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Resource-Based Mechanisms with Cultural Moderators**

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A Meta-Analysis of Perceived Overqualification: Resource-Based Mechanisms with Cultural Moderators

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ABSTRACT

Perceived overqualification (POQ), the belief that one's qualifications exceed job requirements, is an increasingly prevalent phenomenon, yet empirical findings regarding its effects remain mixed. Based on Conservation of Resources theory, this meta-analysis of 233 studies (257 samples, N = 89,617) examines how POQ influences work behavior through two competing mechanisms: personal-resource sufficiency and workplace-resource depletion. Results indicate that POQ simultaneously builds personal resources and depletes workplace resources, generating opposing effects on behavior. Personal-resource sufficiency promotes proactive and prosocial behavior and reduces counterproductive work behavior, whereas workplace-resource depletion shows a reversed pattern. Overall, POQ exhibits a positive total effect on proactive and counterproductive work behavior, and a negative total effect on prosocial behavior. In terms of cultural moderation, the positive link between POQ and personal-resource sufficiency is weaker in high-power-distance and high-individualism contexts, whereas the depletion pathway remains invariant. These findings integrate the dual pathways of POQ and clarify the cultural boundary conditions of its effects. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords:

perceived overqualification; conservation of resources theory; meta-analysis; culture

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INTRODUCTION

Perceived overqualification (POQ) refers to employees' perceptions that their qualifications, such as education, skills, and work experience, exceed the requirements of their current jobs and are not fully utilized (Erdogan, Bauer, Peiró, & Truxillo, 2011; Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006). In today's world, with the rapid expansion of higher education and intensified market competition, this phenomenon has become increasingly widespread (Yang & Li, 2021). The OECD Survey of Adult Skills 2023 shows that about 23% of workers across OECD countries are overqualified for their current jobs (OECD, 2024). Much of the early research on POQ treated it as a negative phenomenon, primarily examining its adverse consequences for employees and organizations (e.g., Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013). However, more recent studies have increasingly demonstrated that POQ can also lead to beneficial outcomes, challenging the traditional view that POQ is solely detrimental (e.g., Van Dijk, Shantz, & Alfes, 2020; Zhang, Law, & Lin, 2016).

Although many empirical studies have explored how POQ influences work outcomes, prior empirical research has yet to provide a fully integrated understanding of its underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions. Regarding mediating mechanisms, most existing studies have focused on one or a few mediators at a time, rather than offering a comprehensive view of the processes through which POQ exerts its effects (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). Regarding boundary conditions, prior empirical work suggests that cultural characteristics may shape individuals' reactions to overqualification, highlighting culture as a potentially important moderator in POQ research (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). Because collecting large cross-cultural samples is challenging in single empirical studies, cultural moderation effects have received limited attention. Meta-analysis offers an effective way to address these gaps by integrating evidence across diverse samples and cultural contexts,

enabling a systematic examination of mediating mechanisms and boundary conditions that are difficult to test in empirical studies (Leavitt, Mitchell, & Peterson, 2010). Accordingly, this study adopts a meta-analytic approach to examine the mechanisms and boundary conditions of POQ effects.

Several meta-analyses have already investigated the relationships between POQ and various outcomes (e.g., Harari, Manapragada, & Viswesvaran, 2017; Liao, Zhang, Carnevale, Huang, & Wang, 2024; Yang & Li, 2021). However, certain limitations persist, suggesting the need for further research to address them. For example, Harari et al. (2017) mainly focused on the direct effects of POQ on outcomes and gave limited attention to underlying mechanisms. Yang and Li (2021) identified two mediating pathways (negative emotions and positive self-concepts), but did not integrate these two paths within a unifying theoretical framework. Therefore, developing an integrated theoretical framework to systematically examine the effects of POQ remains an important task.

In the present meta-analytic study, we propose an integrative, theory-driven framework to address this gap. Building on a resource-based view, we draw on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu, & Westman, 2018) to develop a theoretical model of how POQ influences work outcomes. Although a handful of empirical studies have drawn on COR theory to examine specific effects of POQ (e.g., Jiang, Ning, & Liu, 2025), COR theory has rarely been used as an overarching framework to explain the effects of POQ. Prior meta-analytic research has primarily focused on relatively proximal motivational states to synthesize POQ effects, as illustrated by Liao et al. (2024), who developed an integrated framework based on the proactive motivation model proposed by Parker, Bindl, and Strauss (2010). Extending this line of work, the present study shifts attention to more fundamental resource dynamics, focusing on how employees evaluate their own capabilities and work environments in resource-related terms.

Drawing on COR theory, we explain how POQ shapes employees' resource perceptions and, in turn, influences their behavioral responses. Specifically, we propose that when employees perceive themselves as overqualified, two distinct resource-related mechanisms come into play. On the one hand, POQ means that employees view themselves as having surplus qualifications (e.g., education, experience, and knowledge, skills, and abilities [KSAs]), namely underutilized personal resources, which fosters more positive self-evaluations of their competence and worth (termed "*personal-resource sufficiency*"). On the other hand, feeling overqualified heightens employees' sense that their resources are being wasted or threatened in the workplace, triggering a range of negative appraisals of their jobs and organizations (termed "*workplace-resource depletion*"). Together, these two resource-based pathways capture the double-edged nature of POQ and correspond to divergent mediating mechanisms linking POQ to different behavioral outcomes, including proactive behavior, prosocial behavior, and counterproductive work behavior (CWB).

Prior empirical research on POQ has often reported inconsistent findings, highlighting the importance of considering boundary conditions that shape employees' reactions to overqualification. Compared with more proximal situational or individual moderators, culture represents a more fundamental contextual force shaping how employees interpret and respond to overqualification. In this meta-analytic study, we draw on Hofstede's classic six-dimensional model of national culture to guide our examination of cultural moderation (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010). Within this model, we focus on two cultural dimensions, power distance and individualism, that are theoretically most relevant to how employees interpret and respond to overqualification. Power distance and individualism are theoretically relevant cultural dimensions for understanding when overqualification is construed as a source of surplus capability or as an indicator of job-related constraint, because these dimensions fundamentally shape employees' perceptions of authority, personal agency,

and the legitimacy of prioritizing and deploying their own skills and interests at work (Hofstede, 2011). Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical model of the present study.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Applying the meta-analytic approach, our research makes three important contributions to the literature. First, by adopting a COR perspective, we develop a dual-path model that integrates prior findings on POQ outcomes. This model identifies two distinct resource-based mechanisms linking POQ to workplace behaviors, helping to explain why POQ can produce both positive and negative effects. In doing so, it provides a novel integrated picture of a field where mediating mechanisms have often been studied in a fragmented way (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). Second, we distinguish proactive and prosocial behaviors as two separate types of extra-role behaviors. Whereas prior meta-analyses have treated extra-role behavior as a single category, our meta-analytic evidence shows that POQ exhibits different total effects across these two forms of beneficial behavior, yielding a more nuanced understanding of overqualified employees' behavioral contributions. Third, we extend POQ research by providing a systematic test of cultural moderation in POQ effects. Drawing on Hofstede's six-dimensional model of national culture (Hofstede et al., 2010), we focus on power distance and individualism as theoretically central dimensions shaping whether POQ is experienced as a source of resource sufficiency or as an indicator of resource strain within the workplace. This perspective clarifies how national culture shapes the resource-based pathways linking POQ to employee behavior, directly responding to calls to better understand the cultural boundary conditions of overqualification effects (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

An Integrative Model of POQ and Its Behavioral Outcomes

The commonly held view in prior research treats POQ as a negative phenomenon. Under this view, the wasted talent of overqualified employees is thought to trigger feelings of relative deprivation (e.g., Lee, Erdogan, Tian, Willis, & Cao, 2021; Luksyte, Bauer, Debus, Erdogan, & Wu, 2022), generate a sense of mismatch with their job or organization (e.g., Hu, Erdogan, Bauer, Jiang, Liu, & Li, 2015; Luksyte, Spitzmueller, & Maynard, 2011), lead them to see their work as meaningless or unsatisfying (e.g., Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013; Zhao & Ma, 2023), and lower their organizational identification and commitment (e.g., Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013; Wu, Weisman, Sung, Erdogan, & Bauer, 2022). These mechanisms are believed to trigger a series of negative work behaviors in POQ individuals. However, recent studies have proposed a different perspective, arguing that POQ can also have positive effects. From this viewpoint, overqualified employees often see themselves as having surplus abilities and human capital beyond their job requirements, and they hold positive self-evaluations of their own ability and value (e.g., Chen & Zhou, 2025; Zhang et al., 2016). In turn, these employees may use their extra talents to benefit the organization. Such contradictory findings underscore the need for an integrative theoretical framework that brings together these two distinct mechanisms.

