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# The Impact of Perceived Overqualification on Deviant Innovation Among New Generation Employees: A Role Identity Perspective

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**Abstract:** Existing research primarily focuses on emotional and cognitive pathways to explore the impact of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation, failing to fully reveal the relationship between these factors. Based on role identity theory, this study constructs a model with innovation role identity as a mediating variable and investigates the mechanism of perceived overqualification's impact on deviant innovation, using a sample of 223 employees. The study found that: (1) perceived overqualification positively predicts deviant innovation; (2) innovation role identity positively influences deviant innovation; (3) perceived overqualification positively affects deviant innovation by enhancing innovation role identity.

**Keywords:** Perceived overqualification, Innovation role identity, Deviant innovation, Role identity theory.

## 1. Introduction

To maximize profit, companies usually only implement the most promising innovative ideas. This leads employees to face various challenges and opportunities in innovative practices. To break through organizational constraints, they may bypass formal procedures or violate organizational rules to innovate, showing more deviant tendencies in their innovation behaviors. Data shows that 84% of Chinese employees believe they are overqualified, and perceived overqualification is becoming a common feeling in the workplace (Zhang, 2016). Perceived overqualification is the subjective feeling of being overqualified for one's job, reflecting a mismatch between employees and their roles in the workplace. Deviant innovation refers to spontaneous innovative behaviors that use deviance as a means, which is an important source of unique competitive advantage for enterprises. The relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation is an important but under-researched area. First, in the theoretical field, there are two main viewpoints regarding the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation: one viewpoint argues that perceived overqualification promotes deviant innovation (Ma, 2023); the other viewpoint believes that there is a U-shaped relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation (Wang, 2022). Given that the relationship between the two has not reached a consistent conclusion, further exploration is necessary. Second, existing research explains the impact of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation from two pathways: emotional and cognitive, which helps understand the specific influence process. However, these studies also have certain limitations. On one hand, existing research considers that employees with perceived overqualification engage in deviant innovation behaviors either to alleviate negative emotions or based on a good cognitive state, neglecting the possibility that other factors may play a key role. For example, driven by innovation role identity, individuals with perceived overqualification may also engage in deviant innovation behaviors. Therefore, in the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation, role identity may play a crucial role, which is a direction worth exploring in depth.

Role identity theory suggests that individuals' behaviors are influenced by their roles, and both perceived overqualification and deviant innovation arise in specific contexts, closely linked to role positioning and expectations (McCall, 1978). This theory can better reveal the intrinsic connection with deviant innovation. Therefore, this study, based on role identity theory, focuses on new generation employees to explore the mechanism and boundary conditions of the impact of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation.

## 2. Theoretical Foundation and Hypotheses

### 2.1. Theoretical Foundation - Role Identity Theory

Role identity theory is a branch of identity theory that posits individuals' self-concepts are composed of the roles they play in society. This theory was first proposed by McCall and Simmons in their 1978 book "Identity and Interaction." The core idea of this theory is that individuals assign meaning and expectations to certain roles and incorporate these roles as part of their self-concept, which guides their actions in social interactions. Individuals answer "Who am I?" and "What should I do?" based on the roles they play, which is a collection of role expectations and behaviors. For example, a teacher's role identity might include values about education, a sense of responsibility toward students, and preferences for teaching methods, all of which influence their behavior in the classroom. Similar to Goffman's dramaturgical approach, behavior is primarily guided by personal and others' expectations of specific role performances. Through role-conforming behavior, individuals derive a sense of value and meaning. However, unlike Goffman's emphasis on role-switching and performance in different settings, role identity theory focuses more on the internalization and stability of roles.

Riley and Burke (1995) pointed out that role identity mainly originates from two aspects: feedback from social

relationships and related self-concepts. Feedback from social relationships refers to others' expectations of the individual, which is an important source of self-concept formation, as individuals understand themselves through the "looking-glass self." Related self-concepts refer to self-expectations, which are crucial for self-concept formation. Individuals tend to engage in behaviors related to their roles, meaning the higher the role identity, the more inclined individuals are to engage in related behaviors. On one hand, role identity can stimulate role performance because playing related roles satisfies the key need for self-verification. On the other hand, as role behaviors continue, the social and personal costs of no longer fulfilling specific roles increase, prompting individuals to maintain role-related behaviors. Individuals will only engage in role-consistent behaviors when situational demands align with the implementation of role identity. When role identity is threatened, individuals tend to avoid role-related behaviors.

