**Why and When Employees Like to Speak up More under Humble Leaders?**

**The Roles of Personal Sense of Power and Power Distance**

**Abstract**

Research investigating the underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions under which leader humility influences employee voice remains underdeveloped. Drawing from approach-inhibition theory of power and leader humility literature, we developed a moderated-mediation model in which personal sense of power (i.e., employees’ ability to influence other individuals such as their leader) was theorized as a unique mechanism underlining why employees feel motivated to speak up under the supervision of humble leaders. Additionally, the cultural value of power distance was proposed to be a relevant boundary condition to influence such relationship. We tested the model using time-lagged supervisor-subordinate matched data. Results of mixed models analyses provided support for our hypotheses confirming that employees’ personal sense of power mediates the relationship between leader humility and employee voice, and such relationship was found to be stronger when employees’ power distance was lower rather than higher.

***Keywords:***leader humility, personal sense of power, voice, the approach-inhibition theory of power.

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**Introduction**

Leader humility refers to a leader’s behavior involving “a manifested willingness to correctly view himself or herself, an appreciation of others’ strengths, and teachability” (Owens and Hekman, 2016, p.1088), which has become increasingly important in the field of business ethics (Argandona 2015; Frostenson, 2016; Rego and Simpson 2016). Reflecting individual cognition towards the true self (Frostenson 2016; Morris et al. 2005), leader humility is consistent with Kant’s view that humility fosters and spurs individuals’ self-recognition and promotes the capacity of their moral reasoning (Grenberg 2005; Morris et al. 2005). Furthermore, desirable ethical characteristics, such as being fair and trustworthy are rooted in the concept of leader humility (Oc et al. 2015; Owens and Hekman 2012). It is expected that humble leaders are driven by collective welfares and followers’ benefits rather than their own self-interests and personal benefits (Frostenson 2016; Morris et al. 2005), and they tend to treat their followers fairly by viewing follower interest as primary concerns (Morris et al. 2005; Owens and Hekman 2012). Hence, leader humility can be regarded as an ethic-oriented leadership to promote ethical concerns (Oc et al. 2015), and contributes to organizational reputation and success by effectively inhibiting unethical behaviors (e.g., corporate scandals; Owens and Hekman 2012) in the workplace. Within the ethics of virtues, humility provides fundamentals of moral actions (Owens and Hekman 2012) and leadership effectiveness (Argandona 2015) in the workplace. Humble leaders can positively influence employee outcomes since such leaders will behave ethically and morally to become role models (Morris et al. 2005; Owens and Hekman 2012).

 Unlike the other leadership approaches, leader humility has been regarded as a “bottom-up” approach (Owens and Hekman 2012, p. 787). “Bottom-up leadership” refers to leading from the ground (Argandona, 2015; Rego et al. 2017). Originally, the word of “humility” comes from the Latin word of “humilis”, which means “on the ground” (Owens and Hekman 2012; Rego et al. 2017). Humble leaders have a grounded view of oneself and others to enable leaders to acknowledge their weaknesses and to learn from others’ strengths due to the fact that humility discloses personal weaknesses in comparison with moral laws (Grenberg 2005; Owens et al. 2013). This suggests that humble leaders can identify followers’ strengths and contributions, and are willing to be taught, are open to others’ ideas and feedback, and view themselves accurately (cf., Owens and Hekman 2012, 2016; Owens et al. 2013). More recently, leader humility has been recognized as one of the key leadership approaches to facilitate major follower outcomes such as work engagement, retention, job satisfaction, job performance, perceived leader effectiveness, commitment, and loyalty (e.g., Basford et al. 2014; Owens et al. 2013; Owens et al. 2015), as well as group and organizational outcomes such as team performance and effectiveness, firm innovation, task allocation effectiveness, and top management team integration (e.g., Chiu et al. 2016; Ou et al. 2014; Owens and Hekman 2016; Rego and Simpson 2016; Rego et al. 2017).

Although the findings of these studies are inspiring, the underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions shaping the effect of leader humility on employee behaviors are poorly known. Key fundamental research questions remain unanswered, such as whether or not leader humility is effective in motivating employees to speak up (i.e., the informal and discretionary communication of ideas, suggestions, and concerns about work-related issues that seek to bring about improvement or changes; Morrison 2011, 2014). Addressing this research question is important because employee voice is for the good of organizations by keeping the organization healthy and sustainable (Liang et al. 2012). However, many employees may tend to think that speaking up at work is ineffective in influencing their leader’s attentions and actions in regard to their opinions and suggestions (Morrison 2011, 2014; Morrison et al. 2015). For example, leader may not take employees’ opinions into serious consideration, if such opinion brings disagreement or confrontation. This implies that such a relationship is complex and may be partly determined by psychological processes and boundary conditions that have remained unexplored in the literature.

To address the above research question, approach-inhibition theory of power (Anderson and Berdahl 2002; Keltner et al. 2003) is a relevant theoretical framework to explain when and how employees feel motivated to speak up under the supervision of humble leaders. The key premise of this theory is that the psychological experience of possessing power when working with others can serve as a motivational basis for individuals’ attitudes, perceptions and behaviors (Anderson and Berdahl 2002; Keltner et al. 2003). As such, we propose that personal sense of power (i.e., an individual’s perception of their ability to influence others; Anderson et al. 2012) can represent the subjective feeling of power that is pervasive and fundamental to social relationships (Keltner et al. 2003), including relationships between leaders and followers. In particular, the elevated personal sense of power is associated with the “behavioral approach system,” which is characterized by positive affect, attention to rewards, and approach-related behaviors (Keltner et al. 2003). On this basis, we argue that leader humility is effective to facilitate employee voice by instilling in employees a greater sense of power to influence the leader’s attentions, and endorsement for their opinions and suggestions.

Underpinned by the approach-inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al. 2003), the relevant factor underlying the complex relationship between leader humility and employee voice is the cultural value of power distance (i.e., the extent to which employees accept the unequal distribution of power in the organization, which is also called as individual level of power distance; Farh et al. 2007; Kirkman et al. 2009). Individual differences in power distance have been argued to be an important factor in shaping the effect of personal sense of power on an individual’s attitudes, perceptions and behaviors, because it determines the extent to which “power differences are accepted and consensually reinforced” (Keltner et al. 2003, p. 279). We therefore argue that the individual cultural value of power distance plays a vital role in determining the relationships between leader humility, personal sense of power, and employee voice.

