

THE IMPACT OF UNIVERSITY EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND THE MODERATING EFFECT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

O IMPACTO DO ESTILO DE LIDERANÇA EXECUTIVA UNIVERSITÁRIA NO COMPORTAMENTO DE CIDADANIA ORGANIZACIONAL: O PAPEL MEDIADOR DO COMPROMISSO ORGANIZACIONAL E O EFEITO MODERADOR DA CULTURA ORGANIZACIONAL

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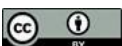
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Abstract

Objective: This study aims to explore the impact of university executive leadership styles (transformational, transactional, charismatic) and emotional labor (surface/deep acting) on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), examining the mediating role of organizational commitment (effort, value, retention) and moderating effect of organizational culture (bureaucratic, innovative, supportive) in the context of SDG. It also investigates demographic differences in OCB among faculty, addressing how leadership dynamics influence faculty engagement critical for sustaining educational excellence. **Theoretical Framework:** Drawing on leadership theories and organizational behavior models, the research integrates constructs of leadership styles, emotional labor, organizational commitment, and culture to analyze their interrelations with OCB in higher education contexts, where quality education of SDG delivery relies on faculty proactive behaviors. **Method:** Adopting a mixed-method design, the study uses questionnaires to collect data from 377 faculty members across three Chinese universities (Zhejiang, Jilin, Jiangsu), spanning diverse regional educational ecosystems committed to quality education initiatives. Quantitative analysis employs SEM, correlation, and regression tests, while qualitative insights from deep interviews validate how leadership practices shape faculty contributions to SDG through OCB. **Results and Discussion:** Preliminary findings suggest leadership styles

Resumo

Objetivo: Este estudo tem como objetivo explorar o impacto dos estilos de liderança executiva universitária (transformacional, transacional, carismático) e do trabalho emocional (atuação superficial/profunda) sobre o comportamento de cidadania organizacional (OCB), examinando o papel mediador do comprometimento organizacional (esforço, valor, retenção) e o efeito moderador da cultura organizacional (burocrática, inovadora, solidária) no contexto dos ODS. Ele também investiga diferenças demográficas no OCB entre o corpo docente, abordando como as dinâmicas de liderança influenciam o engajamento dos professores, fundamental para sustentar a excelência educacional. **Estrutura Teórica:** Com base em teorias de liderança e modelos de comportamento organizacional, a pesquisa integra conceitos de estilos de liderança, trabalho emocional, comprometimento organizacional e cultura para analisar suas inter-relações com o OCB em contextos de ensino superior, onde a educação de qualidade para a implementação dos ODS depende de comportamentos proativos do corpo docente. **Método:** Adotando um desenho de método misto, o estudo utiliza questionários para coletar dados de 377 docentes em três universidades chinesas (Zhejiang, Jilin, Jiangsu), abrangendo diversos ecossistemas educacionais regionais comprometidos com iniciativas de educação de qualidade. **Análise quantitativa** emprega testes de SEM, correlação e regressão, enquanto



significantly influence OCB, with transformational leadership demonstrating the strongest positive effect in fostering faculty behaviors that align with quality education of SDG' objectives. Organizational commitment mediates these relationships, and innovative/supportive cultures enhance OCB by moderating leadership impacts, highlighting their role in cultivating environments conducive to SDG. Emotional labor shows complex effects, with deep acting positively correlating with OCB, indicating its potential to reinforce faculty dedication to educational quality. Research Implications: The study enriches educational management theories by highlighting the mediating-moderating mechanisms through which leadership enhances OCB, providing practical strategies for universities to optimize leadership, foster commitment, and promote faculty behaviors essential for delivering quality education of SDG. Originality/Value: This research innovatively integrates emotional labor and organizational culture into the leadership-OCB framework, offering a comprehensive model for understanding faculty contributions to quality education.

