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The Impact of Shared Leadership on Leader–Member Exchange: The Moderating Role of Paradox Mindset

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Abstract

This study investigates how shared leadership influences leader–member exchange (LMX) and examines the moderating role of employees' paradox mindset. Drawing on social exchange theory and paradox theory, we propose that shared leadership enhances LMX by fostering reciprocal trust, mutual respect, and relational engagement, and that this effect is stronger for employees with a high paradox mindset. Data were collected through a two-wave survey of 318 full-time employees from Chinese organizations across multiple industries. Confirmatory factor analysis and hierarchical regression were used to test the hypotheses. Results indicate that shared leadership has a significant positive effect on LMX, and paradox mindset significantly strengthens this relationship. This study contributes to leadership literature by identifying a relational outcome of shared leadership and by highlighting paradox mindset as an important cognitive boundary condition, offering both theoretical and practical implications for managing distributed leadership in complex organizational environments.

Keywords: shared leadership; leader-member exchange; moderating role; paradox mindset

1. Introduction

In recent decades, shared leadership has emerged as a critical paradigm shift from traditional vertical leadership models to more distributed and collective forms of influence (Pearce & Conger, 2003; Carson et al., 2007). Shared leadership is characterized by the dynamic distribution of leadership functions among team members rather than centralized authority in a single formal leader (Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2014). This leadership form has gained prominence in contemporary organizations where agility, knowledge diversity, and collaborative decision-making are crucial for sustained performance. Prior empirical research has consistently demonstrated that shared leadership enhances team creativity, innovation, and performance through collective ownership and mutual influence (D'Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2016; Nicolaides et al., 2014). However, far less attention has been paid to its relational consequences at the dyadic level—particularly its influence on leader–member exchange (LMX).

LMX theory suggests that leaders form differentiated relationships with subordinates, characterized by varying degrees of trust, support, and respect (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). High-quality LMX is associated with greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, extra-role behaviors, and performance (Liao, Liu, & Loi, 2010; Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007). Although prior studies have examined antecedents such as transformational leadership, empowerment, and ethical leadership (Martin et al., 2016), shared leadership as a relational predictor remains relatively underexplored. Because shared leadership decentralizes authority and enhances mutual engagement, it may provide a fertile foundation for higher-quality dyadic exchanges. Yet empirical work that connects shared and vertical relational dynamics is still emerging, revealing a clear theoretical gap in leadership scholarship.

A further limitation in existing scholarship is the insufficient attention paid to boundary conditions that shape the effectiveness of shared leadership. From a cognitive perspective, employees may interpret distributed authority differently: some may find shared leadership empowering, while others may perceive it as ambiguous or destabilizing (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017). One individual factor that may account for these divergent reactions is paradox mindset—the extent to which people accept, integrate, and even benefit from contradictory

demands (Miron-Spektor et al., 2017). Individuals with strong paradox mindsets tend to embrace tension, view opposing forces as complementary, and respond adaptively to complex structures. Within shared leadership contexts, such individuals may more readily perceive shared influence as opportunity rather than conflict, leading to stronger relational reciprocity with leaders.

Despite the growing interest in both shared leadership and leader–member exchange (LMX), several important gaps remain. First, prior research has largely examined shared leadership as a predictor of collective outcomes such as team performance and creativity, while its implications for dyadic relational processes, particularly LMX, remain insufficiently explored. Second, little is known about the cognitive conditions under which shared leadership is most effective, especially how individuals interpret and respond to the distribution of leadership authority. Third, empirical evidence from non-Western contexts is still limited, despite the cultural salience of hierarchy and power distance in many such settings.To address these gaps, this study conceptualizes shared leadership as an antecedent of LMX, introduces paradox mindset as a key cognitive boundary condition, and empirically tests the proposed model using data from Chinese organizations.