In the present study, we aim to make four theoretical contributions. Firstly, we seek to contribute to the emerging research on leader humility by proposing leader humility as a ‘bottom-up’ leadership approach (Owens and Hekman 2012, p. 787) to encourage employee voice. It appears that this study is among one of the first to investigate the relationship between leader humility and employee voice. Secondly, we seek to provide new insights into the relationship between leadership and voice by adopting a different theoretical perspective (i.e., the approach-inhibition theory of power; Anderson et al. 2012; Keltner et al. 2003)1 to explain why personal sense of power is a unique psychological process that can transmit the effect of leader humility to employee voice. Thirdly, this study is one of the first to advance the application of the approach-inhibition theory of power in the context of leader humility research by examining the moderating effect of the cultural value of power distance on the hypothesized relationship between personal sense of power and employee voice. In doing so, we will contribute to the literature of leader humility and voice by identifying an individual cultural value as a boundary condition. Finally, we seek to contribute to the field of business ethics by examining how and why an ethic-oriented leadership (i.e., leader humility) can promote employees to speak up with constructive suggestions or opinions, which will be beneficial for the functioning of organizations.

In summary, based on the approach-inhibition theory of power, this study develops and tests a moderated-mediation model to examine the relationship between leader humility and employee voice. Specifically, we hypothesize that personal sense of power mediates the relationship between leader humility and employee voice and that the individual cultural value of power distance moderates the relationship between personal sense of power and employee voice (the second-stage moderation). Figure 1 depicts our hypotheses in the conceptual model.

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INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

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**Theory and Hypothesis Development**

**Approach-inhibition Theory of Power Applied to Leader Humility and Employee Voice**

Unlike the other leadership styles, such as empowering leadership, servant leadership, and authentic leadership, leader humility focuses on modeling growth and achieving collective honor for both organizations and employees with an emphasis on ethical virtues (Oc et al. 2015; Owens et al. 2011; Rego et al. 2017). Specifically, leader humility is characterized by openness, self-transcendence, and other-orientation (Morris et al. 2005; Owens and Hekman 2016). The fundamental characteristic of leader humility is that leader humility occurs in interpersonal interactions and features in a pattern of behaviors that are recognizable to others (e.g., followers) (Argandona 2015; Owens et al. 2013). As humble leaders draw attention to and are willing to learn from followers due to the interpersonal and other-centered nature, leader humility forms a bottom-up follower development process by leading from the ground (Owens and Hekman 2012), and can effectively influence employee attitudes and behaviors (Basford et al. 2014; Owens et al. 2013; Owens et al. 2015). However, the above research on leader humility overlooked the importance of exploring potential underlying mechanisms that can influence the implications of leader humility for employee proactive behavior (i.e., voice). Leader humility is argued as a good use of power (Owens and Hekman 2012) and can help to remedy leaders’ weakness, such as low performance due to a lower general mental ability (Owens et al. 2013). Given the fact that many employees do not usually speak up (e.g., opinions about resolving ethical issues) in their workplaces as a result of anticipated neglect and improper actions displayed by leaders after hearing their opinions (Morrison 2011), we contend that humble leaders enable employees to overcome their “psychological hurdles” and motivate them to speak up by instilling among them a sense of power. Thus, given the importance of the interpersonal nature of leader humility, we expect that a potential mechanism to manifest the effect of leader humility on employees’ willingness to voice should be based on the power dynamics between supervisors and subordinates.

A useful theoretical framework for understanding how and why leader humility can promote employees’ willingness to voice is the approach-inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al. 2003). This theory focuses on social relationships and posits that an individual’s psychological experience of possessing or not possessing power to influence others can have an impact on his or her affect, attention, and behaviors (Keltner et al. 2003). Power is a social-relational concept that can manifest in the relationships, and an individual’s power can be understood in relation to other individuals (Anderson et al. 2012), such as supervisors. The key basis of the approach-inhibition theory of power is that personal sense of power reflects an individual’s perception of his or her ability to influence other people and gain their attention (Anderson et al. 2012; Keltner et al. 2003). This suggests that personal sense of power is different from psychological empowerment because personal sense of power focuses on the interaction and perceptions of influence within social contexts rather than specific work roles (Anderson et al. 2012; Spreitzer 1996). Since recent studies have revealed that humble leaders can direct power away from themselves and towards others (Chiu et al. 2016, Ou et al. 2014), personal sense of power could play a critical role in manifesting leader humility effectiveness. For example, based on their knowledge and expertise, employees with personal sense of power can provide suggestions to leaders, helping leaders to make important decisions and undertake specific duties. Unlike the social contagion and social information processing theories that have been commonly used to explain the effects of leader humility (e.g., Chiu et al. 2016; Ou et al. 2014; Owens and Hekman 2016; Rego et al. 2017), the approach-inhibition theory of power focuses on the fundamental issues regarding how and why an individual behaves in social relationships with respect to levels of personal sense of power. This becomes a strong framework to investigate how and why employees choose to voice in relationships with humble leaders. According to Keltner et al. (2003), elevated power can activate the “behavioral approach system” that is characterized by positive affect, attention to rewards, and disinhibited behaviors, whereas reduced power activates the “behavioral inhibition system” that is characterized by negative affect, attention to threat, and inhibited behavior (Keltner et al. 2003). In this study, we focus only on the behavioral approach system because its approach-oriented nature is closely associated with characteristics of leader humility (e.g., teachability) and also captures the characteristics of employee voice. We expect that employees could overcome psychological barriers to speak up by activating the behavioral approach system. The nature of the behavioral inhibition system is irrelevant to employee voice: Morrison et al. (2015) found that employees are able to keep silent, which is a totally different construct from voice, due to the activation of the behavioral inhibition system.

In addition, Keltner et al. (2003) proposed that culture is a critical factor moderating the effects of personal sense of power on affect, attention, and behavior. Specifically, low power distance could facilitate the disinhibition in powerless people (e.g., subordinates). Hence, personal sense of power is not static and can interact with individual cultural differences, such as the individual value of power distance. Along this line of thinking (Keltner et al. 2003), we first argue that leader humility plays a vital role in enhancing employees’ personal sense of power, as a humble leader may tend to appreciate the strength and contribution of, and be willing to learn from, their employees. Second, we contend that employees are more likely to speak up when they experience a sense of power, as they will be more capable of receiving leaders’ attention and concern for their voice, and making leaders more willing to endorse their voice. Third, in accordance with the approach-inhibition theory of power, we argue that an employee’s individual cultural value of power distance moderates the relationship between their personal sense of power and voice. Specifically, we contend that employees with a lower power distance value believe that power should be shared by both leaders and employees, and thus will be more likely to speak up to their leaders if they feel that they can influence their leaders’ concerns and behaviors.