To integrate the opposing perspectives on POQ, we invoke the COR framework. COR theory was originally proposed as a stress theory to clarify “what stress is” (Hobfoll, 1989) and has been widely applied to explain a variety of psychological processes and behaviors in individuals’ work and life (e.g., Halbesleben, Harvey, & Bolino, 2009). COR theory posits that people strive to obtain, retain, foster and protect valuable resources, and that stress occurs when valued resources are threatened or lost or when expected resource gains fail to realize after significant effort (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Moreover, COR theory further

posits that individuals use their existing resources to obtain new ones, thereby reducing net losses, while also building and keeping the resources they have to prepare for possible future loss (Hobfoll et al., 2018).

According to COR theory, POQ can unfold through two resource-based pathways. On the one hand, when overqualified employees see that their extra skills are not put to use, the resource gains they expected from work never arrive and their existing resources go to waste, launching a resource-depletion path that triggers stress. On the other hand, these surplus qualifications can be viewed as a valuable stock of resources that employees invest to earn new gains, opening a resource-sufficiency path that helps them handle stress. COR theory therefore offers strong theoretical support for these two POQ pathways, namely resource depletion and resource sufficiency, and brings the negative and positive views of POQ together in an integrative resource-based framework.

In this study, we propose two mediating pathways linking POQ to various work behaviors based on COR theory. The first construct, *personal-resource sufficiency*, reflects employees' felt adequacy of their resilience-related personal resources and their strong belief that they have sufficient ability to control and influence their environment (Hobfoll, Johnson, Ennis, & Jackson, 2003; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007). This construct encompasses individuals' positive self-assessments of their competence and value (e.g., general and specific self-efficacy, psychological capital, self-esteem), as well as their favorable perceptions of control in the workplace (e.g., psychological empowerment). This pathway implies that overqualified employees hold a positive view of their personal characteristic resources and are motivated to leverage these resources to gain new ones or to offset potential losses.

The second construct is termed *workplace-resource depletion*, reflecting employees' cognitive appraisal of the loss or unavailability of essential resources needed to accomplish

job tasks (Nielsen, Nielsen, Ogbonnaya, Käsälä, Saari, & Isaksson, 2017). It includes negative evaluations of one's job and organization (e.g., work alienation, job satisfaction [reversed], work meaningfulness [reversed], organizational identification [reversed], organizational commitment [reversed]) as well as perceptions of discrepancy or mismatch (e.g., relative deprivation, person-environment fit [reversed], psychological contract breach). This pathway captures the strain experienced by overqualified individuals who feel underutilized and unable to obtain the object or conditions resources they believe they deserve, resulting in stress and tension.

For outcome variables, we include three widely examined work-related behaviors: proactive behavior, prosocial behavior, and CWB. Although proactive and prosocial behaviors are often combined as extra-role behavior in meta-analytic studies on POQ (Liao et al., 2024; Yang & Li, 2021), we distinguish them in this study because they differ in underlying motivation and manifestation (Li, Frese, & Haidar, 2016). We contend that for overqualified employees, these two types of behavior stem from different considerations and are likely influenced by POQ in different ways (Bolino & Grant, 2016; Parker et al., 2010). Proactive behavior refers to “taking initiative in improving current circumstances; it involves challenging the status quo rather than passively adapting present conditions” (Crant, 2000: 436), and the specific behaviors included in this category are general proactive behavior, job crafting, and creative and innovative behavior. Prosocial behavior is described as “a broad category of acts that are defined by some significant segment of society and/or one's social group as generally beneficial to other people” (Penner, Dovidio, Piliavin, & Schroeder, 2005: 366), and the specific behaviors included in this category are organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and knowledge sharing. CWB is defined as “intentional behavior that harms or intends to harm [the organization and its members]” (Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, & Kessler, 2006: 447), and the specific behaviors included in this category are general

CWB, deviance, withdrawal, time theft, and knowledge hiding.

The Mediating Role of Personal-Resource Sufficiency

Employees who perceive themselves as overqualified often recognize a surplus in their KSAs, which represents a valuable form of human capital (Van Dijk et al., 2020). Building on this perception, they tend to view their excess qualifications as a unique asset, drawing confidence from these additional personal resources and forming more positive evaluations of their competence and value (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). As a result, feeling overqualified can enhance employees' sense that they possess sufficient personal resources to effectively manage and exert control over their work (Lin, Law, & Zhou, 2017). Consistent with this view, prior research shows that POQ is positively associated with stronger beliefs in one's capability to take on a broader range of tasks, as reflected in higher role-breadth self-efficacy (Zhang et al., 2016) and a greater sense of task mastery (Lee et al., 2021). Moreover, because surplus qualifications are often recognized and valued by others, overqualified employees may also develop favorable evaluations of their status and influence within the group, reinforcing a sense of distinctiveness in both skills and status and strengthening beliefs about their unique strengths in the workplace (Chen & Zhou, 2025; Van Dijk et al., 2020). Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 1. POQ has a positive direct effect on personal-resource sufficiency.

Employees with a strong sense of personal-resource sufficiency are more likely to engage in proactive behavior. From a self-regulatory perspective grounded in social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1991), individuals can transform feelings of overqualification into proactive behavior by leveraging their sense of self-efficacy (Zhang et al., 2016). When employees believe they possess ample personal resources such as skills, knowledge, and experience, they are more inclined to initiate constructive changes rather than remain passive. Consistent with this view, POQ is positively associated with role-breadth self-efficacy, which in turn

promotes proactive behavior (Zhang et al., 2016), and overqualified employees with higher career self-efficacy are more likely to engage in job crafting (Pan, Wang, Hou, & Li, 2025).

Personal-resource sufficiency may also foster prosocial behavior. Prior research shows that self-efficacy is positively related to OCB, as individuals high in self-efficacy are better able to identify, plan, and execute appropriate citizenship behavior (Beauregard, 2012). Similarly, self-esteem enhances psychological well-being and self-adjustment capacity (Yang & Li, 2021), thereby promoting citizenship behavior (Pierce & Gardner, 2004). From a resource-based perspective, overqualified employees who perceive themselves as resource rich may view prosocial behavior as a form of resource investment that involves minimal depletion while fulfilling psychological needs, such as gaining centrality in social networks (Erdogan, Karaeminogullari, Bauer, & Ellis, 2020; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2015).

