

# 주재원의 윤리적 리더십이 현지 직원의 직무성과에 미치는 영향: 발언행동의 매개효과와 CSR 인식의 조절효과를 중심으로

## Expatriate Ethical Leadership and Employee Job Performance: Mediation of Voice Behavior and Moderation of Perceived CSR\*

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This study examines the effects of expatriate ethical leadership on employee job performance. Drawing on social learning and cue consistency theories, we develop a model of the mediating effect of employee voice behavior and the moderating effect of perceived Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Using multi-source data collected from 190 employees and 28 immediate supervisors across two time points in a Mexican subsidiary, the results reveal that expatriate ethical leadership positively impacts job performance by promoting employee voice behavior. However, contrary to our expectations, the positive association between voice behavior and job performance weakens under conditions of high perceived CSR. These findings suggest that when CSR is perceived to be high, employees may feel less compelled to engage in voice behavior, which in turn may diminish the performance benefits typically associated with such proactive communication. Implications for cross-cultural leadership and CSR signaling are discussed.

Keyword: expatriate ethical leadership, voice behavior, perceived CSR, job performance

### 1. Introduction

As global production profoundly influences corporate growth, understanding and respecting

the culture and employees of host countries have emerged as a competitive advantage. Given the increasing significance of ethical management for multinational corporations (MNCs) in host countries, attention is shifting

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towards not only corporate social responsibility (CSR) but also the ethical behavior of expatriates (Marques et al., 2023; Yidong and Xinxin, 2013). However, despite the crucial role of expatriates in globalized production, empirical research on expatriate ethical leadership is lacking. Existing studies often overlook the moral and ethical capacities of expatriates in fostering an ethical organizational culture and promoting voluntary employee behaviors (Lee et al., 2017).

Expatriates play a crucial role in transferring the knowledge and core values of MNCs, thereby ensuring a cohesive and standardized corporate operation. This is especially vital considering the geographical dispersion of MNC subsidiaries, highlighting the importance of understanding and respecting the host country nationals (HCNs) and local employees (Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1990). Existing research on expatriates has predominantly centered on the expatriates themselves, often overlooking key stakeholders such as HCNs (Van Bakel and Salzbrenner, 2019). While much of the expatriate literature has focused on topics like cross-cultural adjustment and knowledge transfer (Andersen, 2021), it tends to be largely expatriate-centric (Osland, 2013), neglecting the significance of the relationships between expatriates and stakeholders (Abdul Malek et al., 2015; Fee and Gray, 2022). In this context, some studies have underscored the necessity for research on expatriate lead-

ership, highlighting the importance of various expatriate leadership types in enhancing organizational efficiency (He et al., 2022; Marques et al., 2023; Resick et al., 2006; Takeuchi, 2010).

To address the existing research gaps, this study examines how expatriate ethical leadership influences the attitudes and performance of local employees. Our specific aim is to clarify the mechanisms and conditions under which this relationship manifests. Given the diverse values, cultures, and ethical norms present in local subsidiaries, expatriates must lead in a manner that indicates understanding and respect of local employees while guiding operations and performance in alignment with the expectations, core values, and objectives of the MNC (Chang et al., 2012; Colakoglu and Caligiuri, 2008). Drawing upon social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), we posit that expatriates, acting as role models, can inspire employees to engage in voice behavior, thereby contributing to enhanced job performance among employees. Additionally, we acknowledge perceived CSR as a contextual factor that influence this relationship, based on cue consistency theory (Anderson, 1981) to understand how employees interpret their environment through various external cues.

The theoretical implications of this study are twofold. First, it highlights the significance of expatriate ethical leadership, an aspect that has been largely overlooked in existing

literature. Through data analysis, we validate that expatriate ethical leadership, characterized by its emphasis on respecting other cultures and engaging in two-way communication, positively influences the job performance of local employees in Mexico. Second, this study refines the ethical leadership literature by demonstrating a moderated mediation process, where voice behavior mediates the effect of ethical leadership on performance, and perceived CSR moderates this indirect effect. This reveals that the influence of ethical leadership on performance via voice behavior is not uniform, but contingent on employees' perceptions of CSR. The findings of this study suggest that high levels of perceived CSR are associated with a relative decline in employees' verbal behavior, which subsequently diminishes job performance. This result offers a significant theoretical implication by highlighting a potential trade-off between heightened CSR perceptions and the propensity for employee voice behavior.

