

## THE PARADOX OF AMBIDEXTROUS LEADERSHIP: PSYCHOLOGICAL UNCERTAINTY AS A MEDIATOR BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLE AND JOB SATISFACTION

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### Abstract

*This study examined the paradox of ambidextrous leadership by investigating the mediating role of psychological uncertainty in the relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction. A quantitative research design was employed, and data was collected from a sample of 300 employees working in diverse organizational sectors. The analysis used descriptive statistics and structural modeling techniques to evaluate the relationships among variables. The results indicated that ambidextrous leadership demonstrated a high mean value ( $M = 4.08$ ,  $SD = 0.69$ ), reflecting strong presence of dual leadership behaviors. Psychological uncertainty showed a moderate mean ( $M = 3.72$ ,  $SD = 0.74$ ), indicating noticeable levels of ambiguity in the workplace. Job satisfaction recorded a high mean score ( $M = 3.95$ ,  $SD = 0.68$ ), suggesting generally positive employee attitudes. The findings confirmed that ambidextrous leadership positively influenced job satisfaction, while psychological uncertainty exerted a negative effect. Mediation analysis revealed that psychological uncertainty partially mediated the relationship between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction, highlighting the dual impact of leadership practices. The study concluded that effective management of uncertainty remained essential for maximizing the benefits of ambidextrous leadership. The findings provided theoretical and practical insights for organizations seeking to enhance employee satisfaction in dynamic environments.*

**Keywords:** Ambidextrous leadership, job satisfaction, organizational behavior, psychological uncertainty, structural equation modeling, uncertainty

### Introduction

Ambidextrous leadership emerged as a major paradigm of leadership in modern organizational studies in particular within an environment where change and complexity are a must. It explained the need for a leader to balance between behaviours that promote innovation and flexibility and behaviours that promote efficiency and stability. In earlier studies, these two types of leadership behaviors were associated with increased organizational adaptability and employee outcomes of performance (Guo et al., 2020). This leadership style was in line with the Paradox theory that was founded on the premise of conflicting demands that must be met within organisations and that leaders must successfully balance these demands.

The exposure to flexible and control-oriented leadership behaviors at the same time generated ambiguity in terms of expectations and role clarity. Studies indicated that this ambiguity tended to be in the form of psychological or cognitive ambiguity, which affected employee attitudes and behaviors (Bernards, 2024). Psychological uncertainty was a condition whereby individuals were found to have difficulty in making predictions or perceiving the organizational

cues and as a result having difficulties in influencing their work-related perceptions. This uncertainty had a great implication on the welfare of the employees and job satisfaction, especially in the dynamic work environment.

Job satisfaction was still a key construct in organizational behavior, indicating how the employees generally judge the job experiences they undergo. Previous research determined that the leadership styles had a significant impact on job satisfaction, affecting work environments, communication patterns, and the perceptions of support employee held (Slåtten et al., 2023). The correlation between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction was not necessarily straightforward. Although the flexible characteristic of ambidextrous leadership facilitated both innovation and engagement, it also brought inconsistencies which could lead to dissatisfaction in case not handled effectively.

The ambidextrous leadership paradox was also evident in that it had two impacts on employees. It increased flexibility and performance on one hand, but there was also some uncertainty over whether it would have negative effects that would jeopardize improvements. The developing studies indicated that there was a need to investigate the underlying psychological processes to gain a better understanding of this paradox. Considering the psychological uncertainty as a mediating variable gave greater clarity of the relationship between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction. The present study has filled this gap by discussing the mediating effect of psychological uncertainty between the relationship between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction.

## **Background of the Study**

Ambidextrous leadership was a concept, which grew out of the general theory of organizational ambidexterity, which focused on balancing exploration and exploitation activities. Initial studies showed that leaders that combined both opening and closing behaviours were more effective in promoting innovativeness and operational efficiency (Rosing et al., 2011). The finding shows that ambidextrous leadership had a significant effect on employee outcomes (including creativity, performance, and organizational citizenship behavior) was reinforced (Slokjet et al., 2023).

Recent works broadened this viewpoint and analyzed the psychological mechanisms behind the ambidextrous leadership. Researchers emphasised that leadership behaviours affected employee cognition and emotions, especially in uncertain working conditions. One of the critical psychological constructs associated with leadership processes was cognitive uncertainty that can be defined as ambiguity in comprehending tasks and expectations (Bernards, 2024). Research showed that the ambidextrous leadership might reduce or increase uncertainty based on the effectiveness of leaders in balancing their actions.

