Journal of Applied Psychology

Keeping It Between Us: Managerial Endorsement of Public Versus Private Voice

Sofya Isaakyan, Elad N. Sherf, Subrahmaniam Tangirala, and Hannes Guenter

RESEARCH REPORT

Keeping It Between Us: Managerial Endorsement of Public Versus Private Voice

Sofya Isaakyan
Erasmus University Rotterdam

Elad N. Sherf
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Subrahmaniam Tangirala
University of Maryland

Hannes Guenter
Maastricht University

When employees use public settings such as team meetings to engage in *voice*—the expression of work ideas or concerns, they can spur useful discussions, action planning, and problem solving. However, we make the case that managers, whose support is essential for voice to have a functional impact, are averse to publicly expressed voice and prefer acting on voice that is privately brought up to them in one-on-one settings. Drawing on face management theory (Goffman, 1967), we argue that voice expressed in front of an audience, compared with that expressed one-on-one, is more threatening to the image that managers seek to portray as competent and unerring leaders, and that leads managers to respond more defensively to public voice and endorse it less. This, we propose, is especially true when the relationship quality between manager and employee is weak as public voice from relationally distant employees is perceived as a stronger challenge. Across five studies (correlational and experimental), we find support for our arguments and rule out alternative explanations such as that managers are aversive to public voice because it threatens their ego or that managers feel more accountable to act on publicly provided input. We discuss the implications of our findings for theory and practice.

Keywords: employee voice, image threat, public settings

When work issues are openly raised or brought up, they can trigger useful collective deliberation and action planning (e.g., Rogelberg, 2018). However, managers may show a unique aversion to *voice*, or the expression of constructive but challenge-oriented work ideas or concerns (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2012), when initiated by employees in the presence of others (e.g., other team members). In doing so, managers may disregard important forums such as team meetings available for employees to speak up.

Drawing on face management theory (P. Brown & Levinson, 1987; Goffman, 1967), we argue that because of the putative criticism of managers inherent in voice, voice expressed in public (in front of others besides the manager), as compared to voice

expressed in private (one-on-one, only in the presence of the manager), elicits more image threat in managers, or a worry that their competence or performance are being devalued in the eyes of observers, that leads managers to respond more defensively to public voice and endorse it less. Furthermore, we make the case that managers' negative reactions to public voice are exacerbated when such voice comes from employees outside the circle of close confidants—that is, employees who are not among those who share a high-quality relationship with the managers (see Figure 1).

By examining the above arguments, we add to emerging research in the voice literature on managerial reactions to voice. This work has noted that managers can play a key role in enabling voice from employees to have positive organizational effects (e.g., Detert, Burris, Harrison, & Martin, 2013) and, yet, managers do not always endorse voice. In particular, managers are said to react poorly to voice if it has more critical content (Burris, 2012) or when managers lack self-assurance in dealing with it (Fast, Burris, & Bartel, 2014). We extend these discussions by demonstrating how voice with the same content directed at the same manager might elicit differing reactions as an interactive function of where it is communicated (public vs. private settings) and by whom (relationally distant vs. relationally close employees).

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development

Face management theory (Goffman, 1967) posits that individuals have face, "a desired social image that one creates for oneself through

Sofya Isaakyan, Department of Organization and Personnel Management, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam; Elad N. Sherf, Organizational Behavior Area, Kenan-Flagler Business School, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Subrahmaniam Tangirala, Department of Management and Organization, Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland; Hannes Guenter, Department of Organization, Strategy, and Entrepreneurship, School of Business and Economics, Maastricht University.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Sofya Isaakyan, Department of Organization and Personnel Management, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University Rotterdam, P.O. Box 1738, 3000 DR, Rotterdam, the Netherlands. E-mail: isaakyan@rsm.nl
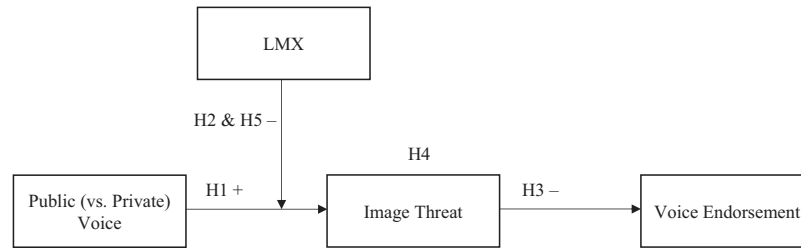
Figure 1. Overall theoretical model. LMX = leader-member exchange quality.

interactions with others" (Cupach & Carson, 2002, pp. 444–445) and that conveying face to others is a fundamental human motive (Baumeister, 1982; Goffman, 1959, 1967). Positive face refers to the desire to be approved and appreciated by others while negative face refers to the desire to look independent and autonomous (P. Brown & Levinson, 1987). At work, people avoid engaging in otherwise functional actions if they believe that such actions might pose a threat to their face (Ashford, 1989). Managers, especially, are expected to project competence and appear independent and in control over events in their teams even when they might lack such control (e.g., Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985). Hence, managers feel pressured to come across as effective and autonomous even when it comes at the expense of their performance (Chun, Lee, & Sosik, 2018) or achievement of team goals (Pfeffer, 1992).

Others' speech acts can threaten one's positive or negative face (P. Brown & Levinson, 1987). Although, as a speech act, voice is constructive in its intent, it can be face-threatening for managers. Because managers are often identified with the status quo, voice can come across as a criticism of their performance or prior decisions or actions (Edmondson, 2003) and thus threaten their positive face. Moreover, as speech acts initiated by employees prompt managers to make changes to the workplace, voice can be seen as an infringement on managers' autonomy and independence, thus threatening their negative face. Yet, voice is not always face-threatening to the same degree. We propose that threat to managers' face or image depends on the social setting in which voice is communicated.

Public (vs. Private) Voice and Image Threat

Employees have the choice of voicing their ideas and opinions in private (one-on-one to the manager) or public (in the presence of observers) settings. We use the term "observers" to refer to coworkers, customers, other managers, or superiors who typically constitute salient social presence at the workplace. This setting matters because when conversations involve observers, they cease to be dialogues and become polylogues (Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2004). In polylogues, social evaluation is salient, even with the presence of just one observer (Schlenker & Leary, 1982), and image concerns loom large (Leary & Kowalski, 1990), meaning that managers are more likely to feel "called to the stage" (Goffman, 1959; Sproull, Subramani, Kiesler, Walker, & Waters, 1996; Triplett, 1898; Zajonc, 1965). Moreover, concerns about self-presentation can distract attention from work goals (Uziel, 2007). Thus, when voice is communicated in public, managers are more prone to shift attention away from the functional utility of voice—that is, how it can help address problems or opportunities confronting the team—and focus instead on how it is affecting their reputation with the audience. As a result, managers are more

likely to worry that others could read voice as indicative of their errors or mistakes (i.e., feel a threat to positive face). Given that public discussions of problems or concerns are more difficult to contain and manage, when confronted with public voice, managers might feel that they are unable to project a sense of control over issues in their team (i.e., feel a threat to negative face). Such image concerns are likely to be minimized in private settings as criticism inherent in voice is confined to the employee-manager dyad. That is, as observers are not present, managers are less likely to worry about how they come across to others. Instead, managers will be more likely to focus on the functional utility of voice.

H1: Managers experience higher image threat when voice is expressed in public settings.

