

The Impact of Union Transformational Leadership on Union Citizenship Behavior in the Vietnamese Union Context: A Moderated Mediation Model of Union Commitment and Union Practice

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Abstract

After implementing the Renovation policy in 1986, the transition to a market-oriented economy brought significant changes to the institutional environment in which trade unions operate. The decline in union membership prompted both union leaders and political authorities to recognize the potential difficulties in maintaining stability and the necessary cohesion for sustainable economic development. The absence of an effective trade union system became apparent, leading to the realization that understanding the role of trade unions in the context of economic transition is indeed essential. The present study aims to explore the relationship between union transformational leadership, union citizenship behavior, union practices and union commitment in a union context Vietnam. At the same time, build a model of the influence of union transformational leadership on union citizenship behavior, which commits unions to play an intermediary role and Vietnamese union practices plays a moderating role. Data were collected on a sample of 595 union members from 15 foreign enterprises as a research sample. Research results show that transformational leadership style has a strong positive influence on behavior union citizenship through promoting union commitment and trade union practices. The research has important academic contributions and administrative implications for Vietnamese trade union leaders.

Keywords: union transformational leadership, union citizenship behavior, union practice, union commitment

1. Introduction

After implementing the Doi Moi (Renovation) policy in 1986, the Vietnamese Government made significant efforts to attract foreign capital. By the end of March 1999, the government had approved 2,623 projects with a total investment of \$35.3 billion (IDIC, 2000). In Vietnam, the transition to a market economy meant significant changes in the institutional environment, which affected labor union activities. State-owned enterprises, traditionally bastions of trade unions, gradually underwent privatization, leading to a reduction in the number of union members. Meanwhile, domestic private companies, including small businesses, became increasingly important employers, providing a new basis for the establishment of local trade unions (Edwards and Phan, 2008).

However, despite the recent increase in union density from around 45% to 50% in the 2007-2010 period (VGCL, 2010), a significant number of enterprises still did not have trade unions, and there seemed to be little pressure forcing employers to establish unions or any legally mandated penalties for non-compliance (Clarke and colleagues, 2007). The "One Million Union Members Campaign" aimed to recruit one million new union members within five years, from 2003 to 2008. By the end of 2007, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor (VGCL) announced that the campaign had been tremendously successful, recruiting 1.6 million new members. However, two-thirds of these new union members were concentrated in state-owned enterprises and public service units, where newcomers were often encouraged to join unions (VGCL, 2008a).

Furthermore, although the Trade Union Law stipulates that enterprise unions are free to independently represent

the rights and interests of laborers, in practice, unions may only be legally established under the auspices of the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor, under the supervision of the Communist Party. The dependence of the unions on the Party is seen as limiting their independence and their ability to act as a pressure group on the government. Mass organizations like unions tend to serve as "transmission belts" for the policies of the Party and the state. In the workplace, union leaders are traditionally placed under the influence of management, and in the case of state-owned enterprises, under Party organizations. Furthermore, the effectiveness of union operations largely depends on the character of the union leaders, who often form part of the company's management. Therefore, if unions continue to operate in a traditional manner and maintain close traditional relationships with management, their members may not consider them genuine unions, as it seems they favor employers over workers. The stability of these traditional close relationships with management has created conflicts of interest within the unions. On one hand, as organizations of laborers, they must represent their members in the struggle against management to protect the legitimate rights and interests of their members. On the other hand, traditionally, they are trapped in a close relationship that limits their ability to confront management. To break free from this dilemma, Vietnamese unions have recognized the need to develop appropriate strategies to help them represent and protect their members and address management issues at the workplace level.

Leadership in both the labor movement and politics began to realize the absence of an effective trade union system and collective bargaining could pose challenges in maintaining the necessary stability and unity for sustainable economic development. To address the increasing labor conflicts, Vietnam has made efforts to strengthen the capacity of trade unions to represent workers in collective bargaining and social dialogue. The impact of unions in the future will largely depend on whether enterprise-level trade unions can truly operate independently from the influence and control of employers.