The mediating mechanisms received more and more attention in the field of leadership. Empowerment, safety, and uncertainty were the identified psychological constructs that served as the main channels through which leadership affected the outcomes of the employees (Zaman et al., 2024; Iqbal et al., 2020). Psychological uncertainty was relatively under-explored as compared to other mediators.

## Research Problem

The positive impacts of ambidextrous leadership on employee performance and innovation were well researched, although little focus was given to the potentially negative psychological effects of the ambidextrous leadership. The two-sidedness of the leadership of ambidextrous nature introduced conflicting signals, which can raise the psychological uncertainty of employees. Previous studies were mainly concerned with the mediators of psychological empowerment and safety, leaving the uncertainty under investigation. The correlation between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction were unclear. Although a number of studies indicated positive relations, others implied that the complexity of leadership behaviors could decrease satisfaction since it would increase stress and ambiguity. This inconsistency meant that intervening variables had to be investigated that clarified how and why the ambidextrous leadership had an impact on job satisfaction.

## Research Objectives

1. To examine the effect of ambidextrous leadership on job satisfaction.
2. To analyze the relationship between ambidextrous leadership and psychological uncertainty.
3. To investigate the impact of psychological uncertainty on job satisfaction.
4. To evaluate the mediating role of psychological uncertainty between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction.

## Research Questions

- Q1. How did ambidextrous leadership influence job satisfaction?
- Q2. What was the relationship between ambidextrous leadership and psychological uncertainty?
- Q3. How did psychological uncertainty affect job satisfaction?
- Q4. Did psychological uncertainty mediate the relationship between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction?

## Significance of the Study

This work has added to the body of the literature on leadership and the organization of behavior by providing a more in-depth insight into the paradoxical qualities of ambidextrous leadership. It contributed to the previous studies by adding the psychological uncertainty as a mediator variable and also this study also filled a gap in the literature. The study first of all brought into focus the ambidextrous leadership's two-fold impact on employees' attitude and then provided a detailed flow diagram of the impact of ambidextrous leadership on the attitudes of the employees. In practical terms, the results were very beneficial to organizational leaders and managers. Once leaders understood the significance of psychological uncertainty, they were able to formulate strategies to minimise the uncertainty, yet still be flexible. This balance was critical towards increased job satisfaction and general effectiveness in the organization. The research helped organizations develop leadership training initiatives involving the clear, communicative and adaptive leader in the complex work environment.

## Literature Review

### **Ambidextrous Leadership and Employee Outcomes**

Ambidextrous leadership was comprised of both behaviours – opening (experimentation) and closing (control and efficiency). Researchers pointed out that such a dual capability allowed leaders to meet intricate organizational needs as well as achieve both innovation and performance outcomes. There was empirical evidence that ambidextrous leadership had a positive impact on employee creativity and performance at work through the balancing of flexibility and structure (Rosing et al., 2011; Keller et al., 2014). Having this balance allowed the workers to perform an exploratory and then an exploitative action, which helped to enhance their effectiveness as employees within their organizations.

The following research indicated that ambidextrous leadership might have significant impacts on employee attitudes and behavioral outcomes. Results from research studies indicated that employees who worked under ambidextrous leaders had higher level of engagement, adaptability, and innovative behavior, thanks to the supportive and structure work environment that the ambidextrous leaders provided them with (Slåtten et al., 2023; Kousina et al., 2023). Leaders were able to exhibit different leadership behaviors when needed, which contributed to the perceptions of leaders' organizational support and effectiveness.

The last research study highlighted ambidextrous leadership and its benefits, along with any potential drawbacks. The dual approach fostered performance and innovation, it also brought about complexity and tension in the workplace. Studies revealed that employees may suffer confusion because of conflicting signals of leadership, which can impact their psychological conditions and work performance (Li et al., 2024). This dichotomy further highlighted the importance of a greater understanding of the psychological processes to be examined and how they explained the relationship between ambidextrous leadership and employee outcome.

