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Political Psychology

Political leaders' identity leadership and civic citizenship behavior: The mediating role of trust in fellow citizens and the moderating role of economic inequality

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Abstract

Identity leadership captures leaders efforts to create and promote a sense of shared group membership (i.e., a sense of "we" and of "us") among followers. The present research report tests this claim by drawing on data from 26 countries that are part of the Global Identity Leadership

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For Affiliation refer page on 29

Development (GILD) project to examine the relationship between political leaders' identity leadership and civic citizenship behavior ($N = 6787$). It also examines the contributions of trust and economic inequality to this relationship. Political leaders' identity leadership (PLIL) was positively associated with respondents' people-oriented civic citizenship behaviors (CCB-P) in 20 of 26 countries and civic citizenship behaviors aimed at one's country (CCB-C) in 23 of 26 countries. Mediational analyses also confirmed the indirect effects of PLIL via trust in fellow citizens on both CCB-P (in 25 out of 26 countries) and CCB-C (in all 26 countries). Economic inequality moderated these effects such that the main and indirect effects of trust in one's fellow citizens on CCB-C were stronger in countries with higher economic inequality. This interaction effect was not observed for CCB-P. The study highlights the importance of identity leadership and trust in fellow citizens in promoting civic citizenship behavior, especially in the context of economic inequality.

KEYWORDS

civic citizenship behavior, economic inequality, identity leadership, social identity, trust

> We are not enemies but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union when again touched, as surely, they will be by the better angels of our nature.
>
> Abraham Lincoln, March 4, 1861

> Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.
>
> John F. Kennedy, January 20, 1961

The words of Lincoln and Kennedy in their inauguration speeches emphasize the importance of people's sense of togetherness in shaping civic action. More specifically, Lincoln and Kennedy challenged US citizens to overcome their divisions and strive for their country's common good—asking them to commit to their country by embracing a sense of civic responsibility and supporting their fellow citizens. In short, they defined their leadership as a project to promote civic engagement and civic citizenship behavior. These examples raise the question, though, of whether it is possible for contemporary leaders to do this. And, if it is, how might they do this?

When it comes to answering such questions, one problem is that hitherto there has been no universally agreed-upon definition of civic engagement at a national level (Marino & Lo Presti, 2019). Nevertheless, in organizational contexts, *organizational citizenship behavior* (OCB) is often defined as the willingness of employees to help others by going above and beyond the duties prescribed in their job descriptions. These citizenship behaviors can be directed at one's peers (e.g., in the form of altruism, courtesy, and sportsmanship) and toward one's organization (e.g., in the form of civic virtue and conscientiousness; LePine et al., 2002;

Organ, 1988; Organ et al., 2006). Even though the literature does not provide an agreed-upon definition of civic engagement on a national level, we propose *civic citizenship behaviors* (CCB) as a pattern of behaviors whereby people are motivated to go beyond mere compliance with laws and social norms to benefit society as a whole. CCB then encompasses a wide range of behaviors, such as voluntary work, charitable activity, and neighborliness, all of which are intended to contribute positively to a community's present and future (Marino & Lo Presti, 2019; Rupar et al., 2021). At a higher level of abstraction, CCB could significantly contribute to a country's overall well-being and constitute a core component of a democratic society (Helliwell et al., 2023; Marino & Lo Presti, 2019). Thus, at the national level, higher levels of CCB should be associated with lower crime, greater economic well-being, and better mental health (Rupar et al., 2021), whereas at the community level, it should be associated with an increased number of inclusive and effective social programs and improved accessibility of social community services (Rupar et al., 2021).

Nevertheless, as noted above, these observations leave unanswered the critical questions of whether—and how—an entire nation might be inspired to engage in civic citizenship behavior directed either at their fellow citizens (as encouraged by Lincoln) or their country (as urged by Kennedy). In the present research, we propose that one important factor driving these forms of citizenship is *identity leadership*—that is, leadership on the part of a head of state who seeks to develop, represent, advance, and embed a sense of shared social identity (a "shared sense of us") among those they lead (Haslam et al., 2020; Steffens et al., 2014; van Dick et al., 2018).

As a starting point for this analysis, we hypothesize that political leaders' engagement in identity leadership (Haslam et al., 2020) will create a sense of trust among their citizens. Based on previous findings that demonstrated a close association between the two constructs (Brewer, 2008; Güth et al., 2008; Lount, 2010), we operationalize trust among citizens as an analogy of a sense of shared national identity. Here, we follow Rousseau and colleagues' (1998) conceptualization of trust as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon the positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another" (p. 395). In turn, we hypothesize that increased trust in fellow citizens should encourage CCB aimed at those citizens and their country. Moreover, we hypothesize that economic inequality will moderate the link between identity leadership and CCB, as mediated by trust in one's fellow citizens. We will test these hypotheses in a data set spanning 26 countries from the Global Identity Leadership and Development (GILD) consortium (van Dick et al., 2018, 2021).

IDENTITY LEADERSHIP AS A BASIS FOR ENGAGED FOLLOWERSHIP

Work on identity leadership is informed by the view that leadership is a group process and that leaders' effectiveness is contingent on their ability to cultivate and represent a sense of shared group membership (a sense of "we" and of "us") among those they aspire to lead (Haslam et al., 2020; Steffens et al., 2014). Grounded in social identity theorizing—which encompasses both social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and self-categorization theory (Turner et al., 1987)—this work argues that leaders will be more effective in leading (i.e., mobilizing and influencing) a given group the more they are perceived (a) to embody what the group stands for (*identity prototypicality*; Hogg, 2001; Turner & Haslam, 2001); (b) to advance the interests of the group rather than their own or those of other groups (*identity advancement*; Haslam et al., 2001); (c) to bring the group together around a sense of shared identity and associated norms, values, and goals (*identity entrepreneurship*; Reicher et al., 2005); and (d) to create structures that help the group live out this shared identity (*identity impresarioship*; Haslam et al., 2020). These arguments flow from the assertion that when followers self-categorize as members of a given group and internalize an associated sense of "us" (i.e., defining themselves in terms of a

particular *social identity*), this should energize behaviors aimed at contributing to the viability and success of their group. In line with these ideas, identity leadership has been found to be linked to a range of work-related outcomes in organizational contexts, including increased innovation and OCB (Bracht et al., 2023; Krug et al., 2020; van Dick et al., 2018, 2021).

The terms *group*, *organization*, and *nation* refer to social groups of varying complexity. Nevertheless, self-categorization theory suggests that the behavior of people in each of these groups (and others) is predicated on the same underlying process of self-categorization, and that it is this self-categorization process that makes collective behavior *possible* (Haslam et al., 2002; Turner et al., 1983). If that is true, then we would expect self-categorization in terms of any social identity to drive the same willingness to evaluate and act favorably toward fellow group members (i.e., the same *engaged followership*; Haslam et al., 2023; Haslam et al., 2022). Thus, at a national level, the efforts of political leaders to cultivate and represent a sense of shared national identity should elicit other- and nation-oriented civic behaviors on the part of the citizenry.

In line with this point, during the COVID-19 pandemic, identity leadership on the part of national leaders was found to engender a sense of shared national identification among citizens and to encourage them to comply with non-pharmaceutical interventions to curtail the spread of the virus (e.g., wearing masks; Frenzel et al., 2022). Moreover, this effect was mediated by perceived national identity—a shared understanding among citizens of what being a citizen of their respective nation entailed. On this basis, we hypothesize:

> **H1.** The perceived identity leadership of political leaders will be positively related to citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country.

TRUST IN ONE'S FELLOW CITIZENS AS A MEDIATOR OF THE IMPACT OF IDENTITY LEADERSHIP

When people see themselves and others sharing group membership, they perceive other group members not as different but as an integral part of the self (Turner et al., 1983). Consequently, they are also more likely to trust and be vulnerable to others they perceive to share group membership with them (Cruwys et al., 2021). In line with this point, self-categorization in terms of shared group membership together with common knowledge about a shared group membership has been found to encourage people to trust other people—including those they have never met (e.g., Blader & Tyler, 2009; Cruwys et al., 2021; Platow et al., 2012). It follows that leaders should be able to foster group members' trust in one another by engaging in identity leadership that builds and promotes a sense of shared identity in the group they lead. In line with this point, leadership behavior that focuses on cultivating a sense of shared identity within teams has been found to foster not only more positive attitudes toward leaders but also greater trust within the team as a whole (Krug et al., 2020; van Dick et al., 2018). Extending this logic to the national level, we therefore hypothesize:

> **H2.** The perceived identity leadership of political leaders will be a positive predictor of citizens' trust in their fellow citizens.

The beneficial effects of trust are well documented. For example, Colquitt et al. (2007) reported a moderate meta-analytical correlation between trust (broadly defined) and OCB ($\rho = .27$). In contrast, a more recent review by Dirks and De Jong (2022) linked trust (in leadership) to increased psychological safety ($\rho = .39$) and team citizenship behavior ($\rho = .27$). However, there is little quantitative research on the link between identity leadership of national leaders and the actions of their constituents (for a qualitative analysis, see Haslam et al., 2023).

Consequently, we aim to extend upon previous research (Banks et al., 2018; Burke et al., 2007; Dirks & De Jong, 2022) by testing the following hypotheses:

H3. Trust in one's fellow citizens will be a positive predictor of citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country.

H4. Trust in one's fellow citizens will mediate the relationship between the perceived identity leadership of political leaders and citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country.

ECONOMIC INEQUALITY AS A MODERATOR OF THE IMPACT OF IDENTITY LEADERSHIP

Economic inequality has grown worldwide in recent years and has been shown to have detrimental consequences on people's orientation to other group members and to reduce their benevolent behavior toward them (Jetten & Peters, 2019; Jiang & Probst, 2017). For example, Hsieh and Pugh (1993) reported moderate to strong meta-analytical correlations between economic inequality and violent crime ($\rho = .44$). Similarly, both field surveys and experimental studies (causally) linked economic inequality to increased beliefs in conspiracy theories (Salvador Casara et al., 2022) and negative social class stereotypes (Tanjitpiyanond et al., 2022). Greater inequality has also been found to predict an increased rate of mental health problems in the general population (e.g., in the form of depression [Ribeiro et al., 2017] and loneliness [Becker et al., 2021]).

