Context-based effect of shared leadership and perceived organizational support on counterproductive work behavior

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Abstract

This study investigates the effects of shared leadership on counterproductive work behaviors of organizations (CWB-O) and individuals (CWB-I), emphasizing the mediating role of perceived organizational support (POS) across different contexts. Data were collected from 143 organizational teams across three sectors in Tehran, Iran—software, charity, and food production—encompassing 515 team members. Using the social network approach, shared leadership was quantified based on team-level density. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) is used to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed that shared leadership significantly reduces both CWB-O and CWB-I, with POS playing a mediating role. Furthermore, findings indicate that team type moderates the relationships between shared leadership, POS, and CWBs. By integrating organizational support theory, social exchange theory, and norm of reciprocity, this study provides a novel theoretical conceptualization linking shared leadership, POS, and CWBs, deepening the understanding of leadership's impact on workplace behavior.

Keywords: *Shared leadership, counterproductive work behavior, perceived organizational support, team dynamics*

Introduction

Counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) refer to voluntary actions by employees that are negative and harmful to the effective functioning of an organization and the overall performance of its workforce (Carpenter et al., 2021; Fox et al., 2001; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Examples include fraud, physical and verbal aggression, vandalism, sabotage, voluntary absenteeism, transgressions, and retaliation (Marcus et al., 2016). CWBs represent a widespread challenge for organizations, directly influencing employee performance and preventing them from reaching their full potential (Carpenter et al., 2021; Marcus et al., 2016). This, in turn, leads to substantial financial costs, potentially reaching billions of dollars. Additionally, such behaviors can result in decreased productivity and increased employee withdrawal, posing a serious threat to the organization's long-term sustainability (Striler et al., 2021; Tong et al., 2020).

Although interest in CWBs has surged since the mid-1990s and is well-established in organizational theory literature due to their disruptive nature and high costs, significant research gaps remain in understanding how organizational management mechanisms can effectively address and mitigate these behaviors (Carpenter et al., 2021; Marcus et al., 2016). First, one key criticism of CWB research is that scholars have often overlooked the social context surrounding these behaviors, failing to fully consider how organizational dynamics and interpersonal interactions contribute to their occurrence (De Clercq et al., 2021). To be more specific, CWBs are commonly categorized into two dimensions: behaviors targeting the organization (CWB-O) and those targeting individuals (CWB-I) (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Carpenter et al., 2021). Prior literature indicates that most studies have primarily focused on individual-level behaviors (CWB-I), with limited attention given to group-level dynamics (CWB-O) that may exacerbate these behaviors within organizations (Dixit & Singh, 2019). Further, only a limited number of studies

have simultaneously examined both CWB-I and CWB-O within the same research across different research contexts (Carpenter et al., 2021).

Second, although a growing body of literature explores the role of various organizational management mechanisms, including leadership styles, in shaping CWBs, most studies have focused on conventional vertical top-down leadership styles such as transformational, participative, and ethical leadership within a single research context (Ahmed et al., 2022, 2024). However, shared leadership, which involves distributing leadership responsibilities within teams, has been suggested toenhance team functioning and reduce workplace misconduct (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch, 2012). Despite its potential, shared leadership has received insufficient attention in this context (Tong et al., 2020). A plausible reason for this gap is that most prior literature has focused on CWB-I in a single research context, while shared leadership is more prominent at the group level. However, although primarily studied at the group level, shared leadership can also influence individual perceptions, particularly about organizational support. This gap highlights the need for empirical studies examining the impact of shared leadership on mitigating CWB at both the individual and group levels.

Third, shared leadership supports autonomy, encourages active participation in decision-making, and provides emotional and developmental support for employees, fostering their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Wayne, 1993). This closely aligns with the concept of perceived organizational support (POS) (Younger, 2021), which reflects employees' perceptions of their organization's commitment to supporting their well-being and valuing their contributions. A high level of POS is linked to reduced employee absenteeism and withdrawal behaviors. Consequently, POS can foster positive organizational outcomes and help mitigate CWBs. However, previous empirical studies examining how shared leadership and POS mitigate CWBs

at both the individual and group levels within the same study are limited. Furthermore, most prior studies have focused on assessing the impact of leadership styles on mitigating CWBs within a single context, limiting their ability to capture the broader influence that organizational context can have.

Fourth, while previous studies have primarily examined the antecedents of CWBs, often relying on random variables or drawing support from a single theory, they lack a comprehensive and complementary theoretical framework (Carpenter et al., 2021). Combining multiple theories to predict the full spectrum of antecedents and cover both main types of CWBs within a single study remains underexplored. By firmly grounded in Organizational Support Theory (OST), Social Exchange Theory (SET), and norm of reciprocity theory, we address gaps in the existing organizational theory literature by hypothesizing that shared leadership positively influences POS, thereby reducing CWBs directed at both individuals and organizations. We specifically used SET, as CWBs are prominently understood within this framework in prior literature (Islam & Ahmed 2019). Along with SET, OST and norm of reciprocity theory were also chosen to theoretically frame the study, as they highlight how shared leadership and POS foster employees' job satisfaction and and encourage reciprocal positive behaviors, potentially mitigating CWBs (Ahmed et al. 2015; Islam & Ahmed 2019; Lebron et al., 2018).

As highlighted above, this study fills the gaps by exploring how shared leadership impacts employees' perceptions of organizational support and their involvement in CWBs. Specifically, it examines whether shared leadership mitigates CWBs directed at individuals (CWB-I) and organizations (CWB-O) through the mediating role of POS. Additionally, recognizing that team context may shape shared leadership's effectiveness, this research explores the moderating role of team type. By analyzing diverse team contexts—software, food production, and charitable

organizations—this study aims to provide actionable insights into leadership strategies for reducing workplace deviance in multiple research context.

