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Understanding the Influence of Authentic Leadership and Employee-Organization Relationships on Employee Voice Behaviors in Response to Dissatisfying Events at Work

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Abstract

This study demonstrates how authentic leadership and the quality of employee-organization relationships (EOR) influence employee behavioral reactions to dissatisfying events at work. We conducted a nationwide survey of 644 full-time employees in the United States. The results from the structural equation modeling (SEM) revealed that authentic leadership was positively and directly related to employees' considerate voice but was not directly associated with other behavioral responses. Additionally, the quality of EOR was found to be a strong mediator between authentic leadership and employee behaviors—particularly in enhancing considerate voice and patience and reducing exit—in the context of dissatisfying workplace events. The implications of developing authentic leadership to build and maintain the quality of EOR are discussed.

Keywords

authentic leadership, employee-organization relationships, employee behavioral reactions, exit, voice, loyalty, neglect, dissatisfying events at work

In the workplace, employees often face dissatisfying workplace events caused by conflicts of opinion with supervisors, discontent regarding schedules, or frustration over specific tasks. Employees' behavioral reactions to dissatisfying situations can considerably affect organizational well-being and effectiveness (Unler & Caliskan, 2019). To better understand employees' behavioral reactions to such adverse organizational circumstances, many researchers (e.g., Lee & Varon, 2020) have focused on a model that offers four possible responses: *exit (E)*, *voice (V)*, *loyalty (L)*, and *neglect (N)* (hereafter EVLN). The EVLN model is a well-documented concept in the organizational and management disciplines (Marchington, 2015). Applying the EVLN model, researchers have examined critical factors that promote voice and loyalty as well as factors that reduce exit and neglect (Bisel & Barge, 2011; Lee & Varon, 2020).

In the organizational communication literature, employees have been described as one of the most important strategic constituencies, because employees are crucial for organizational survival and effectiveness (Park et al., 2014). Many scholars have demonstrated how organizations can benefit from effective communication with their employees (e.g., Kim & Rhee, 2011). For this reason, organizations attempt to build and maintain good quality employee-organization relationships (EOR), which are seen as intangible assets of effective organizational communication; this leads to an improved organizational environment and enhanced organizational effectiveness through employee communication behaviors (Lee et al., 2018). For example, Milam and Heath (2014) found that: (a) informational exchange rather than deliberation of views, (b) lack of transparency in decision making, and (c) the fear of ruining relationships hindered employee voice. Yet, there has been little exploration of EOR quality and authentic leadership as antecedents for employee EVLN responses to dissatisfying workplace situations.

This study investigates the ways that leaders' communication behaviors establish relational contexts that influence employees' behavioral strategies. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to demonstrate whether authentic leadership and the quality of EOR promote patience and considerate voice, while reducing exit, aggressive voice, and neglect in dissatisfying events at work. This study provides practical implications for communication managers to help their organizations effectively manage employees' behavioral reactions to dissatisfying workplace situations by ensuring authentic leadership that benefits internal communication systems and builds and maintains the quality of EOR. This study also expands

the body of knowledge gained through previous research related to organizational communication by examining how the quality of EOR mediates the effect of authentic leadership on the EVLN model.

Employee Behavioral Reactions in Dissatisfying Workplace Events: Exit, Voice, Loyalty, and Neglect Model

In the workplace, employees frequently encounter dissatisfying organizational circumstances through different conflicts related to their tasks and relationships with co-workers and managers. These conflicts lead to detrimental effects on employee work outcomes (e.g., job dissatisfaction) associated with organizational effectiveness (De Wit et al., 2012). For this reason, research examining employees' behavioral responses to dissatisfying events at work has been a prominent theme in organizational management research (Rai & Agarwal, 2019). Understanding employees' behavioral responses can help organizations address workplace conflicts and improve organizational procedures and practices, thereby contributing to organizational effectiveness (Unler & Caliskan, 2019).

The EVLN model has received substantial scholarly attention over the past few decades (Shinohara, 2018). Hirschman (1970) initially identified a three-response model of *exit*, *voice*, and *loyalty*, and other researchers (e.g., Farrell, 1983) later added a fourth response, *neglect* (expending less effort), to the range of employee responses to dissatisfactory workplace situations. In addition to exploring predictors of these four ways of responding to dissatisfying situations, scholars further elaborated on distinctive aspects of the four behavioral responses (e.g., Rusbult et al., 1986; Withey & Cooper, 1989). According to these distinctions, when employees face a dissatisfying event, they are inclined to take action, such as *voice* and *loyalty*, to maintain and reconstruct relationships with their organization. In contrast, employees may also decide not to invest in "the future of the relationship" by resorting to *exit* and *neglect* responses to the dissatisfying event (Rusbult et al., 1986, p. 47, p. 47).

Organizational communication scholars have used the EVLN model as a framework for employees' responses to the disagreement about particular workplace practices (Kassing, 1997). Previous research has revealed that employees can (1) articulate their dissent directly to organizational leadership through upward channels (*upward dissent*), similar to *considerate voice*, (2) choose to express their dissent about personal-advantage issues toward captive audiences in ineffectual ways (*antagonistic dissent* or *latent dissent*¹) as forms of *aggressive voice* and *neglect*, and (3) express their dissent to external audiences—friend and co-workers—who do not have ability to address the dissent concern directly (*displaced dissent*), which can lead to *neglect* and *exit* (Kassing, 1997; Kassing & Armstrong, 2002). Stohl and Cheney (2001) also applied the EVLN model to explain employees' primary options—choosing organizational divorce (*exit*), voicing opposition to the policies or practices (*voice*), adapting to the practices (*loyalty*), or imagining a return to their jobs with the least disruption (*neglect*)—when organizations undermine employee empowerment.

Hagedoorn et al. (1999) modified the EVLN model by dividing *voice* into *considerate voice behaviors* and *aggressive voice behaviors* and renaming *loyalty* as *patience*, resulting in five responses: *exit*, *considerate voice*, *aggressive voice*, *patience*, and *neglect*. *Exit* is an active behavior that can include leaving an organization voluntarily, searching for a different job, or thinking about quitting (Naus et al., 2007). *Considerate voice* is an active behavior where the employee considers both their own concerns and those of the organization to solve a workplace issue, while *aggressive voice* is an active response reflecting an employee's intention to gain from the situation without concern for the

organization (Gorden, 1988). *Patience* is defined as “optimistically waiting until conditions improve, trusting the organization to do the right thing” (Hagedoorn et al., 1999, p. 319) and holds both active (deciding to wait for conditions to improve) and passive (being silent) elements (Withey & Cooper, 1989). *Neglect* is a passive behavior that includes withdrawal behaviors (e.g., absenteeism) (Monzani et al., 2016). The modified EVLN model has been found to be a useful framework that provides important insight into employees’ behavioral reactions to dissatisfying workplace events (Vantilborgh, 2015).

Relational Antecedent of EVLN Model: Employee-Organization Relationships

EOR primarily indicates a relationship between employees and their organization and is based on “the degree to which an organization and its employees trust one another, agree on who has the rightful power to influence, experience satisfaction with each other, and commit oneself to the other” (Men, 2014, p. 261). Previous research has indicated that the quality of EOR, as a reciprocal relationship based on a formal contract and/or relational connection between employees and their organization, is a critical factor for employees’ behavioral outcomes, contributing to an organization’s performance and its goal achievement (Kang & Sung, 2019).