Finally, overqualified employees who feel confident and in control may be less likely to engage in CWB. Empirical evidence suggests that employees with high organization-based self-esteem are less inclined to engage in CWB, as such behavior conflicts with their self-perception as valuable organizational members (Liu, Luksyte, Zhou, Shi, & Wang, 2015). A strong sense of personal control, a key component of personal-resource sufficiency, further enhances self-regulation and reduces the likelihood of harmful behavior (Liao et al., 2024). Research further indicates that ineffective coping with work demands increases the risk of CWB, whereas a sense of control enhances self-discipline and reduces such behavior (Debusscher, Hofmans, & De Fruyt, 2016). Taken together, building on Hypothesis 1, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 2a. Personal-resource sufficiency has a positive direct effect on proactive behavior and mediates the relationship between POQ and proactive behavior, such that POQ has a positive indirect effect on proactive behavior via personal-resource sufficiency.

Hypothesis 2b. Personal-resource sufficiency has a positive direct effect on prosocial behavior and mediates the relationship between POQ and prosocial behavior, such that POQ has a positive indirect effect on prosocial behavior via

personal-resource sufficiency.

Hypothesis 2c. Personal-resource sufficiency has a negative direct effect on CWB and mediates the relationship between POQ and CWB, such that POQ has a negative indirect effect on CWB via personal-resource sufficiency.

The Mediating Role of Workplace-Resource Depletion

When individuals perceive themselves as overeducated for their current jobs, they may experience a strong sense of deprivation stemming from the absence of the social status, compensation, and interpersonal recognition they believe should accompany their qualifications (Vaisey, 2006). Overqualified employees, who often possess surplus skills or experience, may believe they deserve better jobs, giving rise to feelings of relative deprivation (Hu et al., 2015). Empirical research consistently supports this view, showing that POQ is significantly associated with heightened experiences of relative deprivation (Lee et al., 2021; Luksyte et al., 2022; Schreurs, Hamstra, Jawahar, & Akkermans, 2021). In addition, from a person-environment fit perspective, surplus qualifications and elevated expectations make overqualified employees more likely to perceive a mismatch between what their jobs offer and what they need or aspire to at work (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021), a pattern confirmed by prior studies linking POQ to person-environment misfit (Luksyte et al., 2011; Luksyte et al., 2022). Beyond deprivation and misfit, overqualified employees may also develop negative cognitive appraisals of their jobs and organizations. From a resource-based perspective, they may perceive that their substantial effort and expertise are insufficiently utilized or rewarded, leading to dissatisfaction and perceptions of meaningless work (Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013; Wang, Lu, & Wang, 2019; Zhao & Ma, 2023). When such underutilization persists, overqualified employees are more likely to withdraw psychologically and exhibit lower organizational attachment and commitment, a pattern supported by empirical evidence (Liao et al., 2024; Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013; Wu et al., 2022). Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 3. POQ has a positive direct effect on workplace-resource depletion.

We propose that workplace-resource depletion may have a negative direct effect on proactive behavior. From a motivational perspective, when overqualified employees perceive their resources are wasted or depleted through unmet expectations, poor job fit, or undervalued contributions, they may experience diminished reason-to motivation (Parker et al., 2010). Lacking meaningful justification for investing effort, they become less inclined to engage in self-initiated behaviors such as proactively shaping their work environment (Liao et al., 2024). Feelings of relative deprivation, person-job misfit, and negative appraisals of their job or organization can further disengage overqualified employees and undermine proactive action. Empirical research supports this view, showing that POQ reduces personal initiative by increasing relative deprivation and person-environment misfit (Luksyte et al., 2022) and diminishes job crafting by fostering work alienation (Wang et al., 2019).

Similar to its relationship with proactive behavior, we predict that workplace-resource depletion may also negatively affect prosocial behavior. When overqualified employees feel underutilized and believe their resources are wasted or unrecognized, they may lack the reason-to motivation to engage in voluntary behaviors that benefit others (Parker et al., 2010). Negative cognitive appraisals of their job or organization can further weaken their sense of social obligation and willingness to contribute beyond formal role requirements. Empirical evidence supports this reasoning, indicating that POQ reduces prosocial behavior by heightening relative deprivation, fostering person-organization misfit, and weakening felt obligation toward the organization (Luksyte et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2022).

In contrast to its effects on proactive and prosocial behaviors, we predict that workplace-resource depletion may have a positive direct effect on CWB. When employees perceive that their resources are wasted or that their efforts are not adequately reciprocated, they are likely to develop negative cognitive appraisals of their job and organization,

accompanied by adverse emotional states such as anger and boredom (Kim, Park, Sohn, & Lim, 2021; Liu et al., 2015). These reactions can motivate CWB as a form of retaliation or an attempt to restore balance and control in an environment perceived as unfair or unfulfilling (Yang & Li, 2021). Empirical studies corroborate this prediction, showing that relative deprivation, person-job misfit, and diminished work meaningfulness increase the likelihood of CWB among overqualified employees (Luksyte et al., 2011; Schreurs et al., 2021; Zhao & Ma, 2023). Taken together, building on Hypothesis 3, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 4a. Workplace-resource depletion has a negative direct effect on proactive behavior and mediates the relationship between POQ and proactive behavior, such that POQ has a negative indirect effect on proactive behavior via workplace-resource depletion.

Hypothesis 4b. Workplace-resource depletion has a negative direct effect on prosocial behavior and mediates the relationship between POQ and prosocial behavior, such that POQ has a negative indirect effect on prosocial behavior via workplace-resource depletion.

Hypothesis 4c. Workplace-resource depletion has a positive direct effect on CWB and mediates the relationship between POQ and CWB, such that POQ has a positive indirect effect on CWB via workplace-resource depletion.

Total Effects of POQ on Outcomes

The preceding sections have outlined two opposing mediating mechanisms linking POQ to employee behaviors. Because these mechanisms exert countervailing influences on each behavioral outcome, the overall consequences of POQ depend on the relative strength of the mechanisms through which it operates. Although proactive behavior and prosocial behavior are both forms of extra-role behavior and are often treated as a single category in prior meta-analytic studies on POQ (Liao et al., 2024; Yang & Li, 2021), prior theorizing suggests that they are driven by distinct motivational bases (Li et al., 2016). Accordingly, we examine whether the relative strength of the two mediating pathways translates into different total effects of POQ on proactive behavior versus prosocial behavior.

Proactive behavior is more closely tied to self-initiated action and the use of

personal capabilities (Crant, 2000), whereas prosocial behavior is more strongly embedded in relational and normative considerations (Penner et al., 2005). Thus, although both behaviors are influenced by the two mediating mechanisms in our model, proactive behavior is likely to rely more heavily on the personal-resource sufficiency pathway due to its self-initiated nature, whereas prosocial behavior may be more strongly shaped by the workplace-resource depletion pathway, given its reliance on affective and relational considerations. As a result, the two mediating mechanisms may carry different weights for proactive and prosocial behavior, potentially leading to divergent total effects. However, although existing theory offers insights into which mechanisms may be more relevant for each behavior, it does not allow for precise comparisons of their relative strength.

Therefore, we pose the following research question:

Research Question. Do the total effects of POQ on proactive behavior and prosocial behavior exhibit different directional patterns?

Moderating Effects of Cultural Characteristics

Following our discussion of the mediating mechanisms through which POQ influences employee behavior, we turn to cultural moderators that may shape the strength of these pathways. Culture reflects the shared mental programming that differentiates groups and guides individuals' cognitive interpretations and sense-making processes, often delineated by national boundaries (Hofstede et al., 2010; Oyserman, 2017). Compared with more proximal situational or individual factors, culture constitutes a fundamental contextual force influencing how employees interpret overqualification. Drawing on Hofstede's six-dimensional framework, we focus on power distance and individualism, two dimensions theoretically central to how employees construe POQ (Hofstede et al., 2010; Minkov et al., 2017).

