

Title: Exploring Why and When Mentors' Drinking Norms Impact Protégés' Alcohol Misuse

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1 **Exploring Why and When Mentors' Drinking Norms Impact Protégés' Alcohol**

2 **Misuse**

3 **ABSTRACT**

4 Drawing on the social cognitive theory, this study investigated the effect of mentors'
5 drinking norms on their protégés' alcohol misuse by focusing on the mediating role of
6 conformity drinking motives and the moderating role of moral disengagement. We conducted
7 a three-wave survey of 148 mentor-protégé dyads and found that mentors' drinking norms
8 were positively related to their protégés' alcohol misuse and that this relationship was fully
9 mediated by conformity drinking motives. Moreover, the moderated mediation model
10 revealed that moral engagement strengthens the main effects of mentor drinking norms on
11 conformity drinking motives and the indirect effects of mentor drinking norms on protégés'
12 alcohol misuse via enhanced conformity drinking motives. The theoretical and practical
13 implications are discussed.

14
15 **Keywords:**

16 Mentoring; drinking norms; conformity drinking motives; moral disengagement; alcohol
17 misuse; social cognitive theory

INTRODUCTION

1
2 Mentoring, which is prevalent in most professions, including entertainment, athletics, the
3 arts, politics, literature, and the sciences (Eby, Rhodes, & Allen, 2007), is defined as an
4 interpersonal relationship between a veteran (i.e., mentor) who has valuable experience and a
5 novice (i.e., protégé) who is less experienced (Kram, 1985). Mentors offer their protégés three
6 mentoring functions, namely career support, psychosocial support, and role modeling
7 (Scandura & Ragins, 1993). Some studies have focused on the benefits of mentoring,
8 demonstrating that mentoring plays a significant role in increasing employees' personal
9 learning (Hirschfeld, Thomas, & Lankau, 2006), job satisfaction, organizational commitment,
10 career success, and job performance (Ghosh & Reio, 2013), and in promoting organizational
11 performance (Allen, Smith, Mael, O'Shea, & Eby, 2009). The mentoring literature has also
12 shed light on negative mentoring experiences. In particular, studies have corroborated that
13 negative mentoring experiences can damage protégés' perceptions of relationship quality and
14 fair exchange (Eby, Durley, Evans, & Ragins, 2008).

15 Mentoring research is not limited to developed countries. Over the last decade, an
16 increasing number of studies have focused on mentoring in developing countries such as
17 China (Bozionelos & Wang, 2006; Kwan, Liu, & Yim, 2011; Kwan, Yim, & Zhou, 2015; Liu,
18 Kwan, & Mao, 2012). China is being transformed from a centrally planned economy to a
19 market-driven one. Although Chinese companies have increasingly attracted the attention of
20 businessmen due to the substantial foreign direct investments in China, Confucian values
21 continue to prevail in the country and influence employees' work behavior. How effectively
22 multinational firms in China manage their Chinese employees is key to promoting their

1 organizational effectiveness. Hence, research on this phenomenon in China is timely and
2 important.

3 As Confucian values are deeply rooted in Chinese societies, mentoring is prevalent in
4 Chinese organizations and most Chinese employees have experienced mentoring (Bozionelos
5 & Wang, 2006). Indeed, scholars have acknowledged that the mentoring system fits in well in
6 China (Chow, 2005). Chinese organizations have recently developed their own advanced
7 methods of conducting mentoring programs. For example, Haidilao, a leading hot pot
8 restaurant chain in China, has expanded its business rapidly as a result of its mentoring
9 programs (Zheng & Zhao, 2018), from 146 restaurants in 2015 to 273 in 2017. Its success lies
10 in linking the compensation of its mentors with the performance of its protégés. Frontline
11 managers in Haidilao have the autonomy to choose their protégés, and if a protégé performs
12 well, he/she gets an opportunity to establish a new restaurant and his/her mentor gets a share
13 of the profits. These attractive incentives motivate frontline managers in Haidilao to establish
14 mentoring relationships and contribute to these relationships.

15 However, few studies on mentoring have focused on the characteristics of doing business
16 in China. To address this research gap, this study sheds light on the effect of mentors' drinking
17 norms in the Chinese context. Alcohol plays an important role in enhancing social exchange
18 and conducting business in China (Hao, Chen, & Su, 2005). Social drinking is an effective
19 way of establishing and maintaining high-quality relationships between supervisors and
20 subordinates, and between salespersons and customers. However, drinking excessively is
21 harmful to health. Hence, our key research question is as follows: what are the negative
22 effects of mentors' drinking norms on their protégés?