Furthermore, although paradox theory suggests that individuals differ in their capacity to embrace and integrate contradictory demands, very few empirical studies have examined paradox mindset as a moderator in the shared leadership–LMX relationship. This omission is particularly salient in contexts where hierarchical norms traditionally prevail, and where shared leadership may be perceived as either empowering or destabilizing. As Chinese organizations increasingly adopt more collaborative and decentralized structures, understanding how employees cognitively make sense of shared leadership becomes especially important. Accordingly, this study examines (1) whether shared leadership enhances LMX and (2) whether paradox mindset strengthens this relationship.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Shared Leadership

Shared leadership has emerged as a critical perspective within contemporary leadership scholarship as organizations move away from hierarchical command-and-control structures toward collaborative and team-centered work environments. Unlike traditional vertical leadership, which positions influence and decision-making authority in a single formal leader, shared leadership conceptualizes leadership as a collective, dynamic, and interactive process distributed among team members according to expertise and situational needs (Pearce & Conger, 2003). This perspective emphasizes that leadership is not bound to a role or title, but instead resides in reciprocal influence among individuals working toward a common organizational objective (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007). As work increasingly involves knowledge-based tasks and interdependent problem-solving, shared leadership offers a framework capable of supporting flexibility, innovation, and collective accountability within teams (D'Innocenzo, Mathieu, & Kukenberger, 2016).

The development of shared leadership theory has been informed by several foundational theoretical streams. Early discussions of distributed influence can be traced to Follett's concept of "power with," suggesting that authority should emerge from the situation rather than hierarchical rank (Follett, 1924). Substitutes-for-leadership theory later expanded this view by arguing that organizational, task-related, and subordinate characteristics can diminish dependence on a single leader and enable shared influence (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). Research on emergent leadership further highlighted how leadership naturally surfaces within leaderless groups when individuals demonstrate competence or initiative (Morgeson, DeRue, & Karam, 2010). These theoretical foundations collectively shaped the understanding that leadership can be dispersed and constructed through social interactions within teams.

More recently, scholars have examined shared leadership from performance and team-effectiveness perspectives. Empirical research demonstrates that shared leadership positively influences team outcomes such as creativity, decision quality, trust, and overall performance, particularly in complex and fast-changing environments (Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2014). Shared leadership has become especially relevant in virtual teams, project-based work, and

cross-functional collaboration, where distributed expertise is essential to solving multifaceted problems (Hoch & Dulebohn, 2017). As organizations increasingly adopt flexible structures and digital collaboration technologies, shared leadership represents a critical paradigm for understanding how collective influence supports adaptability, resilience, and sustainable success.

2.2. Leader–Member Exchange (LMX)

Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) theory represents one of the most influential relational approaches in leadership research, shifting the scholarly focus from leader traits and behaviors to the unique dyadic relationships leaders develop with each follower. Initially introduced as Vertical Dyad Linkage (VDL), early research emphasized that leaders do not treat all subordinates uniformly but instead form differentiated exchange relationships within a work unit (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). This foundational insight challenged the assumption of a single leadership style applied equally across subordinates and laid the groundwork for the evolution of LMX as a theory centered on relationship quality and exchange dynamics.

As the field progressed, scholars expanded the investigation from identifying differential treatment to examining the attributes and outcomes associated with high- versus low-quality exchanges. High-quality LMX is characterized by mutual trust, respect, support, and obligation, whereas low-quality LMX is limited to formal employment contracts and supervisory control (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Meta-analytic studies consistently demonstrate that strong LMX relationships are positively associated with performance indicators including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, role clarity, citizenship behavior, and reduced turnover intention (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang, & Morgeson, 2007). These findings established LMX as a powerful predictor of both employee attitudes and behavioral outcomes within organizations.

More recent advancements have drawn attention to the multilevel and social-contextual nature of LMX differentiation. Rather than focusing solely on individual dyads, current research explores how variance in LMX relationships within a group influences team functioning, fairness perceptions, and collective performance (Liden, Erdogan, Wayne, &

Sparrowe, 2006). Studies on LMX differentiation (LMXD) suggest that unequal exchange relationships can benefit team effectiveness when aligned with performance contributions but may foster conflict and envy when perceived as unfair (Henderson, Liden, Glibkowski, & Chaudhry, 2009). Additionally, scholars now examine LMX in broader relational networks, emphasizing cross-team, cross-level, and inter-organizational exchanges, underscoring the increasingly systemic perspective of leadership research (Anand, Vidyarthi, & Park, 2015). This body of work reflects an ongoing shift toward understanding leadership as embedded within interconnected structures rather than isolated dyadic relationships.

