Servant Leadership and Employees' Work Safety Behavior: The Moderating Role of Corporate Social Responsibility to Employees

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ABSTRACT

Worldwide spread of COVID-19 had presented a considerable challenge to various sectors, with the service industries being particularly affected. Under an epidemic situation, employees' work safety behavior can ensure the safety of employees, organizations, and customers. Servant leaders prioritize supporting employees, which is crucial for encouraging employees to exhibit more work safety behaviors during a crisis. Drawing on social exchange theory, this study investigates the impact of servant leadership on employees' safety-related work practices, with a focus on the mediating role of perceived organizational support. Additionally, enlightened by a community of destiny-based concept, this study also looks into the moderating effect of corporate social responsibility on employees. By analyzing the data from a questionnaire survey of 1,023 employees in a large hotel, this study initially verified a significant positive relationship between perceived organizational support for employees' work safety behavior, along with a significant positive moderating effect of corporate social responsibility on employees in perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior. In order to examine the hypothesis model and reduce common method bias, this study conducted an online questionnaire survey of 349 employees in the hospitality, catering, tourism, and other service industries. The above further supported the mediating role of perceived organizational support in servant leadership and employees' work safety behaviors and the moderating role of corporate social responsibility to employees in the indirect effect of servant leadership's influence on employees' work safety behavior through perceived organizational support.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, the economy at home and abroad have inevitably been impacted, particularly on service-related enterprises. With international cross-border control and stay-at-home policies, tourism has been hit hard. For example, tourism consumption in the US fell by about $400 billion in the first half of 2020 (McKinsey Company, 2020). Similarly, China's tourism sector was terrible, with 80% of hotel rooms empty and nearly 1.6 million hotel employees unemployed in the first half of 2020 (AHLA, 2020). Meanwhile, 40% of restaurants faced closure, and more than 8 million restaurant workers were on lay-off or leave of absence (National Restaurant Association, 2020). Although the COVID-19 is now largely over and the tourism economy has gradually recovered, people are stricter with the safety and health of the service environments due to the possibility of the recurrence of COVID-19. For the tourism service industry, tourist attractions, travel agencies, hotels, and restaurants are public places where COVID-19 can be spread and infected by person-to-person contact, which will lead to employees' insecurity about service environments. Therefore, it is indispensable to promptly implement a range of safety requirements and strategies to promote employees' work safety behaviors in the workplace and create a safe working environment.

Employee safety behaviors encompass a range of practices that contribute to the well-being and security of workers, their peers, clients, the organization, and associated stakeholders. These proactive measures are essential for fostering a culture of safety within the workplace and offering a secure service experience for customers with peace of mind and security in the workplace (Christian et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2020). Thus, employees' work safety behavior should be actively advocated and promoted in a post-epidemic situation. However, there is still limited empirical study on how to improve safety behaviors among employees in service-related industries during the COVID-19 pandemic (Zhang et al., 2020). In the literature, we find that leadership is a vital organizational resource with an impact on developing certain positive employee behaviors (i.e., work safety behaviors) in the workplace (Xue et al., 2020). Among these, servant leadership is a leading strategy that transcends personal interests, places employees' needs first, and acquires considerable significance in the service business, particularly the tourism and hospitality industries (Hoch et al., 2018; Ling et al., 2016). Even in a crisis environment, servant leaders can provide additional task-related and emotional-related support for employees, not just to ensure that employees work normally and that organizations function properly (Chen et al., 2015; Van Dierendonck, 2011). While little research exists about exploring whether servant leadership affects employees' work safety behavior and the influencing mechanism during the post-epidemic situation for service-related industries such as hospitality and tourism. However, in the post-epidemic situation, the uncertainty of the epidemic will increase the sense of insecurity about service environments, so employees' work safety behavior in the service industry becomes more important. Thus, this paper seeks to fill these gaps through research into the relationship between servant leadership and employees' work safety behaviors and potential mediating mechanisms under social exchange theory.

Similarly, with the social exchange theory, we introduce perceived organizational support, which reflects the employees' assessment of how much the organization cares about their professional input and personal needs (Eisenberger et al., 1986). When employees feel valued and supported by the organization, it motivates employees to engage more wholeheartedly in

their work and contribute to a more harmonious work environment (Ficapal-Cusí et al., 2020; Eisenberger et al., 1986). While servant leaders help employees solve problems, help them grow and progress through genuine concern, and provide necessary guidance and support, all of which can enhance employees' perceived organizational support. According to social exchange theory, to repay the help from servant leaders, when the organization needs employees to comply with safety policies and conduct safety protection, employees may actively follow or even do better in this aspect. Hence, we propose that the perception of organizational support may mediate the relationship between servant leadership and employee work safety behavior.

Moreover, within the organizational context, this study incorporates the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to delve deeper into the boundary condition about how servant leadership influences employees' work safety behavior. We introduce CSR to employees. Research has pointed out that as the main paradigm for understanding organizations and employees, social exchange theory is immensely applicable in understanding the association between CSR and employee behaviors (Brammer et al., 2015). From an energetic perspective, CSR is the internal energy that can stimulate the social exchange mechanism between employees and organizations (Farooq et al., 2019). When enterprises choose to shoulder the social responsibility of employees, such as providing training opportunities, safeguarding employee welfare, and actively listening to employee feedback, these behaviors can obtain resources from employees, such as emotions and services. Namely, CSR to employees can stimulate exchange behaviors, especially promoting positive work behaviors (e.g., work safety behaviors), which is consistent with the core concepts of social exchange theory. In fact, extensive literature has demonstrated that CSR to employees can positively influence employees' attitudes and actions, for example, by promoting employees' organizational commitment (Mueller et al., 2012), enhancing a sense of organizational identity (Farooq et al., 2014), improving job satisfaction (Wisse et al., 2018), reducing the turnover rate and motivating other positive behaviors (Kong et al., 2021). In the post-epidemic situation, when employees see that their organization' efforts in CSR are related to the benefit and safety of themselves, employees will feel less insecurity about their environment. Furthermore, they may be more concerned about work safety behavior to shoulder responsibility for themselves, colleagues, consumers, and other stakeholders. Therefore, this study considers that within the framework of social exchange theory, CSR to employees can moderate the impact mechanism of servant leadership on employees' work safety behavior.