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Literature Review

Research on mentoring among Chinese employees has proved fruitful. For example, studies have shown that protégés' internal locus of control and their mentors' affect-based trust are positively associated with the extent of mentoring functions the protégés reported receiving (Wang, Tomlinson, & Noe, 2010). Moreover, studies have proven the positive effects of mentoring functions on protégés' organizational citizenship behavior (Kwan et al., 2011) and customer orientation (Kwan et al., 2015). Furthermore, they have identified the positive association between mentorship quality and protégés' career satisfaction, voice behavior, and work-family positive spillover (Liu et al., 2012).

The benefits of mentoring are not limited to protégés. In particular, studies have indicated that mentoring functions exert a positive influence on mentors' personal learning, social status, and job performance (Liu, Liu, Kwan, & Mao, 2009). Besides, mentorship quality is positively related to mentors' work-family enrichment and negatively related to their work-family conflicts (Mao, Kwan, Chiu, & Zhang, 2016). Recent studies have focused on the negative aspects of mentoring and have revealed that negative mentoring experiences positively relate to mentors' emotional exhaustion and work-family conflicts (Yi, Kwan, Hu, & Chen, 2017).

Despite these findings, we know little about why and when mentors' negative values or behaviors influences their protégés. This ignorance may be caused by the common assumption that mentors' behaviors are all positive and favorable. This study challenges this assumption and focuses on drinking issues in China. China has specific drinking customs, and

1 most drinking (i.e., business drinking) occurs during social occasions (Hao & Young, 2000).
2 Alcohol consumed during social occasions often serves as a social lubricant, and a lot of
3 relationships form and evolve in events involving drinking (Lewis et al., 2008). However, this
4 has led to a marked increase in alcohol consumption and related problems in today's society
5 (Hao et al., 2005). Here, it is worth noting that mentoring (e.g., drinking norms) may also
6 generate negative outcomes (e.g., alcohol misuse) that can be detrimental to protégés during
7 this socialization (i.e., in social drinking; Liu et al., 2015). The social cognitive theory
8 suggests that individual behaviors are derived from social environment cues and personal
9 cognitions (Bandura, 1986). Mentors' drinking norms lead to a range of drinking practices.
10 Their protégés may form related cognitions about how to drink by observing and imitating
11 their role models in business and social settings, and subsequently display corresponding
12 drinking behavior. This study applies the social cognitive theory to explain why mentors'
13 drinking norms influence their protégés' alcohol misuse.

14 This study also explores the mediating role of drinking motives in the correlation
15 between mentors' drinking norms and protégés' alcohol misuse. Motive refers to the "why"
16 (i.e., goals to attain) of behaviors (McClelland, 1985). Extending the research on drinking
17 motives, namely an individual's reasons for drinking alcohol, may provide some insights into
18 alcohol use (Lewis et al., 2008; Terlecki & Buckner, 2015). Cox and Klinger (1988, 1990)
19 proposed three conformity drinking motives, responding to external social pressures, avoiding
20 social rejection, and decreasing social costs, which are all positively associated with drinking
21 in social settings (Cooper, 1994). In addition, Lewis et al. (2008) proposed that conformity
22 drinking motives are related to more relevant alcohol problems. In other words, conformity

1 drinking motives are strongly correlated with drinking in social situations wherein pressures
2 to conform may be particularly strong (e.g., drinking at parties), and with drinking-related
3 problems (Cooper, 1994; Stewart & Devine, 2000). Thus, we believe that conformity drinking
4 motives are the key mediator linking mentors' drinking norms and their protégés' alcohol
5 misuse.

6 Drawing on the social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1986), we also propose moral
7 disengagement as a moderator to explore the boundary conditions for the effects of mentors'
8 drinking norms. Individuals rely on personal moral choices to shape their cognitions
9 regarding drinking (Fisher, Fried, & Anushko, 2007). "Moral disengagement" refers to a
10 series of eight interrelated cognitive mechanisms, namely moral justification, euphemistic
11 labeling, advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, diffusion of responsibility,
12 disregard or distortion of consequences, dehumanization, and attribution of blame, and those
13 mechanisms by which moral self-sanctions are selectively activated and disengaged from
14 detrimental behavior at different points in the self-regulatory process (Bandura, 1991, 1999,
15 2002). With regard to a mentoring relationship, protégés' moral choices influence the degree
16 to which they follow their mentors' negative behaviors. Protégés with higher levels of moral
17 disengagement are more likely to blindly identify with their mentors' beliefs or behaviors, and
18 consequently to engage in hazardous acts.