The Moderating Role of LMX

Face management theory posits that face threats are often context-dependent and a key factor determining the threat in any given instance is the "social distance" or relational closeness between the speaker and the recipient of the message (P. Brown & Levinson, 1987). That is, the same speech act might trigger varying levels of negative arousal and be perceived differently depending on the nature and history of interactions between the speaker and the recipient. Relational closeness affects the magnitude of image threat because it (a) changes the inferences that individuals draw from speech acts about the speaker's goals such that interpretation of speech acts is affected by "reconstruction of levels of intent beyond and above and integrative of those that lie behind particular utterances or sentences" (P. Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 233) and (b) relational closeness affects the extent to which people feel that they can project control over a conversation initiated by the speaker.

An important marker of relational closeness between managers and employees is leader-member exchange quality (LMX; Graen & Cashman, 1975; Liden & Graen, 1980). According to LMX theory, managers' relationships with high LMX employees are characterized by mutual loyalty, liking, respect, and support and can be described as relationally close whereas relationships with low LMX employees are based on formal job descriptions and can be described as relationally distant (Liden & Maslyn, 1998).

Drawing on face management theory, we argue that when public voice comes from low LMX employees, it heightens managers' image threat. In general, managers likely interpret voice coming from relationally distant employees as more critical and less informed of organizational realities (e.g., Hornsey,

2005). Given such existing suspicions, when relationally distant employees engage in public voice, managers may not see this as a genuine response to work problems. Instead, they might be concerned that those employees are merely speaking up to challenge their authority in front of others. Additionally, given their limited rapport with low LMX employees, managers likely experience greater loss of control when managing public conversations initiated by such employees, and feel that their ability to socially project command over the team is being undermined. All of this is likely to make managers experience a wider gap between their desired and displayed social image and, as a result, enhance their image threat.

In contrast, public voice of high LMX employees is less likely to induce image threat. Managers perceive high LMX employees as trustworthy and credible (Liden & Maslyn, 1998) and will likely attribute benign intentions to their input. Managers give such close employees the benefit of the doubt and interpret public voice from them as a benevolent attempt to solve team problems instead of thinking of it as intended to challenge their authority. Additionally, managers likely feel greater control about managing public conversations initiated by high LMX employees, with whom they share a good rapport, and feel more capable to socially project command in conversations with them. Such inferences should weaken the image threat associated with public voice.

> *H2:* Managers experience higher image threat when voice is expressed in public settings by low (rather than high) LMX employees.

Image Threat and Voice Endorsement

Managers, due to their rank and position in an organizational hierarchy, often possess the power to initiate work changes based on employees' ideas or concerns (Morrison, 2014). Therefore, employees rely on managers to recognize the validity of their concerns, sponsor their ideas, and allocate resources in work modifications in response to voice, a constellation of activities that we refer to as voice endorsement (e.g., Burris, 2012).

We propose that image threat should lead to lower voice endorsement. Face management theory (Goffman, 1967) posits that people are emotionally invested in maintaining face and, when experiencing image threat, become anxious and uncomfortable. As a result, people react defensively. That is, they attack objects perceived to cause image harm (Cupach & Carson, 2002) and discount the credibility or validity of challenging information (Ilgen, Fisher, & Taylor, 1979). Hence, the more managers' image is threatened the more likely managers are to reject employee voice. Moreover, as John, Jeong, Gino, and Huang (2019) highlight, "publicly changing one's mind is a kind of admission of being wrong, which hurts one's pride" (p. 7). That is, by endorsing voice that is threatening their image, managers might feel that they are legitimizing the criticism inherent in voice. Managers experiencing image threat are thus motivated to maintain their image by rejecting employees' ideas and providing less support and resources for addressing them. In contrast, when image threat is not elicited, managers might not feel a compelling need to protect their image and thus are potentially likely to show greater receptiveness to such voice and endorse it.

Given that managers experience greater image threat from public voice, they should be more inclined to penalize such voice by not endorsing it. That is, image threat should explain or mediate the negative relationship between public (vs. private) voice and voice endorsement. Moreover, as public voice from low LMX employees is especially likely to cause image threat in managers, the mediated effect of image threat should be stronger when public voice comes from low LMX employees. Hence, we propose:

> *H3:* Managers' image threat is negatively related to voice endorsement.

> *H4:* Voice expressed in public settings will receive less voice endorsement indirectly via its effects on image threat.

> *H5:* Voice expressed in public settings by low (vs. high) LMX employees will receive less voice endorsement indirectly via its effects on image threat.

Alternative Explanations: Ego Threat and Accountability

We consider two alternative explanations. First, individuals have a desire to maintain a positive self-view that is related to, but distinct from, their desire to maintain face (Leary, Terry, Batts Allen, & Tate, 2009). When a positive self-view is threatened, one may experience what is called ego threat, or a sense of doubt about one's choices and self-worth. Although voice can, irrespective of the social settings in which it occurs, elicit ego threat because of the putative criticism inherent in it, only image threat is likely to vary as a function of the social setting. That is, managers can be sensitive to negative information that may diminish their self-worth irrespective of whether this information becomes known to others (Leary, Barnes, Griebel, Mason, & McCormack, 1987). By contrast, image threat arises only in presence of others, even when the negative information does not affect self-evaluations (Leary et al., 2009). Thus, we propose that image threat is a unique and specific downstream consequence triggered by public voice.

Second, the literature suggests another alternative that "selling an issue to top managers in front of an audience (public channel) increases the probability that top management will spend time on the seller's issue" (Dutton & Ashford, 1993, p. 419). That is, managers may consider public voice more because they feel a need to justify their reactions to observers; whereas, they may find it is easier to dismiss input provided in private (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). This argument suggests that the presence of others enhances sense of accountability which should make managers more rather than less likely to act upon public voice. We challenge this viewpoint and make the case that managers' concerns about threats to their social image in public settings will overwhelm their positive inclination to react more responsibly to publicly expressed voice. We test the validity of these alternative explanations (focused on ego threat and accountability) vis-à-vis image threat in our studies.

Studies 1a and 1b: Method

To study voice endorsement, we asked managers to reconstruct a specific voice event (i.e., recall information about the last time

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities (Study 1a)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Work experience	19.80	11.52	—										
2. Number of followers	14.99	26.37	.05	—									
3. Age	43.17	12.28	.87**	.05	—								
4. Manager gender[a]	.43	.50	−.08	−.10	−.15	—							
5. Employee gender[a]	.40	.49	.02	−.14	.01	.18	—						
6. Self-efficacy	3.99	.45	.05	.03	−.09	.00	−.15	(.84)					
7. Voice setting[b]	.50	.50	−.06	.13	−.11	−.07	−.13	−.09	—				
8. Image threat	2.54	.73	−.17	.11	−.11	.12	.00	−.19*	.22*	(.81)			
9. Ego threat	2.20	.75	−.11	.18	−.03	−.02	−.07	−.25*	.11	.55**	(.85)		
10. LMX	3.85	.51	.09	−.10	.05	−.12	−.02	.33**	−.03	−.53**	−.52**	(.78)	
11. Endorsement	3.79	.88	−.03	−.08	−.07	−.15	.20*	.07	−.02	−.50**	−.51**	.59**	(.95)

Note. $N = 103$. Numbers in parentheses along the diagonal are Cronbach's alphas. LMX = leader-member exchange quality.
[a] Dummy coded: 0 = male, 1 = female.   [b] Dummy coded: 0 = private, 1 = public.
* $p < .05$.   ** $p < .01$.