In this study, role identity theory provides a theoretical foundation for explaining the relationships among perceived overqualification, innovation role identity, and deviant innovation. Perceived overqualification refers to employees believing that their knowledge and abilities exceed the requirements of their current job. This perception enhances employees' internal self-evaluation and desire to fully realize their value, thereby promoting the formation of innovation role identity. Driven by the need for self-actualization and self-verification, innovation role identity can stimulate individuals to actively engage in deviant innovation behaviors. In summary, role identity theory effectively reveals the relationships among perceived overqualification, innovation role identity, and deviant innovation, providing a solid theoretical foundation for this study.

## 2.2. Hypotheses

Perceived overqualification refers to employees' perception that their education, abilities, and experience exceed the requirements of their current job, which profoundly impacts their behaviors. Research shows that higher perceived overqualification can lead to higher psychological privilege, resulting in deviant behaviors. Deviant innovation refers to spontaneous innovative behaviors beneficial to the organization that bypass or ignore leadership opposition. Especially for new generation employees, who emphasize personal growth and self-actualization and dare to challenge authority, this generation has a strong sense of innovation.

Firstly, employees with perceived overqualification usually have high self-efficacy and innovation consciousness (Zhou, 2021). Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to complete specific tasks. Bandura's self-efficacy theory suggests that high self-efficacy can enhance motivation and persistence, making individuals more willing to face challenges and pursue innovation. New generation employees, with higher education levels and skills, are confident in their abilities, which encourages proactive behaviors to change the status quo. For example, a graduate from Guangzhou University's mathematics department chose to work as a food delivery driver after graduation. He utilized his planning and spatial thinking skills developed during university to efficiently plan delivery routes, ensuring timely deliveries and finishing work 40 minutes earlier than colleagues.

Secondly, perceived overqualification can lead to feelings of mismatch and frustration, which can drive deviant innovation. Relative deprivation theory indicates that individuals who feel unfairly treated experience anger and dissatisfaction, more pronounced among new generation employees who have high expectations for self-worth and fair treatment. When they feel their talents and abilities are underutilized, strong feelings of mismatch and frustration arise, motivating them to engage in deviant behaviors to seek psychological balance and job satisfaction.

Lastly, employees with perceived overqualification have high job autonomy and creativity. New generation employees are not satisfied with existing work patterns and tend to proactively seek new methods to enhance deviant innovation. Their open mindset and pursuit of innovation drive them to break norms and engage in unauthorized innovative activities to achieve personal and professional goals. They have a high need for external recognition and achievement and hope to gain organizational recognition and rewards through their efforts. When perceiving overqualification, they exhibit deviant innovation to demonstrate their abilities and values, aiming for more career opportunities and organizational support.

Previous studies have preliminarily confirmed that perceived overqualification positively predicts deviant innovation. For example, Ma (2023), based on self-regulation and self-consistency theories, confirmed the significant positive impact of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation; Qu (2023), based on relative deprivation theory, found a positive correlation between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation; Wang (2019), based on paradox theory, constructed a chain mediation model and confirmed the positive prediction of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation. Based on the above analysis, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: Perceived overqualification positively affects deviant innovation.

Role identity is a self-perspective or a sense of self-attribution associated with a specific role (Burke & Tully, 1977). It arises through individuals' reflective processes on how they view themselves or how others view them, self-judgment based on that representation, and emotional responses based on that judgment (McCall & Simmons, 1978).

On the one hand, employees with perceived overqualification believe they possess abilities beyond job requirements, incorporating this perception into their self-schema. For example, they may develop self-schemas like "I am highly capable" or "I am an underutilized expert." Stryker (1987) believes self-schema plays a key role in role identity formation, reflecting internal standards of self-expectation.

On the other hand, for employees with perceived overqualification, role mismatch makes it difficult to meet self-growth needs. To break through this dilemma, individuals proactively seek new roles, like innovators, to better utilize their abilities. For such employees, an innovation role symbolizes an identity, imbued with significant meaning. Recognizing this role helps them distinguish themselves from other groups, accurately position themselves in society, and alleviate anxiety caused by role mismatch.

n summary, employees with perceived overqualification, under self-expectation, proactively seek role transition, endowing the innovator role with meaning and forming recognition of taking on the innovator role. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: Perceived overqualification positively affects innovation role identity.

