

Article

Leader Fault Tolerance and Employees' Green Silent Behavior: The Mediating Role of Psychological Ownership and Moral Disengagement

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Abstract: This paper is concerned with the negative impact of leader fault tolerance and focuses on the green silent behavior of employees who remain silent on green production or environmental issues. Data from 386 valid questionnaires were analyzed through SPSS 27.0, AMOS 28 software, and the PROCESS program to explore the impact of leader fault tolerance on employees' green silent behavior. Based on the reliability and validity analysis, correlation analysis, and validation factor analysis, the study concluded through hierarchical regression analysis that the regression coefficient values of leader fault tolerance on green silent behavior, moral disengagement, and psychological ownership were 0.362, 0.376, and 0.408, respectively, and their p-values were less than 0.01, which verified that leader fault tolerance had a significant positive effect on green silent behavior, moral disengagement, and psychological ownership. After the mediation effect test, the 95% CI of psychological ownership and moral disengagement were [0.057, 0.156] and [0.059, 0.141], respectively, and they did not include 0, which verified that psychological ownership and moral disengagement had a significant indirect effect on leader fault tolerance and employees' green silent behavior and played a mediating role between them. Based on this, leaders should take appropriate measures to avoid employees' green silent behavior while using leadership style appropriately. In addition, society should also strengthen the supervision of enterprises so as to encourage enterprises to assume social responsibility and continuously promote the sustainable and healthy development of enterprises and society.

Keywords: leader fault tolerance; psychological ownership; moral disengagement; green silent behavior; inclusiveness



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1. Introduction

With the rapid changes present in society, the survival and development of enterprises face many uncertainties and complexities, and in an increasingly competitive world, it is becoming increasingly difficult to rely solely on the competence, intelligence, and quality of leaders to sustain the competitive advantage of an organization. It is particularly important for employees to express their work-related views or opinions more smoothly and effectively in order to realize the healthy and orderly operation of the enterprise. Thus, in the process of enterprise management, managers should value the voice behavior of their employees. As researchers have introduced voice behavior into the field of organizational behavior [1], academics have undertaken studies on voice behavior, investigating features such as theoretical mechanisms of voice behavior [2], leadership styles (e.g., authentic leadership, transformational leadership, inclusive leadership, servant leadership, ethical leadership, authoritative leadership, empowered leadership, etc.) and voice behavior [3–6], and individual traits and voice behavior [7]. Compared with pro-social voice behavior,

silent behavior is mainly based on self-protection by employees to hide their true feelings, and their motives are more complex. For example, in order to not compromise their own development [8], and to satisfy their employment needs [9], out of fear or selfish orientation [10], employees tend to follow the norms of “too much talk, too little action” and “silence is golden”, reserving their opinions on potential problems in the organization. But sometimes, employees also show altruistic tendencies by keeping silent about existing problems for the benefit of the organization or interpersonal relationships [11].

In fact, employees’ silent behavior can have many negative impacts, such as their own susceptibility to physical or psychological problems, hindering the transmission of information, reducing willingness to contribute to the organization, and hindering career development, which are not conducive to the maximization of organizational benefits and sustainable development of the organization. For this reason, business leaders and scholars have begun to pay attention to the factors influencing employees’ silent behavior. Some researchers have focused on individual level factors such as employees’ level of cognition, psychological sense of belonging, job stress, and sense of trust in their supervisors [8,12,13]. There are also researchers who focus on leader or organizational level factors such as leadership style, leadership approach, and organizational climate [14–16].

Leaders are an important factor. There are many components around leadership such as leadership behaviors, leadership identity, leadership styles, and leadership. These components play an important role in the development of an organization or team. Leadership is the ability of an individual or organization to exert influence towards achieving a common goal. Leadership style is a leader’s pattern or manner of behavior, the directly visible behaviors and attitudes, and the leadership style affects their leadership. Chinese researchers have conducted more studies on leadership styles, such as inclusive leadership and employee voice behavior [17], paternalistic leadership and employee voice behavior [18], and humble leadership and employee voice behavior [19]. Among them, inclusive leadership is highly regarded for demonstrating the accessibility of leadership and motivating employees to initiate communication and voice new ideas. [20]. Some researchers believe that inclusive leadership has a positive effect in changing employee attitudes and behaviors, reducing employee turnover, enhancing organizational performance, and improving organizational climate [21]. However, there are also researchers that believe that inclusive leadership only analyzes the “inclusion” part of inclusiveness, but leader fault tolerance highlights the tolerance of wrongdoing and acceptance of opposing views [22,23]. At present, although there are relatively few studies on leader fault tolerance by Chinese scholars, the phenomenon of leader fault tolerance does exist in the course of practical work. For example, some researchers have studied the impact of leaders’ fault tolerance behaviors on employees’ service initiative and psychological security [22], and others have also examined the relationship between employee error acknowledgement and individual job satisfaction; the positive relationship between employee error acknowledgement and job satisfaction was more significant when the leader’s fault tolerance was higher [24]. However, whether leaders’ fault tolerance behaviors have a positive impact on organizational development and subordinate work and how subordinate recognize or understand leaders’ fault tolerance behaviors are questions that still need to be further explored.