that one of their employees voiced an idea, concern, or opinion).[1] Our instructions followed event reconstruction principles used to reduce retrospection biases and make the recall vivid (Grube, Schroer, Hentzschel, & Hertel, 2008). In Study 1a, we recruited 116 managers who held supervisory roles using a snowball sampling approach (Mitchell, Vogel, & Folger, 2015). Excluding those who provided incomplete data, we had a final sample of 103 managers (57% male; $M_{age} = 43.17$; 62% from the Netherlands and 31% from Germany; $M_{work\ experience} = 19.80$ years; $M_{number\ of\ followers} = 14.99$). In Study 1b, using Prolific Academic, an online platform for academic research (Peer, Brandimarte, Samat, & Acquisti, 2017), we surveyed managers at two time points to reduce common source bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). At Time 1, 175 managers reported a voice event. At Time 2 (2 weeks later), 129 managers reported whether they took action (60% female; $M_{age} = 39.73$; 75% from the United Kingdom and 25% from the United States; $M_{organizational\ tenure} = 8.56$ years; $M_{position\ tenure} = 4.94$ years; $M_{number\ of\ followers} = 10.50$).

We assessed public versus private voice by asking managers to think about the event and answer: (a) "How many people overall (besides you) heard the communication by your subordinate?" and (b) who else heard the communication: "a superior", "another employee", "another peer", "a client/customer", "another person", or "nobody." As the mere addition of one observer triggers salience of social evaluation (Schlenker & Leary, 1982) and makes voice public (i.e., a dialogue becomes a polylogue; Kerbrat-Orecchioni, 2004), we coded responses indicating the presence of at least one observer as public. For both studies, managers provided consistent responses across the two items in characterizing events as public. Of the events, 50% (Study 1a) and 44% (Study 1b) were reported as public. In Study 1a, we adapted Tuckey, Brewer, and Williamson's (2002) 8-item defensive impression management scale and 8-item ego defense motive scale to capture image threat and ego threat, respectively (see an online appendix for validation information on these scales). In Study 1b, we used newly validated scales of image and ego threat (see an online appendix for details). Managers rated LMX with the voicer using Graen and Uhl-Bien's (1995) LMX-7 measure and voice endorsement using Burris' (2012) 5-item measure. In Study 1b, in addition, we asked managers to allocate a portion of 100 coins (i.e.,

representing total time and resources at their disposal) toward implementing the voiced idea. This measure standardizes responses across events/contexts and aligns with our conceptualization of endorsement as setting aside resources to implement ideas. We used the amount as a supplemental measure of endorsement. Confirmatory factor analysis results are given in an online appendix.

As male and female managers might differently support ideas raised by their male and female employees (Howell, Harrison, Burris, & Detert, 2015), we controlled for both genders. Also, as managers with low confidence endorse voice less (Fast et al., 2014), we controlled for managers' self-efficacy. In Study 1b, we also accounted for: (a) managers' voice solicitation or the extent to which they seek voice, a direct indicator of their openness to endorse voice (Fast et al., 2014); (b) managers' negative affect (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), as it can be triggered by voice and thus act as an omitted variable; (c) managers' narcissism (Jones & Paulhus, 2014) as narcissists react more negatively to potential threats; (d) employees' status (Djurdjevic et al., 2017) as it can impact how their voice is valued by managers (Howell et al., 2015); and (e) managers' tenure in the organization which may affect how managers evaluate the effectiveness of employee voice (Burris, 2012). We present our results without control variables as they were substantively unaffected by their inclusion (Spector & Brannick, 2011).

Studies 1a and 1b: Results and Discussion

Tables 1 and 2 display descriptive statistics and correlations. Across all studies, to test individual model links, we used regression-based path analysis in Mplus 8.4. We examined mediated moderation using a bootstrapping approach (10,000 iterations;

---

[1] For Study 1a, we obtained institutional review board (IRB) approval from Maastricht University (ERCIC_113_12_12_2018), protocol title: "Keeping it between us: Managerial endorsement of public versus private voice." For Studies 1b, 2a, 2b, and 3, we obtained IRB approval from Erasmus University (IRB NE 2019-25 Sofya Isaakyan), protocol title: "Keeping it between us: Managerial endorsement of public versus private voice." We provide our data, syntax, and validation studies in an online appendix via the open science framework (OSF) website: bit.ly/3dLjDH0. For a complete list of items and reliabilities see Appendix A.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities (Study 1b)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1. Organizational tenure (T1)	8.56	6.95	—																
2. Position tenure (T1)	4.94	4.39	.65**	—															
3. Number of followers (T1)	10.50	25.55	−.01	.03	—														
4. Age (T1)	39.73	12.14	.40**	.41**	−.01	—													
5. Manager gender[a] (T1)	.60	.49	.16	.11	−.04	.14	—												
6. Employee gender[a] (T1)	.64	.50	.02	−.09	.03	−.03	.33**	—											
7. Self-efficacy (T2)	5.53	.82	.02	.04	.18*	.09	−.11	−.27**	(.92)										
8. Voice solicitation (T2)	3.48	1.18	−.13	.00	.06	.11	−.17	−.27**	.10	(.83)									
9. Negative affect (T1)	1.28	.53	−.06	−.07	−.04	−.05	.07	.02	−.19*	.10	(.83)								
10. Narcissism (T2)	3.52	.87	−.18*	−.06	.09	−.03	−.37**	−.21*	.22*	.19*	−.03	(.83)							
11. Employee status (T1)	4.30	1.42	−.04	−.01	−.04	.08	.06	−.12	.06	.20*	.02	.05	(.94)						
12. Voice setting[b] (T1)	.44	.50	−.11	−.03	−.04	−.08	−.02	−.04	−.03	.09	.57**	−.06	−.02	—					
13. Image threat (T1)	1.82	1.28	.01	.08	−.10	.00	.11	−.05	−.21*	.05	.70**	.03	−.09	.11	(.98)				
14. Ego threat (T1)	1.65	1.07	−.04	−.04	−.03	−.04	.20*	.01	−.24**	.05	.25**	−.08	.03	.09	.62**	(.96)			
15. Accountability (T1)	3.61	1.50	.01	−.02	.01	.12	.09	−.02	−.05	.11	−.33**	.05	.03	−.08	.26**	.23**	(.88)		
16. LMX (T1)	5.79	.87	−.01	.11	−.01	.07	−.06	.09	.16	.05	−.40**	−.01	.36**	−.06	−.38**	−.33**	−.08	(.90)	
17. Endorsement (T2)	5.78	1.33	.06	−.04	−.01	.05	.00	.08	.13	.01	−.19*	−.02	.32**	−.10	−.48**	−.30**	−.12	.50**	(.93)
18. Endorsement: Coins (T2)	53.33	27.80	.16	.08	.03	.07	.03	.02	.09	.03	−.19*	−.04	.39**	.06	−.28**	−.10	−.14	.31**	.56**