Laboratory studies also show that economic inequality can undermine trust by increasing people's endorsement of negative stereotypes. For example, in an experiment simulating unequal versus egalitarian countries, participants in the high-inequality condition attributed higher levels of competition and individualism to other participants (Tanjitpiyanond et al., 2022). Moreover, economic inequality increased participants' belief that other citizens were incompetent, immoral, and unfriendly (regardless of whether they were wealthy or poor). Given that a person's ability, benevolence, and integrity are the three major antecedents of interpersonal trust (Colquitt et al., 2007), we therefore hypothesize:

H5. Greater economic inequality in a country will be a negative predictor of citizens' trust in their fellow citizens.

In nations with low economic inequality (i.e., egalitarian societies), it is plausible to expect that citizens will display a higher frequency of CCBs, even if trust in fellow citizens is low. This variation should occur because, in such societies, the state tends to be more concerned with ensuring that its laws and policies provide equal access to opportunities for all citizens—and those citizens, in turn, should be more likely to recognize the value of the state (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). This positive appraisal of the state's efforts should encourage those citizens to contribute to the state by complying with its injunctions and policies (e.g., by paying tax; Wenzel, 2002). Equality can also reduce feelings of anomia (i.e., increase social cohesion) and encourage a positive orientation toward society as a whole, along with its norms (Savolainen, 2000). Following this logic, higher equality should also encourage citizens to engage in CCB.

However, the opposite patterns should prevail in countries with high economic inequality. In these, the state is less concerned with ensuring that citizens have equal access to opportunities (whether as a result of indifference or by design). Furthermore, in more unequal societies, the division between the haves and have-nots should be more salient in

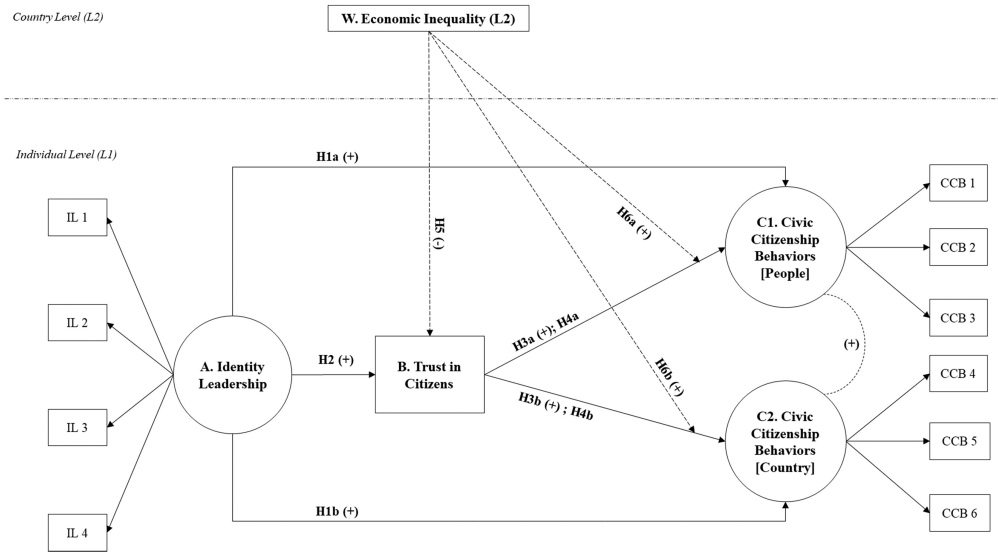

FIGURE 1 Theoretical model showing main and indirect effects of politicians' identity leadership on CCB as mediated by trust in citizens (L1) and moderated by economic inequality (L2).

ways that encourage negative "us–them" stereotypes (Durante & Fiske, 2017). Here too, people should be less willing to go above and beyond to support and contribute toward the well-being of their fellow citizens and the nation. Thus, in countries with high levels of inequality, we can hypothesize that higher levels of trust in fellow citizens will be required to "bridge the divide" and elicit the same frequency of CCB as in egalitarian societies. Accordingly, we hypothesize:

> **H6.** Greater economic inequality in a country will moderate the extent to which trust in one's fellow citizens is a positive predictor of citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country.

Finally, following the above logic, we expect inequality to moderate the indirect effect of PLIL on CCBs as mediated by trust in fellow citizens. More specifically, the indirect effect should be weaker in contexts of low inequality, as the active role of the state and its institutions should suppress the effect of national leaders' efforts to create a shared sense of "us" (i.e., because regardless of the leader, "we all have the same access to education, healthcare, etc."). Conversely, the effect of political leaders' identity leadership on trust in one's fellow citizens should be stronger in nations with more pronounced economic inequality. Put differently, we assume that there is more of a need for identity leadership in a state riddled with inequality. Accordingly, we hypothesize:

> **H7.** Greater economic inequality in a country will moderate the extent to which trust in their fellow citizens mediates the relationship between the perceived identity leadership of political leaders and citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country. More specifically, the indirect effect should be stronger in countries with higher economic inequality.

The theoretical model and main research hypotheses guiding this study are summarized in Figure 1.

METHOD

Sample and procedure

We used the data set collected as part of the Global Identity Leadership Development (GILD) project[1] to test the above hypotheses. In each country, participants were recruited using convenience sampling (using a snowballing method). Participants completed the questionnaires on an online survey platform. The overall sample included 7855 participants, but 1068 were excluded from the analysis due to missing data. Our final sample thus consisted of 6787 participants from 26 countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, India, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, United States, Brazil, France, Greece, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan, Czech Republic. Table 1 provides a summary of sample characteristics.

Measures

(Perceived) political leaders' identity leadership (PLIL)

We used the validated short form of the Identity Leadership Inventory developed by Steffens et al. (2014) to assess citizens' perceptions of their national leader's identity leadership. The short form consists of four items, each assessing a separate dimension of identity leadership (e.g., "My country's leader is a model member of our country"). As on all other scales, responses were made on a 7-point Likert scale (where 1 = *disagree completely*, 7 = *agree completely*). This measure had excellent composite reliability ($\tau = .95$; Raykov & Shrout, 2002).

Trust in citizens (TIC)

We measured respondents' trust in their fellow citizens using a single item ("I trust other people in my country") adapted from Matthews et al. (2022). The mean response was 4.60 ($SD = 1.48$).

Civic citizenship behavior (CCB)

Three items assessed citizenship behavior directed at fellow citizens (e.g., "I assist other people in my country when they are in difficulty"; CCB-P). Three items also measured citizenship behavior that supported one's country (e.g., "I take action to protect my country from potential problems"; CCB-C). Composite reliability was high for both measures (CCB-P, $\tau = .92$; CCB-C, $\tau = .78$).

Economic inequality

We used the Gini Index to measure country-level economic inequality (Gini Index, 2008). The Gini index is the most commonly used yearly index of inequality that measures the degree of

[1]Data from the GILD project have been examined in other publications (e.g., van Dick et al., 2018, 2021), but not those related to the focal constructs in the present article. Identity leadership with respect to the countries' political leaders, trust in fellow citizens, and civic engagement was only measured in this data set and never used for other studies. All the data sets and scripts are available at https://osf.io/hmxaq/?view_only=a62d41b7ca8d47fe87c8e53e0d45e75a.

TABLE 1 Sample characteristics.

Country	*N*	Age	Biological gender	Industry (top 5)	Work experience	Work contract	Leadership position
Australia	269	18–25 = 29.4% 26–35 = 44.6% 36–45 = 16.4% 46–55 = 7.80% 56+ = 1.90%	Female = 49.8% Male = 48.0% Other = 2.2%	Human health & social work (15.5%) Education (14.3%) Professional, scientific, & technical (14.0%) Wholesale & retail trade (12.8%) Accommodations & food service (9.8%)	1 = 3.3% 2 = 25.7% 3 = 39.4% 4 = 20.4% 5 = 11.2%	Full-time = 55.4% Part-time = 33.1% "Mini-job" = 3.3% Other = 8.2%	Non-leaders = 75.6% Leaders = 24.2%
Belgium	285	18–25 = 8.8% 26–35 = 22.1% 36–45 = 24.9% 46–55 = 30.5% 56+ = 13.7%	Female = 66.0% Male = 33.3% Other = .7%	Public administration & defense (15.5%) Administration & supportive service (17.6%) Human health & social work (14.5%) Education (8.8%) Professional, scientific, & technical (8.8%)	1 = 4.6% 2 = 10.5% 3 = 14.7% 4 = 26.7% 5 = 43.5%	Full-time = 82.1% Part-time = 16.5% "Mini-job" = 1.4%	Non-leaders = 73.3% Leaders = 26.7%
Brazil	222	18–25 = 5.9% 26–35 = 27.5% 36–45 = 40.5% 46–55 = 20.3% 56+ = 5.9%	Female = 52.3% Male = 47.7%	Education (18.5%) Professional, scientific, & technical (15.3%) Manufacturing (12.5%) Financial & insurance (12.0%) Information & communication (6.9%)	1 = 3.6% 2 = 6.3% 3 = 16.7% 4 = 38.7% 5 = 34.7%	Full-time = 85.1% Part-time = 6.3% "Mini-job" = 3.2% Other = 5.4%	Non-leaders = 62.2% Leaders: = 37.8%
Canada	353	18–25 = 7.6% 26–35 = 32.9% 36–45 = 30.0% 46–55 = 21.0% 56+ = 8.5%	Female = 47.3% Male = 52.7%	Information & communication (12.2%) Education (11.6%) Human health & social work (11.6%) Manufacturing (8.9%) Professional, scientific, & technical (8.0%)	1 = 1.4% 2 = 13.0% 3 = 30.6% 4 = 32.9% 5 = 22.1%	Full-time = 98.6% Part-time = 1.4%	Non-leaders = 45.9% Leaders = 54.1%
Czech Republic	256	18–25 = 89.1% 26–35 = 7.4% 36–45 = .4% 46–55 = 2.3% 56+ = .8%	Female = 68.4% Male = 31.6%	Professional, scientific, & technical (22.4%) Financial & insurance (13.4%) Administration & supportive service (11.0%) Information & communication (9.0%) Manufacturing (9.0%)	1 = 10.9% 2 = 48.0% 3 = 35.9% 4 = 2.3% 5 = 2.7%	Full-time = 14.5% Part-time = 30.9% "Mini-job" = 49.6% Other = 5.1%	Non-leaders = 7.4% Leaders = 92.6%
France	123	18–25 = 30.9% 26–35 = 53.7% 36–45 = 10.6% 46–55 = 4.6%	Female = 32.5% Male = 66.7% Other = .8%	Information & communication (13.3%) Professional, scientific, & technical (10.0%) Education (8.3%) Human health & social work (8.3%) Manufacturing (7.5%)	1 = 17.9% 2 = 21.1% 3 = 35.0% 4 = 17.1% 5 = 8.9%	Full-time = 84.6% Part-time = 14.6% "Mini-job" = .8%	Non-leaders = 81.3% Leaders = 18.7%

