



The association between inclusive leadership and pro-social rule breaking: Gender as moderator

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ABSTRACT

Background: This study explores the relationship between inclusive leadership and pro-social rule breaking (PSRB), with gender as a moderating factor. Drawing on role theory, it posits that women and men may exhibit different behaviors in work contexts. While women are typically linked with communal, socially oriented behaviors, men tend to show agentic, achievement-focused behaviors. This difference may influence how men and women respond to inclusive leadership in the workplace, including their likelihood of engaging in PSRB. **Methods:** The study involved employees from hospitality companies in Indonesia (N=193). Data were collected through an online survey, and the relationships were analyzed using Hayes' PROCESS macro on SPSS software. **Findings:** Inclusive leadership was found to have a negative correlation with PSRB. Gender moderated this relationship, with a significant negative correlation between inclusive leadership and PSRB in male participants, and a positive but non-significant correlation in female participants. **Conclusion:** The findings suggest that inclusive leadership influences PSRB differently based on gender, with men showing a stronger negative association. This highlights the need to consider gender when studying leadership styles and their impact on workplace behavior. **Novelty/Originality of this Study:** This study contributes to the literature by examining the role of gender in the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB, offering insights into how inclusive leadership can differently affect men and women in the workplace.

KEYWORDS: gender; inclusive leadership; pro-social rule breaking.

1. Introduction

As one of the dynamic and quite developed industries in Indonesia, companies engaged in the hospitality industry such as food and beverages services, hospitality, and tourism (Hemmington, 2007; Mariani, 2019) turns out to have challenges faced by employees in doing their jobs. They are expected to follow various rules within the company that are not small, some of which are regarding safety/hygiene, technology policies, employee codes of ethics, and standard operating procedures regarding guest/customer service (Ghosh & Shum, 2019). With these various regulations, it is possible that its presence hinders employee flexibility in responding to a dynamic environment, resulting in obstacles in achieving the welfare of employees and the company itself (Wang & Shi, 2020; Wang et al., 2021). This is because basically, formal rules in companies are intrinsically inflexible and limit employees from providing a quick response (Zhu et al., 2018). In the end, employees will choose to act deviating from the formal rules that apply in the company to achieve what is considered better for the company and others, where this action is known as pro-social rule breaking (Morrison, 2006).

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Pro-social rule breaking (PSRB) is all forms of actions carried out intentionally to violate rules, regulations, and prohibitions that apply in organization with the main aim of improving the welfare of the organization or one of the stakeholders in the (Morrison, 2006), such as getting good ratings from customers or clients. Some forms of action that reflect the PSRB are making personal copies of documents instead of copying through the company's copy center, notifying information about audit work that is still confidential, and accepting returns or allowing the exchange of goods from customers. PSRB is considered an important action because although organizational rules are generally considered congruent with organizational goals, employees often find themselves in situations where breaking the rules can benefit the company (Vardaman et al., 2014). Some of these advantages include improving the quality of relationships with colleagues (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2015), saving expenses (Sadikoglu & Zehir, 2010), and increasing customer satisfaction (Ambrose et al., 2015). When going to be involved in PSRB, employees will try to observe and obtain information in advance about the possibility that they will get negative consequences from their leaders or not (Wang & Shi, 2020). According to social information processing theory, social information in organizational situations provides a variety of clues that influence their attitudes and behavior, and individual behavior depends on their cognitive interpretation of that information (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). The results of employee observations of the leader's behavior will be processed as social information processed in individuals (Wang & Shi, 2020).

Factors of PSRB can be categorized as internal factors and external factors. Some internal factors include age, work experience (John & Shafi, 2020), tendency to take risks (Morrison, 2006), and low levels of conscientiousness (Dahling et al., 2012); external factors include violations of rules committed by colleagues, job autonomy, and leadership style (He et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2014; Morrison, 2006; Zhu et al., 2018). In this study, leadership style will be examined as a predictor of PSRB because the attitude and behavior of leaders in the company may be an important factor to affect employee motivation, effort and performance (Asrar-ul-Haq & Kuchinke, 2016). Indeed, previous studies found transformational leadership styles (Huang et al., 2014), ethical leadership (Zhu et al., 2018), and inclusive leadership (He et al., 2021; Wang & Shi, 2020) to predict PSRB. Compared to other leadership styles, inclusive leadership is more indicative of equality and participation in ideas, opinions, and opinions from employees (Booysen, 2013; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). According to Carmeli et al. (2010), inclusive leadership style refers to the attitudes and behaviors of leaders who show openness, availability, and ease of reach in their interactions with subordinates. In other words, inclusive leaders are concerned about the interests, expectations, and feelings of subordinates, and are willing and could help subordinates (Carmeli et al., 2010; Choi et al., 2015).