Adopting Hon and Grunig’s (1999) organization-public relationship (OPR) model, scholars have assessed the quality of EOR using four indicators: trust, control mutuality, satisfaction, and commitment (Kang & Sung, 2019). *Trust* is the degree of employees’ confidence and willingness to open up to their organization. *Control mutuality* refers to the degree of agreement about whether the organization has the rightful power to influence employees. *Satisfaction* is the degree of positive feelings, based on employees’ experienced satisfaction with their organization. *Commitment* focuses on the extent to which employees believe it is worth expending energy on the relationship with their organization (Kang & Sung, 2019). Scholars have demonstrated that the quality of EOR is positively associated with voluntary communication behaviors and considerate voice and negatively associated with exit, aggressive voice, and neglect (Lee et al., 2018; Vantilborgh, 2015).

Employee-Organization Relationships Quality and Exit

Regarding a negative association between the EOR quality and exit behavior, previous research has found that indicators of EOR quality—such as trust, satisfaction, and commitment—are negative predictors for employee turnover intentions (Aryee et al., 2002; Naus et al., 2007). Shore et al. (2009) also substantiated the negative effects of positive EOR quality on employee exit behaviors by highlighting that employees who perceive care and respect from the organization want to reciprocate that support. Recently, scholars have suggested that a high-quality and relationship-focused strategy toward employees can decrease employee exit behavior (Kang & Sung, 2019; Kim et al., 2017).

Therefore, we present the following hypothesis:

H1: High-quality EOR will be negatively associated with employee exit behaviors in dissatisfying events at work.

Employee-Organization Relationships Quality and Considerate Voice

Scholars have demonstrated that employees with a high-quality exchange relationship are likely to engage in considerate voice and problem-solving behaviors (Rai & Agarwal, 2019). Previous research has consistently found that employees who identify with their organization or have positive EOR are likely to seek and share positive organizational information and express constructive suggestions and opinions (considerate voice behaviors) (Kim & Rhee, 2011; Liu et al., 2010). Some scholars have argued that

employees often have to bear personal risks and costs when initiating considerate voice (e.g., Milliken et al., 2003). However, Hsiung's study (2012) confirmed that employees are likely to make constructive suggestions (considerate voice) for their organizations, despite these personal risks and costs, if they have developed high-quality relationships with their organization. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: High-quality EOR will be positively associated with considerate employee voice behaviors in dissatisfying events at work.

Employee-Organization Relationships Quality for Aggressive Voice

Recently, some scholars have suggested exploring associations between EOR quality and aggressive voice behaviors (Vantilborgh, 2015). Researchers have discovered that employees who have poor EOR quality were likely to seek revenge and retaliation and tended to respond with aggressive voice behaviors across different types of organizations (Bordia et al., 2008; Vantilborgh, 2015). More recent studies have substantiated that trust in organizational management is negatively associated with aggressive voice behaviors as employees who experienced mistreatment at the hands of their organizations deployed anti-organizational voice behaviors (Michalak et al., 2019; Unler & Caliskan, 2019). Hence, we advance the following hypothesis:

H3: High-quality EOR will be negatively associated with aggressive employee voice behaviors in dissatisfying events at work.

Employee-Organization Relationships Quality and Patience

Loyalty has been positively associated with key indicators of positive relational quality—particularly trust, commitment, and satisfaction—as employees tend to be loyal to organizations that support them and take care of their needs and well-being (Si & Li, 2012; Vantilborgh, 2015). Scholars have suggested that management needs to prioritize maintaining high-quality EORs to increase organizational citizenship behaviors from employees (loyalty), defined as employees' contributions to their organizations beyond the job requirements (Tufan & Wendt, 2020). In the same vein, a few studies have found that employees who are highly satisfied with their organizations have a strong tendency to feel *optimistic* about possible improvements (high patience behaviors) for dissatisfying workplace events, indicating the positive association between high quality of EOR and *patience* (Hagedoorn et al., 1999; Hsiung & Yang, 2012). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4: High-quality EOR will be positively associated with employee patience behaviors in dissatisfying events at work.

Employee-Organization Relationships Quality and Neglect

Research has found that employees who have low-quality social exchange relationships with their organization tend to reciprocate by lowering their contribution to the organization, that is, choosing neglect (Thompson et al., 2018). Neglect is seen in social loafing behaviors, such as employees taking themselves out of workgroups, working less overtime, and reducing their efforts to encourage innovation, thus making no attempt to help their organization (Pearson et al., 2000). In terms of the quality of EOR, scholars have demonstrated that a low-quality EOR can increase employees' neglect of in-role job duties because of reduced their commitment to the organization (Turnley & Feldman, 1999) and lost trust in the organization (Vantilborgh, 2015). Mellahi et al. (2010) also maintained that

employees who are highly attached to their organization are less likely to neglect the organization. Accordingly, we present the following hypothesis:

H5: High-quality EOR will be negatively associated with employee neglect behaviors in dissatisfying events at work.

Leadership Antecedent of EVLN Model: Authentic Leadership

Link Between Authentic Leadership and Employee-Organization Relationships Quality

Authentic leadership refers to “a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organizational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors on the part of leaders and associates” (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243). Authentic leaders act in accordance with deep personal values and convictions to “build credibility and win the respect and trust of followers by encouraging diverse viewpoints and building networks of collaborative relationships with followers” (Avolio et al., 2004, p. 806). Authentic leaders tend to openly share organizational information with employees, cultivating organizational engagement and favorable organizational perceptions from employees (Avolio et al., 2004; Men & Stacks, 2014). Thus, authentic leadership tends to foster a positive work environment in which employees feel trusted and empowered to express themselves freely and contribute their opinions and ideas to management, demonstrating effective organizational communication (Monzani et al., 2016).

In terms of EOR, previous research has empirically demonstrated that authentic leadership can build employees’ organizational commitment and trust in the organization (Hsieh & Wang, 2015). Authentic leaders can build benevolence and integrity, as well as increase employees’ willingness to cooperate with leaders by “encouraging totally open communication, engaging their employees, sharing critical information, and sharing their perceptions and feelings about the people with whom they work” (Avolio et al., 2004, p. 810). Authentic leaders’ characteristics include transparency and congruency in their beliefs and actions, high ethical standards and integrity, and willingness to receive feedback; these qualities help authentic leaders build trust among their followers (Agote et al., 2016). Moreover, Bisel and Barge (2011) demonstrated that employees are likely to experience distrust of leadership when they perceive their leaders as closed and not transparent. Other scholars have found empirical evidence that authentic leadership characteristics can help employees trust their leaders and engage more in their work, cultivating high-quality EOR (Hsieh & Wang, 2015; Men & Stacks, 2014). Consequently, we suggest the following hypothesis:

H6: Authentic leadership will be positively associated with high-quality EOR in dissatisfying events at work.

Authentic Leadership and Exit

Previous research has revealed both direct and indirect effects of authentic leadership on employee exit behavior (Lee et al., 2019). Kiersch and Byrne (2015) found that authentic leadership indirectly and negatively influenced employee turnover intention (exit), specifically with respect to employees’ perceptions of interpersonal justice exhibited by an authentic leader, and the shared climate of interpersonal justice that authentic leaders create. Subsequent studies have also found that authentic leadership can decrease employee exit behaviors because authentic leaders can create positive work

environments. In such environments, employees tend to internalize their manager's authentic leadership style (Lee et al., 2019; Monzani et al., 2016). Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H7: Authentic leadership will be negatively associated with employee exit behavior in dissatisfying events at work.