## II. Literature Review

The term "expatriate" refers to an employee of a MNC who is assigned to work in a foreign branch for a specified period (Gupta et al., 2012). Expatriates play a dual role, acting as conduits for conveying the mission of the

headquarters to the subsidiary while also addressing internal issues within the subsidiary. To fulfill this dual role effectively, expatriates must function as mini-headquarters and exhibit ethical leadership qualities that inspire and empower employees with values such as integrity, resilience, and maturity. Previous research on expatriate leadership has primarily focused on the former aspect, emphasizing transformational leadership that centres on the expatriates themselves (Muenjohn, 2009; Zhou, 2017). However, in terms of the job performance of local employees, situational factors, such as the relationship between the leader and stakeholders, are equally crucial alongside the leader's individual characteristics. The ethical judgment and behavior of expatriates, particularly their willingness to listen to employees' opinions, can significantly enhance the job satisfaction and engagement of local employees (Bealer and Bhanugopan, 2014).

Ethical leadership is defined as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (Brown et al., 2005: p. 120). Moral leadership is defined as superior personal values, including self-discipline, selflessness, and integrity (He et al., 891). A common feature of ethical leadership is a reciprocal relationship between leaders and organizational members,

rooted in stakeholder theory (Brown and Treviño, 2006; Freeman, 1994). According to the stakeholder perspective, ethics transcend “a few good principles” (Soule, 2002): they encompass day-to-day ethical behavior relevant to the circumstances faced by a company’s clients, employees, and other stakeholders on a daily basis (Vanderpal and Ko, 2014).

When managing overseas subsidiaries of MNCs, the ethical competence of expatriates becomes paramount due to the necessity of resolving ethical dilemmas arising from cultural disparities between the parent company and the subsidiary. Ethical dilemmas arise from the understanding that individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds interpret ethical issues differently (Rashid and Ibrahim, 2008). Caligiuri and Tarique (2012) have identified three competencies crucial for expatriates abroad—assessing cultural differences, cultural flexibility, and tolerance for ambiguity—as pivotal factors in resolving ethical dilemmas. In a qualitative study conducted by AlMazrouei and Zacca (2015), which involved interviews with 25 expatriates in the UAE, the results underscored the importance of respectful attitudes towards local employees and integrity in communication and behaviors, given the divergent cultural backgrounds of expatriates and HCNs. Ulusemre and Fang (2022) focused on *guanxi* to investigate the role of expatriates’ ethical decision-making

processes. Through in-depth interviews with 14 expatriate managers residing in China, they argued that expatriates should function as ethical decision-makers, acting as intermediaries between ethical relativism and ethical imperialism. These studies collectively suggest that expatriate ethical leadership can effectively navigate ethical dilemmas and cultural disparities in the global business environment.

### III. Hypotheses Development

Ethical leaders make fair and impartial decisions, acknowledge appropriate behaviors, and address unethical or inappropriate conduct (Chen and Hou, 2016; Yang and Wei, 2017). This underscores the importance of clarifying the values that underpin corporate decisions and shaping the thoughts and behaviors of employees (Treviño et al., 2003). Aligned with this perspective, expatriates who exemplify morality and ethical values convey powerful messages to their followers about desirable behaviors. For instance, leaders who demonstrate integrity strive to maintain consistency in their actions in line with established principles, norms, and values (Lawton and Paez, 2015; Yukl et al., 2013). Previous literature suggests that ethical leadership can bolster self-esteem by emphasizing an

individual's commitment to ethical principles (Babalola et al., 2016). Furthermore, qualities such as honesty, trustworthiness, and integrity contribute to the development of the "moral person" aspect, empowering individuals to resist corruption, fulfil their obligations, and uphold responsibilities (Brown and Treviño, 2006; Brown et al., 2005; Heres, 2010; Lawton and Páez, 2015; Resick et al., 2006; Treviño et al., 2000; Walumbwa and Schaubroeck, 2009).

Both a moral manager and an ethical leader exhibit authenticity and base their decisions on a robust framework of ethical values and principles (Treviño et al., 2000; Yukl et al., 2013). Expatriates demonstrating ethical leadership consequently yield positive effects on employee job performance, and this study proposes three key reasons for this correlation. First, when leaders are perceived as more appealing and credible, their role modelling significantly influences employees' task performance (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Ethical leaders can effectively guide followers' behavior through role modelling, inspiring employees to emulate their values and behaviors (Bandura, 1977, 1986; Mayer et al., 2009). Employees learn the expected behavior necessary for optimal job performance (Bouckennooghe et al., 2015). Additionally, collaborating with expatriates who exhibit ethical leadership can lead to competency enhancement and improved performance among employees.