Drawing on the theory of social exchange, we offer a three-point contribution to extant literature in this paper. First, little is known about the link between servant leadership and employees' work safety behavior at the individual employee's level. Our study will provide preliminary evidence as to which way servant leadership links to employees' work safety behaviors. Additionally, this study introduces CSR to employees as a moderating effect based on a community of shared future for mankind, enriching the boundary conditions of how servant leadership affects employees' work safety behavior in the context of the COVID-19 epidemic. Finally, this research expects to enhance understanding of servant leadership and social exchange theory, as well as advance related studies and practices with regard to the servant leadership domain.

Literature Review
Servant Leadership

As a supportive and people-oriented leadership style, servant leaders prioritize employees' interests; examples of this include taking into account the needs and interests of subordinates, treating employees fairly and inclusively, and giving them the necessary care and help (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Russell & Stone, 2002). According to previous research, servant leaders are characterized by healing emotion, producing team value, delegating appropriately, supporting subordinates' growth, behaving ethically, and so on (Newman et al., 2017). There is a wealth of current research on servant leadership in organizations. In the individual level, a large of evidence exists on servant leadership's positive influence on promoting positive employee attitudes like employees' job satisfaction, loyalty, engagement, emotional commitment, trust in leaders or organizational trust (e.g., Carter & Baghurst, 2014; Jaramillo et al., 2015; Lapointe & Vandenberghe, 2018; Van Dierendonck & Patterson, 2015), ideal work behaviors like organizational citizenship behavior, innovative behavior, proactive behavior and employee flourishing(e.g., Giolito et al., 2021; Lu et al., 2019; Newman et al., 2017; Yaffe & Kark, 2011). In the team level, research has shown that servant leadership leads to better work outputs like organizational-dimension and team-dimension performance (e.g., Eldor, 2021; Schaubroeck et al., 2011). In the organizational level, research has shown that servant leadership is conducive to creating an organizational climate of fairness and service. In addition, studies have also placed servant leadership in industries such as education, Microsoft and hotels, and banking (e.g., Al-Azab & Al-Romeedy, 2024; Karatepe et al., 2019; Quinteros-Durand et al., 2023; Siddqiue et al., 2023). In conclusion, there is a relatively large research literature on servant leadership, but we found that research involving distinguishing servant leadership in different cultures has not yet matured, especially in service industries such as tourism in the post-epidemic context. Therefore, this paper will examine how servant leadership plays a role and influences employees' work safety behavior in a special situation, i.e., an unexpected viral crisis in service industries such as tourism, which is very necessary.

Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) reflects their general sentiment regarding the extent to which the organization values their efforts, acknowledges their contributions, and caters to their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). It mainly includes two aspects: one is employees' expectation that their efforts and contributions can be recognized by the organization, and the other is employees' emotional needs can be satisfied by the organization. Studies have shown that transformational leadership (Suifan et al., 2018), servant leadership (Ekmekcioglu & Öner, 2024), and inclusive leadership (Qi et al., 2019) positively affect POS. while higher POS can promote employee creativity (Suifan et al., 2018), satisfaction (Miao & Kim, 2010), and innovative behavior (Qi et al., 2019) among other positive work behaviors. Studies have also explored the impact of POS in the context of unsafe environments and found that in unsafe environments, POS can enhance employees' organizational citizenship behaviors (Alshaabani et al., 2021), reduce employees' insecurity (Lee, 2021), and increase employees' work engagement (Rasool et al., 2021). Although existing literature has focused on the effects of POS

on positive work behaviors and psychology, few studies have looked at the effects of POS on employees' work safety behaviors (Puah et al., 2016), and this paper fills this gap by introducing POS.

Employees' Work Safety Behavior

Employees' work safety behavior refers to the promotion of health and safety of themselves, colleagues, customers, and the public to improve safety performance and reduce accidents at work (Christian et al., 2009; Griffin & Neal, 2000). Griffin and Neal (2000) subdivided it into safety compliance behavior (such as following corporate safety systems and rules) and safety participation behavior (such as helping colleagues solve safety-related problems) according to task performance and situational performance. There is relatively extensive research on employees' work safety behavior from the leadership dimension. He et al. (2021) showed that leader-member exchange positively increased employees' work safety behavior. Amponsah-Tawaih and Adu (2016) and Niu and Liu (2022) found that managers' commitment to safety significantly enhanced employees' safety compliance behavior and safety participation behavior. Other studies have identified significant positive effects of positive leadership styles on employees' work safety behavior, such as safety leadership (Zhang et al., 2020) and shared transformational leadership (Lyubykh et al., 2022). Bian et al. (2019) revealed that transactional leadership would inhibit employees' work safety behavior. However, there is still limited research on whether servant leadership, an important and positive leadership style, affects employees' work safety behavior. This study will explore the effects and underlying mechanism of servant leadership on employees' job security behavior, which is an addition and improvement to the existing literature.

