



RESEARCH PAPER

Inclusive Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment: Relational Silence as a Mediator

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to explore the influence of inclusive leadership on organizational citizenship behaviour for the environment. This relationship is mediated by the relational silence. Environmental patterns, innovation and change has considerable influence on the organizational working environment. Individuals and groups are trying to respond these challenges in their own ways. This research study is also an attempt to explore such mechanisms which are used by organizations to engage in activities required for environmental protection. Structural Equation modeling (SEM) was used to examine the influence of inclusive leadership on organizational citizenship behaviour for environment (OCBE) along with the mediation of relational silence. For this purpose, data was analyzed through both descriptive and inferential statistics. Results of research study disclosed that inclusive leadership has a noteworthy positive impact on organizational citizenship behaviour for environment (OCBE) whereas inclusive leadership has a negative correlation with relational silence. Moreover, relational silence is also negatively correlated with organizational citizenship behaviour for environment and it partially mediates the connection of inclusive leadership with OCBE. These results are helpful in understanding the influence of inclusive leadership on organizational citizenship behaviour for environment. In this regard, the mediating role of relational silence is first time observed theoretically enriching the existing literature and giving new ways for practicing inclusive leadership style in the organization.

KEYWORDS Environment, Inclusive Leadership, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Relational Silence

Introduction

World's environmental patterns are worsening day by day due to continuous rise of competition in this era of globalization and businesses are trying to maintain viable ecological development. Many researchers are trying to investigate the environmental changes at the strategic level but the worker level is ignored in this regard (Bansal and Song, 2017; Galpin and Whittington, 2012). As workers have a notable role to play in the execution of business strategies, therefore their perspective towards environment is an important dimension which provide support to the sustainable business management. Thus, organizational citizenship behaviour for environment (OCBE) involves such environmental practices of workers which are not formally awarded by the organizations. Such practices accompaniment ecological defensive deeds of worker and the tactical business analysis for green practices (Ramus & Steger, 2000). Workers engaging in OCBE have environmental defensive attitudes thereby fulfilling organizations green strategic analysis. Thus, organization environmental presentation is influenced by the workers' OCBE (Pailé & Mejía-Morelos, 2014; Temminck et al., 2015;

Paillé et al., 2013; Lamm et al., 2015). Furthermore, past experiences suggest that workers involving in OCBE are of vital importance. Nowadays, research scholars are interested in investigating different aspects of workers development and growth, environmental self-caring, business environmental security procedure, problems related to business environment, and business environmental behaviour (Paillé & Mejía-Morelos, 2014; Zhang et al., 2016; Paillé et al., 2013; Temminck et al., 2015; Lamm et al., 2015). While examining all these aspects, the role of leader cannot be ignored. In this regard, many research studies have observed the impact of leaders on OCBE. This research study is also an attempt to enrich the existing literature.

Additionally, different leadership styles like supportive, service, transformational have considerable impact on OCBE as being wide-ranging, trustworthy but more definitely focused on sustainable ecological development and positive change in the society (Pless et al., 2011). Many management researchers have examined the ecological role at the organizational level but overlooked to study it at the individual level (Galpin and Whittington, 2012). Similarly, past studies also focused on the key role of leadership in developing green behavior (Zhang et al., 2016; Kura, 2016). OCBEs are responsible for developing distinct discretionary behaviour. It is not recognized by a formal reward system but is collectively playing a significant role in the organizational maintainable advancement (Robertson and Barling, 2017).

In consequence, two research objectives can be drawn for the current research study on the base of above discussion. Firstly, it elaborates the influence of inclusive leadership on employees' OCBE and secondly, it is aimed to study the mediation of relational silence between the association of inclusive leadership and OCBE to encourage the green behaviour of employees.