The findings contribute to organizational theory literature in five vital ways. First, this study is one of the few attempts to examine CWBs directed at both the individual and organizational levels within the same research, offering a comprehensive coverage of the concept. Second, this study examines the role of shared leadership in mitigating CWBs, an area that has received limited attention in the CWB literature, in contrast to the more commonly studied conventional top-down leadership styles. Third, this study combines POS and shared leadership—two highly interrelated concepts—and empirically examines their collective influence on mitigating CWBs at both the individual and organizational levels within the same study. Fourth, and most importantly, by integrating OST, SET, and norm of reciprocity theory, this study offers a novel theoretical framework that links shared leadership, POS, and CWBs. While empirically validating this relationship, it deepens our understanding of how shared leadership and POS can mitigate CWBs directed at both individual and organizational levels. Fifth, it offers rare insights into how team context moderates the effect of shared leadership on both POS and CWBs, addressing calls for context-specific research in organizational theory literature. Further, the findings present actionable strategies for managers aiming to foster collaborative and healthier organizational environments by mitigating disruptive and harmful CWBs.

Literature review and hypotheses development

Shared leadership and perceived organizational support

Leadership is often regarded as a cornerstone of team effectiveness (Sinclair, 1992; Zaccaro et al., 2001), with failures in team performance frequently attributed to inadequate leadership (Stewart & Manz, 1995). However, the traditional vertical leadership model, where a single individual is

responsible for guiding the team, may no longer suffice in today's dynamic and knowledge-driven work environments (Barry, 1991; Pearce, 2004; Tajeddini et al., 2020). Increasingly, teams are composed of highly skilled individuals who value autonomy and seek opportunities to apply their expertise. In such contexts, the ability of a team to distribute leadership responsibilities among its members becomes crucial for optimal performance (Druskat & Wheeler, 2003).

Shared leadership diverges from the conventional top-down approach, emphasizing distributed influence and lateral collaboration among team members (Pearce & Sims, 2002). It involves mutual influence and interactive processes among peers to achieve team or organizational goals (Ensley et al., 2006; Pearce et al., 2009). This approach fosters collective accountability, with leadership emerging from both formal and informal roles within the team (Pearce et al., 2009). Empirical studies highlight the positive impact of shared leadership on team outcomes (Carson et al., 2007; Hoch, 2014; Hoegl & Muethei, 2016; Mehra et al., 2006; Wang et al., 2013).

OST posits that employees develop perceptions of organizational support based on how much their organization values their contributions and prioritizes their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Shore & Wayne, 1993). This perception is shaped by the organization's responsiveness to employees' socio-emotional needs and its ability to fairly reward their efforts (George et al., 1993; Randall et al., 1999). Shared leadership, which encourages autonomy and active participation in decision-making, aligns closely with the principles of OST. Autonomy, for example, has been shown to enhance perceived organizational support by signaling trust and recognition from the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1999; Roades & Eisenberger, 2002). Similarly, providing employees a voice in decision-making fosters perceptions of fairness and respect, further strengthening perceived organizational support (Moorman et al., 1998).

Furthermore, Houghton et al. (2015) linked shared leadership to a culture of care within teams, where members actively support each other's growth and development. Such a culture aligns with the essence of perceived organizational support, as it emphasizes respect, recognition, and well-being (Mayeroff, 2009). By fostering proactive caring and collaboration, shared leadership enhances employees' sense of value and belonging within the organization (Houghton et al., 2012). Given these theoretical foundations and empirical insights, this study posits the following hypothesis:

H_1: *Shared leadership has a positive effect on perceived organizational support.*

Counterproductive work behaviors

Griffin and Lopez (2005) asserted that, despite increasing research on CWBs, the concept of dysfunctional behaviors within organizations remains underdeveloped. Bowling and Gruys (2010) suggested that CWB literature is fragmented and should be studied as a comprehensive concept. Bennett and Robinson (2000) proposed that since some forms of CWB share common characteristics, they could be classified into clusters or categories.

Efforts to classify employee deviance have been limited. Mangione and Quinn (1974) distinguished between counterproductive behaviors (e.g., intentional destruction of employer property) and low-quality or quantity output. Wheeler (1976) categorized organizational rule-breaking into serious and non-serious crimes. Hollinger and Clark (1986) further classified CWBs into two broad categories: *property deviance* (abusing employer assets, such as theft or destruction of property) and *production deviance* (violating job performance norms, such as tardiness or poor work quality).

Robinson and Bennett (1995, 2000) expanded on these categorizations by distinguishing between behaviors targeting the organization (CWB-O) and those targeting individuals within the

organization (CWB-I). They used multi-dimensional scaling to categorize CWB into two dimensions: focusing on organizational behaviors (CWB-O) and interpersonal behaviors (CWB-I), further distinguishing between minor offenses and serious crimes. Neuman and Baron (1998) argued for a distinction between workplace aggression and workplace violence, categorizing CWBs into *hostility*, *obstructionism*, and *overt aggression*. Sackett et al (2006) proposed a hierarchical model of CWBs, defining CWB as a general factor encompassing specific forms of deviant behavior (e.g., theft, absenteeism, alcohol use).

Gruys and Sackett (2003) identified eleven distinct types of CWB, emphasizing the importance of understanding the interrelationships between different behaviors. Spector et al. (2006) presented a five-dimensional model of CWB, including abuse, sabotage, withdrawal, production deviance, and theft. They critiqued earlier one- or two-dimensional typologies, arguing that such models group disparate behaviors (e.g., spreading rumors and theft or tardiness and property deviance) together under single indices, implying equivalence where it may not exist. Their study demonstrated strong correlations between CWB-I and abuse and between CWB-O and other CWB dimensions.