Authentic Leadership and Considerate Voice

Scholars have highlighted supervisors' encouragement and openness to discussion as corporate conditions conducive to employee considerate voice (Gorden et al., 1988). Previous research has identified three characteristics of leaders that encourage employees' use of considerate voice: (a) leaders' authority to address issues that employees raise, (b) organizational resource control and decisions on changes, and (c) power to reward and punish employees (Detert & Burris, 2007). In this regard, researchers have argued that authentic leadership successfully encourages employees to express their opinions within the organization because authentic leaders promote inclusive communication—actively soliciting input and encouraging employees to express their viewpoints (Hsiung, 2012; Jahn & Black, 2017). Recent studies have also emphasized that authentic leaders motivate employees to speak up with an innovative or constructive idea (considerate voice) because authentic leaders are less likely to have employees who perceive speaking up as risky (Guenter et al., 2017; Niu et al., 2018). Therefore, we advance the following hypothesis:

H8: Authentic leadership will be positively associated with considerate employee voice behavior in dissatisfying events at work.

Authentic Leadership and Aggressive Voice

Differentiating between aggressive and considerate voice behaviors provides insights into how leaders can manage different voice behaviors (Hsiung & Yang, 2012). However, many previous studies have not examined aggressive employee voice as distinct from considerate employee voice (Lee & Varon, 2020). Some scholars have argued that "aggressive voice is believed to arise when an individual perceives that there is misalignment between the statements and actions of the organization" (Vantilborgh, 2015, p. 609). In addition, previous studies have suggested that leadership can play a crucial role in facilitating employees' desirable voice behaviors and hindering undesirable voice behaviors because of the positive associations between employees' attitudes toward their management and voice behaviors (Lee et al., 2014; Unler & Caliskan, 2019). Accordingly, we present the following hypothesis:

H9: Authentic leadership will be negatively associated with aggressive employee behavior in dissatisfying events at work.

Authentic Leadership and Patience

Loyalty has been described as an employee's faithfulness to an organization, indicated by acting in alignment with the organization's best interests and remaining with the same organization (Book et al., 2019). Scholars have demonstrated that authentic leader characteristics—self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing—can enhance employees' loyalty to their organization (Kwan et al., 2016). Specifically, previous research has revealed that authentic leadership can improve employees' work attitudes, create a healthy and efficient work environment, and positively affect organizational citizenship behavior and organizational commitment, directly leading to employee loyalty to the organization (Kiersch & Byrne, 2015). Monzani et al. (2016) also found that

authentic leadership increases employee patience, even when employees face a conflict situation. That is, employees were more likely to balance the short-term rewards and the long-term interests of their organization in the context of authentic leadership. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

H10: Authentic leadership will be positively associated with employee patience behavior in dissatisfying events at work.

Authentic Leadership and Neglect

Authentic leadership has been found to be a negative predictor of employees' neglect responses, especially withdrawal behaviors (e.g., absenteeism), because authentic leaders can influence employees' positive work attitudes and, in turn, diminish their withdrawal behaviors (Monzani et al., 2016). Moreover, Thompson et al. (2018) found that leaders who prioritize financially-oriented interactions with their employees and overlook employees' needs and preferences prompted employee neglect behavior through workplace incivility (breach of norms of mutual respect). Consequently, we present the following hypothesis:

H11: Authentic leadership will be negatively associated with employee neglect behavior in dissatisfying events at work.

Based on the literature, we propose a structural model with the hypotheses in Figure 1.

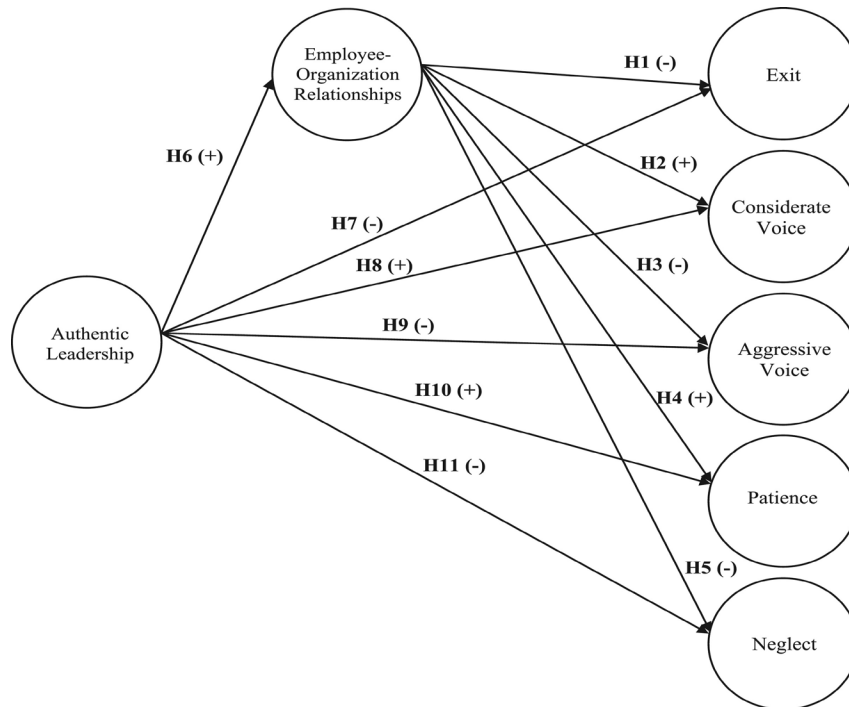


Figure 1. A proposed structural model of authentic leadership, employee-organization relationships, and employee behavioral responses (exit, considerate voice, aggressive voice, patience, and neglect) to the dissatisfying events at work.

In terms of reciprocal norms of social exchange, we posit that employees will engage in behaviors supportive of the organization as reciprocation for high-quality EOR (see, e.g., Shore et al., 2009). The literature on leader-member exchange has empirically shown that authentic leadership, which fosters a

high-quality EOR, indirectly reinforces employees' considerate voice and loyalty while mitigating their exit, aggressive voice, and neglect, even when an organization faces difficult situations (e.g., Niu et al., 2018). Therefore, we ask the following research question to test the mediating role of high-quality EOR between authentic leadership and employee behavioral reaction to dissatisfying workplace events:

RQ1: To what extent does high-quality EOR mediate the effects of authentic leadership on employee exit, considerate, aggressive, patience, and neglect behaviors in dissatisfying events at work?

Method

We conducted an online survey with 644 full-time employees in the United States. A national survey firm, Qualtrics, collected data by recruiting participants based on representative quotas for region and gender. The survey was conducted in May 2019.

Participants

The total sample of participants was 633 ($N = 633$). Following listwise deletion, 11 cases (1.71%) were deleted because each of missing values. We included only cases with complete records in the analyses as a small number of cases (less than 5%) with missing data should be dismissed or can generally be ignored because of inappropriateness to attempt to remedy (Byrne, 2016; Hair et al., 2010). The sample included 323 women (51%) and 310 men (49%). The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 78 years ($M = 49.82$, $SD = 13.80$). In terms of work tenure, participants' work experience ranged from 0 years, 8 months to 58 years, 5 months ($M = 12.79$, $SD = 10.95$). The participants reported working in a variety of major industries based on information from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Among the participants, the dominant ethnic group was White (80.3%, $n = 508$), followed by Black (6.5%, $n = 41$), Asian (6.3%, $n = 40$), Latino (4.7%, $n = 30$), and other races (e.g., Native American) (2.2%, $n = 14$). Almost one-third of the participants had a bachelor's degree (33.2%, $n = 210$), followed by those with a two-year associate's degree or some college with no degree (28.6%, $n = 181$). Nearly 30% of the participants had a post-graduate degree (27.1%, $n = 172$), while more than 10% had a high school degree or less degree (11.6%, $n = 73$).