Power distance captures the extent to which unequal distributions of power are

accepted and expected within a society (Hofstede et al., 2010). In high-power-distance cultures, hierarchical differentiation is widely regarded as legitimate, whereas in low-power-distance cultures, power relations are more likely to be evaluated in terms of fairness and participation (Hofstede et al., 2010; Hofstede, 2011). Because power distance reflects core cultural norms regarding hierarchy and authority, it shapes how employees interpret discrepancies between their qualifications and job roles.

Specifically, we argue that power distance influences the psychological salience of POQ. In high-power-distance contexts, individuals are socialized to accept hierarchical disparities as a normal feature of organizational life (Hofstede et al., 2010). As a result, even when employees recognize a surplus of qualifications, POQ is more likely to be normalized rather than cognitively elaborated as a salient signal of personal worth or unfair resource allocation. This normalization weakens POQ's potency as a psychological cue, thereby attenuating its capacity to evoke strong perceptions of both personal-resource sufficiency and workplace-resource depletion.

Conversely, in low-power-distance cultures, hierarchical arrangements are more frequently scrutinized and evaluated based on principles of fairness and participation. In such contexts, a perceived mismatch between one's qualifications and job demands is less likely to be dismissed as normal. Instead, it is more readily interpreted as a meaningful discrepancy, either as a basis for positive self-assessment or as evidence of an inequitable situation. This amplifies the psychological impact of POQ, thereby strengthening its relationships with both mediating pathways. Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 5a. Power distance weakens the positive relationship between POQ and personal-resource sufficiency, such that this relationship is less positive in high-power-distance cultural contexts.

Hypothesis 5b. Power distance weakens the positive relationship between POQ and workplace-resource depletion, such that this relationship is less positive in high-power-distance cultural contexts.

Individualism refers to cultures in which interpersonal ties are relatively loose and individuals are expected to prioritize personal goals over collective concerns (Hofstede, 2011; Minkov et al., 2017). Such cultures emphasize personal autonomy, independent choice, and the expression of one's own values and preferences (Minkov & Kaasa, 2021). Because individualism shapes how people define the self and evaluate personal interests relative to the collective, it is likely to influence how employees interpret and respond to POQ in the workplace (Liao et al., 2024).

Regarding the personal-resource sufficiency pathway, we argue that individualism may weaken the positive relationship between POQ and this mediator. In cultures characterized by independent self-construal and a strong emphasis on personal achievement, individuals tend to define their self-worth through internal comparisons with an ideal career self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002). Within this frame, perceiving oneself as overqualified can serve as a salient cue that one has not yet attained a job that matches their capabilities or aspirations. This awareness may trigger self-doubt and a sense of underachievement rather than fostering robust self-confidence, thereby attenuating the positive link between POQ and personal-resource sufficiency (Yang & Li, 2021).

Conversely, regarding the workplace-resource depletion pathway, we contend that individualism strengthens the positive relationship between POQ and this mediator. Individualistic cultures socialize individuals to believe they are entitled to have their personal needs and expectations fulfilled (Hofstede, 2011; Minkov et al., 2017). This heightened sense of entitlement makes employees more sensitive to discrepancies between what they believe they deserve and what they actually receive at work. Consequently, when overqualified employees perceive a mismatch between their qualifications and job demands, they are more likely to interpret it as a salient injustice and a waste of personal resources, thereby

amplifying feelings of relative deprivation and negative appraisal of the work environment.

Therefore, we hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 6a. Individualism weakens the positive relationship between POQ and personal-resource sufficiency, such that this relationship is less positive in high-individualism cultural contexts.

Hypothesis 6b. Individualism strengthens the positive relationship between POQ and workplace-resource depletion, such that this relationship is more positive in high-individualism cultural contexts.

METHODS

Literature Search and Inclusion Criteria

We systematically collected relevant literature through the following steps. First, we conducted a comprehensive search of online databases, including Web of Science, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, ProQuest, EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, Elsevier ScienceDirect, Wiley, Taylor & Francis, JSTOR, Emerald, and APA PsycINFO. The search terms included “overqualification,” “overqualified,” “underemployment,” “skill underutilization,” “overeducation,” and “overeducated.” Second, we searched for articles published in influential journals in the fields of management and applied psychology, including *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Personnel Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *Human Resource Management*, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Applied Psychology*, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *Journal of Business Ethics*, and *Journal of Business Research*. Third, we examined the reference lists of prior review and meta-analytic papers on POQ to identify additional eligible studies (e.g., Erdogan & Bauer, 2021; Harari et al., 2017; Liao et al., 2024; Liu & Wang, 2012; McKee-Ryan & Harvey, 2011; Yang & Li, 2021). The literature search was conducted up to November 2024.

We initially identified 3,323 articles through the literature search. After removing duplicate records and studies unrelated to the topic, 2,078 articles remained. We then applied the following inclusion criteria to determine eligible studies for the meta-analysis. First, only English-language articles were included; those published in other languages were excluded. Second, only quantitative empirical studies were retained; review, meta-analytic, theoretical, and qualitative studies were excluded. Third, included studies had to examine the relationship between POQ and at least one mediator or outcome variable and report both the correlation coefficient and sample size. Fourth, if an article contained multiple independent samples, each sample was coded separately. If two different articles used the same sample, only the more recent one was retained. In total, our meta-analysis included 233 articles, 257 samples, and 547 effect sizes. An overview of the literature search and inclusion process is presented in the flowchart in Figure 2.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Coding Procedures

We coded all eligible studies included in the meta-analysis using a structured coding sheet developed prior to data extraction. For each study, we recorded the title of the article, journal name, authors, year of publication, type of publication (e.g., journal article, dissertation, or conference paper), correlation coefficients (i.e., Pearson's r), reliability coefficients (i.e., Cronbach's alpha), sample size, and the country in which the sample was collected. To enhance coding accuracy, a subset of studies was independently double-coded by the first author and a research assistant who was a graduate student majoring in management. Specifically, 107 articles were double-coded to assess agreement on key coding items. Intercoder agreement was 96.07%, and all discrepancies were resolved through discussion between the two coders, resulting in 100% agreement finally. The remaining

studies were coded independently by the first author following the same coding procedure.

After the initial coding, the original variables were further integrated into higher-level constructs. Specifically, variables with similar conceptual meanings were aggregated into higher-level constructs based on their theoretical definitions and measurement items, consistent with recommended meta-analytic practices (Schmidt & Hunter, 2015) that have been widely adopted in prior research (e.g., Liao et al., 2024). Definitions and operationalizations of all focal constructs are provided in the following sections.

POQ. In line with the prior definition, we selected POQ measures that are most widely adopted in existing studies. (e.g., perceived overqualification, overqualification, overqualification perception, perceived underemployment, subjective underemployment).

Personal-resource sufficiency. A variable was classified as personal-resource sufficiency when it represents employees' felt adequacy of the resilience-linked aspects of the self and indicates that they believe they have enough capacity to shape and manage their surroundings effectively (Hobfoll et al., 2003; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). This construct includes general self-efficacy, specific self-efficacy, psychological capital, psychological empowerment, and self-esteem.

Workplace-resource depletion. A variable was classified as workplace-resource depletion when it captures employees' appraisal that the resources intend to support their job tasks have been lost or have become unavailable because of negative work experiences (Nielsen et al., 2017). This construct comprises relative deprivation, work alienation, psychological contract breach, and reverse-coded variables including person-environment fit, work meaningfulness, organizational identification, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction.

Proactive behavior. A variable was classified as proactive behavior when it describes self-initiated actions that challenge the status quo and seek to introduce constructive

change or improvement in the workplace (Crant, 2000). This construct includes general proactive behavior, job crafting, and creative and innovative behavior.

Prosocial behavior. A variable was classified as prosocial behavior when it represents discretionary acts intend to benefit colleagues or contribute positively to the organization's collective effectiveness (Penner et al., 2005). This construct includes OCB and knowledge sharing.