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Country	*N*	Age	Biological gender	Industry (top 5)	Work experience	Work contract	Leadership position
Germany	859	18–25 = 21.4% 26–35 = 32.2% 36–45 = 18.0% 46–55 = 19.0% 56+ = 9.3%	Female = 70.3% Male = 29.3% Other = .3%	Human health & social work (23.3%) Professional, scientific, & technical (13.7%) Education (13.1%) Financial & insurance (8.3%) Manufacturing (6.4%)	1 = 6.4% 2 = 26.3% 3 = 23.5% 4 = 16.2% 5 = 27.6%	Full-time = 54.5% Part-time = 29.3% "Mini-job" = 8.8% Other = 7.3%	Non-leaders = 22.1% Leaders = 77.9%
Greece	210	18–25 = 2.4% 26–35 = 5.7% 36–45 = 26.2% 46–55 = 46.2% 56+ = 19.5%	Female = 51.4% Male = 48.6%	Public administration & defense (51.5%) Professional, scientific, & technical (8.3%) Education (8.3%) Administrative & support service (6.9%) Human health & social work (6.4%)	1 = .5% 2 = 2.9% 3 = 7.6% 4 = 27.1% 5 = 61.9%	Full-time = 96.7% Part-time = 1.9% Other = 1.4%	Non-leaders = 52.4% Leaders = 47.6%
India	192	18–25 = 26.6% 26–35 = 57.8% 36–45 = 9.9% 46–55 = 5.2% 56+ = .5%	Female = 33.3% Male = 66.7%	Information & communication (50%) Financial & insurance (13.2%) Mining & quarrying (10.0%) Professional, scientific, & technical (7.9%) Manufacturing (7.4%)	1 = 3.6% 2 = 38.5% 3 = 39.6% 4 = 10.4% 5 = 7.8%	Full-time = 99.5% Part-time = .5%	Non-leaders = 62.0% Leaders = 38.0%
Israel	215	18–25 = 58.6% 26–35 = 34.9% 36–45 = 4.3% 46–55 = .5% 56+ = 1.9%	Female = 73.5% Male = 25.6% Other = .9%	Human health & social work (.5%) Information & communication (.5%) Professional, scientific, & technical (.5%) Other service activities (.5%) NA (98.1%)	1 = 29.8% 2 = 42.8% 3 = 23.7% 4 = 2.3% 5 = 1.4%	Full-time = 28.4% Part-time = 40.5% "Mini-job" = 27.9% Other = 3.3%	Non-leaders = 84.7% Leaders = 15.3%
Italy	191	18–25 = 10.5% 26–35 = 38.2% 36–45 = 15.2% 46–55 = 23.0% 56+ = 13.1%	Female = 53.4% Male = 46.1% Other = .5%	Manufacturing (27.4%) Professional, scientific, & technical (10.2%) Public administration & defense (9.7%) Accommodation & food service (6.5%) Human health & social work (6.5%)	1 = 6.8% 2 = 11.0% 3 = 26.2% 4 = 20.4% 5 = 35.6%	Full-time = 79.6% Part-time = 14.7% "Mini-job" = 3.1% Other = 2.6%	Non-leaders = 74.9% Leaders = 25.1%
Japan	284	18–25 = 4.6% 26–35 = 29.9% 36–45 = 23.2% 46–55 = 32.0% 56+ = 10.2%	Female = 49.3% Male = 50.7%	Manufacturing (25.1%) Other service activities (16.5%) Information & communication (12.9%) Human health & social work (11.5%) Wholesale & retail trade (7.5%)	1 = 4.6% 2 = 10.6% 3 = 26.8% 4 = 28.9% 5 = 29.2%	Full-time = 93.7% Part-time = 3.9% "Mini-job" = 1.4% Other = 1.1%	Non-leaders = 80.6% Leaders = 19.4%

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Country	*N*	Age	Biological gender	Industry (top 5)	Work experience	Work contract	Leadership position
Kazakhstan	161	18–25 = 19.9% 26–35 = 33.5% 36–45 = 25.5% 46–55 = 14.9% 56+ = 6.2%	Female = 59.6% Male = 40.4%	Education (40.9%) Professional, scientific, & technical (15.6%) Information & communication (5.8%) Financial & insurance (5.8%) Human health & social work (5.2%)	1 = 5.6% 2 = 14.9% 3 = 27.3% 4 = 30.4% 5 = 21.7%	Full-time = 81.4% Part-time = 11.8% "Mini-job" = 1.9% Other = 5.0%	Non-leaders = 73.9% Leaders = 26.1%
Netherlands	270	18–25 = 14.1% 26–35 = 22.6% 36–45 = 21.9% 46–55 = 24.4% 56+ = 17.0%	Female = 50.4% Male = 49.6%	Human health & social work (14.0%) Manufacturing (9.5%) Wholesale & retail (9.5%) Professional, scientific, & technical (9.5%) Administrative & support service (9.5%)	1 = 1.5% 2 = 11.5% 3 = 21.5% 4 = 21.9% 5 = 43.7%	Full-time = 66.7% Part-time = 28.5% "Mini-job" = 3.0% Other = 1.9%	Non-leaders = 74.4% Leaders = 25.6%
Norway	200	18–25 = 1.0% 26–35 = 17.0% 36–45 = 35.5% 46–55 = 28.0% 56+ = 18.5%	Female = 37.5% Male = 62.5%	Education (14.7%) Human health & social work (11.2%) Public administration & defense (8.6%) Information & communication (8.6%) Manufacturing (7.6%)	1 = .5% 2 = 3.5% 3 = 18.5% 4 = 27.0% 5 = 50.5%	Full-time = 94.0% Part-time = 2.5% "Mini-job" = 1.5% Other = 2.0%	Non-leaders = 66.5% Leaders = 33.5%
Philippines	281	18–25 = 24.9% 26–35 = 33.1% 36–45 = 19.9% 46–55 = 17.4% 56+ = 4.6%	Female = 64.1% Male = 33.8% Other = 2.1%	Administrative & support service (14.6%) Education (14.2%) Accommodation & food service (11.9%) Manufacturing (8.6%) Financial & insurance (8.6%)	1 = 8.5% 2 = 17.1% 3 = 27.4% 4 = 25.6% 5 = 21.4%	Full-time = 87.2% Part-time = 6.8% "Mini-job" = 3.2% Other = 2.8%	Non-leaders = 55.5% Leaders = 44.5%
Poland	375	18–25 = 9.9% 26–35 = 34.4% 36–45 = 34.4% 46–55 = 20.0% 56+ = 1.3%	Female = 72.8% Male = 27.2%	Education (13.7%) Administrative & support service (11.6%) Information & communication (11.3%) Financial & insurance (9.7%) Human health & social work (8.9%)	1 = 3.5% 2 = 12.3% 3 = 21.6% 4 = 40.3% 5 = 22.4%	Full-time = 85.1% Part-time = 2.9% "Mini-job" = 4.8% Other = 7.2%	Non-leaders = 69.3% Leaders = 30.7%
Portugal	202	18–25 = 14.4% 26–35 = 23.3% 36–45 = 30.2% 46–55 = 20.8% 56+ = 11.4%	Female = 65.3% Male = 34.7%	Education (23.7%) Professional, scientific, & technical (14.4%) Manufacturing (8.2%) Human health & social work (8.2%) Information & communication (7.7%)	1 = 5.0% 2 = 13.4% 3 = 19.8% 4 = 29.7% 5 = 32.2%	Full-time = 91.1% Part-time = 3.0% Other = 5.9%	Non-leaders = 64.4% Leaders = 35.6%