Keywords: University Executive Leadership Style. Organizational Citizenship Behavior. Organizational Commitment. Emotional Labor. Organizational Culture.

insights qualitativos de entrevistas aprofundadas validam como as práticas de liderança moldam as contribuições do corpo docente para os ODS por meio do OCB. Resultados e Discussão: Os resultados preliminares sugerem que os estilos de liderança influenciam significativamente o OCB, com a liderança transformacional demonstrando o efeito positivo mais forte na promoção de comportamentos do corpo docente alinhados com os objetivos de educação de qualidade dos ODS. O compromisso organizacional medeia essas relações, e culturas inovadoras/de apoio aumentam o OCB ao moderar os impactos da liderança, destacando seu papel na criação de ambientes propícios aos ODS. O trabalho emocional apresenta efeitos complexos, com a profundidade de atuação correlacionando-se positivamente com o OCB, indicando seu potencial para reforçar a dedicação do corpo docente à qualidade educacional. Implicações da pesquisa: O estudo enriquece as teorias de gestão educacional ao destacar os mecanismos de mediação e moderação por meio dos quais a liderança potencializa o OCB, fornecendo estratégias práticas para que as universidades otimizem a liderança, estimulem o comprometimento e promovam comportamentos do corpo docente essenciais para a oferta de educação de qualidade alinhada aos ODS. Originalidade/Valor: Esta pesquisa integra de forma inovadora o trabalho emocional e a cultura organizacional ao quadro de liderança-OCB, oferecendo um modelo abrangente para a compreensão das contribuições do corpo docente para a educação de qualidade.

Palavras-chave: Estilo de Liderança Executiva Universitária. Comportamento de Cidadania Organizacional. Compromisso Organizacional. Trabalho Emocional. Cultura Organizacional.

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, China's education industry has achieved remarkable development in both scale and quality. Data from 2023 shows that although the number of schools at all levels and types nationwide decreased slightly, the gross enrollment rate for preschool education reached 91.1%, the nine-year compulsory education consolidation rate stood at 95.7%, and the gross enrollment rate for higher education reached 60.2%—all exceeding

the targets set in the 14th Five-Year Plan. The education market has highlighted innovative trends, with segments such as quality education (SDG 4), smart hardware, and vocational education continuing to evolve amid digital transformation. Meanwhile, to promote the development of quality education (SDG 4, the construction of a high-quality teaching workforce has been continuously strengthened through policy guarantees (e.g., ensuring that the average salary of compulsory education teachers is not lower than that of local civil servants) and training programs (e.g., the "Excellent Teacher Plan"). Against this backdrop, the relationship between university executives' leadership styles, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior has become a research focus: Transformational leadership enhances organizational commitment through visionary inspiration, transactional leadership influences behavioral compliance via reward-punishment mechanisms, and servant leadership strengthens employee identification through a supportive environment—all three affecting employees' organizational citizenship behavior beyond formal job responsibilities through different pathways.

Deep commitment driven by value identification motivates employees to take on extra tasks proactively, while work-life balance and perceived organizational support indirectly stimulate citizenship behavior by enhancing commitment levels. Organizational culture plays a key moderating role in this relationship: Innovative culture amplifies the driving effect of leadership empowerment on citizenship behavior, supportive culture buffers the inhibitory effect of bureaucracy through emotional compensation, whereas bureaucratic culture leads to a "commitment-behavior disconnect" due to hierarchical barriers. Existing research indicates that the influence of leadership styles on citizenship behavior is mediated by organizational commitment and significantly moderated by cultural contexts (e.g., power distance, fairness perception). Understanding this complex mechanism holds important theoretical and practical significance for universities to build efficient governance systems and optimize human resource management.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Review of theories and concepts

This study synthesizes multi-dimensional theoretical frameworks including Social Exchange Theory, Equity Theory, and Leadership Behavior Theory to systematically interpret the driving mechanisms of OCB. Social Exchange Theory reveals the reciprocal logic whereby employees exhibit OCB to reciprocate organizational support, while Equity Theory indicates that perceptions of distributive, procedural, and interactional fairness significantly influence behavioral choices—individuals are more inclined to demonstrate proactive behaviors beyond formal duties when perceiving input-output ratios as balanced. Leadership Behavior Theory further highlights that transformational leadership strengthens employee organizational identification through visionary inspiration and personalized support, while transactional leadership regulates behavioral compliance via reward-punishment mechanisms, with both influencing OCB through distinct pathways. Group Dynamics Theory and Organizational Identification Theory supplement this explanation from the perspectives of team climate and psychological belonging: positive group norms and high organizational identification can respectively promote employees' voluntary contributions by enhancing a sense of belonging and value resonance.