Particularly, in recent years, Vietnam has deepened its integration into the international market. Vietnam will have to fulfill commitments related to labor and freedom of association outlined in Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) that it has signed. This period will witness the emergence of non-traditional trade union organizations (new representatives of labor in Vietnam), which will compete with traditional trade union organizations (base-level unions affiliated with the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor). The survival of Vietnam's trade union organizations at this stage depends on the leadership skills of workplace union representatives and the commitment of their members. Sustaining traditional leadership styles is no longer suitable for the current situation in Vietnam. Therefore, within the Vietnamese context, trade union leaders need to adopt leadership styles that align with the commitments from the union members, which is crucial. It's worth emphasizing that grassroots union officials are the closest to union members on a daily basis; thus, the attitudes and behaviors of these leaders often determine the level of member participation and their attitude toward the union.

Grassroots union officials are primarily responsible for guiding new employees of the company to join the union, as well as capturing and updating information about workers' lives (such as health conditions, pregnancies, birthdays, weddings, holidays, etc.) to help them access the company's policies. When asked, many workers have responded that it is the union branch leader or company union officials who create activities and movements within the company to encourage their participation and foster stronger bonds among them. These grassroots union officials, however, have the characteristic in Vietnam of being influenced by the employer, and they are all non-professional union officials.

So the first question explored in this study is: from an empirical perspective, if union transformational leadership is enhanced, can it be confirmed that union commitment and union citizenship behavior are also enhanced? Secondly, does union commitment in the Vietnamese context mediate the relationship between union transformational leadership and union citizenship behavior or not? Thirdly, do union practices promote the relationship between union transformational leadership and union commitment?

Furthermore, while leadership has always been a subject of interest to many researchers, to date, all theories on leadership styles, when applied experimentally, have fallen short of meeting real-world requirements, and there is a need for further research in various contexts. In fact, as of the present time, there has been no experimental research in Vietnam on the influence of transformational leadership styles on workers' union commitment. On the other hand, Vietnam's academic research on union-related issues tends to be qualitative, primarily analyzing and evaluating union activities.

Therefore, this research aims to provide additional materials to offer a perspective, compare, evaluate, enhance awareness, and improve leadership capabilities to achieve high results in union activities within Vietnamese enterprises. The research plan focuses on non-state enterprises, using union commitment as an intervening

variable and union practice as a moderating variable to explore the potential role of union transformational leadership styles in union citizenship behavior.

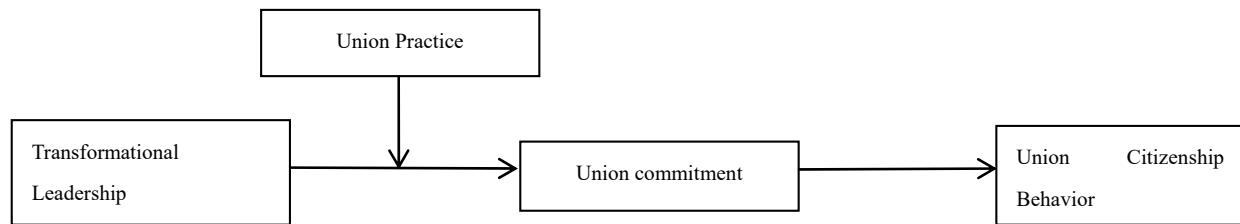


Figure 1. Conceptual model of union transformational leadership and union citizenship behavior

2. Theory and Hypothesis

2.1 Union Transformational Leadership Style and Union Citizenship Behavior

Burns first introduced the concept of transformational leadership. He proposed that transformational leadership style reflects leaders enabling subordinates to recognize the importance of the task, stimulating their higher-level needs, and encouraging subordinates to produce additional work outcomes. Chacko & Greer (1982) pointed out that the characteristics of union leadership are consistent with transformational leadership styles. They noted that in the context of unions, the exchange relationship between leaders and members has weakened, superiors interact with members by meeting their needs, sustaining their interests, and supporting personal development. Members establish exchange relationships and encourage them to contribute to the union's development by describing a bright future for union activities.