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Country	*N*	Age	Biological gender	Industry (top 5)	Work experience	Work contract	Leadership position
Slovenia	96	18–25 = 26.0% 26–35 = 41.7% 36–45 = 22.9% 46–55 = 7.3% 56+ = 2.1%	Female = 64.6% Male = 35.4%	Education (17.7%) Information & communication (13.5%) Professional, scientific, & technical (11.5%) Administrative & support service (10.4%) Wholesale & retail trade (9.4%)	1 = 7.3% 2 = 30.2% 3 = 33.3% 4 = 19.8% 5 = 9.4%	Full-time = 72.9% Part-time = 2.1% "Mini-job" = 22.9% Other = 2.1%	Non-leaders = 77.1% Leaders = 22.9%
Spain	692	18–25 = 14.4% 26–35 = 23.3% 36–45 = 30.2% 46–55 = 20.8% 56+ = 11.4%	Female = 59.1% Male = 39.9% Other = 1.0%	Other service activities (26.9%) Education (11.0%) Human health & social work (10.1%) Manufacturing (9.7%) Administrative & support service (7.1%)	1 = 6.4% 2 = 16.6% 3 = 25.6% 4 = 29.6% 5 = 21.8%	Full-time = 72.8% Part-time = 22.4% "Mini-job" = 1.6% Other = 3.2%	Non-leaders = 79.2% Leaders = 20.8%
Switzerland[a] (EN)	22	18–25 = 13.6% 26–35 = 45.5% 36–45 = 22.7% 46–55 = 18.2%	Female = 59.1% Male = 40.9%	Professional, scientific, & technical (23.8%) Education (19.0%) Arts, entertainment, & recreation (9.5%) Financial & insurance (9.5%) Manufacturing (4.8%)	1 = 9.1% 2 = 27.3% 3 = 27.3% 4 = 22.7% 5 = 13.6%	Full-time = 90.9% Part-time = 9.1%	Non-leaders = 77.3% Leaders = 22.7%
Switzerland[a] (FR)	164	18–25 = 8.5% 26–35 = 45.7% 36–45 = 20.1% 46–55 = 18.3% 56+ = 7.3%	Female = 31.7% Male = 68.3%	Financial & insurance (17.6%) Manufacturing (13.2%) Information & communication (10.7%) Professional, scientific, & technical (9.4%) Other service activities (6.9%)	1 = 6.7% 2 = 13.4% 3 = 28.0% 4 = 25.6% 5 = 26.2%	Full-time = 75.6% Part-time = 23.2% "Mini-job" = 1.2%	Non-leaders = 66.5% Leaders = 33.5%
Switzerland[a] (GE)	30	18–25 = 3.3% 26–35 = 26.7% 36–45 = 40.0% 46–55 = 20.0% 56+ = 10.0%	Female = 30.0% Male = 70.0%	Professional, scientific, & technical (43.3%) Manufacturing (20.0%) Transportation & storage (6.7%) Financial & insurance (6.7%) Construction (3.3%)	1 = 3.3% 2 = 6.7% 3 = 30.0% 4 = 26.7% 5 = 33.3%	Full-time = 90.9% Part-time = 3.3% Other = 6.7%	Non-leaders = 60.0% Leaders = 40.0%
Turkey	190	18–25 = 10.0% 26–35 = 36.8% 36–45 = 26.3% 46–55 = 23.7% 56+ = 3.2%	Female = 58.4% Male = 41.6%	Education (19.8%) Manufacturing (12.8%) Professional, scientific, & technical (11.2%) Public administration & defense (10.2%) Information & communication (8.0%)	1 = 5.3% 2 = 14.2% 3 = 26.8% 4 = 27.4% 5 = 26.3%	Full-time = 93.2% Part-time = 4.7% Other = 2.1%	Non-leaders = 71.6% Leaders = 28.4%

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Country	*N*	Age	Biological gender	Industry (top 5)	Work experience	Work contract	Leadership position
Russia	171	18–25 = 1.2% 26–35 = 11.7% 36–45 = 45.6% 46–55 = 31.6% 56+ = 9.9%	Female = 81.3% Male = 18.7%	Information & communication (3.6%) Administrative & support service (2.4%) Professional, scientific, & technical (1.2%) Manufacturing (.6%) NA (92.3%)	1 = .6% 2 = 1.2% 3 = 8.2% 4 = 39.8% 5 = 50.3%	Full-time = 85.4% Part-time = 7.6% "Mini-job" = 1.2% Other = 5.8%	Non-leaders = 59.1% Leaders = 40.9%
United Kingdom	263	18–25 = 14.8% 26–35 = 51.7% 36–45 = 21.7% 46–55 = 9.1% 56+ = 2.7%	Female = 65.0% Male = 33.1% Other = .4%	Human health & social work (13.2%) Professional, scientific, & technical (13.2%) Information & communication (11.2%) Wholesale & retail trade (9.7%) Education (9.7%)	1 = 1.9% 2 = 14.4% 3 = 37.3% 4 = 30.4% 5 = 16.0%	Full-time = 73.4% Part-time = 21.7% "Mini-job" = 3.4% Other = 1.5%	Non-leaders = 76.8% Leaders = 23.2%
United States	318	18–25 = .6% 26–35 = 28.3% 36–45 = 36.5% 46–55 = 19.8% 56+ = 14.8%	Female = 45.3% Male = 54.1% Other = .6%	Information & communication (19.4%) Wholesale & retail trade (13.3%) Professional, scientific, & technical (10.8%) Education (10.5%) Financial & insurance (7.9%)	1 = 0% 2 = .6% 3 = 16.0% 4 = 36.2% 5 = 47.2%	Full-time = 89.9% Part-time = 9.91% Other = .9%	Non-leaders = 61.3% Leaders = 38.7%
Uzbekistan	103	18–25 = 36.9% 26–35 = 27.2% 36–45 = 13.6% 46–55 = 18.4% 56+ = 3.9%	Female = 72.8% Male = 27.2% Other = .5%	Information & communication (4.1%) Public administration (2.1%) Professional, scientific, & technical (1.0%) Administrative & support service (1.0%) NA (91.8%)	1 = 20.4% 2 = 24.3% 3 = 22.3% 4 = 9.7% 5 = 23.3%	Full-time = 75.7% Part-time = 19.4% "Mini-job" = 1.9% Other = 2.9%	Non-leaders = 73.8% Leaders = 26.2%
Total sample	7855	18–25 = 18.2% 26–35 = 33.4% 36–45 = 23.8% 46–55 = 17.3% 56+ = 7.2%	Female = 56.9% Male = 42.6% Other = .4%	Education (11.4%) Professional, scientific, & technical (9.7%) Human health & social work (9.5%) Information & communication (9.3%) Manufacturing (9.1%)	1 = 6.4% 2 = 17.4% 3 = 25.7% 4 = 25.2% 5 = 24.9%	Full-time = 76.8% Part-time = 14.5% "Mini-job" = 5.1% Other = 3.6%	Non-leaders = 31.9% Leaders = 65.4%

Note: Table provides descriptive statistics for the complete 2021 data set ($N = 7855$). Work experience: 1 = less than a year; 2 = 1 to 3 years; 3 = 4 to 10 years; 4 = 10 to 20 years. Leaders' Span of Control captures the number of direct or indirect reports reporting any participant who indicated that they held a leadership position. NA = no answer.

[a]All three subsamples were aggregated for this study.

inequality in the distribution of incomes in a given population. A Gini coefficient of 0 indicates that there is no inequality in income distribution (all people in the country receive the same income), and 1 represents a completely unequal income distribution (such that some people receive all the income while others receive none). In our sample, we used 2021 Gini scores, which ranged from .38 to .68, and the median was .49.

Analytic strategy

First, descriptive statistics were calculated for each sample. Second, as previous theory and empirical evidence have validated the structure of identity leadership, confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were employed to test the data's factorial structure (Kline, 2013). To this end, several nested CFAs were created using the lavaan package in R (R Core Team, 2022; Rosseel, 2012), utilizing a robust estimator, the weighted least squares-mean and variance adjusted (WLSMV). The lavaan package was also used to test Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2, 3a, and 3b in a full-sample data set and for each country in our global data set. Given the relatively small number of Level 2 observations in our data (countries), we used a mixed-effect linear model (MLM) and a multilevel structural equation model (SEM) in R and MPlus 8.6 (Muthén & Muthén, 2017) to test Hypotheses 4a, 4b, 5, 6a, and 6b. Additional parameters were specified in the multilevel SEM to test Hypothesis 7. The additional parameter captures the indirect effects strengths at different levels of our Level 2 moderator (−1*SD*/+1*SD*; following Stride et al., 2015). Finally, we followed the criteria suggested by Cheung and Rensvold (2002) to assess the goodness of fit for each model.

A Bayesian estimator was required to obtain standardized coefficients in our multilevel SEM. Thus, we checked the potential scale reduction (PSR) scores and posterior parameters distribution by specifying 100; 500; 1000; 5000; 10,000; and 50,000 Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC) iterations (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2021; Muthén & Muthén, 2017). A caveat of this approach is that traditional goodness-of-fit indicators for Bayesian models, such as the deviance information criterion (DIC) or posterior predictive *p*-values (PPP) have not yet been implemented for multilevel SEM involving cross-level interactions in Mplus 8.6. Accordingly, we followed Asparouhov and Muthén's (2021) recommendation to refine the model iteratively. Individual-level (L1) and country-level variables (L2) were group-centered or mean-centered in all models, respectively (Dawson, 2013). Finally, to distinguish variation among countries of our data set, we show the results in both the full and clustered data sets.

RESULTS

Table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of our data set. Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, and Pearson bivariate correlations for all variables. As expected, CCB-P and CCB-C were positively correlated ($r_{(6787)} = .58$, $p < .001$), justifying the use of covariance-based analyses to complement traditional regression-based analyses.[2]

The three-factor model (CFA-3) had the best fit for our data. The chi-square difference tests indicated that model CFA-1 fit the data better than model CFA-0, and, in turn, models CFA-2.1, CFA-2.2, and CFA-2.3 fit the data substantially better than model CFA-1. CFA-3

[2]Based on a reviewer's suggestions and given that this is a correlational study, we also tested for a reverse causal model (from CCB via trust to PLIL). However, while some predictors were significant, the overall variance explained by this model was substantially lower (pseudo-$R^2 = .18$) and the predicted correlation was confirmed as the best-fitting model. Also based on a reviewer's suggestion, we tested a model in which economic inequality was a predictor of identity leadership. However, this had no effect ($B = .0001$, $SE = .29$, $p < .99$).

TABLE 2 Mean, standard deviation, and Pearson correlations for all variables in the aggregated model.

