Received: 13 April 2020 | Revised: 1 July 2021 | Accepted: 20 July 2021

DOI: 10.1002/job.2551

RESEARCH ARTICLE

WILEY Journal of Organizational Behavior

Leader status behaviors and team creativity: The role of collective interactions and status conflict among members

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Funding information
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Summary

By integrating the leadership and status literature, this study explores the intervening mechanisms through which different forms of leader status-claiming behaviors predict team creativity. We propose that leaders' prestige- and dominance-oriented status behaviors are positively related to supportive and coercive interactions among members, respectively, which in turn predict team creativity. Empirical analysis based on the multisource data of 53 work teams confirmed that leader prestige behavior exerted a positive indirect effect on team creativity through increased supportive intermember interaction. The indirect effect of leader prestige behavior was significant only when team status conflict was low. By contrast, leader dominance behavior exhibited a positive effect on coercive intermember interaction, which was not significantly related to team creativity. A post hoc analysis revealed that leader dominance behavior had a negative indirect effect on team creativity through decreased supportive interaction among members. This study provides meaningful theoretical insights into the interactive effects of leader status behaviors and team status conflict that lead to distinct collective group processes and team creative output.

KEYWORDS
collective group processes, leader status behavior, prestige versus dominance, team creativity, team status conflict

1 | INTRODUCTION

With the increasing endorsement of teams as effective and crucial units for innovative solutions (Lopez-Cabrales et al., 2009; Paulus & Nijstad, 2019), creativity at the group level has gained increasing research attention. Team creativity represents "the generation of novel and appropriate ideas, solutions, or processes in the context of team objectives" (Sung & Choi, 2012, p. 4). Extant studies have focused mostly on diverse information and creative motivation often based on group composition factors and psychological properties (Anderson et al., 2014; Hülsheger et al., 2009). Nonetheless, creativity at the group level is also "a function of group processes in addition to group composition and group characteristics" (Zhang et al., 2011, p. 852). This study elaborates on how leaders' status-related behaviors and team status conflict affect two distinct types of collective group processes that predict team creativity.

In the present study, we identify leadership as a critical input factor that shapes distinct group processes (Shalley et al., 2004). Leadership has received much attention as a predictor of workplace creativity, as documented in a recent systematic review of 195 studies (Hughes et al., 2018) and a meta-analytic investigation of 266 empirical studies (Lee et al., 2019) that highlight the significance of transformational, authentic, empowering, and entrepreneurial leadership. These studies identify creativity as a core leadership challenge to deal with changing, complex, and dynamic business problems.

Leaders affect creative output because they set the norms for appropriate behaviors and control the interactions among members, which hinge on the great deal of power and status afforded to leaders (DeChurch et al., 2010). In this sense, the way leaders exercise their power and claim their status constitutes a core mechanism underlying leadership (Anderson et al., 2015). The status-claiming strategies leaders adopt may create distinct social interactions among members

because followers tend to mimic and display behaviors similar to those of leaders in their social interactions (Liu et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2009). We thus identify downward social learning as a core theoretical mechanism through which leader status behaviors create corresponding behavioral standards and expectations for intragroup social interactions through role modeling or vicarious learning among followers (Li et al., 2016). Nevertheless, such a status-based view of leadership in explaining distinct member interaction patterns is lacking and underdeveloped particularly in relation to team creativity, which is affected by the cross-fertilization of ideas through member interactions (Hu et al., 2018; West, 2002). The current work addresses this neglected but important issue.

Although status is given and iconic for leaders in organizations, these leaders still engage in status-claiming behaviors to reiterate and validate their status in various ways. To identify the status-claiming patterns of leaders, we adopt the prestige–dominance model (Cheng et al., 2013) and isolate two distinct orientations toward status. Prestige refers to "freely conferred deference to prestigious others who possess valued skills and abilities," whereas dominance refers to "coerced deference to dominant others who induce fear by their ability to inflict physical or psychological harm" (Cheng & Tracy, 2014, p. 4). Drawing on downward social learning (Li et al., 2016), we propose that leaders' status claiming based on prestige or dominance (hereinafter referred to as *leader prestige and dominance behaviors*) may lead to corresponding patterns of intermember interactions. This focus on social interactions meaningfully extends the literature that has identified the motivational, cognitive, and affective processes involving members and their identification and social relations with leaders as potential mediating mechanisms (Hughes et al., 2018).

Group processes or "interaction patterns among group members" (Zhang et al., 2011, p. 854) determine the level of cross-fertilization and flow of ideas among members required for team creativity (Kanter, 1988; Sung & Choi, 2012). Hildreth and Anderson (2016) identified the positivity of intermember interactions as a critical group process that explains the relationship between high-power individuals and team creativity. Drawing on Hildreth and Anderson, we focus on collective processes that involve positive and negative interactions targeted at ideas. Positive interaction represents members' recognition and support of one another's ideas and opinions, in which "members accept, affirm, and complement each other's ideas" (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016, p. 265). Negative interaction reflects these members' coercion and oppression of one another in which they force others to accept their ideas and opinions (Greer et al., 2017). To further specify and reflect the meanings of positive and negative interactions targeted at ideas, we label them as *supportive and coercive member interactions*, respectively. We propose that these member interactions are shaped by leader status behaviors based on prestige and dominance and predict team creativity.

We also offer a nuanced explanation by specifying a boundary condition (Mainemelis et al., 2015). Although members learn from their leaders, mimic their behaviors, and are guided by the values and norms set by their leaders (Liu et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2009), such leader influences may be neutralized when members are preoccupied with their internal struggles, which make them less susceptible to downward social learning (De Hoogh et al., 2015; Hu et al., 2018). Accordingly, we attend to the potential moderating function of *team status conflict* or "disputes over people's relative status positions in the group's hierarchy" (Bendersky & Hays, 2012, p. 323). Team status conflict constitutes a powerful social environment that prescribes interpersonal processes (Tiedens & Fragale, 2003). Thus, we propose that the effects of leader status behaviors on intermember interactions and team creativity will dissipate when team status conflict emerges as a neutralizer of such leadership processes.