Due to the close connection between specific roles and self-

awareness, individuals tend to act according to this role identity to achieve identity verification (Petkus, 1996). When employees form an innovation role identity at work, this identity not only reflects recognition of their innovation ability but also translates into concrete innovative behaviors. The stronger the innovation role identity, the more likely employees are to engage in deviant innovation. Additionally, the psychological and social costs of not continuing to fulfill the innovation role increase, prompting sustained deviant innovation.

On the one hand, driven by self-verification needs, innovation role identity can stimulate deviant innovation. Individuals with strong role identity, to maintain their role, actively engage in corresponding behaviors and seek opportunities and resources to meet role-related work requirements (Swann, 1983). When employees firmly believe they are innovators, they proactively seek opportunities to showcase and prove this role, even if these behaviors are unauthorized. For example, an employee with innovation role identity may constantly seek ways to improve existing processes, even if these improvements are outside formal responsibilities. This proactivity and creativity not only meet self-verification needs but also bring actual business improvements and innovations.

On the other hand, the psychological and social costs of not continuing to fulfill innovation role identity increase, prompting sustained deviant innovation. As innovative behaviors continue, employees gradually view the innovation role as an integral part of themselves. Role identity theory also suggests that individuals tend to maintain behaviors consistent with their roles to avoid psychological identity crises and disappointment from social relationships. To avoid self-identity crises and disappointment from colleagues and superiors, employees persist in innovation.

In summary, driven by self-verification needs and avoiding self-identity crises, innovation role identity can positively predict deviant innovation behaviors. Farmer et al. (2003) found that innovation role identity positively predicts employee innovation behaviors. He (2022) also found that innovation role identity positively predicts deviant innovation behaviors. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H3: Innovation role identity positively affects deviant innovation.

Role identity theory suggests that individuals form role identity through feedback from social relationships and self-concept integration, driving behaviors consistent with the role. Individuals with perceived overqualification, typically having high self-perception and confidence, seek affirmation from social relationships, driving them to pursue higher career goals, further promoting the formation of innovation role identity.

Innovation role identity is the recognition of oneself as an innovator in the workplace, stimulating deviant innovation behaviors. Role identity theory argues that, driven by self-verification needs, individuals tend to exhibit behaviors consistent with their role identity. Foote (1951) believes identity motivates role performance by giving behaviors meaning and purpose, serving as self-verification. Symbolic interaction theory also points out that identity motivates role performance by categorizing social objects (including self and others), maintaining and verifying the meaning embedded in identity (Stryker, 1980).

Additionally, as innovative behaviors continue, employees gradually view the innovation role as an integral part of themselves. Swann et al. (1987) noted that identity helps people understand and cope with social situations by predicting and controlling social reality, crucial for social adaptation and survival. In other words, identity allows individuals to predict and manage their behaviors and outcomes in social interactions, enhancing social adaptability and survival chances. Since stopping innovative behaviors may lead to self-identity crises and disappointment from social relationships, the potential psychological and social costs prompt employees to sustain deviant innovation to avoid these negative outcomes (Burke, 1991).

Combining H2 and H3, innovation role identity mediates the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation. Higher perceived overqualification strengthens innovation role identity, increasing the likelihood of engaging in deviant innovation behaviors. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H4: Innovation role identity mediates the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation.