In union literature, the focus of research has traditionally been on the role of leaders, with many studies concentrating on developing "models" of union leadership (Martin et al., 1978). However, recent developments in organizational leadership literature, differentiating between transformational and transactional leadership (Bass, 1985), have shifted attention to the followers and their emotional reactions to leaders. Some studies have investigated the impact of leadership behavior on union members (Fullagar et al., 1994). Fullagar et al. (1992) used transformational leadership factors from (Bass, 1985) to examine the potential contribution of leadership characteristics to influencing union socialization and worker attitudes. The research found that transformational leadership style significantly impacts the union socialization process and attitudes toward the union. Transformational leadership union focus on the higher-order needs of members, such as self-awareness, while nurturing members' confidence and self-esteem for them to perceive the significant value of the mission. They commit to the organization and subsequently create higher-performing and better unions.

Cregan and Bartram (2009) believe that the inspirational behavior of transformational union leaders is a mobilization strategy that can increase members' social attachment to the union, thereby improving loyalty to the organization, team spirit, and union citizenship behavior. It is crucial to emphasize that grassroots union officials are closest to members on a daily basis; therefore, their attitudes and behaviors often determine the level of participation and members' attitudes toward the union (Murakami, 2000).

However, those are studies conducted in the Western context, while in the context of the Vietnamese trade unions, these conclusions still need to be discussed. Unlike trade unions in capitalist countries, the Vietnam General Confederation of Labor (VGCL) and its subordinate unions have three major functions: protecting the legal rights and interests of workers, participating in state management and business management, and educating workers about state policies and laws (Trade Union Law 1990, Article 2). The latter two functions are emphasized by the provision that trade unions 'are under the leadership of the Communist Party' (Trade Union Law 1990, Article 1) and must 'collaborate with the State to increase production, create employment, and improve the living standards of workers' (Trade Union Law 1990, Article 2). The continuity of this traditional approach has been reaffirmed by the VGCL regulations in 1993 and the supplementary amendments in 2002. The regulations recognize no clear distinction between employers and employees by allowing all Vietnamese managers, including the highest executive directors, to join the trade unions, and there is no restriction on state-owned enterprises having deputy directors or human resource managers concurrently serving as union chairpersons.

In these companies, the trade union is a management component, responsible for welfare plans and plays the role of the company's 'power transmission belt.' Labor disputes in these companies are informally resolved, often

with employers conceding to the specific demands of employees in each case. While such a strategy prevents these companies from visible forms of labor disputes such as strikes and work stoppages, it does not provide a formal and transparent mechanism to resolve conflicts in the workplace. The consequence is the growing dissatisfaction of workers as they have no means to negotiate with employers about working conditions regularly and formally, leading to mass resignations and high labor turnover. In such a context, trade union leaders are caught between employers and workers. Consequently, they cannot fulfill their responsibilities as union representatives, protecting the interests and voices of the workers. As a result, union members lose trust in the function and role of union leaders. This leads to less interaction between union leaders and members, causing union leaders to lose touch with the needs and expectations of their members, making the union less effective in representing its members. Therefore, whether the advantages of transformative leadership in the context of Vietnamese trade unions can enhance the commitment and participation of union members still needs to be discussed and studied. Therefore, given Viet Nam's situational factors, the first hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Union transformational leadership style is positively correlated with union citizenship behavior.

2.2 The Mediating Effects of Union Commitment

The commitment of the trade union is an extension of employees' commitment to the union. The union citizenship behavior is largely determined by employees' commitment to and support for the union. Union citizenship behavior is manifested through participation in union activities, filing complaints, attending meetings, and voting, which is considered crucial for the development of the union (Barling, Fullagar, & Kelloway, 1992). This is particularly relevant in a context where union participation is declining among members (Twigg et al., 2007). Therefore, union leaders especially need actions to enhance members' union citizenship behavior so that they can mobilize more workers into their union activities.