In summary, this study advances the literature in several meaningful ways. First, this study integrates the leadership and status literature to theorize and validate how the distinct patterns of leaders' status claiming affect collective interactions and team creativity. This effort should offer novel insights beyond the extant considerations of leadership styles, such as transformational and empowering leadership, thereby enriching the literature and generating useful lessons for practicing managers (Lee et al., 2019). Second, we identify positive and negative forms of idea-targeted interactions that may reveal creativity-relevant group processes beyond the general notions of task motivation and communication among members (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016). Identifying collective processes that are directly responsible for team creativity is critical to explaining how input factors, such as leader status behaviors, affect team creativity (Hu et al., 2018). Third, we provide a contextualized explanation of the indirect effects of leader status behaviors on team creativity by examining the moderating role of team status conflict that suppresses leadership effects. Examining status-related leader behaviors and constructive member interactions offers practical guidelines for managing teams with creative demands. The current propositions are empirically tested by using multisource field data collected from 53 teams representing diverse industries.

2 | THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Status represents social privileges, such as respect, admiration, and prestige, which are conferred by others to a focal actor (Anderson et al., 2015). Leadership by definition reflects a social rank, authority, and influence; thus, claiming and establishing status are inevitable and are at the core of leadership (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009; Cheng et al., 2013). To elaborate on such leadership effects in a team setting, we draw on the input–process–output (IPO) framework of team effectiveness (Ilgen et al., 2005), in which leadership has been identified as a critical input factor toward group processes and outcomes (Shalley et al., 2004). Although the IPO framework is a simplification of the complex team dynamics, it identifies the concepts and relationships involved in the phenomenon investigated in the current study, thus enabling testable predictions to be derived. The IPO framework offers a coherent structure for explaining how leader status behaviors (input) help idea-targeted collective group processes emerge among members (process), leading to team creative performance (output).

These effects of leader status behaviors are expected to attenuate when team members are consumed by their own internal status contests that distract them from leader influences. We present below the theoretical justifications for each relationship proposed in this framework, as summarized in Figure 1.

2.1 | Leader status-claiming behaviors and collective group processes

Leaders are powerful sources of group values and norms that shape intermember interaction patterns via various mechanisms, such as verbal messages, social learning through role modeling, and allocating resources and incentives (Liu et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2009). Accordingly, leader behaviors generate potent contextual values and input that guide member behaviors (DeChurch et al., 2010; Li et al., 2016). Among various leader behaviors, claiming and establishing status is one of the most representative and inescapable leader interventions (Anderson et al., 2015; De Hoogh et al., 2015). Recent studies have identified two distinct forms of status claim, namely, prestige and dominance. The prestige-oriented status claim focuses on respect and admiration based on skills, knowledge, and generosity, whereas the dominance-oriented status claim uses intimidation, fear, and coercion (Cheng et al., 2013; Redhead et al., 2018). The prestige–dominance model posits that the two forms of status behaviors are independent; thus, individuals without competence or altruism can still acquire high status by intimidating others and inducing their compliance (Cheng & Tracy, 2014).

When leaders engage in prestige-oriented status behavior based on functional characteristics, such as competent contributions and generosity, team members tend to engage in positive and functional interactions among themselves by imitating their leaders intentionally and/or subconsciously (Liu et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2009). Thus, leader prestige behavior may offer a constructive contextual value for a group; that is, members are apt to exhibit positive reinforcement and support one another's ideas even when these ideas differ from their own to demonstrate their appreciation and respect (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016; Hu et al., 2018). Such constructive values encouraged by leader prestige behavior initiate a downward social learning, in which followers tend to mimic and display similar behaviors of leaders in their own interaction (Li et al., 2016). Thus, leader prestige behavior may stimulate members to mutually reinforce, affirm, and complement one another's ideas (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016). In sum, members working with prestige-oriented leaders tend to exhibit positive idea-targeted interactions, thereby leading to the following hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis 1.** Leader prestige behavior is positively related to supportive member interaction.

By contrast, when leaders exercise their power by using dominance-oriented behavior through threats, intimidation, and personal attacks, members are exposed to contextual values that may legitimize and induce similar interpersonal behaviors (DeChurch et al., 2010). Such a domineering manner exhibited by leaders may promote negative intermember interactions. When assimilating leader dominance behavior, members resort to collective coercive interaction by attempting to control others, imposing their own opinions, and using aggressive tactics to force their ideas (Greer et al., 2017; Greer & Dannals, 2017). Under such an aggressive atmosphere, members tend to push others to comply by adopting coercive and egotistic interpersonal tactics in dealing with their ideas, which are likely reciprocated by others as well. Thus, we propose the following relationship:

> **Hypothesis 2.** Leader dominance behavior is positively related to coercive member interaction.

2.2 | Collective group processes and team creativity

Teams can be creative to the extent that their members engage in collective interactions to promote the flow, cross-fertilization, and refinement of ideas by recognizing others' thoughts and opinions and by pooling diverse cognitive resources (Kanter, 1988). Theoretical perspectives on team innovation and creativity based on team climate, psychological safety, and knowledge management endorse the importance of the mutual acceptance and appreciation of diverse ideas contributed by other members (Sung & Choi, 2012; West, 2002). Such processes of collectively sharing and developing ideas comprise the "necessary first steps or pre-conditions for creative outcomes" (Gilson & Shalley, 2004, p. 454). In this respect, supportive interaction is a core component of activating creative processes in teams that liberates members to share ideas openly and thereby facilitates new

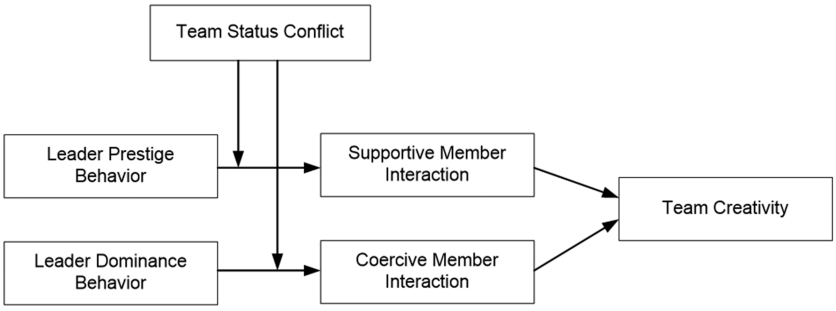


FIGURE 1 Theoretical framework

combinations of extant views and unforeseen innovative solutions (Lopez-Cabrales et al., 2009). As members mutually recognize the value of one another's ideas and complement them, supportive interaction generates a positive spiral that further promotes the application and combinations of ideas to produce creative solutions (Paulus & Nijstad, 2019). We thus hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 3. Supportive member interaction is positively related to team creativity.