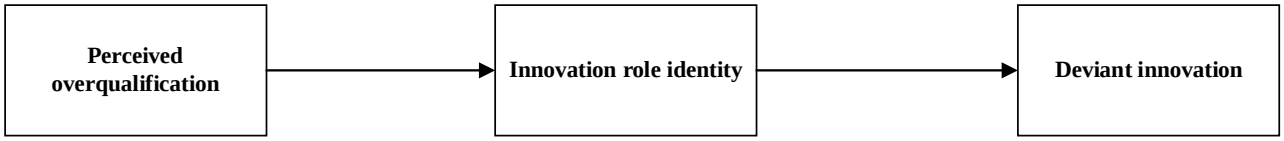


**Figure 1.** Proposed conceptual model

# 3. Research Design

## 3.1. Sample and Procedure

This study's sample is derived from survey data of employees in various regions. The survey was conducted using an electronic link. To ensure data authenticity, the survey emphasized that the results were for academic research only and that personal information would not be disclosed. Additionally, the survey included a fixed number question that respondents had to answer to ensure validity. A total of 264 questionnaires were collected, with 223 valid ones after excluding invalid responses. In the valid questionnaires, gender distribution was relatively balanced, with 49.8% male and 50.2% female. Most respondents were aged 25-34, accounting for 64.6%. Regarding education, 94.6% had a bachelor's degree or above. The majority had 2-5 years of work experience, accounting for 47.1%. Manufacturing and internet industries had the highest representation, at 28.3% and 23.8%, respectively. The highest proportion of positions was ordinary employees, accounting for 56.5%.

## 3.2. Variable Measurement

This study uses mature scales from domestic and international sources to measure variables, with all scales being 5-point Likert scales, where 1 represents "completely disagree" and 5 represents "completely agree." The scales are as follows:

Perceived Overqualification: Measured using the scale developed by Maynard et al. (2006), with 9 items. The

Cronbach's alpha of this scale is 0.904.

Innovation Role Identity: Measured using the scale developed by Farmer (2003), with 3 items. The Cronbach's alpha of this scale is 0.812.

Deviant Innovation: Measured using the scale developed by Zou (2020), with 7 items across two dimensions: "breaking the rules" and "disregarding orders." The Cronbach's alpha of this scale is 0.806.

# 4. Empirical Analysis Results

## 4.1. Descriptive Analysis

As shown in Table 1, perceived overqualification is positively correlated with deviant innovation (r=0.789, ρ<0.01); perceived overqualification is positively correlated with innovation role identity (r=0.773, ρ<0.01); and innovation role identity is positively correlated with deviant innovation (r=0.859, ρ<0.01). These descriptive statistics provide preliminary support for subsequent hypothesis testing.

**Table 1.** Descriptive Statistics (N=223)

| variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Gender | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Age | -0.176** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| 3. Education Level | -0.142* | 0.092 | 1 | | | | | | |
| 4. Work Experience | -0.224** | 0.760** | -0.018 | 1 | | | | | |
| 5. Industry Type | 0.176** | -0.292** | -0.054 | -0.204** | 1 | | | | |
| 6. Position | -0.355** | 0.427** | 0.113 | 0.631** | -0.12 | 1 | | | |
| 7. Perceived Overqual | -0.203** | 0.395** | 0.213** | 0.428** | -0.240** | 0.266** | 1 | | |
| 8. Innovation Role Id | -0.208** | 0.298** | 0.362** | 0.276** | -0.222** | 0.359** | 0.773** | 1 | |
| 9. Deviant Innovation | -0.318** | 0.366** | 0.379** | 0.330** | -0.318** | 0.361** | 0.789** | 0.859** | 1 |
| Mean | 1.5 | 2.09 | 2.22 | 2.48 | 3.61 | 1.84 | 3.84 | 3.91 | 3.88 |
| Standard Deviation | 0.5 | 0.59 | 0.58 | 0.97 | 2.08 | 1.07 | 0.5 | 0.72 | 0.65 |
| Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01 | | | | | | | | | |

## 4.2. Hypothesis Testing

According to Model 2 in Table 2, perceived overqualification positively affects deviant innovation (β=0.705, ρ<0.001), supporting H1. Model 1 shows that perceived overqualification positively predicts innovation role identity (β=0.749, ρ<0.001), supporting H2. Model 3 shows that innovation role identity positively predicts deviant innovation (β=0.763, ρ<0.001), supporting H3. Model 4 shows that when both perceived overqualification and innovation role identity are included in the regression equation for deviant innovation, both have significant effects on deviant innovation (β=0.528, ρ<0.001; β=0.309, ρ<0.001), supporting H4.