Note. N = 129. Numbers in parentheses along the diagonal are Cronbach's alphas. LMX = leader-member exchange quality.
[a] Dummy coded: 0 = male, 1 = female. [b] Dummy coded: 0 = private, 1 = public.
* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Edwards & Lambert, 2007). Results (Table 3 and 4) indicated that managers reported more image threat when employees spoke up in public (vs. private) in Study 1a (B = .30, p = .012) but not in Study 1b (B = .22, p = .292), supporting H1 in Study 1a but not 1b. Supporting H3, image threat was negatively related to endorsement (Study 1a: B = −.27, p = .021; Study 1b: B = −.41, p < .001) and coins endorsement (Study 1b: B = −6.77, p = .004). Table 5 presents indirect effects of voice setting on endorsement via image threat across all our studies. Supporting H4 in Study 1a, but not 1b, there was an unconditional indirect effect of voice in public (vs. private) via image threat on endorsement (−.13, p < .05). In support of H2, voice setting interacted with LMX (Study 1a: B = −.57, p = .014; Study 1b: B = −.73, p = .002; Figures 2 & 3) such that image threat was higher when voice was public for lower LMX (−1SD; Study 1a; B = .58, p < .001; Study 1b: B = .84, p = .004) but not for higher LMX (+1SD; Study 1a: B = .01, p = .954; Study 1b: B = −.42, p = .148). As seen in Table 5, the indirect effect was negative when LMX was lower (−1SD; Study 1a: −.16, p < .05; Study 1b: [endorsement], −.34, p < .05; [endorsement: coins], −5.72, p < .05) but not significant or positive when LMX was higher (+1SD; Study 1a: −.003, p > .05; Study 1b: [endorsement], .17, p < .05; [endorsement: coins], 2.87, p < .05). The difference between the two effects was significant (Study 1a: .16, p < .05; Study 1b: [endorsement], .52, p < .05, [endorsement: coins], 8.59, p < .05).

We ran several additional analyses. First, we examined the effects of setting (private vs. public) on ego threat. As expected, there were no differences in ego threat across settings (Study 1a: B = .14, p = .262; Study 1b: B = .16, p = .369). The interaction between voice setting and LMX on ego threat was also not significant (Study 1a: B = −.37, p = .137; Study 1b: B = −.27, p = .196). Second, we examined whether accountability pressures were more pronounced in public settings (Dutton & Ashford, 1993). To test this, in Study 1b we measured sense of accountability with five items from Hochwarter, Kacmar, and Ferris (2003). Voice setting had no effect on accountability (B = −.25, SE = .26, p = .339) and did not affect endorsement (B = −.02, SE = .07, p = .794) or coins endorsement (Study 2a: B = −1.57, SE = 1.57, p = .319). Controlling for accountability, image threat continued to predict voice endorsement.

Studies 1a and 1b demonstrated that LMX moderates the effect of public (vs. private) voice on endorsement via image threat such that the indirect effect was negative only when LMX was lower. Ego threat and accountability, in contrast to image threat, did not vary across settings, supporting our argument that image threat uniquely explains the effects induced by the social presence of others. The use of an event-based recall study with managers reacting to expressed voice in a real-life work context provided external validity for the voice setting effects. However, because of the cross-sectional methodology, we cannot make strong causal inferences. We thus conducted a series of experiments (Studies 2a, 2b, & 3) to provide complementary evidence for our model.

Studies 2a and 2b: Method

We recruited participants via Prolific Academic (excluding those who completed Content Validation Studies and Study 1b). For Study 2a, we recruited 200 people but excluded 10 due to insufficient effort responding (Huang, Bowling, Liu, & Li, 2015),

Table 3
Regression Analysis Results (Study 1a)

Variables	Image threat		Ego threat		Endorsement
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Constant	2.39** (.08)	2.38** (.08)	2.13** (.09)	2.13** (.09)	3.73** (.09)
Voice setting[a]	.30* (.12)	.30* (.12)	.14 (.13)	.14 (.12)	.11 (.13)
LMX	−.76** (.12)	−.43* (.17)	−.77** (.12)	−.56** (.19)	.87** (.21)
Voice Setting × LMX		−.57* (.23)		−.37 (.25)	−.42 (.27)
Image threat					−.27* (.12)
Ego threat					−.26* (.11)
R^2	.33**	.36**	.28**	.30**	.43**

Note. $N = 103$. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported with standard errors in parentheses. All predictors were centered prior to analysis. LMX = leader-member exchange quality.
[a] Dummy coded: 0 = private, 1 = public.
* $p < .05$.   ** $p < .01$.

which resulted in a final sample of 190 participants (60% female; $M_{age} = 34.25$; 95% from United Kingdom and 5% from United States). For Study 2b, we recruited 200 people but excluded two people due to insufficient effort responding, which resulted in a final sample of 198 (55% female; $M_{age} = 34.73$; 55% from United Kingdom and 45% from United States). In line with prior research on voice endorsement (e.g., Burris, 2012; Fast et al., 2014), we used scenarios to study managers' reactions to voice (i.e., allocating resources for voice implementation). Scenario studies are particularly useful to study processes and outcomes that participants can readily report on, such as their voice endorsement propensity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014; Greenberg & Eskew, 1993). We adapted Sijbom, Janssen, and Van Yperen's (2015) scenario and provided the "participants with adequate contextual background" (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014, p. 361) so that they could realistically place themselves in the situation as a manager (see Appendix B). They assumed the role of head of marketing, in charge of the department's 12 employees, launching a campaign for a new product called "Fat Free French Fries." They had decided to use a strategy successfully implemented in the past. We highlighted initial support from top management for the strategy, and an investment of $10,000 already allocated for it. Next, we

described how an employee, Riley, suggested replacing the strategy with an alternative one. As Riley's communication was challenging but constructive (with a suggestion that can benefit the organization), it closely fits our conceptualization of voice (Sherf, Tangirala, & Venkataramani, 2019). In the private condition (Study 2a: $N = 96$; Study 2b: $N = 103$), participants read:

> Suddenly, Riley, one of the employees, approached you and asked to privately speak to you, one—on—one, about the campaign. Alone in your office, Riley said privately . . .

In the public condition (Study 2a: $N = 94$; Study 2b: $N = 95$), participants instead read:

> Suddenly, Riley, one of the employees, approached you and publicly, in front of the other 11 employees in the open office space, spoke up about the campaign. With the other 11 employees listening, Riley said publicly . . .

We used a 2-item measure to test the efficacy of our manipulation. Participants rated the setting as more public in the public condition (Study 2a: $M = 4.80$, $SD = .65$; Study 2b: $M = 4.93$, $SD = .29$) as compared with the private condition (Study

Table 4
Regression Analysis Results (Study 1b)

Variables	Image threat (Time 1)		Ego threat (Time 1)		Endorsement (Time 2)	Endorsement: Coins (Time 2)
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Constant	1.72** (.14)	1.71** (.13)	1.58** (.12)	1.58** (.12)	5.83** (.13)	50.82** (3.01)
Voice setting[a]	.22 (.21)	.21 (.20)	.16 (.18)	.16 (.18)	−.11 (.19)	5.41 (4.53)
LMX	−.55** (.12)	−.23 (.15)	−.40** (.10)	−.28* (.14)	.65** (.15)	10.11** (3.53)
Voice Setting × LMX		−.73** (.23)		−.27 (.21)	−.22 (.23)	−4.74 (5.41)
Image threat					−.41** (.10)	−6.77** (2.38)
Ego threat					.07 (.11)	3.96 (2.69)
R^2	.15**	.21**	.11*	.12*	.37**	.19**

Note. $N = 129$. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported with standard errors in parentheses. All predictors were centered prior to analysis. LMX = leader-member exchange quality.
[a] Dummy coded: 0 = private, 1 = public.
* $p < .05$.   ** $p < .01$.