Second, since expatriates with ethical leadership are collective oriented, they prioritize organizational interests ahead of personal interests (Resick et al., 2006). Thus, they are willing to share their knowledge and skills from headquarters with HCNs and encourage them to learn and acquire capabilities to improve their performance (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Furthermore, they choose to view employees' mistakes as learning opportunities and focus on providing feedback on those mistakes.

Finally, local employees trust expatriates with ethical leadership to make fair and objective decisions and to provide performance-based rewards to local direct reports who achieve their goals in a manner consistent with their ethical values. This trust enables their organization to be more cohesive and encourages them to focus on teamwork and the immediate tasks. Moreover, several studies have demonstrated a relationship between ethical leadership and employees' job performance (Walumbwa et al., 2011; Yang and Wei, 2017). Based on the above, we hypothesize the following:

*Hypothesis 1: Expatriates' ethical leadership is positively related to the job performance of their subordinates.*

### 3.1 Mediating role of voice behavior

According to social learning theory (Bandura,

1977), individuals acquire knowledge and behaviors by observing and imitating the attitudes, values, and actions of role models. When leaders are perceived as credible and appealing, their role modelling becomes highly effective (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Leaders who prioritize ethics, engage in genuine interpersonal communication, and uphold high moral standards are often viewed as credible and attractive role models (Brown et al., 2005). Employees tend to perceive expatriates as trustworthy leaders when they consistently make moral judgments, even when their cultural backgrounds differ. When expatriate managers exhibit strong ethical values and principles, their employees are more likely to emulate their behavior, thereby feeling empowered to voice their opinions and advocate for necessary actions.

Voice behavior refers to the willingness of individuals to speak up and challenge the status quo (Van Dyne and LePine, 1998). Previous research has provided the consistent evidence indicating that ethical leadership encourages subordinates' voice behavior (Chen and Hou, 2016; Huang and Paterson, 2017). While these findings are robust, it is important to note that the empirical contexts of these studies—primarily governmental organizations or large domestic chain stores in China—represent relatively homogeneous settings in terms of cultural and organizational norms. Such environments may reinforce conformity and reduce variance in how leadership behaviors are

perceived and enacted.

Our study, by contrast, examines this relationship in the context of expatriate ethical leadership, where leaders are dispatched from the home country to manage operations abroad. This setting introduces a unique cross-cultural dynamic in which ethical leadership is not merely about norm adherence but about demonstrating genuine integrity and moral care in a culturally sensitive environment. In such contexts, local employees' voice behavior is not simply a function of organizational expectations, but may reflect a deeper and more intrinsic reaction to the authenticity and credibility of the leader's moral stance.

Therefore, we argue that when local employees perceive expatriate leaders' ethical behavior as genuine and consistent, they are more likely to engage in voice behavior, which in turn enhances their job performance. Specifically, when ethical leadership is exhibited by expatriates in a host country, it may serve as a powerful interpersonal signal that transcends cultural boundaries and fosters trust and psychological safety among local employees. In this context, voice behavior functions as a key psychological mechanism through which ethical leadership translates into improved employee outcomes.

Voice behavior is known to stimulate constructive suggestions and innovative ideas (Song et al., 2017), which can enhance job performance by generating positive feedback

loops with supervisors and peers (Fuller et al., 2007). Furthermore, employees who actively voice their opinions and concerns tend to receive higher performance appraisals (Chen and Hou, 2016; Whiting et al., 2008), reinforcing the behavioral and perceptual benefits of speaking up. Prior studies have found that voice behavior mediates the relationship between ethical leadership and task performance (e.g., Mo and Shi, 2018), but these findings have largely come from culturally homogeneous or domestic organizational settings. By examining this relationship in a cross-cultural expatriate context, our study contributes to the literature by showing that ethical leadership from expatriates can still effectively encourage meaningful voice behavior and, in turn, promote enhanced employee performance, even across cultural boundaries. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

*Hypothesis 2: Employee voice behavior mediates the positive relationship between expatriate managers' ethical leadership and employee job performance.*

### 3.2 Moderating role of perceived CSR

According to cue consistency theory (Anderson, 1981), when the cues provided by an organization are consistent, employees' attitudes and behaviors align accordingly. Ethical leadership primarily concerns the influence on

employees' ethical behavior, while ethical organizations concentrate on establishing ethical norms and standards (Kaptein, 2019). By integrating expatriate ethical leadership and CSR activities to cultivate an ethical climate, local employees may begin to perceive ethical business operation as a fundamental management philosophy and reflect this in their own behavior (Duane Hansen et al., 2016; Mayer et al., 2009).