19 **Mentors' Drinking Norms and their Protégés' Alcohol Misuse**

20 The social cognitive theory provides a framework for understanding, predicting, and
21 changing individual behavior, suggesting that individuals' behaviors vary with personal
22 factors and the environment (Bandura, 1986). According to this theory, individuals learn by

1 imitating and observing their role models (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Such social learning leads
2 individuals to develop schemas that direct their perceptions, expectations, desires, and
3 subsequent behaviors (Gioia & Poole, 1984).

4 The mentoring literature has applied the social cognitive theory or role modeling
5 perspective to explain how protégés learn from their mentors (for a review, see Coleman,
6 2018; Ray & Violanti, 2018). In fact, role modeling is one of three mentoring functions
7 (Scandura & Ragins, 1993). Research has corroborated that role modeling is positively related
8 to protégés' personal learning and work-family enrichment (Kwan, Mao, & Zhang, 2010).

9 In this study, we suggest that mentors' drinking norms have a positive influence on their
10 protégés' alcohol misuse, for the following reasons. First, good mentoring relationships
11 enable protégés to develop their careers (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Drawing on the social
12 cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986), protégés learn that following their mentors' drinking
13 norms is expected of them and beneficial to their career development. Hence, they tend to
14 take alcohol consumption for granted and often overdo it in the long term. Second, norms are
15 fundamental to understanding the variations in individuals' behaviors, which guide
16 individuals to act in a particular way (Mizuchi & Perrucci, 1962; Perkins, 2002; Terry &
17 Hogg, 1999). For protégés, the drinking norms of their mentors are shared beliefs and
18 perceptions regarding the extent to which the consumption of alcohol is legitimate for social
19 interactions with their mentors or clients (Liu et al., 2015). Such norms are likely to play an
20 important role in developing individuals' drinking behaviors. Finally, our empirical findings
21 indicate a positive relationship between the perception of drinking as a norm and heavy
22 drinking. In particular, Bacharach, Bamberger, and Sonnenstuhl (2002) indicated that drinking

1 norms increase problem drinking. Similarly, other studies have revealed that the norms of
2 alcohol use are positively related to alcohol misuse (Frone & Brown, 2010; Liu et al., 2015).
3 Based on the above discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

4 *Hypothesis 1: Mentors' drinking norms are positively related to their protégés' alcohol*
5 *misuse.*

6 **The Mediating Role of Conformity Drinking Motives**

7 Mentors' drinking norms can arouse their protégés' conformity drinking motives, for the
8 following two reasons. First, mentors have extensive experience and can direct their protégés
9 to maintain excellent interpersonal relationships (Kram & Isabella, 1985). According to the
10 social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986), protégés can learn the ropes and develop their
11 careers by learning social skills from their mentors and maintaining their mentors' standard of
12 behavior. Second, norms involve expectations and demands that subconsciously influence
13 individuals' cognitions in avoiding negative reinforcement and social rejection (Lewis et al.,
14 2008). Therefore, mentors' drinking norms not only include normative drinking demands that
15 guide their protégés to drink but also essential steps to establish good relationships with
16 mentors or clients. Such benefits through cognition spur protégés' conformity drinking
17 motives.

18 Based on the social cognitive perspective, conformity motives reflecting negative
19 reinforcement and avoiding social rejection are uniquely related to alcohol-related problems
20 (Lewis et al., 2008). Conformity drinking motives may provide important insights into the
21 cognitive processes that allow people to legitimize and justify drinking behaviors, which may
22 result in greater frequency and intensity of drinking, and consequently increased alcohol

1 consumption. In the long term, alcohol consumption gradually becomes a habit, leading to
2 alcohol dependence and even addiction, thereby increasing the probability of alcohol misuse.
3 Moreover, studies have indicated that conformity drinking motives are likely to cause alcohol
4 misuse and problems (e.g., Terlecki & Buckner, 2015). In sum, mentors' drinking norms
5 influence their protégés' alcohol misuse by activating conformity drinking motives. Thus, we
6 propose the following hypothesis:

7 *Hypothesis 2: Conformity drinking motives mediate the positive relationship between*
8 *mentors' drinking norms and their protégés' alcohol misuse.*

9 **The Moderating Effect of Moral Disengagement**

10 According to the social cognitive theory associated with morality, detrimental conduct is
11 regulated by two primary sanctions, namely social sanctions and internalized self-sanctions
12 (Bandura, 1991). Individuals have different cognitions and multiple moral standards (Moore,
13 Detert, Treviño, Baker, & Mayer, 2012). As such, individuals have different levels of moral
14 disengagement. Individuals with high levels of moral disengagement usually justify the
15 morality of their behaviors, portray these behaviors as serving socially worthy or moral
16 purposes, and view harmful conduct as acceptable. They use euphemisms to describe
17 detrimental conduct to reduce their sense of guilt and condone their behavior. Conversely,
18 individuals with low levels of moral disengagement follow general standards to regulate their
19 moral cognitions. Research has indicated that individuals' propensity to morally disengage is
20 vital for understanding engagement in harmful behavior (Duffy et al., 2012).