Organizational deviance and interpersonal deviance

While Robinson and Bennett's (1995) typology has faced some methodological and content-based criticisms, it remains a foundational framework for CWB research. They argued that the key distinction between types of deviant behavior lies in the target of the deviance—whether directed at the organization (CWB-O) or individuals within the organization (CWB-I). This target-based separation is significant for two reasons: first, it causes a qualitative difference in the behaviors, and second, it determines the motivational factors behind these activities (Bennett & Robinson, 2000).

CWB-O refers to behaviors that negatively affect the organization, such as excessive interruptions, self-interest-driven actions, or violations of organizational norms. CWB-I involves behaviors that harm individuals within the organization, including verbal insults, rumor spreading, and aggression toward coworkers (Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Dalal, 2005; Mount et al., 2006). Empirical evidence suggests that both types of CWBs can harm individuals, disrupt group processes, and violate organizational norms (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Grijalva & Newman, 2014; Priesemuth et al., 2013).

CWB and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

From a definitional perspective, CWB and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) are opposites. OCB is discretionary employee behavior that benefits the organization, even though it is not formally recognized or rewarded (Schnake, 1991). In contrast, CWB harms the organization (Dalal, 2005). OCB has been called "prosocial behavior," with behaviors that support coworkers (OCB-I) and the organization (OCB-O). Bennett and Stamper (2001) found a strong negative relationship between OCB-I and CWB-I and between OCB-O and CWB-O, indicating that behaviors that help others or the organization are inversely related to behaviors that harm them (Kelloway et al., 2002). Several studies (e.g., Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Bennett & Stamper, 2001; Kelloway et al., 2002; Spector et al, 2006) have explored the negative relationship between OCB and CWB. The findings suggest that as OCB increases, CWB decreases, reinforcing the idea that OCB and CWB are opposites.

Shared leadership and counterproductive work behaviors

Despite the increasing interest in shared leadership, most studies have focused on its effects on team performance and effectiveness (e.g., Pearce et al., 2009; Ensley et al., 2006). Research on the

impact of shared leadership on CWB is scarce (Holtz & Harold, 2012), with a few exceptions, such as Pearce et al (2009), who found that shared leadership mitigates anti-citizenship behaviors within teams. Pearce defines anti-citizenship behaviors as defiance and avoidance of work, behaviors conceptually similar to CWB.

Shared leadership does not negate the role of formal leaders; it can complement traditional vertical leadership (Pearce & Sims, 2000). Research on self-managing teams highlights the role of external leaders in motivating members and helping them develop autonomy (Carson et al., 2007; Manz & Sims, 1987). External team coaching, or supportive leadership, is closely related to shared leadership as it helps teams develop self-management and autonomy (Carson et al., 2007; Morgeson, 2005).

In the context of CWB, Greenberger et al. (1989) noted that perceptions of control influence the emergence of CWBs. Employees who perceive a lack of control are more likely to engage in CWB. Storms and Spector (1987) supported this idea, and Fida et al. (2014) found a positive relationship between lack of decision latitude and CWB-O and CWB-I.

Several studies have linked the dimenisons of shared leadership to a positive work environment, which reduces CWBs. The dimensions of shared leadership include *voice* (participation in decision-making) and *social support* (recognizing and reinforcing contributions). These elements have been shown to negatively correlate with CWB-O and CWB-I (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Fida et al., 2014; Kidwell & Valentine, 2008; Marcus et al., 2016).

Based on these findings, we propose the following hypotheses:

H_2: *Shared leadership has a negative effect on team members' counterproductive work behaviors targeting the (a) organization (CWB-O) and (b) individuals (CWB-I).*

Perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behaviors

Shore and Wayne (1993) believed that the employee interpretation of organizational will likely affect employees' behavior. POS can lead employees to feel an obligation to care about the organization's welfare (Eisenberger et al., 2001). This obligation to care in exchange for caring (Foa & Foa, 1980) can reduce CWBs. Employees perceive the way organizational support and its potential to mitigate CWBs can be inferred both theoretically and through empirical studies.

SET is one of the theoretical backgrounds that can deepen the understanding of this relationship. Blau (1986) suggested that social exchanges involve implicit obligations, where a good deed performed for someone is expected to be reciprocated in the future, though the timing or nature of the return is often unclear. Employees tend to pursue long-term social exchange relationships by creating a perceived balance in these exchanges (Rousseau, 1989). Social exchange theorists believe that donated resources will be valued when donated by choice, instead of donated without the control of the donor. In other words, positive discretionary activities by the organization that benefit employees will be considered evidence of the organization caring about the employees' welfare (Eisenberger et al., 1990). Such discretionary activities that represent the donor's respect for and valuing of the recipient are pleasant, and employees' proper responses can be expected, to compensate for the organization's efforts (e.g., Gouldner, 1960; Blau, 1986; Eisenberger et al., 1987). Eisenberger et al. (1990) believed that high levels of perceived organizational support lead to the feeling of obligation, by which employees feel that they not only are obligated to their employers but also must return the employer's obligation; they feel obligated to engage in behaviors that support the organization's goals.

Regarding the norm of reciprocity, Gouldner (1960) provided another valuable basis for understanding the relationship between perceived organizational support and CWB. Gouldner (1960) stated that the norm of reciprocity leads to obligation when one side engages in behaviors

that benefit the recipient. The recipient becomes indebted to the donor until the obligation is repaid and does not harm the donor as long as the recipient is obligated. Creating obligations and the subsequent repayment reinforces the mutually beneficial exchange of benefits (Blau, 1986; Eisenberger et al., 1987).