CSR to Employees

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) encompasses actions by corporations that have a positive impact on various stakeholders, beyond pure economic interests (Turker, 2009a; Turker, 2009b). In organizational behavior, Verdeyen et al. (2004) stated that CSR includes both internal and external CSR. The existing literature mainly focuses on external CSR from a macro perspective. For example, external CSR has a positive impact on employees' job satisfaction (Wisse et al., 2018), organizational identification (Asante Boadi et al., 2020; Hameed et al., 2016), innovative behavior (Ahmad et al., 2019) and pro-environmental behavior (Kong et al., 2021). There is also literature on the impact of internal CSR on employees, but relatively little (Hameed et al., 2016). Furthermore, Turker (2009b) conceptualized CSR within a four-dimensional framework, which encompasses responsibilities towards social and non-social stakeholders, employees, customers, and the government. Within this framework, employees are identified as a particularly crucial stakeholder group in CSR initiatives (Zulfiqar et al., 2019). CSR to employees means a company's social responsibility towards its employees, encompassing a series of behaviors for improving employees' well-being and working conditions, such as providing more opportunities for career development, ensuring organizational fairness, and implementing family-supportive policies (Turker, 2009b). Studying CSR for employees allows for an exploration of how CSR influences their work-related

attitudes and behaviors, which is an important but underdeveloped area of research. Therefore, this study examines CSR so that employees can gain a better understanding of CSR from a micro perspective.

Theoretical Background and Hypothesis Development
Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange is an individual's voluntary action driven by the expectation of receiving a return from others, and it usually does receive a return from others (Blau, 1964). Mutual reciprocity exists not only among persons but also between individuals and organizations. If employees have access to organizational support, it is much more possible for them to reciprocate organizational preference in a constructive manner (Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to the social exchange theory, the reciprocity rule includes three aspects. First, reciprocity functions as an interdependent exchange. This interdependence suggests a cause-and-effect dynamic where one party's move inevitably prompts a response from the other. Second, reciprocity is also deeply rooted in cultural expectations and the belief in proportional justice. This perspective posits that over time, exchanges will achieve an equitable equilibrium, with those who refrain from helping likely to face repercussions, while those who engage in supportive behaviors anticipate future assistance. Third, reciprocity is perceived as a personally oriented norm. For instance, individuals with a strong propensity for exchange may be more inclined to reciprocate than those with a weaker propensity. Additionally, there are distinctions in preferences for the nature of exchange—individuals inclined towards negative reciprocity might be more prone to retaliatory actions, whereas those with a positive inclination are more likely to return kindness. In summary, the principles of reciprocal transactions and returns lay the groundwork for social exchange theory. This theory posits that when leaders demonstrate care and offer support to their employees, the social exchange relationship is nurtured, leading to positive outcomes. Thus, it elucidates the impact of social exchange dynamics between leaders and employees on the employees themselves.

Among ongoing research, social exchange theory finds extensive application in describing how leadership and organizations affect employees (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Ling et al., 2016). Within an examination of servant leadership, this theory can also account in-depth for the inward mechanisms through which servant leadership influences employees' positive actions.

Servant Leadership and Employees' Work Safety Behavior

Drawing from social exchange theory, the more service and resources employees get from the organization and leaders, the more willing employees are to try to repay the organization and leaders (Eva et al., 2019). Thus, servant leadership can help stimulate employees' willingness to achieve mutually beneficial obligations by considering their security needs and interests and providing a variety of security resources and psychological care. Employees will repay leaders by adopting safer work behaviors with greater motivation, such as complying with safety regulations and processes (Hofmann & Morgeson, 1999), actively participating in security affairs, and helping colleagues to learn safety knowledge, etc. (Hofmann et al., 2003). In tandem, servant leaders are characterized by noble moral qualities, ethical behaviors, and a burning sensation of social responsibility (Eva et al., 2019). Thus, during the COVID-19

pandemic, they are prone to incentivizing employees to comply with safety rules, improving support for safety protection, and providing more safety prevention. All of them represent leaders' support and consideration of employees' safety and needs and are more likely to trigger employee participation in safety behaviors (Hu et al., 2021; Xia et al., 2020). Accordingly, this study sets out that:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Servant leadership positively relates to employees' work safety behavior.

Mediating Effect of Perceived Organizational Support

Prior research has shown that support from leaders is the main source of employee's POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Because leaders implement the organizational policies, evaluate employees' contributions, communicate with the employees, and accomplish tasks and goals of the organization, employees are inclined to attribute many of the leader's actions to the whole organization or to see leaders' support to be an indication of organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Giao et al., 2020; Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2009). Thus, support from leaders can improve the employees' perceived organizational support. Servant leadership has several characteristics, such as caring for, respecting, recognizing, healing, and helping employees, all of which show leaders' supportive behavior. Therefore, servant leadership facilitates employee's high POS. For instance, Schneider et al. (2013) demonstrate that servant leaders can improve employees' perceived organizational support and promote them to complete their work better by sharing information with employees, supporting their involvement in making decisions, and empowering them proactively. Maitla et al.'s (2023) study also supports the relationship between servant leadership and employees' perceived organizational support. Hence, this study sets out that:

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Servant leadership positively relates to perceived organizational support.

According to social exchange theory, employees who perceive high levels of organizational support from their leaders are likely to offer positive feedback and repay both their leaders and the organization. This repayment is demonstrated through a positive work attitude and behaviors that are beneficial to the organization, such as affective commitment to the organization, trust in the management, job satisfaction, and other favorable attitudinal outcomes (Riggle et al., 2009; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Additionally, this support is linked to in-role performance and organizational citizenship behaviors, as well as reduced counterproductive work behaviors (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Furthermore, positive correlations have been found between perceived organizational support and job self-efficacy, organization-level self-esteem, and work-family balance, while negative correlations exist with work stress, burnout, work-family conflict, absenteeism, and turnover intentions (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2020).

Employees' work safety behavior improves organizational safety performance and reduces accidents, which is a positive behavior. Especially in service industries, employees' work safety behavior can affect not only the safety of the workplace and employees themselves but also the safety of customers. Furthermore, Eisenberger et al. (2020) have suggested that keeping employees' safe in the workplace reflects the importance that organizations place on employees'

well-being and the support they provide to their employees. Therefore, when the organization appreciates employees' contribution to work safety, they will feel support from the organization, which develops a sense of responsibility to return to the organization, thus enhancing the organization's safety. Employees who feel a strong sense of support from their organization are more inclined to embrace responsibility for safety within the workplace, actively adhere to safety protocols, and engage in additional safety-related tasks. Research supports this notion, indicating that a perception of organizational support fosters employees' engagement in work safety behaviors (Liu et al., 2021; Puah et al., 2016). Based on these, this study proposes that:

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Perceived organizational support positively relates to employees' work safety behavior.