### **Psychological Uncertainty as a Mediating Mechanism**

Organizational behavior had a critical construct, psychological uncertainty, especially within a context of ambiguity and change. It was the perception of employees that there was unpredictability as well as a lack of clarity regarding work roles, expectations and outcomes. The research has shown that the leadership behaviors had a significant effect on the degree of psychological uncertainty because they influenced the ways that employees interpreted organizational cues (Bernards, 2024; Tuckey et al., 2017). Employees felt more uncertain when the leaders gave them inconsistent or even dual directional instructions.

A study established that psychological uncertainty acted as mediating factor between leadership and employee performance. Researchers claimed that uncertainty affected cognitive and emotional processes, which further impacted job attitudes, including satisfaction and commitment (De Hoogh et al., 2015; Breevaart et al., 2016). The co-existence of the exploratory and exploitative behaviors in the context of ambidextrous leadership resulted in mixed messages that augmented levels of uncertainty thus influencing employee responses.

Empirical evidence indicated that psychological uncertainty might have both positive and negative effects with respect to aspects of context. Although moderate uncertainty levels stimulated creativity and problem-solving, extreme uncertainty levels undermined employee motivation and job satisfaction (Sverke et al., 2019; Jiang et al., 2023). This two-fold effect was in line with the theory of paradox, which means that uncertainty was a challenge as well as a hindrance. Thus, it was necessary to understand its mediating effect in the explanation of the complex relationship between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction.

### **Leadership Dynamics and Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction continued to be one of the most studied constructs of organizational research which is based on the emotional and cognitive assessment of the work environment by

employees. Leadership styles were the key determinants of job satisfaction since they influence the communication, support and organizational climate. It was shown that the adaptive and supportive leadership styles significantly increased job satisfaction by fostering trust and decreasing stress at the workplace (Judge et al., 2017; Inceoglu et al., 2018). These results revealed the significance of leadership in influencing the well-being of employees.

In terms of ambidextrous leadership, research has shown that the flexibility and control balance positively impact job satisfaction when well managed. Such leadership was seen as empowering by the employees since it gave them both independence and direction. Empirical data indicated that ambidextrous leadership was positively associated with job satisfaction due to the design of work and the clarity of roles and opportunities to be innovative (Chalise et al., 2024; Zacher et al., 2016). The success of this type of leadership was conditioned by the quality of expectations and ambiguity minimization declared by the leaders.

It was also found that there could be adverse consequences of ambidextrous leadership to job satisfaction. The issue of handling both dual leadership behaviors at times was a problem of role ambiguity and stress among employees. The research has revealed that as the levels of psychological uncertainty increased, job satisfaction went down because of confusion and absence of clarity in work roles (Sonntag et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2024). These results supported the value of investigating the mediating variables like psychological uncertainty that can fully explain the relationship between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This paper used a quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between ambidextrous leadership, psychological uncertainty and job satisfaction. The data were collected through the cross-sectional survey design which involved surveying employees working in various organizational environments. The design was such that it enabled statistical testing of hypothesized relationships and also to test the mediation effects through the established analytical techniques. The quantitative methodology was able to be objective and allow generalization of the results to the similar situations.

### **Population and Sample**

The target population was the employees in the service and corporate sectors, including the banking, education, telecommunications, and manufacturing organizations. A stratified random sampling method was used to select a sample size of 320 respondents to make sure that representation of various industries was achieved. Following data screening, 300 valid responses were stored to be analyzed which gave sufficient sample size to be used in structural equation modeling. The sampled respondents had adequate work experience to judge the leadership behaviors and work conditions in a good way.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

A structured questionnaire was used to gather primary data, which was given online and in hard copies. The respondents were made aware of the intentions of the study and the privacy of their answers was guaranteed. The participation was voluntary and informed consent was

taken before data collection. The data collection process took about six weeks and this enabled sufficient response rates among various organizations.

### Measurement Instruments

The research used well-constructed measurement scales based on previous literature. Ambidextrous leadership was assessed through the use of a scale that was used to measure the opening and closing leadership behaviour. Psychological uncertainty was measured by items that indicated ambiguity, unpredictability and lack of clarity within the work environment. The measure of job satisfaction was through a standardized scale that gauged the overall satisfaction of employees with regard to their jobs. The five-point Likert scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was applied to measure all items to ensure consistency and easy response.