Because environmental pollution and ecological destruction are threatening people’s production and life, green development, which takes efficiency, harmony, and sustainability as the development goal; conserves resources and protects the environment as the development mode; and realizes green production, life, and consumption as the pursuit of development, it has become the inevitable choice to reverse the ecological destruction scene and escape the ecological crisis [25]. However, in order to fundamentally reverse the “three highs” of high pollution, high energy consumption, and high emissions, and to achieve the goal of green, low-carbon, and high-quality development, it is far from sufficient to rely solely on the provisions and implementation of laws and regulations; it is also imperative to continue to stimulate the intrinsic motivation of enterprises, prompting enterprises to consciously implement the green development of behavior. Based on the significant role of

leadership style on influencing silent behavior, this paper continues along the lines of the research on leader fault tolerance by specifically exploring employees' green silent behavior, i.e., the behavior of employees who remain silent on the green development approach and ecological environmental protection issues in the actual working process. Environmental protection has a positive externality [26], and the cost of environmental protection investment is usually greater than the return on investment. Employees' behavior and attitude towards green development is the key for promoting the green sustainable development of the enterprise; if the employees have green silent behavior, then it will not be conducive to the green sustainable development of the enterprise and society. Therefore, the research on this issue has certain practical significance.

This study attempts to explore the relationship between the influence of leader fault tolerance and employees' green silent behavior. For one, this study will explore the influence of leader fault tolerance on employees' green silent behavior. Leader fault tolerance reflects the leader's tolerance or condoning of employees' wrongdoings. From a social information processing perspective [27], an individual's interpretation of information influences their behavior. Leader fault tolerance is likely to make employees believe that mistakes are forgiven, so they do not have to worry about their mistakes. Based on this, employees feel they can acquiesce to or ignore green development issues or environmental problems in their organizations, thus giving rise to green silent behavior. In terms of employee trust and loyalty to the leader or organization, as the level of fault tolerance of the leader increases, the employee's trust in the leader increases, and their loyalty to the organization increases, which in turn creates psychological ownership [28,29]. Generally speaking, solving the green development problems and environmental issues that exist in a business or organization requires a lot of financial, technological, and human support, and sometimes the organization can be punished for these problems, at which point the stronger the psychological ownership of the organization by the employees, the more likely they are to produce green silent behaviors. From the perspective of corporate culture, corporate culture and leadership style are usually consistent; that is, the kind of leadership creates the kind of corporate culture. The higher the leader's tolerance for mistakes, the less psychological burden and pressure employees feel during the work process, which is also conducive to communication between upper and lower levels. But a leader who condones or indulges the mistakes or errors of their employees will be detrimental to the development of the organization. It can be said that a good corporate atmosphere is not only beneficial to the organization, but also to the individual and even to society. From a moral choice perspective, in the face of wrongdoing, the leader's fault tolerance behavior or the moral disengagement habits of employees [30] may allow employees to choose to shirk their responsibilities or to psychologically downplay the consequences of wrongdoing. In fact, although the use of environmentally friendly materials, the recycling of various materials, and the reduction of the use or destruction of natural resources by enterprises or organizations reflect their sense of social responsibility, this is indeed the proper behavior of enterprises or organizations in protecting nature and preserving the ecological environment. However, moral disengagement behaviors can lead to employees ignoring adverse effects, shirking their due diligence, and forming habits of green silent behavior.

The ecological environment provides necessary resources for the survival and development of human beings; thus, the protection of the ecological environment is the common responsibility of human beings and is an inevitable requirement for the sustainable development of society. The production and operation of an enterprise concerns its survival and development, and adhering to green production and paying attention to ecological environment protection is a guarantee for the long-term development of the enterprise. The enterprises concerned in this study are those that should carry out green production or not cause pollution to the environment in the process of product production according to the relevant national policies, such as carton factories, plastic product factories, and so on. In summary, there are more academic studies on leadership styles and silent behaviors, but it is relatively rare to study the relationship between specific leadership styles and green

silent behaviors. Accordingly, this study focuses on the relationship between leader fault tolerance and influence on employees' green silent behavior, moral disengagement, and psychological ownership, respectively, and the mediating effect of moral disengagement and psychological ownership between leader fault tolerance and green silent behavior. The structure of this study is as follows: the first part is the introduction, which focuses on the background of the study and the current state of research. The second part is the theoretical background and research hypotheses. The third part focuses on data collection, the introduction of variables, and the research methodology. The fourth part focuses on testing the proposed hypotheses by analyzing the valid data. The fifth part is the discussion. The sixth part is the conclusion.

2. Theoretical Background and Research Hypothesis

2.1. Leader Fault Tolerance and Employee Green Silent Behavior

Leader fault tolerance is the ability of a leader to tolerate the non-principled mistakes of employees and respect and accept their objections [22]. Contrary to the traditional authoritative and commanding leadership style, as a relationship-oriented leadership style, diversity and inclusion are increasingly becoming the new direction of development in management situations. Inclusive leadership also shares similarities with leader fault tolerance, such as caring for subordinates and paying attention to their different needs [17,20], all of which are manifestations that may influence and change employees' silent behavior.