Integrating hypothesis 2 and 3, this study proposes a mediating effect between servant leadership and work safety behavior. From a social exchange theory viewpoint, having strong perceived organizational support can result in employees displaying favorable attitudes and behaviors, including employees' work safety behavior. Especially in the epidemic situation, they will not only adhere to the safety requirements and regulations but also make additional efforts to promote safety behavior, such as making recommendations for safety protection, assisting colleagues with safety protection, etc. Based on these, this study sets out that:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between servant leadership and employees' work safety behavior.

Moderating the Effect of CSR on Employees

Researchers have demonstrated how CSR influences employees' attitudes and behaviors. For example, the study of Turker (2009a) found a significant relationship between CSR and employees with organizational commitment. Besides, researchers also have found that CSR can improve employees' work engagement (Gürlek & Tuna, 2019), reduce turnover rate (Lin & Liu, 2017), promote organizational identity and other positive attitudes and behavior (Farooq et al., 2014). If the companies actively fulfill CSR to employees, like implementing safety policies, improving working conditions, and caring for employees' emotional needs, an ethical responsible atmosphere within the organization can be created (Ghosh, 2018), and a sense of pride and safety can be generated among employees (Ahmad et al., 2019). Thus, employees in socially responsible organizations may experience a greater sense of "meaningful work" or a kind of spiritual consciousness, which can encourage them to actively perform safety behaviors that positively affect themselves, their customers, and even society (Hur et al., 2018).

Therefore, when employees perceive strong organizational support through servant leaders' care, help, and support, they are likely to generate a motivation to repay their leaders and promote work safety behavior. Meanwhile, the efforts of CSR to employees represent a good indication of their organization's concern for them, which can further enhance their determination to shoulder their responsibility for the safety of themselves and other stakeholders and ultimately strengthen their safety behavior (Zulfiqar et al., 2019). Conversely, if an organization does not fulfill CSR to employees, they will have the impression that the organization only participates in CSR symbolically rather than sincerely; thus, they will reduce

their willingness to conduct more safety behaviors to repay the organization that is not sincerely caring about them (Donia et al., 2019). Based on the above, this study sets out that:

Hypothesis 5 (H5): CSR to employees moderates the relationship between perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior. When CSR to employees is stronger, the relationship between perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior is stronger.

Figure 1 depicts the theoretical model.

Figure 1
Theoretical Model
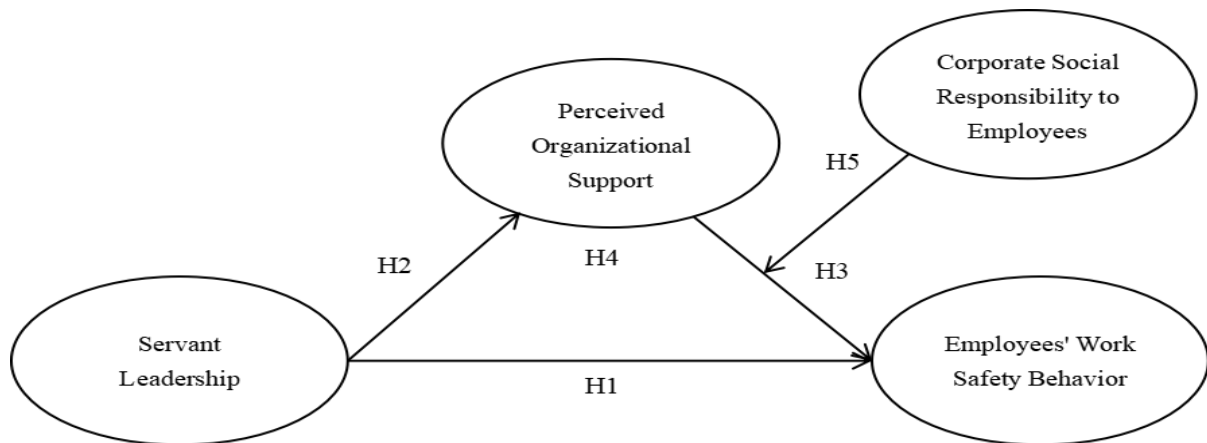
Method (Study1)
Sample and Data Collection
Two study designs were used for data collection to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire data. Study 1 used a convenience sampling method from a large hotel group. The Human Resource Department helped the authors distribute the questionnaires to all the employees from five branches and obtained 1023 valid sample data. The classic scale with high reference frequency was selected to ensure the reasonableness of the questionnaire. In addition to translating the question items, some epidemic situational sentences were appropriately added. The home page of the questionnaire has detailed guide information and ensures anonymity and confidentiality so that the respondents can answer voluntarily, safely, and clearly. The questionnaire was responsible for investigating perceived organizational support, CSR to employees, employees' work safety behavior, and some demographic variables like gender, age, and education. Table 1 lists the demographic statistics.

Table 1

Demographic Analysis

Demographic variable	Sample distribution	Sample size	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	474	46.3%
	Female	549	53.7%
Age	18~24 years old	75	7.3%
	25~30 years old	435	42.5%
	31~35 years old	290	28.4%
	Over 36 years old	223	21.8%
Education	Primary school	49	4.8%
	Junior high school	197	19.3%
	High school or vocational school	648	63.3%
	College or above	129	12.6%

Measures

We adopted all scales from the well-established measures in the literature. Two researchers fluent in Chinese and English applied back-translation approaches to interpret the initial English scales into Chinese. A five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" was used for all the variables, if not specifically indicated.

Perceived organizational support was measured using an eight-item scale constructed by Eisenberger et al. (1986). A sample item is "Help is available from my company when I have a problem" (Cronbach's α = .94).