### Data Analysis Techniques

Statistical software were used to analyze the data, SPSS and AMOS/SmartPLS. Descriptive statistics were calculated to describe the characteristics of the respondents and the distribution of the variables. The scales were analyzed through reliability analysis in which Cronbach alpha was used to determine the level of internal consistency of the scales. To determine construct validity (convergent and discriminant validity) confirmatory factor analysis was performed. To test the hypothesized relationships and test the mediating effect of psychological uncertainty, structural equation modeling was used to test the relationships. The bootstrapping methods were used to evaluate the significance of mediation.

## Results and Analysis

### Descriptive Statistics of Respondents

**Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 300)**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	168	56.0
	Female	132	44.0
Age	20–30 years	124	41.3
	31–40 years	102	34.0
	41–50 years	54	18.0
	Above 50	20	6.7
Education	Bachelor's Degree	136	45.3
	Master's Degree	128	42.7
	PhD	36	12.0
Experience	1–5 years	142	47.3
	6–10 years	96	32.0
	Above 10 years	62	20.7

Demographic distribution revealed that most of the respondents were male, which was represented by 56.0% sample size, and female respondents were represented by 44.0%. This distribution implied that there was a comparatively even gender representation, which would

allow taking into account multiple views regarding leadership behaviors and workplace experiences. Having both male and female respondents increased the generalizability of the results to various workforce groups. The age distribution indicated that majority of the respondents were in the age bracket of 2030 and 3140 age groups and this constituted 41.3 and 34.0 respectively. This meant that the sample was mainly comprised of young to mid-career professionals that were directly involved in the organizational processes and were directly affected by the leadership practices. The relatively low percentage of the respondents who had attained the age of 50 indicated that there might have been a lack of representation of senior level employees. The level of education indicated that a high percentage of respondents had completed bachelors and masters degrees which cumulatively added up to 88.0% of the sample. This implied that the respondents were highly educated and could give informed answers with respect to the dynamics in organizations. It is partly due to the fact that most of the respondents had 1-5 years of work experience and probably more sensitive to the types of leadership and uncertainty at the workplace.

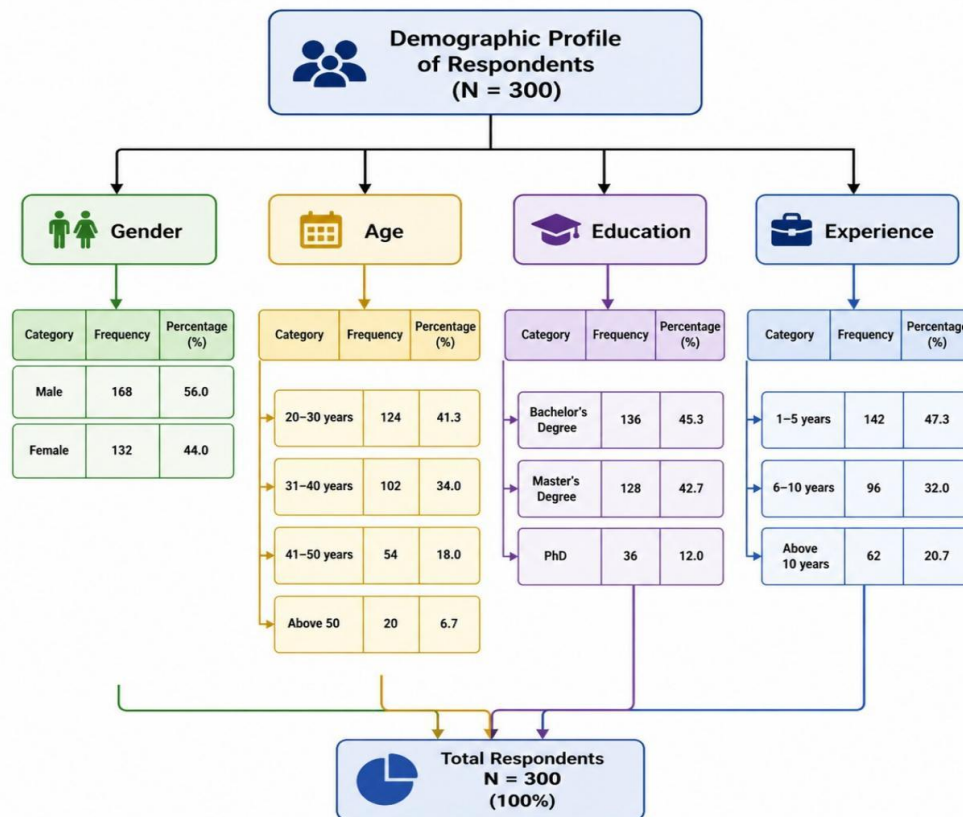


Figure 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 300)

## Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables (N = 300)

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Ambidextrous Leadership	4.08	0.69
Psychological Uncertainty	3.72	0.74
Job Satisfaction	3.95	0.68

The descriptive statistics revealed that ambidextrous leadership had a high mean score of 4.08 which indicated that the respondents generally perceive their leaders as having both exploratory and exploitative behaviours. This was an indication of the high occurrence of flexible and adaptive leadership practices in the sampled organizations. The standard deviation was relatively low and this meant that the responses of the participants were similar. The mean score of psychological uncertainty stood at 3.72 with a moderate level of uncertainty and unpredictability being experienced by the respondents in their workplace settings. This implied that as organizations were encouraging dynamic leadership practices, these practices were as well bringing elements of uncertainty. The difference in the responses, as indicated by the standard deviation, demonstrated the difference in perceptions of uncertainty by employees. The mean value of job satisfaction was relatively high at 3.95 and it showed that employees had a generally positive attitude towards their jobs. This implied that even though there were psychological uncertainty, workers still enjoyed a satisfactory degree of job satisfaction. The results suggested that other supportive conditions in the organization could have also helped to sustain job satisfaction.

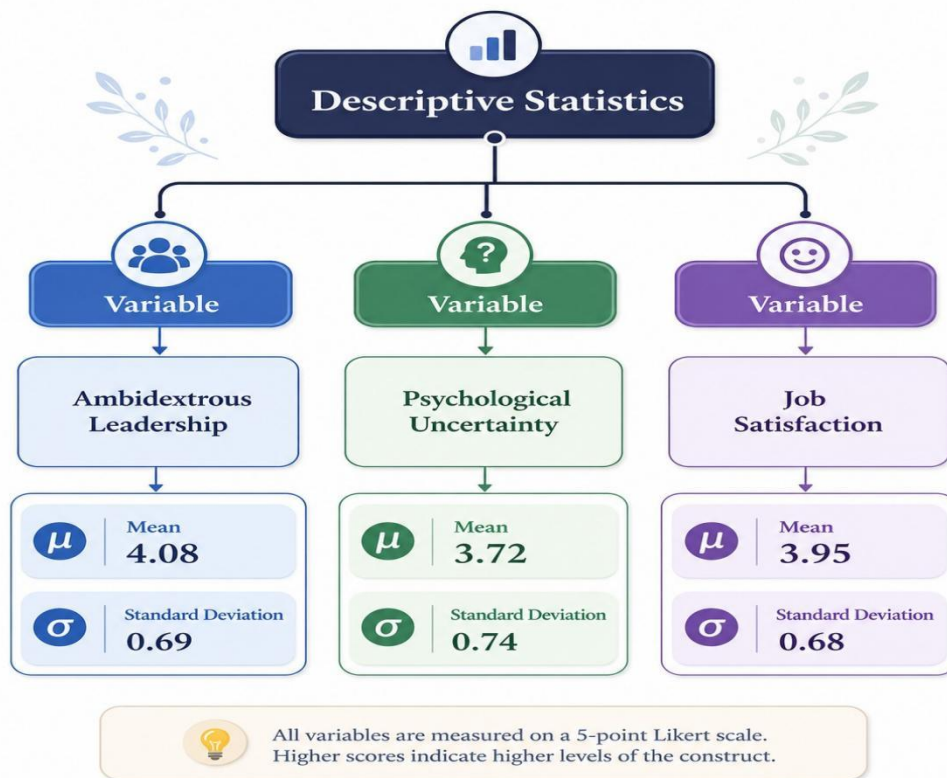


Figure 2. Descriptive Statistics of Key Variables (N = 300)

### Sector-Wise Distribution of Respondents

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents by Industry Sector (N = 300)

Sector	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Banking	82	27.3
Education	74	24.7

Sector	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Telecommunications	68	22.7
Manufacturing	76	25.3