Full sample							
***N*=6787**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1. PLIL	3.70	1.86	–				
2. TIC	4.60	1.48	.34**	–			
3. CCB-People	4.81	1.36	.30**	.40**	–		
4. CCB-Country	4.70	1.30	.39**	.52**	.58**	–	
5. Gini 2021	.50	.50	−.07**	−.04**	.07**	.04**	–
Australia							
***N*=265**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	
1. PLIL	3.01	1.68	–				
2. TIC	4.75	1.41	.26**	–			
3. CCB-People	4.83	1.30	.23**	.45**	–		
4. CCB-Country	4.40	1.26	.38**	.54**	.52**	–	
Belgium							
***N*=283**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	
1. PLIL	4.23	1.86	–				
2. TIC	4.78	1.48	.48**	–			
3. CCB-People	4.81	1.36	.25**	.30**	–		
4. CCB-Country	4.70	1.30	.27**	.40**	.50**	–	
Brazil							
***N*=215**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	
1. PLIL	2.15	1.63	–				
2. TIC	4.71	1.65	.14**	–			
3. CCB-People	4.87	1.68	.02	.34**	–		
4. CCB-Country	4.51	1.55	.20**	.56**	.54**	–	
Canada							
***N*=335**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	
1. PLIL	4.67	1.61	–				
2. TIC	5.33	1.25	.43**	–			
3. CCB-People	5.32	1.16	.40**	.49**	–		
4. CCB-Country	5.34	1.06	.42**	.66**	.64**	–	
Czech Republic							
***N*=255**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	
1. PLIL	2.50	1.76	–				
2. TIC	4.36	1.40	.07	–			
3. CCB-People	4.46	1.29	.16*	.23**	–		
4. CCB-Country	4.32	1.04	.24**	.47**	.41**	–	

TABLE 2 (Continued)

France						
***N*=120**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	3.66	1.45	–			
2. TIC	4.36	1.41	.26**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.66	1.29	.12	.27**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.58	1.22	.37**	.51**	.54**	–

Germany						
***N*=812**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.97	1.39	–			
2. TIC	4.84	1.39	.34**	–		
3. CCB-People	5.03	1.25	.27**	.35**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.85	1.20	.25**	.42**	.46**	–

Greece						
***N*=204**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.11	1.84	–			
2. TIC	4.91	1.37	.38**	–		
3. CCB-People	5.07	1.21	.41**	.55**	–	
4. CCB-Country	5.15	1.20	.51**	.59**	.72**	–

India						
***N*=189**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.80	1.78	–			
2. TIC	5.12	1.39	.47**	–		
3. CCB-People	5.41	1.20	.42**	.48**	–	
4. CCB-Country	5.46	1.17	.47**	.63**	.67**	–

Israel						
***N*=208**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	2.92	1.61	–			
2. TIC	4.46	1.46	.30**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.54	1.35	.26**	.16*	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.70	1.25	.43**	.51**	.45**	–

(Continues)

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Italy						
***N*=185**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.28	1.59	–			
2. TIC	4.06	1.45	.30**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.40	1.33	.41**	.42**	–	
4 CCB-Country	4.70	1.24	.34**	.52**	.61**	–
Japan						
***N*=279**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	3.19	1.47	–			
2. TIC	4.10	1.36	.38**	–		
3. CCB-People	3.97	1.33	.45**	.59**	–	
4. CCB-Country	3.91	1.18	.50**	.64**	.76**	–
Kazakhstan						
***N*=154**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	3.94	1.74	–			
2. TIC	4.23	1.66	.42**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.88	1.56	.34**	.54**	–	
4. CCB-Country	3.78	1.53	.43**	.73**	.73**	–
Netherlands						
***N*=264**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.55	1.33	–			
2. TIC	4.68	1.25	.45**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.69	1.29	.37**	.48**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.87	1.06	.32**	.42**	.56**	–
Norway						
***N*=197**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.40	1.47	–			
2. TIC	4.88	1.43	.51**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.86	1.13	.50**	.58**	–	
4. CCB-Country	3.98	1.22	.48**	.59**	.69**	–

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Philippines						
***N*=268**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.01	2.04	–			
2. TIC	4.55	1.42	.26**	–		
3. CCB-People	5.17	1.16	.32**	.48**	–	
4. CCB-Country	5.12	1.20	.36**	.53**	.74**	–
Poland						
***N*=372**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	2.43	1.64	–			
2. TIC	3.87	1.59	.21**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.72	1.51	.13**	.38**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.55	1.39	.37**	.49**	.52**	–
Portugal						
***N*=194**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.24	1.41	–			
2. TIC	4.68	1.29	.26**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.93	1.29	.20**	.10	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.95	1.07	.32**	.44**	.46**	–
Russia						
***N*=167**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	3.92	1.75	–			
2. TIC	4.47	1.37	.38**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.95	1.29	.23**	.38**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.77	1.26	.49**	.56**	.53**	–
Slovenia						
***N*=96**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	2.99	1.86	–			
2. TIC	4.52	1.54	.34**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.68	1.48	.44**	.54**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.85	1.28	.53**	.55**	.65**	–

(Continues)

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Spain						
***N*=661**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	2.97	1.58	–			
2. TIC	4.76	1.49	.21**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.44	1.41	.34**	.41**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.27	1.34	.20**	.45**	.51**	–
Switzerland						
***N*=210**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.37	1.36	–			
2. TIC	5.14	1.28	.32**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.86	1.31	.22**	.33**	–	
4. CCB-Country	5.04	1.12	.31**	.40**	.43**	–
Turkey						
***N*=187**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	2.90	1.99	–			
2. TIC	3.53	1.77	.57**	–		
3. CCB-People	5.07	1.47	.38**	.41**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.66	1.60	.59**	.59**	.64**	–
United Kingdom						
***N*=257**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	3.34	1.76	–			
2. TIC	4.35	1.34	.22**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.74	1.29	.21**	.22**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.50	1.20	.46**	.50**	.50**	–
United States						
***N*=314**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	2.59	2.02	–			
2. TIC	4.57	1.50	.26**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.93	1.39	.22**	.47**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.75	1.37	.46**	.57**	.63**	–

TABLE 2 (Continued)

Uzbekistan						
***N*=96**	***M***	***SD***	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
1. PLIL	4.58	1.70	–			
2. TIC	4.29	1.57	.58**	–		
3. CCB-People	4.86	1.44	.48**	.42**	–	
4. CCB-Country	4.49	1.38	.64**	.63**	.72**	–

Note: Table contains descriptive statistics and correlations for all variables in the model ($N=6787$).

Abbreviations: CCB-People, civic citizenship behaviors; Gini, economic inequality; PLIL, perceptions of political leaders' identity leadership; TIC, trust in fellow citizens.

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

had a better fit than models CFA-2.1, CFA-2.2, and CFA-2.3. Thus, CFA-3 was retained as our measurement model. Similarly, our SEM had an excellent fit in the full sample and across most countries (see Tables 3 and 4).

Hypotheses 1–3: Main effects of PLIL and TIC on CCB-P, CCB-C

In line with Hypothesis 1, political leaders' identity leadership (PLIL) was positively correlated with CCB aimed at fellow citizens (CCB-P) ($r_{(6787)}=.30$, $p<.001$) and at one's country as a whole (CCB-C) ($r_{(6787)}=.39$, $p<.001$), with standardized coefficients in the expected direction not only across models (MLM, multilevel SEM) but also across countries, with the exception of Brazil, in which the coefficient was small, negative, and nonsignificant for CCB-P ($\beta=-.02$, ns).

In Hypothesis 2, we posited that PLIL would predict trust in fellow citizens (TIC). Again, our correlation matrix ($r_{(6787)}=.34$, $p<.001$) and standardized regression coefficients show positive and significant associations, with effect sizes varying in size (small-to-moderate and moderate). The standardized coefficient was small and nonsignificant ($\beta=.07$, ns) only for the Czech Republic. Hypothesis 3 stated a main effect of TIC on CCB-P and CCB-C, which was found in our full models and for all countries in the clustered model, with the exception of Israel ($\beta=.07$, ns). Thus, these results partially support Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2, and 3a and provide full support for Hypothesis 3b (Table 5).

Hypothesis 4: Indirect effect of PLIL on CCB-P and CCB-C as mediated by TIC

All predicted main and indirect effects for CCB-P and CCB-C were significant in the full data set. In the clustered data set, the indirect effect between PLIL and CCB-P as mediated by TIC was significant in 23 of 26 countries, while the indirect effect on CCB-C was significant in 25 of 26 countries (see Tables 3 and 4 for goodness-of-fit values and path coefficients). This provides partial (but substantial) support for Hypotheses 4a and 4b.

TABLE 3 Confirmatory factor analyses.

Model	χ^2	*df*	S-B χ^2	Scaling correction	RMSEA robust	CFI robust	TLI robust	SRMR robust	$\Delta\chi^2$ test
Baseline	71,854.85	55	23,095.26***	3.12	–	–	–	–	–
Single factor (CFA-0)	10,730.18	44	12,821.75***	.84	.19	.85	.81	.18	–
Two factors (CFA-1)	3540.99	43	5460.28***	.65	.11	.95	.94	.11	1877.57***
Three factors (CFA-2.1)	2558.45	41	4823.17***	.53	.13	.97	.95	.09	1648.60***
Three factors (CFA-2.2)	1428.77	41	2783.37***	.53	.07	.98	.97	.07	–
Three factors (CFA-2.3)	701.78	41	1597.56***	.44	.05	.99	.99	.05	–
Three factors (CFA-3)	665.33	39	1733.41***	.38	.05	.99	.99	.05	42.79***

Note: $N = 6787$. In the first model (CFA-0), all items were loaded into a single factor. In the second model (CFA-1), all identity leadership items loaded into a single factor and all CCB and TIC items loaded into another factor. In turn, we constructed CFA-2.1, CFA-2.2, and CFA-2.3 as three-factor models in which all identity leadership items loaded into a latent factor; three civic citizenship behaviors items loaded into a factor labeled "CCB-People" (CCB-P); and another three were loaded into a factor labeled "CCB-Country" (CCB-C). Yet, in model CFA-2.1, TIC was set to load into the identity leadership factor; in model CFA-2.2, TIC was set to load on the people factor; and in model CFA-2.3, TIC loaded onto the country factor. In the fourth model (CFA-3), all identity leadership items were set to load into their respective factor, three CCB items loaded into CCB-P, three items loaded into CCB-C, and TIC as correlated to all three factors. The chi-square difference test ($\Delta\chi^2$) was conducted using the lavTestLRT function in the lavaan package (Rosseel, 2012).