Inclusive leaders will be seen from how actions are taken towards employees, they will tend to have characteristics such as being open, providing time, and understanding the needs of their employees (Carmeli et al., 2010). Inclusive leaders will also engage in a variety of attitudes and actions that can build employee perceptions that their different ideas, opinions, and opinions are valuable (Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006) by providing opportunities for employees to develop norms, encourage open communication, take on more responsibility, and voice opinions (Qi & Liu, 2017). Even though PSRB is carried out with positive intentions, employees who carry out PSRB are still faced with risks such as getting punished or perceived as someone who is not responsible (Vardaman et al., 2014). According to social information processing theory, social information in organizational situations provides a variety of clues that influence individual attitudes and behaviors depending on their cognitive interpretation of the information (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). When employees are informed that their leaders adopt an inclusive style through openness, availability, and reachability, it fosters employee confidence that when they break the rules prosocially with the aim of benefiting the company, their leaders will understand and appreciate their main intentions (He et al., 2021). Therefore, an inclusive leadership style can increase the likelihood of employees conducting PSRB. Thus, this article hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 1: Inclusive leadership has a positive and significant relationship to employee PSRB behavior

Gender roles still receive little attention in leadership research (Ye et al., 2018). However, many human decisions are determined by the attributes inherent in employees, including gender. Role theory (Eagly & Wood, 1991) assumes that differences in women and men in social behavior are partly due to the tendency of individuals to act consistently with their gender roles. Based on the theory that expectations of gender roles based on sex can influence the behavior of women and men in social situations, this study seeks to involve gender to see how gender makes the difference in PSRB behavior when they perceive their superiors apply inclusive leadership styles. According to Eagly (1987), women are more associated with communal behaviors such as helping, serving, and focusing on interpersonal relationships. Traditionally, women are expected to care and put the interests of others first (Eagly & Crowley, 1986). Elements of PSRB such as kindness, understanding, dedication to others, and support are more congruent with what is considered women's behavior, so it is expected that women display higher PSRB than men. On the other hand, men are more associated with agentic behaviors such as competitive, assertive, and goal-focused (Eagly, 1987). They also naturally have a desire to achieve heroic status in their helping behavior (Eagly & Crowley, 1986). Therefore, even if PSRB elements do not conform to what is associated with male behavior, they will be more likely to display PSRB behavior when they have power, control, and the possibility to achieve a higher heroic status in the workplace.

However, inclusive leaders present equality for subordinates (Booyesen, 2013; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006). This can make female employees feel they have the same position and opportunity to contribute to the company so that they can encourage PSRB behavior. Meanwhile, male employees will feel demotivated to show PSRB because the presence of inclusive leaders can reduce opportunities to compete and gain recognition or heroic status when conducting PSRB. In other words, female employees who perceive their superiors as displaying inclusive leadership will be more likely to be motivated to violate rules to help achieve company profits or goals compared to male employees. Therefore, hypothesize 2 in this article that:

Hypothesis 2: Gender moderates the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB, such that female participants who perceive their leader to be inclusive are more likely to perform PSRB compared to the male participants.

2. Methods

2.1 Participants and procedures

This study employ convenience sampling to get participants by distributing the link to the survey via social media such as Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter. Sampling criteria include employees from the hospitality industry (lodging and accommodation, food and beverages, and travel and tourism) and have at least one year experience working with the current direct supervisor. Of the 562 participants filling out the survey, 369 data were deleted in which 276 (49.1%) participants did not work in the hospitality industry, 90 (16%) participants did not pass the attention checker item, and 3 (0.5%) participants were not willing to finish the survey. A number of 193 data were further used. The general characteristics of participants in this study were dominated by men (58.5%). Most participants were in the age range of 25 - 44 years (57%) with the mean age was 28 years (SD = 7.06). Participants' educational level was dominated by college graduates (38.9%) followed by high school degrees (37.8%). In terms of job position, the majority of the participants are staff (45.6%) followed by managers (22.3%). Participants working under

the current supervisor less than 2 years make up the most participants (65.8%) with mean work time under the current supervisor is 3.25 years (SD = 3.41).