**Leader Humility and Employees’ Personal Sense of Power**

In the current study, we propose that leader humility enhances employees’ personal sense of power. According to Owens et al. (2013), leader humility is characterized by (i) an appreciation of others’ strengths and contributions; (ii) teachability; and (iii) a manifested willingness to view oneself accurately. This conceptualization of leader humility reflects the three underlying and tightly interconnected characteristics or components and provides strong evidence of construct validity (e.g., construct, nomological, face, predictive, and external validity) (Owens et al. 2013). These components set the stage for a stronger employee influence on leaders. Some social psychologists (e.g., Anderson et al. 2012; Galinsky et al. 2003) consider such influence as a necessary condition for greater personal sense of power, in a few respects.

First, a humble leader displays an appreciation of others’ strengths and contributions and is other-enhancing (Morris et al. 2005). A leader’s ability to appreciate and acknowledge others reflects that the leader values the strengths of his or her followers (Tangney 2002). In addition, being ethic-oriented, humble leaders will treat followers fairly and show caring by viewing follower interests as one of leaders’ primary concerns (Morris et al. 2005; Owens and Hekman 2012). Such leaders tend to identify and value the unique abilities of their followers (Owens et al. 2013). Thus, under a humble leader, employees tend to feel more respected and influential, and have a stronger sense that they can influence their leader. Second, teachability manifests when a leader shows openness to learning, feedback, different cultures, and the new ideas of others, and is willing to seek help from others (Owens et al. 2013). Humble leaders reveal a “thanks” for followers’ contribution in achievement (Frostenson 2016). Such leader behaviors tend to identify and value the unique abilities of followers (Owens et al. 2013) and send a signal to followers that: “I can get my leader to listen to what I say.” These behaviors also imply that employees will be able to influence their leaders through their communication and interactions (Anderson et al. 2012). Humble leaders are more willing to learn from and listen to their employees and such behaviors cause employees to feel that their leaders are not hard-headed and egocentric. A similar finding was reported in Chiu et al.’s research (2016) that humble individuals are more willing to accept the lead of others. Consequently, employees of humble leaders are more likely to experience a sense of power, as they are able to influence their leader’s decisions and perceptions. Third, the final component of leader humility (i.e., a leader’s willingness to view oneself accurately) includes a more objective appraisal of personal limitations “that is manifested by transparent disclosure of personal limits, [and] acknowledging mistakes” (Owens et al. 2013, p. 1519). We anticipate that this component of leader humility also fosters employees’ sense of power because such leaders are willing to share their weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Further, such leaders are more likely to acknowledge that people are not perfect and may make mistakes at work. As a result, employees tend to have a higher personal sense of power to influence their leader’s decisions, as they believe that such leaders tend to take employees’ suggestions and comments into serious consideration to minimize potential risks in management (Owens et al. 2013; Argandona 2015). Thus, by being open to learning, feedback, and new ideas, and by appreciating employees’ strengths and contributions, as well as by admitting their limitations and mistakes, humble leaders can influence employees’ personal sense of power. Leader humility is manifested by a set of power-equalizing behaviors (Owens and Hekman 2016); Ou and colleagues (2014) also demonstrated that humble leaders (e.g., chief executive officers) are more willing to empower employees. As a result, employees who are empowered can foster their personal sense of power. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 1:**Leader humility is positively related to employees’ personal sense of power.

**Personal Sense of Power and Employee Voice**

As outlined earlier, the approach-inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al. 2003) provides a relevant lens to understand why personal sense of power can motivate employees to voice their opinions. Under this theory, an individual’s psychological experiences of possessing power is associated with increased resources (e.g., financial resources, esteem, and praise), and provides an individual with the awareness that he or she can act at will and without the interference of others (Keltner et al. 2003; Weber 1947). Personal sense of power enables individuals to activate behavioral approach systems that comprise approach-related affects (e.g., confidence and optimism), attention (e.g., rewards and benefits), and behaviors (e.g., disinhibited behaviors) (for examples, see Galinsky et al. 2015; Morrison et al. 2015). Thus, employees with an elevated sense of power may view themselves as the power-holder and perceive reward rich-environments and a freedom to pursue their goals. An activated behavioral approach system should encourage employees to engage in actions aimed at influencing their environments.

On this basis, we argue that personal sense of power influences employee voice in two important ways. First, we suggest that personal sense of power activates an individual’s behavioral approach system, leading to positive effects (e.g., optimism and confidence) (Anderson and Galinsky 2006; Fast et al. 2012; Keltner et al. 2003). Optimistic and confident employees are more likely to influence their work environments and proactively seek opportunities to participate in work-related affairs by sharing ideas and raising their concerns (including ethical issues) with their leaders (Tangirala and Ramanujam 2008). Second, we contend that an activated behavioral approach system increases employees’ attention towards the activities and goals that can generate rewards or benefits (Anderson et al. 2012; Keltner et al. 2003). These activities include voicing opinions (e.g., making constructive suggestions that could potentially and effectively resolve workplace problems and issues) (Fuller et al. 2006; Tangirala and Ramanujam 2008). Thus, employees with a greater sense of power tend to perceive the associated benefits of, and overcome the psychological barriers to speaking up, which in turn motivates them to voice good ideas, make useful suggestions, or voice their opinions of work related issues (e.g., quality of workplace ethics) to their leaders. Further, given the fact that employee voice is sensitive, especially for speaking up about ethical problems, when employees perceive that they are more powerful, they enjoy a relatively high social status among peers, and “infer that they have access to resources and opportunities to effectively be heard” (Liang et al. 2012, p. 74). Consequently, employees with a strong personal sense of power are more likely to speak up in the workplace.