Employees evaluate the consistency of various cues and adjust their attitudes and behavior accordingly. When multiple cues are recognized, individuals often modify their behavior, sometimes giving weight to more important cues (Anderson, 1981; Wagner et al., 2009). For instance, when organizational issues require improvement, employees may engage in voice behavior, which can enhance job performance through perceived procedural fairness (Whiting et al., 2008). Given this case, employees' active involvement can enhance organizational performance.

However, when similar signals are repeated, such as employees perceive their organization as highly committed to CSR, the impetus for voice behavior may diminish, leading to reduced performance. Since CSR activities may be interpreted as an organization's voluntary efforts to enhance the well-being of various stakeholders (De Roeck et al., 2016; Rupp et al., 2013), individual efforts may decrease in a high CSR situation. Given that CSR can be

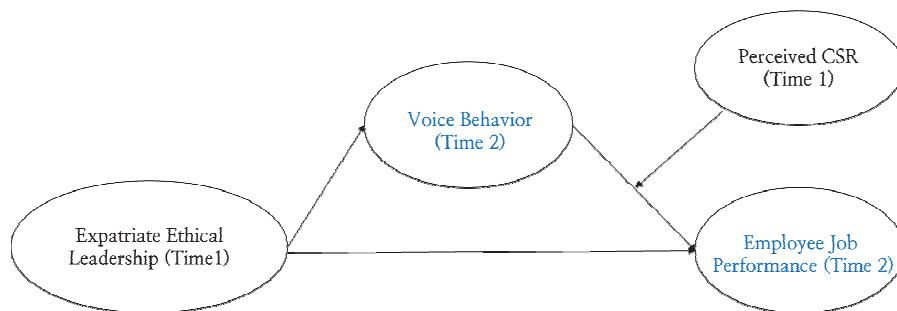
interpreted as a form of organizational justice (Mallory and Rupp, 2014), employees may perceive less necessity to speak up. That is, high levels of perceived CSR may signal that the organization already embodies just and responsible principles, thereby reducing the perceived need for individual voice. As a result, employees may feel less need to engage in voice behavior, weakening its positive effect on job performance.

*Hypothesis 3: Employees' perceived CSR moderates the relationship between voice behavior and job performance, such that this relationship is weaker when perceived CSR is high.*

Taken together, these hypotheses suggest a more nuanced mechanism by which expatriate managers' ethical leadership influences employee job performance through voice behavior, and how this mechanism is contingent upon employees' perceptions of CSR. While ethical leadership fosters employee voice be-

havior, which in turn enhances job performance, this indirect effect does not operate uniformly across all contexts. When employees perceive high levels of CSR within the organization, they may view the workplace as already embodying fairness, responsibility, and responsiveness (Wang et al., 2020). As a result, they may perceive less necessity to engage in voice behavior, weakening the influence of ethical leadership on performance through this pathway. Thus, the strength of the indirect relationship between ethical leadership and job performance via voice behavior depends on the level of perceived CSR, indicating a moderated mediation process.

*Hypothesis 4: Perceived CSR moderates the mediating effect of voice behavior on the relationship between expatriate managers' ethical leadership and employee job performance, such that the mediating effect is weaker when the level of perceived CSR is high rather than low.*



〈Figure 1〉 The proposed research model.

## IV. Methods

### 4.1 Participants and procedures

Data for this study were obtained via a questionnaire-based survey administered to both employees and their immediate supervisors at a Mexican subsidiary of an MNC specializing in home appliances production. The subsidiary, located inland in Queretaro, has been operational since 2003. Its products are sold in Mexico and exported to North America and Europe, with a significant emphasis on ethical production standards. The subsidiary's workforce includes approximately 4,000 production workers and 300 white-collar workers, with 12 expatriate managers from the parent company who play key roles in making decisions related to technology, operations, and accounting. The focus of our study is on white-collar workers, as they are generally more challenging to recruit and retain in Mexico compared to production workers. Securing high-quality office workers is essential for maintaining competitiveness in the Mexican market for MNCs.