CSR to employees was measured using a five-item scale constructed by Turker (2009b). Sample item is "My company is primarily concerned with employees' needs and wants" (Cronbach's α = .88).

Employees' work safety behavior was measured using a six-item scale constructed by Neal and Griffin (2006). Sample item is "I am using all the necessary safety equipment to do my job" (Cronbach's α = .87).

Control variables. Demographic variables such as gender, age, and education were controlled in the analysis.

Results (Study1)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Firstly, we examined the baseline model including all three key variables (i.e., perceived organizational support, CSR to employees, and employees' work safety behavior). According to the result, the expected three-factor measurement displayed an acceptable fit ($\chi 2/ df = 4.91 <$ 5; RMSEA = .06 < .08; SRMR = .04 < .05; CFI = .96 > .90; NFI = .95 > .90; NNFI = .95 > 0.90). Additionally, the Composite Reliability (CR) values and average variance extracted (AVE) values also supported for the convergent validity (see Table 2). The AVE square root of each variable outperformed correlations between it and other variables, showing desirable discriminant validity.

Table 2

Correlations, Reliability, and Validity Measurements

Variables	CR	α	1	2	3
Perceived organizational support	.94	.94	**.82**		
CSR to employees	.89	.88	.78	**.78**	
Employees' work safety behavior	.88	.87	.60	.56	**.74**

Note. N = 1023, CR = composite reliability, α = Cronbach's alpha, AVE = average variance extracted. Diagonal bold numbers are the square root of the AVE. The remaining figures are the correlation coefficients.

Common Method Variance (CMV)

It may encounter a common method variance for the dataset of Study 1 as each variable measured was filled out by the same individual, with the same questionnaire, and during the same time period. To minimize the potential influence of CMV, a Harman one-factor test was performed to check whether CMV exists. The current result revealed the first factor explains 33. 27% (<50%) of the covariance, indicating that CMV is not a substantial problem in the study (Harman, 1976).

Table 3 illustrates the descriptive statistics and correlations for all the variables in Study 1. It was found that there exists a positive link between perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior according to the results ($r = .60$, $p < .01$). CSR to employees also correlated positively with employees' work safety behavior ($r = .56$, $p < .01$). The results above were supportive of further analyses.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
gender	1.54	0.50					
age	32.13	6.74	-0.04				
education	3.84	0.73	0.05	-0.15**			
POS	3.97	0.77	-0.05	-0.01	-0.11**		
CSR-E	4.13	0.73	-0.01	-0.01	-0.10**	0.78**	
EWSB	4.08	0.64	-0.07*	0.00	-0.05	0.60**	0.56**

Note. N = 1023, *p < .05; **p < .01; POS = perceived organizational support, CSR-E = Corporate social responsibility to employees, EWSB = employees' work safety behavior.

Regression Analysis

We intended to employ a hierarchical regression analysis to explore the relationship existing between perceived organizational support to employees' work safety behavior and the moderating role of CSR to employees. Table 4 presents a significant and positive correlation that exists between perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior after controlling for gender, age, and education (see model 1, $β = .60$, $p < .001$). Thus, Hypothesis 3 was verified.

Table 4

Regression Analysis

|	Employees' work safety behavior		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
gender	-.04	-.05	-.04
age	.01	.01	.02
education	.01	.02	.02
POS	.60***	.41***	.41***
CSR-E		.24***	.29***
POS * CSR-E			.13***
R^2	0.36	0.38	0.40
F	142.90***	126.03***	112.20***

Note. N = 1023, *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001; POS = perceived organizational support, CSR-E = Corporate social responsibility to employees.

Additionally, an interactive item of perceived organizational support and CSR for employees is created by the production of the mean-centered focal variables to reduce potential multicollinearity problems (Aiken & West, 1991). The results showed a significant and positive effect of the interaction term (see model 3, $\beta = .13$, $p < .001$), which indicated that CSR to employees could significantly moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior.

Furthermore, a simple slope test was also conducted. Figure 2 presents that the slope of perceived organizational support on employees' work safety behavior when CSR-E was high (i.e., the scores were above average) was larger than the slope when CSR-E was low. Hence, the positive relation between perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior was strengthened as the level of CSR to employees was increased, initially confirming hypothesis 5.

Figure 2

Study 1 Simple Slope Test (N=1023)
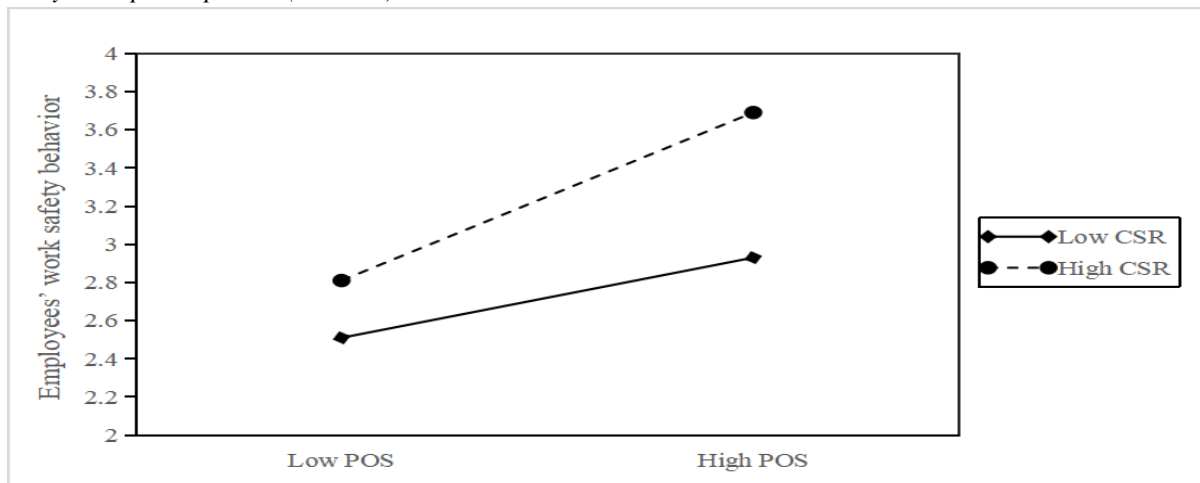
Method (Study2)
Sample and Data Collection
Study 2 used an online questionnaire to conduct research and adopted a two-stage research method. At the first wave, 631 questionnaires were obtained. Four weeks later, the second wave

was conducted, and a total of 349 paired questionnaires were obtained, with a validity rate of 55.3%. Table 5 lists the demographic statistics.

