers and receiving more favorable performance evaluations than women when expressing opinions and ideas (Wang et al., 2023). Additionally, age is presumed to be correlated with performance as it signifies accumulated work experience; older employees may have more experience and be less afraid to speak up. Therefore, gender (1=males, 2=females) and age were selected as control variables.

3.3. Data analysis

The research data underwent a three-step analysis. Firstly, descriptive and correlation statistics were conducted using SPSS 22.0 to assess the interrelations among the study variables. Secondly, structural equation modeling (SEM) in AMOS 27.0 was employed to scrutinize the relationships between the variables and validate the direct hypotheses in the model. Finally, the mediating effect of psychological capital and the moderating effect of organizational identification were evaluated using the PROCESS plug-in in SPSS. The analysis incorporated Bootstrap resampling (5000 samples) with a 95%

confidence interval (CI) to determine the significance of the mediating and moderating effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive statistics and correlations

Table 2 displays the means, standard deviations, and correlations among the study constructs, along with the extracted square roots of the average variance (AVE). Shared leadership exhibited positive correlations with psychological capital ($r = 0.589$, $p < .01$), promotive voice behavior ($r = 0.602$, $p < .01$), and prohibitive voice behavior ($r = 0.638$, $p < .01$), aligning with our expectations. Additionally, psychological capital displayed positive correlations with both promotive ($r = 0.559$, $p < .01$) and prohibitive voice behaviors ($r = 0.608$, $p < .01$). These findings offer initial support for our hypotheses.

Notably, the AVEs for all five variables surpassed the recommended 0.50 level, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity among the constructs (Ab Hamid et al., 2017).

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, correlations, and discriminant validity analysis

	Mean	SD	Gender	Age	SL	PVB	PRVB	PsyCap	OI
Gender	1.470	0.499	(N.A.)						
Age	2.090	0.912	-.311**	(N.A.)					
SL	4.985	0.961	-.139**	.119*	(0.81)				
PVB	5.029	1.044	-.287**	.158**	.602**	(0.86)			
PRVB	4.989	1.095	-.240**	.165**	.638**	.745**	(0.78)		
PsyCap	5.456	0.743	-0.058	.107*	.589**	.559**	.608**	(0.76)	
OI	5.258	1.135	-.130**	.239**	.587**	.530**	.576**	.577**	(0.88)

$N = 440$; * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Values in parentheses, presented in boldface on the diagonal, represent the extracted square roots of the AVE for each scale. SL = shared leadership, PsyCap = psychological capital, PVB = promotive voice behavior, PRVB = prohibitive voice behavior, OI = organizational identification.

4.2. Common method bias and normality tests

This study utilized the Harman one-way test to examine common method bias. The results revealed five factors with eigenvalues exceeding 1. The variance explained by the first principal factor was 38.205%, slightly below the critical threshold of 40% suggested by Harman (1976). This finding reduces the likelihood of a common method bias issue within the sample data.

To ensure the normality of our measurement items, skewness and kurtosis tests were conducted. All variables displayed skewness values between -0.628 and 0.228, and kurtosis values ranging from -0.815 to 0.951. Adhering to Kline's criteria (2005) — specifying that the absolute value of univariate skewness should be within 2 and kurtosis within 7 — our data satisfies these conditions. Consequently, each measurement item exhibits an approximately normal distribution, making the dataset suitable for structural equation modeling.

4.3. Structural equation modeling

Confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) and average variance extracted (AVE) were employed to evaluate the discriminant validity of the survey measures before hypothesis testing. The distinctiveness of the study's variables was examined through a series of CFA using AMOS 27.0, taking into account Chi-square statistics and fit indices, including Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR), and root-mean-squared error of approximation (RMSEA), (Jackson et al., 2009).

Table 3 displays the CFA results, illustrating that the five-factor model (shared leadership, psychological capital, promotive voice, prohibitive voice, and organizational identification) exhibited a satisfactory fit ($\chi^2 = 1689.57$, $df = 645$, $p < 0.01$, $TLI = 0.909$, $CFI = 0.917$, $IFI = 0.917$, $RMSEA = .061$, $SRMR = .053$). These results substantiate the discriminant validity of the study's constructs.

Table 3. The CFA results for various models

	χ^2	df	TLI	IFI	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA
M1--Five factors SL, PsyCap, PVB, PRVB, OI	1689.57	645	0.909	0.917	0.917	0.053	0.061
M2--Four factors SL+PsyCap, PVB, PRVB, OI	649.51	54	0.827	0.859	0.858	0.0635	0.158
M3--Four factors SL,PsyCap, PVB+ PRVB, OI	2142.62	649	0.871	0.881	0.881	0.0648	0.072
M4--Three factors SL+PsyCap, PVB+ PRVB, OI	649.51	54	0.827	0.859	0.858	0.0635	0.158

Note: SL = shared leadership, PsyCap = psychological capital, PRVB = prohibitive voice behavior, PVB = promotive voice behavior, OI = organizational identification.