TABLE 4 Fit indices for structural equation models for each country of our data set.

	N	χ^2	*df*	S-B χ^2	Scale correction	RMSEA robust	CFI robust	TLI robust	SRMR robust
Full sample	6787	655.33***	39	1733.41	.38	.05	.99	.99	.05
Australia	265	38.52ns	39	105.02***	.44	.04	.99	.98	.05
Belgium	283	44.80ns	39	107.20***	.49	.08	1.00	1.00	.05
Canada	335	26.84ns	39	71.03***	.51	.05	1.00	1.00	.05
Germany	812	66.35**	39	152.45***	.48	.06	.99	.99	.04
India	189	11.91ns	39	51.59ns	.35	.04	1.00	1.00	.02
Italy	185	27.12ns	39	92.34***	.37	.05	1.00	1.00	06
Spain	661	161.13***	39	359.02***	.47	.08	.97	.96	.07
Switzerland	210	42.29ns	39	96.16***	.52	.06	.98	.97	.06
United States	314	49.35ns	39	154.33***	.37	.06	.99	.98	.06
Brazil	215	73.57ns	39	122.30***	.41	.06	1.00	1.00	.06
France	120	23.97ns	39	57.87*	.58	.05	1.00	1.00	.06
Greece	204	17.79ns	39	69.80**	.36	.04	1.00	.99	.04
Israel	208	68.10*	39	126.01***	.63	.08	.96	.95	.08
Japan	279	16.09ns	39	80.35**	.25	.03	1.00	1.00	.03
Kazakhstan	154	18.50ns	39	63.70**	.43	.04	.99	.99	.05
Netherlands	264	46.63ns	39	104.74***	.56	.06	1.00	.99	.07
Norway	197	17.36ns	39	79.80***	.27	.04	.99	.99	.05
Philippines	268	12.49ns	39	51.32ns	.37	.02	1.00	1.00	.03
Poland	372	53.95ns	39	133.43***	.46	.06	.99	.99	.05
Portugal	194	61.90**	39	108.51***	.70	.08	.96	.95	.09
Russia	167	29.35ns	39	72.20**	.55	.05	1.00	1.00	.06
Slovenia	96	15.87ns	39	70.26**	.31	.05	.99	.99	.06
Turkey	187	31.83ns	39	118.76***	.32	.06	.99	.99	.06
United Kingdom	257	89.37***	39	184.10***	.55	.09	.97	.96	.08
Uzbekistan	96	19.67ns	39	52.38ns	.71	.05	.99	.99	.06
Czech Republic	255	64.38**	39	126.31***	.58	.07	.98	.97	.07

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

Hypotheses 5–6: Main and moderator effects of economic inequality

Table 6 and Figure 2 present the results of our MLM model. PLIL was related to CCB-P ($B = .15$, $p < .001$, $SE = .01$) and CCB-C ($B = .18$, $p < .001$, $SE = .01$). Similarly, trust in citizens (TIC) was related to CCB-P ($B = .26$, $p < .001$, $SE = .07$) and CCB-C ($B = .15$, $p < .001$, $SE = .06$). Economic inequality was related to neither CCB-P nor CCB-C. The cross-level interaction term between PLIL and economic inequality was not a significant predictor of CCB-P or CCB-C. Furthermore, the cross-product term between economic inequality and trust in one's fellow citizens was not significant for CCB-P ($B = .08$, $SE = .14$) but was significant for CCB-C ($B = .47$, $p < .001$, $SE = .12$). The intercepts and predicted values at different levels of trust in fellow citizens and economic inequality are presented in Appendix S1.

Figure 3 presents standardized coefficients for our multilevel SEM. The model's initial estimation converged successfully. However, as economic inequality did not significantly moderate the relation between TIC and CCB-P, we removed this parameter and recalculated

TABLE 5 Standardized coefficients for mediation model.

	A-C1	A-C2	A-B	B-C1	B-C2	A-B-C1	A-B-C2	A-B-C1-C2
Effect type	**Direct**	**Direct**	**Direct**	**Direct**	**Direct**	**Indirect**	**Indirect**	**Total**
Full sample	.20 (.01)	.30 (.01)	.29 (.01)	.31 (.01)	.41 (.01)	.09 (.01)	.12 (.01)	.32 (.01)
Country								
Australia	.14 (.06)	.26 (.07)	.26 (.06)	.42 (.07)	.56 (.06)	.11 (.03)	.15 (.04)	.40 (.07)
Belgium	**.15 (.08)a**	**.12 (.08)a**	.50 (.05)	.22 (.07)	.38 (.08)	.11 (.04)	.19 (.04)	.31 (.07)
Canada	.25 (.06)	.23 (.07)	.45 (.05)	.40 (.08)	.68 (.06)	.18 (.04)	.3 (.04)	.53 (.07)
Germany	.19 (.05)	.15 (.05)	.37 (.04)	.30 (.05)	.43 (.05)	.11 (.02)	.16 (.03)	.31 (.05)
India	.27 (.08)	.26 (.08)	.48 (.06)	.35 (.08)	.57 (.07)	.17 (.04)	.28 (.04)	.53 (.07)
Italy	.32 (.08)	.21 (.01)	.31 (.08)	.32 (.08)	.50 (.08)	.1 (.03)	.15 (.04)	.37 (.1)
Spain	.26 (.04)	**.04 (.04)a**	.22 (.04)	.36 (.04)	.47 (.04)	.08 (.02)	.10 (.02)	.14 (.05)
Switzerland	**.13 (.07)a**	.22 (.10)	.34 (.08)	.29 (.07)	.36 (.08)	.1 (.03)	.12 (.04)	.34 (.1)
United States	.10 (.05)	.39 (.04)	.26 (.05)	.45 (.07)	.49 (.05)	.12 (.03)	.13 (.03)	.52 (.04)
Brazil	**−.02 (.07) a**	.14 (.06)	.16 (.06)	.34 (.08)	.60 (.06)	.05 (.03)	.09 (.04)	.24 (.07)
France	**.10 (.10)a**	.32 (.11)	.27 (.09)	.24 (.10)	.54 (.09)	.06 (.04)	.15 (.06)	.47 (.11)
Greece	.26 (.07)	.40 (.07)	.38 (.07)	.46 (.07)	.53 (.07)	.17 (.05)	.2 (.05)	.60 (.06)
Israel	.25 (.08)	.26 (.07)	.32 (.07)	**.07 (.08)a**	.50 (.08)	**.02 (.03)a**	.16 (.05)	.43 (.06)
Japan	.27 (.07)	.36 (.07)	.39 (.06)	.51 (.07)	.51 (.07)	.2 (.04)	.2 (.04)	.56 (.05)
Kazakhstan	.16 (.08)	.14 (.07)	.43 (.08)	.49 (.08)	.68 (.06)	.21 (.05)	.29 (.06)	.43 (.08)
Netherlands	.19 (.08)	.18 (.09)	.47 (.07)	.38 (.08)	.33 (.08)	.18 (.04)	.15 (.05)	.33 (.08)
Norway	.30 (.08)	.29 (.07)	.51 (.07)	.47 (.09)	.48 (.08)	.24 (.06)	.25 (.05)	.54 (.08)
Philippines	.22 (.06)	.28 (.06)	.26 (.06)	.43 (.06)	.52 (.06)	.11 (.03)	.13 (.04)	.41 (.06)
Poland	**.07 (.06)a**	.32 (.06)	.23 (.06)	.36 (.06)	.45 (.05)	.08 (.03)	.11 (.03)	.43 (.05)
Portugal	.18 (.08)	**.15 (.09)a**	.27 (.07)	.07 (.07)	.50 (.07)	**.02 (.02)a**	.13 (.04)	.28 (.09)
Russia	**.11 (.09)a**	.34 (.08)	.39 (.08)	.31 (.08)	.44 (.08)	.12 (.05)	.18 (.04)	.52 (.08)
Slovenia	.30 (.08)	.41 (.15)	.35 (.10)	.44 (.10)	.57 (.13)	.19 (.06)	.2 (.07)	.6 (.13)
Turkey	.18 (.08)	.38 (.07)	.57 (.06)	.33 (.09)	.40 (.07)	.19 (.06)	.23 (.05)	.61 (.04)
United Kingdom	.18 (.07)	.42 (.06)	.22 (.06)	.17 (.07)	.45 (.07)	.04 (.02)	.1 (.03)	.52 (.06)
Uzbekistan	.34 (.10)	.51 (.10)	.57 (.10)	.25 (.10)	.46 (.10)	.14 (.08)	.26 (.08)	.77 (.08)
Czech Republic	.16 (.10)	.23 (.09)	**.07 (.06)a**	.24 (.08)	.59 (.06)	**.02 (.01)a**	**.04 (.03)a**	.27 (.09)

Note: Unless noted as nonsignificant at the $p < .05$ level ("a"), all coefficients are significant at $p < .001$. A-B = path from PLIL to TIC; A-C1 = path from PLIL to CCB-P; A-C2 = path from PLIL to CCB-C; B-C1 = path from TIC to CCB-P; B-C2 = path from TIC to CCB-C; A-B-C1 = indirect effect of PLIL on CCB-P as mediated by TIC; A-B-C2 = indirect effect of PLIL on CCB-C as mediated by TIC; A-B-C1-C2 = total effects from PLIL to CCB-P and CCB-C as mediated by TIC, as a result of aggregating both pathways (A-B-C1 and A-B-C2).

a more parsimonious model (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2021). In the revised model, PSR values approached 1, and there was no variation in PSR values between 5000 and 10,000 iterations (ΔPSR = .12) or between 10,000 and 50,000 iterations (ΔPSR = .10), meaning that after 5000 iterations, posterior parameters were normally distributed. The model's coefficients align with the findings of our MLM. PLIL was positively associated with trust in citizens (TIC; $\beta = .37$, $p < .001$) and on CCB-P ($\beta = .19$, $p < .001$) and CCB-C ($\beta = .24$, $p < .001$). In turn, TIC was positively associated with CCB-P ($\beta = .35$, $p < .001$) and CCB-C ($\beta = .51$, $p < .001$).