Table 5

Demographic Analysis

Demographic variable	Sample distribution	Sample size	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	166	47.6%
	Female	183	52.4%
Age	18~25 years old	59	16.9%
	26~35 years old	235	67.3%
	36~45 years old	46	13.2%
	Over 45 years old	9	2.6%
Education	High school or vocational school	22	6.3%
	Bachelor or college degree	301	86.2%
	Postgraduate and above	26	7.5%

Measures

All the variables were measured with a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree".

Servant leadership was measured using a 14-item scale constructed by Ehrhart (2004). A sample item is "My direct supervisor spends the time to form quality relationships with department employees" (Cronbach's α = .80).

Perceived organizational support was measured using an eight-item scale constructed by Eisenberger et al. (1986). A sample item is "Help is available from my company when I have a problem" (Cronbach's α = .83).

CSR to employees was measured using a five-item scale constructed by Turker (2009b). A sample item is "My company is primarily concerned with employees' needs and wants" (Cronbach's α = .67).

Employees' work safety behavior was measured using a nine-item scale constructed by the measurements of Zhang et al. (2020) and Neal and Griffin (2006). A sample item is "I am using all the necessary safety equipment to do my job during the COVID-19 pandemic" (Cronbach's α = .77).

Control variables. We controlled the same demographic variables as in Study 1.

Results (Study2)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Structural Equation Model (SEM) was used to test the convergent and discriminant validity. Given the limited sample size of the study, in order to avoid serious parameter and estimate bias, all the items of every variable were assigned randomly and packed into three packages by means of randomized parceling. We tested the full four-factor model including servant leadership, perceived organizational support, CSR to employees, and employees' work safety behavior, which suggested that the model fitted well with the actual data ($\chi2/$ df = 1.64 < 3; RMSEA = .04 < .08; SRMR = .04 < .05; CFI = .98 > .90; NFI = .96 > .90; NNFI = .98 > .90). Moreover, according to Table 6, all constructs showed Cronbach's α and Composite Reliability (CR) values around .70, which indicated an acceptable internal consistency. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values were above .50, which supported the good convergent

validity. Besides, each variable's square root of the AVE exceeded any between-factor correlation, which presented good discriminant validity.

Table 6

Correlations, Reliability, and Validity Measurements

Variables	CR	α	1	2	3	4
Servant leadership	.78	.80	**.74**			
Perceived organizational support	.84	.83	.58	**.80**		
CSR to employees	.64	.67	.59	.58	**.62**	
Employees' work safety behavior	.77	.77	.54	.48	.55	**.74**

Note. N = 349, CR = composite reliability, α = Cronbach's alpha, AVE = average variance extracted. Diagonal bold numbers are the square root of the AVE. The remaining figures are the correlation coefficients.

Table 7 tabulates the descriptive statistics and their correlations for all variables in Study 2. It was found that there exists a positive link between servant leadership and perceived organizational support ($\beta = .73$, $p < .01$) and employees' work safety behavior ($\beta = .54$, $p < .01$). Perceived organizational support was also correlated positively with employees' work safety behavior ($\beta = .49$, $p < 0.01$). The results above were supportive of further analyses.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
gender	1.52	0.50						
age	3.01	0.64	-0.09					
education	3.01	0.37	0.03	-0.09				
SL	3.74	0.52	0.02	-0.02	0.10			
POS	3.59	0.67	0.00	-0.01	0.10	0.73**		
CSR-E	3.92	0.60	-0.09	-0.05	0.07	0.60**	0.59**	
EWSB	4.02	0.52	-0.06	0.01	0.00	0.54**	0.49**	0.56**

Note. N=349, *p $<$ 0.05; **p $<$ 0.01; SL = servant leadership; POS = perceived organizational support, CSR-E = Corporate social responsibility to employees, EWSB = employees' work safety behavior.

Regression Analysis

To minimize the problem of multicollinearity, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) tests were conducted. Not a single regression model with VIF exceeding the recommendation threshold of 10 was found, signifying that multicollinearity failed to bias the findings. Table 8 lays out the findings from the regression analyses. It shows a significant positive link between servant leadership and perceived organizational support (see model 1, $\beta = .73$, $p < .001$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was verified.
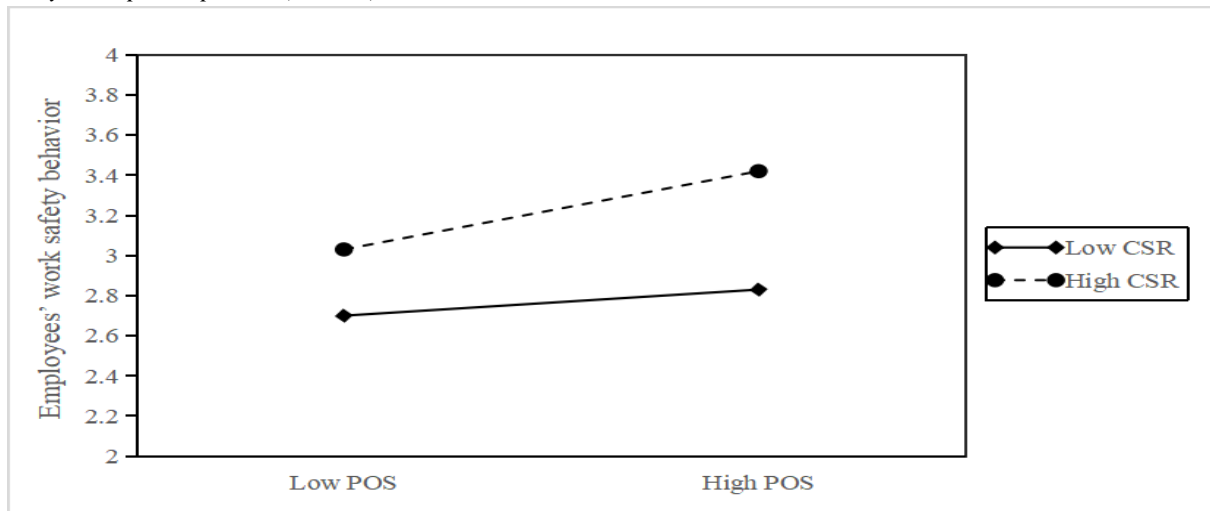
Table 8