4.4. Hypotheses testing

This study utilized AMOS 27.0 to assess the direct hypotheses mentioned earlier. The CFA results exhibited a satisfactory fit ($\chi^2/df=2.619$, TLI = 0.909, CFI = 0.917, IFI = 0.917, RMSEA = .061, SRMR = .053). The outcomes of the model analysis are depicted in Figure 2, and detailed outcomes are provided in Table 4.

Table 4. Summary of the direct effects between variables

	Path	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
PVB	<--- SL	0.400	0.180	5.226	***
PRVB	<--- SL	0.399	0.193	5.340	***
PsyCap	<--- SL	0.627	0.168	6.263	***
PVB	<--- PsyCap	0.347	0.079	6.125	***
PRVB	<--- PsyCap	0.417	0.086	7.473	***

*** $p < .01$.

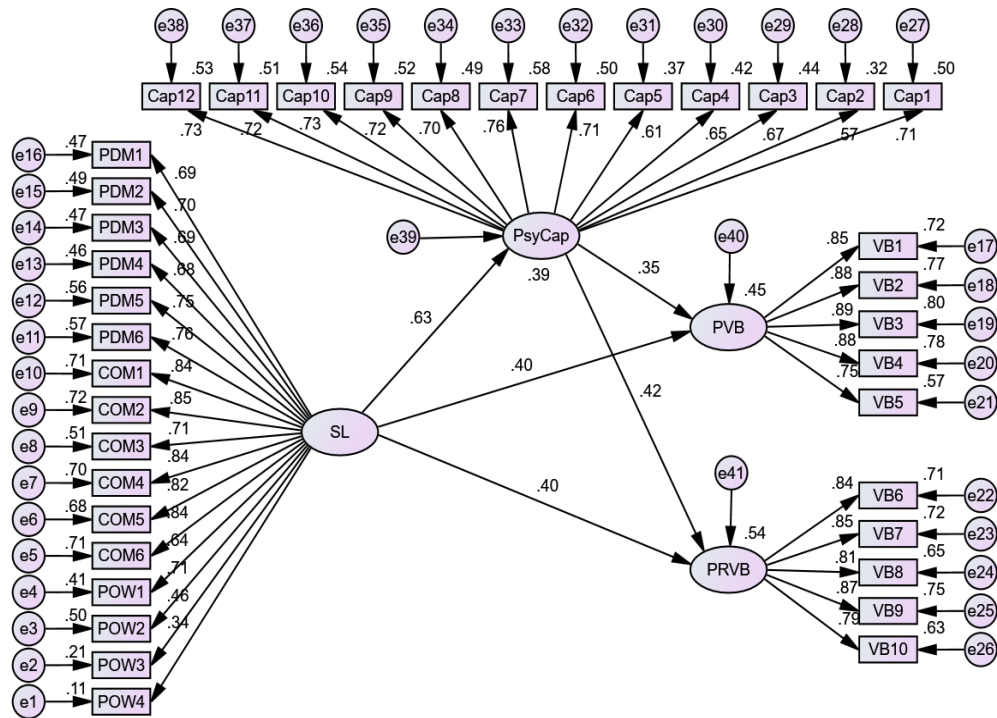


Fig. 2: Results of the final structural equation model

Direct effects: We first examined the direct effect of shared leadership on university full-time lecturers' promotive voice behavior. The model results revealed a significant positive association ($\beta = 0.400$, $p < 0.001$) between higher levels of shared leadership and increased promotive voice behavior, after controlling for gender and age. This finding supports Hypothesis 1a, indicating a positive correlation between shared leadership and university full-time lecturers' promotive voice behavior.

Subsequently, our study delved into the direct impact of shared leadership on the prohibitive voice behavior of university full-time lecturers. The results, supporting Hypothesis 1b, demonstrated that elevated levels of shared leadership were correlated with greater instances of prohibitive voice behavior ($\beta = 0.399$, $p < 0.001$), after accounting for gender and age. This suggests a positive association between shared leadership and prohibitive voice behavior among university full-time lecturers.