By contrast, when members coerce their ideas by pressuring others to accept, affirm, and complement them, intermember interactions within a group may become rigid and defensive (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016; Tiedens & Fragale, 2003), thereby blocking team engagement in creative processes (Gilson & Shalley, 2004). This threatening social situation distracts members from the cognitive processing of ideas and redirects team interactions toward political debates to defend one's ego (Greer & Dannals, 2017). When members attempt to dominate team discussions by coercing their ideas, teams can develop psychological tension and hostility that degenerate the interpersonal trust among members, thereby reducing their willingness to cooperate and share information (Bendersky & Hays, 2012; Lee et al., 2018). This degenerated group process engenders a negative spiral that derails teams from constructive idea exchanges. Members with defensive minds may become unwilling to convey unconventional solutions or risky ideas, compromising team creative potential (Hu et al., 2018). Thus, we advance the following relationship:

Hypothesis 4. Coercive member interaction is negatively related to team creativity.

2.3 | Collective group processes as a mediating mechanism

Combining the earlier propositions, we identify collective group processes (i.e., supportive and coercive member interactions) as a meaningful intervening mechanism through which leader status behaviors influence team creativity. As studies on leadership have demonstrated, leadership by itself exerts significant direct effects on team outcomes, including creative performance (DeChurch et al., 2010; Mainemelis et al., 2015). However, leaders are not alone on the team; thus, if they affect team creativity, then they tend to affect the outcome by forming collective group processes of members toward team creativity than by being the direct source of creativity themselves (Hu et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2011). The current conceptualization of group processes as a link that connects group input factors, such as leadership, to team creative output is also consistent with the basic tenet of the IPO framework of team effectiveness (Ilgen et al., 2005). Specifically, we expect that leader prestige behavior encourages supportive idea-targeted interactions among members, thereby improving team creativity. By contrast, leader dominance behavior may shape coercive member interactions that may limit the entire team's capacity to pool and develop ideas (Kanter, 1988; West, 2002). Thus, we propose the following mediation hypotheses:

Hypothesis 5. Supportive member interaction mediates the positive relationship between leader prestige behavior and team creativity.

Hypothesis 6. Coercive member interaction mediates the negative relationship between leader dominance behavior and team creativity.

2.4 | Team status conflict as a boundary condition

We further identify a boundary condition of the indirect effects of leader status behaviors on team creativity. Providing a contextualized explanation of organizational phenomena is important because a given theoretical account may operate only under a certain boundary condition (Mainemelis et al., 2015). The expectation that leader status behaviors exert indirect effects through idea-targeted member interactions may hold only when team members are willing to accept such leader influences. Recent studies introduce interesting insights regarding such possibilities. Hu et al. (2018) found that leader humility predicts team creativity via information sharing in teams with low power–distance values but not in those with high power–distance values. Members with high appreciation and sensitivity of power differentials are not ready or willing to accept influences from humble leaders who tend to distance themselves from power. In a similar vein, De Hoogh et al. (2015) found that autocratic leadership significantly predicts group climate and performance only when the power struggles among members are low. In this case, leader influences on group emergent states and outcomes disappear when members' power struggles are highly salient to the extent that they neutralize the function of leaders' autocratic power exercise. These studies demonstrate how power-related values or struggles among members suppress the effects of leaders' power behavior (or the lack thereof).

Building on these findings that indicate leader–member complementarity, we propose that the effects of leader status behaviors may be attenuated in teams characterized by high status conflict among members. When members compete against one another for dominance and influence, they become engrossed with imminent status threats and opportunities for upward status mobility among themselves (Greer et al., 2017). Status conflict is highly intensive and preoccupying for members because of its zero-sum nature and lasting effects on the entire group structure and resource allocation across members (Bendersky & Hays, 2012). For this reason, although members tend to mimic leader status behaviors and are guided by the contextual values set by leaders (Liu et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2009), such leadership processes may be neutralized when they are distracted by their internal fights for finite resources and social ranks (Greer & Dannals, 2017). As members' power-related values and struggles nullify the effects of humble and autocratic leadership (De Hoogh

et al., 2015; Hu et al., 2018), status conflict among members may suppress leadership effects based on status behaviors. In a sense, status struggles may work as a situational force that substitutes the function of leader behaviors in shaping member interactions, constraining the resulting variations in member interactions and group output attributable to leadership (Meyer et al., 2010).

Specifically, status conflict among members may suppress leadership effects based on prestige behavior because members are preoccupied with internal struggles and are thus unlikely to assimilate the constructive and soft interpersonal strategies exhibited by their leader (Greer et al., 2017). Team status conflict may also limit the effect of leader dominance behavior in that members are already attuned to aggressive strategies to force their own ideas and discount those of others to protect their status and win the status contest (Bendersky & Pai, 2018). Accordingly, we identify team status conflict as a critical team contingency that neutralizes the indirect effects of leader status behaviors on team creativity. We propose the following moderated mediation hypotheses:

Hypothesis 7. Team status conflict moderates the indirect positive relationship between leader prestige behavior and team creativity through supportive member interaction, such that this indirect relationship is more positive when team status conflict is low than high.

Hypothesis 8. Team status conflict moderates the indirect negative relationship between leader dominance behavior and team creativity through coercive member interaction, such that this indirect relationship is more negative when team status conflict is low than high.

3 | METHOD

3.1 | Data collection and sample

To test the hypotheses, we contacted managers participating in executive MBA programs in a major Korean university. With the consent and cooperation of these managers, we distributed survey questionnaires to 75 teams via postal mail with pre-stamped and addressed return envelopes. Data were collected from two sources to avoid potential problems associated with common method variance. Leaders reported their status-claiming behaviors and team creativity, whereas members reported collective group processes and team status conflict.

From the initial sample, completed survey questionnaires were received from 71 leaders and 302 members. We excluded those questionnaires with incomplete responses and teams without matching leader data. We also removed those teams with less than three members because teams with two members are dyads based on one-on-one relationships between two people, which should be distinguished from groups (Moreland, 2010). The screening procedure yielded the final sample of 53 teams, which comprised 53 leaders and 233 members. The industries covered by these teams included manufacturing (32.2%), finance (19.3%), information technology and telecommunication (28.8%), service (15.0%), and others (4.7%). These teams represented a wide range of functional areas, including business planning/administration (48.5%), sales/marketing (15.9%), research and development (10.3%), engineering (6.0%), and professional services (19.3%).