Procedure

The survey company, Qualtrics, recruited participants via email with the survey link, inviting them to log into the Qualtrics system and take the survey. Participants were limited to full-time employees working in medium-sized and large organizations in the United States. The participants were provided with a consent form approved by the Institutional Review Board at a university in the Midwest United States. Once they voluntarily consented to participate, the participants were asked a series of questions which included items on the main variables—authentic leadership, EOR quality, and employee exit, loyalty, considerate voice, aggressive voice, neglect behaviors—as well as basic demographic information. Participants received compensation in the form of online points that can be used for gift cards (e.g., Amazon).

A pretest with 75 full-time employees ($N = 75$) was conducted to check the instruments for clarity and understandability, relevancy of the instructions and questions, and the amount of time required to complete the survey. Respondents in the pretest gave answers on a 7-point semantic differential scale, ranging from unclear, confusing, or irrelevant (1) to clear, understandable, and relevant (7). The instructions and questions were rated as clear ($M = 5.68$, $SD = 1.35$), understandable ($M = 5.60$, $SD =$

1.41), and relevant ($M = 5.60$, $SD = 1.40$). In an open question asking for additional comments or questions, no issue or problem was raised for the pretest. The median of completion time in the pretest was 19.50 minutes. Based on this, we set a minimum completion time of 10 minutes for the main test.

In the main test, 1250 respondents participated, but only 644 (51.52%) full-time employees working in the U.S. were included in the data analysis due to quality assurance measures imposed by the qualifying questions, timing limits, and quality of responses. The Qualtrics system automatically excluded respondents who completed the survey too quickly (less than 10 minutes) or took too long to complete the survey (more than 60 minutes) (Sheehan, 2018). At the very beginning of the survey, the survey firm asked participants to thoughtfully provide their best answers to each question. Those who did not intend to provide their best answer for each question were screened out and did not proceed with taking the survey. To control the risk of common method bias (CMB), we ensured scale validity and respondent anonymity in the design of the study's procedures (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Measures

We adopted existing measurement items from previous research. All items except those related to demographics were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1= "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree"). All items used in this study are provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Composite reliability and construct validity of main variables (N = 633).

| Latent Variables | Measurement Items | β | R^2 |
|---|---|---------|-------|
| Authentic Leadership (AUL)-CR: .97-AVE: .89- ASV: .22 | <i>Self-awareness</i> | .95 | .91 |
| | SA1: My leader describes accurately the way others view his/her abilities | .82 | .67 |
| | SA2: My leader shows that he/she understands his/her strengths and weaknesses | .90 | .81 |
| | SA3: My leader is clearly aware of the impact he/she has on others | .83 | .70 |
| | <i>Relational transparency</i> | .94 | .88 |
| | RT1: My leader clearly states what he/she means | .89 | .79 |
| | RT2: My leader openly shares information with others | .83 | .68 |
| | RT3: My leader expresses his/her ideas and thoughts clearly to others | .92 | .84 |
| | <i>Internalized moral perspective</i> | .94 | .88 |
| | IMP1: My leader shows consistency between his/her beliefs and actions | .90 | .81 |
| | IMP2: My leader uses his/her core beliefs to make decisions | .86 | .75 |
| | IMP3: My leader resists pressures on him/her to do things contrary to his/her beliefs | .76 | .58 |
| | IMP4: My leader is guided in his/her actions by internal moral standards | .86 | .75 |
| | <i>Balanced processing</i> | .94 | .88 |

| | | | |
|---|--|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| | BP1: My leader asks for ideas that challenge his/her core beliefs | .81 | .66 |
| | BP2: My leader carefully listens to alternative perspectives before reaching a conclusion | .91 | .83 |
| | BP3: My leader objectively analyzes relevant data before making a decision | .88 | .77 |
| | BP4: My leader encourages others to voice opposing points of view | .89 | .80 |
| Employee-Organization Relationships (EORs)- CR: .98-AVE: .94-ASV: .24 | <i>Trust</i> | .99 | .97 |
| | TR1: My company treats people like me fairly and justly | .88 | .77 |
| | TR2: Whenever my company makes an important decision, I know it will be concerned about people like me | .85 | .72 |
| | TR3: My company can be relied on to keep its promises | .91 | .82 |
| | TR4: I believe that my company takes the opinions of people like me into account when making decisions | .89 | .79 |
| | TR5: I feel very confident about my company's skills | .83 | .69 |
| | TR6: My company has the ability to accomplish what it says it will do | .74 | .55 |
| | <i>Control Mutuality</i> | .96 | .93 |
| | CM1: My company and people like me are attentive to what each other say | .86 | .74 |
| | CM2: My company believes the opinions of people like me are legitimate | .95 | .90 |
| | CM3: My company really listens to what people like me have to say | .95 | .91 |
| | CM4: The management of my company gives people like me enough say in the decision-making process | .86 | .74 |
| | CM5: I believe people like me have influence on the decision-makers of my company | .86 | .74 |
| Latent Variables | Measurement Items | <i>b</i> | <i>R</i>² |
| Employee-Organization Relationships (EORs)- CR: .98-AVE: .94-ASV: .24 | <i>Commitment</i> | .97 | .95 |
| | CO1: I feel that my company is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me | .94 | .88 |
| | CO2: I can see that my company wants to maintain a relationship with people like me | .94 | .88 |
| | CO3: There is a long-lasting bond between my company and people like me | .94 | .88 |

| | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| | CO4: Compared to other companies, I value my relationship with my company more | .90 | .81 |
| | CO5: I feel a sense of loyalty to my company | .84 | .71 |
| | <i>Satisfaction</i> | .96 | .91 |
| | ST1: I am happy with my company | .92 | .85 |
| | ST2: Both my company and people like me benefit from the relationship | .91 | .82 |
| | ST3: Most people like me are happy in their interactions with my company | .93 | .87 |
| | ST4: Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship my company has established with people like me | .94 | .89 |
| | ST5: Most people enjoy dealing with my company | .89 | .79 |
| Exit CR: .93-AVE: .69-ASV: .09 | EX1: I would consider possibilities to change jobs | .79 | .63 |
| | EX2: I would actively look for a job outside the field of my company industry | .86 | .74 |
| | EX3: I would intend to change employers | .91 | .84 |
| | EX4: I would actively look for a job elsewhere within the field of my company industry | .79 | .62 |
| | EX5: I would look for job advertisements in newspapers to which I could apply | .80 | .64 |
| | EX6: I would intend to change my filed of work | .82 | .67 |
| ConsiderateVoice (CV)-CR: .96-AVE: .67-ASV: .12 | CV1: I would try to come to an understanding with my supervisor | .84 | .71 |
| | CV2: In collaboration with my supervisor, I would try to find a solution that is satisfactory to everybody | .88 | .77 |
| | CV3: I would try to work out an ideal solution in collaboration with my supervisor | .89 | .79 |
| | CV4: Together with my supervisor, I would explore each other's opinions until the problems solved | .88 | .77 |
| | CV5: I would try to compromise with my supervisor | .84 | .70 |
| | CV6: I would talk with my supervisor about the problem until I reach total agreement | .82 | .67 |
| | CV7: I would suggest solutions to my supervisor | .81 | .65 |
| | CV8: I would immediately report the problem to my supervisor | .77 | .59 |
| | CV9: I would immediately try to find a solution | .79 | .62 |
| | CV10: I would try to think of different solutions to the problem | .78 | .60 |
| | CV11: I would ask supervisor for a compromise | .75 | .56 |
| Latent variables | Measurement Items | β | R^2 |