2.2 Measures

Inclusive leadership was measured using inclusive leadership scale by Carmeli et al. (2010) and has been translated into Indonesian and used in Yusuf's (2021) research with high internal consistency ($\alpha=0.939$). The measure consists of 9 items with 3 dimensions, namely openness (4 items, example: "My boss is always open to listening to new ideas"), availability (3 items, example: "My boss is always willing to answer questions related to the work asked"), and accessibility (2 items, example: "My supervisor can be contacted directly to discuss issues at hand"). This measuring instrument uses a 7-point Likert scale, where participants answer with points 1, "strongly disagree" to 7, "strongly agree".

Pro-Social Rule Breaking was measured using the General Pro-Social Rule Breaking Scale (GPSRBS) measurement tool developed by Dahling et al. (2012) which has gone through a forward translation process with supervision by a bilingual organizational psychologist. Based on the results of the pilot study, this measuring instrument has a very high reliability, which is $\alpha=0.958$. After a field study, the reliability of this measuring instrument became $\alpha=0.929$. This measure consists of 13 items with 3 dimensions, namely efficiency (5 items, example: "I will violate company rules or policies if I can work more efficiently"), coworker assistance (4 items, example: "I will violate company rules if my coworkers need help related to their work"), and customer service (4 items, example: "I violated the company's rules to provide better service to customers"). This measuring instrument uses a 5-point Likert scale, where participants answer with points 1, "strongly disagree" to 5, "strongly agree".

3. Results and Discussions

Table 1 shows the mean, SD, and correlation coefficients between demographic variables and study variables. Based on the results of the analysis presented in Table 1, employee PSRB behavior is negatively and significantly associated with inclusive leadership ($r=-0.15$, $p=0.041$). This shows that the more employees have the perception that their leaders are open, available, and easy to reach, the less likely they are to act prosocially against the rules. It was also found that PSRB had a positive and significant correlation with gender ($r=0.16$, $p=0.023$). This shows that male employees tend to display higher PSRB compared to female employees.

Table 1. Results of mean, standard deviation, and inter-correlation between demographic variables and study variables

No	Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Age	28.2	7.06	1						
2	Tenure	3.25	3.41	0.50**	1					
3	Educational level	3.64	1.41	0.32**	0.07	1				
4	Job position	2.3	1.57	0.51**	0.31**	0.36**	1			
5	Gender	NA	NA	0.21**	0.13	-0.1	0.01	1		
6	Inclusive leadership	5.97	1.01	0.13	0.12	0.06	0.22**	0.02	1	
7	Pro-Social Rule Breaking	2.34	0.9	-0.17*	0.1	-0.19**	-0.1	0.16*	-0.15*	1

Note: * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$ (2-tailed NA= not applicable. Gender is dummy-coded (1= Female, 2= Male), Educational level (1= Junior High School, 2= High School/Equivalent, 3= D1, 4= D3, 5= D4/S1, 6= S2, 7= S3), Job position (1= Staff, 2= Senior Staff, 3= Manager, 4= Senior Manager, 5= Director)

For correlation with demographic variables, PSRB was found to have a negative and significant correlation with age ($r=-0.017$, $p=0.016$). So, the lower the age of the employee, the higher the score of PSRB behavior that will be obtained. Furthermore, employee PSRB behavior was also negatively and significantly associated with recent education levels ($r=-0.19$, $p=0.007$). This shows that the lower the employee's education level, the higher the

PSRB behavior score. On the other hand, the inclusive leadership variable had a positive and significant relationship with the position of work ($r=0.22$, $p<0.001$). These results show that the higher the position of employees in the company, the higher the inclusive leadership perceived to their superiors.

3.1 Hypothesis testing

Table 2 shows that all predictor variables contributed significantly to PSRB ($R^2=0.1780$; $F(7,185)=5.724$, $p<0.05$). Thus, 17.80% of the variance of the PSRB is explained by age, tenure, educational level, job position, inclusive leadership, gender, and the interaction between inclusive leadership and gender. The results of regression analysis also showed that inclusive leadership significantly predicted PSRB ($b=-0.17$, $t(193)=-2.74$, $p<0.05$), 95% CI (-0.30, -0.05). Every one-point increase in the inclusive leadership score will lower the PSRB score by 0.17. Therefore, Hypotesis 1 which states that inclusive leadership has a positive and significant association with PSRB is partially supported by the data.