CWB. A variable was classified as CWB when it denotes deliberate actions that harm or intend to harm the organization or its members (Spector et al., 2006). This construct represents behaviors harmful to the organization or its members, including general CWB, deviance, withdrawal, time theft, and knowledge hiding.

Moderators. To examine potential cultural moderation effects, we utilized national boundaries to capture differences in cultural context across studies, aligning with prior research that emphasizes the role of country-level cultural variation (e.g., Minkov & Hofstede, 2012). Specifically, when country information was available for a given sample, we matched it with national-level cultural value indices for two dimensions: power distance and individualism, based on Hofstede, Hofstede, and Minkov's (2010) survey data. These continuous cultural indicators were used as moderators in subsequent analyses. Samples were excluded from the moderation analysis if country information was unavailable or if the sample involved multiple countries within the same study.

Meta-Analytic Procedures

We used Smart Meta-Analysis (SMA) 1.1 (Wei & Jiao, 2025) for data entry and initial processing of the meta-analytic dataset, and then used R (version 4.4.0) to conduct data analyses, including meta-analytic correlations analyses, meta-analytic structural equation (MASEM) modeling, and meta-regression analyses.

We conducted the meta-analysis following Schmidt and Hunter's (2015)

psychometric approach, using a random-effects model. First, we calculate the sample-size weighted mean correlation (r) for each relationship, and then correct for measurement error using reliability coefficients to estimate the true-score correlation (ρ). For variables without reported reliability coefficients, we use the sample-size weighted average reliability of the construct as an approximate estimate (Joshi, Son, & Roh, 2015). Second, we compute 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for each estimated ρ . Third, we calculate 80% credibility intervals (CVs) to describe the distribution of true-score correlations across studies.

We used MASEM (Viswesvaran & Ones, 1995) to test the hypothesized mediation model. Specifically, we estimated the direct, indirect, and total effects among the variables through path analysis. We constructed a 6×6 meta-analytic correlation matrix based on corrected correlations and specified a mediation model that included indirect paths from POQ through two mediators to three outcome variables. Given the variation in sample sizes across studies, we calculated the harmonic mean of sample sizes based on the correlation matrix (Viswesvaran & Ones, 1995). To assess the significance of indirect effects, we conducted Monte Carlo simulations with 20,000 repetitions to generate 95% CIs for each mediation path (Preacher & Selig, 2012). Because the moderators were continuous variables, we conducted meta-regression to examine the moderating effects (Field & Gillett, 2010).

RESULTS

Meta-Analytic Correlations

Before conducting hypotheses testing, we first examined potential publication bias for the key relationships investigated in this study. We adopted four widely used methods to examine potential publication bias, including the fail-safe N (Rosenthal, 1979), Egger's regression test (Egger, Smith, Schneider, & Minder, 1997), Begg and Mazumdar's rank correlation test (Begg & Mazumdar, 1994), and the trim-and-fill method (Duval & Tweedie, 2000). Taken together, the results of all four publication bias assessments suggest that the

overall conclusions of this study are robust, and publication bias does not appear to pose a serious threat to the validity of the findings.

We conducted meta-analytic correlation analyses to examine the direct effects among the variables in our hypothesized model (see Table 1). Regarding relationships between POQ and the two mediators, POQ was significantly positively correlated with workplace-resource depletion ($\rho = .29$, 95 % CI= [.26, .33]), whereas its positive correlation with personal-resource sufficiency did not reach significance ($\rho = .04$, 95 % CI= [-.06, .13]). For the associations between personal-resource sufficiency and the outcome variables, personal-resource sufficiency showed significant positive correlations with proactive behavior ($\rho = .52$, 95 % CI= [.42, .61]) and prosocial behavior ($\rho = .43$, 95 % CI= [.16, .69]), and a significant negative correlation with CWB ($\rho = -.16$, 95 % CI= [-.30, -.02]). With respect to workplace-resource depletion, it exhibited significant negative correlations with proactive behavior ($\rho = -.29$, 95 % CI= [-.38, -.21]) and prosocial behavior ($\rho = -.35$, 95 % CI= [-.43, -.27]), but a significant positive correlation with CWB ($\rho = .20$, 95 % CI= [.09, .30]). Overall, these meta-analytic correlation results are consistent with the predicted directions of our hypotheses, and thus provide a foundation for the subsequent MASEM analyses.

Insert Table 1 about here

Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modeling

We used MASEM (Viswesvaran & Ones, 1995) to build a model that simultaneously included POQ, two mediators, and three outcome variables to test the direct, indirect, and total effects of every path in our hypothesized model. First, we constructed the correlation matrix for the study (see Table 2) and calculated the harmonic mean of the sample sizes in that matrix to serve as the sample size in the MASEM. We then ran the MASEM and obtained the coefficient estimates and their significance levels. Afterward, we performed

20,000 Monte-Carlo simulations (Preacher & Selig, 2012) to estimate 95 % Monte Carlo CIs for the indirect effects and total effects.

Insert Table 2 about here

As shown in Figure 3, the path coefficient from POQ to personal-resource sufficiency was 0.04 ($p < .05$), supporting Hypothesis 1, and the path coefficient from POQ to workplace-resource depletion was 0.29 ($p < .001$), supporting Hypothesis 3. In addition, we also found that personal-resource sufficiency was positively associated with proactive behavior ($\beta = 0.46, p < .001$) and prosocial behavior ($\beta = 0.36, p < .001$), while it was negatively associated with CWB ($\beta = -0.15, p < .001$). Workplace-resource depletion was negatively linked to proactive behavior ($\beta = -0.18, p < .001$) and prosocial behavior ($\beta = -0.24, p < .001$), but positively linked to CWB ($\beta = 0.08, p < .001$). These results provided the basis for the subsequent mediation analyses.

Insert Figure 3 about here

Table 3 presents the test results of the indirect effects and total effects. The results showed that personal-resource sufficiency mediated the relationships between POQ and proactive behavior ($\beta = 0.02, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.00, 0.03]$), prosocial behavior ($\beta = 0.01, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.00, 0.02]$), and CWB ($\beta = -0.01, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.01, -0.00]$). All the 95 % Monte-Carlo CIs excluded zero, so Hypotheses 2a-2c were supported. The results also showed that workplace-resource depletion mediated the relationships between POQ and proactive behavior ($\beta = -0.05, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.06, -0.04]$), prosocial behavior ($\beta = -0.07, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.08, -0.06]$), and CWB ($\beta = 0.02, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.01, 0.03]$). Thus, Hypotheses 4a-4c were supported. Regarding total effects, POQ had significant positive total effects on proactive behavior ($\beta = 0.05, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.02, 0.08]$) and CWB ($\beta = 0.25, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.22, 0.28]$). In contrast, it had a significant

negative total effect on prosocial behavior ($\beta = -0.06$, 95 % CI $[-0.09, -0.03]$). These results address the research question by showing different directional total effects of POQ on proactive and prosocial behavior.

Insert Table 3 about here

Moderation Effects

According to the meta-regression results, the relationship between POQ and personal-resource sufficiency was more positive in low-power-distance cultural contexts than in high-power-distance contexts ($b = -0.02$, $p < .05$). Likewise, this relationship was also more positive in low-individualism cultural contexts than in high-individualism cultural contexts ($b = -0.01$, $p < .05$). However, the moderating effects of power distance ($b = -0.001$, $p = .88$) and individualism ($b = 0.002$, $p = .57$) on the relationship between POQ and workplace-resource depletion were both nonsignificant. Therefore, Hypotheses 5a and 6a were supported, whereas Hypotheses 5b and 6b were not. Moreover, the meta-regression results also showed that the other four Hofstede cultural dimensions (masculinity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence) did not exhibit significant moderating effects.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The present study investigates how POQ shapes employee behavior through two resource-based mechanisms. Using a meta-analytic approach, we tested a dual-path model showing that POQ simultaneously fosters personal-resource sufficiency, reflecting employees' perceptions of having ample personal resources, and triggers workplace-resource depletion, capturing perceptions of exhausted work-related resources. We examined how these two mechanisms influence proactive behavior, prosocial behavior, and CWB, as well as whether cultural factors moderate these relationships. In doing so, this study provides a

systematic and integrative account of the complex effects of POQ on employee behavior.