Literature Review

Inclusive Leadership and Organizational citizenship behavior for environment

Inclusive leadership refers to the employees' perception about his position in a specific team through fair treatment that satisfies their desires for exceptionality and affiliation (Shore et al., 2011). It is concerned with involving people in the organizational affairs. The main purpose of inclusive leadership is to do things with people instead of doing things to people. Consequently, it creates a sense of attachment and exclusivity. It will enable the employees to realize their importance in the organization, developing a sense of commitment and loyalty, achieving goals for communal paybacks and work for long term output. Employees perceived themselves to be unique due to their exceptional talent and eminent workgroup (Sugiyama et al., 2016). Comparatively, inclusive leadership is considered as a unique one on basis of its generality and sense of affinity. Optimal distinctiveness theory, an elongation of social identity theory reveals that people always used to be equally unlike and alike to other individuals concurrently. The inclusion is requirement of individual to have a sense of attachment and uniqueness. It simultaneously refers to unlike and similar to others for creating the state of gain (Randel et al., 2018). Ultimately, it develops a sense of affinity with the organizational procedures. It focuses on involving all employees in the organizational decision-making process and also giving them importance in the organization. The combined decision-making process and involvement in organizational debate platforms encourage environment-oriented employees to develop innovative ideas and actions to save the surroundings. The solace of organization in the form of inclusive leadership is required to introduce and implement environment friendly behaviour in the organization (Javed et al., 2017). Thus, it can be assumed on the base of these arguments that

H1: Inclusive leadership has a noteworthy correlation with organizational citizenship behaviour for the environment.

Inclusive Leadership and Relational Silence

According to Brinsfield (2013), relational silence depicts the behaviour of employees to remain silent for building and maintaining a strong relationship with other individual in the organization. As mentioned earlier, this concept integrates the influence of precursor motivation on employee relational silence which identifies several aspects of the employees' silence. Although, the focus of contemporary research is on employee silence but very few studies exist in the past which examined the association of inclusive leadership with relational silence. This research study therefore aims to investigate this relationship. According to Nembhard and Edmondson(2000), open minded leaders openly communicate with employees. Similarly, employees' courage to give their opinion enable them to break their silence in the organization. Due to openness and accessibility of inclusive leadership, employees feel that managers are always ready to help them in any circumstances. Ultimately, employees silence focus on the relational aspect (Jolly & Lee, 2021). Such environment is conducive for employees' development, expressing their confidence, improving employees' emotional security which may reduce employee silence (Alingh et al., 2019; Brown & Treviño, 2006; Brown et al., 2005). According to Lee and Dahinten, 2021, inclusive leadership has a negative relation with the aim to divulge errors and positively correlated with speaking out. Thus, when leaders have large extent of intimacy then the standard of relationship with their employees is improved and employee silent behaviour is reduced (Xu et al., 2015; Detert and Burris, 2007; Jolly and Lee, 2021). Moreover, leaders try to pay full attention to staff when they approach them in time of difficulties thus fulfilling their need of relatedness (Ye et al., 2019). Thus, inclusive leadership exhibits candidness, listen to employees' views and give rise to such behaviour which inhibit employees' silent behaviour. On the basis of all this discussion, it can be proposed that

H2: Inclusive leadership is negatively correlated with relational silence.

Relational Silence and organizational citizenship behavior for the environment

Many previous studies depict that organizational silence has an adverse impact on organizational citizenship behavior (Şehitoğlu, 2010 and Çınar et al., 2013). It shows that if employees are not allowed to take part in decision making process, then their level of organizational citizenship behaviour decreases. Organization needs this type of behaviour for smooth functioning of the system. Previous research studies also reveal that organizational citizenship behaviour results in improving both individual and organizational performance (Özdevecioğlu, 2003: 117). Organizational silence arises due to many reasons and if it is not positively handled it will ultimately lead towards employees' silence in the long run and consequently will not show organizational citizenship behaviour. More specifically, employees having defensive and acquiescent silence are not anticipated to show organizational citizenship behaviour whereas employees having prosocial silence behavior are expected to display organizational citizenship behaviour in the long run. Thus, on the basis of above discussion, it can be proposed that:

H3: Relational silence is negatively correlated with organizational citizenship behavior for the environment.