Job Characteristics Theory emphasizes that work designs with features such as skill variety and task autonomy satisfy employees' intrinsic motivations, thereby stimulating OCB. Existing theories collectively construct a multi-level analytical framework of "individual-leadership-group-organization," yet research gaps remain: the reconstruction of group dynamics in virtual teams in the digital era, the moderating effects of cross-cultural fairness perceptions, and the dynamic impact of AI-empowered work design on OCB have not been fully explored. These theories not only provide theoretical support for analyzing the complex relationships among leadership styles, organizational commitment, and OCB but also offer systematic practical guidelines for universities to enhance employees' proactive contribution behaviors by optimizing cultural environments, leadership strategies, and work architectures.

2.2 Review of variables

The Relationship Between Leadership Style and Organizational Citizenship

Behavior: Walumbwa *et al.* (2005) took local bank employees from the United States and Kenya with large cultural differences as the research object to explore the relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The research was conducted in a quantitative way. Acar (2012) took a total of 344 employees from 37 logistics companies in Turkey as the research object to explore the impact of organizational culture and leadership style on organizational commitment in the Turkish logistics industry. Quintana *et al.* (2015) explored the impact of leadership style on the job performance of hotel employees. Taking leadership style as the independent variable, job performance as the dependent variable, demographic variables as control variables, and different hotel types (chain, independently operated) as moderating variables, data was collected in a quantitative way. Pio *et al.* (2020) took a total of 320 teachers from Christian and Catholic educational foundations in areas such as South Minahasa, Indonesia as the research object to explore the impact of leadership style on organizational culture, organizational commitment, and moral behavior. Taking leadership style as the independent variable; organizational commitment and moral behavior as the dependent variables; organizational culture as the moderating variable, the research was conducted in a quantitative way.

The Relationship Between Emotional labor and Organizational Citizenship

Behavior: According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, long-term job demands, including emotional labor as an emotional demand, can lead to the depletion of individual resources, resulting in burnout and other physical and mental health issues, which subsequently affect both individual and organizational outcomes. When employees' true inner emotions do not align with the display rules required by the organization, those who engage in surface acting may express the emotions expected by the organization, but they do not change their true feelings. In such cases, employees are prone to experience emotional conflicts and other negative feelings. Especially when there is a significant discrepancy between their inner feelings and the display rules, employees have to exert more effort and consume more resources, making them more

susceptible to emotional exhaustion, losing interest in their work, and experiencing a decrease in job satisfaction. Consequently, they are less likely to exhibit behaviors that go beyond their formal job roles. Therefore, deep acting can stimulate employees' work enthusiasm and improve job satisfaction. Employees with high levels of enthusiasm and satisfaction are more willing to exhibit behaviors that go beyond their formal job roles, i.e., organizational citizenship behavior. Research has shown that employees in a positive emotional state are more likely to exhibit altruistic behavior within organizational citizenship behavior; Salami confirmed that emotional labor positively predicts altruistic behavior, sportsmanship, and civic virtue within organizational citizenship behavior; and Elfenbein's research indicated that deep acting has a positive impact on service quality and employee performance.

The Relationship Between Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Yoon *et al.* (2016) explored the relationship between environmental management strategy, organizational trust, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. Taking a total of 373 employees from 500 hotels in the United States as the research object, with environmental management strategy as the independent variable, organizational trust and organizational commitment as the mediating variables, and organizational citizenship behavior as the dependent variable, data was collected in a quantitative way. The research results confirmed that organizational commitment has a positive impact on organizational citizenship behavior. And organizational commitment has a mediating effect on environmental management strategy and organizational citizenship behavior. Liu (2017) explored the influence of emotional dysregulation and organizational commitment of government civil servants on organizational citizenship behavior. Taking government civil servants as the research object, with emotional dysregulation and organizational commitment as the independent variables, organizational citizenship behavior as the dependent variable, and job burnout as the mediating variable, data was collected in a quantitative way.