Although limited evidence has been available to support the above argument Morrison et al.’s (2015) study provided some indirect support, showing that personal sense of power is negatively related to employee silence. Given that silence is conceptually opposite to voice, the results of their study suggest that personal sense of power should be related to voice. Thus, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 2:**Personal sense of power is positively related to employee voice*.*

**The Mediating Role of Personal Sense of Power**

Building upon the approach-inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al. 2003), and the above theoretical exposition in relation to Hypotheses 1 and 2, we further anticipate that leader humility influences voice indirectly via personal sense of power. In other words, leader humility leads employees to obtain a higher personal sense of power. In turn, employees with a higher personal sense of power would assume greater levels of flexibility and freedom to invest their contribution to the organization, and can be more willing to speak up to leaders. In this process, employees’ personal sense of power serves as a unique psychological mechanism that mediates the effect of leader humility on employee voice. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 3:** Personal sense of power mediates the relationship between leader humility and employee voice.

**The Moderating Role of Power Distance**

Drawing on the approach-inhibition theory of power, individual cultural values, including power distance, may shape the effect of personal sense of power on employee outcomes (Keltner et al. 2003). We therefore propose that power distance moderates the relationship between personal sense of power and voice. As discussed earlier, the cultural value of power distance comprises individuals’ beliefs about status, authority, and power in organizations (Kirkman et al. 2009). Hence, power distance influences one’s perceived social distance and reliance with others, and determines how individuals behave in social relationships (Daniels and Greguras 2014). These ideas suggest that close and informal relationships may be viewed as being more common and more valued with a low power distance value, whereas hierarchical and formal relationships are more expected with a high power distance value.

Employees with a low power distance value tend to have personalized relationships with authority figures (i.e., leaders), and are more desirous of obtaining power from leaders to carry out work activities (Farh et al. 2007; Kirkman et al. 2009). Employees with a low power distance value typically expect leaders to rely on informal rules and to consult employees more frequently, than those with a high power distance value (Daniels and Greguras 2014). As such, these employees have more confidence to exercise control and take the initiative to make changes, and thus accelerate the activation of the behavioral approach system. Essentially, because voice behaviors are intentional, self-initiated and future-oriented (Morrison 2011), the reinforced behavioral approach system enables the assertion of the self to voice; thereby low power distance values promote the positive effects of personal sense of power on employees’ willingness to constructively change or improve current work-related conditions. As a result, employees with a strong personal sense of power are more likely to speak up to leaders when their cultural value of power distance is low.

Conversely, when employees’ value of power distance is high, we expect the likelihood of speaking up to decrease even when employees have a strong personal sense of power. Employees with a high power distance value have a strong deference to authority figures and resistance to autonomy (Chen and Aryee 2007; Farh et al. 2007). Accordingly, such employees have a greater sense of social distance and duty to leaders, feel uncomfortable going outside the boundary of power, and view power hierarchies as a legitimized way to maintain the social order (Daniels and Greguras 2014; Kirkman et al. 2009). Perceived authoritative relationships create a strong belief that being approach-oriented may bring threats and risks, and thus inhibit the activation of the behavioral approach system and weaken the effect of employees’ personal sense of power. That is, such employees may feel a sense of power in the workplace; however, high power distance may facilitate self-preservation by weakening employees’ activation of their behavioral approach system and cause them to behave in a defensive manner. Therefore, unlike employees with a lower value of power distance, employees with higher values of power distance have significantly exacerbated “psychological hurdles” preventing employees from voicing their opinions even if they have a strong personal sense of power, as they view doing so to be risky and challenging. Further, while personal sense of power can promote employees’ confidence in solving work-related problems, employees with a high power distance value have a high acceptance of imposed work roles, and tend to expect their leaders, rather than themselves, to solve problems (Kirkman et al. 2009). Consequently, when work-related problems arise, employees with a high power distance value are more willing to comply with their leaders’ directions and instructions (Chen and Aryee 2007), and less inclined to make efforts to voice different opinions to their leaders even if they perceive that they have the power to influence their leaders. Thus, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 4:** Power distance moderates the relationship between personal sense of power and employee voice such that this relationship is stronger when power distance is low rather than high.

**A Moderated-Mediation Model**

In addition to the moderating effects of employee power distance on the relationship between personal sense of power and employee voice, it is logical to predict that employee power distance will conditionally influence the strength of the indirect relationship between leader humility and voice. The approach-inhibition theory of power postulates that power distance alters the influence of individuals’ subjective power (Keltner et al. 2003). It is expected that a low power distance value enhances this indirect relationship by strengthening the mediating role of personal sense of power between leader humility and employee voice. Hence, by facilitating personal sense of power, employees with a low power distance value tend to activate their behavioral approach systems and voice opinions under the supervision of humble leaders. Consequently, we propose a moderated-mediation model (i.e., the second-stage moderation) to explain the effect of leader humility on employees’ voice behaviors; we also predict a strong relationship between leader humility and voice when employee power distance is low, and vice versa. Based on the above discussion, we hypothesize that:

**Hypothesis 5:** Power distance moderates the mediating effect of personal sense of power on the relationship between leader humility and employee voice such that the mediated effect of leader humility on employee voice through personal sense of power is stronger when power distance is low.

**Methods**

**Participants and Procedure**

To test the conceptual model (see Figure 1), multi-time and multi-source data were collected from front-line subordinates and their immediate supervisors at a large Chinese pharmaceutical company located in central China. Seventy front-line supervisors and 280 direct subordinates were invited to participate in the study. Two sets of surveys were developed to collect data relating to different variables from the subordinate and supervisor participants. A coding scheme was used to match the supervisor–subordinate data. Each survey included a cover letter explaining the objectives of the study and an assurance of privacy and confidentiality, and a consent form explaining the voluntary nature of participation.

At Time 1, the subordinate surveys were distributed to collect data measuring leader humility, personal sense of power, power distance, and the control variables. Two weeks later (i.e., at Time 2), the supervisor surveys were distributed to supervisors to collect their responses on direct employees’ voice behaviors. All of the completed surveys were returned in sealed envelopes provided by the research team. At Time 1, 232 subordinates returned completed surveys. At Time 2, 50 supervisors returned completed surveys. Thus, the overall response rate was 86% for the supervisor sample, and 83% for the subordinate sample. After eliminating surveys with missing data and unmatched responses, the final sample comprised data from 152 subordinates and 48 supervisors. In relation to the subordinate sample, 63.2% of the participants were female and had an average age of 28 (SD = .69), and average job tenure of 5.76 years (SD = 5.81). Of the participants, 16.4% completed high school, 65.8% held a bachelor degree, and 15.8% held a master degree.