Questionnaires were distributed to Mexican managers (immediate supervisors) and employees at two points in 2016. We obtained 197 responses (response rate: 65.7%) about expatriate ethical leadership and the perceived CSR activities from local employees (Time 1)

and, 4 weeks later, the responses of 28 Mexican managers related to employees' voice behavior and employee job performance (Time 2). Owing to incomplete answers, data from 7 respondents had to be excluded from the analysis, leaving a final sample of 190 respondents.

Since most measures in this study were adapted from prior English-language research, the original English version of the survey was translated into Spanish. To ensure measurement equivalence, we translated the original English questionnaire to Spanish and then back to English again (Brislin, 1970). A rigorous double-back translation process was then independently conducted by professional translators. The average age of the participants was 33.23 years ( $SD = 7.22$ , range = 20–61), with 68.1% being women and 31.9% men. All participants were categorized according to their organizational rank into three groups: assistant clerk (25.3%), assistant junior official (54.6%), and junior official (20.1%).

### 4.2 Measures

#### 4.2.1 Independent variable

*Expatriate ethical leadership* (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.94$ ) was measured using 10 items developed by Brown et al. (2005). This measure was also used by Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009). Two sample items are as follows: "Managers who come from headquarters listen

to what employees have to say” and “Managers who come from headquarters have the best interests of employees in mind.”

#### 1) Moderator: perceived CSR

*Perceived CSR* (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.91$ ) was measured using 9 items, including 5 developed by Hansen et al. (2011) and 4 developed by Lakshman et al. (2014). Two sample items are as follows: “My company is socially responsible” and “My company seeks suppliers with mutual interests.”

#### 2) Mediator: voice behavior

We assessed *voice behavior* (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.95$ ) using managers' ratings of 6 items developed by Van Dyne and LePine (1998). Two sample items are as follows: “This employee (Name) develops and makes recommendations concerning issues that affect this workgroup” and “This employee (Name) speaks up and encourages others in this group to get involved in issues that affect the group.”

#### 3) Dependent variable: employee job performance

We assessed *employee job performance* (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.87$ ) using managers' ratings of four items taken from the measure of job performance in Van der Vegt et al. (2000). Sample items are “This employee (Name) fulfills the responsibilities outlined in their job well” and “This employee (Name) performs

their assigned tasks well.” Survey respondents indicated the degree of their agreement with all the abovementioned items using a 5-point response format (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree).

### 4.3 Data analysis

#### 4.3.1 Confirmatory factor analysis

To assess the constructive and discriminant validity of our model, we performed a series of confirmatory factor analyses. First, we ran the four-factor model (expatriate ethical leadership, perceived CSR, voice behavior, employee job performance) to determine how well the model fitted the data (Hair et al., 2009). For the comparative fit index (CFI) and normed fit index (NFI), values close to .90 are recommended as an indication of good model fit (Hair et al., 2009; Hu and Bentler, 1999). For the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) and root mean squared residual, values less than .06 indicate a good model fit and values less than .10 an acceptable fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1993). The four-factor model showed a good model fit ( $\chi^2 = 703.78$ ,  $df = 242$ ,  $CFI = 0.94$ ,  $NFI = 0.90$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.05$ ), as shown in Table 1. Next, we formulated alternative three-factor models for comparison with our four-factor models. In these alternative models, we combined expatriate managers' ethical leadership and per-

〈Table 1〉 Confirmatory factor analysis of the models

Models	$\chi^2$ (df)	CFI	NFI	RMSEA
Four-factor model	703.78 (242)	.94	.90	.05
Three-factor model <sup>a</sup>	1507.04 (374)	.81	.77	.10

Note:  $\chi^2$  = chi-squared discrepancy, df = degrees of freedom, CFI = comparative fit index, NFI = normed fit index, RMSEA = root mean squared error of approximation.

<sup>a</sup> Ethical leadership and perceived CSR combined into a single factor, compared to the four-factor model.

ceived CSR into a single category. As Table 1 reveals, the alternative models yielded an unacceptable model fit.