The Relationship Organizational commitment serves as a mediator in the relationship between university executives' leadership style and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) among faculty and staff: Yoon *et al.* (2016) explored the relationship between environmental management strategy, organizational trust,

organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. Taking a total of 373 employees from 500 hotels in the United States as the research object, with environmental management strategy as the independent variable, organizational trust and organizational commitment as the mediating variables, and organizational citizenship behavior as the dependent variable, data was collected in a quantitative way. The research results confirmed that organizational commitment has a positive impact on organizational citizenship behavior. Liu (2017) explored the influence of emotional dysregulation and organizational commitment of government civil servants on organizational citizenship behavior. Taking government civil servants as the research object, with emotional dysregulation and organizational commitment as the independent variables, organizational citizenship behavior as the dependent variable, and job burnout as the mediating variable, data was collected in a quantitative way. Sarhan *et al.* (2020) explored the relationship between organizational culture and employees' organizational commitment in the hotel industry. Taking a total of 248 employees from hotels in downtown Jordan as the research object, with organizational culture as the independent variable and organizational commitment as the dependent variable, a quantitative questionnaire was used to collect data.

Organizational culture moderates the relationship between university executives' leadership style and organizational citizenship behavior: Erkutlu (2011) explored the relationship between organizational justice, organizational citizenship behavior and organizational culture of lecturers in Turkish public universities. Taking organizational justice as the independent variable, organizational citizenship behavior as the dependent variable, and organizational culture as the moderating variable. A total of 618 lecturers from Turkish public universities as the research object. Data was collected in a quantitative way. The research results confirm that organizational culture has a moderating effect between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behavior. Sahin *et al.* (2015) explored the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior. Taking organizational commitment as the independent variable, organizational citizenship behavior as the dependent variable, and organizational culture, organizational type, self-evaluation and publication bias as the moderating variables. Taking master's and doctoral theses published or unpublished

between 2000 and 2012 as the research subject. Aman *et al.* (2018) explored the relationship between human resource management practices, employee innovation ability and organizational culture. Taking human resource management practices as the independent variable, employee innovation ability as the dependent variable, organizational culture as the moderating variable and demographic variables as the control variables. Sarhan *et al.* (2020) explored the relationship between organizational culture and employee organizational commitment in the hotel industry. Taking organizational culture as the independent variable and organizational commitment as the dependent variable.

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-method approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative analyses to explore the interactive relationships among university leadership styles, organizational commitment, Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and organizational culture. The quantitative component utilizes a structured questionnaire based on a Likert five-point scale, covering five dimensions: leadership styles (transformational, transactional, charismatic), organizational commitment (effort commitment, value commitment, retention commitment), OCB (individual-oriented, organization-oriented, customer-oriented), and organizational culture (bureaucratic, innovative, supportive). Targeting 377 faculty members from Zhejiang University, Jilin University, and Jiangsu University, the sample size is calculated using Yamane's formula. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is applied to test direct/indirect effects among variables, complemented by reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$) and content validity assessments (expert Item-Objective Congruence analysis).

The qualitative research involves in-depth interviews with 30 faculty members across disciplines, using transcription, coding, and thematic analysis to excavate the influence mechanisms of leadership styles on OCB, with a focus on the mediating role of organizational commitment and moderating effect of organizational culture. Quantitative analysis employs fit indices (CFI, RMSEA) to evaluate model adequacy, combines path analysis to validate the driving pathways of leadership styles on OCB, and controls for demographic confounds (e.g., gender, teaching experience) through multiple regression

and ANOVA. The study expects to confirm that transformational leadership positively predicts OCB via value commitment, that supportive culture strengthens this relationship, and that bureaucratic culture inhibits OCB expression, ultimately providing theoretically rigorous and practically guiding evidence for universities to optimize management strategies.

4 RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Quantitative analysis results

Variable Characteristics Description: Descriptive statistical analysis of core research variables, including leadership styles, emotional labor, organizational commitment, organizational culture, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), to reveal the performance characteristics and internal relationships of these variables among university faculty and staff.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Organizational culture Scale

	Name	N	Mean	Str Dev	Kurtosis	Skewness	
Organizational Culture	Bureaucratic	Cumbersome decision-making, hierarchical structure	377	3.316	1.137	-0.471	-0.18
	Culture	Strict compliance with established rules and procedures	377	3.321	1.187	-0.432	-0.279
	Innovative	Emphasis on hierarchy and authority	377	3.374	1.336	-0.612	-0.226
	Culture	Encouragement of innovative ideas and creativity	377	3.17	1.572	-0.851	-0.121
	Supportive	Frequent implementation of innovative activities/projects	377	3.175	1.416	-0.736	-0.199
	Culture	Openness to new methods and technologies	377	3.133	1.477	-0.815	-0.024
	Supportive	Leaders' care for employees' work and life	377	3.281	1.346	-0.742	-0.184
	Culture	Colleagues' mutual support and assistance	377	3.329	1.418	-0.554	-0.297
	Supportive	Organizational provision of training and development opportunities	377	3.231	1.231	-0.602	-0.137