A question may be raised about the nature of reciprocity differing from employee-organization exchanges because the organization is not an individual but a set of individuals. Members of the organization are viewed as an entity with which employees can form relationships (Shore & Tetrick, 1991). Levinson (1965) noted that employees often do not attribute the actions of agents of the organization to those agents individually, but perceive the actions as indicators of the organization's intention, a concept that Levinson called personification of the organization. Therefore, if employees perceive the activities and decisions of the organization (as an entity) as signs that the organization cares and finds them worthwhile, they will care about and help the organization, and will increase their prosocial practices to achieve a perceived balance (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 2001).

As mentioned above, in addition to the theoretical background, empirical research also acknowledges the relationship between perceived organizational support and CWBs. While leadership research has traditionally focused on hierarchical models, Ahmad et al. (2023) highlight the emerging importance of servant and compassionate leadership styles in addressing workplace challenges, such as bullying and deviance. This study extends this perspective by investigating shared leadership as an alternative framework to reduce CWBs. Recent studies have confirmed the relationship between perceived organizational support and forms of OCBs (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne et al., 1997; Randall et al., 1999; Moorman et al.,1998). Recent studies suggest that organizational support is pivotal in mitigating CWBs. For instance,

Ahmed et al. (2015) conducted a meta-analysis emphasizing the importance of POS in enhancing employee well-being and reducing deviant workplace behaviors. This highlights the theoretical relevance of POS as a mediator in leadership and behavioral studies.

Roades and Eisenberger (2002) also found a positive relationship between perceived organizational support and OCB-O and OCB-I in their meta-analysis. In addition to OCBs, studies show that organizational practices that imply caring and positive attention to employees increase effective commitment through the norm of reciprocity (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Guzzo et al., 1994; Wayne et al., 1997; Tsui et al.,1997; Randall et al., 1999; Eisenberger et al., 2001). The meta-analysis of Roades and Eisenberger (2002) also approved this relationship. Employees' affective commitment reflects their sense of attachment to and identification with the organization, as well as their involvement in organizational activities. It enhances their motivation to pursue organizational goals and increases their willingness to remain with the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Effective commitment is crucial to dedication and loyalty, and represents an emotional bond with the organization and a belief in and adherence to its values and norms (Meyer et al., 1993). Certainly, someone who adheres to the organization's norms will not violate them. Therefore, based on the above, we present the following hypotheses;

H_3: *Perceived organizational support has a negative effect on counterproductive work behaviors targeting organizations (a) and individuals (b).*

H_4: *Shared leadership indirectly, by the mediating role of perceived organizational support, has a negative effect on counterproductive work behaviors targeting (a) organizations and (b) individuals.*

Given that organization type is recognized as a moderating variable in numerous leadership studies (e.g., Smith et al., 2004; Long & Mao, 2008; Voon et al., 2011; Bramwell & Eddie, 2014), we test our hypotheses across three distinct team types: software, food production, and charity.

H5: *Team type moderates the effect of SL on (a) POS, (b) CWBO, and (c) CWBI.*

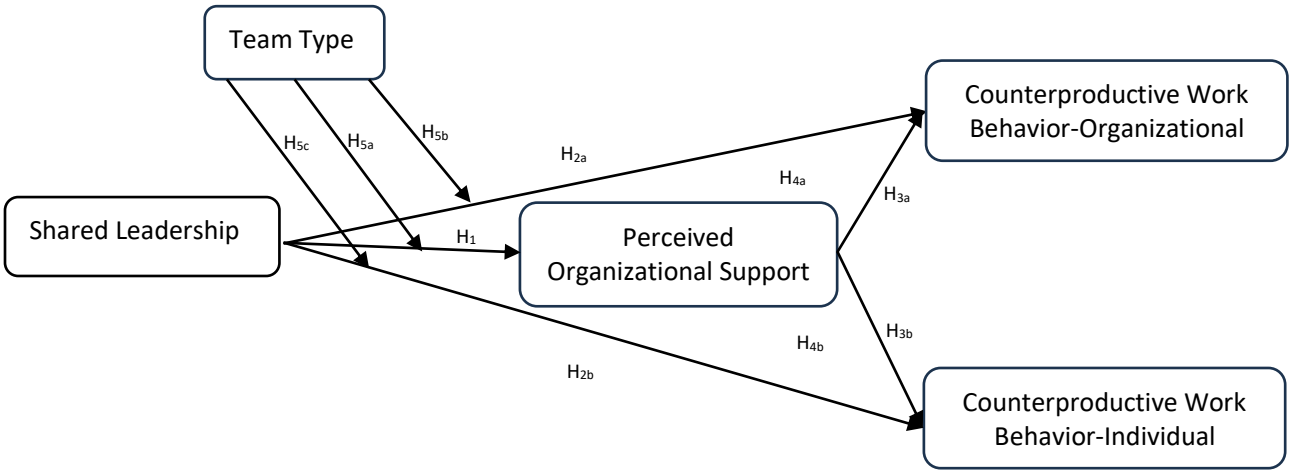

Figure 1. Research Hypotheized Model

Note: SL = Shared Leadership, POS = Perceived Organizational Support, CWB-O= Counterproductive Work Behavior-Organizational, CWB-I= Counterproductive Work Behavior-Individual.

Research method

Participants and Procedures

This study investigates the impact of shared leadership on POS and CWBs, distinguishing between behaviors targeting individuals (CWB-I) and those targeting organizations (CWB-O). To explore these relationships, data were collected from 143 teams across three sectors in Tehran, Iran: software (41 teams, 174 respondents), charities (35 teams, 143 respondents), and food production (67 teams, 198 respondents). These sectors were selected to represent diverse team dynamics. Participants were selected based on the following criteria: (1) a minimum of two years of experience working in teams, (2) active participation in shared leadership dynamics, and (3) willingness to participate in the study. Random sampling was used to select participants, ensuring the representativeness of each sector. In total, 515 team members participated. Data collection involved distributing questionnaires to team members and supervisors. Random sampling was

used to select participants, ensuring representativeness of each sector. The unit of analysis was the team level, with aggregated data for group-level evaluations.