Silent behavior is the most typical employee avoidance and withdrawal behavior [31]. Existing studies regard employee silent behavior as an organization-directed counterproductive behavior; this is because it blocks the information feedback of the organization and affects the overall effectiveness of the organization [10,32]. Employee silent behavior is the process by which an employee retains or conceals their opinions, views, attitudes, etc., about the work or organization in order to maintain their dignity and interpersonal relationships and to avoid negative impacts on themselves and others [17]. Some researchers have combined employee factors and motives for silence to classify employee silence as inactive silence and acquiescent silence [33] or as acquiescent silence, defensive silence, and pro-social silence [11]. Silent behavior has been found to affect subordinates' job satisfaction and well-being and also has the potential to create stress and turnover tendencies in subordinates [34]. Based on the silent behavior categories and employees' behavioral attitudes towards environmental issues, this study proposes employees' green silent behavior. Green silent behavior is derived from silent behavior, which is more specific and direct than silent behavior. Green silent behavior is the behavior of employees who choose to hide their views and opinions on green development or environmental issues, either for the overall benefit of the organization or because they believe that even if they express their opinions, they will not be able to effectively influence the organization. Addressing environmental issues is both a long-term and significant investment in the sustainability of the organization, as well as a potentially unpredictable risk. But employees' green silent behavior does not hinder business development in the short term and even to a certain extent helps the company to achieve its short-term goals, making it a tacitly accepted behavior by leaders.

A leader's behavioral attitude tends to communicate to subordinates the extent to which a behavior is permitted or prohibited. A leader's fault-tolerant behavior will lead subordinates to believe that the leader will not hold them accountable for certain wrongdoings. It has been suggested that if leaders have a high degree of fault tolerance, subordinates will voluntarily admit their mistakes [35]. However, some studies have also asked whether tolerating subordinates' mistakes will lead to recidivism [36]. The green development approach is an important way to protect the environment, reduce pollution and damage to the natural environment, and promote the sustainable development of human society, and it is also an important guideline for organizational green development [37]. As there is no clear standard for organizational green development, subordinates have the right to make behavioral choices and suggestions about green and environmental issues in the organization. Based on this, this paper focuses on the possible negative impacts of

leaders' fault-tolerant behavior. Furthermore, the more fault-tolerant the leader is, the more autonomy subordinates have in their work and the less they consider the outcome of their behavior. Driven by economic interests, advocating green production and development methods means more human, material, and financial inputs, and silent behaviors can prevent such phenomena from occurring. Therefore, subordinates tend to be silent about green development methods or environmental protection issues, and so the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *Leader fault tolerance has a significant positive effect on employees' green silent behavior.*

2.2. The Mediating Role of Psychological Ownership

Ownership can denote either a mental attitude or an objective entity [38]. Psychological ownership is a mental state in which an individual feels that they own an objective [39]. Both individual and leader factors can have an impact on psychological ownership. Some researchers have argued that subordinates' sense of organizational involvement and decision-making power and the authority of the leader affect subordinates' psychological ownership [40]. Other researchers have argued that the level of effort put into a goal task by an individual also affects psychological ownership [41].

Generally, within organizations, the psychological ownership of subordinates is influenced by the attitude or manner in which leaders treat their subordinates. According to the leader–member exchange theory [42], the more support and trust subordinates receive from their leaders, and the smoother the flow of rich and comprehensive information between the top and bottom levels, the more subordinates identify with the organization. Some researchers have argued that work engagement is a prerequisite for psychological ownership [41], that authentic leadership positively affects work engagement [43], and that authoritative leaders reduce subordinates' psychological ownership [40]. In the actual work process, the leader's fault-tolerant attitude enables employees to not worry too much about making mistakes, thus generating a sense of trust in the leader and a sense of belonging to the organization. Therefore, this paper argues that leaders' fault tolerance helps to enhance subordinates' psychological ownership, and so the following hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *Leader fault tolerance has a significant positive effect on psychological ownership.*

Psychological ownership reflects to some extent the subordinate's sense of belonging to the organization. The stronger the psychological ownership of the organization by the subordinates, the better it is for the organization. Some researchers have argued that the closeness of the superior–subordinate relationship is an important basis for whether subordinates choose to advise [40]. Green silent behavior is pro-organizational behavior, which benefits the organization in the short term but in the long term is not conducive to the green and sustainable development of society. It can thus be said that psychological ownership has a positive impact on green silent behavior.

Leaders enhance the psychological ownership of subordinates through fault-tolerant behaviors and increase the loyalty of subordinates to the organization. According to social exchange theory [44], in organizations where leaders have a high degree of fault tolerance, subordinates implement more behaviors that are beneficial to the organization. Subordinates' green silent behavior is influenced by the leader's fault tolerance and their own psychological ownership of the organization; in order to be loyal to the leader, protect the organization, and reduce the organization's costly inputs, subordinates usually implement green silent behaviors that are beneficial to the leader and the organization. Accordingly, this paper proposes the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *Psychological ownership mediates the relationship between leader fault tolerance and employees' green silent behavior.*