Table 5

Indirect Effect of Voice Setting on Endorsement via Image Threat at Different Values of LMX (Studies 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, & 3)

| Dependent variable | LMX | Estimate | CI[a] | | Index of moderated mediation[c] | | |
			LL	*HL*[b]	Index	Low	High
			Study 1a				
Endorsement	Low (−1 *SD*)	−.16	−.43	−.01	.16	.01	.44
	Unconditional	−.13	−.37	−.02			
	High (+1 *SD*)	−.003	−.14	.08			
			Study 1b				
Endorsement	Low (−1 *SD*)	−.34	−.95	−.02	.52	.08	1.27
	Unconditional	−.14	−.50	.05			
	High (+1 *SD*)	.17	.04	.43			
Endorsement: Coins	Low (−1 *SD*)	−5.72	−16.04	−.30	8.59	1.25	21.50
	Unconditional	−2.18	−7.54	.90			
	High (+1 *SD*)	2.87	.45	7.41			
			Study 2a				
Endorsement: Choice	Unconditional	−.69	−1.20	−.22			
Endorsement: Budget	Unconditional	−8.62	−13.29	−3.88			
			Study 2b				
Endorsement: Choice	Unconditional	−.56	−1.04	−.09			
			Study 3				
Endorsement: Choice	Low condition	−.90	−1.40	−.44	.30	.09	.63
	High condition	−.60	−.99	−.28			
Endorsement: Budget	Low condition	−9.00	−13.42	−4.80	3.04	.98	6.06
	High condition	−5.97	−9.51	−2.97			

Note. LMX = leader-member exchange quality.
[a] Numbers in CI column represent 95% confidence intervals. [b] *LL* = lower limit; *HL* = higher limit. [c] 95% confidence intervals of difference between high and low values of LMX.

2a: $M = 1.18$, $SD = .51$; Study 2b: $M = 1.26$, $SD = .57$), Study 2a: $F(1, 189) = 1824.36$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .91$, Study 2b: $F(1, 197) = 3140.77$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .94$.

We adapted items used in Study 1b to capture image threat and ego threat. To capture endorsement, we told participants that they would meet top management in two days for a presentation. We operationalized endorsement as participants' choice between presenting their own strategy ("0") and the strategy suggested by Riley ("1"). We also asked them to allocate a budget of $90,000 to

Riley's strategy and used the amount as an endorsement measure. In addition, to increase realism, in Study 1b, we induced participants to consider the costs of endorsing voice (i.e., costs incurred by changing the marketing strategy), something that participants may otherwise not do—because they react to issues only on "paper" and because it is socially desirable to accept employee suggestions (for a similar approach, see Chang, Milkman, Chugh, & Akinola, 2019). In particular, before deciding whether to endorse Riley's suggestion, we told participants that they are being
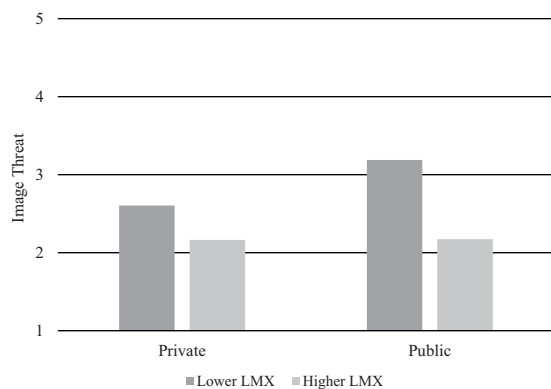

Figure 2. Interaction of voice setting and leader-member exchange quality (LMX) on image threat (Study 1a).
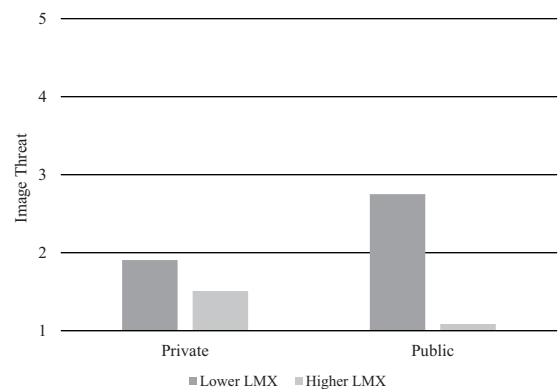

Figure 3. Interaction of voice setting and leader-member exchange quality (LMX) on image threat (Study 1b).

given a \$.15 bonus for the study but that their endorsement decision would be compared against expert advice. If they chose nonendorsement, but experts advised endorsement, they would lose \$.07 of the bonus. However, if they chose endorsement, but experts advised against it, they would lose \$.10 of the bonus. Thereby, participants learned that they could keep more real money if they took the right decision, and that they could lose \$.03 cents more of that bonus if they endorsed voice, reflecting the costs incurred by changing the status quo.

Studies 2a and 2b: Results and Discussion

Table 6 displays descriptive statistics and correlations. As seen in Tables 7 and 8, social setting was positively related to image threat (Study 2a: B = 2.59, $p < .001$; Study 2b: B = 2.53, $p < .001$), supporting H1. Image threat was negatively related to choice endorsement (Study 2a: B = −.27, $p = .007$; Study 2b: B = −.22, $p = .019$) and budget endorsement (Study 2a: B = −3.33, $p < .001$), supporting H3. To establish mediation, we followed the confirmatory test for full mediation suggested by James, Mulaik, and Brett (2006). As seen in Table 5, supporting H4, there was an unconditional indirect effect of public (vs. private) setting via image threat on choice endorsement (Study 2a: −.69, $p < .05$; Study 2b: −.56, $p < .05$) and budget endorsement (Study 2a: −8.62, $p < .05$).

Similar to Studies 1a and 1b, we conducted several additional analyses. First, we established image threat over ego threat as the explanation for our effects. Social setting had no impact on ego threat in Study 2a and a significant but weaker impact (than image threat) in Study 2b (Study 2a: B = .36, $p = .098$; Study 2b: B = .61, $p = .001$). Importantly, only image threat predicted endorsement, enhancing confidence that image concerns, rather than other threats, explain our results. Second, to test the accountability explanation (Dutton & Ashford, 1993), we measured participants' sense of accountability with the same five items as in Study 1b. Accountability was higher in public settings (Study 2a: B = .75, $SE = .19$, $p < .001$; Study 2b: B = .85, $SE = .18$, $p < .001$), but had no effect on choice endorsement (Study 2a: B = .15, $SE = .13$, $p = .227$; Study 2b: B = .15, $SE = .12$, $p = .208$) or budget

endorsement (Study 2a: B = −.05, $SE = 1.18$, $p = .969$). Controlling for accountability, image threat continued to predict voice endorsement.

Studies 2a and 2b allowed us to demonstrate causality in the relationship between voice setting and endorsement (via image threat) and to rule out alternative mediators. The studies confirmed that image threat is indeed a unique pathway through which public voice relates to endorsement. To replicate the full model from Studies 1a and 1b (including the moderating effect of LMX) in an experimental setting, we conducted Study 3. We not only manipulated the setting of voice (private vs. public) in Study 3 but also leveraged real existing relationships between managers and employees to manipulate LMX.