To ensure generalizability, the selected sample included teams from various sectors with differing characteristics. Software teams represented dynamic environments with high intellectual and operational variability, charity teams involved voluntary participation and mixed member dynamics, and foodstuff production teams operated in static environments with standardized processes. This diversity increases the study's credibility and applicability to a broader population. Data collection involved distributing questionnaires to team members and supervisors, both online and in person. Steps were taken to ensure participants' privacy and encourage honest responses. A pilot test was conducted with 30 participants to ensure the reliability and clarity of the instruments, and minor adjustments were made based on feedback.

Research Instruments

The study utilized a structured questionnaire to measure key variables, which were carefully designed to ensure validity and reliability. To accommodate the study's context, the questionnaires were translated into Persian using the back-translation method. This approach ensured conceptual equivalence between the original and translated versions. Additionally, a team of bilingual experts reviewed and refined the translated items to maintain accuracy and cultural appropriateness. The measurement scales used to measure the main variables are described below.

Shared leadership: we evaluated shared leadership using the *social network approach* (Carson et al., 2007), which uses density (congestion). In this context, density is a measure of the total amount of leadership displayed by each team member. Using the question, "To what degree does your team rely on this individual for leadership?" each member is asked to rate each of his co-workers

on a five-point response scale (1 = not at all, to 5 = very high level). Equation (1) shows how to compute density for shared leadership:

Equation 1: Density = S/5 N (N-1)

In this equation, S is the total sum of the *values* team members allocate to each other for leadership. N indicates the number of team members, and N (N-1) is the total number of probable ties in a team. The number 5 is the maximum value each team member can allocate to their co-workers (Carson et al., 2007).

Counterproductive work behaviors: we considered a set of tools used in previous studies to measure CWB (e.g., Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Sackett et al., 2006; Spector et al., 2006; Klotz & Buckley, 2013), but for accurate investigation, we divided deviant behaviors into two families: "individual*"* and "organizational" deviant behaviors. We designed a questionnaire with 30 items (16 items to measure CWB-O and 14 items to measure CWB-I) using a five-point Likert scale (1 = not at all, to 5 = very high level). The questions were distributed to the work groups in the form of a members' questionnaire as well as in the form of a supervisory questionnaire. Then, to investigate each of these variables at the group level, we first calculated the arithmetic mean of the responses of the group members and supervisors in separate families of "individual" and "organizational." Then, we aggregated the mean of individual deviant work behaviors (CWB-I) of the members and supervisors and the mean of organizational deviant work behaviors (CWB-O) of the members and supervisors, so that we calculated the CWB-I and CWB-O of the entire group.

Perceived organizational support: We measured perceived organizational support using the shortened version of a survey of perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), using the shortened version is not

problematic because the original scale is unidimensional and highly trusted. In this regard, we chose six items with the highest factor-loading from past surveys of perceived organizational support. Previous studies have confirmed the validity and reliability of this scale (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Eisenberger et al., 2001). Each item was measured using the seven-point Likert scale: "1 = completely opposite, to 7 = fully agreeable". In addition, the questionnaire items were adapted to fit the study goal without affecting the psychometric and nomological features. For example, the term "management" was replaced by "organization". Moreover, since the data was gathered at the individual level, the data from each group was aggregated to evaluate at the group level, too.

Data analysis

To analyze the data, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used with a partial least squares (PLS) approach, using smart PLS software to test the hypotheses of the study. This method is ideal for analyzing research with complex relationships between variables, small sample sizes, and non-normal data distributions (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012). Additionally, PLS is well-suited for measuring causal relationships (Henseler et al., 2009).Also, as stated, the analysis was at the team or group level; studies such as Schwarz and Schwarz (2007), Díaz-Casero et al. (2011), De la Torre-Ruiz et al. (2014), and Chu & Chen (2015) have used PLS to examine samples of teams.

Research finding

Evaluation of the measurement model

The measurement model was evaluated using reliability, convergent validity, and divergent validity to ensure its appropriateness. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using

Cronbach's Alpha, composite reliability (CR), and factor loadings. These measures provide insight into the consistency of the constructs across the items. For convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE) was used, as proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981). AVE measures the degree to which the latent variable explains the variance of its indicators. As shown in Table 1, all constructs demonstrated acceptable values for Cronbach's Alpha, CR, and AVE, indicating satisfactory internal consistency and convergent validity.

Table 1. Factor Loading, Cronbach's Alpha, CR, and AVE Report

	Items	**FL ≥ 0/4**	**Items**	**FL ≥ 0/4**
CWBO	**α= 0.85; CR= 0.87; AVE= 0.57**			
	cwbo1	0.49	cwbo9	**0.45**
	cwbo2	0.54	cwbo10	**0.58**
	cwbo3	0.56	cwbo11	**0.59**
	cwbo4	0.48	cwbo12	**0.61**
	cwbo5	0.58	cwbo13	**0.53**
	cwbo6	0.54	cwbo14	**0.62**
	cwbo7	0.52	cwbo15	**0.57**
	cwbo8	0.62	cwbo16	**0.52**
CWBI	**α= 0.83; CR= 0.86; AVE= 0.59**			
	cwbi1	0.57	cwbi8	**0.44**
	cwbi2	0.60	cwbi9	**0.45**
	cwbi3	0.48	cwbi10	**0.53**
	cwbi4	0.58	cwbi11	**0.62**
	cwbi5	0.51	cwbi12	**0.60**
	cwbi6	0.53	cwbi13	**0.63**
	cwbi7	0.55	cwbi14	**0.61**
POS	**α= 0.84; CR= 0.88; AVE= 0.55**			
	pos1	0.75	pos4	**0.76**
	pos2	0.77	pos5	**0.74**
	pos3	0.73	pos6	**0.71**

Note: POS = Perceived Organizational Support, CWB-O= Counterproductive Work Behavior-Organizational, CWB-I= Counterproductive Work Behavior-Individual.