TABLE 6 Hierarchical linear model—economic inequality (L2)×trust in citizens (L1).

	Civic citizenship behaviors—People ($N=6768$; $k=26$)			Civic citizenship behaviors—Country ($N=6768$; $k=26$)		
	B	***SE***	**95% CI**	***B***	***SE***	**95% CI**
Intercept	4.81***	.05	[4.70, 4.91]	4.73***	.07	[4.60, 4.85]
PLIL	.15***	.01	[.12, .17]	.18***	.01	[.15, .21]
TIC	.26***	.07	[.12, .41]	.15***	.06	[.03, .27]
Gini 2021	1.14	.71	[−.31, 2.58]	.31	.83	[−1.40, 2.03]
PLIL×Gini 2021	−.26	.18	[−.60, .10]	.12	.16	[−.20, .45]
TIC×Gini 2021	.08	.14	[−.19, .36]	.47***	.12	[.23, .71]
	Pseudo R^2		.23	Pseudo R^2		.37

Note: Before any analyses, L2 variables were mean-centered, and L1 variables were group-centered to prevent potential multicollinearity issues. Results indicate that any difference in coefficients between the years 2020 and 2021 was close to zero, largely due to very low variation in economic inequality. Consequently, only the 2021 Gini score was retained for our multilevel SEM.

Abbreviations: CCB, civic citizenship behaviors; Gini, economic inequality; PLIL, perceptions of political leaders' identity leadership; TIC, trust in fellow citizens.

***$p<.001$.

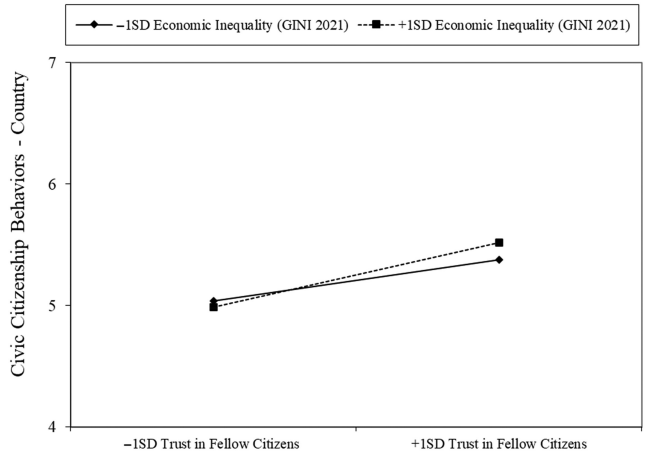

FIGURE 2 Greater economic inequality as a moderator of the extent to which trust in fellow citizens is a positive predictor of citizens' CCB in relation to their country.

Economic inequality's cross-level (main) effect on TIC was consistent with Hypothesis 5 but not statistically significant ($\beta=-.26$, $p=.116$), possibly due to the low N of our L2 construct. Similarly, only the cross-level interaction effect between economic inequality (L2) and TIC (T1) on CCB-C was significant. These results do not support Hypothesis 5 or 6a but support Hypothesis 6b.

Hypothesis 7: Conditional indirect effect of PLIL on CCB-P and CCB-C, as mediated by TIC and moderated by economic inequality

Hypothesis 7 stated that the predicted indirect effect of PLIL (L1) on CCB-P and CCB-C, as mediated by TIC (L1), would be conditional on a country's degree of economic inequality (L2). In a detailed inspection of the additional parameters specified in MPLus 8.6, the indirect

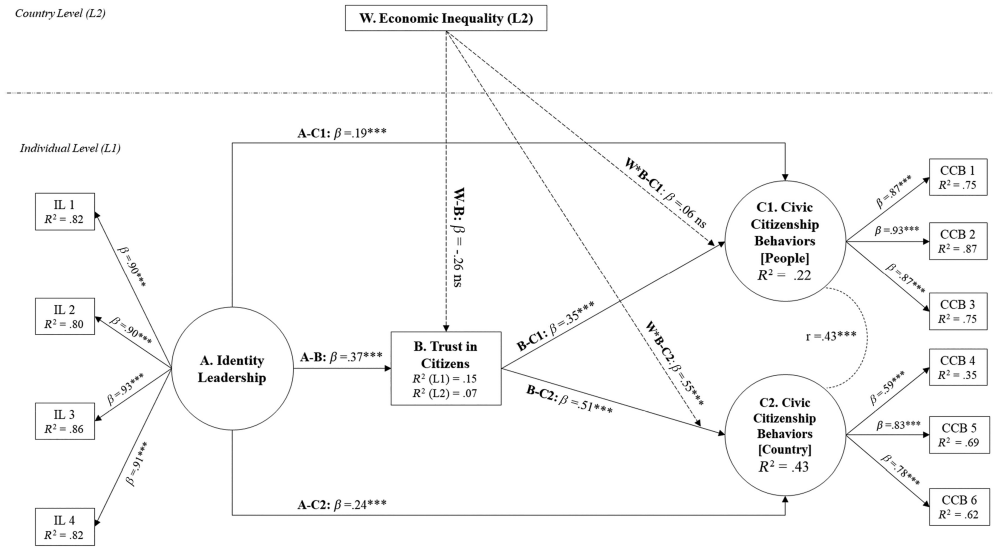

FIGURE 3 Multilevel structural equation model.

effect of PLIL on CCB-C as mediated by TIC was stronger at high levels of the moderator (+1*SD*; ES = .35, *SE* = .03, $p < .0001$) than at low levels (−1*SD*; ES = .27, *SE* = .03, $p < .0001$). The observed difference in effect sizes was statistically significant (ES = −.07, *SE* = .03, $p = .008$). This finding provides full support for Hypothesis 7b.

DISCUSSION

Across 26 countries, we investigated the indirect effect of political leaders' perceived identity leadership on people's civic citizenship behavior (CCB) directed at fellow citizens (Hypothesis 1a) or at the country as a whole (Hypothesis 1b), as mediated by trust in those fellow citizens (Hypotheses 2, 3, 4a, and 4b). Additionally, we examined the extent to which a country's economic inequality reduced trust (Hypothesis 5) and moderated the strength of these direct and indirect relationships (Hypotheses 6a, 6b, and 7). An overview of the results of tests of these hypotheses is presented in Table 7.

Supporting Hypothesis1, the present study provides empirical support for the claim that identity leadership can shape and strengthen collective identity ("a shared sense of us") not only in small groups and organizations, but also at the national level. Whereas in small social groups and firms, ingroup members tend to have frequent interactions with others, but that is not the case at the national level, where most members of the ingroup are strangers to each other. Further, and more importantly, it suggests that this shared sense of "us" in turn engenders positive attitudes (trust) and behavior both toward other citizens (CCB-P; Hypothesis 1a) and the country as a whole (CCB-C; Hypothesis 1b).

It is worth noting that the main effect of PLIL on CCB-P held across 20 of 26 countries and on CCB-C in 23 of 26 countries, and it was observed for political leaders across the authoritarian–democratic spectrum (Lewin et al., 1939). In this, our results complement prior survey and experimental findings, which show that those political leaders who are seen as prototypical (a facet of identity leadership) tend to be more endorsed, even if they breach procedural justice norms (Ullrich et al., 2009). Similarly, in an experiment emulating organizational settings, followers of prototypical leaders tended to be more tolerant when their leaders failed to achieve their promised maximal goals (Giessner & van Knippenberg, 2008). Clearly, some level of trust

TABLE 7 Summary of hypotheses and findings.

Hypotheses	Full	Cluster	Observations
H1: The perceived identity leadership of political leaders will be a positive predictor of citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country	✓✓	✓	H1a was supported in 20 out of 26 countries
		✓	H2a was supported in 23 out of 26 countries
H2: The perceived identity leadership of political leaders will be a positive predictor of citizens' trust in their fellow citizens	✓✓	✓	H2b was supported in 25 out of 26 countries
H3: Trust in their fellow citizens will be a positive predictor of citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country	✓✓	✓	H3a was supported in 25 out of 26 countries
	✓✓	✓✓	H3b was supported in 26 out of 26 countries
H4: Trust in their fellow citizens will mediate the relationship between the perceived identity leadership of political leaders and citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country	✓✓	✓	H4a was supported in 23 out of 26 countries
		✓	H4b was supported in 25 out of 26 countries
H5: Greater economic inequality in a country will be a negative predictor of citizens' trust in their fellow citizens	N/A	✗	H5 was not supported. The effect was in the expected direction but did not reach statistical significance
H6: Greater economic inequality in a country will moderate support for H3—that is, the extent to which trust in their fellow citizens is a positive predictor of citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country	N/A	✗	H6a was not supported, and the interaction effect was nonsignificant. A positive effect at both levels of the moderator was found (−1*SD*, +1*SD*) but a nonsignificant difference in slopes
	N/A	✓✓	H6b was fully supported. The effect was stronger in countries with high inequality
H7: Greater economic inequality in a country will moderate support for H4—that is, the extent to which trust in their fellow citizens mediates the relationship between the perceived identity leadership of political leaders and citizens' CCB in relation to both (a) other citizens and (b) their country	N/A	✓	The indirect effect is stronger at high levels of the moderator (+1*SD* economic inequality) for the indirect effect between PIL and CCB-C, as mediated by TIC

Note: ✓✓ = full support; ✓ = partial support; ✗ = not supported.

in leadership must exist for ingroup members to continue endorsing their political leaders, even in the face of those leaders' manifest personal failings.

