Feeling ambivalent: An examination of leader–member exchange ambivalence on migrant worker voice behavior

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Background

We draw on Conservation of Resources Theory in proposing that Leader–Member Exchange ambivalence (LMX ambivalence) inhibits migrant workers' voice behavior by reducing their self-perceived status, while supervisor consultation plays a moderating role in such an indirect effect. We test the hypotheses using confirmatory factor analyses and mediations and moderated tests supported by Mplus 8.0 software.

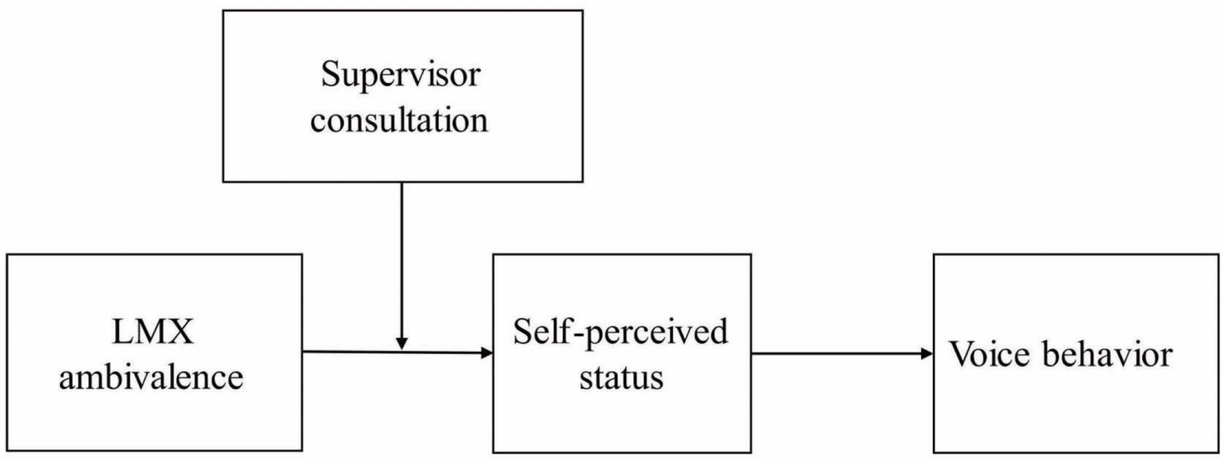
Highlights

•LMX ambivalence inhibits voice behavior by reducing migrant workers' self-perceived status.

•Supervisor consultation plays a moderating role in such an indirect effect.

•Our findings offer novel perspectives on how migrant workers' voice mechanisms work in the face of LMX ambivalence.

Research Model



Results

Statistical analysis:

In this empirical study. Reliability and validity of the measurement model and Hypothesis testing

Table 1
Means, standard deviation, and correlations.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Control variables											
1.Age	2.76	1.13									
2.Gender	0.48	0.50	0.09*								
3.Education	2.50	0.70	0.00	0.08							
4.Dyadic tenure	4.20	2.71	0.48**	-0.05	0.04						
5.LMX quality	3.34	0.96	0.06	-0.04	-0.07	-0.01	**0.92**				
Study Variables											
6. LMX ambivalence	3.27	0.95	0.04	0.06	0.01	0.09	-0.33**	**0.92**			
7. Self-perceived status	3.73	0.79	-0.05	0.00	-0.04	-0.00	0.31**	-0.36**	**0.81**		
8. Supervisor consultation	3.54	1.01	0.02	0.00	-0.05	-0.02	0.23**	0.03	0.23**	**0.83**	
9. Voice behavior	3.65	0.99	-0.04	−0.06	-0.03	-0.06	0.34**	-0.44**	0.48**	0.11*	**0.85**

Notes. n = 508, internal consistency reliability estimates are on the diagonal. Age of migrant workers (18–25 years =1, 26–33 years = 2, 34–41 years = 3, 42–49 years = 4, 50–57 years = 5, and 58 years and above = 6); Gender of migrant workers (male = 1, female = 0); Education of migrant workers (basic education =1, high School = 2, undergraduate = 3, Postgraduate = 4).
** $p < 0.01$ * $p < 0.05$; two tailed test.
Source: Developed by authors

Results of scale analyses using confirmatory factor analysis.

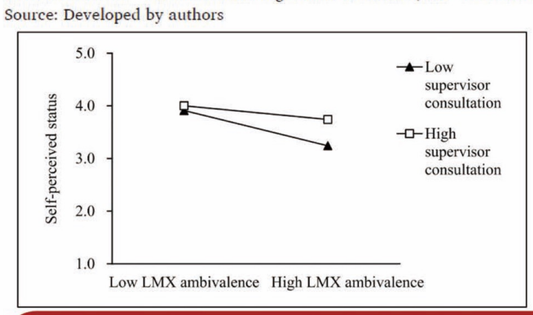
Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	RMSEA	TLI	CFI
4-factor	227.33***	113			0.05	0.97	0.98
3-factor	741.23***	116	513.90***	3	0.10	0.84	0.86
2-factor	1320.43***	118	1093.10***	5	0.14	0.69	0.73
1-factor	1926.44***	119	1699.11***	6	0.17	0.54	0.60

Notes. 4-factor: LMX ambivalence, self-perceived status, supervisor consultation, voice behavior; 3-factor: LMX ambivalence and self-perceived status were combined into one factor; 2-factor: LMX ambivalence, self-perceived status and supervisor consultation were combined into one factor; 1-factor: all items loading onto one factor.
*$p < 0.05$, ***$p < 0.001$
Source: Developed by authors

Results of path analyses.

	Self-perceived status				Voice behavior			
Variables	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*
Intercept	4.06***	0.24	3.64***	0.25	4.32***	0.29	2.59***	0.34
Controls								
Age	-0.06	0.03	-0.06	0.03	-0.03	0.04	0.00	0.04
Gender	0.07	0.07	0.05	0.06	-0.06	0.08	-0.09	0.07
Education	-0.03	0.05	-0.02	0.05	-0.01	0.06	0.00	0.05
Dyadic tenure	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	-0.01	0.02	-0.01	0.02
LMX quality	0.18***	0.04	0.14***	0.04	0.22***	0.04	0.14***	0.04
Independent variables								
LMX ambivalence (LMX)	-0.24***	0.04	-0.25***	0.04	-0.38***	0.04	-0.28***	0.04
Supervisor consultation (SC)			0.15**	0.03				
LMX * SC			0.10**	0.03				
Mediators								
Self-perceived status							0.43***	0.05
R^2	0.18***		0.23***		0.24***		0.34***	

Note. Coefficient =unstandardized regression coefficient; SE =standard error. **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.
Source: Developed by authors



Moderated mediation effect.

	LMX ambivalence → self-perceived status → voice behavior	
	Indirect Effect	
Moderator	Effect	95 % *CI*
High supervisor consultation (+1 SD)	-0.06 (0.02)	(-0.10, -0.01)
Low supervisor consultation (–1 SD)	-0.14 (0.03)	(-0.20, -0.10)
Moderated mediation	0.04 (0.01)	(0.02, 0.07)

Note. The indirect effects were calculated by a bootstrap with 10,000 repetitions. SE =standard error of the indirect effect.
Source: Developed by authors

Conclusion

•LMX ambivalence is negatively related to voice behavior.

•LMX ambivalence leads to reduced self-perceived status and in turn lower voice behavior.

•high levels of supervisor consultation mitigate such a negative indirect effect. This study considers LMX quality as a bivalent construct where both positive and negative cognitions can coexist.

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