**Measures**

In the survey for both subordinates and supervisors, all responses provided by our participants were collected using five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). To ensure the semantic and conceptual equivalence of instruments expressed in different languages, each item of each construct was subject to the back-translation procedure recommended by Brislin (1986).

*Leader humility.* Owens and Hekman’s (2016) nine-item scale was used to measure perceived leader humility. Subordinate participants were asked to provide their ratings on this scale. Sample items included “This leader shows appreciation for the unique contributions of others,” and “This leader admits it when he or she doesn’t know how to do something.” The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .95. Given that 152 subordinate participants provided ratings of leader humility, an analysis of variance (ANOVA), and intra-class correlation (ICC) tests were conducted to ensure that the non-independence of observations was not related to differences in subordinates’ rating patterns for each supervisor (Bliese 2000). An inter-rater reliability (*rwg(j)*) test was also conducted to assess the level of inter-rater agreement for leader humility within the workgroups. The ANOVA was significant (*F* = 2.15, *p* < .01), and ICC (1) and ICC (2) results for leader humility were .26 and .56, respectively. The median *rwg(j)* of leader humility across 48 teams was .99. Both the ICC and *rwg(j)* results suggested that aggregation to the team level was justified (Hofmann 1997; James et al. 1984).

*Personal sense of power.* Anderson et al.’s (2012) eight-item scale was used to measure employees’ personal sense of power. Sample items included “I can get him/her to listen to what I say;” and “I can get him/her to do what I want.” The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .90.

*Power distance.* A seven-item scale from Brockner et al.’s study (2001) was used to measure power distance, which was adopted from the scale developed by Earley and Erez’s (1997). In the current study, the reliability of the seven-item scale did not meet the reliability threshold (.67, which is slightly below .70). Consequently, the two items with the lowest inter-item correlations and corrected item-total correlations were removed to improve the scale reliability. The five items used in the current study were (i) “In most situations managers should make decisions without consulting their subordinates;” (ii) “Once a decision of a top-level executive is made, people working for the company should strictly follow the order;” (iii) “Employees should not express disagreements with their managers;” (iv) “Managers should be able to make the right decisions without consulting with subordinates;” and (v) “Managers who let their employees participate in decisions lose power.” The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .70.

*Employee voice.* Supervisors were asked to provide responses about employees’ voice behaviors using Maynes and Podsakoff’s (2014) five-item scale. Sample items included “He/she often speaks up with recommendations about how to fix work-related problems,” and “He/she frequently makes suggestions about how to improve work methods or practices.” The Cronbach alpha for this scale was .90. In the current study, 152 subordinates were nested in 48 teams, and supervisors were asked to provide ratings for multiple subordinates in each team. Consequently, ANOVA and ICC tests were undertaken to identify whether there was any systematic between-group variance in employees’ voice behaviors (Bliese 2000). The ANOVA results (*F* = 3.27, *p* < .01) and ICC (1) and ICC (2) values for employees’ voice behaviors of .41 and .72, respectively, suggested that a 41% between-group variance resided in individual voice ratings.

*Control variables.* A number of the subordinates’ demographic variables were controlled, including age, gender, work tenure, and educational level. Previous research has shown that such variables are related to leader humility (Owens et al. 2013) and employee voice (see Morrison 2014).

**Measurement Models**

A series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted using MPlus 6.0 (Muthén and Muthén 1998–2010) to examine the distinctiveness of the study’s variables based on the chi-square statistics and fit indices of the root-mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA), the comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), and the standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) (Hu and Bentler 1999). As the primary interest of the current study is the interrelations of the variables, rather than the items within constructs, we follow Little et al.’s (2013) suggestion to create item parcels for each variable. Five parcels were created for leader humility, four for personal sense of power, three for power distance, and three for employee voice. In total, 15 parcels were created and used to represent each variable for CFAs. Table 1 shows that the overall CFA results confirmed that the hypothesized four-factor model fitted the data very well (*χ*2 = 126.08, *df* = 84, *p*< .01, TLI = .97, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05). This four-factor measurement model also fitted the data better than other alternate measurement models; for example, when leader humility and personal sense of power were combined, the three-factor model did not fit the data well (*χ*2 = 526.70, *df* = 87, *p*< 0, TLI = .68, CFI = .73, RMSEA = .18, SRMR = .15). Similarly, the two-factor model (which combined leader humility, personal sense of power, and power distance) had a poor fit (*χ*2= 594.21, *df* = 89, *p*< 0, TLI = .64, CFI = .69, RMSEA = .19, SRMR = .16). Finally, the one-factor measurement model was not within the acceptable range (*χ*2 = 848.50, *df* = 90, *p* < 0, TLI = .46, CFI = .54, RMSEA = .24, SRMR = .19). These CFA results suggest that the study variables included in this current study were distinctive and can be used in subsequent analyses.

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**Results**

**Descriptive Statistics**

Table 2 sets out the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the study variables. Consistent with expectations, leader humility and personal sense of power were positively related (*r* = .34, *p* < .01). Further, personal sense of power was found to be positively associated with employee voice (*r* = .21, *p* < .01). These results provided initial support for our hypotheses.

**Hypotheses Testing**

All of the variables in this study were conceptualized and measured at the individual level; however, due to the nested nature of the data (i.e., one supervisor rated three or four subordinates’ voice behaviors, and the same subordinates were nested in each team), multi-level analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses using mixed models in SPSS. Mixed models were used rather than the other statistical techniques (e.g., the Hierarchical Linear Model [HLM]) due to a small sample size (i.e., 152 subordinate participants nested in 48 workgroups with an average of three members per workgroup). All of the hypotheses were tested using bootstrapped estimation (*n* = 10,000 bootstrap samples). Table 3 sets out the mixed models regression results pertaining to Hypotheses 1–4. As Table 3 shows, leader humility was positively related to personal sense of power (*β* = .31, *p* < .01, Model 1). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Personal sense of power was also positively related to employee voice (*β* = .24, *p*< .05, Model 2). Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

In relation to Hypothesis 3, the mediating role of personal sense of power was tested in relation to the relationship between leader humility and employee voice. The relationship between leader humility and voice (*β* = .03, *ns*, Model 3) was not significant when personal sense of power was entered into the analysis (*β* = .23, 95% CI [.02, .43] for voice, Model 3). Thus, it appears that personal sense of power completely mediates the relationship between leader humility and employee voice, indicating that the indirect effect of personal sense of power is significant. These results supported Hypothesis 3.