As the spokesperson for the union, the leadership style of union leaders plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' loyalty to the union and their participation in union activities (Fullagar et al., 2004). Relevant experimental research has confirmed the relationship between different leadership styles and union commitment. Transformational leadership is based on the personal values of the leader, and how these values relate to the values and beliefs of followers (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders influence by addressing higher-order needs of followers, such as confidence, respect for the leader, and trust (Kuhnert & Lewis, 1987). At the workplace, union delegates serve as a link between the macro strategies of the union and the commitment of members. Empowered workplace leadership, characterized by sensitivity, innovation, and transparency, with the authority and legality to address workplace issues, is positively related to members' commitment. These characteristics can be particularly crucial in gaining commitment from members.

Based on social exchange theory and social identity theory, the second hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Union commitment mediates the positive relationship between union transformational leadership style and union citizenship behavior.

2.3 The Moderating Effect of Union Practice

The trade union leaders have observed the indifference of union members (Brecher & Costello, 1999). This indifference restricts the union's ability to organize new members, enhance outcomes from collective bargaining, and contribute to society (Clark, 2002). However, actions can be taken to increase opportunities for the union to derive maximum benefits from voluntary participation. Effective communication can ensure that the benefits of affiliating with the union are known and appreciated by everyone. The better union members understand the benefits of the union, the more they appreciate the efforts of union leaders. If members perceive that the union supports their needs, they may become more committed to the union. Redman & Snape (2005) analyzed the union pattern in the UK and indicated that union capability correlates positively with union commitment and union citizenship behavior through union support awareness. Qi et al. (2021) argued that effective union activities can promote higher employee commitment.

For Vietnam, a nation undergoing socio-economic transition, the position and role of trade unions vary at different times and stages of development. Before economic reforms and opening up, unions functioned as organizations extending the functions of the Party and government in companies, supporting companies' social development rather than improving working and living conditions through negotiation and strikes. In that context, unions had little significant function. However, after economic reforms and opening up, non-state enterprises, private enterprises, and foreign enterprises emerged in large numbers, leading to collaboration and even conflict between companies and unions. The responsibilities and functions of transformation, adjustment, restructuring, and protecting the legitimate rights of unions were emphasized. With the increasingly complex economic and

production environment in Vietnam, labor disputes between workers and companies are intensifying. Therefore, as a crucial means to resolve labor disputes, unions, especially in their function of protecting their legal rights, need to be highly regarded. An effective union organization can convey the desires and complaints of workers to employers and explain the concerns and difficulties of employers to workers. Based on the analyses above, the article proposes the third hypothesis:

H3: The relationship between the transformational leadership style of the union and union commitment is moderated by union citizenship behavior.

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Design, Participants and Procedure

This study examined workers and union members in enterprises located in Hai Duong province. A total of 700 questionnaires were distributed, and 595 valid questionnaires met the analysis requirements.

3.2 Measures

The article primarily measures four variables: union transformational leadership, union commitment, union participation, and union citizenship behavior.

Union Transformational Leadership (TL): The study combines the measurement scale from Waldman et al. (2001) with a multi-factor leadership questionnaire developed by Bass (1985). It mainly assesses the capacity of union transformational leadership from two aspects: "leader attractiveness" and "leader charisma." The first four items reflect leader attractiveness, while the last four items reflect leader charisma. The initial alpha coefficient of the scale is 0.885, indicating good reliability.

Union Commitment (UC): This is measured using a six-item scale developed by Meyer and Allen (1997). The scale focuses on measuring emotional commitment aspects (Chan, Snape, 2013), emphasizing emotional attachment and involvement of union members within the union. The initial alpha coefficient of the scale is 0.887, indicating good reliability.

Union Practice (UP): The study selected 13 measurement items from a scale compiled by Zhang Maolong and colleagues (2018). The initial alpha coefficient of the scale is 0.912, indicating good reliability.

Union Citizenship Behavior (UCB): The measurement of union citizenship behavior is adapted using the Fullagar and Barling (2011) measurement method for union citizenship behavior. For example, "You will participate and speak at union meetings," "You will participate in social activities organized by the union," "Complaints to the union about work-related issues," etc. The initial alpha coefficient of the scale is 0.908, indicating good reliability.