Overall, the trajectory of LMX literature highlights a transition from dyadic-level differentiation to a more complex, social network-based understanding of leadership processes. As organizations adopt collaborative and interdependent work systems, LMX continues to offer a valuable framework for understanding how relationship quality influences employee outcomes, team dynamics, and organizational performance.

2.3. Paradox Mindset

Recent paradox scholarship has introduced the paradox mindset as an individual-level disposition that enables people to recognize, accept, and even be energized by tensions arising from seemingly contradictory but interrelated demands. Miron-Spektor and colleagues define the paradox mindset as “the extent to which one is accepting of and energized by tensions” and show that individuals who adopt such a mindset can transform resource-scarcity–induced tensions into improved performance and innovation (Miron-Spektor et al., 2018). The paradox mindset thus shifts the focus from treating tensions as problems to be resolved toward seeing them as generative conditions that, when engaged productively, enable ambidexterity (simultaneous exploration and exploitation), creativity, and adaptive performance. This micro foundational work complements earlier macro/theoretical developments in paradox theory—most notably Smith and Lewis’s (2011) dynamic equilibrium model—which argue that sustained organizational performance depends on cyclical, both/and responses to persistent contradictions rather than on one-time either/or choices.

Empirical and theoretical work since Miron-Spektor et al. has clarified mechanisms, boundary conditions, and development pathways for the paradox mindset. Experimental and field studies document positive links between a paradox mindset and innovative outcomes, showing that individuals who embrace contradictions are better able to integrate competing goals and enact ambidextrous behaviors (Leung et al., 2018; Liu & Zhang, 2022). Research on leadership and socialization further indicates that paradox mindsets are not purely dispositional: paradoxical leaders and team processes can cultivate followers' ability to reframe tensions and to use behavioral routines that normalize both/and responses (Boemelburg, Zimmermann, & Palmié, 2023). Cross-cultural work also reveals moderators of paradox benefits—cultural tendencies toward middle-ground thinking and individual differences in epistemic motivation influence whether paradoxical framing translates into creativity or cognitive conflict (Leung et al., 2018). Together, these studies portray the paradox mindset as a malleable cognitive-affective orientation that (a) enables constructive engagement with tensions, (b) amplifies creative and ambidextrous performance, and (c) can be strengthened through leadership, framing, and training interventions.

3. Methodology

3.1. Hypothesis Development

3.1.1 Shared Leadership and Leader–Member Exchange

Shared leadership refers to a collective influence process in which multiple members contribute to leadership functions based on expertise rather than hierarchy (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007; Pearce & Sims, 2002). Compared with traditional vertical leadership, shared leadership provides richer interactions and promotes distributed responsibility and mutual influence among team members (Wang, Waldman, & Zhang, 2014). High levels of shared leadership encourage open communication, trust, and reciprocal support, which are critical components for building high-quality social exchange relationships (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Since LMX is fundamentally grounded in mutual respect, trust, and obligation between leader and

follower (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), environments that support collective leadership enhance opportunities for deeper relational exchanges and resource flows among members.

H1: Shared leadership is positively associated with leader–member exchange.

3.1.2 Shared Leadership and Leader–Member Exchange

A paradox mindset is defined as individuals' capability to embrace and navigate tensions arising from simultaneous contradictory demands (Smith & Lewis, 2011; Miron-Spektor et al., 2018). Employees with high paradox mindset tend to interpret competing expectations as complementary rather than conflicting, enabling them to manage role complexity more effectively (Leung et al., 2018). Within leader–member exchange relationships, such employees demonstrate higher adaptability, learning motivation, and relational openness, fostering more positive social exchanges and cooperative behaviors (Liu & Zhang, 2022). Thus, higher paradox mindset strengthens the relational process required for developing high-quality LMX.