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INSERT TABLE 3 AND FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

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For Hypothesis 4, we tested whether employees’ cultural value of power distance would moderate the relationship between personal sense of power and employee voice (i.e., the second-stage moderation). The results for the interaction term between personal sense of power and power distance were significant (*β* = -.12, *p* < .05, Model 4; Table 3) for employee voice. Thus, Hypothesis 4 received support. To illustrate the nature of the interaction effect, Aiken and West’s (1991) procedure of computing slopes at one standard deviation above and below the mean of power distance was used to plot the interaction. Figure 2 shows that the interaction pattern confirmed that the positive effect of personal sense of power on employee voice was more salient among subordinates with lower levels (*β* = .28, *p* < .001) (rather than higher levels, *β* = .01, *ns*) of power distance.

Finally, Hypothesis 5 related to whether power distance moderates the indirect effect of leader humility on employee voice via personal sense of power. Hayes’s (2013) analytical approach was adopted and the coefficients obtained in Model 4 were used to test the moderated-mediation by considering the moderating role of power distance in the relationship between personal sense of power and employee voice (i.e., the second-stage moderation).2 As shown in Table 4, the conditional indirect effect of leader humility on employee voice was significant in the low power distance condition (conditional indirect effect = .13, bias-corrected 95% CI [.04, .28]), but not under the high power distance condition (conditional indirect effect = .01, *ns*). Thus, Hypothesis 5 was supported.

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INSERT TABLE 4 ABOUT HERE

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**Discussion**

In the current study, we proposed and tested a moderated-mediation model that integrated the approach-inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al. 2003) and research on leader humility to better understand the mediating role of personal sense of power, and moderating role of power distance in explaining the influence of leader humility on employee voice. The results of the study supported our model, confirming that leader humility is a significant predictor for employee voice, and that the relationship is fully mediated by employees’ personal sense of power. Further, power distance moderates the relationship between personal sense of power and employee voice. Finally, the results also supported the overall moderated-mediation model. In particular, the mediation effect is only significant when employees’ cultural value of power distance was low rather than high. Thus, this study makes both theoretical and practical contributions to the literature on leader humility and employee voice.

**Theoretical Implications**

The present study makes four key contributions to the existing research on leader humility in the field of business ethics. First, we contribute to the burgeoning literature of leader humility, by examining its implications for promoting employee voice. As mentioned in the theory and hypothesis development section, previous studies have ignored the potential effect of leader humility on employees’ proactive behaviors such as voice. Given that the motivation of speaking up may be largely determined by the extent to which followers can influence leaders (Morrison 2014, 2011), the increased willingness to voice under the supervision of humble leaders can be viewed as a follower-centric influencing process (i.e., a bottom-up approach; Owens and Hekman 2012, p. 787). Results of our study highlight the interpersonal nature of leader humility-that the experience of leaders’ humility is embedded in the interaction between leaders and followers, and such experience influences followers’ perceived sense of influence over their leader’s attention and actions. Additionally, it is important to note that employee voice is a proactive behavior (Morrison 2011). As such, our results may help elaborate how leader humility influences proactive behavior in general (e.g., helping, socialization, and stress coping).

Second, our study improves our understanding of the relationship between leader humility and employee voice by proposing and examining personal sense of power as a mediating mechanism in the relationship through a new theoretical explanation of approach-inhibition theory of power (Keltner et al. 2003). By doing so, our study goes beyond the existing psychological mechanism, such as psychological safety, and provides insights that personal sense of power is a new key psychological mechanism through which leader humility motivates employees to feel more confident to speak up. To the best of our knowledge, the existing research on leader humility has not yet adopted such theory as a unique framework to propose any relevant psychological processes underlying the leader humility-voice link. Our study found that the influence of leader humility on employee behaviors is indirect, at least in a Chinese context. As such, our results suggest that personal sense of power supports the “bottom-up” leadership approach (Owens and Hekman 2012, p. 787), by arguing that leader humility is effective to promote employee voice via the personal sense of power based on the activation of the behavioral approach system. Corroborating Owens et al.’s (2013) findings of the compensatory effect of leader humility, this study supports the idea that leader humility can transmit its positive effect on employee voice by compensating employees’ reluctance to voice due to a perception that they are powerless and cannot effectively influence the leader to endorse their suggestions and opinions. By instilling in employees a strong personal sense of power, they may tend to perceive that humble leaders are likely to have a good use of their power and are willing to respond to the employees’ suggestions and opinions positively. Also, the mediating role of personal sense of power furthers the understanding of motivational implications for employee voice. In addition to commonly used motivations of employee voice, such as altruism, cooperation, and elimination of personal dissatisfaction (Van Dyne et al. 2003; Hirschman 1970), the elevated personal sense of power activating the behavioral approach system motivates employees to feel more optimistic and confident and to view speaking up as a benefit-related behavior.

Third, our findings relating to the moderating effect of power distance provide support for the application of the approach-inhibition theory of power in the context of leader humility. Keltner et al. (2003) suggested that the individual cultural value of power distance may have a moderating effect on the relationship between power and behavior; however, this assumption has not been tested empirically. This is why Anderson et al. (2012) have called for more research to examine the boundary conditions to determine the effect of personal sense of power. Additionally, the recent literature has encouraged more research to explore “individual cultural difference in the demonstration and effectiveness of leader humility” (Rego et al. 2017, p. 21) and to investigate how such cultural differences can influence the interpretation of humble leader behaviors (Owens and Hekman 2012). By proposing and testing the moderating role of power distance on the relationship between personal sense of power and voice behavior, our study provides evidence supporting the application of the approach-inhibition theory of power in a new leadership research context and facilitates a more precise understanding about how an ethical type of leadership, leader humility, plays in organizations. To have a deep understanding of the effectiveness of leader behaviors, it is critical to take the individual cultural value of power distance into consideration when investigating the impact of leader humility. Employees with a low power distance value fits well with leader with strong ethics, because a low power distance value promotes the communication between subordinates and supervisors about ethical standards while employees with a high power distance value view leaders as autocratic authority figures and less likely to interpret ethical codes from leaders (Loi et al. 2012). Specifically, our study suggests that employees with a low value of power distance are more likely to voice under humble leaders. Going forward, research using the approach-inhibition theory of power should incorporate the individual cultural value of power distance as an important boundary condition to underpin its theoretical predictions.