#### 4.3.2 Common method bias test

When data are self-reported, common method bias may occur. Thus, before testing our hypotheses, this study performed preliminary analyses to assess the potential for common method bias. To address this issue, we conducted Harman's single-factor test by performing an exploratory factor analysis with four substantive variables (Podsakoff and Organ, 1986). Common method bias is thought to be present when the resulting factor explains more than 50% of the variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). When examining the variables' unrotated factorial structure, the first factor accounted for 34.25% of the variance, compared to 71.72%, explained by all factors. These results indicate that a single factor does not account for most of the variance in our data. In addition, we utilized the "single unmeasured latent method factor" proposed by Podsakoff et al. (2003) to more rigorously

diagnose common method bias. The analysis showed that the variance explained by common method bias was 22.36% of the total variance, which is lower than the 25% suggested by Williams et al. (1989) as an acceptable level. Taken together, these results suggest that the common method bias in this study is not significant enough to distort the results.

## V. Hypothesis Testing and Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables are presented in Table 2. In general, coefficients above 0.7 may increase the likelihood of multicollinearity in a regression analysis (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996). All correlations in our study were below this threshold, indicating that all measures were appropriate for inclusion in the analyses.

As shown in Table 3, ethical expatriate leadership is positively associated with employee job performance ( $\beta = .15, p < 0.01$ ).

〈Table 2〉 Means, standard deviations, and correlations

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	32.57	7.3							
2. Gender	1.36	.48	-.19**						
3. Seniority	69.49	33.29	.43**	-.13					
4. Education level	3.74	1.29	.02	-.05	-.15*				
5. Ethical leadership	3.43	.95	.12	.02	.09	.01			
6. Perceived CSR	4.05	.71	.05	.11	-.05	-.06	.56**		
7. Voice behavior	3.51	.97	.16*	.03	.12	.10	.19**	.08	
8. Employee job performance	4.14	.73	.01	.15*	-.01	-.01	.21**	.14	.58**

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$ .

〈Table 3〉 Results of the direct effects

Path	$\beta$	t-value	P	Bias-corrected Percentile 95% CI	
				Lower	Upper
EEL → EJP	0.15	2.80	.00	.05	0.26
Controls					
Age → EJP	0.01	0.17	.87	-0.01	0.02
Gender → EJP	0.22	1.98	.05	-0.01	0.43
Seniority → EJP	0.00	-0.12	.90	-0.01	0.01
Education → EJP	-0.01	-0.13	.90	-0.08	0.07

Note: EEL = Expatriate ethical leadership; EJP = Employee job performance, CI = Confidence of interval

Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported.

Hypothesis 2 was evaluated using path analysis conducted in SPSS version 25 with the PROCESS model, which employs a regression-based approach to examine direct and indirect effects through bootstrapping (5,000 iterations). To assess the mediation effect of voice behavior (Hypothesis 2), PROCESS model 4, as suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2004), was utilized. As presented in Table 4, the findings reveal a significant and positive as-

sociation between expatriate ethical leadership and voice behavior ( $\beta = 0.17$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, voice behavior demonstrates a significant relationship with employee job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.34$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). This outcome confirms the indirect effect, as bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals do not include zero ( $\beta = 0.07$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is supported.

To examine the moderating role of perceived CSR (Hypotheses 3 and 4), we analyzed the conditional direct effects model using process

〈Table 4〉 Results of the direct and indirect effects (Process model 4)

	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Direct effects				
EEL → VB	0.17*	0.07	0.03	0.31
VB → EJP	0.43**	0.05	0.34	0.52
EEL → EJP	0.15**	0.05	.05	0.26
EEL → EJP (after controlling for VB)	0.08	0.05	-0.01	0.17
Indirect effects (EEL → VB → EJP)				
VB	0.07	0.04	0.01	0.15

Note: VB = Voice behavior; LLCI = lower level confidence interval; ULCI = upper level confidence interval.

\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\* $p < 0.01$

〈Table 5〉 Results of conditional effects (Process model 14)

Path	$\beta$	t-value	P	Bias-corrected Percentile 95% CI	
				Lower	Upper
Constant	0.09	0.09	0.92	-1.75	1.93
EEL → JP	0.06	1.15	0.24	-0.04	0.17
VB → JP	1.13	4.36	0.00	0.62	1.64
CSR → JP	0.61	2.72	0.00	0.16	1.05
VB × CSR → JP	-0.17	-2.72	0.00	-0.28	-0.04
Controls					
Age → JP	-0.01	-0.87	0.38	-0.02	0.01
Gender → JP	0.15	1.63	0.10	-0.03	0.32
Seniority → JP	-0.00	-0.96	0.33	-0.00	0.00
Education → JP	-0.04	-1.22	0.22	-0.11	0.03