Although shared leadership creates structural and relational conditions beneficial for LMX, the extent to which individuals convert shared influence into high-quality exchanges may depend on psychological resources (Hoch, 2013). Employees with strong paradox mindset are better able to tolerate competing views, balance autonomy and interdependence, and leverage team diversity (Smith & Lewis, 2011; Miron-Spektor et al., 2018). Therefore, when paradox mindset is high, shared leadership is more likely to translate into collaborative relationships and mutual trust, resulting in enhanced LMX quality. Conversely, when paradox mindset is low, individuals may perceive shared leadership as role conflict or ambiguity, weakening its positive effects.

H2: Paradox mindset positively moderates the relationship between shared leadership and leader–member exchange, such that the relationship is stronger when paradox mindset is high.

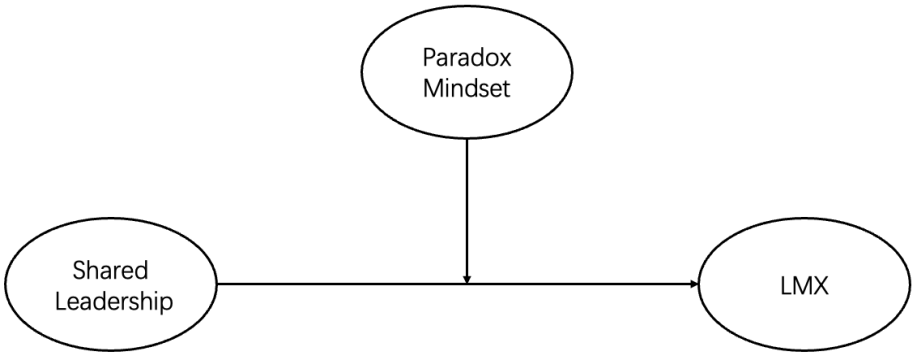

Figure 1. Research Model.

3.2. Research Design and Data Collection

This study adopted a quantitative survey design to empirically examine the impact of shared leadership on LMX and the moderating role of paradox mindset. Data were collected in two waves to reduce potential common method bias and enhance the temporal robustness of the research outcomes. The surveys were distributed to full-time employees working in Chinese organizations across diverse industries, including technology, manufacturing, education, and service sectors.

Participants were full-time employees working in team-based structures. Shared leadership was measured using a six-item scale adapted from Carson et al. (2007). LMX was measured using the LMX-7 scale (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Paradox mindset was assessed using a four-item scale developed by Miron-Spektor et al. (2018). All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

The first wave of data collection was conducted between July and September 2022, and the second wave was conducted between March and May 2025. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed, and after eliminating responses with missing data or identical response patterns, 318 valid samples were retained for analysis, yielding an effective response rate of 90.9%.

4. Results

This study extends shared leadership research by demonstrating that its influence is not limited to collective performance outcomes but also shapes dyadic relational quality. Consistent with social exchange theory, shared leadership fosters mutual obligation and trust, which strengthens LMX. Moreover, the moderating effect of paradox mindset aligns with paradox theory, suggesting that individuals who cognitively embrace tensions are better equipped to interpret shared authority as complementary rather than conflicting. This finding complements Hoch and Dulebohn (2017) and Miron-Spektor et al. (2018) by integrating relational and cognitive perspectives.

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A total of 318 valid responses were included in the final analysis. As shown in Table 1, female respondents accounted for a slightly higher proportion (54.7%) compared to males (45.3%). In terms of age distribution, the largest group of participants was between 40 and 50 years old (42.4%), followed by those aged 30–40 years (37.7%), indicating that the sample primarily consisted of mid-career employees.

Regarding job position, more than half of the respondents were section chiefs (51.9%), while 21.1% were agents, and 20.1% held deputy director or higher roles, suggesting that the majority of the sample worked in middle-management roles. Most participants had 1–5 years

of team working experience (72.1%), and 24.5% reported 5–10 years, which implies the respondents were relatively familiar with team-based work environments.