Table 2. Results of regression analysis on PSRB

Predictors	b	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	3.40	0.28	12.24	0.00	2.85	3.95
Age	-0.04	0.01	-3.36	0.00	-0.06	-0.02
Tenure	0.06	0.02	3.08	0.00	0.02	0.10
Educational level	-0.08	0.05	-1.72	0.09	-0.18	0.01
Job position	0.05	0.05	1.04	0.30	-0.04	0.14
IL	-0.17	0.06	-2.74	0.01	-0.30	-0.05
Gender	0.33	0.13	2.57	0.01	0.08	0.58
IL x Gender	-0.35	0.12	-2.85	0.00	-0.58	-0.11
$R^2=0.1780$			$F(7,185)=5.7239$, $p<0.05$			

Note: N = 193. IL = Inclusive leadership

Table 2 demonstrates the significant interaction effect between inclusive leadership and gender on PSRB ($b=-0.35$, $t(193)=-2.85$, $p<0.05$), CI 95% (-0.58, -0.11). The results suggest that gender moderates the association between inclusive leadership and PSRB. Based on these results, Hypothesis 2 which states that gender moderates the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB is partially supported by the data.

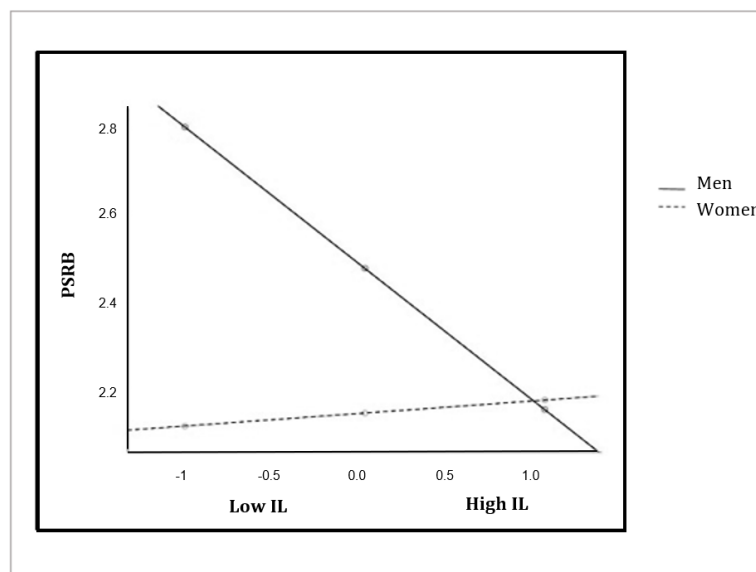


Fig. 1. Simple slope of the moderating effect of gender on the association between inclusive leadership and PSRB

Figure 1 shows the simple slope of the regression lines in female and male employees. Based on the graph, in the group of women participants, the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB is positive but not significant. Meanwhile, in the group of male participants, it was found that the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB was negative and significant. These results suggest that gender attenuates the negative relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB, where the relationship becomes nonsignificant and positive in female employees compared to male employees.

3.2 Discussion

The purpose of this study is to examine the association between inclusive leadership and pro-social rule breaking (PSRB) and the effect of gender moderation on the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB in employees in the hospitality industry in Indonesia. The findings showed that inclusive leadership has a negative and significant relationship with PSRB. Moreover, the study found that gender significantly moderated the association between inclusive leadership and PSRB in an unexpected direction.

This article findings are not in line with two previous studies that showed inclusive leadership to have a positive and significant relationship with PSRB (He et al., 2021; Wang & Shi, 2020). A possibility for the unexpected results is that there is a social desirability bias in providing answers. Social desirability bias (SDB) is a condition in which individuals tend to display actions that are in accordance with social norms and tend to show less behavior that is socially considered inappropriate (Narsa et al., 2020). There are several factors that corroborate the likelihood that the participants of this study were influenced by SDB. First, SDB was found to appear in studies with sensitive topics, such as responses to vote buying (Pradhanawati et al., 2018) and tax-abiding behavior (Iraman et al., 2021), where Indonesians were participants in the study. This shows that Indonesians have the tendency to be affected by SDB. The perception that PSRB actions are violations that should not be carried out makes violations of the rules, even though they are carried out prosocially, can be perceived as a sensitive topic by participants. Second, SDB can also occur when individuals are faced with situations that pose ethical dilemmas (Narsa et al., 2020). PSRB is one form of behavior that poses an ethical dilemma because individuals must choose not to violate company rules or violate them for the benefit of the company (Vardaman et al., 2014). The adaptation items of the GPSRBS measuring instrument (Dahling et al. 2012) used to measure PSRB behavior in this study explicitly include words such as violating rules, regulations, or company policies that can be perceived negatively by people of collectivistic countries like Indonesia. Various factors that have been mentioned can cause participants in this study to prefer to show a socially more desirable and acceptable attitude, namely not doing PSRB even though in fact, it does not rule out the possibility that they have done PSRB.