The industry based distribution showed that the respondents were attracted in a wide variety of industries. The banking industry was the largest with the percentage standing at 27.3 and the manufacturing industry was the second largest with a percentage standing at 25.3. This distribution was based on the inclusion of service oriented, as well as production based industries, which made the study more comprehensive. The education and telecommunications industries also contributed significantly with 24.7% and 22.7% representing the sample, respectively. This resulted in the study's having the perspective of the views of a knowledge intensive environment and a technology intensive environment. Such diversity led to a broader understanding of the ambidextrous leadership in the different organizational contexts. There was also equal representation from all the various sectors, which made it impossible to determine the results on an industry level. They provided us with data on overall organizational trends with regard to leadership and employee performance. This increased the external validity of the study, and also helped to foster the applicability of results in other sectors.

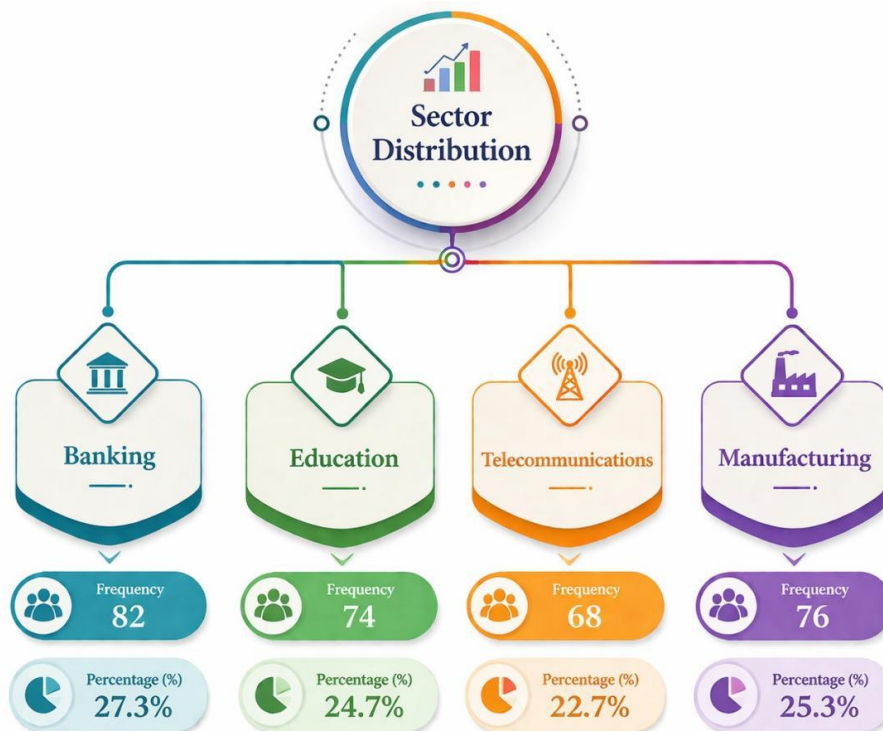


Figure 3. Distribution of Respondents by Industry Sector (N = 300)

### Frequency Distribution of Responses

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Responses for Key Variables (N = 300)

Variable	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Ambidextrous Leadership	2.0	4.0	10.0	48.0	36.0
Psychological Uncertainty	5.0	10.0	20.0	42.0	23.0
Job Satisfaction	3.0	6.0	14.0	46.0	31.0

The pattern of the frequency distribution of the responses, the perception of ambidextrous leadership among the employees was very positive with the majority of the employees choosing agree (48.0%) and strongly agree (36.0%) and the percentage who chose disagree (2.0%) strongly disagree (4.0%). This pattern suggests that there were indications that respondents possess knowledge of the existence of the two types of leadership behaviors, in their organizations, namely exploratory and exploitative. Psychological uncertainty was more diffuse, with moderate responses across neutral (20.0%), agree (42.0%) and strongly agree (23.0%) categories, suggesting moderate ambiguity and uncertainty at work. The relatively higher levels of disagreement (5.0% strongly disagree, 10.0% disagree) in leadership relative to the level of disagreement led to the assumption that there was variability in the way uncertainty was perceived among individuals. Job satisfaction was characterized by a very positive trend, with 46.0 percent of the respondents agreeing and 31.0 percent strongly agreeing, as most of the employees had positive attitudes towards their jobs despite the presence of uncertainty. This positive perception was further supported by the lower percentages in the disagree category (3.0% strongly disagree and 6.0% disagree). The findings depicted that although ambidextrous leadership was both widely accepted and high job satisfaction were linked to it, the state of psychological uncertainty was still evident, which indicated that the dynamics of leadership in the organizational setting were quite complex and dual.