2.3. The Mediating Role of Moral Disengagement

As a self-ethical behavioral decision-making mechanism, moral disengagement is the process by which individuals find comfort in their own unethical behavior, which makes people believe that their unethical behavior is valuable and worthy of forgiveness, and it ignores the negative consequences of unethical behavior for the organization and for society [45,46]. Moral disengagement makes wrongdoing sound less negative and look less bad, and the theory is mainly used to explain organizational corruption [47], antisocial behavior in adolescents [48], and cyber-bullying [49]. Currently, many studies have explored the effect of leadership style on employees' moral disengagement. Some researchers have argued that leadership forgiveness has a positive effect on employees' moral disengagement and a non-significant effect on employees' moral shirking when their level of empathy is high [50]. Some researchers have argued that moral disengagement mediates the relationship between exploitative leadership and employees' unethical pro-organizational behavior [51]. Other researchers have argued that a leader's non-contingent punishment is significantly and positively related to employees' moral disengagement, while employees' moral disengagement in the leader's non-contingent punishment situations affects their behaviors, which usually has negative consequences for themselves or the firm [52]. In addition, some researchers have verified a positive indirect effect of moral disengagement on employees' unethical behavior in terms of the leader's other-oriented perfectionism; when the leader emphasizes only perfection and makes unrealistic demands on the employees, the employees perceive the unethical behavior as a demand of the leader, so they are more willing to commit unethical behaviors [53]. This study suggests that while individuals may recognize that their behavior violates ethical norms, leader fault tolerance may encourage employees to "justify" evading their responsibilities. This paper proposes the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4 (H4). *Leader fault tolerance has a significant positive effect on moral disengagement.*

Moral disengagement is a cognitive mechanism of moral self-adjustment that focuses on rationalizing or ignoring one's own unethical behavior. Some researchers have argued that moral disengagement allows subordinates to "justify" their silence in the face of unethical behavior [46]. At present, the concept of green development has received widespread attention from all walks of life, and enterprises or organizations are the main force for practicing the concept of green development and promoting green transformation and sustainable development, and they play a key role in improving the mode of production and development and in achieving high-quality development [54,55]. As the concept of green development continues to gain popularity, subordinates are usually able to recognize the benefits of adhering to green development and protecting the ecological environment for leading a sustainable and better life. In the face of the organization's green development problems or their own wrongdoings, the higher the leader's fault tolerance under the effect of moral disengagement, the less subordinates care about the consequences of their mistakes and the more likely they are to self-rationalize their unethical behavior, thus keeping silent about the problems, choosing to shirk their responsibilities, and gradually developing the habit of moral disengagement. The development of the habit of moral disengagement can lead to green silent behavior by allowing the individual to stay out of the way when confronted with a problem or wrongdoing. Accordingly, this paper proposes the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 5 (H5). *Moral disengagement mediates the relationship between leader fault tolerance and employees' green silent behavior.*

In summary, the theoretical model of the influential relationship between leader fault tolerance and green silence behavior proposed in this study is shown in Figure 1. Also, the five hypotheses proposed in this study are demonstrated in Figure 1. Specifically, the

influential relationships of leader fault tolerance on green silent behavior, psychological ownership, and moral disengagement, respectively, are Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4. The mediating roles of psychological ownership and moral disengagement between leader fault tolerance and green silent behavior are Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 5, respectively.

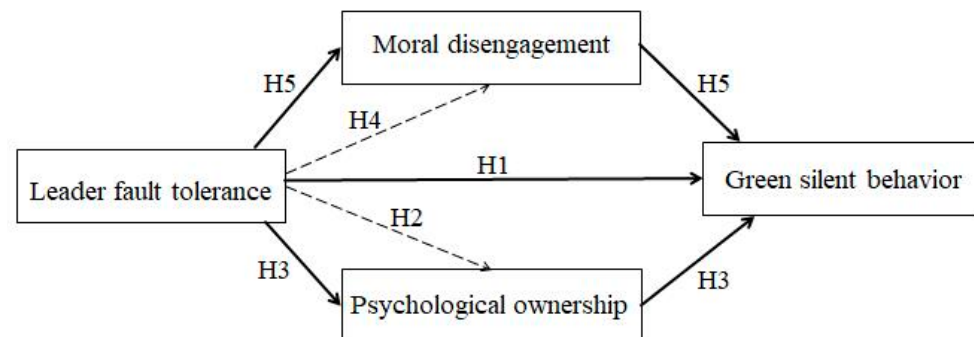


Figure 1. Theoretical model and hypotheses.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Sample

The category of enterprises in this survey is based on the relevant national policies and regulations in the process of product production that should be green production or does not cause pollution to the environment, such as carton factories, plastic product factories, and so on. This study was conducted on the premise of individual informed consent, using a random sampling method to survey employees and managers at all levels of relevant enterprises in Henan Province, China. In order to protect personal information and reduce the impact of common methodological bias, respondents were clearly informed before the survey and in the questionnaire instructions that the questionnaire was used to collect data in an anonymous way and that the data collected would only be used for academic research. In order to facilitate later data statistics and analysis, this study chose to release an anonymous electronic questionnaire. In June 2024, the designed questionnaire was released to an online questionnaire platform, and a link for the questionnaire completion was generated, which was then sent to the relevant enterprise exchange groups through social software such as WeChat 8.0 and QQ 9.0. A total of 430 questionnaires were collected, and after excluding invalid questionnaires such as the same options, short answer time, and regular answers, there were 386 valid questionnaires with an effective recovery rate of 89.77%. The demographic characteristics of the respondents of this survey are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the survey respondents.