In terms of educational attainment, 80.8% held a bachelor's degree, and 10.6% obtained a postgraduate degree or above, indicating a generally high level of educational background among participants. Overall, the sample composition aligns well with the characteristics of contemporary organizational employees in China and is suitable for examining team-level leadership dynamics.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Sample

Sample Characteristics		Sample (N=318)	
		Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	144	45.3
	Female	174	54.7
Age	20-30	59	18.6
	30-40	120	37.7
	40-50	135	42.4
	50-60	4	1.2
Position	Clerk	22	7.0
	Agent	67	21.1
	Section chief	165	51.9
	Deputy director or above	64	20.1
Team Working years	Less than 1 year	6	1.8
	1-5 year	229	72.1
	5-10 years	78	24.5
	More than 10 years	5	1.5
Education	High school diploma	7	2.2
	College diploma	20	6.2
	Bachelor	257	80.8
	Postgraduate or above	34	10.6

In terms of educational attainment, 80.8% held a bachelor's degree, and 10.6% obtained a postgraduate degree or above, indicating a generally high level of educational background among participants. Overall, the sample composition aligns well with the characteristics of contemporary organizational employees in China and is suitable for examining team-level leadership dynamics.

A series of confirmatory factor analyses was conducted to evaluate the psychometric properties of the focal constructs. As shown in Table 2, all items loaded significantly onto their corresponding latent factors (all $p < .001$), and standardized loadings ranged from .764 to .902 for shared leadership, .785 to .853 for LMX, and .771 to .902 for paradox mindset, exceeding the recommended .70 threshold (Hair et al., 2019). Composite reliability (CR) values were also satisfactory (Shared Leadership = .948; LMX = .924; Paradox Mindset = .930), indicating strong internal consistency. Moreover, average variance extracted (AVE) values for all constructs (AVE = .729–.754) exceeded the .50 benchmark, demonstrating adequate convergent validity.

Table 2. CFA Result

Construct	Items	Estimate	STDYX	S.E.	Est./S.E.	P-Value	AVE	CR
Shared Leadership	SL9	1.000	0.773				0.729	0.948
	SL10	0.922	0.768	0.065	12.751	0.000		
	SL11	1.020	0.797	0.082	15.289	0.000		
	SL12	1.060	0.785	0.084	17.205	0.000		
	SL13	1.061	0.803	0.096	14.495	0.000		
	SL25	1.036	0.764	0.140	8.446	0.000		
LMX	LMX2	1.000	0.803				0.767	0.924
	LMX3	0.929	0.808	0.043	21.462	0.000		
	LMX4	0.947	0.801	0.087	10.845	0.000		
	LMX5	1.014	0.853	0.088	11.552	0.000		
	LMX6	0.991	0.837	0.097	10.179	0.000		
	LMX7	0.988	0.785	0.104	9.480	0.000		
Paradox Mindset	PM1	1.000	0.771				0.754	0.930
	PM4	1.133	0.902	0.064	17.683	0.000		
	PM5	1.055	0.801	0.072	14.682	0.000		
	PM6	1.037	0.868	0.064	16.128	0.000		

Chi-square=944.076, df=448, X^2/df=1.914, p-value=0.000,
RMSEA=0.062, CFI=0.903, TLI=0.904,

Model comparison further confirmed superior construct distinctiveness (Table 3). The hypothesized three-factor model (shared leadership, LMX, paradox mindset) showed good fit to the data, $\chi^2 = 934.076$, $df = 492$, $\chi^2/df = 1.898$, CFI = 0.913, TLI = 0.904, RMSEA = 0.069. This model fit substantially better than competing two-factor and one-factor models,

supporting discriminant validity. Overall, both convergent and discriminant validity criteria were met, indicating that the measures were psychometrically sound.

Table 3. Comparison of Measurement Models

Model	X^2	*df*	X^2/df	ΔX^2	CFI	ΔCFI	TLI	RMSEA	$SRMR_W$	$SRMR_B$
1	934.076	492	1.898	-	.913	-	.904	.069	.048	.052
2	1841.420	440	4.185	908.344	.753	.160	.730	.115	.112	.052
3	2133.831	451	4.731	1199.755	.703	.210	.676	.126	.117	.052

N=318
1:Three factor model: shared leadership, LMX, paradox mindset; 2:Two factor model: combined shared leadership and LMX; 3:One factor model.