21 We suggest that moral disengagement moderates the effects of mentors' drinking norms,
22 for two reasons. First, according to the social cognitive theory, personal standards of right and

1 wrong guide individual behavior during the process of socialization (Bandura, 1986). Moral
2 disengagement consists of eight self-regulatory mechanisms that usually convert detrimental
3 conduct into acceptable and reasonable conduct to achieve self-sanctions (Bandura, 1991). In
4 the context of mentoring, protégés with high levels of moral disengagement are likely to
5 believe that establishing good relationships or acquiring success through drinking is
6 appropriate. Such reinforcements can trigger stronger motivations that conform to mentors'
7 drinking norms. Conversely, individuals with low levels of moral disengagement regard
8 drinking as an inappropriate way of winning business. As a result, they disengage from
9 conforming to their mentors' drinking norms.

10 Second, individuals rationalize unethical behavior via self-regulatory mechanisms to
11 achieve social sanctions (Bandura, 1991). Mentors' drinking norms represent behavioral rules
12 in social interaction. Protégés follow these norms despite their being inconsiderate and
13 immoral to obtain social recognition. Consequently, protégés with high levels of moral
14 disengagement believe that these norms are legitimate and justified through moral
15 self-regulation, and take drinking in social situations for granted, which is more likely to
16 activate their conformity drinking motives. Conversely, individuals with low levels of moral
17 disengagement consume alcohol for their own pleasure rather than use it to achieve social
18 recognition, and are therefore less likely to activate self-regulatory mechanisms to conform to
19 mentors' drinking norms. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

20 *Hypothesis 3: Protégés' moral disengagement moderates the positive relationship*
21 *between their mentors' drinking norms and protégés' conformity drinking motives, such*
22 *that the relationship is stronger when moral disengagement is high rather than low.*

1 province, China. We randomly selected 200 formal mentor-protégé dyads that were paired
2 together by their human resources department. We informed our participants that the results of
3 the survey would remain anonymous and would be used only for academic research, and that
4 code numbers would be used to match mentors with their protégés. All of the questionnaires
5 were distributed to the participants and returned to the researchers directly.

6 We conducted a three-wave survey at two-week intervals to prevent potential
7 problems associated with common method bias (Doty & Glick, 1998). In the first wave of the
8 survey (*T1*), the mentors were asked to assess their drinking norms and provide their
9 demographics such as gender, age, and education. Of the 200 questionnaires sent to mentors,
10 188 were returned, with a response rate of 94.00%. Two weeks after the first survey, we sent
11 our second-wave survey questionnaires (*T2*) to 188 protégés whose mentors had completed
12 the first set of questionnaires. They were asked to rate their moral disengagement and
13 conformity drinking motives during the past two weeks, and provide their demographics such
14 as gender, age, education, marital status, and job position. Of the 188 surveys sent out, 163
15 surveys were returned, with a response rate of 82.49%. Two weeks later, we sent our
16 third-wave survey questionnaires (*T3*) with measures of alcohol misuse during the past two
17 weeks to the remaining 163 participants, and received 150 responses. Our final sample
18 contained 148 usable responses, with a total response rate of 74.00%.

19 Of all the mentors, 62.67% were male and were on average 35.28 years old. More than
20 half (59.33%) of the mentors had a college degree or above (e.g., Bachelor's degree, Master's
21 degree). Of all the protégés, 63.33% were male and were on average 28.12 years old. Married
22 protégés represented 46%, and most of the protégés were frontline employees (70.30%).

1 Moreover, 78.4% of the protégés belonged to the same departments as their mentors and
2 66.9% of the protégés reported that their mentors were their supervisors.

3 **Measures**

4 ***Mentor drinking norms.*** A 5-item scale developed by Liu et al. (2015) was used to
5 measure the drinking norms of the mentors. A 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1
6 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to measure this variable. A sample item is
7 as follows: “Drinking alcohol together is an important part of the interaction between a client
8 and me.” Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .96.