The mediating effect of relational silence

The fear of damaging relationships encourages the employees to remain silent at work. However, it reduces positive communication, quantity and quality of information

sharing within the organization. According to Whiteside and Barclay (2013), three dimensions of employees silence i.e., tacit silence, inaction silence and pro social silence has negative relationship with wellbeing of employees but it has positive correlation with employee stress and rate of turnover. Under these circumstances, employees silence is not good at the time of ideas cross fertilization or introduction of new processes within the organization. It is so because it hinders creativity and brainstorming at these stages of knowledge development in the organization (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). Moreover, employees silence acts as a mediator between employees' creativity and abusive management (Lee et al., 2022). Similarly, nurses silence also play mediating role between toxic leadership and organizational performance (Farghaly Abdelaliem & AbouZeid, 2023). Likewise, defensive silence can mediate the relationship between employees' creativity and their sense of supervisor rejection (Jahanzeb et al., 2021). Similarly, Broeng 2018 argued that tacit silence acts as a mediator between organizational justice and emotional exhaustion. It also exerts considerable influence on the physiological withdrawal behaviour as well as serve as an intermediator in the real performance level in the organization. Furthermore, the level of employee silence will increase when the top management often reject recommendations made by them. However, employee silence will reduce when top level management behave with openness, impartiality, trust and shows support and gratitude for employees' performance (Vakola & Bouradas, 2005). Thus, a conducive inclusive leadership environment in the organization results in overcoming employees' silent behaviour, encourage them to speak, and improve the quality and frequency of exchange relationship between leaders and employees, consequently stimulating employees' organizational citizenship behaviour for the milieu. On the basis of above analysis, the following proposition is proposed in this research study

H4: Relational silence act as mediator between the connection of inclusive leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour for the environment.

Material and Methods

Participants

For this research study the sample was chosen randomly from the education sector. More specifically, data was collected from the principals and teachers of secondary schools of selected districts of Kotli and Mirpur. A sample of 263 teachers and their concerned principals was selected for this research study.

Measures

Inclusive leadership was measured through an instrument of Carmeli et al. (2010). This particular instrument was based upon three different dimensions i.e., openness, accessibility and availability. Whereas, the scale of Boiral and Paillé (2012) was used to measure the construct of organizational citizenship behaviour for environment. Additionally, the construct of relational silence was measured by a scale of Brinsfield (2013).

Data Analysis

In the current research study, data was analyzed through AMOS-SEM statistical technique which is widely used in management sciences. At the preliminary stage, data was analyzed with the help of descriptive and inferential statistics. Data was kept confidential and enough time was given to the respondents to make sure that they have respond honestly.

Results and Discussion

The issue of common method bias was avoided by employing anonymous measurements in the research instrument. Then, Harman single factor method was employed to examine different items of the questionnaire i.e., inclusive leadership, relational silence and organizational citizenship behaviour for environment.

Table 1
Model fit indices for measurement models.

Measurement	χ^2/df	CFI	IFI	RMSEA	GFI	TLI
Three-factor measurement model	1.719	0.925	0.926	0.055	0.893	0.91
Two-factor measurement model	2.542	0.861	0.863	0.075	0.860	0.834
One-factor measurement model	3.543	0.774	0.776	0.098	0.743	0.742

N= 263

The three-factor measurement model is concerned with the joint evaluation of inclusive leadership, relational silence and organizational citizenship behaviour for environment on the identical factor. Whereas, the two-factor measurement model integrates two factors with inclusive leadership and relational silence and organizational citizenship behaviour for environment on the similar factor. However, the one factor measurement model employs one of the factors of inclusive leadership, relational silence and organizational citizenship behavior for environment on the same factor.

Descriptive Statistics

Results in table 2 reveal the descriptive analysis of the study which includes the calculation of mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient of the concerned variables of the research study. These results indicate the negative relationship of inclusive leadership with relational silence ($\beta=-0.459$ and $p<0.01$) and positive correlation with organizational citizenship behaviour for environment ($\beta=0.543$ and $p<0.01$) whereas there exists a negative correlation between relational silence and organizational citizenship behaviour for environment ($\beta=-0.409$ and $p<0.01$)

Table 2
Descriptive analysis of the study

Variables of the study	Mean	SD	1	2	3
Inclusive leadership	3.564	0.653	1		
Relational Silence	2.218	0.543	-0.459**	1	
Organizational citizenship behaviour for environment	3.723	0.654	0.543**	-0.409**	1

N= 263 and ** $p<0.01$ (two-tailed)

Main Effect Hypotheses Testing

The base models of the research study were model no. 1 and model no. 2. Model no. 3 and model no. 4 were formed after the addition of independent variable. Results in table 3 reveal that inclusive leadership is significantly positively correlated with organizational citizenship behaviour for environment ($\beta = 0.586$ and $p < 0.001$) after controlling relevant variables in the research study. Thus, hypothesis 1 of the study was supported in accordance with the results of table 3.