Regression Analysis

	POS	EWSB				
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Control variable						
gender	-.01	-.07	-.06	-.06	-.02	-.02
age	.00	.01	.01	.01	.03	.02
education	.02	-.06	-.05	-.06	-.05	-.05
Independent variable						
SL	.73***	.55***		.40***		
Mediator						
POS			.50***	.21**	.25***	.26***
Moderator						
CSR-E					.41***	.44***
POS * CSR-E						.13**
R^2	0.54	0.30	0.25	0.32	0.36	0.37
F	99.61***	36.77***	28.04***	32.13***	37.92***	35.59***

*Note. N = 349, *p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001; SL = servant leadership; POS = perceived organizational support, CSR-E = Corporate social responsibility to employees, EWSB = employees' work safety behavior.*

Model 2 presents a significant and positive correlation between servant leadership and employees' work safety behavior (see model 2, $\beta = .55$, $p < .001$). Model 3 presents a significant and positive correlation that exists between perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior (see model 3, $\beta = .50$ $p < .001$). Therefore, it was supported for both H2 and H3. Additionally, we put control variables, independent variable, and mediator into the regression model in order to test the mediation effect and found that even though there was a slight reduction in the significant influence that servant leadership had on employees' work safety behaviors (see model 4, $\beta = .40$, $p < .001$), the effect of perceived organizational support on employees' work safety behavior remained significant and positive (see model 4, $\beta = .21$, $p < .01$). Hence, perceived organizational support played a partial mediating effect according to the regression result. A bootstrapping text via PROCESS macro was implemented to ensure the robustness of the findings (Hayes, 2017). The mediation effect can be supported when there is a confidence interval for the indirect effect excluding zero. After bootstrapping 5,000 samples, the results indicated a significant indirect influence of perceived organizational support at the 95 percent confidence level ($\beta = .15$, SE = .06, 95%CI [.04, .26]), supporting H4.

Moreover, we also examined the moderating role of CSR on employees and the relationship between perceived organizational support and employees' work safety behavior. As can be seen, the interactive effect between perceived organizational support and CSR on employees was positively significant (see model 6, $\beta = .13$, $p < .01$), which indicated a significant moderating effect of CSR on employees. In addition, a simple slope test was conducted. Figure 3 shows that under the moderation of CSR for employees, different slope maps exist regarding the influence of perceived organizational support on employees' work safety behavior. When the employee-oriented CSR was higher, the significant positive correlation between organizational support and safety behavior was stronger, further supporting H5.

Figure 3

Study 2 Simple Slope Test (N=349)

Moderated Mediation Analysis

To test the indirect effect, bootstrapping was again conducted to test the mediation effect of perceived organizational support when CSR to employees was different (± 1SD). Table 9 presents that when the level of CSR to employees was high, perceived organizational support exerted a significant indirect impact on the influence that servant leadership had on employees' work safety behavior (β = .15, 95%CI [.04, .25], excluding 0). However, when CSR to employees was low, the indirect impact did not show significance (β = -.01, 95%CI [-.16, .13], including 0). Moreover, the coefficient of moderated mediation was significant (β = .13, 95% [.02, .24], excluding 0).

Table 9

Moderated Mediation Analysis

SL→POS→EWSB				
Mo=CSR-E	β	SE	95%LLCI	95%ULCI
Low	-.01	.08	-.16	.13
Medium	.09	.05	-.02	.20
High	.15	.06	.04	.25
Moderated mediation	.13	.06	.02	.24

Note. N = 349, SL = servant leadership; POS = perceived organizational support, CSR-E = Corporate social responsibility to employees, EWSB = employees' work safety behavior.

Discussion

Theoretical Implications

We do certain theoretical significance. Above all, our findings extend existing research on the outcomes of servant leadership and antecedents of employees' work safety behavior by linking servant leadership and employees' work safety behavior, particularly in relation to industrial safety in times of global crisis. Although employees' safety behaviors have been widely researched, most previous research focuses on employees' work safety behavior in conventional high-hazard industries like construction and coal mining (Baser et al., 2017; Griffin & Neal, 2000; Newaz et al., 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic still exists, and there is a high necessity to study what incentives are available for employees to engage in safe behavior in the workplace so that a safe and pleasing service quality and service environment can be provided, which is a

safeguard for customers and employees (Zhang et al., 2020). With respect to leadership, there have been lots of works focusing on how different leadership styles act on employees' work safety behavior, such as leader-member exchange (He et al., 2021), security leaders (Zhang et al., 2020), transactional leaders (Bian et al., 2019), and so on. Yet few studies take into account how servant leadership style acts on employees' work safety behavior. While servant leadership works in the services industry because their support, concern, appreciation, and other "service and resources" can enlighten and affect employees to provide sincere services to customers (Russell & Stone, 2002) and then bring higher customer satisfaction and organizational performance (Brownell, 2010). Hence, the positive influence of servant leadership on employees' work safety behaviors verified in this paper enriches the research on servant leadership and employees' work safety behavior and broadens the application fields of employees' work safety behavior research.