| | | | |
|--|---|-----|-----|
| Aggressive Voice (AV)- CR: .87-AVE: .50-ASV: .12 | AV1: I would describe the problem as negatively as possible to my supervisor | .79 | .62 |
| | AV2. I would try to win the case | .50 | .25 |
| | AV3. I would deliberately make the problem sound more problematic that it really is | .87 | .75 |
| | AV4. I would be persistent with my supervisor in order to get what you want | .69 | .48 |
| | AV5. I would be starting a “fight” with my supervisor | .72 | .52 |
| | AV6. I would try to prove in all possible ways to my supervisor that I am right | .63 | .39 |
| | AV7. By definition, I would blame my company for the problem | .71 | .51 |
| Patience (PA)-CR: .92- AVE: .71-ASV: .16 | PA1: I would trust the decision-making process of my company without my interference | .91 | .83 |
| | PA2. I would trust my company to solve the problem without my help | .93 | .87 |
| | PA3. I would have faith that something like this will be taken care of by my company without me contributing to the problem-solving process | .90 | .80 |
| | PA4. I would assume that in the end everything will work out | .76 | .58 |
| | PA5. I would optimistically wait for better times | .68 | .47 |
| Neglect (NG)-CR: .94- AVE: .75-ASV: .13 | NG1: I would report sick because I do not feel like working | .84 | .77 |
| | NG2: I would come in late because I do not feel like working | .82 | .83 |
| | NG3: I would put less effort into my work than may be expected of me | .87 | .76 |
| | NG4: Now and then, I would not put enough effort into my work | .91 | .67 |
| | NG5: I would be missing out on meetings because I do not feel like attending them | .84 | .71 |

Note. β : Standardized Loading Estimate, R^2 : Explained Variance. CR: Composite Reliability, AVE: Average Variance Extracted, ASV: Average Shared Variance. CFA model goodness-of-fit indices: χ^2 (2235, N =633) = 5688.77, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.55$, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .05, 90% CI [.048, .051], PCLOSE = .73, and SRMR = .05.

Authentic leadership items were adopted from Neider and Shreisheim’s (2011) Authentic Leadership Inventory. They included 14 items ($M = 4.62$, $SD = 1.41$, $\alpha = .97$) evaluating the authentic aspects of self-awareness (three items, $M = 4.66$, $SD = 1.48$, $\alpha = .88$); relational transparency (three items, $M = 4.71$, $SD = 1.58$, $\alpha = .91$); internalized moral perspective (four items, $M = 4.67$, $SD = 1.46$, $\alpha = .91$); and balanced processing by the leader (four items, $M = 4.44$, $SD = 1.58$, $\alpha = .93$).

To assess the quality of EOR, we used Hon and Grunig's (1999) scales for organization-public relationship outcomes, which have been applied as the measurements of EOR quality in previous research (e.g., Kang & Sung, 2019). The measure consisted of 21 items ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 1.59$, $\alpha = .97$) to measure four dimensions: trust (six items, $M = 4.59$, $SD = 1.55$, $\alpha = .94$); control mutuality (five items, $M = 4.28$, $SD = 1.67$, $\alpha = .95$); commitment (five items, $M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.73$, $\alpha = .96$); and satisfaction (five items, $M = 4.74$, $SD = 1.65$, $\alpha = .95$).

The following instructions from Hagedoorn et al. (1999) were adopted to measure employee behavioral responses to dissatisfying events at work: "Everybody occasionally encounters a problem or a problematic event at work. This can be a difference of opinion with your supervisor, frustrations with regard to the behavior of co-workers, or dissatisfaction, for instance, about a schedule or a specific task you are assigned to do. People tend to react differently to these experiences. On the following pages, several descriptions of possible reactions are listed. Would you indicate how likely it is that you would react to problematic events in the described ways?" A 7-point Likert scale (1 = definitely not to 7 = definitely yes) was used to measure each item of the Hagedoorn et al.'s (1999) EVLN model.

Exit was measured with six items ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.66$, $\alpha = .93$). Considerate voice was evaluated with 11 items ($M = 5.51$, $SD = 1.12$, $\alpha = .96$), and aggressive voice was assessed with seven items ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.32$, $\alpha = .88$). Patience was measured with five items ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 1.37$, $\alpha = .93$). Neglect was assessed with five items ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.58$, $\alpha = .94$).

We controlled for demographic variables—age, gender, and tenure—which could influence the EVLN model according to previous research. Researchers have found that age could be positively related to loyalty (Turnley & Feldman, 1999) and negatively associated with neglect and exit (Rai & Agarwal, 2019). Tenure has been found as a positive predictor for neglect (Rai & Agarwal, 2019) but as negatively correlated with exit (Lee & Varon, 2020). Previous research has also shown that male employees are more likely to use aggressive voice and to engage in neglect and exit behaviors than female employees (Vantilborgh, 2015). Thompson et al. (2018) found a negative association between female employees and neglect.

Assessing Measurement Model through Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Prior to testing the hypotheses, we assessed the presence of CMB by conducting Harman's one-factor test, which loads all variables into an exploratory factor analysis with unrotated factor solution. The factor merged accounted for less than 50% of the variance (40.78%), meaning that CMB was not likely to affect the results (Podsakoff et al., 2003). We then conducted CFA to assess the measurement model fit and the construct validity. CFA revealed that convergent validity and discriminant validity were successfully established in the proposed measurement model in terms of Hair et al.'s (2010) golden rule—that is, convergent validity: construct reliability (CR) > .70, standardized factor loading > .50, and average variance extracted (AVE) > .50; discriminant validity: AVE > average shared squared variance (ASV). The measurement model achieved acceptable goodness-of-fit levels, χ^2 (2235, $N = 633$) = 5688.77, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 2.55$, CFI = .93, SRMR = .05, RMSEA = .05, 90% CI [.048, .051], PCLOSE = .73, in terms of the joint criteria from Hair et al. (2010) and from Holbert and Stephenson (2008)—that is, $\chi^2/df \leq 3.00$, CFI or TLI $\geq .90$, SRMR $\leq .08$ with CFI $\geq .92$, and RMSEA $\leq .07$ with CFI $\geq .90$ (see Table 1).

In the CFA model, multivariate normality was assessed by multivariate kurtosis, based on the calculation of Mardia's coefficient using the AMOS 25 program. The result indicated that there was multivariate

non-normality in the sample, as the critical ratio of the kurtosis (normalized estimates) was greater than 5.00 (Byrne, 2016). The effect caused by non-normality was likely negligible in this study because of a large sample size ($N > 500$) where the effect of departure from zero kurtosis diminishes (Hair et al., 2010). However, we conducted a remedial test, a bootstrapping method, for multivariate non-normality when analyzing data (Byrne, 2016).

Testing Hypotheses through Structural Equation Modeling

SEM was conducted to examine the proposed structural model testing the hypotheses. To validate the mediation effects of EOR quality, we conducted a bias-corrected bootstrapping procedure ($N = 2000$) with 95% confidence intervals in the SEM (Byrne, 2016). In the SEM analysis, we also included control variables—age, tenure, and gender—based on a preliminary test with multiple regression analysis.² The final SEM model achieved an acceptable model fit, $\chi^2 = 3266.82$, $df = 1370$, $\chi^2/df = 2.39$, $p < .001$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .05, 90% CI [.045, .049], PCLOSE = .99, and SRMR = .09, in terms of the joint criteria by Hair et al. (2010) and Holbert and Stephenson (2008)—that is, sample ($N \geq 250$) and number of indicators ($m \geq 30$): $\chi^2/df \leq 3.00$, CFI or TLI $\geq .90$, SRMR $\leq .08$ with CFI $\geq .92$, and RMSEA $\leq .07$ with CFI $\geq .90$

For the associations between EOR quality and employee behavioral responses in dissatisfactory working situations ($H1$ to $H5$), the quality of EOR was statistically related as predicted except in the case of aggressive voice ($H3$): exit ($H1$), $\beta = -.33$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [-.392, -.256]; considerate voice ($H2$), $\beta = .28$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [.157, .403]; patience ($H4$), $\beta = .64$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [.597, .698]; and neglect ($H5$), $\beta = -.09$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [-.162, -.013]. Therefore, $H1$, $H2$, $H4$, and $H5$ were supported. However, EOR quality was not statistically significant for aggressive voice ($H3$), $\beta = .09$, $p = .23$, 95% CI [-.038, .225], thus failing to support $H3$.