Each group in the final sample had an average of 4.40 participating members ($SD = 1.50$, ranging from three to nine members), which represented 79.4% of the total membership based on the average actual group size of 5.51 as reported by leaders. This sample represents a sufficient level of group-level member participation (intrateam response rates ranging between 63.6% and 88.9%; Timmerman, 2005). The participating team leaders and members comprised 83.0% and 58.6% of males, respectively, with an average age of 44.2 ($SD = 9.28$) and 35.4 years ($SD = 8.91$) and an average tenure of 12.57 ($SD = 9.15$) and 5.98 years ($SD = 6.30$). The educational levels of leaders and members were classified as high school (17.0% and 15.5%, respectively), 2-year college (7.5% and 17.7%), undergraduate degree (50.9% and 57.3%), and graduate degree (24.5% and 9.5%).

3.2 | Measures

All variables were assessed by multi-item measures using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). All scales exhibited acceptable levels of reliability (all >.70). We aggregated the individual responses of members to the group level for analysis. Group-level reliability, within-group agreement ($r_{wg(j)}$), and intraclass correlations (ICC[1], ICC[2]) were examined to verify the validity of this group-level aggregation. The acceptable aggregation statistics shown for all scales indicated that the members of the same group exhibited similar perceptions on the present constructs (Chen et al., 2004). Overall, the statistics justified the aggregation of individual member ratings to construct group-level measures.

3.2.1 | Leader prestige and dominance behaviors (leader)

Adopting the measures developed by Cheng et al. (2013), leader prestige behavior was assessed by using a five-item scale ($\alpha = .82$) rated by leaders. The scale included the following items: (a) "I behave in a way that members of my team respect and admire me," (b) "I behave in a manner that members of my team expect me to be successful," (c) "I show my unique talents and abilities to be recognized by others in my team," (d) "I behave in a way that members of my team consider me an expert on some matters," and (e) "I behave in a manner that members of my team seek my advice on a variety of matters." Leaders also rated their dominance behavior by using the following five-item scale ($\alpha = .75$): (a) "I have control over others in my team," (b) "I often

try to get my way regardless of what others in my team may want," (c) "I use aggressive tactics to get my way in my team," (d) "I try to control others rather than permit them to control me in my team," and (e) "I behave in a manner that other members of my team know that letting me have my way is better."

3.2.2 | Supportive and coercive member interactions (members)

Based on existing measures (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016), we constructed three-item scales to measure supportive and coercive member interactions targeted at ideas in groups. Team members rated the following three items for supportive member interaction ($\alpha = .93$, $r_{wg[3]} = .83$, ICC[1] = .28, ICC[2] = .67, $F = 3.03$, $p < .001$): "How much do team members (a) accept each other's ideas, (b) affirm each other's ideas, and (c) complement each other's ideas?" Coercive member interaction was assessed by the following three items ($\alpha = .92$, $r_{wg[3]} = .85$, ICC[1] = 0.13, ICC[2] = 0.50, $F = 1.82$, $p < .01$): "How much do team members force other members to (a) accept their ideas, (b) affirm their ideas, and (c) complement their ideas?" Participating members rated these items on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *not at all*, 5 = *a great deal*).

3.2.3 | Team status conflict (members)

We used four items developed by Bendersky and Hays (2012) to assess team status conflict. Each team member reported the level of status conflict among members by rating the following items ($\alpha = .90$, $r_{wg[4]} = .90$, ICC[1] = 0.19, ICC[2] = 0.57, $F = 2.30$, $p < .001$): (a) "My team members frequently take sides (i.e., form coalitions) during conflict," (b) "My team members experience conflict because of others trying to assert their dominance," (c) "My team members compete for influence," and (d) "My team members disagree about the relative value of members' contributions."

3.2.4 | Team creativity (leader)

To assess team creative performance, we used the following three items from Sung and Choi's (2012) measure of team creativity rated by each team leader ($\alpha = .82$): (a) "My team comes up with new and practical ideas in solving problems," (b) "My team easily develops new ways and procedures related to the task," and (c) "My team generates creative solutions when confronting problems."

3.2.5 | Control variables (leader and members)

Team size is a critical team-specific factor that may affect group processes and outcomes (Moreland, 2010; Timmerman, 2005). In the analysis, team size was indicated by the total number of team members as reported by leaders. Given that members' demographic characteristics related to their professional experiences bear significant implications for idea-related team processes and outcomes (Anderson et al., 2014; Hülsheger et al., 2009), the average education and organizational tenure of team members were also controlled. Considering that the importance of sharing information and knowledge among members in promoting team creativity has been recognized in the literature (Hu et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2011), we controlled knowledge sharing based on a three-item measure ($\alpha = .90$; e.g., "My team members share information and knowledge as requested by others").

3.3 | Analytic strategy

To empirically validate the relationships depicted in Figure 1 (Hypotheses 1–4), we used a structural path analysis in AMOS 26 by using the composite score of each construct. In this analysis, we did not incorporate item-level observed variables as indicators to create latent factors because the current sample size of 53 teams is relatively small compared with the number of parameters to be estimated when using latent factors (i.e., 253) (Bandalos & Finney, 2001).

Following the best-practice recommendations (MacKinnon et al., 2007), we verified the mediation and moderated mediation effects (Hypotheses 5–8) by testing the product of direct effects via a bootstrapping procedure (i.e., Monte Carlo simulations using 5000 replications). In this procedure, we computed the bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals of indirect and conditional indirect effects based on 5000 bootstrapped samples obtained through the PROCESS macro using SPSS 24 (Model 4 for mediation and Model 7 for moderated mediation, Hayes, 2013). When testing moderated mediation, all variables were mean-centered to reduce the multicollinearity among the main effect variables and their interaction terms (Katrichis, 1993).