Mediating Effect

The mediation impact of the model equation was calculated on the basis of Baron and Kenney's (1986). Results in model no. 2 of table 3 reveal that inclusive leadership is negatively correlated with relational silence ($\beta = -0.487$ and $p < 0.001$) after controlling relevant variables. Thus, hypothesis 2 of the study is also accepted on the basis of these results. Furthermore, the intermediary variable i.e., relational silence, was added in the model 4 and model 5. Model 5 reveals that the influence of relational silence on organizational citizenship behaviour for environment was negative ($\beta = -0.203$ and $p < 0.01$) therefore hypothesis 3 was also supported. Additionally, the impact of inclusive leadership on organizational citizenship behaviour for environment was also decreased from ($\beta = 0.586$ and $p < 0.001$) to ($\beta = 0.508$ and $p < 0.001$), when relational silence act as partial mediator between inclusive leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour for the environment. Therefore, hypothesis 4 of the research study was also supported.

Table 3
Regression analysis.

	Relational Silence		Organizational citizenship behaviour for environment		
	Model no 1	Model no 2	Model no 3	Model no 4	Model no 5
1. Control variables of the study					
Age	-0.153*	-0.128*	0.167*	0.176*	0.150
Gender	0.076*	0.165	0.043	-0.050	-0.035
Education	-0.070	-0.051	0.054	0.036	0.023
Position level	0.014	-0.024	-0.140*	-0.084	-0.086
Working time	0.015	0.087	0.046	0.004	0.013
Occupation	-0.013	0.008	-0.017	-0.018	0.053
2. Inclusive leadership					
Inclusive leadership		-0.487***		0.586***	0.508***
3. Mediating variable of the study					
Relational Silence					-0.203**
R2	0.025	0.253	0.068	0.374	0.393
$\Delta R2$	0.003	0.234	0.048	0.356	0.373
F	1.147	12.385***	3.154*	21.645***	20.482***

N=263. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, and *** $p < 0.001$ (two-tailed).

Discussion

This research study examined the influence of inclusive leadership on organizational citizenship behaviour for environment. The findings of this study identified that relational silence is a partial mediator between inclusive leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour for milieu; inclusive leadership is significantly

positively correlated with organizational citizenship behaviour for milieu ; inclusive leadership has a negative correlation with relational silence; relational silence is noteworthy negative influence on organizational citizenship behaviour for milieu; This research study clarified the partial mediation impact of relational silence between inclusive leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour for milieu.

In the framework of Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, the notion of inclusive leadership can be viewed as a resource that enhances employees' psychological and emotional well-being by fostering an atmosphere of inclusivity and trust. This resource, represented by inclusive leadership, serves as a protective factor against resource loss in the form of relational silence. As employees experience reduced relational silence, they preserve their emotional and psychological resources, which in turn can lead to a greater inclination to involve in organizational citizenship behavior for milieu. In this context, the theory suggests that inclusive leadership not only contributes positively to employees' resource acquisition but also helps mitigate resource loss by reducing relational silence, ultimately promoting citizenship behavior for environment within the workplace.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is necessary for the organization to maintain a conducive environment which can build an active, open-minded and broad dimensions of the culture so that managers can effectively communicate with lower-level employees. Consequently, it will reduce the influence of external environment on employees' silent attitude. It is unconditionally essential for the managers to adopt inclusive leadership style, provide support to the employees, treat them with accessible attitude, appreciate their efforts, improve channels of communication and meet their individual needs. In this framework, organizations require employees' organizational citizenship behaviour for environment. Because, this type of behaviour is essential for increasing productivity of employees, coordinate the activities of cross functional teams and helping the organization to face environmental challenges in a better way.

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