9 ***Moral disengagement.*** A 3-item scale originally developed by Moore et al. (2012) and
10 later modified and applied by Chen, Chen, and Sheldon (2016) in a Chinese setting was used
11 to measure moral disengagement. A 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly
12 disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was applied to measure this variable. A sample item is as
13 follows: “It would be OK to be misleading to protect my company’s interests.” Cronbach’s
14 alpha for this scale was .94.

15 ***Conformity drinking motive.*** A 5-item scale developed by Cooper (1994) was used to
16 measure the protégés’ conformity drinking motives. A 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from
17 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used to measure this variable. A sample item is
18 as follows: “I drink because others won’t kid me about not drinking.” Cronbach’s alpha for
19 this scale was .95.

20 ***Alcohol misuse.*** A 10-item World Health Organization alcohol use disorder
21 identification test developed by Babor, Higgins-Biddle, Saunders, and Monteiro (2001) and
22 later applied by Liu et al. (2015) was used to measure alcohol misuse in a Chinese setting. A

1 sample item is as follows: “How often during the two weeks have you been unable to
2 remember what happened the night before because you had been drinking?” Responses
3 ranged from 0 (never) to 4 (daily or almost daily). Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .93.

4 **Control variables.** We controlled for the demographic characteristics of both the mentors
5 and the protégés because this information could affect perceptions of the mentoring
6 relationship and individual alcohol use (e.g., Frone, 2013; Godshalk & Sosik, 2000; Ragins &
7 McFarlin, 1990). To control for these potential effects, we entered the gender, age, and
8 education of the mentors and the gender, age, education, marital status, and job position of the
9 protégés into our model as control variables.

10 RESULTS

11 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

12 Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to examine the distinctiveness of the four
13 key variables (i.e., mentor drinking norms, moral disengagement, conformity drinking motive,
14 and alcohol misuse). We compared the hypothesized four-factor model with a set of
15 alternative models, including three three-factor models, one two-factor model, and one
16 single-factor model. The results showed that the hypothesized four-factor model yielded the
17 best model fit ($\chi^2 = 55.17$, $df = 48$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .03, CFI = .99, TLI = .99) and that
18 none of the five alternative models reached acceptable model fits.

19 Descriptive Statistics

20 We analyzed the descriptive statistics, and presented the means, standard deviations, and
21 correlations of all of the variables in Table 1. The results showed that the mentors’ drinking
22 norms were positively related to their protégés’ conformity drinking motives ($r = .48$, $p < .01$)

1 and alcohol misuse ($r = .26, p < .01$), respectively. The protégés' conformity drinking motives
2 were positively related to alcohol misuse ($r = .30, p < .01$).

3 -----
4 Insert Table 1 about here
5 -----

6 **Hypotheses Testing**

7 Hierarchical multiple regression and bootstrapping analyses were used to test the
8 hypotheses. The regression results are presented in Table 2. Hypothesis 1 proposed positive
9 effects of mentors' drinking norms on protégés' alcohol misuse. The result of Model 7
10 supported this hypothesis ($\beta = .25, p < .01$). To explain the positive relationship between
11 mentors' drinking norms and protégés' alcohol misuse, Hypothesis 2 proposed that conformity
12 drinking motives mediate the relationship between mentor drinking norms and protégés'
13 alcohol misuse. We used the following four-step process. First, we put in the control variables.
14 Second, we put in the mentors' drinking norms and alcohol misuse accordingly, thereby
15 testing the direct effect of the mentors' drinking norms on alcohol misuse (i.e., Model 6). Next,
16 we put in the mentors' drinking norms, and subsequently protégés' conformity drinking
17 motives and alcohol misuse, thereby testing the mediating effect of the mentors' drinking
18 norms (i.e., Models 2, 7, and 8; Baron & Kenny, 1986). When conformity drinking was added
19 to the model, the effect of mentor drinking norms on alcohol misuse became nonsignificant (β
20 = .15, *n.s.*). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported. The bootstrapping results also indicated
21 that the indirect effect of mentor drinking norms on protégés' alcohol misuse via conformity
22 drinking motives was significant ($\beta = .06; s.e. = .03; 95\% CI [.01, .11]$, excluding zero). Thus,
23 Hypothesis 2 was further supported.