Items	Categories	Frequency (N = 386)	Percent (%)	Min	Max
Sex	Men	167	43.26%	1	2
	Women	219	56.74%		
Age	20–29	136	35.23%	1	3
	30–39	207	53.63%		
	≥40	43	11.14%		
Academic qualifications	Specialist and below	126	32.64%	1	3
	Undergraduate	216	55.96%		
	Masters and above	44	11.40%		
Position level	Grassroots Employee	227	58.81%	1	4
	Grassroots Manager	81	20.98%		
	Middle Manager	41	10.62%		
	Top Manager	37	9.59%		

3.2. Measure

Demographic variables such as sex, age, education, and job level were controlled during the analysis of the study. In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the scales, the scales referred to in this study are all publicly published and mature scales. After the questionnaire was designed according to the content of the study and the survey population, students and experts from related disciplines were invited to judge and revise the content of the measurement indicators and scale items. All questions, except for the control variables, were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 for very non-compliant and 5 for very compliant) [56]. See Appendix A for project specifics. Reliability is the consistency, stability, and reliability of the test results, and it is an important indicator for evaluating the quality of a questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha coefficient is the most commonly used reliability test, which evaluates the internal consistency of the scale, i.e., the correlation between the items, and it is applicable to both the scale and the questionnaire. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to examine the reliability of the questionnaire. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient ranging between 0.8 and 0.9 indicates good reliability.

3.2.1. Leader Fault Tolerance

The study entailed subordinates evaluating the fault tolerance of their immediate managers or leaders, so the 4-item scale used by Zhang and Tang [24] and Zhou and Cheng [22] was used, with typical questions such as: "My superior forgive faults that occur in subordinates" (See Appendix A for the full list of items). After statistical analysis, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this item was 0.857, and the results show that the scale has good reliability and validity.

3.2.2. Psychological Ownership

This item mainly refers to the 7-item scale of Van and Pierce [57] and also combines with the psychological ownership scale used by Liu and Fan [58], with typical items such as: "I feel I have a high level of personal ownership of my department (team)" (See Appendix A for the full list of items). After statistical analysis, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this item was 0.882.

3.2.3. Moral Disengagement

This item refers to both the 32-item scale of Caprara et al. [59] and the 5-item scale of Cai and Gao [46] and features typical items such as: "It is understandable if companies create problems of resource wastage, environmental pollution or damage in order to survive" (See Appendix A for the full list of items). After statistical analysis, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this item was 0.891.

3.2.4. Green Silent Behavior

At present, there are more studies on silent behavior in academia, but a mature scale has not been formed for green silent behavior. Therefore, this study mainly refers to the 5-item scale of Luo et al. [60] and Tangirala and Ramanujam [61] and also combines the meaning of green, with typical items such as: "I choose to remain silent when I get information that would benefit the organization in improving resource wastage and environmental pollution in the organization" (See Appendix A for the full list of items). After statistical analysis, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this item was 0.896.

3.3. Data Analysis Methods

This study explored the relationship between the influence of leader fault tolerance and green silent behavior based on the analysis of valid data from the sample, which is empirical, and an empirical analysis was used. This study used SPSS 27.0 software and AMOS 28 software for statistical analysis of the data. Firstly, the valid data were analyzed for reliability, validity, and correlation using SPSS 27.0. Second, validation factor analysis was conducted using AMOS 28. Third, stratified regression analyses were conducted using

SPSS 27.0. Fourth, mediation effect tests were conducted using SPSS 27.0 and the PROCESS plugin [62].

Validity is the degree to which a scale is able to accurately measure what it is required to measure. The validity tests for this study were the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test and Bartlett’s test of sphericity, which verifies the suitability of survey data for factor analysis. The KMO value is a statistic between 0 and 1, which is used to assess the correlation between the variables, and the closer the value is to 1, the stronger the correlation between the variables, which makes it suitable for factor analysis. The KMO value was between 0.8 and 0.9, which indicates that it is suitable for factor analysis, while a value of 0.9 or above indicates that it is very suitable for factor analysis. Bartlett’s sphericity test is used as a test to measure the degree of correlation between variables and is used to determine whether the variables are suitable for factor analysis. If the probability of significance is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating that there is a correlation between the variables and that it is suitable for factor analysis. According to the results of SPSS 27.0, the KMO value of this study was 0.922 and Bartlett’s test of sphericity $p < 0.000$, indicating that it is suitable for factor analysis, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett’s test.

Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.922
Bartlett’s test of sphericity	Approx. chi-square	4227.875
	df	190
	p	0.000

4. Results

4.1. Validated Factor Analysis and Descriptive Statistical Analysis

In this paper, validation factor analysis was used to test the fit of the data to the model and to test the discriminant validity of the variables. Among them, a χ^2/df of less than three is ideal and less than five is more ideal. The closer the comparative fit index (CFI) is to 1, the better the fit is, and the CFI was greater than or equal to 0.9, which indicates that the model fits better. The closer the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) [63] is to one, the better the fit is; a TLI value of greater than 0.9 means that the model fit is good and the data and model fit are good. If the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) [64] is close to 0, it indicates that the model fits well, and if its value is between 0.05 and 0.08, it indicates that the model fits reasonably well; a value greater than or equal to 0.1 indicates a poor model fit. An RMR value of less than 0.05 means that the model fit is very good. AMOS 28 software was used to conduct a validated factor analysis of the measurement items of leader fault tolerance, psychological ownership, moral disengagement, and green silent behavior, and the specific results are shown in Table 3. The results show that the fit of the data of the four-factor model is better than the other models, and the values of the fitting indexes are good, indicating that the discriminant validity among the variables is good.

Table 3. Validation factor analysis.