Mediating effects: The mediational model, incorporating psychological capital, demonstrated a robust fit with the data ($\chi^2 = 1689.57$, $df = 645$, $RMSEA = 0.061$, $CFI = 0.917$, $TLI = 0.909$, $SRMR = 0.053$). Figure 2 and Table 4 illustrate positive associations between shared leadership and psychological capital ($\beta = 0.627$, $p < 0.001$), shared leadership and promotive voice behavior among university full-time lecturers ($\beta = 0.400$, $p < 0.001$), as well as shared leadership and prohibitive voice behavior ($\beta = 0.399$, $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, psychological capital exhibited positive associations with university full-time lecturers' promotive voice behavior ($\beta = 0.347$, $p < 0.001$) and prohibitive voice behavior ($\beta = 0.417$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 5 presents results from the bias-corrected bootstrapping test, focusing on indirect effects. After controlling for gender and age, psychological capital significantly mediated the association between shared leadership and university full-time lecturers' promotive voice behavior. The indirect effect was 0.235 (95% CI [0.153, 0.344]), the direct effect was 0.409 (95% CI [0.274, 0.541]), and the total effect was 0.645 (95% CI [0.523, 0.784]). All effects reached statistical significance, thereby supporting Hypothesis 2a.

Similarly, after controlling for gender and age, psychological capital significantly mediated the relationship between shared leadership and prohibitive voice behavior in university full-time lecturers. The indirect effect was 0.306 (95% CI [0.215, 0.408]), the direct effect was 0.444 (95% CI [0.286, 0.620]), and the total effect was 0.750 (95% CI [0.608, 0.931]), all proving statistically significant. Hence, Hypothesis 2b received empirical support.

Table 5. Results of the Bootstrap mediation effect test

Effect relation	SL→PsyCap→PVB				SL→PsyCap→PRVB			
	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P	Estimate	Lower	Upper	P
Direct effect	0.409	0.274	0.541	0.002	0.444	0.286	0.620	0.001
Indirect effect	0.235	0.153	0.344	0.001	0.306	0.215	0.408	0.001
Total effect	0.645	0.532	0.784	0.001	0.750	0.608	0.931	0.001

Continuing our investigation, we examined the moderating influence of organizational identification on the relationship between shared leadership and psychological capital, utilizing the previously tested mediation model. As outlined in Table 6, organizational identification exhibited a statistically significant positive moderating effect in the shared leadership and psychological capital relationship ($B = 0.069$, $SE = 0.022$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 6. Results of the moderated mediation model

	Psychological capital (PsyCap)		
	B	SE	p
Covariates			
Gender	0.09	0.056	0.11
Age	-0.022	0.035	0.524
Study variables			
Shared leadership (SL)	0.476	0.030	<0.001

Organizational identification (OI)	0.232	0.029	<0.001
SL × OI	0.069	0.022	0.002

Note: The significant results are in bold. Gender: 1 = males, 2 = females.

Moreover, we performed a simple slope analysis, as depicted in Fig. 3. The analysis indicates that the relationship between shared leadership and psychological capital was stronger among university full-time lecturers with high OI ($B = 0.394$, $SE = 0.041$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI = [0.313, 0.476]) than those with low OI ($B = 0.237$, $SE = 0.044$, $p < 0.001$, 95% CI = [0.152, 0.323]). Consequently, Hypothesis 3 receives empirical support.

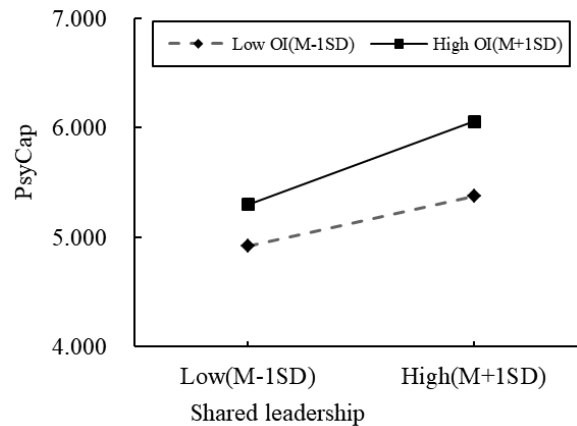


Fig. 3: The moderating effect of organizational identification (OI)

5. Discussion and Implications

Prior research underscores the necessity for further exploration of the relationship between shared leadership and voice behavior across diverse contexts, extending beyond conventional business or management organizations. Many studies advocate for the inclusion of additional moderating or mediating variables to enhance the understanding of these dynamics (Wu et al., 2020). Responding to this call, the present study focuses on a sample of university full-time lecturers. Utilizing a moderated mediation model, our research explores the influences of psychological capital and organizational identification on shaping the relationship between shared leadership and the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers.

By specifically concentrating on university full-time lecturers in China, this study constitutes a substantial contribution to the exploration of the intrinsic connection between shared leadership and the voice behavior of educators in higher education. This relationship is intricately influenced by various variables, underscoring the necessity for a comprehensive examination.

5.1. Theoretical implications

This research represents a significant advancement in the literature on employee voice behavior, specifically within the context of university full-time lecturers. Addressing a notable gap in current research, our study investigates the correlation between shared leadership and both promotive and prohibitive voices among university lecturers, a domain that has been underexplored in the existing literature.