24 -----

1 drinking norms are related to protégés' alcohol misuse by focusing on the mediating role of
2 protégés' conformity drinking motives and the moderating role of protégés' moral
3 disengagement. We conducted a three-wave survey with 148 valid dyads, and found that
4 mentors' drinking norms have a significant positive effect on protégés' alcohol misuse.
5 Protégés' conformity drinking motives play a mediating role in this relationship. Moral
6 disengagement strengthens the relationship between mentors' drinking norms and protégés'
7 conformity drinking motives, and the indirect effect of mentors' drinking norms on protégés'
8 alcohol misuse via conformity drinking motives. Overall, our hypothesized integrative model
9 has critical theoretical and practical implications, which are summarized below, along with
10 some limitations of the present work and recommendations for future research.

11 **Theoretical Implications**

12 Our research has several significant theoretical implications. In particular, we extend the
13 mentoring literature to include drinking issues in the Chinese context. The vast majority of
14 existing studies demonstrate that mentoring is related to career satisfaction, job satisfaction,
15 organizational commitment, and job performance (Ghosh & Reio, 2013; Liu et al., 2012).
16 However, few studies discuss the intersection of mentoring and drinking in organizational
17 socialization. Our research enhances our understanding of the negative influence of mentoring
18 and broadens the scope of the concept of mentoring, thereby contributing further to the
19 mentoring literature. In particular, we investigate the effects of mentors' drinking norms on
20 protégés' alcohol misuse. According to Liu et al. (2015), informal socialization generates
21 outcomes that can be dysfunctional for newcomers in the long run. Mentors' drinking norms
22 force protégés to conform and take alcohol consumption for granted, thereby leading to a

1 pattern of alcohol misuse. This finding is consistent with those of prior studies (Liu et al.,
2 2015) in providing robust evidence of this positive relationship. Additionally, prior studies on
3 alcohol use have mostly focused on the psychosocial domain (e.g., Terlecki & Buckner, 2015;
4 Tyler, Stone, & Bersani, 2007) and on veteran peers' and clients' alcohol use norms (Liu et al.,
5 2015). This study extends alcohol use to the mentoring literature, thereby contributing greatly
6 to the literature on drinking.

7 Moreover, based on the social cognitive theory, we examine the role of conformity
8 drinking motives in mediating the relationship between mentors' drinking norms and
9 protégés' alcohol misuse. These findings extend our understanding of the origin and role of
10 motive as a basis for behavior determination (Liu et al., 2015) and explain how drinking
11 motives link drinking norms embedded in the social environment with the adoption of risky
12 behaviors (Liu et al., 2015).

13 Drawing on the social cognitive theory, we also introduce moral disengagement as a
14 moderator to explain individuals' propensity to morally disengage through a wider range of
15 dysfunctional behaviors (i.e., alcohol misuse), thereby providing a boundary condition for the
16 effects of mentors' drinking norms. Moral disengagement is a cognitive risk factor (Newton,
17 Barrett, Swaffield, & Teesson, 2014) that chronically disengages from detrimental attitudes
18 and behaviors, and could increase alcohol use and bring about a range of other anti-social
19 behaviors. As discussed, identifying cognitive risky factors related to risky drinking in
20 mentoring relationships improves our understanding of this phenomenon. It significantly
21 enriches the role boundaries of mentoring relationships and expands on the moral
22 disengagement literature.

1 Finally, this study improves on prior studies in terms of the method used. Although prior
2 studies have examined the detrimental effects of mentoring, methodological weaknesses
3 including a cross-sectional research design and single-source data have undermined the
4 generalizability of their findings (e.g., Yi et al., 2017). Researchers have identified these
5 issues and have called for a longitudinal research design and multiple-source data (Allen, Eby,
6 O'Brien, & Lentz, 2008). Our research makes two important methodological advances. First,
7 we collected data in three phases to provide robust evidence of the causality. Second, we
8 obtained data from two sources (mentors and protégés), which helped to alleviate the concern
9 of common method variance.

10 **Practical Implications**

11 The study's findings offer several important practical implications. First, a mentoring
12 relationship is often described as being potentially advantageous in enhancing the
13 development of individuals in both the early and middle career stages and offering
14 opportunities for personal and professional growth (Kram, 1985; Kram & Isabella, 1985).
15 However, this study indicates that mentoring can also have negative effects on employees.
16 Therefore, it is vital for employees, especially newcomers or novices, to bear in mind that
17 mentoring relationships do not necessarily bring about benefits and that it is important to
18 avoid unnecessary harm. Our study provides a framework to study the dark side of mentoring.
19 Future research can expand on our framework to explore other unfavorable values or
20 behaviors of mentors.