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	RMR
Four-factor model	194.060	166	1.169	0.993	0.992	0.021	0.038
Three-factor model	678.727	167	4.064	0.876	0.859	0.089	0.102
Two-factor model	1303.906	169	7.715	0.725	0.691	0.132	0.136
One-factor model	1917.571	170	11.280	0.577	0.527	0.163	0.171

Notes: Four-factor model: leader fault tolerance, psychological ownership, moral disengagement, green silent behavior; three-factor model: leader fault tolerance + psychological ownership, moral disengagement, green silent behavior; two-factor model: leader fault tolerance + psychological ownership + moral disengagement, green silent behavior; one-factor model: leader fault tolerance + psychological ownership + moral disengagement + green silent behavior.

The means, standard deviations, and correlations of the variables in this paper are shown in Table 4, from which it can be seen that leader fault tolerance is significantly and positively correlated with psychological ownership ($r = 0.416$), moral disengagement ($r = 0.373$), and green silent behavior ($r = 0.378$); psychological ownership is significantly and positively correlated with green silent behavior ($r = 0.434$); and moral disengagement is significantly and positively correlated with green silent behavior ($r = 0.433$). The above results are in line with the theoretical expectations and lay the foundation for further analysis.

Table 4. Mean, standard deviation, and correlation analysis.

Variant	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sex	1.567	0.496	1							
Age	1.759	0.638	−0.043	1						
Academic qualifications	1.788	0.630	−0.029	−0.089	1					
Position level	1.710	0.998	−0.034	0.371 **	−0.028	1				
Leader Fault Tolerance	3.293	0.975	0.041	0.039	−0.060	0.096	1			
Psychological Ownership	3.309	0.963	0.024	−0.042	−0.015	0.069	0.416 **	1		
Moral Disengagement	3.395	0.974	0.042	−0.008	0.028	0.016	0.373 **	0.422 **	1	
Green Silent Behavior	3.329	0.941	0.017	0.001	0.067	0.119 *	0.378 **	0.434 **	0.433 **	1

Notes: “***” = $p < 0.01$; “**” = $p < 0.05$.

4.2. Hypothesis Testing

In order to test the relationship between leader fault tolerance and employees’ green silent behavior, the model was diagnosed with VIF values using SPSS 27.0 during the analysis process. The VIF values represent the severity of multiple covariance, i.e., the existence of a high degree of correlation between the explanatory variables, and it is used to test whether the model exhibits covariance or not. If it appears that a particular item has a VIF value greater than 10, strictly speaking, a VIF value of greater than 5 indicates that the item has a covariance problem. Tolerance takes values between zero and one, with values closer to one indicating weaker covariance and closer to zero indicating stronger covariance. Using SPSS 27.0 to test the data for multiple covariance, it was learned that the VIF values of leader fault tolerance, psychological ownership, moral disengagement, and green silent behavior were 1.326, 1.431, 1.386, and 1.406, respectively, and all of them were less than 2. The tolerances of leader fault tolerance, psychological ownership, moral disengagement, and green silent behavior were 0.754, 0.699, 0.721, and 0.711, and their values were closer to 1. This indicates that the model is not covariant and can be analyzed by regression.

Stratification is the study of whether there is any statistical significance to the change in the regression model with the addition of independent variables one by one or layer by layer. The independent variables are stacked on top of each other layer by layer to see if there is any statistical significance to the change in the model with each addition of one or more independent variables, and it is specifically the study of the significance of the added independent variables that come later. Stratified regression is based on regression analysis and is used to study the differences between multiple regression models. Stratified regression places the variable of the core study in the last step of the model in order to examine the contribution of that variable to the regression equation when the contribution of other variables is excluded, and it is often used in studies of mediation or moderation. R^2 represents the fit of the model; the closer it is to one, the better the results. ΔR^2 represents the model change, the change in R^2 . The F value is used to judge whether the model is meaningful or not; when $p < 0.05$, it means that the model is meaningful. In order to test the relationship between leader fault tolerance and green silent behavior, this paper uses a stratified regression analysis, and the results of the specific stratified regression are shown in Table 5. As can be seen in Table 5, the leader fault tolerance has a significant positive effect on the green silent behavior ($\beta = 0.362$, $p < 0.01$), and the assumption of H1 is established. Leader fault tolerance and psychological ownership have a significant effect on green silent behavior ($\beta = 0.231$, $p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.322$, $p < 0.01$); leader fault tolerance

and moral disengagement have a significant effect on green silent behavior ($\beta = 0.170$, $p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.252$, $p < 0.01$); leader fault tolerance has a significant positive effect on psychological ownership and moral disengagement ($\beta = 0.408$, $p < 0.01$; $\beta = 0.376$, $p < 0.01$); and hypotheses H2 and H4 are established as valid.

Table 5. Stratified regression analysis and hypothesis test.

Variant	Dependent Variable (Green Silent Behavior)				Mediating Variable (Psychological Ownership)		Mediating Variable (Moral Disengagement)	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Sex	0.041	0.010	0.007	−0.005	0.045	0.011	0.084	0.052
Age	−0.065	−0.064	−0.026	−0.031	−0.119	−0.119	−0.018	−0.018
Academic qualifications	0.100	0.132	0.130	0.111	−0.028	0.007	0.044	0.077
Position level	0.130 *	0.096 *	0.078	0.086	0.095	0.057	0.022	−0.013
Leader Fault Tolerance		0.362 **	0.231 **	0.170 **		0.408 **		0.376 **
Psychological Ownership			0.322 **					
Moral Disengagement				0.252 **				
R ²	0.021	0.160	0.249	0.302	0.011	0.179	0.003	0.143
ΔR ²	0.021	0.139	0.089	0.052	0.011	0.168	0.003	0.140
F	4.529 **	16.890 ***	16.930 ***	45.303 ***	5.089 **	33.685 ***	4.093 **	14.586 ***

Notes: “****” = $p < 0.001$; “***” = $p < 0.01$; “**” = $p < 0.05$.