Empirical findings highlight that shared leadership positively influences the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers. This impact is explained through the lenses of social cognitive theory and social exchange theory. In line with social cognitive theory, university lecturers are inclined to participate in extra-role performance behaviors, including voice behavior, when they perceive that the university values them, shares power, encourages open communication, and involves them in decision-making processes (Morrison, 2023). Social exchange theory posits that increased support and improved working conditions, such as a positive communication climate and participation in decision-making,

encourage employees to express their genuine thoughts (Tasneem et al., 2023). Similarly, social cognitive theory suggests that shared leadership can influence cognitive factors, altering psychological capital, and subsequently impacting an employee's voice behavior (Chen & Zhang, 2023).

Utilizing the promotive-prohibitive voice framework, our research contributes to a more comprehensive exploration of various voice types, enhancing the existing knowledge base on the interplay between shared leadership and voice behavior.

This study significantly contributes to the current scholarly understanding of the relationship between shared leadership and the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers. The integration of social cognitive theory and social exchange theory underscores the mediating effects of psychological capital. Confirming the role of psychological capital as a mediator between shared leadership and employee voice behavior, our findings elucidate how psychological capital mediates both prohibitive and promotive voice behavior among university full-time lecturers. This discovery aligns with previous investigations in the business domain (Handoyo & Ardi, 2020), emphasizing that cultivating employees' voice behavior is contingent upon establishing a conducive voice climate intricately linked to leadership support and style.

Furthermore, organizational identification not only moderates the impact of shared leadership and psychological capital but also strengthens this mediated mechanism, particularly at a higher level of organizational identification. The primary significance of this study lies in providing empirical evidence of the moderating effect of organizational identification on the mediating effects of psychological capital.

While previous research has predominantly focused on voice behavior through the lenses of psychological capital or shared leadership (Al-Nasrawi, 2023; Zhang et al., 2020), our research broadens the scope by elucidating how shared leadership influences psychological capital. This broader perspective enhances our comprehension of the influential mechanisms underpinning the correlation between shared leadership and the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers.

5.2. Practical implications

The findings of this investigation carry substantial managerial implications. Our results demonstrate a positive correlation between shared leadership and both prohibitive and promotive voice behavior among full-time university lecturers. Drawing on insights from Pearce et al. (2018), who highlight that shared leadership facilitates the expression of faculty members' authentic opinions and taps into their expertise, our study offers valuable guidance for university administrators seeking to enhance the voice behavior of full-time lecturers within the Chinese cultural context. Administrators can focus on principles of equality and participation, encouraging effective communication and equal dialogue across all university levels and roles. Creating an environment that emphasizes mutual support, cooperation, and trust among team members, where each member's unique talents are recognized, can foster an atmosphere where voice behaviors are welcomed and supported (Detert & Burris, 2007). Additionally, fostering support, cooperation, and trust can mitigate voice challenges and reduce dissatisfaction among team members (Parker et al., 2010). The positive impact of shared leadership on extra-role behaviors, specifically the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers, can be applicable to nations with similar cultural contexts.

Furthermore, this study establishes psychological capital as a mediating variable between the voice behavior of university full-time lecturers and shared leadership. Recognizing the significant influence of psychological capital on university full-time lecturers' voice behavior becomes a crucial aspect of the competitive edge for universities. Managers are encouraged to prioritize the psychological capital of university full-time lecturers over just their voice behavior. Providing recognition, cultivation, application, and appreciation of lecturers' strengths can boost their self-assurance and motivation, positively impacting their voice behavior.

Moreover, our research delves into how organizational identification acts as a moderating factor in the association between psychological capital and shared leadership. In implementing management

practices, managers should take into account individuals' organizational identification values. Cultivating strong organizational identification can lead to increased work engagement and more contributions to organizational progress through voice behaviors. Emphasizing the advantages of fostering a robust sense of affiliation with the evolving identity of an organization, university administrators can grant full-time lecturers increased autonomy and responsibility, promoting creativity and innovation while offering incentives to enhance work motivation and satisfaction. These efforts can alleviate work stress, enhance organizational identification, and elevate the likelihood of receiving constructive feedback and suggestions.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study offers initial evidence suggesting that shared leadership contributes to the promotion of voice behavior among university lecturers by fostering psychological capital, particularly within the context of higher organizational identification. Nevertheless, further research is indispensable to validate these findings. This necessitates enlarging the sample size, diversifying data sources, exploring additional explanatory mechanisms, and addressing potential limitations associated with self-report biases. Comparative research that examines outcomes under shared versus hierarchical leadership would enhance the practical implications for university administrators and policymakers seeking to promote lecturer contributions through voice.

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