Study 3: Method

We recruited 270 supervisors via Prolific Academic (excluding those who completed Content Validation Studies and Studies 1b, 2a, & 2b). After excluding 10 due to insufficient effort responding, we had a final sample of 260 participants (61% female; $M_{age} = 39.63$; 78% from United Kingdom and 22% from the United States). We implemented a 2 (private vs. public voice) × 2 (LMX: low vs. high) between-subjects design. We manipulated voice setting as in Studies 2a and 2b. Using the same manipulation checks, participants rated the setting as more public in the public condition ($N = 130$; $M = 4.87$, $SD = .44$) as compared with the private condition ($N = 130$; $M = 1.15$, $SD = .39$), $F(1, 259) = 5,190.30$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .95$. LMX comprises aspects such as loyalty, liking, and respect, all of which only develop over time. Hence, to provide a sense of psychological realism, we capitalized on existing relationships at work by asking supervisors to provide the initials of an employee, and embedding these initials into the scenario as the voicer (replacing "Riley" in Appendix B). We instructed participants to think of their relationship with that employee when providing answers (see Sherf & Venkataramani, 2015). This approach allowed us to manipulate LMX, which is difficult to represent outside real work relationships, while maintaining the benefits of an experimental design. In the low LMX condition ($N = 121$), we asked participants to think about:

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities (Studies 2a & 2b)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
Study 2a							
1. Voice setting[a]	.49	.50	—				
2. Image threat	3.25	1.91	.68**	(.98)			
3. Ego threat	2.78	1.51	.12	.47**	(.96)		
4. Accountability	4.29	1.34	.28**	.32**	.33**	(.87)	
5. Endorsement: Choice	.36	.48	−.21**	−.17*	.02	.05	—
6. Endorsement: Budget	38557.89	20949.78	−.21**	−.21**	.06	−.03	.58**
Study 2b							
1. Voice setting[a]	.48	.50	—				
2. Image threat	3.21	1.76	.72**	(.97)			
3. Ego threat	2.66	1.36	.22**	.41**	(.95)		
4. Accountability	4.33	1.32	.32**	.29**	.31**	(.85)	
5. Endorsement: Choice	.38	.49	−.20**	−.19**	−.10	.02	—

Note. $N_{Study\ 2a} = 190$, $N_{Study\ 2b} = 198$. Numbers in parentheses along the diagonal are Cronbach's alphas.
[a] Dummy coded: 0 = private, 1 = public.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 7
Regression Analysis Results (Study 2a)

Variables	Image threat	Ego threat	Endorsement: Choice[a]	Endorsement: Budget[b]
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Constant	1.97** (.14)	2.60** (.15)	.30 (.35)	41.62** (3.37)
Voice setting[c]	2.59** (.20)	.36 (.22)		
Image threat			−.27** (.10)	−3.33** (0.86)
Ego threat			.20 (.12)	2.79* (1.10)
R^2	.46**	.01	.09	.12*

Note. N = 190. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported with standard errors in parentheses.
[a] Binary logistic regression.   [b] For the analysis, we divided participants' responses by 1000.   [c] Dummy coded:
0 = private, 1 = public.
* $p < .05$.   ** $p < .01$.

Someone whom you do (or did) NOT professionally trust or respect enough to have a close personal or working relationship with.

In contrast, in the high LMX condition (*N* = 139), we instructed them to think about:

Someone whom you professionally trust(ed) and respect(ed) very much and have (had) a close personal or working relationship with.

Using the LMX-7 measure (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), our manipulation checks indicated that means in the high LMX condition were higher (*M* = 6.10, *SD* = .63) than in the low LMX condition (*M* = 4.32, *SD* = 1.04), $F(1, 259) = 290.28$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .53$. We used the same 7-item measures of image threat and ego threat as in Studies 2a and 2b and the same measures of endorsement as in Study 2a.

Study 3: Results and Discussion

Table 9 displays descriptive statistics and correlations. As seen in Table 10, supporting H1, participants in the public condition indicated more image threat (B = 2.46, $p < .001$). Supporting H3, image threat was negatively related to both choice endorsement (B = −.30, $p < .001$) and budget endorsement (B = −3.00, $p < .001$). The interaction between voice setting and LMX on image threat was significant (B = −1.01, $p = .005$; Figure 4). Simple slope analysis supported H2 as the relationship between voice

Table 8
Regression Analysis Results (Study 2b)

Variables	Image threat	Ego threat	Endorsement: Choice[a]
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)
Constant	1.99** (.12)	2.37** (.13)	−.32 (.36)
Voice setting[b]	2.53** (.17)	.61** (.19)	
Image threat			−.22* (.10)
Ego threat			−.04 (.12)
R^2	.52**	.05	.05

Note. N = 198. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported with standard errors in parentheses.
[a] Binary logistic regression.   [b] Dummy coded: 0 = private, 1 = public.
* $p < .05$.   ** $p < .01$.

setting and image threat was stronger in the low LMX (B = 3.00, $p < .001$) as compared to the high LMX condition (B = 1.99, $p < .001$). We estimated the conditional indirect effect of voice setting on endorsement via image threat by using James et al.'s (2006) confirmatory test for full mediation (see Table 5). The indirect effect of voice setting on endorsement was stronger when LMX was low ([endorsement: choice]: −.90, $p < .05$; [endorsement: budget]: −9.00, $p < .05$) than when it was high ([endorsement: choice]: −.60, $p < .05$; [endorsement: budget]: −5.97, $p < .05$). The difference between the indirect effects was significant ([endorsement: choice]: .30, $p < .05$; [endorsement: budget]: 3.04, $p < .05$). Hence, H5 was supported. We also replicated our results from prior studies that image threat represented a unique explanation for our results: The interaction effects between the setting and LMX on ego threat (B = −.06, $p = .875$) and accountability (B = −.14, $SE = .33$, $p = .681$) were not significant. Moreover, only image threat explained the negative effects of the setting on endorsement.

In Study 3, we again found that image threat explains the effects of the setting in which voice is enacted (private vs. public) on voice endorsement. Additionally, the study provided support for the moderating role of LMX; that is, the effect of a public setting on image threat was stronger when LMX quality with the voicing employee was lower.

General Discussion

We explored how the social setting in which voice is expressed influences managerial reactions to it. Five studies provided convergent evidence for our theory that public (vs. private) voice was more strongly associated with image threat, and, thereby, received less endorsement, especially when such voice was expressed by low LMX employees. We also demonstrated that image threat, and not ego threat or accountability, was a unique explanation for managers' reactions to public voice.

Theoretical Contributions

We contribute to conversations on voice. First, scholars recognize the benefit of publicly engaging in challenge-oriented forms of communication because public voice helps teams to deliberate, build on, and make plans for tackling issues (De Dreu & West, 2001). In fact, forums such as team meetings are often convened

Table 9
Descriptive Statistics, Correlations, and Reliabilities (Study 3)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Voice setting[a]	.50	.50	—						
2. LMX	.53	.50	−.02	—					
3. Image threat	3.42	1.93	.64**	−.13*	(.98)				
4. Ego threat	2.62	1.43	.16**	−.05	.38**	(.96)			
5. Accountability	4.09	1.37	.24**	.01	.33**	.40**	(.87)		
6. Endorsement: Choice	.32	.47	−.17**	.25**	−.21**	.02	−.03	—	
7. Endorsement: Budget	34211.58	20445.11	−.22**	.32**	−.20**	.11	.11	.67**	—

Note. N = 260. Numbers in parentheses along the diagonal are Cronbach's alphas. LMX = leader-member exchange quality.
[a] Dummy coded: 0 = private, 1 = public.
* $p < .05$.   ** $p < .01$.

precisely to publicly surface employees' privately held opinions and ideas (Rogelberg, 2018). At the same time, there are conflicting perspectives in the literature on how managers respond to public voice. Some argue that public voice might be ineffective because managers are averse to it (e.g., Detert & Edmondson, 2011), which goes against the idea that team meetings—as public forums—serve a useful purpose. Others, however, argue that "selling an issue to top managers in front of an audience (public channel) increases the probability that top management will spend time on the seller's issue" (Dutton & Ashford, 1993, p. 419). Hence, the literature lacks consensus about how public voice is received by managers. We provide clarity on this issue by using face management theory (Goffman, 1967) to propose that image threat rather than accountability is triggered by public voice and reduces voice endorsement, and providing empirical evidence to support this viewpoint (Rousseau & Olivas-Luján, 2013).