4 | RESULTS

To verify the empirical distinctiveness of the current measures, we performed a 10-item confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) that covers team status conflict and two dimensions of collective group processes rated by team members. Afterward, we conducted a 13-item CFA that covers leader status behaviors and team creativity rated by team leaders. As reported in Table 1, a three-factor model for member-rated variables indicated good fit with the data (χ^2 [$df = 32$] = 45.64, $p = .06$; comparative fit index [CFI] = 0.98; root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = 0.09; standardized root mean square residual [SRMR] = 0.05; Akaike's information criterion [AIC] = 91.64; Bayes Information criterion [BIC] = 136.95) and outperformed the alternative single- and two-factor models (chi-square difference tests; all $p < .001$). A three-factor model for leader-rated variables also showed good fit (χ^2 [$df = 62$] = 74.73, $p = .13$; CFI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = 0.08; AIC = 132.73; BIC = 189.87) that was significantly better than those of the alternative single- and two-

TABLE 1 Confirmatory factor analysis

Model	χ^2 (*df*)	p	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC	BIC
Member rated variables							
Three-factor model: Supportive member interaction, coercive member interaction, and team status conflict	45.64 (32)	.06	0.98	0.09	0.05	91.64	136.95
Two-factor model: Supportive and coercive member interactions as a single construct	213.45 (34)	.00	0.68	0.32	0.27	255.45	296.82
Two-factor model: Coercive member interaction and team status conflict as a single construct	146.10 (34)	.00	0.79	0.25	0.12	188.10	229.48
Single-factor model: All variables considered as a single construct	350.33 (35)	.00	0.43	0.42	0.33	390.33	429.73
Leader rated variables							
Three-factor model: Leader prestige behavior, leader dominance behavior, and team creativity	74.73 (62)	.13	0.94	0.06	0.08	132.73	189.87
Two-factor model: Leader prestige and dominance behaviors as a single construct	87.00 (64)	.00	0.90	0.08	0.09	141.00	194.20
Single-factor model: All variables considered as a single construct	134.52 (65)	.00	0.69	0.14	0.13	186.52	237.74

Abbreviations: AIC, Akaike's information criterion; BIC, Bayes Information criterion; CFI, comparative fit index; RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual.

TABLE 2 Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Team size	5.51	1.80	–									
2. Average education	3.61	0.64	−.07	–								
3. Average tenure	6.07	5.02	−.06	−.09	–							
4. Knowledge sharing	3.78	0.26	.13	.16†	.15†	–						
5. Leader prestige behavior	3.80	0.50	−.01	−.03	.07	.24†	–					
6. Leader dominance behavior	2.78	0.62	−.08	−.11	.26†	.28*	.59**	–				
7. Team status conflict	2.07	0.53	.03	−.06	.30*	.05	−.08	.18	–			
8. Supportive member interaction	3.63	0.49	−.01	.18†	−.22†	.17†	.15†	−.16†	−.42**	–		
9. Coercive member interaction	2.41	0.50	−.16†	−.17†	.23†	−.23†	−.21†	.16†	.54**	−.23†	–	
10. Team creativity	3.54	0.58	−.21†	.29*	.29*	.30*	.31*	.20†	−.05	.25†	−.04	–

Note. Unit of analysis is team ($N = 53$).
$^{\dagger}p < .10$. $^{*}p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$. [Correction added on 03 August 2021, after first online publication: Table 2 has been updated in this version.]

factor models (chi-square difference tests, all $p < .001$). Overall, the CFA results demonstrated the discriminant validity of the scales used. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and the correlations among the study variables.

4.1 | Hypothesized model and plausible alternative models

We fit the structural model that incorporated all hypothesized paths along with the covariances between the two leader status behaviors. This model also included four control variables (i.e., team size, average education, average tenure, and knowledge sharing). The hypothesized model exhibited somewhat poor fit with the data (χ^2 [$df = 19$] = 33.50, $p = .02$; CFI = 0.74; RMSEA = 0.12; SRMR = 0.11; AIC = 85.50; BIC = 136.73). We further checked the possibility of having theoretically plausible alternative models that could better explain the observed patterns in the data. First, we tested the possibility that leader prestige and dominance behaviors predict both supportive and coercive member interactions instead of affecting the corresponding aspect of member interaction. As reported in alternative model 1 in Table 3, this full-relationship model with two additional paths between leader status behaviors and member interactions produced a good fit (χ^2 [$df = 17$] = 20.68, $p = .24$; CFI = 0.94; RMSEA = 0.06; SRMR = .10; AIC = 76.68; BIC = 131.85) that was significantly better than that of the

TABLE 3 Hypothesized and alternative models

Model	χ^2 (*df*)	p	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	AIC	BIC
Hypothesized model	33.50 (19)	.02	0.74	0.12	0.11	85.50	136.73
Alternative model 1:							
Leader status behaviors predict both supportive and coercive interactions	20.68 (17)	.24	0.94	0.06	0.10	76.68	131.85
Alternative model 2:							
Partial mediation: Direct effects of leader status behaviors on team creativity	16.22 (15)	.36	0.97	0.04	0.09	76.22	135.33
Alternative model 3:							
Parallel effects of leader status behaviors and collective group processes	31.52 (19)	.03	0.77	0.11	0.10	83.51	134.74

Abbreviations: AIC, Akaike's information criterion; BIC, Bayes Information criterion; CFI, comparative fit index; RMSEA, root mean square error of approximation; SRMR, standardized root mean square residual.

hypothesized model ($\Delta\chi^2$ [$\Delta df = 2$] = 12.82, $p < .01$). Thus, we adopted this model with full relationships between leader status behaviors and group processes for further alternative model comparisons and hypothesis testing.

Second, although we hypothesized mediating effects, collective group processes may only partially mediate the relationships between leader status behaviors and team creativity. We tested this possibility by adding two direct paths from two leader status behaviors to team creativity (alternative model 2 in Table 3). This partial mediation model produced a decent model fit (χ^2 [$df = 15$] = 16.22, $p = .36$; CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.04; SRMR = 0.09; AIC = 76.22; BIC = 135.33) but was not significantly better than alternative model 1 ($\Delta\chi^2$ [$\Delta df = 2$] = 4.46, $p = .11$). Furthermore, none of the direct effect paths from leader status behaviors to team creativity was significant.

Third, we modified the model to test the potential independent main effects of leader status behaviors and collective group processes on team creativity instead of having a mediated relationship (alternative model 3 in Table 3). This model produced a much worse fit than did the other models (χ^2 [$df = 19$] = 31.52, $p = .03$; CFI = 0.77; RMSEA = 0.11; SRMR = .10; AIC = 83.51; BIC = 134.74). In sum, the model comparison results validate alternative model 1 as the most plausible explanation for the current data.

4.2 | Hypothesis testing

Figure 2 presents the results of the path analytic model with the full relationships between leader status behaviors and group processes. Among the control variables, average education level was a significant and positive predictor of supportive member interaction ($\beta = .24$, $p < .05$), whereas average tenure of members showed a significant positive effect on team creativity ($\beta = .36$, $p < .01$). Knowledge sharing also exhibited significant associations with supportive and coercive member interactions ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$ and $\beta = -.25$, $p < .10$, respectively).