Table 4 reports means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and bivariate correlations. Results showed that shared leadership was positively correlated with LMX (r = .698, p < .01) and paradox mindset (r = .293, p < .01). Paradox mindset was also positively related to LMX (r = .134, p < .05). Gender and position displayed small correlations with several variables, while team tenure showed a moderate correlation with paradox mindset (r = .280, p < .01). All scale reliabilities were high, further supporting measurement robustness.

Table 4. Correlation and Reliabilities

Individual level variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender(1=male 0=female)	.709	.489						
2. Position	3.969	.768	.150*					
3. Team tenure (year)	4.591	2.189	.078	.280**				
4. Shared leadership	3.799	.683	.112	-.018	-.01	(.948)		
5. LMX	4.134	.595	.039	-.208**	-.01	.698**	(.930)	
6. Paradox mindset	3.598	.730	.014	.065	.134*	.	.293**	(.924)

N=318 for individual level data, Gender (1/0=male/female)
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Reliabilities for the scales are in parentheses and presented along the diagonal.

Hierarchical regression was conducted to test the hypothesized moderation model. After entering demographic controls (gender, position, tenure) at Step 1, shared leadership and paradox mindset were entered at Step 2, followed by the interaction term at Step 3. As expected, shared leadership positively predicted LMX (β = .396, p < .001), and paradox mindset also showed a significant positive effect (β = .267, p < .001). Supporting Hypothesis 3, the interaction between shared leadership and paradox mindset was significant (β

= .217, $p < .001$), indicating that paradox mindset strengthened the positive association between shared leadership and LMX.

A simple-slope test revealed that shared leadership had a stronger effect on LMX when paradox mindset was high (+1 SD: slope = 0.828) compared to low paradox mindset (−1 SD: slope = 0.238). Figure 1 visually illustrates this pattern, showing that LMX increased more sharply under high paradox mindset. Thus, employees with greater paradoxical thinking tendencies appear more responsive to shared leadership, thereby forming higher-quality leader–member exchange relationships.

Table 5. Hypotheses Testing Results.

	Hypotheses	Estimate	S.E	*t*-value	*p*-value
H1	SL->LMX	0.396	0.103	3.858	0.000
H2	SL*PM->LMX	0.217	4.185	908.344	0.000