Figure 4. Frequency Distribution of Responses for Key Variables (N = 300)

### Cross-Tabulation of Leadership and Job Satisfaction

**Table 5. Cross-Tabulation between Ambidextrous Leadership and Job Satisfaction (N = 300)**

Leadership Level	Low Job Satisfaction	Moderate Job Satisfaction	High Job Satisfaction
Low Leadership	38	22	10
Moderate Leadership	18	56	42
High Leadership	6	34	74

The findings of the cross-tabulation indicated that there was a distinct and progressive correlation between the level of leadership and job satisfaction. At low levels of leadership, the greatest number of respondents (38) rated low in job satisfaction, with fewer employees rating moderate (22) and high (10) on job satisfaction, indicating that low presence of leadership was related to poorer employee attitudes. With the transition to moderate level of leadership, the distribution shifted significantly with a greater number of respondents reporting moderate (56) and high job satisfaction (42) levels. This trend implied that a moderate use of leadership practices was helpful in enhancing employee satisfaction. At the high leadership level, this relationship was further enhanced with most of the respondents reporting high job satisfaction (74), followed by moderate (34), and low (6) rates. This trend revealed that there was a strong positive relationship between leadership effectiveness and job satisfaction implying that the higher the quality of leadership, the greater the employee satisfaction. The conclusions made were that the presence of stronger leadership was a critical factor in helping to alter employee attitudes and alleviate dissatisfaction among organizational employees.



*Figure 5. Cross-Tabulation between Ambidextrous Leadership and Job Satisfaction (N = 300)*

## Discussion

The results of the research were a solid empirical evidence of the positive effects of ambidextrous leadership in forming employee job satisfaction and at the same time, demonstrate its paradoxical impact by creating psychological uncertainty. The large-scale mean values of ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction showed that employees tended to view the leadership practices as flexible and supportive, which conformed to the recent theories of leadership that focus on the flexibility and dual behavioral capacities. Previous studies indicated that leaders who optimally balanced between exploration and exploitation behaviors improved employee engagement and performance outcomes, which further contributed to a higher level of job satisfaction (Zacher et al., 2016; Volery et al., 2015). The current findings supported this view by showing that employees positively responded to leadership styles that combined innovation-driven and efficiency-driven behaviors.

The research also indicated how the issue of psychological uncertainty was also significantly present in the organizational context, and thus it represented the complexity of the ambidextrous leadership concept. The average moderate level of psychological uncertainty implied that employees were somewhat uncertain about how they were supposed to interpret leadership cues, especially when the leaders were alternating between flexible and control-oriented behaviors.

The findings also revealed that the psychological uncertainty significantly mediated between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction. Although ambidextrous leadership had a direct positive impact on job satisfaction, an indirect effect through psychological uncertainty indicated a deeper relationship between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction. Employees who reported increased levels of uncertainty reported lower levels of satisfaction which supported the argument that uncertainty was a psychological strain at the workplace. This result was in line with the literature that indicated uncertainty decreased employee well-being and heightened stress, thus negatively affecting job attitudes (Colquitt et al., 2012; Selenko et al., 2017). The mediation effect meant that the returns to ambidextrous leadership were related to the effectiveness with which leaders dealt with uncertainty.

The positive relationship between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction was further supported by the cross-tabulation analysis, which revealed that, the higher the level of the leadership, the higher the level of the satisfaction. This trend implied that as leaders managed their dual role successfully, employees felt more supported, autonomous, and clear to them and that improved their overall work experience. The same results were mentioned in the works that stressed the relevance of the adaptive leadership in facilitating the motivation and satisfaction of employees (Bledow et al., 2011; Mom et al., 2015). The findings revealed that ambidextrous leadership was a useful tool to organizations aiming to enhance the performance of employees in dynamic settings.