**Table 2.** Hierarchical Regression Results (N=223)

| Variable | Innovation Role Identity | Deviant Innovation | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
| Control Variables | | | | |
| Gender | 0.039 | -0.115* | -0.155** | -0.133** |
| Age | 0.087 | 0.109 | 0.059 | 0.068 |
| Education Level | 0.201*** | 0.196*** | 0.090* | 0.102** |
| Work Experience | -0.211*** | -0.142** | 0.035 | -0.043 |
| Industry Type | -0.014 | -0.036** | -0.031** | -0.029** |
| Position | 0.199*** | 0.121*** | -0.02 | 0.027 |
| Independent Variables | | | | |
| Perceived Overqualification | 0.749*** | 0.705*** | | 0.309*** |
| Mediating Variables | | | | |
| Innovation Role Identity | | | 0.763*** | 0.528*** |
| $R^2$ | 0.688 | 0.725 | 0.782 | 0.812 |
| Adjusted $R^2$ | 0.678 | 0.716 | 0.774 | 0.805 |
| F | 67.841*** | 81.002*** | 109.899*** | 115.442*** |
| Note: **p<0.01, ***p<0.001 | | | | |

Using the Bootstrap method to further verify the mediating effect of innovation role identity, Table 3 shows that the indirect effect of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation is 0.514, with a 95% confidence interval excluding 0, indicating a significant indirect effect. Additionally, the direct effect of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation is 0.402, with a 95% confidence interval excluding 0, indicating a significant direct effect. Thus, innovation role identity partially mediates the positive impact of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation.

**Table 3.** Mediation Effect Test of Innovation Role Identity (N=223)

| Item | Effect Value | Standard Error | 95% Confidence Interval | | Relative Effect |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Lower Limit | Upper Limit | |
| Total Effect | 0.916 | 0.054 | 0.809 | 1.022 | |
| Indirect Effect | 0.514 | 0.077 | 0.367 | 0.674 | 56% |
| Direct Effect | 0.402 | 0.068 | 0.267 | 0.537 | 44% |

# 5. Discussion

## 5.1. Theoretical Implications

Firstly, this study expands the research perspective. Existing research mainly explains the impact of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation from self-regulation, self-consistency, and conservation of resources theories, focusing on emotional experiences and cognition. However, these perspectives do not fully understand the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation. This study, based on role identity theory, explores the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation, providing a new theoretical perspective and compensating for the shortcomings of existing research.

Secondly, this study provides a new cognitive pathway for revealing the relationship mechanism between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation. Existing literature has limited research on the mechanism of perceived overqualification's impact on deviant innovation, mainly focusing on emotional experiences and cognition. This study introduces innovation role identity to deeply analyze how it mediates the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation, emphasizing the critical role of role identity in this process. This provides a new cognitive pathway for revealing the relationship mechanism between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation, helping to understand this relationship more comprehensively and deeply.

## 5.2. Practical Implications

Based on role identity theory, this study explores the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation among new generation employees, providing specific and valuable managerial insights for managers.

Firstly, by thoroughly exploring the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation, this study provides managers with a deeper and more comprehensive understanding. Managers should not only focus on the potential positive impact of perceived overqualification but also carefully evaluate its potential association with deviant innovation, forming a dialectical management concept. Secondly, this study reveals the impact of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation from the perspective of role identity, emphasizing the importance of innovation role identity. In practice, managers should focus on creating a positive innovation role identity atmosphere, stimulating and consolidating employees' recognition of the innovation role.

## 5.3. Managerial Implications

(1) Allow Employees to “Be Big Fish in a Small Pond”

Managers should identify employees who feel overqualified and provide them with an environment where they can fully utilize their potential, especially those who excel in their current positions but still find their tasks unchallenging.

Assign Challenging Tasks: Managers can stimulate these employees' creativity and problem-solving abilities by assigning them challenging innovation tasks. These tasks should involve complex projects or cross-departmental collaborations, requiring employees to use their advanced skills and knowledge to find innovative solutions.

Encourage Public Innovation: To further stimulate the potential of overqualified employees, managers should guide them to engage in formal public innovation activities, such as organizing innovation competitions, creative sharing sessions, or project showcases. Encouraging employees to share their ideas and solutions can not only create a team innovation atmosphere but also promote the exchange of knowledge and experience.

Provide Constructive Feedback: When employees make mistakes or engage in deviant innovation, managers should maintain a gentle attitude, promoting learning and growth through constructive feedback instead of punishment. This approach can reduce psychological pressure on employees and encourage them to continue trying new methods and sustaining innovation. Constructive feedback should include specific improvement suggestions and recognition of positive behaviors, helping employees continuously improve their innovation capabilities through practice.