Last but not least, the findings of the current study also contribute to the business ethics literature by demonstrating how and why an ethic-oriented leadership (i.e., leader humility) can promote employee proactive behavior (i.e., voice). In particular, the results of our study suggest that, if leaders act in an ethical manner, such as treating followers fairly and showing caring by viewing employees’ interest as one of leaders’ primary concerns, they will be able to encourage employees to speak up with constructive suggestions or raise concerns that will be beneficial for organizations. Our study also provides insights that personal sense of power is a key psychological mechanism through which an ethic-oriented leadership (i.e., leader humility) motivates employees to feel more confident to speak up. In addition, given the contents of employee voice may include suggestions of how to promote ethical behaviors or inhibit unethical behavior in workplaces, our study also contributes to the literature of business ethics by examining employee voice as an outcome variable.

**Practical Implications**

A humble leader can achieve the best results, “not only economic, but also social, human and ethical”; for example, being humble can help leaders achieve growth in ethical quality (Argandona 2015, p. 69). In addition, our study responds to a statement by Schein (2016) that, in today’s fast-moving world, leaders or supervisors need to be humble to work with and receive help from others (i.e., their subordinates), develop immediate “adaptive moves,” and manage complex, messy, and dynamic problems. In particular, the findings of the current study suggest that to stimulate employees to voice their opinions, leaders need to behave with “more humility and less hubris” (Owens et al. 2013, p. 1517). When leaders behave humbly (i.e., by recognizing and appreciating employees’ contributions), employees will perceive that they are more powerful, and consequently be more likely to voice constructive suggestions and share their concerns of ethical issues with their leaders. This will contribute to the effective functioning of, as well as the ethical management of group and organizations (Argandona 2015). Additionally, leader humility in particular encompasses three characteristics (e.g., self-awareness, openness, and teachability) that can be trained by the organizations. Hence, organizations can utilize human resource practices, such as training programs, to educate supervisors to understand that leader humility is one of the effective leader behaviors, and to encourage leaders to behave more humbly when interacting with their subordinates. In particular, organizations can train supervisors to appropriately appreciate or spotlight subordinates’ contributions and strengths and to increase self-awareness of their limitations and mistakes.

The results of the moderating effect of power distance on the relationship between personal sense of power and voice suggest that leaders should pay attention to their employees’ individual cultural values. For employees with a lower power distance value, leaders will be more effective in obtaining constructive opinions about workplace ethics from them by enhancing their personal sense of power. Conversely, for employees with a higher power distance value, the effect will be less salient.

**Limitations and Future Research Directions**

The study has several limitations that future research should seek to address. First, although the findings (based on data collected using a time-lagged design, two weeks apart to control for common method bias; Podsakoff et al. 2003) provided support for the hypothesized relationships, the cross-sectional nature of the data limited possible interpretations of the causal relationships among the study variables. Future research may also want to examine the possible dynamic relationship among the variables studied in the current paper (e.g., possible alternative causal relationships that personal sense of power or employee voice influences leaders to behave more humbly) and further confirm the mediating relationship examined in our study. The second limitation is related to the generalizability of the results of the current study, as the sample comprised employees from a company in China. In general, a sample from China is suitable to test the current theoretical model; in particular, to determine the effect of the individual cultural value of power distance. This is because significant social and economic changes have occurred in China in the past 30 years, and the individual cultural values of Chinese people vary significantly (Chen and Aryee 2007). In other words, employees at the same organization may hold very different individual cultural values. Additionally, the variables (i.e., leader humility, personal sense of power, and voice) in this study are not culturally specific. Our results about the effectiveness of leader humility are consistent with those research conducted in western settings (e.g., Owens et al. 2013; Owens and Hekman 2012), implying that leader humility could play a critical role in encouraging employee voice across different cultures. However, to increase the generalizability of the current research findings, we still suggest that future research test the hypotheses developed in the present study across different cultural settings, such as in western countries. In addition, when examining the relationship between leader humility and personal sense of power, we did not consider possible boundary conditions. Future research should explore whether individual differences (e.g., moral virtues such as benevolence and forgivingness, personality traits such as agreeableness, assertiveness, and extraversion) and contextual factors (e.g., empowerment climate, informal leadership, and task complexity) moderate the relationship between leader humility and personal sense of power. Future studies should also investigate whether organizational or group contexts (e.g., participative decision-making practices and organizational structures, such as flat organization) strengthen the relationship between personal sense of power and voice. Moreover, as sometimes employees may speak up for protecting self-interests (e.g., help-seeking and defensive voice) rather than contributing the organization, future research should explore the effect of leader humility on self-serving voice.

**Notes**

1**.** In the current study, we adopt a different theoretical perspective (i.e., the approach-inhibition theory of power; Keltner et al. 2003) to examine the leadership–voice relationship. A review of the literature suggests that very few major theories have been used to explain the potential effects of different leadership styles on employee voice. Zhang et al. (2015) used the social exchange theory to examine the relationship between paternalistic leadership and employee voice. Hsiung (2012) investigated the influence of authentic leadership on voice based on leader-member exchange theory (LMX), and Mo and Shi (2016) explored the relationship between ethical leadership and voice using the affect theory of social exchange. Tangirala and Ramanujam (2012) used logic (based on expectancy theory) to explain how supervisor consultation enhanced subordinates’ upward voice via motivational states and employees’ beliefs, and thus affected key decisions in organizations. Burris, Detert, and Chiaburu (2008) used the LMX theory to examine the indirect relationship between LMX and subordinates’ voices via the meditating role of psychological detachment. Conversely, the current study adopts the approach-inhibition theory of power. This theory is deemed relevant to the current research because it explains the role of personal sense of power as a mediator, and the individual cultural value of power distance as a moderator. Further, it has not been previously used to explain the leadership–voice relationship.

2. An additional analysis was conducted to test the first-stage moderation (i.e., the effect of the joint effect of employees’ power distance and leader humility on personal sense of power); however, the results did not support this moderation. The results of this additional analysis are available upon request.

**Compliance with Ethical Standards**

**Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest**

*Funding*. This study is not funded.