4.3. Results of the Mediation Effect Test

This study relied on the PROCESS program in SPSS 27.0 and used the bootstrap method to test the mediating effect of psychological ownership and moral disengagement between leader fault tolerance and green silence behavior on a sample of 5000; the results are shown in Table 6. Bootstrapping is the use of a limited number of samples sampled over many repetitions to re-establish a new sample sufficient to replace the parent sample distribution. The method of 95% confidence intervals indicates that about 95% of the confidence intervals in multiple repetitions will contain the overall true parameter values. The bootstrap method was used for the mediated effects test, setting the bootstrap count to 5000 and the confidence interval to 95%. If the 95% confidence interval for the indirect effect does not include zero, then a mediation effect exists.

Table 6. Mediation effect test.

Variant	Effect Type	Effect Value	BootSE	95% CI	
				LLCI	ULCI
Leader Fault Tolerance	Total effect	0.365	0.046	0.276	0.455
	Direct effect	0.171	0.047	0.078	0.263
Psychological Ownership	Indirect effect	0.100	0.025	0.057	0.156
Moral Disengagement	Indirect effect	0.094	0.021	0.059	0.141

As can be seen in Table 6, the total effect between leader fault tolerance and green silent behavior is significant ($b = 0.365$), with a 95% confidence interval of [0.276, 0.455], and it did not include a value of 0; the direct effect was not significant ($b = 0.171$) with a 95% confidence interval of [0.078, 0.263], and it did not include a value of 0; and the indirect effects of psychological ownership and moral disengagement on the relationship of leader fault tolerance to green silent behavior were 0.100 and 0.094, with confidence intervals of [0.057, 0.156] and [0.059, 0.141], neither of which contains the value of 0, indicating that the indirect effect is significant and that hypotheses H3 and H5 are valid.

5. Discussion

This study found that leader fault tolerance has a significant positive impact on employees' green silent behavior. Employee silencing behavior has received attention from many researchers; although some researchers have found that differential leadership (i.e., leaders treating different employees differently) has a significant negative effect on

employee silencing behavior [65], most researchers have found through their studies that leadership styles have a significant positive effect on employee silencing behavior, e.g., researchers have concluded that authoritative leadership has a significant positive effect on employee silencing behavior [66]. Some have also found that leader bullying significantly affects employee silence [67]. The results of this study are the same as most of the previous research on the relationship between leadership style and the effect of silent behavior. Currently, some researchers have found that environmental leadership positively affects employees' green behavior through their studies [68], but the present study focuses on green silent behavior, which is the difference between the present study and other studies. It can be said that the higher the leader's tolerance of subordinates' mistakes, the more it will intensify subordinates' green silent behavior. This is because a leader's high tolerance for mistakes will make subordinates feel that the organization is able to tolerate subordinates' wrongdoings, thus reinforcing subordinates' green silent behavior and increasing subordinates' loyalty to the organization. According to the social exchange theory [45], both the leader's support and the organization's satisfaction of the subordinates' needs motivate subordinates to behave in the way the organization expects them to. Because the input costs of environmental protection outweigh the benefits, this results in a low willingness for organization green governance and green development [69]. Based on this, when confronted with the organization's green development problems, this green silent behavior caters to the organization's needs as the leaders are tolerant of their subordinates' misbehaviors and the subordinates will remain silent on the organization's problems. It can be said that the more tolerant the leader is, the easier it is for subordinates to form the habit of green silent behavior.

This study found that leader fault tolerance has a significant positive effect on moral disengagement and psychological ownership and that moral disengagement and psychological ownership play an important mediating role between leader fault tolerance and green silence behavior. Silence is a typical avoidance and withdrawal behavior [31], and silent behavior is a direct behavioral consequence of an individual's moral disengagement psychology [32]. In the face of the organization's green development issues, subordinates will keep silent on green development issues that they believe may be detrimental to the organization in terms of short-term organizational interests, and leader fault tolerance will also work through subordinates' moral disengagement on green silent behaviors. Leaders' tolerance and forgiveness of wrongdoings can negatively affect subordinates' perceptions, making them stop worrying about the consequences of wrong behavior, and this slowly leads to the habit of moral disengagement for subordinates. The more accustomed subordinates are to moral disengagement, the weaker their moral code becomes, and thus the easier it is for them to remain silent about the organization's green development problems. Leadership style influences employees' behavior by affecting their psychological feelings. Some researchers have suggested that emotional trust has a significant effect on silent behavior, but authoritative leadership has a significant negative effect on employees' emotional trust [66]. And this study verifies that leader fault tolerance has a significant positive effect on employees' psychological ownership. Because leader fault tolerance to create an atmosphere of tolerance will enhance the subordinate's sense of belonging, a sense of belonging will further enhance the subordinate's sense of loyalty to the organization so as to maintain the psychological sense of ownership. In conclusion, in the relationship between leader fault tolerance and green silent behavior, leader fault tolerance affects green silent behavior through two paths: moral disengagement and psychological ownership.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Theoretical Contributions

This study has two main theoretical contributions. First, it focuses on the negative impact of leader fault tolerance. Previous research has only focused on the positive impact of leader fault tolerance on employees and has ignored the negative impact of leader fault tolerance, so this study verifies the negative impact of leader fault tolerance. Secondly,

silent behavior was specified as green silent behavior, and the parallel mediating roles of moral disengagement and psychological ownership between leader fault tolerance and green silent behavior were verified, which is important for a deeper understanding of the impact effects of green silent behavior.