Regarding the association between authentic leadership and EOR quality ($H6$), authentic leadership was strongly and positively related to EOR quality with statistical significance ($H6$), $\beta = .83$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [.794, .861]; consequently, $H6$ was supported. For the direct effects of authentic leadership on employee behavioral responses ($H7$ to $H11$), only one significant effect was found, with considerate voice ($H8$: $\beta = .24$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [.109, .365]); no significant direct effects were found with exit ($H7$: $\beta = .06$, $p = .42$, 95% CI [-.066, .198]), aggressive voice ($H9$: $\beta = -.04$, $p = .59$, 95% CI [-.179, .090]), patience ($H10$: $\beta = .11$, $p = .10$, 95% CI [-.001, .221]), or neglect ($H11$: $\beta = -.13$, $p = .12$, 95% CI [-.250, .006]). Thus, only $H8$ was supported, while $H7$, $H9$, $H10$, and $H11$ were not supported.

For RQ1, there were significant indirect effects of authentic leadership on exit ($\beta = -.32$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [-.214, -.428]), considerate voice ($\beta = .22$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.337, .121]), patience ($\beta = .46$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.546, .369]), neglect ($\beta = -.07$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [-.134, -.006]) behaviors, not aggressive voice behavior ($\beta = .08$, $p = .23$, 95% CI [-.032, .185]). Hence, EOR quality partially mediated between authentic leadership and considerate voice and fully mediated the effects of authentic leadership on exit, patience, and neglect, but not on aggressive voice.

Regarding the control variables, age was significantly and negatively related to exit ($\beta = -.22$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [-.292, -.153]), aggressive voice ($\beta = -.31$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [-.378, -.237]), and neglect ($\beta = -.36$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [-.416, -.290]). Gender (female) was found as a significant and negative factor associated with aggressive voice ($\beta = -.18$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [-.242, -.105]) and neglect ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [-.201, -.068]). Tenure was significantly and negatively related to exit ($\beta = -.13$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [-.197, -.065]) and patience ($\beta = -.09$, $p < .01$, 95% CI [-.137, -.040]) (see Table 2 and Figure 2).

Table 2. Hypothesis testing in the proposed SEM model using Bootstrapping ($N = 2000$).

| Hs and RQ | Parameters | | | β | S.E. | Critical Ratio (z) | p | 95% CI |
|------------------|-----------------|---|----------|---------|------|--------------------|-----|----------------|
| Direct effects | | | | | | | | |
| H1 | EORs | → | Exit | -.33 | .04 | -8.64 | ** | [-.392, -.256] |
| H2 | EORs | → | COVO | .28 | .07 | 3.95 | ** | [.157, .403] |
| H3 | EORs | → | AGVO | .09 | .07 | 1.21 | .23 | [-.038, .225] |
| H4 | EORs | → | Patience | .65 | .03 | 18.64 | ** | [.597, .698] |
| H5 | EORs | → | Neglect | -.09 | .04 | -2.16 | * | [-.162, -.013] |
| H6 | AUL | → | EORs | .83 | .02 | 22.37 | ** | [.794, .861] |
| H7 | AUL | → | Exit | .06 | .09 | 0.84 | .42 | [-.066, .198] |
| H8 | AUL | → | COVO | .24 | .06 | 3.33 | ** | [.109, .365] |
| H9 | AUL | → | AGVO | -.04 | .08 | -0.50 | .59 | [-.179, .090] |
| H10 | AUL | → | Patience | .11 | .07 | 1.72 | .10 | [-.001, .221] |
| H11 | AUL | → | Neglect | -.13 | .09 | 0.84 | .12 | [-.250, .006] |
| CV | Age | → | Exit | -.22 | .04 | -5.27 | ** | [-.292, -.153] |
| | Age | → | AGVO | -.31 | .00 | -7.34 | ** | [-.378, -.237] |
| | Age | → | Neglect | -.36 | .04 | -8.84 | ** | [-.416, -.290] |
| | Gender (Female) | → | AGVO | -.18 | .11 | -4.23 | ** | [-.242, -.105] |
| | Gender (Female) | → | Neglect | -.14 | .12 | -3.47 | ** | [-.201, -.068] |
| | Tenure | → | Exit | -.13 | .04 | -3.15 | ** | [-.197, -.065] |
| | Tenure | → | Patience | -.09 | .03 | -2.86 | ** | [-.137, -.040] |
| Indirect effects | | | | | | | | |
| RQ1 | AUL | → | Exit | -.32 | .07 | — | ** | [-.214, -.428] |
| | AUL | → | COVO | .22 | .07 | — | ** | [.337, .121] |
| | AUL | → | AGVO | .08 | .07 | — | .23 | [-.032, .185] |
| | AUL | → | Patience | .46 | .05 | — | ** | [.546, .369] |
| | AUL | → | Neglect | -.07 | .06 | — | * | [-.134, -.006] |

Note. β : Standardized Loading Estimate, S.E.: bootstrap standard errors, CI: confidence intervals, EORs: the quality of organization-employee relationships, AUL: authentic leadership, COVO: considerate voice, AGVO: aggressive voice, CV: control variables.

Model fit indices: $\chi^2 = 3266.82$, $df = 1370$, $\chi^2/df = 2.39$, $p < .001$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .05, 90% CI [.045, .049], PCLOSE: .99, and SRMR = .09. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

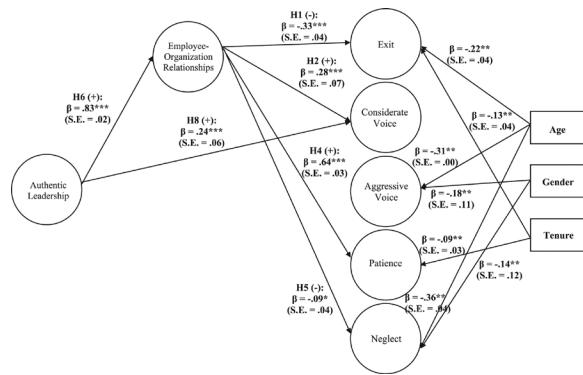


Figure 2. Bootstrapping ($N=2000$) results of structural model of authentic leadership, employee-organization relationships, and employee behavioral responses (exit, considerate voice, aggressive voice, patience, and neglect) to the dissatisfying events at work. Model fit indices: $\chi^2 = 3266.82$, $df = 1370$, $\chi^2/df = 2.39$, $p < .001$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .05, 90% CI [.045, .049], PCLOSE: .99, and SRMR = .09. *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$. * $p < 0.05$.

Discussion

This study examined how leadership can cultivate positive relationships between an organization and its employees, thereby influencing employees' behavioral strategies. The purpose of this study was to investigate authentic leadership and the quality of EORs promoting patience and considerate voice while reducing exit, aggressive voice, and neglect in response to dissatisfying workplace events. We found that authentic leadership was positively and directly related to employee considerate voice but was not directly associated with other behavioral responses. High-quality EOR was found to be a strong mediator between authentic leadership and employee behaviors—enhancing considerate voice and patience and reducing exit and neglect—in dissatisfying workplace events.