Second, this paper clarifies the influencing mechanism of servant leadership for employees' work safety behavior from the theoretical viewpoint of social exchange under the background of COVID-19. The hospitality, catering, and tourism industries have been greatly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic (Zenker & Kock, 2020), so it is imperative to study how employees in these industries submit to organizational management in volatile and crisis-ridden environments. Perceived organizational support has been confirmed as a mediation between leadership factors and workplace behavioral outcomes in many studies. Therefore, this paper introduced perceived organizational support from the viewpoint of social exchange theory and proven the mediation effect of perceived organizational support on servant leadership for employees' work safety through 2 empirical research about employees from service industries. This means perceived organizational support plays a powerful mediating role in servant leadership and employees' work safety behaviors despite adversity and crisis, which not only gives the possible answer for the organization in the crisis but also further enriches the related research of perceived organization support and the field of service management literature under COVID-19.

Third, explaining the moderating effect of CSR on employees in a community of destiny-based concept enriches the boundary conditions of the formation mechanism of employees' work safety behavior in a COVID-19 pandemic background. Because the COVID-19 epidemic has swept the whole world, this paper excavates the variable CSR to employees from a shared future community concept and introduces it into the hypothesis model to clarify the factors affecting individual behavior in the organization. Moreover, our study uncovered that CSR employees play a positive moderating effect on perceived organizational support for employees' work safety behavior, and it can also moderate the indirect effect on servant leaders for employees' work safety behavior through perceived organizational support. This shows that, in the special context, enterprises shouldering morality and responsibility to employees and standing with employees rather than abandoning them have a greater likelihood of making employees feel supported by their organizations and promoting their positive behaviors such as work safety behavior. To some extent, this confirms the nature of win-win cooperation in the concept of a community of shared future, provides a new perspective or inspiration for the field of organizational management, leadership and employee behavior research.

Managerial Implications

We also do certain practical significance. First, enterprises should encourage and develop servant leadership styles and behaviors. Our study indicates how vital servant leadership is in the promotion of employees' work safety behavior. Thus, in terms of recruitment, enterprises can adopt the appropriate psychological, personality, and other measurement tools to excavate potential servant leadership temperaments in the selection process of good managers. In terms of training, enterprises should provide guidance and training for servant leadership thoughts and behaviors, such as adding training courses on servant leadership behavior to the compulsory training courses in management. In the process of performance appraisal, enterprises can appropriately incorporate the indicators of servant leadership behavior into the assessment system to actively encourage and advocate service-oriented leadership behavior with practical actions.

Second, enterprises should improve the employees' perceived organizational support. Perceived organizational support is a powerful motivator to regulate employee behavior and even improve employee efficiency. In terms of the workplace, enterprises should prepare the necessary resources for employees, including instruments or equipment, channels for employees to seek help with problems, work autonomy, and authorization. These represent enterprises value employees' opinions and contribution and help employees realize their importance so that they will work more diligently and efficiently. In the emotional aspect, whether in daily work or critical situations, enterprises and employees are always a community of interests and emotions. For example, when employees have no intention of making mistakes at work, enterprises should stand with their employees and assume responsibility together. For example, during the COVID-19 epidemic, many enterprises still provide employees with training or extend their holidays to tide them over difficulties rather than directly dismiss them.

Third, enterprises should actively fulfill the social responsibility of the stakeholders, especially employees. It can not only win the good reputation and recognition of the employer but also exert a good demonstration effect and an incentive effect on employees, enhancing employees' organizational identity and willingness to follow organizational norms and rules. In terms of employee-oriented social responsibility, enterprises should first work on the system construction, such as introducing enterprise policies to provide skills training and career guidance, incentivizing personnel skills development and career enhancement, adopting flexible policies to deal with employees' special circumstances to achieve a work-and-life balance, such as providing resources and support for remote work; ensuring the fairness and justice of the decision-making system and the openness and rationality of the process. In addition, enterprises can also consider investing their resources in employee assistance programs, including financial support, psychological counseling, and legal counseling, to fulfill their social responsibilities to employees and protect their rights and interests.

Limitations and Future Research

We also have certain limitations. First, only the mediation effect of perceived organizational support is discussed in this study, but there should be the possibility of multiple mediators both in theory and practice. The research perspective is also very broad because the interaction between leadership and employees' behavior is complex and changeable. There are still lots of

perspectives and variables needing further exploration. From the perspective of an organization, an organizational fault tolerance atmosphere can also be considered, and it can promote employees' positive behavior by eliminating employee concerns and worries (Tang et al., 2015). From the perspective of individuals, researchers can try to study individual self-esteem, namely, the extent to which individual employees feel competent, meaningful, and valuable at work (Pierce et al., 1989). It is hoped that more variables can be considered as the mediation between servant leadership and employees' work safety behavior, promoting the comprehensiveness of the underlying mechanisms of servant leadership for employees' work safety behavior.

Second, our investigation introduces CSR to employees as a key moderator; however, it does not strictly differentiate real CSR behavior from employees' subjective perception of CSR. CSR is a concept with a rich connotation. In fact, whether CSR performed by the enterprise and that perceived by employees in the enterprise are consistent is basically questionable. Even if the classic scale is selected for measurement, there is no guarantee that the employees' answers reflect actual CSR behavior. Moreover, this article does not deeply explore the moderating effect of CSR on employees in servant leadership and perceived organizational support. To some extent, leaders can represent the organization, but it is also worth discussing whether employees agree with this point. Therefore, further exploration and improvement of the moderating mechanism can be done in future studies.

Last, all of our variables were self-rated. There may be certain biases and errors in such an evaluation method because of the subjectivity of the results. In future research, it is hoped that other evaluation methods such as colleague evaluation and leadership evaluation, or objective measurement data such as objective behavior record form or key event method, will be used to make the evaluation more accurate and the research results more objective.

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