4.2.1 | Main effects

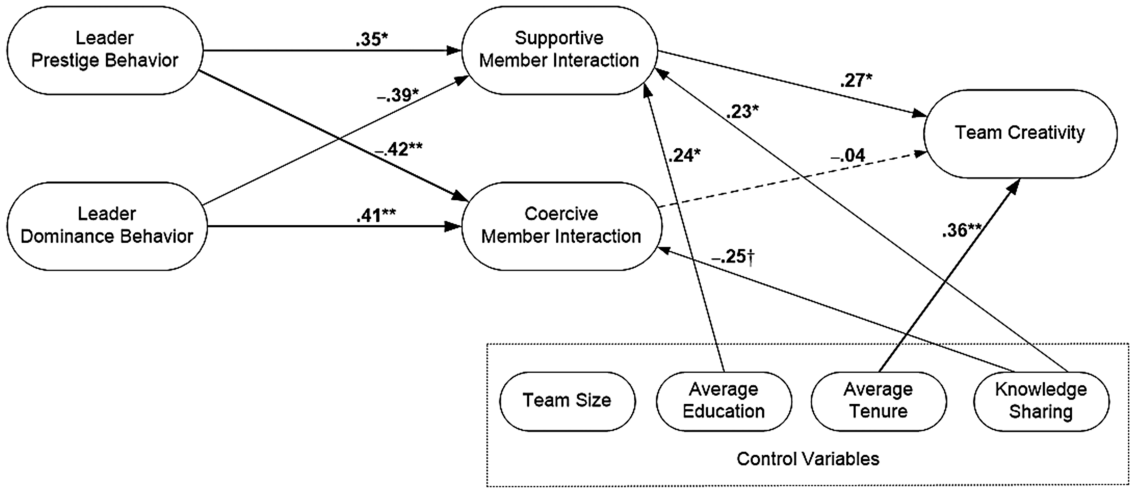
Hypothesis 1 suggested that leader prestige behavior is positively related to supportive member interaction. As depicted in Figure 2, leader prestige behavior had a significant positive effect on supportive member interaction ($\beta = .35$, $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 1. Although not hypothesized, leader prestige behavior also exerted a significant negative effect on coercive member interaction ($\beta = -.42$, $p < .01$).

Hypothesis 2 posited a positive relationship between leader dominance behavior and coercive member interaction. In line with this expectation, leader dominance behavior exhibited a significant positive effect on coercive member interaction ($\beta = .41$, $p < .01$), confirming Hypothesis 2. In addition, leader dominance behavior showed a negative effect on supportive member interaction ($\beta = -.39$, $p < .05$).

Hypotheses 3 and 4 proposed that supportive and coercive member interactions are positive and negative predictors of team creativity, respectively. As reported in Figure 2, supportive member interaction exerted a significant positive effect on team creativity ($\beta = .27$, $p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 3. However, coercive member interaction was not related to team creativity ($\beta = -.04$, *ns.*), rejecting Hypothesis 4.

4.2.2 | Mediation effects

Hypotheses 5 and 6 suggested that supportive and coercive member interactions mediate the effects of leader prestige and dominance behaviors on team creativity, respectively. Table 4 shows that leader prestige behavior exerts a significant positive indirect effect on team creativity through supportive member interaction ($b = .05$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.21]). However, the indirect effect of leader dominance behavior on team creativity through coercive member interaction was not significant. Thus, the mediation effect was supported only for leader prestige behavior through supportive member interaction



Model fit: $\chi^2(df = 17) = 20.68$, $p = .24$; CFI = .94; RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .10; AIC = 76.68; BIC = 131.85

Note. Thicker lines represent statistically more significant results. Dotted lines depict insignificant paths. Insignificant effects of control variables are not depicted in this figure.
† $p < .10$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

FIGURE 2 Path analysis results

TABLE 4 Indirect effects for mediation hypotheses

				Bootstrapping bias-corrected 95% CI	
Independent variable	**Mediator**	**Dependent variable**	**Indirect effect**	**Lower limit**	**Upper limit**
Leader prestige behavior	Supportive member interaction	Team creativity	**0.05**	**0.01**	**0.21**
Leader dominance behavior	Coercive member interaction		0.04	−0.02	0.22

Note. Bootstrap sample size = 5000. The coefficients in bold fonts represent statistically significant results.
Abbreviation: CI, confidence interval.

(Hypothesis 5) but not for leader dominance behavior through coercive member interaction (Hypothesis 6).

4.2.3 | Moderated mediation effects

Hypotheses 7 and 8 claimed that team status conflict moderates the indirect relationships between leader status behaviors and team creativity through collective group processes such that the indirect effects are significant only when team status conflict is low. As reported in Table 5, leader prestige behavior exerted a significant conditional indirect effect on team creativity through supportive member interaction in teams with low status conflict ($b = .07$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.31]), and this effect became insignificant in teams with high status conflict ($b = -.01$, 95% CI [−0.13, 0.07]). The difference between these two conditional indirect effects was also significant (index of moderated mediation: $b = -.06$, 95% CI [−0.35, −0.01]), thereby supporting Hypothesis 7. However, the conditional indirect effects of leader dominance behavior through coercive member interaction at high versus low levels of team status conflict were not significant, and the difference between the two indirect effects was not significant either (index of moderated mediation: $b = .02$, 95% CI [−0.03, 0.19]). Hypothesis 8 was therefore rejected.

4.3 | Post hoc analysis

Given the significance of the full relationships between leader status behaviors and member interactions beyond the hypothesized corresponding member interactions, we also examined the possibility that additional mediated and moderated relationships are statistically significant though not hypothesized. These possibilities were verified through post hoc analyses. First, we conducted the same bootstrapping procedure to test the indirect effect of leader prestige behavior through coercive member interaction and the indirect effect of leader dominance behavior through supportive member interaction. Between these two alternative indirect effects, the former was not significant, whereas the latter (i.e., the indirect effect of leader dominance behavior on team creativity through supportive member interaction) was statistically significant and negative ($b = -.05$, 95%

TABLE 5 Bootstrapped conditional indirect effects for moderated mediation

Independent variable	Moderator	Mediator	Dependent variable	Moderator level	Conditional indirect effect	Bootstrapping bias–corrected 95% CI	
						Lower limit	Upper limit
Leader prestige behavior	Team status conflict	Supportive member interaction	Team creativity	Lo (mean − 1*SD*)	**0.07**	**0.01**	**0.31**
				Hi (mean + 1*SD*)	−0.01	−0.13	0.07
Leader dominance behavior		Coercive member interaction		Lo (mean − 1*SD*)	−0.02	−0.14	0.02
				Hi (mean + 1*SD*)	0.01	−0.03	0.09

Note. Bootstrap sample size = 5000. The coefficients in bold fonts represent statistically significant results.
Abbreviation: CI, confidence interval.