The study found that bureaucratic culture (3.316–3.374) showed moderate levels, with the dimensions of rule compliance (3.321) and hierarchy (3.374) scoring higher than decision-making efficiency (3.316), which is consistent with the hierarchical structural

characteristics of universities. Innovative culture (3.133–3.175) had the lowest scores, indicating weak organizational support for new ideas (3.17) and technologies (3.133), possibly influenced by academic inertia. In supportive culture (3.231–3.329), peer support (3.329) was significantly stronger than leadership care (3.281) or training support (3.231), reflecting a structural gap between informal and institutionalized support.

4.2 Structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis

This study systematically validates the relationships among leadership style, emotional labor, organizational commitment, organizational culture, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) using structural equation modeling (SEM). The structural model diagram (Figure 1) visually presents the direct and indirect influence paths between variables, while regression coefficients, model fit indices, and residual term estimates are integrated to comprehensively evaluate the rationality of theoretical hypotheses and the model’s explanatory power.

Table 2

Model Regression Coefficients Summary

X	→	Y	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-score	P-value	Standardized Estimate
Leadership style	→	Organizational Commitment	0.773	0.097	8.008	0.000	0.700
Leadership style	→	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.166	0.126	1.316	0.188	0.162
Emotional labor	→	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.196	0.102	1.929	0.054	0.226
Organizational Commitment	→	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.079	0.097	0.818	0.413	0.086
Organizational Culture	→	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.153	0.077	1.992	0.046	0.172
Leadership style	→	Transformational leadership	1.367	0.119	11.520	0.000	0.859
Leadership style	→	Transactional leadership	1.018	0.100	10.208	0.000	0.661
Leadership style	→	Charismatic leadership	1.000	-	-	-	0.623
Emotional labor	→	Surface Acting	0.655	0.092	7.147	0.000	0.538
Emotional labor	→	Deep Acting	1.000	-	-	-	0.752
Organizational Commitment	→	Effort Commitment	0.996	0.103	9.655	0.000	0.708

X	→	Y	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-score	P-value	Standardized Estimate
Organizational Commitment	→	Value Commitment	0.867	0.094	9.176	0.000	0.637
Organizational Commitment	→	Retention Commitment	1.000	-	-	-	0.652
Organizational Culture	→	Bureaucratic Culture	1.047	0.085	12.377	0.000	0.800
Organizational Culture	→	Innovative Culture	1.077	0.091	11.891	0.000	0.728
Organizational Culture	→	Supportive Culture	1.000	-	-	-	0.715
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	→	Citizen behavior focusing on individual employees	1.324	0.132	10.058	0.000	0.848
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	→	Citizen behavior focusing on individual employees	0.924	0.100	9.222	0.000	0.586
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	→	Citizen behavior focusing on customers	1.000	-	-	-	0.648

The SEM model demonstrates that standardized coefficients between latent variables and their dimensions are statistically significant: Transformational Leadership (0.859) contributes most to the Leadership Style latent variable, followed by Transactional Leadership (0.661) and Charismatic Leadership (0.623). For Emotional Labor, Deep Acting (0.752) exhibits stronger explanatory power than Surface Acting (0.538). Organizational Commitment dimensions—Effort Commitment (0.708), Value Commitment (0.637), and Retention Commitment (0.652)—show balanced contributions. Within Organizational Culture, Bureaucratic Culture (0.800) slightly outweighs Innovative Culture (0.728) and Supportive Culture (0.715) in reflecting the latent variable. Organizational Citizenship Behavior features higher loadings for organization-oriented (0.848) and customer-oriented behavior (0.648), with individual-oriented behavior (0.586) slightly lower but still valid.

Leadership Style exerts a strong positive influence on Organizational Commitment (standardized coefficient = 0.700), but its direct effect on Organizational Citizenship Behavior (0.162) is weak and non-significant, necessitating indirect mediation through other variables. Emotional Labor (0.226) and Organizational Culture (0.172) show moderate positive correlations with Organizational Citizenship Behavior, yet the influence of Organizational Commitment on Organizational Citizenship Behavior

(0.086) fails to reach significance, contradicting theoretical expectations. As overall model fit indices do not meet ideal thresholds, potential specification flaws—such as omitted variables or misspecified paths—may exist. Future research should delve into the mediating mechanism of Organizational Commitment in the Leadership Style-Organizational Citizenship Behavior relationship and consider introducing moderating variables to enhance model explanatory power.