The Strong Effect of Authentic Leadership on Considerate Employee Voice Behavior

Regarding the direct effect of authentic leadership on considerate employee voice behavior, this study extends previous research about employee voice by examining both considerate and aggressive voice behaviors. Much of the extant research examining authentic leadership and employee voice has failed to distinguish between different sorts of voice. In considering two forms, this study found a positive and direct effect of authentic leadership on employees' speaking up behaviors with constructive ideas (considerate voice) in a dissatisfying event in the workplace, when the effects of aggressive voice on other behaviors were controlled. This finding can be explained by the key aspects of authentic leadership, in that leaders with authenticity seek input from their employees, even if the input challenges leader viewpoints. In doing so, authentic leaders can display their willingness to be open to employees' constructive ideas because they encourage others to voice opposing viewpoints and they carefully listen to alternative perspectives before making decision. This finding suggests that organizational leaders should first show "their authenticity and act as role models" to encourage employees to speak up with constructive ideas that could solve dissatisfying work situations (Hsiung, 2012, p. 360).

However, a direct effect of authentic leadership on aggressive employee behaviors was not found. This result indicates that authentic leadership in itself may not be effective in decreasing aggressive voice

behaviors when the effect of authentic leadership on considerate voice behaviors is controlled. One possible reason could be that different workplace contexts might require higher levels of authentic leadership to deal with aggressive voice behaviors. Regarding the expression of aggressive voice, employees may seek a sense of immunity to safeguard against retaliation for being adversarial (Kassing, 1997) or lack the skills to speak up to their leaders effectively (Kassing & Avtgis, 1999). Eisenberg and Witten (1987) argued that personal preferences and styles, the tasks at hand, and organizational regulations or policies can constrain employees' decisions about how openly to communicate. That is, aggressive voice behaviors in certain workplace contexts may become latent or lateral if employees do not perceive a higher level of authentic leadership; that is, leadership that is more open, with fewer regulations, and that provides a sense of immunity against retaliation within their organization.

Mediating Role of Employee-Organization Relationships Quality between Authentic Leadership and Employee Behaviors

No significant direct effect of authentic leadership was found on the behavioral responses of exit, patience, and neglect; rather, the results demonstrated the full mediation of EOR quality between authentic leadership and employees' behaviors in dissatisfying workplace events. In this regard, this study corroborates that leaders who practice self-awareness, communication transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing can help build and improve EOR quality (Luthans & Avolio, 2003). Furthermore, the findings indicate that high-quality EOR could affect employees' decision-making regarding dissatisfying events at work. Rai and Agarwal (2019) highlighted the importance engaging in strong relationship building with employees in the workplace because this can provide employees with the necessary resources to cope with adverse workplace situations. In this regard, this study suggests that employee relationship management can help leaders to understand specific employees' behavioral intentions for coping with dissatisfying workplace situations and help to increase considerate voice and patience and reduce exit and neglect.

The findings also suggest that employees who have high-quality EOR are likely to engage in patience more than other behaviors. The direct effect of EOR quality on patience was stronger than on other behaviors in this study. Employees may passively support their organization to protect the quality of EOR in dissatisfying workplace situations because they feel that a positive EOR is an important resource in the workplace. Researchers have suggested that dissatisfying events in the workplace can motivate employees to adopt defensive and passive postures to guard against losing this resource (Rai & Agarwal, 2019). The results of this study specifically demonstrate that employees with a positive EOR who encounter dissatisfying events in their workplace tend to quietly support their organization because they trust the organization to do the right thing based on the relationship they have built with their organization.

However, this study did not find any direct effect of EOR quality on aggressive employee voice. One plausible explanation could be that employees may express aggressive voice through alternative methods or different channels (e.g., peers) because they feel anxious and intimidated by communication with higher-ups or fear the negative consequences that aggressive voice behaviors might cause for their relationships with their organizations (Michalak et al., 2019). Employees may fear harming their relationship with their organizations because they prioritize maintaining the relationship over

communicating hurtful voice behaviors. This dynamic is called *the hierarchical mum effect* and is defined as reluctance to provide negative feedback to one another (Bisel et al., 2011).

Correspondingly, employee exit behavior can involve aggressive voice behavior. Previous research has found an *exit-voice tradeoff*, referring to situations where exit discourages employees from aggressive voice behaviors (Shinohara, 2018). Employees who are leaving their organization often fear expressing their dissatisfaction or choose to be silent about their discontent, because such voice behaviors may negatively affect the work environment of co-workers who remain (Monzani et al., 2016). Researchers have also suggested that employees tend to view considerate voice as a primary step in handling a dissatisfying situation because the consequences associated with aggressive voice are likely to be more severe than other behaviors (e.g., Lee & Varon, 2020). For these reasons, exit and considerate voice could have influenced the effect of EOR on aggressive voice behavior. Nevertheless, more research should be conducted to elucidate the association between such exit-voice and the quality of EOR interactions.

Application of the Quality of Employee-Organization Relationships for the Theoretical Advancement of the Exit, Voice, Loyalty, Neglect Model

In terms of theoretical contributions, this study not only advances antecedents of the EVLN model, but also extends the study of the association between the quality of EOR and employee behavioral reactions in the context of dissatisfying working situations. EOR quality has rarely been considered to be an antecedent of the EVLN model. Thus, this study provides a multidisciplinary perspective of employee behavioral reactions to dissatisfying workplace events and could contribute to an overarching theory applicable to relevant disciplines (e.g., employee relations) and practice.

Furthermore, this study substantiates that EOR is an underlying mechanism mediating the effects of authentic leadership on different employee behavioral outcomes within the framework of the EVLN model. In terms of employee performance, the EVLN framework can be applied to in-role performance as related to formal job requirements (neglect), to extra-role performance as discretionary works (considerate voice and patience), and to turnover behavior (exit), which substantially contribute to an organization's effective functioning and its organizational success (Singh & Vidyarthi, 2018). In this sense, the results of this study theoretically extend the concept of EOR quality to organizational effectiveness as a way to manage in-role and extra-role employee behaviors in the workplace.

Managing Employee Behavioral Effects through Authentic Leadership and Employee-Organization Relationships Quality

This study also provides valuable practical insight into how managers can promote considerate voice and patience, while preventing exit, aggressive voice, and neglect in dissatisfying events at work. Employees inevitably deal with dissatisfying events in their organizations; in these situations, employee behavioral reactions are closely related to organizational success and effectiveness. In this regard, this study suggests that leaders should act with authentic personal values and moral conviction and communicate in a transparent and timely manner when their organization aims to resolve dissatisfying workplace situations. To foster a positive and collaborative work environment in which employees feel safe to voice their constructive ideas and suggestions, leaders should provide employees with relevant information, give timely and appropriate feedback to their opinions, and recognize and appreciate

employee contributions to organizational problem-solving. Furthermore, organizations must invest in building an architecture of listening, such as setting up formal policies and structures (e.g., reconciliation committees, listening post, and ombudsmen) for organizations to listen to employees' voice and for employees to voice their opinions (Macnamara, 2016).

At the same time, communication managers should regularly monitor EOR quality by communicating with employees to see whether they perceive that their organization will treat them fairly and justly, believe they have influence on the decision-making, value their relationships with the organization, and feel satisfaction in their interactions with the organization via regular employee opinion surveys. Importantly, leaders should acknowledge, study, address, and act in response to employee opinion surveys. Such efforts through communication exchanges with leaders and employees over time would constantly improve dissatisfactory working conditions by managing employees' different behavioral responses.