Overall, the results largely supported our theoretical model. POQ was associated with both higher personal-resource sufficiency and greater workplace-resource depletion, with the two pathways exerting opposing effects across outcomes. Personal-resource sufficiency was linked to higher levels of proactive and prosocial behavior and lower levels of CWB, whereas workplace-resource depletion predicted reduced proactive and prosocial behavior and increased CWB. Accordingly, POQ exhibited a positive total effect on proactive behavior and CWB and a negative total effect on prosocial behavior, highlighting its double-edged nature. The contrasting total effects on proactive versus prosocial behavior also demonstrate the importance of examining these two forms of extra-role behavior separately.

Although most hypotheses were supported, several cultural moderation effects were not observed. Neither power distance nor individualism moderated the workplace-resource depletion pathway, suggesting that the negative cognitive and stress-related responses to POQ may be relatively universal. In contrast, both cultural dimensions moderated the personal-resource sufficiency pathway, such that the positive association between POQ and personal-resource sufficiency was stronger in low-power-distance and low-individualism contexts. No other Hofstede cultural dimensions showed significant moderating effects, reinforcing the theoretical and practical relevance of focusing on power distance and individualism.

Together, these findings validate the integrated dual-path model of POQ.

Theoretical Implications

Our study offers several important theoretical implications for the POQ literature. First, by introducing COR theory into POQ research (Hobfoll, 1989), we conceptualize POQ through the dual lenses of resource sufficiency and resource depletion and identify two distinct mediation pathways: personal-resource sufficiency and workplace-resource depletion. Prior empirical research has typically approached the effects of POQ in a piecemeal fashion

(Erdogan & Bauer, 2021), relying on different theoretical perspectives to account for isolated effects rather than offering an integrated explanation. By demonstrating that overqualified employees simultaneously mobilize surplus personal resources and experience resource loss due to underutilization, our study provides a unified account of POQ's ambivalent consequences and extends the application area of COR theory.

Second, we advance POQ research by differentiating between two forms of beneficial extra-role behavior: proactive behavior and prosocial behavior. Although prior meta-analytic studies have often treated positive extra-role behavior as a single category (Liao et al., 2024; Yang & Li, 2021), our findings reveal a clear divergence in the total effects of POQ across these behaviors. Specifically, POQ exhibits a positive total effect on proactive behavior but a negative total effect on prosocial behavior, suggesting that overqualified employees tend to proactively shape their work environment while being less willing to invest additional effort in helping others. This finding aligns with Erdogan and Bauer's (2021) review, which shows that overqualification correlates positively with innovative behavior and negatively with OCB, thereby providing quantitative support for their proposition.

Third, by examining national culture as a moderator, we add a cross-cultural perspective to POQ research. Drawing on Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede et al., 2010), we find that power distance and individualism constitute key boundary conditions for the personal-resource sufficiency pathway, whereas the workplace-resource depletion pathway appears relatively invariant across cultural contexts. These findings suggest that cultural context primarily conditions the bright side of POQ, while its dark side may be more universal. Accordingly, future research would benefit from incorporating cultural contingencies to better understand when and how POQ translates into divergent resource-based outcomes.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide practical guidance for managing employees who perceive themselves as overqualified. First, managers can help overqualified employees fully activate their personal strengths by creating opportunities to apply and expand their skills beyond routine tasks, such as involving them in problem-solving, innovation projects, or mentoring roles, thereby encouraging confidence and proactive contribution. Second, organizations should pay close attention to preventing feelings of frustration or underutilization by offering clear role expectations, developmental feedback, and visible pathways for growth, which can reduce disengagement and the risk of withdrawal or CWB. Third, effective management of overqualified employees requires sensitivity to cultural differences, as employees across cultural contexts may vary in how they express confidence, voice concerns, or respond to developmental opportunities, making it important for managers to adapt communication styles, recognition practices, and talent utilization strategies to local norms rather than relying on a single uniform approach.

Limitations and Future Research

Our study inevitably has some limitations, which also guide the direction for future research. First, we grouped many different similar variables under higher-order constructs, a process that carried the risk of “mixing apples with oranges” (Cortina, 2003). To reduce this risk and maintain construct clarity, we defined each variable theoretically and conducted systematic coding procedures to ensure alignment between measures and definitions. This rigorous approach minimized the risk of conflating distinct concepts and strengthens the integrity of our theoretical framework (Liao et al., 2024).

Second, our examination of potential moderators was constrained by the limited number of empirical studies available for certain variables, preventing a more comprehensive analysis of how overqualification functions across situations. Prior research suggests that job

characteristics such as job autonomy and job complexity (Debus, Gross, & Kleinmann, 2020; Peng, Yu, Peng, Zhang, & Xue, 2023), leadership styles including transformational, servant, and ethical leadership (Chen & Zhou, 2025; Liu, Huang, Kim, & Yang, 2024; Liu, Mu, & Li, 2025), as well as individual traits such as justice sensitivity and proactive personality (Liu et al., 2015; Simon, Bauer, Erdogan, & Shepherd, 2019) may all moderate the effects of POQ on work-related outcomes. We encourage future research to examine these boundary conditions using diverse methodologies, including field studies and experiments.

Third, although our study focused on behavioral outcomes, future research may also examine relational outcomes. Feeling overqualified can shape how employees interact with coworkers and supervisors, eliciting divergent social responses. Overqualified employees may be admired or sought out for guidance due to their expertise (Erdogan et al., 2020), but may also face jealousy, contempt, or ostracism when their surplus qualifications are perceived as threatening (Li, Liao, & Han, 2022; Zhang, Bolino, & Yin, 2023). Prior studies have examined such relational consequences through constructs such as social acceptance (Simon et al., 2019), advice network centrality (Erdogan et al., 2020), and peer ostracism (Zhang et al., 2023). We encourage future research to further investigate these relational outcomes to advance understanding of POQ's interpersonal implications.

CONCLUSION

This study advances a holistic understanding of POQ by integrating fragmented findings within a resource-based dual-path framework. Drawing on COR theory, we demonstrate that POQ operates through two opposing mechanisms: personal-resource sufficiency, which generally produces positive effects, and workplace-resource depletion, which primarily drives negative effects. Overall, POQ is associated with increased proactive behavior and CWB, but reduced prosocial behavior. Furthermore, cultural characteristics, particularly power distance and individualism, play an important moderating role in the

personal-resource sufficiency pathway. Taken together, these insights offer an integrative account of POQ's behavioral consequences and provide a foundation for future research and managerial practice.