Gender was found to moderate the association between inclusive leadership and PSRB, wherein the association between inclusive leadership and PSRB became positive but non-significant in female group participants and negative and significant in male group participants. This is contrary to the research of Ye et al. (2018) which shows that women will show a more positive response and are motivated by inclusive leaders. This may be explained through things outside the leadership style applied by their superiors. For example, in a study conducted by Borry (2017) and Piatak et al. (2020), it was found that when women are in a condition as a minority, they will be more likely to comply with the rules that apply within the company. This may cause them to lose authority and feel that they do not have the same position as other colleagues so that when their boss adopts an inclusive leadership style, it is not enough to make them want to do things beyond what they should do even if it can contribute well to clients/customers, co-workers, and the company where they work.

In line with this, the stereotype from the environment that women's roles should display feminine behavior shown through responsiveness, obedience, and service makes the inherent characteristics of women do not match the image of someone who breaks the rules (Portillo & DeHart-Davis, 2009) and if it has greater intensity, then the presence of

inclusive leaders may not provide significant influence on PSRB behavior. Although not significant, the relationship found between inclusive leadership and PSRB behavior in female employees tended to be positive. This shows that despite the weak intensity, female employees tend to be motivated to carry out PSRB by the behavior of superiors who show openness, availability, and ease of reach.

On the other hand, it was found that the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB in male employees was negative and significant. This is in accordance with the hypothesis built based on role theory (Eagly & Wood, 1991) which states that women and men can display different behaviors in social situations according to the expectations of the society or culture in which they are. In the work environment, men focus more on competition, assertive behavior, independence, and dominance (Eagly et al., 2000; Schminke et al., 2003). Meanwhile, the presence of inclusive leaders creates equality and equal opportunities to contribute to the welfare of the company (Qi & Liu, 2017). This deprives male employees of a more domineering or powerful position, creates a less competitive atmosphere, and reduces their chances of gaining recognition or heroic status for their constructive behavior in the workplace. This makes it less likely for male employees to engage in constructive behavior outside of their responsibilities, including PSRB. Therefore, the more inclusive the leadership perceived by male employees, the lower their PSRB behavior.

This study is not without limitations. First, this study did not consider organization culture and climate that can influence employees in perceiving prosocial rule-breaking actions as something negative, even if it is done with the intention to help achieve company goals or welfare. Therefore, further research can consider these aspects to be included in research variables. Second, the use of self-report increases the likelihood of common method bias and social desirability bias. Considering that the adaptation items of the GPSRBS measuring instrument (Dahling et al., 2012) explicitly stated violations of rules, regulations, or policies, it is quite likely that participants' answers were in accordance with what others considered more appropriate or preferred. Therefore, future research can use measures accompanied by schemes or scenarios as in Morrison's (2006) research to provide examples closer to PSRB behavior so that participants have an image that PSRB is a positive and profitable action for the company. Third, the study measured gender using the participants' biological sex, although it is possible for participants to identify with a gender role different from their sex. Future research can measure gender using gender role scales.

As a practical implication, managers in the hospitality industry can apply different communication strategies to female and male employees so that they feel that PSRB is not something that needs to be avoided. To female employees, it can further convince them to believe that the boss is willing to discuss and listen to complaints so that they feel protected when they violate rules that are beneficial to the organization. For male employees, it can be by communicating to them that PSRB is not a negative action, and PSRB behavior from them will be appreciated. In addition, superiors can also show PSRB behavior itself, so that employees feel that this behavior is something that is expected or allowed in the company.

4. Conclusion

Research that has been conducted on 193 employees of hospitality companies in Indonesia shows that inclusive leadership and PSRB have a negative and significant relationship. This means, the higher the inclusive leadership shown by superiors, the lower the PSRB behavior of employees. In addition, the study also found that gender moderated the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB, where the relationship between inclusive leadership and PSRB became more negative and significant in the male participant group, while being positive but non-significant in the female participant group.

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Author Contribution

Both authors contributed equally to the study, including conceptualization, data collection, analysis, literature review, writing, and editing. All authors collaborated throughout the research process and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Not available.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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