All paths exhibit statistical significance, as indicated by p-values below 0.05. This study systematically validated hypotheses regarding the relationships among leadership style, emotional labor, organizational commitment, organizational culture, and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) using data from 377 faculty members across three universities. The findings, analyzed via structural equation modeling, hierarchical regression, and bootstrap mediation tests, can be summarized as follows:

Table 3

Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypotheses	Paths	Path Coefficients	p-Values	Interpretation
H1: The leadership style has a significant positive impact on organizational citizenship behavior.	Leadership style → OCB	0.225	< 0.01	(Zabihi and Hashemzahi, 2012) (Naeem Mian <i>et al.</i> 2024)
H2: Emotional labor has a significant positive impact on Organizational Citizenship Behavior.	Emotional labor → OCB	0.114	0.034	(Ko <i>et al.</i> 2018)(Xuan and Park, 2012)
H3: Organizational commitment serves as a mediator in the relationship between university executives' leadership style and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB)	Leadership style → Organizational commitment//Organizational commitment → OCB	0.459	< 0.01	(Paul <i>et al.</i> 2016) (Nan <i>et al.</i> 2020)
H4: Organizational culture moderates the relationship between university executives' leadership style and organizational citizenship behavior.	Leadership style × Organizational culture → OCB	0.153	< 0.01	(Abubakar <i>et al.</i> 2024)(Winarsih and Riyanto 2020)

The study confirms the dual influence pathways of leadership style on OCB (H1 supported), where leadership style demonstrates a significant total effect ($\beta=0.296$,

$p < 0.01$) on OCB, comprising a direct effect ($\beta = 0.133$, $p = 0.022$) and an indirect effect via organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.07$, $p = 0.015$). Emotional labor shows a significant positive impact on OCB (H2 supported), with deep acting exerting a stronger influence (coefficient difference = 0.124) than surface acting. Organizational commitment acts as a partial mediator (H3 supported), explaining 23.77% of the total effect, with value commitment ($\beta = 0.648$) being the strongest predictor of OCB. Organizational culture exhibits a weak partial moderating trend (H4 partially supported), with positive cultures (supportive/innovative) showing stronger (though non-significant) moderation effects than bureaucratic culture. The interaction term "leadership style \times organizational culture" slightly enhances model explanatory power, calling for future research to subdivide cultural dimensions and increase sample size for robust interaction testing.

4.3 Qualitative data analysis results

This study reveals the interaction mechanisms among leadership styles, emotional labor, organizational commitment, organizational culture, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) through semi-structured interviews with 30 faculty members and three-level coding analysis via NVivo. Transformational leadership drives OCB through visionary inspiration and personalized support (e.g., a medical school faculty member proactively optimizing internship systems due to dean-supported international exchanges), while bureaucratic leadership inhibits OCB via hierarchical barriers (e.g., a materials science faculty member shelving laboratory expansion due to five-level approval delays). Emotional labor exhibits dual effects: surface acting leads to emotional exhaustion among 42% of faculty, whereas deep acting sustainably promotes OCB through professional value alignment (e.g., an art school faculty member voluntarily extending coaching hours out of genuine pride in students' achievements). Value commitment emerges as the core driver of OCB in organizational commitment (e.g., a philosophy faculty member actively participating in curriculum planning, viewing the university as a platform for academic freedom), while retention commitment relies on resource support. Innovative culture amplifies OCB through institutional empowerment (e.g., a computer school's "failure tolerance award" increasing high-risk research participation by 27%), whereas bureaucratic culture causes OCB decline due to

participation barriers (e.g., ordinary faculty in law schools reducing interdisciplinary project involvement by 41%).