However, our findings regarding Hypotheses 2 and 3 go above and beyond previous studies. Here, our results show that, at the national level, citizens will also support their fellow ingroup members (citizens) when their political leader engages in identity leadership (Hypothesis 2). We explain this association by invoking the notion of engaged followership (Haslam et al., 2023; Haslam & Reicher, 2017), in which individuals not only identify with an actor (the leader) but also with the collective project that he or she embodies (as shown in previous social identity research; Kawakami & Dion, 1995; Wright, 2009). In the present research, the salience of national-level social identity increased positive affect toward ingroup members and acted as a major driver of action aimed at protecting the collective (CCB-C).

Consequently, at the national level, engaged followers will likely imitate their political leaders in, for example, volunteering to create structures that make it easier for others to be productive members of society (i.e., identity impresarioship) or aimed at advancing the collective interests of the nation (i.e., identity advancement) or even contribute to shaping the national identity, either by taking part in democratic life or by actively protesting in the streets (i.e., identity entrepreneurship). Note too that the results supporting these (and other) conclusions are broadly consistent across all the countries that are part of the GILD project. More specifically, in 23 out of 26 countries, respondents' trust in their fellow citizens mediated the relationship between political leaders' identity leadership and CCB targeted at other citizens (consistent with Hypothesis 4a); in 25 out of 26 countries, trust in one's fellow citizens mediated the relationship between political leaders' identity leadership and people's CCB directed at their country (consistent with Hypothesis 4b).

Our results also indicate that the relationship between trust and civic citizenship behaviors was stronger at high levels of economic inequality. Our logic in testing for this effect was that inequality should reduce the role that the national state plays in promoting policies that contribute to a sense of shared identity (whereby all citizens have equal access to public resources). Instead, economic inequality acts as a fault line that highlights the difference between the haves and have-nots and thus decreases trust in fellow citizens (Hypothesis 5). Although this hypothesis was not supported, the relation trended in the expected direction. Given the relatively small sample of countries in the data set, we recommend caution when interpreting this finding, as it might be due to a type II error.

Consequently, when access to these resources is not present, our results suggest that citizens tend to compensate by showing a higher frequency of civic citizenship behaviors directed at their country while still displaying CCBs aimed at their fellow citizens. In this regard, results supported Hypotheses 6b and 7 in showing that higher economic inequality amplified the effect of trust in one's citizens on country-oriented citizenship behavior (C-CCB; as well as being implicated in a stronger indirect effect), whereas this was not observed for CCB-P (so there was no support for Hypothesis 6a).

Implications for theory and practice

The first theoretical contribution of the present research is to support and build upon an emerging body of research on identity leadership and engaged followership. More precisely, we underline this construct's broad relevance by showing its links to the attitudes and behaviors of citizens (followers) in relation both to other societal actors (their fellow citizens) and to institutions (their country). This accords with Haslam and colleagues' (2023) dual-agency model of identity leadership and engaged followership, which argues that leadership and followership reflect two sides of a group dynamic that centers on the cultivation of a sense of shared social identity, which encourages both leaders and followers to collaborate to promote the interests of the group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Shaping a strong sense of "us" consequently affects not

only the degree of trust between leaders and followers but also trust among followers. More generally, these findings align with previous suggestions that this identity-based dynamic between followers and leaders is a basis for strong, concerted forms of collective action (Haslam et al., 2023; Van Bavel & Packer, 2021).

A second theoretical contribution of the present research is to advance our understanding of the interplay between macrolevel factors (i.e., economic inequality) and individual-level attitudes and behavioral tendencies (i.e., trust in fellow citizens; CCB-P and CCB-C). More precisely, whereas previous research has highlighted the negative effects that economic inequality often has on individual members of a collective, extant theory provides limited insight into whether (and how) political leadership can help to overcome these effects. Speaking to this point, our results show that in countries with high economic inequality, the relation between trust and CCB-C is stronger than in countries with lower economic inequality. It thus appears that leaders who work to build this trust through identity leadership may help to protect citizens from the worst effects of inequality.

Interestingly, although the pattern of findings was consistent across most countries, there were nevertheless some exceptions. In particular, although support for Hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4 (the link between PLIL and CCB-P and CCB-C) was significant in the analyses using the full data set (comprising all countries), support for Hypothesis 4 (mediation of this relationship via trust in fellow citizens) was not significant for Israel, the Czech Republic, or Portugal, as in these countries greater trust in citizens did not predict increased citizenship behavior directed at those fellow citizens. Additionally, in the Czech Republic, such trust did not predict citizenship behavior on behalf of the country as a whole. Precisely why this is the case is unclear, but it speaks to the fact that the link between trust in citizens and citizenship is not straightforward and can depend on such things as the prevailing policy settings in a given country (Bundi & Pattyn, 2022).

Beyond these theoretical advances, the present research also has practical implications for leaders who are striving to promote civic engagement within the groups they lead. In particular, and in line with the urgings of Kennedy and Lincoln, our study appears to support the notion that the goal of inspiring and motivating people to contribute to the common good can be advanced through identity leadership. In line with this point, previous research has shown that identity leadership can foster civic engagement that helps people to work together to deal with a crisis (e.g., by following nonpharmaceutical guidelines during the COVID-19 pandemic; Frenzel et al., 2022). The results of the present study extend this body of research by indicating that identity leadership has broader relevance for civic citizenship in general.

In the present research, we focused on the behavior of countries' top leaders. However, it is clearly hard to imagine these leaders themselves wanting to take part in workshops or even be informed about research such as this. Nevertheless, there are politicians and policymakers at range levels who might be in a position to take its lessons on board. Accordingly, it is important to spread the word about these findings and disseminate them widely in exchanges with civic leaders at all levels (e.g., through information sessions, debates, and workshops). One concrete program designed to help them become better identity leaders is the 5R program (Haslam et al., 2017; see also Haslam et al., 2021). This aims to raise leaders' awareness of the importance of social identity processes for leadership and takes them through structured activities that help them build engaged and inclusive teams. More specifically, the program comprises five modules: (1) *Readying*, an initial session that informs participants about the importance social identity processes for leadership; (2) *Reflecting*, which helps leaders take stock of the nature of the social identities that are important for members of their group; (3) *Representing*, which involves clarifying the content and meaning of both diverse and shared identities; (4) *Realizing*, which involves working with group members to help them achieve their various identity-related ambitions; and (5) *Reinforcing*, which encourages leaders to reflect on progress toward collective goals and on the ongoing challenges of making leadership

both ethical and sustainable. The program's effectiveness has been confirmed in multiple studies in organizational and sporting contexts (including randomized controlled trials; Haslam et al., 2023; Mertens et al., 2021), and we hope the present research will stimulate its application to fields of governance and politics.

Limitations and future research

As with every study, this study is not without limitations. First, the data we used to test our hypotheses were collected as part of the Global Identity Leadership Development (GILD) project, and the cross-sectional design of this data set does not allow us to infer causality. Nevertheless, our findings are consistent with previous multi-wave research that supports the direction of the hypothesized associations (e.g., see Frenzel et al., 2022). Although this cannot fully address concerns about potential endogeneity, we have tried to mitigate this issue by using an SEM approach with robust estimators (that modeled the error of each indicator). We also added an exogenous variable to our model that was not self-reported (economic inequality; Antonakis et al., 2010) to address biases arising from common-method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2000).

Second, although the GILD project has yielded an extensive data set with a remarkably heterogeneous sample (including individualistic and collectivistic cultures), we cannot conclude that participants are necessarily representative of their respective countries. To address this limitation, future research might seek to corroborate our findings among more carefully stratified samples of respondents. A third limitation might be seen in the fact that we only used a single item to measure trust in one's fellow citizens. However, the single-item indicator we employed in this research is highly similar to the one-item indicator for coworkers' trust, which was validated by Matthews et al. (2022) against a multi-item trust scale. Additionally, although the two constructs of trust in one's fellow citizens and perceived shared identity are closely linked, future research should more directly assess and incorporate the idea of shared national identity.

Lastly, considering the nonsignificant moderating effect of economic inequality on the relationship between trust in one's fellow citizens and civic citizenship behavior toward others, it is critical to acknowledge that participants may have different subgroups in mind when answering the questionnaire items. More precisely, and particularly in countries exhibiting higher levels of inequality, it is impossible to know which subgroup (e.g., national ingroup, national outgroup, subordinate groups) participants had in mind when responding to items such as "I trust other people in my country" or "I assist other people in my country when they are in difficulty." Nevertheless, the fact that our findings were so consistent without us controlling for this source of variability only increases our confidence in their robustness. All the same, it is clearly the case that further research might explore this further—for instance, by specifying the respective group in the items or by using open-ended questions to explore participants' thought processes.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research suggest that identity leadership that builds and shapes a sense of shared social identity (a sense of "us") at the national level serves to build trust among citizens, which in turn encourages them to engage in different forms of citizenship behavior. We also found that in countries with high (vs. low) levels of economic inequality, trust in one's fellow citizens has a more critical role in motivating people to engage in citizenship behaviors that help their country. In this way, the study builds on a growing body of literature that shows how identity leadership can bridge the gap between macrolevel factors (economic inequality) and

individual-level attitudes (trust in fellow citizens) and behavior (civic citizenship). It also highlights the importance of national leaders working to develop and promote a sense of "us" as a means of building nations in which people take on responsibilities as citizens by supporting each other's well-being. In short, it suggests that before citizens are prepared to discover what they can do for their country and its citizens, their leaders first must convince them that their country is an "us" worth doing it for.

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