\* $p < .05$ ; \*\* $p < .01$

methodology (model 14). As illustrated in Table 5, the interaction term between voice behavior and perceived CSR exhibits significance on job performance ( $\beta = -0.17$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Furthermore, the results in Table 6 indicate that the conditional indirect effects of expatriate ethical leadership and employee job performance through voice behavior are

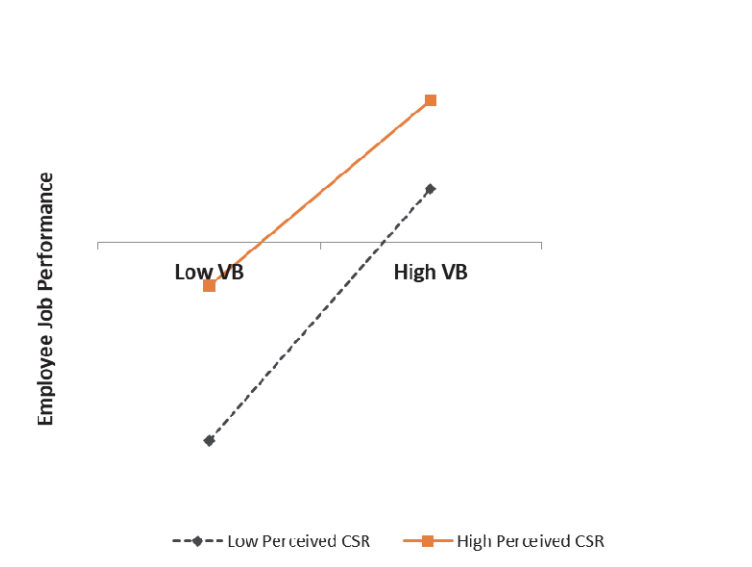
significant across three values of perceived CSR: at the mean, 1SD below the mean, and 1SD above the mean. These results support Hypothesis 3. Moreover, Furthermore, the index of the moderated mediation in Table 7 confirms that the indirect effects of expatriate ethical leadership through voice behavior on employee job performance are weakened un-

〈Table 6〉 Conditional indirect effects on values of the moderator in the EEL - VB - JP relationship

Perceived CSR	Effect	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
3.39	0.56	0.06	0.43	0.69
4.05	0.45	0.04	0.36	0.54
4.89	0.31	0.06	0.19	0.43

〈Table 7〉 Index of moderated mediatio

	Index	Boot SE	LLCI	ULCI
Perceived CSR	-0.03	0.15	-0.06	-0.01



〈Figure 2〉 Plot of the interaction between voice behavior and perceived CSR predicting job performance

der high perceived CSR. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is supported.

Figure 2 indicates that when perceived CSR is high, the positive effects of voice behavior on job performance are weaker than when perceived CSR is low.

## VI. Discussion

### 6.1 Theoretical Implications

Few previous studies have focused on the capacity of expatriate leaders to address eth-

ical dilemmas (Banai and Sama, 2000; Resick et al., 2006). Insufficient attention has been devoted to the ethical leadership of expatriate managers, who possess extensive knowledge about the requirements of both the headquarters and the foreign subsidiary within MNCs (Tan and Wang, 2011). Most studies have concentrated on expatriate selection and training (Tahir, 2018), adjustment processes (Kraimer et al., 2001; Takeuchi, 2010; Wu et al., 2023), success or failure rates (Haile and White, 2019; Zhou, 2021), or knowledge transfer (Chang et al., 2012; Colakoglu and Caligiuri, 2008; Paik and Sohn, 2004). While these findings clarify the significance of expatriate managers' capabilities within MNCs, their ethical responsibilities as representatives of the headquarters have been largely overlooked.

Our study highlights the significance of expatriates' ethical leadership within the MNC context, a dimension often overlooked in previous expatriate-centric studies on global leadership (Osland, 2013), which have tended to disregard stakeholders such as HCNs. Additionally, it highlights the expatriate's multifaceted role, which extends beyond mere knowledge transfer within the firm (Chang et al., 2012; Colakoglu and Caligiuri, 2008). Expatriates also play pivotal roles in resolving ethical dilemmas (Banai and Sama, 2000; Chen et al., 2017; Resick et al., 2006; Ulusemre and Fang, 2022) and managing decision-making

processes between the company headquarters and its subsidiaries (Tan and Wang, 2011).