Control variables: In addition to employee demographic variables (age, gender, education level, years of work), according to previous research, control variables will impact the above predictor variables. Among the effective questionnaires, 74.1% of respondents were female (due to the predominantly surveyed industries being textiles, leather footwear, and toys), 42.15% had a Bachelor's degree or higher, and the average union membership duration was 44.64 months. In general, the respondents were representative and met the research requirements.

4. Results

4.1 Analysis of Common Method Bias

Due to data collection being conducted independently through self-reported employee surveys, there is a possibility of common method bias, which can potentially influence the research outcomes. To examine whether the collected data suffer from common method bias, this article employs confirmatory factor analysis, as presented in Table 1, and establishes the following appropriate criteria for each direct branch: a chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) less than 5 indicates an ideal model (when sample size is small); the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) should fall between 0 and 1, with a critical value of 0.08, the closer to 0, the better; the goodness of fit index (GFI), comparative fit index (CFI), and incremental fit index (IFI) must exceed 0.9 and the closer to 1, the better. Comparing the model fit indices with those of other models, it is evident that the four-factor model fits the data better (TLI=0.90, RMSEA=0.06, CFI=0.91, $\chi^2/df=3.22$). In this model, the chi-square value cannot be used as the sole criterion for the final judgment, as it tends to increase with larger sample sizes. Therefore, this study combines other fit indices to evaluate an acceptable fit. Thus, it can be determined that the issue of common method bias in the data used for subsequent analysis is within manageable limits, and the data can meet the research needs.

Table 1. Results of CFA test

Item	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Hypothesized model	1887.201	585	3.22	0.91	0.90	0.06
Model A	9828.160	592	16.60	0.38	0.35	0.16
Model B	8675.979	591	14.68	0.47	0.43	0.15
Model C	3853.299	589	6.54	0.72	0.71	0.10
Model D	3545.254	591	5.99	0.80	0.79	0.09
Model E	5184.372	591	8.77	0.70	0.68	0.11

Model A 1-factor model combining all variables, Model B Two-factor model: TL+UC; UP+UCB, Three-factor model C: TL+UC,UCB,UP,Three-factor model D: TL,UC+UCB,UP, Three-factor model E: TL+UCB,UC,UP

4.2 Correlation Analysis

The mean values, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients of each variable in this study are presented in Table 2. It can be observed that there is a significant positive correlation between the perception of union transformational leadership and the union citizenship behavior ($r= 0.57, p< 0.01$).

There is also a significant positive correlation between union transformational leadership and union commitment ($r= 0.65, p< 0.01$). The initial hypothesis of this study has received preliminary support.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis of Variables

Variables	Mean	SD	UP	UC	UCB	TL
Union Practice	3.70	0.57	-			
Union commitment	3.67	0.67	0.10**	-		
Union citizen behavior	3.50	0.58	0.09**	0.70***	-	
Union transformational leadership	3.66	0.58	0.07**	0.65***	0.57***	-

Notes. *, **, *** Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 and 0.001 levels, respectively.

4.3 Hypothesis Testing

(1) Main effect test

Before proceeding with data analysis, this study focused on variables such as the perception of union transformational leadership, union commitment, and union citizenship behavior, then used hierarchical multiple regression analysis to analyze the data. The results are presented in Table 3. First, we tested Hypothesis 1 regarding union citizenship behavior. As shown in Model 5 of Table 3, union transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on union citizenship behavior ($\beta=0.48, p<0.001$), and this result supports Hypothesis 1.