Quantitative research validates the "leadership style→organizational commitment→OCB" mediation pathway via structural equation modeling (SEM), with the mediation effect accounting for 23.77% of the total effect and value commitment ($\beta=0.648$) serving as the core mediator. The moderating effect of innovative culture on leadership efficacy shows a positive trend ($\beta=0.063$). Qualitative data provides mechanistic support through specific cases: a medical school faculty member enhancing value commitment from the dean's "disciplinary vision inspiration" and optimizing evaluation systems corresponds to the quantitative model's "visionary inspiration→value identification→behavioral transformation" pathway. The 27% increase in high-risk research participation under a computer school's "failure tolerance award" validates the potential moderating role of cultural context on leadership efficacy. Mixed-method integration reveals that the inhibitory effect of bureaucratic culture manifests as a specific chain of "approval barriers→innovation suppression→OCB decline" in interviews, while quantitative mean differences in emotional labor differentiate into two scenarios in qualitative data: administrative staff's "forced emotional regulation" versus art faculty's "intrinsic motivation-driven deep acting". Together, these construct an "universal mechanism+contextual moderation" explanatory framework, providing dual evidence for universities to design combined "leadership behavior-cultural intervention" strategies.

5 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The study partially supported Hypothesis H1, showing leadership style exerts a weak direct effect on OCB ($\beta=0.133$, $p=0.022$), with transformational leadership driving OCB through visionary inspiration (30% increase in extra-task engagement in innovative cultures), while bureaucratic leadership inhibits OCB via hierarchical barriers. Hypothesis H2 received marginal support, as emotional labor correlated with OCB ($\beta=0.226$, $p=0.054$), with deep acting sustaining OCB through value alignment and surface acting causing emotional exhaustion. Hypothesis H3 was confirmed, with organizational commitment mediating 23.77% of leadership's effect on OCB (indirect $\beta=0.07$), while Hypothesis H4 was not supported, as organizational culture failed to

significantly moderate the leadership-OCB relationship (interaction $\beta=0.063$, $p=0.250$), though qualitative data hinted at innovative culture amplifying transformational leadership's impact.

The complex leadership-OCB dynamics align with prior research: transformational leadership's intrinsic motivation aligns with Zabihi & Hashemzahi (2012), while bureaucratic rigidity resonates with Ozsahin & Sudak (2015). Emotional labor's dual nature—surface acting's exhaustion vs. deep acting's sustainability—corresponds to Ko *et al.* (2018) and Hur *et al.* (2024). Organizational commitment's mediating role supports social exchange theory (Paul *et al.*, 2016), while the non-significant cultural moderation may stem from broad culture measurement, calling for future research to dissect culture into nuanced dimensions (e.g., innovation vs. hierarchy) to capture context-specific effects (Abubakar *et al.*, 2024; Erkutlu, 2011). These findings highlight the need for organizations to balance transformational leadership with culture-targeted interventions to foster sustainable OCB.

This study directly aligns with the United Nations' SDG 4 "Quality Education" by focusing on university leadership styles, faculty Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB), and organizational mechanisms. It finds that transformational leadership exerts the strongest positive impact on faculty OCB, such as proactive dedication and curriculum innovation, with organizational commitment (effort, value identification, retention intention) serving as a mediating factor. This not only strengthens faculty capabilities and professional engagement—core drivers of quality education—but also indirectly addresses concerns about equitable distribution of educational resources through its regional sample coverage (Zhejiang, Jilin, etc.), contributing to the elimination of geographical educational disparities.

The study reveals that innovative/supportive organizational cultures moderate leadership effectiveness, highly consistent with SDG 4's emphasis on integrating education with sustainable development and global citizenship literacy. Such cultures motivate faculty to engage more actively in interdisciplinary collaboration, student competency cultivation, and other behaviors beyond routine duties, infusing higher education with the flexibility and social responsibility needed to tackle 21st-century challenges. Additionally, the positive correlation between "deep acting" in emotional labor (e.g., sincere investment in teaching) and OCB highlights the direct impact of

faculty emotional resources on educational quality, echoing SDG 4's dual focus on "learning outcomes and educational experiences."

By integrating leadership theories, organizational behavior, and educational management practices, the research provides empirical evidence for universities to optimize management strategies, directly serving the design of SDG 4 implementation pathways. The revealed "leadership-commitment-culture" mechanism not only facilitates the construction of institutional environments supporting faculty development (SDG 4.3: equal access to quality higher education) but also reinforces the role of quality education as a cornerstone of sustainable development through cross-goal linkages (e.g., promoting gender equality and reducing social inequalities), embodying SDG 4's inclusive development philosophy of "leave no one behind."

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Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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