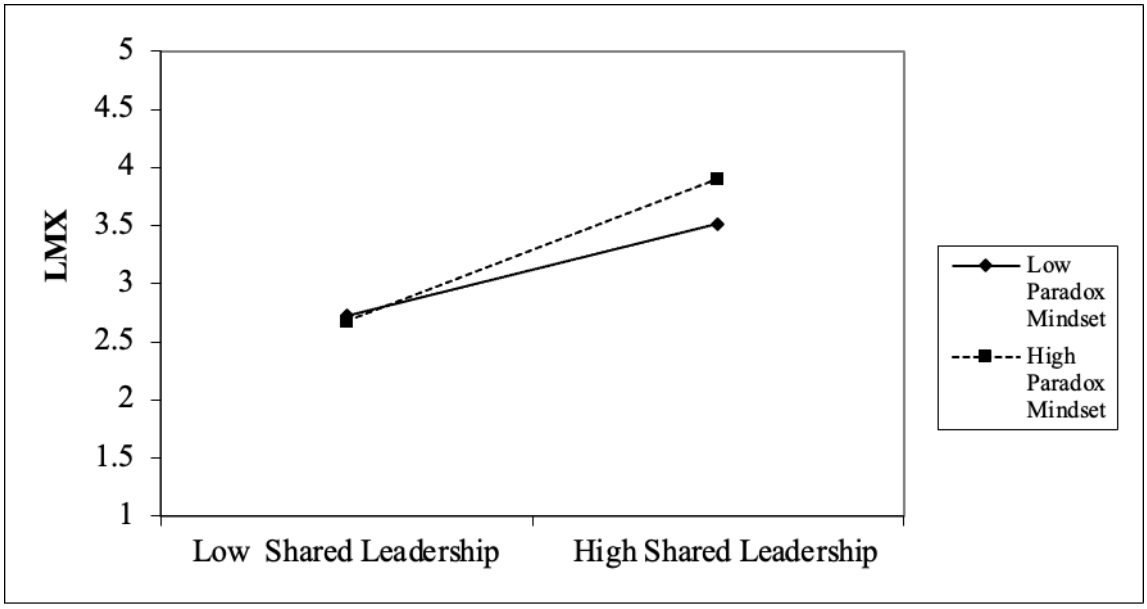

Figure 2. Moderating role of Paradox mindset.

5. Conclusion

This research confirms that shared leadership is positively associated with LMX, suggesting that when leadership responsibilities are dispersed across members rather than centralized in

a single authority, employees perceive stronger trust, mutual respect, and socio-emotional exchange with leaders. Additionally, paradox mindset serves as a meaningful moderator: individuals more capable of embracing contradictions are better able to interpret distributed authority structures positively, thereby responding more favorably to shared leadership behaviors. Overall, this study highlights shared leadership as a relational process and reveals cognitive openness to paradox as a critical condition for relationship quality improvement.

5.1. Theoretical Implications

First, this study enriches shared leadership literature by demonstrating its relational consequence—higher LMX. While prior research has primarily addressed shared leadership's impact on team performance or creativity, relational mechanisms have received less attention. Our work fills this gap and positions shared leadership as an antecedent of dyadic leadership relations. Second, by identifying paradox mindset as a moderator, the study advances the cognitive perspective within leadership research. Individuals differ in their ability to make sense of distributed authority, and this cognitive capability shapes whether shared leadership is interpreted as empowering or ambiguous. The finding responds to recent calls to examine when shared leadership works rather than only whether it works. Third, conducted within the Chinese context, this study offers culturally grounded insights. Collective climates and hierarchical value norms may shape how employees respond to power decentralization. Our results show that shared leadership remains effective even within cultures historically oriented toward authority, suggesting that modern workplaces are shifting toward more participatory and cognitively adaptive leadership models.

5.2. Practical Implications

For organizations, the findings suggest that adopting shared leadership practices can meaningfully improve leader–member relationships. Encouraging members to share decision authority, distribute expertise, and collaborate on leadership tasks may strengthen trust, transparency, and psychological connection within leader–follower dyads. Managers should also consider developing employees' paradox mindset. Training programs that help employees tolerate ambiguity, view tensions as complementary rather than contradictory, and approach conflicts dialectically may enhance leadership acceptance and relationship quality.

Especially in dynamic environments, employees with strong paradox cognition are better equipped to thrive under decentralized leadership. Additionally, leaders may intentionally design job roles and team structures that support shared influence—such as rotational leadership assignments, cross-functional collaboration, and peer-mentoring systems—enabling shared leadership to be perceived as developmental rather than disorderly.

5.3. Limitations and Future Research

Overall, this study contributes to leadership research by integrating relational (LMX), structural (shared leadership), and cognitive (paradox mindset) perspectives, offering a more holistic understanding of leadership dynamics in complex organizations.

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations. First, the cross-sectional research design restricts causal inference. Future studies could employ longitudinal designs or experimental field interventions to validate temporal causality between shared leadership and LMX. Second, self-report survey data may introduce perceptual bias; incorporating multi-source or behavioral indicators would improve measurement robustness. Third, the sample was drawn from Chinese organizations, which may limit cultural generalizability. Cross-cultural comparisons or intercultural team samples would help determine whether the moderating mechanisms are universal or context-dependent. Future research may also examine mediator processes such as psychological safety, trust, empowerment, or collective identity, which could further explain how shared leadership enhances LMX. Additionally, exploring other boundary conditions—such as power distance orientation, uncertainty tolerance, or team interdependence—would deepen understanding of when shared leadership is most effective.

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