Table 3. Multilevel linear regression results

	UC			UCB		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Gen	0.02	0.07	0.06	0.01	0.02	0.03
Age	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.04**	0.03**	0.02
Edu	-0.03	-0.05	-0.06	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01
Workyears	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.07
TL		0.58***			0.48***	0.22***
UC						0.37***
UP			0.13***			
TL*UP			0.17***			
F	0.45	53.12***	62.22***	1.19	38.19***	56.81***
R2	0.003	0.346***	0.384***	0.008	0.245***	0.367***
ΔR^2	0.003	0.340***	0.381***	0.001	0.238***	0.361***

Notes. N=595. * $p<0.01$; ** $p< 0.001$; *** $p< 0.0001$.

(2) Mediation effect test

Model 2 demonstrates a significant effect of union transformational leadership on union commitment ($\beta=0.58$, $p<0.001$), and Model 6 shows a significant effect of union commitment on union citizenship behavior ($\beta=0.37$, $p<0.001$). Additionally, the 'three-step method' measuring previous mediators was a previously widely used method in academic research. However, in recent years, many scholars have argued that traditional methods have low statistical power and are not suitable. Therefore, they propose a new testing method for mediation effects, Bootstrap.

To better test Hypothesis 2, this study conducted a Bootstrap mediation test using the SPSS plugin designed by Hayes (2013) that selected the method of adjusting bias and a 95% confidence interval. The results of the mediation test indicated that the indirect effect of union commitment was greater than 0 (LLCI= 0.190, ULCI= 0.354), showing that union commitment significantly mediates the main relationship, and the mediated effect of union commitment is 0.26. Furthermore, after controlling for the mediator variable of union commitment, union transformational leadership has a significant independent effect on union citizenship behavior ($p< 0.001$, LLCI= 0.144, ULCI= 0.305), indicating that union commitment partially mediates the relationship between union transformational leadership and union citizenship behavior. Hypothesis 2 is supported.

(3) Moderating effect test

From Model 3, it can be seen that the interaction between union transformational leadership and union practices has a significant positive effect on union commitment ($\beta= 0.17$, $p< 0.001$). To further test, this study conducted a scrutinized mediation test, and the method used was Bootstrap.

The data results indicate that union transformational leadership and union practices have a significant impact on union commitment ($p< 0.05$, LLCI= 0.068, ULCI= 0.330). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported. Specific moderation effects are illustrated in Figure 2.

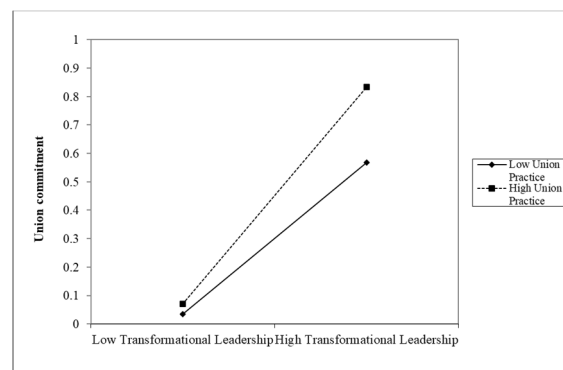


Figure 2. Moderating role of union practice

5. Discussion

5.1 Theoretical Implications

Firstly, the concept of union transformational leadership, proposed in a Western context, has received relatively little research attention in the context of Vietnamese unions. Based on the practices of Vietnamese unions and social exchange theory, this article establishes a different logical model from Western union practices. It hypothesizes that union transformational leadership influences union citizenship behavior, supported by empirical data. The article asserts that union transformational leadership has a positive relationship with union citizenship behavior, similar to the findings of Chacko and Greer (1982). This research, conducted in the Vietnamese context, not only addresses theoretical questions about improving union citizenship behavior but also delves into union theory in the context of Vietnam.

Secondly, it investigates how union transformational leadership influences union citizenship behavior. Union commitment has long been shown to have a critically important influence on union citizenship behavior. However, applying it to explain the impact of union transformational leadership on union citizenship behavior is relatively rare. The research results reveal certain intermediate mechanisms through which union transformational leadership affects union citizenship behavior. Furthermore, the mediating role of union commitment reinforces the notion of three-way determinism (Bandura, 1987), where individual behavior can

indeed shape the environment it exists in through personal initiatives, thereby affecting the formation of personal attitudes.