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TABLE 1

Results of Meta-Analytic Correlations

Relationships	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>SD_r</i>	ρ	<i>SD_ρ</i>	95%CI	80%CV	%Var
POQ→Mediators									
Personal-resource Sufficiency	52	14534	0.03	0.29	0.04	0.33	[-0.06, 0.13]	[-0.39, 0.46]	3.27
Workplace-resource Depletion	178	65667	0.25	0.23	0.29	0.26	[0.26, 0.33]	[-0.03, 0.62]	3.44
POQ→Outcomes									
Proactive Behavior	79	28352	0.04	0.35	0.05	0.40	[-0.04, 0.14]	[-0.46, 0.56]	1.78
Prosocial Behavior	43	11970	-0.05	0.21	-0.06	0.24	[-0.14, 0.01]	[-0.37, 0.25]	6.02
Counterproductive Work Behavior	67	23218	0.22	0.18	0.25	0.20	[0.20, 0.30]	[-0.000, 0.51]	6.21
Personal-resource Sufficiency→Outcomes									
Proactive Behavior	8	2408	0.46	0.11	0.52	0.11	[0.42, 0.61]	[0.37, 0.67]	13.67
Prosocial Behavior	4	1078	0.37	0.16	0.43	0.17	[0.16, 0.69]	[0.17, 0.69]	8.91
Counterproductive Work Behavior	9	3036	-0.15	0.17	-0.16	0.18	[-0.30, -0.02]	[-0.40, 0.08]	8.73
Workplace-resource Depletion→Outcomes									
Proactive Behavior	14	4544	-0.26	0.13	-0.29	0.16	[-0.38, -0.21]	[-0.49, -0.10]	10.79
Prosocial Behavior	22	7750	-0.29	0.12	-0.35	0.18	[-0.43, -0.27]	[-0.59, -0.11]	6.48
Counterproductive Work Behavior	26	11508	0.17	0.23	0.20	0.25	[0.09, 0.30]	[-0.13, 0.52]	3.38

Notes: *k* = number of effect sizes; *N* = total sample sizes; *r* = mean sample size weighted observed correlation; *SD_r* = standard deviation of the observed correlation; ρ = mean sample size weighted corrected correlation; *SD_ρ* = standard deviation of the corrected correlations; 95% CI = 95% confidence interval around the corrected correlation; 80% CV = 80% credibility interval around the corrected correlation; %Var = the percentage of observed variance accounted for by sampling error and measurement error.

TABLE 2
Meta-Analytic Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. POQ					
2. Personal-resource Sufficiency	<i>k</i> = 52, <i>N</i> = 14534 <i>r</i> = 0.03, ρ = 0.04 95%CI = [-0.06, 0.13]				
3. Workplace-resource Depletion	<i>k</i> = 178, <i>N</i> = 65667 <i>r</i> = 0.25, ρ = 0.29 95%CI = [0.26, 0.33]	<i>k</i> = 17, <i>N</i> = 3924 <i>r</i> = -0.26, ρ = -0.30 95%CI = [-0.47, -0.13]			
4. Proactive Behavior	<i>k</i> = 79, <i>N</i> = 28352 <i>r</i> = 0.04, ρ = 0.05 95%CI = [-0.04, 0.14]	<i>k</i> = 8, <i>N</i> = 2408 <i>r</i> = 0.46, ρ = 0.52 95%CI = [0.42, 0.61]	<i>k</i> = 14, <i>N</i> = 4544 <i>r</i> = -0.26, ρ = -0.29 95%CI = [-0.38, -0.21]		
5. Prosocial Behavior	<i>k</i> = 43, <i>N</i> = 11970 <i>r</i> = -0.05, ρ = -0.06 95%CI = [-0.14, 0.01]	<i>k</i> = 4, <i>N</i> = 1078 <i>r</i> = 0.37, ρ = 0.43 95%CI = [0.16, 0.69]	<i>k</i> = 22, <i>N</i> = 7750 <i>r</i> = -0.29, ρ = -0.35 95%CI = [-0.43, -0.27]	<i>k</i> = 11, <i>N</i> = 2993 <i>r</i> = 0.49, ρ = 0.55 95%CI = [0.40, 0.70]	
6. Counterproductive Work Behavior	<i>k</i> = 67, <i>N</i> = 23218 <i>r</i> = 0.22, ρ = 0.25 95%CI = [0.20, 0.30]	<i>k</i> = 9, <i>N</i> = 3036 <i>r</i> = -0.15, ρ = -0.16 95%CI = [-0.30, -0.02]	<i>k</i> = 26, <i>N</i> = 11508 <i>r</i> = 0.17, ρ = 0.20 95%CI = [0.09, 0.30]	<i>k</i> = 10, <i>N</i> = 3796 <i>r</i> = -0.16, ρ = -0.18 95%CI = [-0.32, -0.04]	<i>k</i> = 7, <i>N</i> = 3282 <i>r</i> = -0.05, ρ = -0.06 95%CI = [-0.40, 0.28]

Notes: *k* = number of effect sizes; *N* = total sample sizes; *r* = mean sample size weighted observed correlation; ρ = mean sample size weighted corrected correlation; 95% CI = 95% confidence interval around the corrected correlation.

TABLE 3
Results of Mediation Analysis

Path and Effect	β	<i>SE</i>	95% Monte Carlo CI
POQ→Mediators→Proactive Behavior			
Indirect Effect: POQ→Personal-resource Sufficiency→Proactive Behavior	0.02*	0.01	[0.003, 0.03]
Indirect Effect: POQ→Workplace-resource Depletion→Proactive Behavior	-0.05***	0.005	[-0.06, -0.04]
Total Effect	0.05**	0.02	[0.02, 0.08]
Difference	0.07***	0.01	[0.05, 0.08]
POQ→Mediators→Prosocial Behavior			
Indirect Effect: POQ→Personal-resource Sufficiency→Prosocial Behavior	0.01*	0.01	[0.002, 0.02]
Indirect Effect: POQ→Workplace-resource Depletion→Prosocial Behavior	-0.07***	0.01	[-0.08, -0.06]
Total Effect	-0.06***	0.02	[-0.09, -0.03]
Difference	0.08***	0.01	[0.07, 0.10]
POQ→Mediators→Counterproductive Work Behavior			
Indirect Effect: POQ→Personal-resource Sufficiency→Counterproductive Work Behavior	-0.01*	0.002	[-0.01, -0.001]
Indirect Effect: POQ→Workplace-resource Depletion→Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.02***	0.005	[0.01, 0.03]
Total Effect	0.25***	0.01	[0.22, 0.28]
Difference	-0.03***	0.01	[-0.04, -0.02]

Notes: β = standardized coefficient for the specified effect in the mediation model; *SE*=standard error of β ; 95 % Monte Carlo CI = bias-corrected 95 % confidence interval obtained from 20 000 Monte-Carlo resamples of the model parameters.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