Specifically, patience and considerate employee voice, as extra-role behaviors, require *an impetus or driving force* (Hsiung, 2012). In this sense, this study sheds light on the fact that authentic leadership and positive quality of EOR can be driving forces motivating employees to speak up with constructive ideas and support what the organization is doing to cope with dissatisfying workplace events. Because the extra-role behaviors related to voluntary work help an organization achieve its goals (Singh & Vidyarthi, 2018), organizations can expect to improve working situations effectively by promoting considerate voice and patience. Moreover, exit, aggressive voice, and neglect could impede organizational effectiveness as they are associated with poor performance and higher costs for recruiting and training new employees (Turnley & Feldman, 1999). By increasing self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing, leaders can better adjust and control their leadership behaviors to cultivate EOR quality and subsequently prevent further detrimental effects on organizational effectiveness caused by exit, aggressive voice, and neglect strategies when employees face dissatisfying workplace situations.

Further, this study suggests that organizations should pay closer attention to the extent of aggressive voice behaviors while encouraging considerate voice behaviors. The findings indicate that aggressive voice behaviors have unique antecedents, not ones significantly affecting more and less considerate voice behaviors. In this sense, different levels or types of aggressive voice behaviors should be considered more thoroughly, as aggressive voice behavior has been conceptualized differently in terms of active and passive forms (e.g., dissent voice and prohibitive voice) (Unler & Caliskan, 2019).

For example, dissent voice could be expressed without aggressive forms (passive aggressive voice) if it is shared directly with management when employees face dissatisfying situations in their workplace (Kassing, 1998). However, such different voices from employees should be recognized and valued, and management should make an effort to create a workplace structure that can account for employees' needs (Cheney et al., 1998; Milam & Heath, 2014). Understanding different levels of corrective feedback from employees can help an organization increase the attention span of employers when it comes to employees' views (Gorden, 1988) and enhance the well-being of the organization (Hsiung & Yang, 2012), contributing to organizational performance and success (Lee & Varon, 2020). As such, this study suggests that organizations establish organizational norms and cultures through policies and structures that allow dissenting voices to be safely and effectively heard before the relationship deteriorates and employees have little choices but to resort to aggressive voice, resignation, or exit.

In addition, every employee has a variety of professional and personal experiences and different standpoints on the workplace issues, all of which contribute to their overall perspective on work (Buzzanell, 1994). Biesel et al. (2011) recommended *communication skills training*, which promotes difficult conversations based on mindful reflection and discussion of the implications of action in challenging situations. The training is meant to overcome *the hierarchical mum effect* in the workplace. Milam and Heath (2014) emphasized *contestation*, which considers different opinions and invites diverse viewpoints to foster participative communication practices. Thus, authentic leadership and quality of EOR should be further applied to such employee communication practices to explore their effects on different types of aggressive voice behaviors.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study has its limitations. First, not all of the possible responses to dissatisfying workplace events were considered in this study. Dissatisfaction in the workplace may prompt employees to express organizational dissent opinions (Kassing, 1997) or choose to remain silent in the workplace (Guenter et al., 2017). Future research should investigate different degrees of employee voice behaviors influenced by leadership and relational factors by considering dissent and silence behaviors and more comprehensively examining behavioral reactions to dissatisfying workplace situations (Morrison, 2014).

Second, this study may have some drawbacks in measuring the EVLN model. The survey instructions did not describe specific situations, but equally weighted all dissatisfying workplace events. Dissatisfying events can vary in quality and severity and may cause employees to choose different behavioral reactions (Kassing & Armstrong, 2002). This issue with the survey could account for insignificant results. Future research should clarify distinct types of dissatisfying workplace events to offer communication managers more practical insights based on how authentic leadership and EOR can influence employee behavioral reactions.

Third, situational factors can influence the effects of authentic leadership and EOR on behavioral responses to dissatisfying working situations. For example, an organizational climate can facilitate aggressive behavior or turnover if it is characterized by coercion (Gorden, 1988) and incivility (Thompson et al., 2018), or it can enhance considerate voice behaviors as coping strategies in an organizational climate that encourages positive work environment (Kwan et al., 2016). Also, employee mood may moderate the relationship between EOR and employee voice behavior (Hsiung, 2012). Therefore, future research should examine how these situational factors can interact with high-quality EOR and authentic leadership on employee behavioral responses to dissatisfactory workplace situations.

In addition, employee perceptions of the fairness of organizational policies regarding layoffs and terminations can decrease exit and voice but increase patience (Turnley & Feldman, 1999). Moreover, the perception that management is unreceptive and that employees lack freedom of speech have been identified as situational barriers limiting employees' willingness to engage in upward voice behaviors (Cheney et al., 1998; Gorden et al., 1988). Future research should control internal and external situations to robustly examine the model that proposes the associations between leadership, EOR, and employee behavioral responses.

Lastly, this study relied on a cross-sectional design with self-reported data that may lead to a bias in the results. Self-reported data could increase CMB in this study as the results affected by CMB cannot be eliminated completely. Future research should conduct more robust remedies to control for CMB. A

longitudinal study could be a better remedy procedure to reduce CMB as it creates temporal, proximal, and psychological separation of measurement (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Furthermore, the cross-sectional design in this study could lack the necessary generalizability to extend empirical evidence of leadership and relational factors to a significant influence on employee behavioral responses. Employees at the entry phase tend to be active with patience and considerate voice, but their loyalty become more passive when employees settle in with an organization (Grima & Glaymann, 2012). A longitudinal study could better illuminate how the associations between authentic leadership, EOR quality, and behavioral responses change over time with employee age and work tenure.

Conclusion

It is inevitable that employee encounter dissatisfying workplace events and employee responses to such events are closely related to organizational effectiveness. Our results demonstrate the important role of authentic leadership in enhancing considerate voice and patience and reducing exit and neglect responses from employees by building the quality of EOR. Thus, this study makes significant contributions to advancing the EVLN model by emphasizing the quality of EOR in order to elucidate the impact of authentic leadership on employee responses in dissatisfactory workplace situations. Furthermore, this study suggests that organizations should strive to build and maintain high quality of EOR to facilitate organizational survival, well-being, and effectiveness, as these directly relates to employees' voice, patience, exit, and neglect when employees are faced with dissatisfying situations.

Declaration Of Conflicting Interests

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Footnotes

- 1 Kassing (1998) renamed the term *antagonistic* as *latent dissent* to reflect the final set of items for this dimension more accurately.
- 2 To find the significance of the effect of each control variable on employee behavioral responses, we conducted a series of multiple ordinary least squares regression analyses. Multiple regression analyses revealed that age was statistically significant for exit ($b = -0.03$, $t = -5.28$), aggressive voice ($b = -0.03$, $t = -6.18$), and neglect ($b = -0.04$, $t = -7.97$), but not for considerate voice ($b = 0.01$, $t = 1.79$) and patience ($b = -0.00$, $t = -0.70$). Tenure was found to be statistically significant only for exit ($b = -0.22$, $t = -3.30$) and patience ($b = -0.01$, $t = -2.23$), not considerate voice ($b = -0.05$, $t = -1.19$), aggressive voice ($b = 0.05$, $t = 1.10$), or neglect ($b = 0.04$, $t = 0.73$). Gender (female) showed statistical significance only for aggressive voice ($b = -0.39$, $t = -3.69$) and neglect ($b = -0.42$, $t = -3.41$), not exit ($b = -0.19$, $t = -1.58$), considerate voice ($b = 0.13$, $t = 1.68$), or patience ($b = -0.11$, $t = -1.27$).

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