The research also found out that the advantages of ambidextrous leadership were not unanimously present in all employees. The difference in psychological uncertainty implied the difference in the perceptions of the employees towards the leadership behaviors under the influence of the individual variation and organizational circumstances. There are a minority of employees who interpreted dual leadership behaviors as empowering, and there are those employees who perceived dual leadership behaviors as confusing or stressful. This observation was consistent with the body of research on the importance of contextual and individual factors in determining the responses to leadership (Papachroni et al., 2015; Andriopoulos et al., 2019).

The results showed that organizations had to take into account these differences in adopting ambidextrous leadership practices.

The results were added to the general discussion on the paradox theory by presenting the way the conflicting demands in the leadership fields contributed to the overall outcome in the employees. The ambidextrous leadership made balancing flexibility and control, innovation and efficiency, autonomy and structure a challenge for leaders. Rising from these tensions was a psychological uncertainty that was an indication of the challenges that awaited those who would deal with them. Previous studies suggested that the successful management of paradox had a positive effect on organizational performance while unsuccessful management contributed to employee stress and employee dissatisfaction (Smith et al., 2016; Schad et al., 2016). The present research has contributed to this knowledge by demonstrating that psychological uncertainty was an important process through which these contradictions influenced job satisfaction.

The research also provided some feedback on the feasibility of coping with psychological uncertainty in the organisations. Leaders who conveyed effectively and offered a consistent direction had a higher likelihood of minimizing the uncertainty and improving the satisfaction of employees. On the opposite side, however, lack of clarity and a failure to communicate added to ambiguity, and took away the positive effect of leadership. This observation was in line with the research that emphasized the importance of communication and transparency in the effectiveness of leaders' leadership (Lee et al., 2019; Hoch et al., 2018). The results suggested that investments in leadership development programmes designed around clarity, adaptability and emotional intelligence should be made by organizations.

The findings indicated that the compromise between flexibility and stability of the leadership practices is important. While innovation and adaptability were facilitated by ambidexterity, the best of both worlds, without a clear structure of the organization, led to uncertainty and low satisfaction. This was a critical balance very important to motivate and engage employees to work in a dynamic environment. Organizations that were successful in achieving balance of these components had better performance results and higher job satisfaction among their employees (O'Reilly et al., 2013; Gibson et al., 2004).

### **Conclusion**

The paper has touched upon the paradox of ambidextrous leadership and looked at the paradox's direct and indirect effects on job satisfaction via psychological uncertainty. The results showed that ambidextrous leadership had a positive impact on job satisfaction, which can be seen in the high mean ( $M = 4.08$ ), which shows that the employees are strongly perceiving the adaptive leadership behaviors. Psychological uncertainty was another significant intervening variable with a medium mean score ( $M = 3.72$ ) showing that the amount of ambiguity in how employees understood the leadership cues was notable. The relatively high value ( $M = 3.95$ ) also showed that the attitude of the employees towards work was positive even in the uncertainty. The findings validated the psychological uncertainty mediated the association between ambidextrous leadership and job satisfaction, and the dual influence of leadership practices. The researcher found that ambidextrous leadership could help raise the performance of employees but at the same time, it raises ambiguity that can jeopardize its benefits.

### **Recommendations**

The organizations can work on improving the clarity of leadership and at the same time be flexible in decision making processes. To minimize psychological uncertainty in the minds of employees, leaders need to communicate regularly and set clear expectations. The training and development programs should be directed towards how to achieve a balance between the exploratory and exploitative behaviors without causing confusion. Managers ought to embrace organized feedback systems to keep track of worker perceptions and to eliminate ambiguity on the fly. Employees' psychological needs should be addressed through the establishment of psychological support systems like mentoring, counseling, etc. in the organization for coping with uncertainty. Job satisfaction and employee engagement can also be improved with the help of strengthening of the organizational communication channels and promoting the transparency of the leadership practices.

### Future Directions

Longitudinal designs could be investigated in future research to understand the long-term changes in psychological uncertainty and job satisfaction. Further, the moderating effect of situational factors such as organizational culture, emotional intelligence and employee resilience on the ambidextrous leadership and employee satisfaction can be investigated. It is possible to increase the generalizability of the findings by increasing the number of countries and industries as well as providing cross-cultural information. Future research can also be qualitative to get more knowledge about the employees' experience with regard to leadership ambiguity. Further research should also consider other psychological mediators, including trust and perceived organizational support, to come up with a more comprehensive framework of ambidextrous leadership outcomes.

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