To assess divergent validity, the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion was used, and PLS analysis provided a matrix of correlations between latent variables. The HTMT criterion checks the discriminant validity of the latent variables by comparing the correlations between different constructs. The results presented in Table 2 show that all HTMT values are below the

recommended threshold of 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015), confirming that the model exhibits adequate divergent validity.

Table 2. HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) Values for Assessing Divergent Validity

Latent Variables	SL	POS	CWBO	CWBI
SL	1.00	0.58	0.49	0.42
POS	0.74	1.00	0.67	0.62
CWBO	0.66	0.75	1.00	0.75
CWBI	0.61	0.75	0.66	1.00

Note: SL = Shared Leadership, POS = Perceived Organizational Support, CWB-O = Counterproductive Work Behavior-Organizational, CWB-I = Counterproductive Work Behavior-Individual.

Common method bias analysis

To address potential common method bias (CMB), we conducted a full collinearity test following the approach recommended by Kock (2015). The results indicated that all VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values were below the critical threshold of 3.3, suggesting that common method bias does not pose a significant concern in this study. This approach replaces the earlier use of the Harman single-factor test and provides a more robust assessment of CMB, further ensuring the validity of our results.

Evaluation of the structural model and test of the hypotheses

After evaluating the validity and reliability of the measurement model, the next step was to evaluate the structural model using the relationships between latent variables. For this purpose, three criteria were used: the significance coefficient (t-values), R^2, and predictive relevance (Q^2). The values of R^2 for the endogenous variables in the research model—POS (0.26), CWBO (0.41),

and CWBI (0.45)— suggest moderate predictive power for POS and moderate to strong predictive power for CWBO and CWBI (Chin, 1998). Additionally, the Q^2 values for these variables—0.24, 0.21, and 0.23, respectively—confirm the model's predictive relevance (Henseler et al., 2009).

To evaluate the overall model fit, we used the NFI and SRMR indices. To evaluate the overall model fit, we used the NFI and SRMR indices. The NFI values for the full, software, charity, and foodstuffs production samples were 0.92, 0.89, 0.86, and 0.90, respectively. According to Hu and Bentler (1999), NFI values above 0.90 indicate a good model fit. While the NFI values for the software (0.89) and charity (0.86) teams fall slightly below this threshold, they are still considered acceptable based on previous research (Hair et al., 2019), especially in models with complex latent variable structures. Furthermore, the SRMR values for these models (0.05, 0.06, 0.07, and 0.05, respectively) were all below the recommended 0.08 threshold (Hu & Bentler, 1999), further confirming the model's adequacy.

After examining the fit of both the measurement and structural models and ensuring the models were well-fitted, we proceeded with hypothesis testing. The results of the direct and indirect hypotheses in the full, software, charity, and food production models are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Research Hypotheses Test Results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-Statistic	Supported	Notes
H_1	SL → POS	0.510	11.820	Yes ($p < 0.001$)	Strong relationship in the full model; software and production teams showed higher effects compared to charity teams.
H_{2a}	SL → CWBO	0.200	4.678	Yes ($p < 0.001$)	Significant relationship across all team types, with the strongest effects in software and production teams.
H_{2b}	SL → CWBI	0.058	1.267	No	Insignificant in the full and software models but supported in charity ($p < 0.001$) and production teams ($p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-Statistic	Supported	Notes
H_{3a}	POS → CWBO	0.511	12.733	Yes ($p < 0.001$)	POS significantly reduces CWBO in all team types.
H_{3b}	POS → CWBI	0.637	14.996	Yes ($p < 0.001$)	POS significantly reduces CWBI across all models.
H_{4a}	SL → POS → CWBO	0.565	23.333	Yes ($p < 0.001$)	Mediation of POS between SL and CWBO confirmed.
H_{4b}	SL → POS → CWBI	0.848	25.484	Yes ($p < 0.001$)	Mediation of POS between SL and CWBI confirmed.
H_{5a}	Team Type ↓ SL → POS	Varies by Team	2.662 (Software)	Partial	Moderation effect significant for software and production teams; not significant for charity teams.
H_{5b}	Team Type ↓ SL → CWBO	Varies by Team	1.999 (Software)	Partial	Moderation significant for software teams but not significant for production and charity teams.
H_{5c}	Team Type ↓ SL → CWBI	Varies by Team	2.321 (Software)	Partial	Moderation significant for software and production teams; insignificant for charity teams.

Note: SL = Shared Leadership, POS = Perceived Organizational Support, CWB-O= Counterproductive Work Behavior-Organizational, CWB-I= Counterproductive Work Behavior-Individual.

The results reveal significant insights into the relationships between Shared Leadership (SL), Perceived Organizational Support (POS), and Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWBO and CWBI). Additionally, they highlight the moderating role of Team Type in these relationships.