**Research Involving Human Participants and/or Animals**

*Ethical approval*: Humans (employees) were involved in the survey of our current study. We got ethical approval from the human ethics committee of our university before conducting the survey. Thus, all procedures performed in our study involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the human ethics committee of our university and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

**Informed Consent**

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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Table 1

 *Measurement Model Comparisons*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | RMSEA | CFI  | TLI | SRMR |  *X2* (*df*) |  Δ*X2* (*df*) |
| Hypothesized four-factor model | .06 | .97 | .97 | .05 | 126.08(84) | - |
| Three-factor model(LH, PSOP, combine PD&EV) | .09 | .94 | .92 | .08 | 193.01(87) | 66.93(3)\*\*\* |
| Three-factor model (combine LH&PD, PSOP, EV) | .09 | .93 | .92 | .08 | 194.78(87) | 1.77(3)\*\*\* |
| Three-factor model (combine LH&PSOP, PD, EV) | .18 | .73 | .68 | .15 | 526.70(87) | 331.92(3)\*\*\* |
| Three-factor model (LH, PD, combine PSOP&EV) | .19 | .71 | .65 | .18 | 559.75(87) | 33.05(3)\*\*\* |
| Two-factor model (combine LH&PSOP, combine PD&EV) | .19 | .69 | .64 | .16 | 592.42(89) | 32.67(2)\*\*\* |
| Two-factor model (combine LH&PD&PSOP, EV) | .19 | .69 | .64 | .16 | 594.21(89) | 1.79(2)\*\*\* |
| One-factor model (combine LH&PSOP&PD&EV)  | .24 | .54 | .46 | .19 | 848.50(90) | 254.29(1)\*\*\* |

*Note. n* =152. RMSEA is Root-Mean Squared Error of Approximation, CFI is Comparative Fit Index, TLI is Tucker-Lewis Index, and SRMR is Standardized Root-Mean-Square Residual. LH is leader humility, PSOP is personal sense of power, PD is power distance, and EV is employee voice. For value of null model (Chi-square test of fit for the baseline model), the value is 1746.01, freedom 105, and *P* = .00. Following the standard RMSEA < .08, and the CFI and TLI >.90, and SRMR <.10, our five-factor model has the best RMSEA, SRMR, CFI, and TLI. The four factor model best fit our data: *X2* (84) = 126.08, p< .01; RMSEA = .06; CFI = .97; TLI= .97; SRMR = .05.

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

Table 2

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variable | *MEAN* | *SD* |  1 |  2 |  3 |  4 |  5 |  6 |  7 |  8 |  |
| 1. Sex | 1.60 | .47 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Age | 2.62 | .69 | -.16 | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Work tenure | 5.76 | 5.81 | -.19\* | .66\*\* | - |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Educational level | 4.95 | .63 | .05 | -.04 | -.14 | - |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. Leader humility | 3.72 | .72 | -.03 | -.02 | -.02 | -.07 | (.95) |  |  |  |  |
| 6. Personal sense of power | 3.51 | .65 | .15 | -.03 | .01 | .00 | .34\*\* | (.90) |  |  |  |
| 7. Power distance | 3.83 | .66 | -.18\* | .19\* | .00 | .14 | .05 | -.04 | (.70) |  |  |
| 8. Employee voice | 3.46 | .76 | .03 | -.03 | .02 | .10 | .09 | .21\*\* | .14 | (.90) |  |

*Descriptive Statistics, Correlations and Reliabilities*

*Note.* *n* = 152. M is Mean and SD is standard deviation. Internal reliabilities (alpha coefficients) for the overall constructs are given in parentheses on the diagonal.

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

Table 3

Results of Mixed Model Analysis for the Hypothesized Relationships

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Personal Sense of Power | Employee Voice |
|  | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
| Variables | Estimate | 95% CI | Estimate | 95% CI | Estimate | 95% CI | Estimate | 95% CI |
| *intercept* | 1.92\*\* | [.61, 3.18] | 2.09\*\* | [.79, 3.47] | 2.00\*\* | [.51, 3.45] | 3.46\*\*\* | [3.37, 3.56] |
| Gender | .23\* | [.02, .44] | -.01 | [-.28, .26] | -.00 | [-.28, .27] | .04 | [-.22, .31] |
| Age | -.05 | [-.23, .13] | -.08 | [-.31, .17] | -.08 | [-.30, .17] | -.13 | [-.38, .14] |
| Tenure | .01 | [-.01, .03] | .01 | [-.02, .04] | .01 | [-.02, .04] | .01 | [-.01, .04] |
| Education | .03 | [-.14, .17] | .14 | [-.06, .32] | .14 | [-.06, .32] | .12 | [-.05, .29] |
| LH | .31\*\* | [.12, .55] |  |  | .03 | [-.14, .23] | -.02 | [-.19, .14] |
| PSOP |  |  | .24\* | [.05, .44] | .23\* | [.02, .43] | .11 | [-.05, .23] |
| PD |  |  |  |  |  |  | .08 | [-.04, .18] |
| PSOP x PD |  |  |  |  |  |  | -.12\* | [-.24, -.01] |
| *Residual* | .36\*\*\* | [.28, .45] | .54\*\*\* | [.43, .67] | .54\*\*\* | [.43, .67] | .30\*\*\* | [.23, .40] |
| *-2 Log likelihood* | 274.35 | 337.15 | 337.03 | 303.31 |
| *Intercept F* | 12.31\*\* | 10.33\*\* | 8.13\*\* | 1880.61\*\*\* |

*Note. n* = 152. CI is confidence interval. LH is leader humility. PSOP is personal sense of power. PD is power distance. All models are based on 10000 bootstrap samples.

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

Table 4

*Conditional Indirect Effect at Specific Values of Power Distance*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Employee Voice  |
| Moderator | Level | Conditional indirect effect | *SE* | Bias-corrected 95% CI |
| Power distance | Low | .13\* | .06 | [.04, .28] |
| High | .01 | .05 | [-.09, .11] |

*Note.* SE is standard error. 95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals are derived are based on10000 bootstrap samples. Moderator values listed are the sample mean and +/- 1 standard deviation.

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

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*Figure 1*. Hypothesized model of processes linking perceived leader humility and employee voice

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*Figure 2*. The moderating effect of power distance on personal sense of power for employee voice