CI [−0.22, −0.01]). Second, we checked if these two alternative indirect effects are moderated by team status conflict. We used the same procedure for our hypothesis testing and tested the significance of these alternative conditional indirect effects at different levels of team status conflict. However, none of the additional conditional indirect effects were statistically significant.

5 | DISCUSSION

Drawing on the IPO framework (Ilgen et al., 2005; Shalley et al., 2004), we investigated how distinct leader status-claiming behaviors affect team creativity differently through collective group processes targeted at ideas. Our empirical analysis confirmed that leaders' prestige- and dominance-oriented status behaviors were respectively associated with supportive and coercive member interactions. Between the two group processes, only supportive member interaction significantly predicted team creativity and mediated the effect of leader status behaviors on team creativity. Team status conflict was a significant boundary condition that attenuated the indirect relationship between leader prestige behavior and team creativity through supportive member interaction, which was significant only for teams with low status conflict. We highlight below the critical findings, elaborate on their implications, discuss the limitations of this study, and present directions for future research.

5.1 | Leader status behaviors shaping collective group processes

By connecting leadership and status literature, we investigated how leaders' status behaviors affect the interaction patterns among group members (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016). Status literature identified prestige- and dominance-oriented behaviors as two distinct strategies for claiming and attaining status (Cheng et al., 2013). We applied this distinction to the leadership domain and proposed that leaders' status behaviors may convey contextual values that stipulate and legitimize a particular form of social interaction in the group (Li et al., 2016). As hypothesized, leaders' prestige and dominance behaviors exhibited significant effects on corresponding forms of collective group processes (i.e., supportive and coercive member interactions). In addition, leader prestige and dominance behaviors suppressed the opposite forms of social processes by exerting negative effects on coercive and supportive member interactions, respectively. These contrasting patterns revealed the distinct consequences of leaders who resort to respect or intimidation in shaping corresponding group processes.

The strong correspondence between leader status behaviors and intermember interaction patterns delineates the operation of downward social learning (Li et al., 2016). Downward social learning, in which followers are prone to emulate their leaders' behavior in their own interactions, can be driven by various mechanisms, such as role modeling or reward contingencies imposed by leaders (Liu et al., 2012; Mayer et al., 2009). Alternatively, different dimensions of leader status-claiming behaviors shape team institutional contexts for followers' interpersonal interactions in the corresponding domain (Cheng et al., 2013; Hu et al., 2018). The current analysis thus further confirmed the potent role of leaders in prescribing follower beliefs, motivations, and behavioral patterns in desirable or undesirable directions in accordance with their status-claiming strategies (DeChurch et al., 2010). Future theoretical and empirical endeavors may be directed to understanding varying implications of leader status behaviors toward group emergent psychological states, such as team cohesion, psychological safety, and risk-taking intention shared among members.

5.2 | Collective group processes leading to team creativity

We hypothesized that leader status behaviors may indirectly affect team creative outputs by shaping collective group processes. Our analysis revealed that the supportive interaction among members, but not coercive interaction, exerted significant main and mediating effects on team creativity. Generating creative ideas in teams seems to depend on the interpersonal trust among members that their constructive suggestions will be recognized and further developed through mutual efforts (Lee et al., 2018; West, 2002). Supportive interaction among members builds mutual trust and emotional support that encourage them to contribute their ideas and opinions freely

(Hu et al., 2018). Members who are exposed to such positive social environments tend to exhibit their cognitive flexibility in pursuing new pathways and exploring unfamiliar domains, which should promote team creativity (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016; West, 2002). Supportive member interaction thus promotes constructive, open idea exchanges based on the members' belief that their ideas will be fairly evaluated and credited with respect and privilege in proportion to their contribution (Anderson & Brion, 2014).

Contrary to our expectation, coercive member interaction did not have any significant main and mediating effects on team creativity. In line with this result, our bootstrapping analysis demonstrated that leader status behaviors exerted significant indirect effects on team creativity only through supportive interaction but not through coercive interaction. We speculate on the possibility that imposing one's ideas and pushing others to accept them may offer advantages and disadvantages for creativity, thus being an ambivalent predictor. Although coercing one's ideas can suppress mutual appreciation and collaborative development of ideas in a team (Hildreth & Anderson, 2016), assertively presenting ideas may reflect one's confidence and willingness to utilize his/her expertise to resolve the problem at hand. Such conviction can energize individual initiatives to identify novel solutions, although such creative efforts may not be well received by others. Given the potentially ambivalent implications of coercive member interaction, further studies must explore the boundary conditions that activate its positive or negative potentials for creative output.

The current analysis of indirect effects highlighted the importance of leader prestige behavior to promote team creativity through increased supportive member interaction. Our post hoc analysis also indicated the significantly negative indirect effect of leader dominance behavior on team creativity through decreased supportive member interaction. The overall indirect effect patterns suggest that leader prestige behavior is preferred over dominance behavior to improve team creativity. This result is consistent with previous findings underscoring the relative supremacy of prestige behavior over time, particularly in collaborative task groups characterized by increasing interdependence, social learning, and need for collective coordination (Redhead et al., 2018). In organizational teams, dominance behavior offers limited social and instrumental values in accomplishing shared group goals, and thus team members may "confer deference and yield decision-making to these prosocial, talented individuals in an attempt to gain proximity and access the resources" (Redhead et al., 2018, p. 223).

5.3 | Team status conflict as a critical boundary condition

The current analysis explored the functions of a situational contingency that may shape the leader effects on group processes and output (Mainemelis et al., 2015). Specifically, we proposed that leaders' status behaviors will influence group processes and team creativity only when team status conflict is low. This expectation was supported for the positive indirect effect of leader prestige behavior on team creativity via supportive member interaction, which was observed only when team status conflict was low.

Team status conflict seems to neutralize the effect of leader behavior, particularly in shaping positive, mutually reinforcing interactions among members. Status contests may activate intermember status sensitivity that promotes members' awareness, reactivity, and vulnerability to power or resource issues, thereby distracting them from other social forces, such as the leader (Greer et al., 2017; Greer & Dannals, 2017). Thus, when team status conflict is high, members become highly sensitive to potential status threats from others, which fully absorb their attention, thereby rendering leaders less significant referents for their behavior (Bendersky & Pai, 2018). By contrast, for leader dominance behavior, the moderating effect of team status conflict was not observed perhaps because the two constructs seemed redundant and might substitute each other in shaping coercive member interaction and also because the indirect effect through coercive member interaction was not significant.