Firstly, the direct effect of SL on POS (H_1) was confirmed across all team types, with a strong path coefficient of 0.510 and a high t-statistic of 11.820, indicating a significant positive relationship between SL and POS. This suggests that shared leadership enhances employees' perception of organizational support, consistent across different team models, although the effect was slightly weaker in charity teams. Similarly, SL positively influences CWBO (H_{2a}) with a path coefficient of 0.200, and this effect was significant in all team models, particularly in the software and production teams. However, in charity teams, the effect was weaker yet still significant. While the effect of SL on CWBI (H2b) was not significant in the full and software models ($t = 1.267$, $p > 0.05$), it was found to be significant in both food production ($p < 0.05$) and charity teams ($p <$

0.001), indicating a context-dependent relationship. This difference might be attributed to contextual factors such as team dynamics or leadership structures in production and charity teams. The relationship between POS and CWBO (H_{3a}) was found to be highly significant, with a path coefficient of 0.511 and a t-statistic of 12.733, confirming that higher POS leads to increased organizational counterproductive behaviors. Similarly, POS significantly influences CWBI (H_{3b}), with a path coefficient of 0.637 and a very high t-statistic of 14.996, indicating that perceived organizational support is associated with a higher likelihood of individual counterproductive work behavior. These results suggest that POS plays a crucial role in fostering both organizational and individual counterproductive behaviors.

The mediating role of POS in the relationships between SL and both CWBO and CWBI was also tested. The mediation effect was confirmed in both SL → POS → CWBO (H_{4a}) and SL → POS → CWBI (H_{4b}), with high path coefficients (0.565 and 0.848, respectively) and substantial t-statistics (23.333 and 25.484). This shows that POS significantly mediates the impact of SL on both organizational and individual counterproductive behaviors, highlighting its key role in explaining how shared leadership influences these outcomes. The mediation was consistently significant across all team types, suggesting that POS is a central mechanism in these relationships. These mediation effects highlight the crucial role of POS in reducing counterproductive behaviors, showing how shared leadership indirectly influences these outcomes through perceived support.

Furthermore, the study explored the moderating role of Team Type on the relationships between SL, POS, and counterproductive work behaviors. In terms of SL → POS (H_{5a}), the moderation effect was significant in the software and production teams, indicating that the impact of SL on POS differs across team types. However, for charity teams, no significant moderation was found, suggesting that the effect of SL on POS is similar to that observed in the full sample. Regarding

the SL → CWBO relationship (H_{5b}), moderation effects were significant in the software and production teams but not in the charity teams. This indicates that SL's influence on CWBO is stronger in software and production teams than charity teams. Lastly, the moderation of SL → CWBI (H_{5c}) was significant in the software and production teams but not in charity teams. These results suggest that team type plays a significant role in moderating the relationship between SL and counterproductive work behaviors, with stronger effects observed in the software and production teams. The non-significant moderation effect in charity teams may be explained by their unique structure, often characterized by voluntary participation and less hierarchical leadership.

The moderation graph (Figure 2) illustrates the impact of team type on the relationships between shared leadership and three outcomes: POS, CWB-O, and CWB-I.

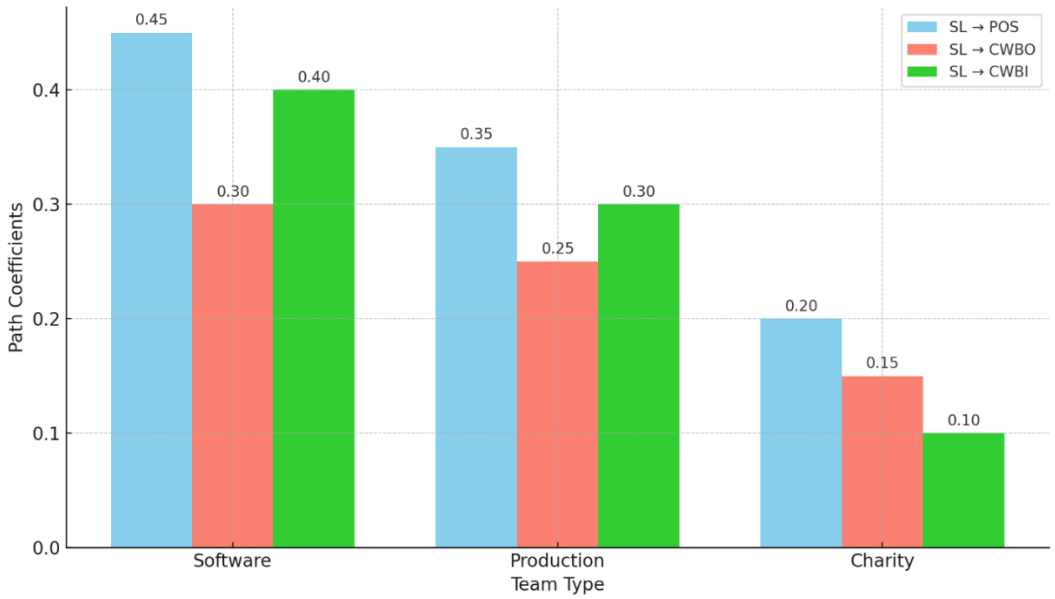

Figure 2. Moderation effects graph by team type

In conclusion, the findings underline the importance of considering both mediating and moderating variables in understanding the dynamics between leadership and counterproductive behaviors. The research demonstrates that POS plays a critical mediating role, while team type moderates the effects of shared leadership on counterproductive behaviors, emphasizing the complex and context-dependent nature of these relationships.

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

The findings contribute to organizational theory literature in five distinct ways. First, this study is one of the few to examine CWBs at both the individual and organizational levels within the same research, providing a comprehensive exploration of the concept. Most prior literature has primarily focused on individual-level CWBs, neglecting the interconnected nature of these behaviors in real-world settings (Carpenter et al., 2021; Marcus et al., 2016). The high correlation between CWB-O and CWB-I found in this study reinforces the integrated nature of these behaviors. This finding enriches CWB literature by broadening its scope to capture the interconnectedness of these behaviors and highlighting the importance of examining them simultaneously within the same study.