Thirdly, the study shows that the conditions of union transformational leadership lead to union citizenship behavior through union commitment. The research results indicate that in the context of low union practices, union commitment plays a weaker intermediate role between union transformational leadership and union citizenship behavior, as compared to the high union practices context. Therefore, the study suggests that union commitment becomes more potent as an intermediate mediator in the relationship between union transformational leadership and union citizenship behavior in high union practices contexts.

5.2 Practical Implications

The findings of the research hold significant importance in the context of Vietnam. Firstly, the study provides reference materials for the development of policies regarding the role of trade unions in enterprises in general and foreign enterprises in particular. Trade unions need to organize more professional training courses for grassroots union officials, not only focusing on training the leadership of grassroots unions but also emphasizing the knowledge level of union leaders, as they are the ones in direct contact with union members and workers. At the same time, improve organizational skills for union leaders such as propaganda skills, advocacy skills, and persuasion skills to capture the thoughts and aspirations of workers; Labor dispute resolution skills such as negotiation skills to protect the legitimate rights of workers. The process of improving the capacity of grassroots trade union officials can be through the process of organizing activities for workers at the enterprise. In addition, it is necessary to strengthen protection measures and pay more attention to the life and spirit of union leaders at enterprises. Because discriminatory acts against grassroots trade union officials are often extremely sophisticated, there is a need for a legal system to protect grassroots trade union officials. As outlined in Resolution 02-NQ/TW of the Central Committee, the tasks and solutions include "building a professional, qualified, and capable trade union cadre team to meet the requirements of new situations" and ensuring "quantity, quality, intelligence, competence, dedication, responsibility, credibility, dialogue ability, leadership, inspiration, aggregation, and unity of workers."

Secondly, for union members to grasp the values and common beliefs of the organization and be willing to support it, union leadership undergoing transformation needs to build trust and promote unity in values by conveying the significance of union values that followers believe to be right and good. Propaganda work to attract workers to join trade unions needs to be implemented as soon as workers start working. This activity can be carried out through direct exchanges and meetings between grassroots trade unions and workers. In addition, during operations, the grassroots trade union can organize competitions to learn about union organization and develop union newsletters to raise workers' awareness of the role of trade unions.

Thirdly, the regulatory role of union practices can provide theoretical guidance for union organizations and management boards in establishing the relationship between unions and workers. This research demonstrates that union practices strongly impact the relationship between union leadership and union commitment. To obtain union commitment from workers, it is not only through propaganda and mobilization activities but also through the operational activities of the union organization, concrete evidence of the role of the union organization. Therefore, Vietnamese trade unions at all levels need to strengthen the efficient organization of activities related to the representation function, protecting the legal rights and interests of workers. At the same time, the grassroots trade union also needs to grasp the situation and aspirations of workers, promptly resolve difficulties and problems of workers, and meet their legitimate aspirations; Representing employees to negotiate with employers to improve income and working conditions for employees. Thereby improving workers' trust and loyalty to the union and increasing workers' participation in union activities.

5.3 Limitations

Firstly, this study employed a cross-sectional research design, which, however, is insufficient to establish a causal relationship between union transformational leadership style and union citizenship behavior. Future research could employ a longitudinal research design to delve deeper into the causal relationship between the variables and their dynamic developmental processes.

Secondly, the study's sample was limited to data collected in the Hai Duong province. Therefore, in future research, we should expand the sample source and collect data from a wider scope to conduct a more in-depth investigation into the relationship between union transformational leadership style and union citizenship behavior.

Third, we define union transformational leadership from employees' perceptives, measuring at the individual level,

rather than the organizational or group level, which may yield distinct effects for management. Future studies may need to have a multilevel design to address this issue.

Finally, the article attempts to explore the mediating effect of union commitment and the moderating effect of union practices on the relationship between union transformational leadership and union citizenship behavior. However, theoretical research in this field is still a minority in Vietnam. In future studies, we hope to have more comprehensive theoretical studies.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Canadian Center of Science and Education.

The journal and publisher adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

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Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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