High team status conflict exerted a strong situational force that suppresses the function of leader prestige behavior toward positive group processes and creative output (Meyer et al., 2010). The current analysis implies that the horizontal intermember status dynamism and the vertical leader-to-member status behaviors complement each other rather than reinforcing or synergistically related. Such interplay between horizontal and vertical status- or power-related processes may lead to distinct group climates, intragroup interactions, and group performance (De Hoogh et al., 2015; Hu et al., 2018). This intriguing possibility must be explored further using alternative leader and member behaviors related to status claims or values.

5.4 | Practical implications

The current findings offer several implications for business leaders. First, in contemporary organizations coveting creativity and innovation to survive and prosper, practicing managers should be keen on their strategies for claiming and establishing status. Practically all managerial actions and interventions can be interpreted from the perspective of status claiming through either prestige or dominance, which could be analogous to soft and hard power tactics or empowering and controlling practices. Consistent with the leadership literature that underscored the importance of transformational, authentic, and empowering leadership to creativity (Hughes et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2019), our analysis urges leaders to adopt prestige rather than dominance behaviors to promote team creativity. Organizations should train, encourage, and reward leaders' prestige-oriented status behaviors based on competence and prosocial attributes that elicit positive processes and outcomes for work teams.

Second, our analysis demonstrated that leaders affect team creativity because their behaviors shape the interaction patterns among team members. Leaders send signals to their followers about what they should or should not do and how they work together by using verbal and non-verbal expressions, such as prestige and dominance

behaviors (Hu et al., 2018). The resulting behavior and interactions among followers directly contribute to team performance. Given the benefit of positive and supportive interactions among members toward team creativity, leaders should be aware of the implications of their prestige and dominance behaviors in shaping group processes that can be functional or hindering for shared goal achievements (Redhead et al., 2018).

Finally, the effect of leader prestige behavior on team creativity through supportive member interaction was meaningful only when team status conflict was low. This result highlights the importance of the situation in which leadership takes place. Despite the predominant role of leaders, situations can attenuate, substitute, or even nullify their effect on group processes and creativity (Meyer et al., 2010). In this light, the leaders' roles are not static but dynamic to suit the situational demands. In teams with high status conflict, leaders may need to identify the sources or drivers of such unstable status structure and resolve them. Thus, business leaders should be sensitive about their team contexts, manage the heterogenous demands from their followers, and adapt to unique team and business challenges.

5.5 | Study limitations and future research directions

The present findings should be cautiously interpreted by considering their limitations. First, the causal directions among the constructs may not be definite because all study variables were collected at the same time. For example, members of teams with high creative performance may engage in supportive interaction based on their previous success in being creative as a team. This limitation reflects the issue of endogeneity caused by the use of correlational data, omitted variables, and potential reverse causality (Antonakis et al., 2010). In addition, although most hypotheses were supported with a conventional significance level (i.e., $p < .05$), the findings should be regarded as conservative given the small sample involved. Future studies should further validate these findings by using a large sample of organizational teams and adopting a longitudinal or field-experimental design to ascertain the causal direction and avoid the endogeneity problem as suggested by Antonakis et al. (2010).

Second, we used leaders' self-report to assess their status claiming behaviors, which could also be rated by followers or team members. Our data collection design has the advantages of separating the sources of independent variables (leader status behaviors) and mediators (collective group processes), thereby reducing same-source or percept–percept bias in our analysis. Furthermore, follower ratings of leader behavior can be driven by these followers' relationships with and other perceptions of their leader (Cogliser et al., 2009). Nevertheless, the leader ratings of their status-claiming behaviors may suffer from a potential social desirability bias and cannot be exogenous in that these behaviors may depend on other variables, such as leader personality and values (Antonakis et al., 2010). Future studies may replicate these findings by using alternative unobtrusive measures to avoid such biases and adopt a design for exogenously manipulating leader status behaviors to avoid the threat of endogeneity.

Finally, the present research context and sample may have affected the empirical findings. Korea is characterized by high uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and collectivism (Lee & Lee, 2014). Accordingly, Korean employees are sensitive to insecurity, group conflict, and interpersonal tension. Thus, the fear and psychological burden accompanying high team status conflict may overwhelm and dominate the collective interaction patterns among members and suppress the potential role-modeling functions of leaders. Furthermore, the supportive interaction, rather than coercive interaction, among members significantly predicted team creativity possibly because Korean employees may feel uncomfortable with others' aggressive idea presentation owing to their collectivistic values. Future studies should validate the current framework in other cultural and national contexts.

6 | CONCLUSION

This study offers meaningful theoretical insights into the interactive effects of leader status behaviors and team status conflict that lead to distinct team member interactions and creativity. Specifically, following the IPO framework of team effectiveness (Ilgen et al., 2005), we validated the significant implications of leader status behaviors as a contextual input toward group processes targeted at member ideas and creative output in intact work teams. The results also demonstrated that the effects of leader status behaviors on collective processes and team creativity are dependent on the team contingency, that is, status conflict among members. The present theoretical and empirical analysis enriches the leadership, status, and creativity literature by identifying distinct leader status behaviors beyond prevailing leadership styles, which encourage corresponding member interactions to promote team creativity.

To further expand this study, future research may examine diverse organizational and team boundary conditions. This is because the status-related dynamism cannot be fully understood without considering the contextual values often shaped by leaders given that status represents a socially constructed, symbolic value (Bendersky & Pai, 2018). Organizational contexts supply various status-pertinent properties, such as authoritarian culture, hierarchical structure, HR practices (e.g., incentive schemes), team external environments (e.g., resource scarcity and interdependence), and members' psychological inclinations (e.g., need for power and goal orientation). Considering these potential situational contingencies and boundary conditions should offer novel insights into how leaders shape team processes to affect outcomes by revealing how these factors supply potent contextual values for group dynamism.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study is supported by Nanjing University Business School and the Institute of Labor Relations at Seoul National University.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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How to cite this article: Sung, S. Y., & Choi, J. N. (2021). Leader status behaviors and team creativity: The role of collective interactions and status conflict among members. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *42*(8), 1120–1133. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2551