21 Second, alcohol is deemed a social lubricant. Excessive alcohol consumption gradually
22 becomes habitual (Lewis et al., 2008; Liu et al., 2015), which makes us realize that one must

1 drink in moderation. Our findings reveal that mentors' drinking norms are positively related to
2 protégés' alcohol misuse, which prevents employees from blindly following their mentors
3 merely to maintain good relationships with them. Our findings also indicate that mentors
4 should adopt fitting and proper drinking norms to guide their protégés' drinking behavior. Our
5 study appears to be the first to include drinking in the literature on mentoring, which may
6 inspire future studies to study drinking in various contexts.

7 Third, our model shows that individual differences in moral disengagement moderate the
8 mediating mechanism. The mediating effect is stronger when protégés' moral disengagement
9 is high. It is important for organizations to recognize that individual values have significant
10 effects on human behavior motives. Therefore, they should train their employees to inculcate
11 the right values and morals to reduce problematic drinking behaviors.

12 **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

13 Despite its theoretical and practical implications, this study has several limitations. First,
14 due to limited resources and time constraints, our data were collected from a large
15 state-owned company in China, which may hamper the generalizability of our results. The
16 Chinese are tolerant of unreasonable values or behaviors of high-status individuals. Therefore,
17 the effects of mentors' drinking norms on protégés' may be stronger in China than in the West.
18 Future research should collect cross-cultural data to test our hypotheses. Second, this study
19 does not include some potential control variables. Prior research has indicated that
20 performance drinking motives are predictors of alcohol misuse (Liu et al., 2015). Thus, future
21 research should control for other motive variables to examine the effects of mentors' drinking
22 norms above and beyond the effects of other control variables. Third, although our model

1 introduces moral disengagement as a moderator to explore boundary conditions, other
2 variables can also shed light on important boundary conditions. For example, according to
3 Aryee, Wyatt, and Stone (2007), protégés' ingratiation behavior with their mentors is
4 significantly and positively related to career success. Here, we boldly assume that mentors'
5 drinking norms may more likely activate protégés' conformity drinking motives when
6 apple-polishing protégés adopt ingratiation tactics to advance their careers. In addition,
7 conformity drinking motives are more likely to bring about alcohol misuse in individuals who
8 have a low tolerance for alcohol. This calls for further in-depth research.

9 **Conclusion**

10 This study provides specific insights into mentoring relationships, exploring the
11 relationship between mentors' drinking norms and protégés' alcohol misuse in the Chinese
12 context. Drawing on the social cognitive theory, our research shows that the conformity
13 drinking motive is a crucial mediator of the relationship between mentors' drinking norms and
14 protégés' alcohol misuse. Additionally, moral disengagement is a key moderator that
15 reinforces the effects of mentors' drinking norms on protégés' alcohol misuse. We hope that
16 this study will provide a significant springboard for future research on mentors' drinking
17 norms, drinking motives, and alcohol use.

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Fig. 1. Theoretical model.

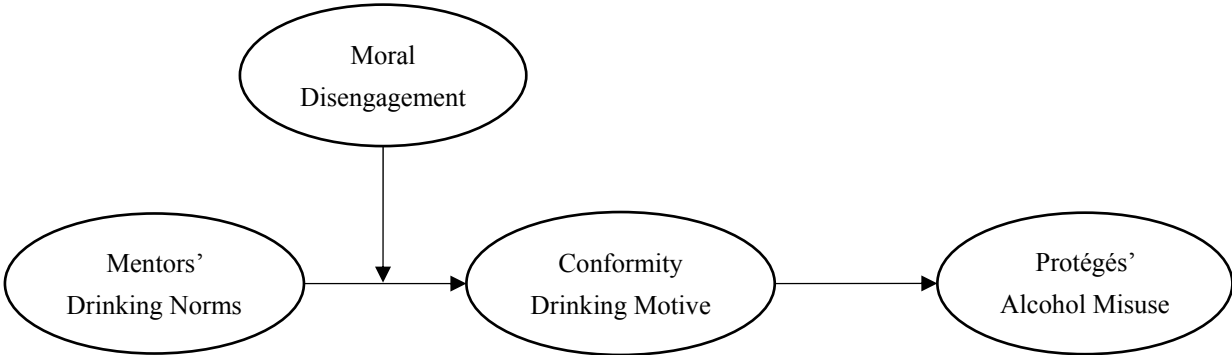


Fig. 2. The moderating effect of moral disengagement on the relationship between mentor drinking norms and protégés' conformity drinking motive.