Second, this study explores the role of shared leadership in mitigating CWBs, an area that has received limited attention in CWB literature, particularly compared to the more commonly studied top-down leadership styles (Ahmed et al., 2024). Our findings highlight that employees who perceive their organization as supportive are less likely to engage in harmful behaviors, consistent with the norm of reciprocity theory (Gouldner, 1960). These results align with previous research on shared leadership and CWBs, which indicates an inverse relationship between POS and CWBs, considering both CWB-I and CWB-O (Akbari et al., 2016; Pearce et al, 2009; Rhoades

& Eisenberger, 2002). Further, we build on prior literature by emphasizing how the differential effects of shared leadership reduce CWBs and enhance team cohesion across various team types, underscoring the importance of contextualizing leadership practices. Our findings suggest that while shared leadership demonstrates clear benefits in structured teams, its relevance in volunteer-driven environments, such as charity teams, requires further investigation.

Third, this study combines POS and shared leadership—two highly interrelated concepts—and empirically examines their collective influence on mitigating CWBs at both the individual and organizational levels within the same study. The results confirm that shared leadership plays a significant role in enhancing POS. Two key factors drive this relationship. First, shared leadership promotes autonomy and active participation by enabling employees to express their opinions and contribute to decision-making. This strengthens their sense of being valued by the organization. Second, by delegating leadership roles, the organization signals goodwill and acknowledges employees' contributions, aligning with the principles of SET (Blau, 1986) and OST (Eisenberger et al., 1986), thereby enriching existing literature.

Fourth, and most importantly, by integrating OST, SET, and the norm of reciprocity, this study presents a novel theoretical framework that connects shared leadership, POS, and CWBs. In doing so, it offers valuable insights into the dynamics of these concepts, emphasizing the mediating role of POS and the moderating effects of team type. Through empirical validation of these relationships, this study enriches the existing literature by demonstrating how shared leadership and POS can mitigate CWBs at both the individual and organizational levels.

Fifth, it provides valuable insights into how team context moderates the impact of shared leadership on both POS and CWBs, addressing calls for context-specific research within organizational theory. Our findings indicate that in software and production teams, shared

leadership has a more significant impact on POS and CWBs, reflecting the structured nature of these teams where leadership practices directly influence employee behavior. In contrast, the moderating effects were found to be insignificant in charity teams. These varying findings across different contexts suggest that the results extend beyond a single organizational setting, providing valuable insights into leadership effectiveness in diverse work environments (Pearce et al., 2009).. By exploring multiple team settings and investigating the role of leadership in mitigating CWBs, this research enriches cross-cultural perspectives on organizational behavior. The findings indicate that shared leadership can be a globally relevant strategy for enhancing POS and reducing CWBs when tailored to different team structures. By doing so, this study significantly contributes to the broader scholarly discourse on leadership and team dynamics, providing theoretical and practical insights applicable to various cultural and industry contexts.

Practical Implications

The findings provide actionable insights for managers looking to effectively curtail CWBs by fostering shared leadership and cultivating perceived organizational support. Consistent with prior research (Ahmed et al., 2021), our results also confirm that addressing subordinates' CWBs from a leadership perspective is an effective strategy for inhibiting such behaviorsAs highlighted in this study, fostering a supportive environment that alleviates employee frustration from external pressures and empowers them can significantly reduce deviant behaviors. Contrary to the traditional top-down hierarchical management approach, organizations today should empower employees by promoting shared leadership initiatives, encouraging participation in decision-making, and recognizing individual contributions to enhance POS. These practices can boost

employee motivation and satisfaction, as supported by Islam and Ahmed (2019), ultimately reducing CWBs.

Our findings suggest that POS can reduce the magnitude of CWBs directed at both the individual and organizational levels, highlighting the managerial need to identify ways to enhance POSManagers must be innovative in designing policies and programs that enhance POS, particularly by appreciating employees' contributions and prioritizing their well-being. For example, they can develop strategies that promote fairness in employee treatment, provide supervisor support when needed, offer rewards, improve job conditions, and acknowledge employees' contributions to the organization's success. These efforts, in turn, can help reduce CWBs.

Further, considering the moderating effect of team types, shared leadership can enhance efficiency in structured teams by reducing CWBs through improved team dynamics and accountability. In contrast, charity teams, driven by volunteer dynamics, require more tailored approaches. Managers of such teams should embrace compassionate and servant leadership practices, focusing on intrinsic motivation, fostering cohesion, and aligning organizational goals with the values of volunteers, as emphasized by Ahmad et al. (2023). These strategies can help cultivate a more resilient and collaborative team culture, addressing the unique challenges faced in different team contexts.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study acknowledges several limitations. First, although we made every effort to mitigate it, the reliance on self-reported questionnaires may introduce common method bias, even with the implementation of anonymity and temporal separation in data collection. Future research should

incorporate objective measures and longitudinal designs to validate the findings further. Second, the study does not explicitly account for cultural and organizational contexts. Incorporating cross-cultural perspectives and diverse industries, as suggested by Ahmed et al. (2015), could enhance the generalizability of the results. Lastly, while focusing on three team types provides valuable insights, future research should explore additional configurations, such as hybrid or remote teams, to expand the scope of applicability.

Conclusion

This research sheds light on the critical role of shared leadership in fostering perceived organizational support and mitigating counterproductive work behaviors across diverse team types. The findings emphasize the contextual nature of leadership effectiveness, with structured teams benefiting more significantly from shared leadership practices. By integrating multiple theoretical perspectives (i.e., organizational support theory, social exchange theory, and norm of reciprocity), the study contributes to both scholarly discourse and practical applications, offering actionable insights for managers and future researchers. While limitations exist, the study lays the groundwork for exploring nuanced leadership dynamics in varied organizational contexts.

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