(2) Help Overqualified Individuals Transition into and Strengthen Their Innovation Roles

Overqualified employees may feel unsatisfied or lack a sense of role identity in their current roles. At this time, managers should take measures to help them transition roles and strengthen their innovation role identity.

Public Praise and Rewards: Publicly praising innovation achievements and providing innovation rewards, such as recognizing outstanding employees in innovation projects at company meetings, awarding innovation prizes, or offering additional career development opportunities. This recognition can boost employees' confidence and sense of accomplishment while motivating other employees to actively participate in innovation activities.

Provide Role Transition Opportunities: Offer overqualified employees opportunities for role transitions, such as promotions to more challenging positions or cross-departmental rotations. These role transitions can meet employees' career development needs while cultivating versatile talents for the company, enhancing overall competitiveness.

Build an Innovation Culture: Create a positive innovation culture by fostering a supportive work environment for innovation. Encourage employees to freely express their ideas and provide them with necessary resources and support to strengthen their innovation role identity. Additionally, managers can organize innovation training, creative workshops, and team-building activities to improve employees' innovation abilities and teamwork spirit.

(3) Provide Innovation Support to Employees

Managers should ensure that employees feel empowered to innovate without excessive restrictions, offering support not only in material resources but also in psychological and cultural aspects.

Provide Necessary Resources: To support employees' innovation activities, managers should provide essential resources and tools, such as advanced technical equipment, professional training courses, and R&D funds. By offering these resources, managers can reduce the risks associated with innovation and increase the chances of success.

Adjust Work Processes: Simplify work processes and reduce unnecessary bureaucratic procedures and hierarchical constraints, allowing employees greater freedom to innovate. For example, establish streamlined approval processes or provide dedicated green channels for innovation projects, reducing obstacles and delays in the innovation process. Managers should also regularly review and optimize work processes to ensure their efficiency and flexibility.

Create a Supportive Environment: Foster an open and inclusive work environment where employees feel recognized and supported in their innovation activities. Specifically, managers should encourage employees to try new methods, allow them to make mistakes during the innovation process, and use regular communication and feedback mechanisms to understand employees' needs and difficulties, providing targeted assistance and support.

### 5.4. Limitations and Future Directions

First, the data in this study were all self-reported by employees, which may introduce common method bias. Despite emphasizing the purpose of the questionnaire to alleviate respondents' concerns during its distribution, it is well-established in the literature that same-source data can lead to higher correlations. In future research, to reduce this bias, time-lagged surveys and multi-source data collection can be employed to enhance external validity. For instance, future studies could use longitudinal designs, collecting data in phases to mitigate time-related biases. Additionally, gathering data from different sources, such as supervisor assessments and peer feedback, can provide a more comprehensive validation of research hypotheses, thereby reducing self-report bias.

Second, this study used cross-sectional data to measure all variables and assumed that independent variables precede dependent variables in their influence. Although the research findings are valid, the possibility of reverse causality cannot be ruled out. Therefore, future research can employ longitudinal data to measure variables, establishing the temporal sequence of their relationships and eliminating or controlling for other potential confounding factors or reverse causality. For example, using experimental designs or follow-up studies to track changes in variables over time can clarify the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables. Controlling for confounding variables, such as personal background and organizational culture, can also provide a more precise explanation of the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation.

Finally, this study, based on the perspective of role identity theory, explored the mechanism by which perceived overqualification affects deviant innovation, lacking a multi-theoretical perspective to examine the relationship between the two. While role identity theory reveals how perceived overqualification influences deviant innovation through innovative role identity, a single theoretical framework might limit a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Future research can enrich relevant theoretical studies by explaining the mechanism and boundary conditions between the two from multiple theoretical perspectives. For example, integrating social exchange theory, conservation of resources theory, or relative deprivation theory can provide a multi-dimensional analysis of the impact of perceived overqualification on deviant innovation. Additionally, future studies could explore the contagion effect of perceived overqualification among organizational members, examining whether one member's sense of overqualification influences the perceptions and behaviors of others, thus revealing the group effect of perceived overqualification within the organization. This approach can deepen the understanding of the relationship between perceived overqualification and deviant innovation and offer more actionable recommendations for organizational management practices.

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