6.2. Practical Implications

In the actual working process, the style of leadership behavior has a positive or negative impact on subordinates, and subordinates' different perceptions of leadership style may also affect their behavior. Firstly, leader fault tolerance may have a negative impact on the organization, on the leader themselves, and on their subordinates. Specifically, the leader's fault tolerance attitude towards environmental issues related to the development of the enterprise is beneficial to the organization in the short term but is not conducive to the development of the enterprise in the long term. For individual leaders, their own fault-tolerant behavior will not only have a negative impact on the green production and sustainable development of the enterprise, but it is also not conducive to their own career development. This is because an enterprise or organization that adheres to green production and pays attention to environmental issues will not turn a blind eye to the environmental issues that arise, nor will it turn a blind eye to the managers who affect the development of the enterprise. For employees, leader fault tolerance may seem to reduce the psychological burden or worry of employees after making mistakes or small errors, but it may also make responsible employees think that the leadership does not act. Therefore, enterprises should strengthen the supervision of managers with fault-tolerant behaviors, managers should communicate with each other to abandon the attitude of condoning and indulging the treatment of employees who make mistakes, and employees should also positively face the mistakes and take the initiative to give advice to the enterprise so as to control the negative impact of the leader fault tolerance as much as possible. Secondly, organizations should set clear standards and improve incentives to try to avoid the green silent behavior of subordinates. Apart from managers, employees are also crucial to the development of an organization. If employees turn a blind eye to the environmental issues of the enterprise without worrying about their mistakes or keep their opinions and suggestions, then the enterprise will receive less effective information in the development process, which is not conducive to the sound development of the enterprise. Therefore, enterprises should open up channels of advice and formulate incentive policies to encourage employees to actively contribute to the development of the enterprise. At the same time, society should strengthen the supervision of enterprises, urge enterprises to take the initiative to assume social responsibility, promote the green development and sustainable development of enterprises, create a favorable atmosphere for the development of society, and provide assistance for ecological protection. Thirdly, research has shown that psychological ownership plays an important role in the development of organizations. Organizations should pay attention to corporate culture and try to create a good corporate atmosphere so that employees want to speak out and dare to speak out. At the same time, enterprises should also reasonably stimulate and make use of the psychological ownership of subordinates so that subordinates can take into account the internal and external interests of the enterprise and the short-term and long-term interests in the face of environmental protection issues, thus promoting the realization of the enterprise's economic goals and social development goals.

6.3. Limitations

This study still has some limitations. In terms of research methodology, employee self-assessment was used to measure the influence mechanism of green silent behavior. Considering the differences in feelings and evaluations from different perspectives, and considering the large subjectivity of individuals, further investigation can be conducted in the future by combining the self-assessment of the individual and the assessment of the leader. In terms of measurement scales, on the basis of the existing mature scales, the measurement scales can be further optimized and enriched for relevant research content

in the future. In the future, the effects of different leadership styles on silent behavior and the effects of factors such as leaders' personal traits and corporate culture on leader fault tolerance can be further explored, and they can also be extended to the effects of organizational tolerance on green silent behavior. In addition, this study did not analyze the boundary conditions between leader fault tolerance and green silent behavior, which is a direction for future research efforts.

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Appendix A. Survey Items

Leader Fault Tolerance

- LFT1: My superior will tolerate unintentional faults of subordinates.
- LFT2: My superior will forgive faults that occur in subordinates.
- LFT3: My superior will accept objections from subordinates.
- LFT4: My superior will accept criticisms from subordinates and improve them.

Psychological Ownership

- PO1: I feel that my department (team) is an organization that we share.
- PO2: I feel that I have a high level of personal ownership of my department (team).
- PO3: Colleagues in the department (team) feel that they are owners of the business.
- PO4: I feel I have a strong stake in the good or bad of the business.
- PO5: I would like to think of the business as my home.

Moral Disengagement

- MD1: It is understandable if companies create problems of resource wastage, environmental pollution or damage in order to survive.
- MD2: It is unreasonable for individuals to worry about environmental damage because the adverse effects arise at the societal level.
- MD3: The role of business in stopping environmental degradation is very limited.
- MD4: I contribute minimally to environmental issues, so I do not feel guilty about causing environmental problems.
- MD5: The use of non-environmentally friendly materials is unavoidable for businesses to survive.

Green Silent Behavior

- GSB1: I have ideas or suggestions for improving environmental protection, but I have not raised them.
- GSB2: I have not told others about the environmental hazards I have found in my organization.
- GSB3: I choose to remain silent when I get information that would benefit the organization in improving resource wastage and environmental pollution in the organization.
- GSB4: I will protect the organization's environmental information for the benefit of the organization.
- GSB5: I will be under pressure from others to disclose information about the organization's environmental protection.
- GSB6: I refuse to disclose environmental information that may harm the organization.

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