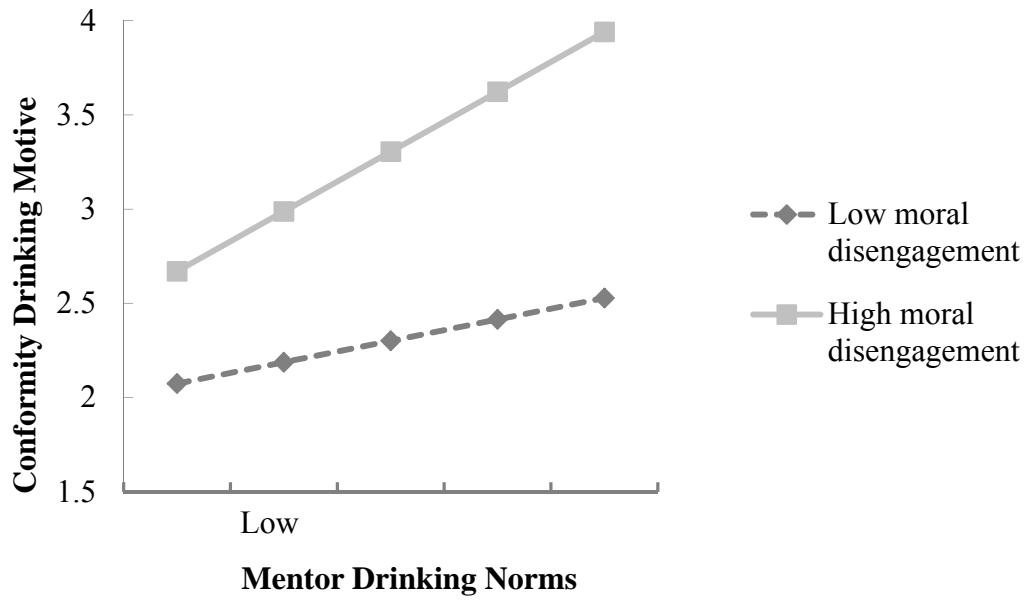


Table 1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Protégé gender	1.58	.50												
2. Protégé age	28.12	6.52	.09											
3. Protégé education	1.03	.23	-.04	-.30**										
4. Protégé marital status	1.54	.50	-.03	-.74**	.31**									
5. Protégé job position	1.37	.72	-.24**	.27**	-.09	-.34**								
6. Mentor gender	1.63	.48	.04	.06	.02	.08	.02							
7. Mentor age	35.28	8.19	.17*	.38**	-.17*	-.29**	-.16	.08						
8. Mentor education	2.75	.99	.14	-.35**	.39**	.28**	-.19*	.08	-.09					
9. Mentor drinking norms	3.28	1.29	.18*	-.11	-.08	.07	-.15	.14	.13	-.04	(.96)			
10. Moral disengagement	3.26	1.25	-.00	.03	-.08	.11	-.01	.07	-.08	-.10	.32**	(.94)		
11. Conformity drinking motive	2.80	1.30	.18*	.08	-.16	.11	-.03	.23**	.08	.03	.48**	.48**	(.95)	
12. Protégé alcohol misuse	.57	.71	.32**	-.01	.11	.10	-.12	.09	.13	.14	.26**	.28**	.30**	(.93)

Notes: $N = 148$; ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Cronbach's alpha is in parentheses.

Table 2. Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis with conformity drinking motive and alcohol misuse.

	Conformity drinking motive				Alcohol misuse			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
Control variables								
Protégé gender	.16	.08	.10	.11	.27*	.23*	.23*	.21*
Protégé age	.23	.39	.27	.30	.08	.17	.01	.09
Protégé education	-.24	-.22	-.19	-.16	.10	.12	.17	.16
Protégé marital status	.35	.40	.30	.29	.14	.16	.04	.08
Protégé job position	.05	.07	.09	.09	.02	.04	.01	.02
Mentor gender	.19	.12	.11	.12	.07	.03	.01	.01
Mentor age	.05	-.06	.02	.02	.08	.03	.07	.04
Mentor education	.14	.19	.21	.21	.07	.10	.03	.06
Independent variable								
Mentor drinking norms		.46**	.34**	.29**		.25**		.15
Moderator								
Moral disengagement			.36**	.37**				
Interaction								
Mentor drinking norms × Moral disengagement				.20**				
Mediator								
Conformity drinking motive							.28**	.21**
R^2	.19	.37	.47	.51	.13	.18	.19	.21
ΔR^2		.18**	.10**	.04**		.05**	.06**	.02*
F	3.45**	7.49**	10.45**	10.93**	2.15**	2.84**	3.08**	3.03**

Notes: $N = 148$; ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$ (two-tailed)