Second, we demonstrate that managers react especially negatively to public voice from employees with whom they do not share strong LMX. We thus highlight an insidious phenomenon that the voice literature has not paid attention to: Managers may deprive themselves of particularly valuable perspectives. Relationally distant employees are most likely to have nonoverlapping perspectives vis-à-vis managers (e.g., Granovetter, 1983) and at the same time often have less opportunities for private interactions with the manager and even when they do have such interactions they "are mainly one-sided, with the supervisor relaying information and directives and the subordinates primarily accommo-

dating the requests with little feedback or input" (Kramer, 2017, p. 2324). This underscores that managers may be averse to the only channel (i.e., public setting) available to relationally distant members for voicing divergent opinions and that managers might be missing out important contrary viewpoints by failing to attend to public voice from such employees. We thus highlight unique decision-making pitfalls that managers may encounter as they attempt to save face in work settings.

Third, we highlight that, although voice, whether public or private, can elicit ego threat due to the criticism inherent in it, public voice uniquely induces image threat. This distinction between ego and image threat is of significance because individuals' desire to be assured of their self-worth is distinct from their desire to maintain face (Leary et al., 2009). When experiencing ego threat, people doubt their self-worth; when they experience image threat, they feel insecure about their social reputation. Consequently, solutions that lessen ego threat such as self-affirmation interventions (e.g., focusing attention on the integrity or multifaceted nature of the self; Sherman & Cohen, 2006; Steele, 1988) would not help assuage concerns about image threat, which requires interventions to reduce face considerations (e.g., creating a work culture where managers feel that their reputations are not on the line when discussing issues in public).

Fourth, we extend literature that has highlighted that managers often do not seek feedback in the presence of others (e.g., Ashford & Northcraft, 1992). This work has not explored how managers actually respond to or act on ideas or opinions that come their way

Table 10
Regression Analysis Results (Study 3)

Variables	Image threat Model 1 B (SE)	Image threat Model 2 B (SE)	Ego threat Model 3 B (SE)	Ego threat Model 4 B (SE)	Endorsement: Choice[a] Model 5 B (SE)	Endorsement: Budget[b] Model 6 B (SE)
Constant	2.42** (.16)	2.14** (.19)	2.46** (.16)	2.44** (.18)	.31 (.32)	36.25** (2.90)
Voice setting[c]	2.46** (.18)	3.00** (.26)	.46** (.18)	.49 (.26)		
LMX	−.43* (.18)	.08 (.25)	−.13 (.18)	−.10 (.25)		
Voice Setting × LMX		−1.01** (.36)		−.06 (.35)		
Image threat					−.30** (.08)	−3.00** (.68)
Ego threat					.19 (.11)	3.14** (.92)
R^2	.42**	.44**	.03	.03	.10*	.11**

Note. N = 260. Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported with standard errors in parentheses. LMX = leader-member exchange quality.
[a] Binary logistic regression.   [b] For the analysis, we divided participants' responses by 1000.   [c] Dummy coded: 0 = private, 1 = public.
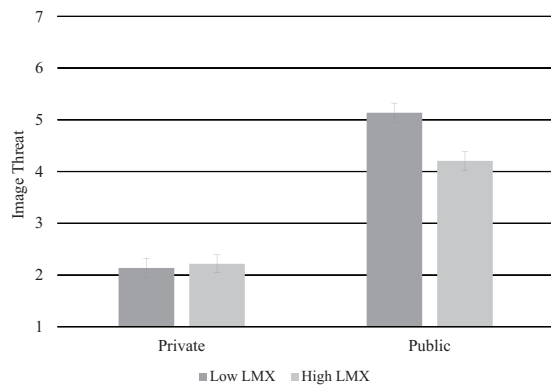* $p < .05$.   ** $p < .01$.

Figure 4. Interaction of voice setting and leader-member exchange quality (LMX) on image threat (Study 3). Error bars indicate one standard error above and below the mean.

in public, even when they have not sought them. By focusing on voice, a *self-initiated* communication by employees, we go beyond feedback seeking research in explicating how (a) image threat overcomes the competing psychological press of accountability in making managers disregard publicly provided input, and (b) this aversion of managers is especially centered around relationally distant employees providing such input.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

A number of limitations point to new avenues for future research. First, although our experimental studies provided internal validity, their psychological realism is constrained. However, scenario studies can be useful (Greenberg & Eskew, 1993) and have been used to examine managerial reactions to voice, replicating effects from field samples (e.g., Burris, 2012; Fast et al., 2014). We also incentivized choices with real monetary stakes in Study 2b and leveraged managers' existing relationships to make LMX manipulations more realistic in Study 3. Nonetheless, future research should supplement our current package of studies by employing lagged field study designs that help better establish causality in realistic settings.

Second, because we used between-person designs in our field studies, we did not capture real time within-person variations in managerial reactions to voice. Future studies may track managers longitudinally to examine how the same manager responds differently to voice based on the social setting and the relational context in which it is expressed. Such studies can use either signal-contingent methods (that capture voice events at times that researchers predetermine) or event-contingent methods (that ask the participants to report voice events as and when they occur). The choice would depend on the expected frequency of voice events as event-contingent approaches are desirable for less commonly occurring events and signal-contingent approaches for more frequently occurring events (Beal & Gabriel, 2019). Studies that have explored daily within-person variations in voice (e.g., Liu, Song, Li, & Liao, 2017; Madrid, Patterson, & Leiva, 2015) have reported relatively low means, suggesting that voice may be less frequent at the daily level. This has prompted other scholars to explore that behavior across wider intervals such as weeks (Lam, Lee, & Sui,

2019) or months (Sherf, Parke, & Isaakyan, 2020), although a consensus on this issue is yet to emerge in the voice literature. Hence, going forward, scholars need to more precisely estimate the base rate of voice events and, subsequently, design studies that examine those events as they dynamically unfold. This would add richness to the study of voice and the managerial reactions to it.

Third, audience characteristics (e.g., in-group status) might matter in how much managers perceive image threat in public voice. An exploratory analysis of public voice events in one of our studies (Study 1b; available on request from the first author) indicated that managers do indeed perceive less image threat when the audience is comprised of "in-group" (vs. "out-group") members. Future research can, in a more confirmatory manner, examine how various aspects of voice settings, including audience characteristics, can impact receipt of public voice, across multiple episodes.