Furthermore, our findings identify the mechanism through which expatriate ethical leadership influences employee job performance, drawing on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). Ethical leadership demonstrated by expatriate managers can serve as a guiding example for employee behavior through role modelling, transcending cultural differences. The perceived morality of expatriate leaders may vary depending on the frame of reference. We contribute to understanding this relationship by demonstrating that voice behavior, which constitutes extra-role behavior, mediates the effects of ethical expatriate leadership on employee job performance. While previous studies have highlighted the positive impact of ethical leadership on improved job performance, they have predominantly focused on motivational and perceptual aspects (Bouckenoghe et al., 2015; Tu et al., 2019). However, our study suggests that voice behavior, a challenging and promotive extra-role behavior, is encouraged by ethical leaders as role models, thereby enhancing job performance. Notably, voice behavior involves intentions to improve the work environment rather than merely criticizing. In other words, local employees feel secure to speak up to correct unethical or inappropriate practices without fear of negative repercussions for their challenging behavior. Given the context where local em-

ployees work with expatriate leaders who have different cultural backgrounds, this is a remarkable finding.

Additionally, employing cue consistency theory (Anderson, 1981), our study investigates the contingent role of perceived CSR. Consistent cues between organizational values and expatriate ethical leadership regarding stakeholder welfare could be crucial for shaping employee attitudes and behavior. However, our findings indicate that even when expatriates demonstrate fairness and ethical behavior towards local employees, their moral conduct may be less effective if the company is committed to socially responsible activities. These findings imply that in organizations with well-established internal CSR initiatives, the impact of employee voice may be mitigated. Conversely, in environments with low CSR, the voice effect of employees may contribute to improved job performance. While prior studies have explored the positive influence of CSR on employee voice (e.g., Wang et al., 2020), they have not clarified how the voice effect may vary depending on CSR. This study extends existing research by examining the circumstances under which perceived CSR can offset effects on employee job performance.

Our findings offer practical insights for both headquarters and local subsidiaries' management. First, while cultural adaptation and knowledge transfer remain crucial, the selection and training of expatriates in MNCs should pri-

oritize their ethical leadership skills. Expatriates in leadership positions within subsidiaries play a significant role in shaping the ethical climate of overseas operations. Therefore, MNCs should prioritize the selection and training of expatriate leaders with robust ethical standards. Training programs should incorporate ethical decision-making, transparent communication, and responsible behavior to ensure managers are equipped to demonstrate ethical leadership effectively. Second, local management should focus on enhancing CSR principles and aligning them with the ethical leadership of expatriates. For local employees, consistency between the organization's CSR initiatives and expatriates' ethical leadership fosters a cohesive and credible corporate image. Additionally, local managers should enhance organizational culture and encourage open communication to promote employee voice behavior.

## 6.2 Limitations and future research

Several limitations in this study suggest avenues for future research. First, this study collected expatriate ethical leadership data from local employees, while the respondents (local employees)' job evaluations were obtained from their immediate supervisors, and the responses were time-lagged. However, the time-lagged approach was underutilized by measuring voice behavior and job evaluations at the same time. Future studies should be

carefully designed to minimize common method bias, such as measuring parameters at different times from the dependent variable. Although we employed a time-lagged approach with a 4-week interval between ethical leadership and employee behavior and performance, the duration may not have been sufficiently long. Given the principles of social learning and cue consistency, an extended timeframe could provide deeper insights.

Second, the outcomes of our study may be influenced by the duration of expatriate dispatch. Expatriates, typically mid-level managers, are often assigned to local subsidiaries for 4 - 5 years. Future research should explore whether our findings can be generalized across different dispatch periods, ranging from newly dispatched expatriate managers to those nearing the end of their assignment. Third, our measurement of ethical expatriate leadership relied on data collected from Mexican white-collar workers, who constitute local employees with potentially different levels of commitment and attitudes toward the organization compared to production workers. Future studies could explore the impact of ethical expatriate leadership on blue-collar and non-clerical workers within local entities.

Finally, this study examined the effectiveness of leadership, measuring it at the individual level. However, since leadership is a concept that may be more appropriately examined at the team or group level, future stud-

ies should actively consider research models that enable multilevel analysis to analyze leadership at the group level.

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