FIGURE 1
Theoretical Model

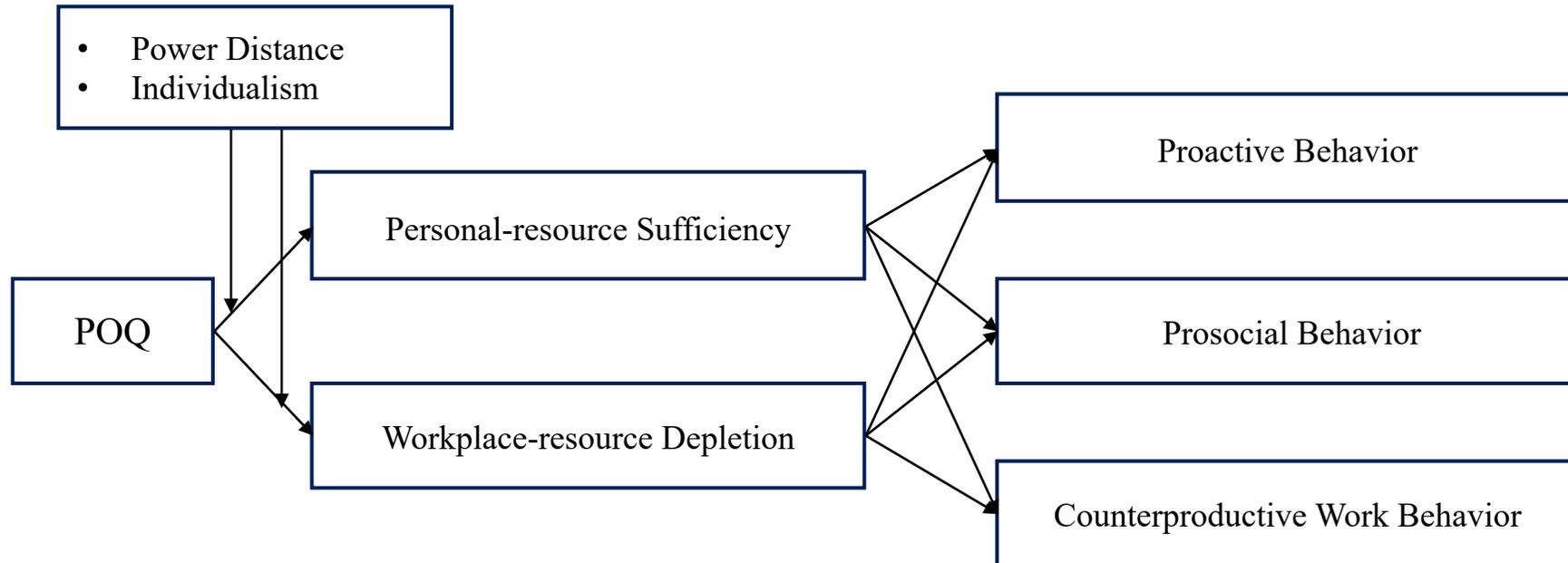


FIGURE 2

The Flowchart of the Literature Search and Inclusion

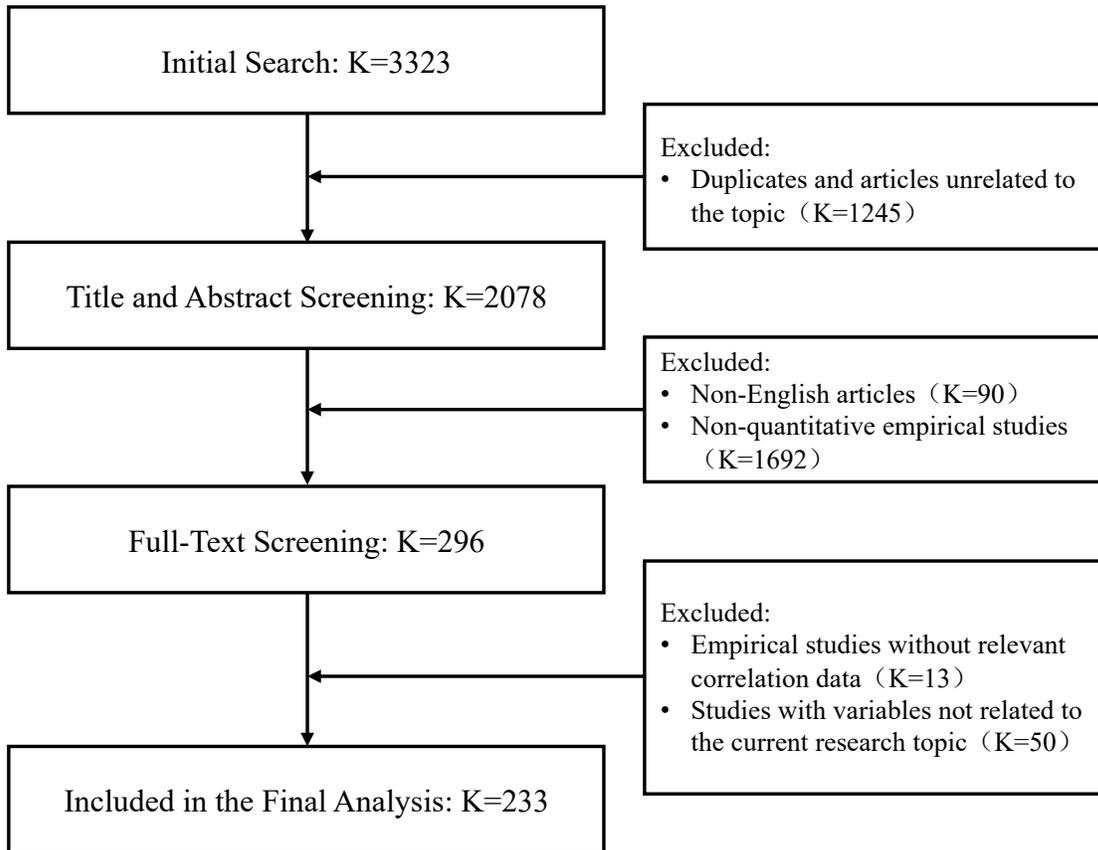
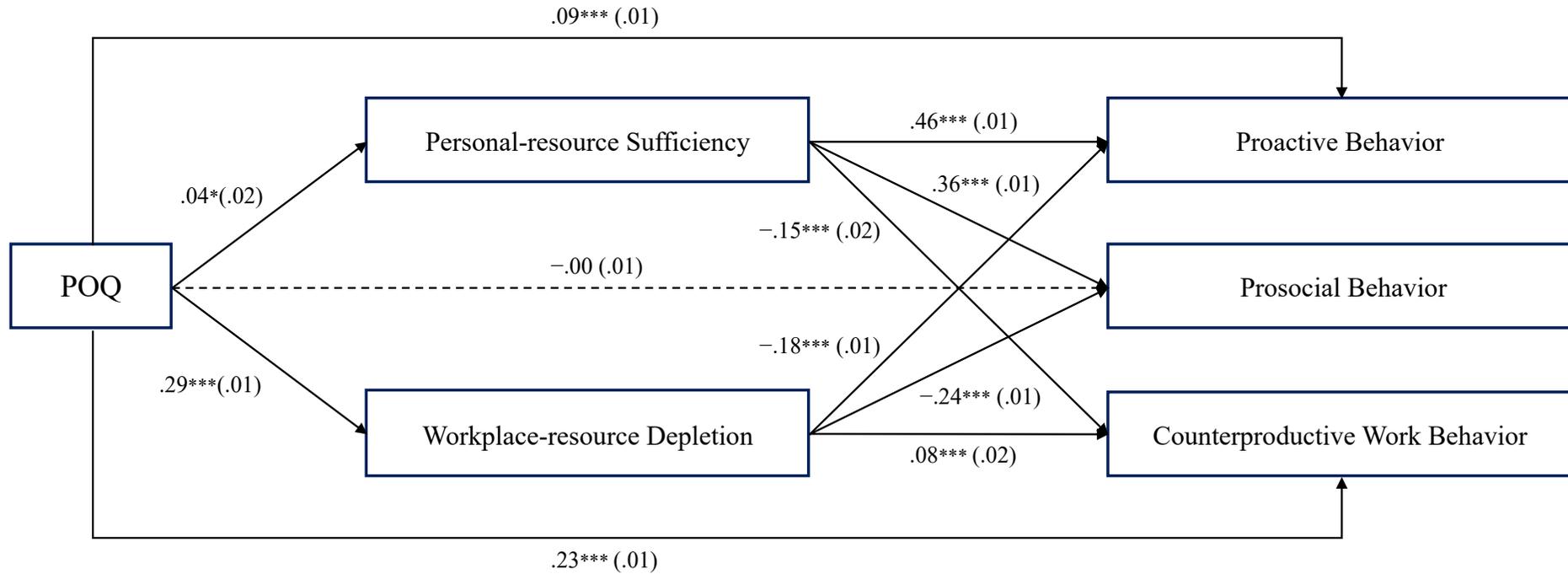


FIGURE 3
MASEM Results



Notes: $N=4272$ (harmonic mean). Standard errors are in parentheses. Solid lines represent significant relationships in the MASEM, while dashed line represent a nonsignificant relationship.

* $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$.