Forth, drawing on prior work on the benefits of publicly expressed dissent (V. R. Brown & Paulus, 2002; De Dreu & West, 2001; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009; Nemeth, Connell, Rogers, & Brown, 2001; Paulus, Levine, Brown, Minai, & Doboli, 2010), we assumed that managers adversely affect their teams by becoming biased against public voice. Future studies should directly test this assumption and the conditions in which public voice is more beneficial to teams. It is possible that narrow issues that deal with idiosyncratic problems or opportunities are better raised in private rather than in public. By contrast, issues that are broader in scope and span multiple team members are potentially better brought up in a public context. By exploring such possibilities, research can provide better guidance to managers in terms of how they can encourage voice in different social settings.

Managerial Implications

Organizations should communicate the benefits of public voice to managers and explain to them that it is often productive for people to challenge each other publicly. This may encourage managers to endorse public voice without being overly concerned about how this might impact their image. Managers also need to be aware that their reactions to voice can be colored by the quality of their relationships with employees and that they might miss out on important divergent perspectives by neglecting public voice from those outside their circle of confidants. Finally, employees should be aware that, when they do not share a high-quality relationship with their manager, they might be more successful in gaining managerial endorsement by expressing their opinions or concerns in private rather than in public settings.

References

Aguinis, H., & Bradley, K. J. (2014). Best practice recommendations for designing and implementing experimental vignette methodology studies. *Organizational Research Methods, 17,* 351–371. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1094428114547952

Ashford, S. J. (1989). Self-assessments in organizations: A literature review and integrative model. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol. 11, pp. 133–174). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Ashford, S. J., & Northcraft, G. B. (1992). Conveying more (or less) than we realize: The role of impression-management in feedback-seeking. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 53,* 310–334. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(92)90068-I

Baumeister, R. F. (1982). A self-presentational view of social phenomena. *Psychological Bulletin, 91,* 3–26. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.91.1.3

Beal, D. J., & Gabriel, A. S. (2019). Looking within: An examination, combination, and extension of within-person methods across multiple levels of analysis. In S. E. Humphrey & J. E. LeBreton (Eds.), *The handbook of multilevel theory, measurement, and analysis* (pp. 305–327). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0000115-014

Brown, P., & Levinson, S. C. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511813085

Brown, V. R., & Paulus, P. B. (2002). Making group brainstorming more effective: Recommendations from an associative memory perspective. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11,* 208–212. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.00202

Burris, E. R. (2012). The risks and rewards of speaking up: Managerial responses to employee voice. *Academy of Management Journal, 55,* 851–875. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amj.2010.0562

Chang, E. H., Milkman, K. L., Chugh, D., & Akinola, M. (2019). Diversity thresholds: How social norms, visibility, and scrutiny relate to group composition. *Academy of Management Journal, 62,* 144–171. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amj.2017.0440

Chun, J. U., Lee, D., & Sosik, J. J. (2018). Leader negative feedback-seeking and leader effectiveness in leader-subordinate relationships: The paradoxical role of subordinate expertise. *The Leadership Quarterly, 29,* 501–512. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.11.001

Cupach, W. R., & Carson, C. L. (2002). Characteristics and consequences of interpersonal complaints associated with perceived face threat. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 19,* 443–462. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0265407502019004047

De Dreu, C. K. W., & West, M. A. (2001). Minority dissent and team innovation: The importance of participation in decision making. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86,* 1191–1201. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.6.1191

Detert, J. R., Burris, E. R., Harrison, D. A., & Martin, S. R. (2013). Voice flows to and around leaders: Understanding when units are helped or hurt by employee voice. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 58,* 624–668. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0001839213510151

Detert, J. R., & Edmondson, A. C. (2011). Implicit voice theories: Taken-for-granted rules of self-censorship at work. *Academy of Management Journal, 54,* 461–488. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amj.2011.61967925

Djurdjevic, E., Stoverink, A. C., Klotz, A. C., Koopman, J., da Motta Veiga, S. P., Yam, K. C., & Chiang, J. T.-J. (2017). Workplace status: The development and validation of a scale. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102,* 1124–1147. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/apl0000202

Dutton, J. E., & Ashford, S. J. (1993). Selling issues to top management. *Academy of Management Review, 18,* 397–428. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amr.1993.9309035145

Edmondson, A. C. (2003). Speaking up in the operating room: How team leaders promote learning in interdisciplinary action teams. *Journal of Management Studies, 40,* 1419–1452. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/1467-6486.00386

Edwards, J. R., & Lambert, L. S. (2007). Methods for integrating moderation and mediation: A general analytical framework using moderated path analysis. *Psychological Methods, 12,* 1–22. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.12.1.1

Fast, N. J., Burris, E. R., & Bartel, C. A. (2014). Managing to stay in the dark: Managerial self-efficacy, ego defensiveness, and the aversion to employee voice. *Academy of Management Journal, 57,* 1013–1034. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amj.2012.0393

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Goffman, E. (1967). *Interaction ritual: Essays on face-to-face behavior.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Graen, G. B., & Cashman, J. F. (1975). A role-making model of leadership in formal organizations: A developmental approach. In J. G. Hunt & L. L. Larson (Eds.), *Leadership frontiers* (pp. 143–166). Kent, OH: Kent State University Press.

Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *The Leadership Quarterly, 6,* 219–247. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(95)90036-5

Granovetter, M. (1983). The strength of weak ties: A network theory revisited. *Sociological Theory, 1,* 201–233. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/202051

Greenberg, J., & Eskew, D. E. (1993). The role of role playing in organizational research. *Journal of Management, 19,* 221–241. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/014920639301900203

Grube, A., Schroer, J., Hentzschel, C., & Hertel, G. (2008). The event reconstruction method: An efficient measure of experience-based job satisfaction. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 81,* 669–689. http://dx.doi.org/10.1348/096317907X251578

Hochwarter, W., Kacmar, C., & Ferris, G. (2003, April). *Accountability at work: An examination of antecedents and consequences.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Orlando, Florida.

Hornsey, M. J. (2005). Why being right is not enough: Predicting defensiveness in the face of group criticism. *European Review of Social Psychology, 16,* 301–334. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10463280500436040

Howell, T. M., Harrison, D. A., Burris, E. R., & Detert, J. R. (2015). Who gets credit for input? Demographic and structural status cues in voice recognition. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100,* 1765–1784. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/apl0000025

Huang, J. L., Bowling, N. A., Liu, M., & Li, Y. (2015). Detecting insufficient effort responding with an infrequency scale: Evaluating validity and participant reactions. *Journal of Business and Psychology, 30,* 299–311. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10869-014-9357-6

Ilgen, D. R., Fisher, C. D., & Taylor, M. S. (1979). Consequences of individual feedback on behavior in organizations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 64,* 349–371. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.64.4.349

James, L. R., Mulaik, S. A., & Brett, J. M. (2006). A tale of two methods. *Organizational Research Methods, 9,* 233–244. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1094428105285144

John, L. K., Jeong, M., Gino, F., & Huang, L. (2019). The self-presentational consequences of upholding one's stance in spite of the evidence. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 154,* 1–14. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2019.07.001

Jones, D. N., & Paulhus, D. L. (2014). Introducing the short Dark Triad (SD3): A brief measure of dark personality traits. *Assessment, 21,* 28–41. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1073191113514105

Kerbrat-Orecchioni, C. (2004). Introducing polylogue. *Journal of Pragmatics, 36,* 1–24. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0378-2166(03)00034-1

Kramer, M. W. (2017). Supervisor–subordinate communication. In C. Scott, J. Barker, T. Kuhn, J. Keyton, P. Turner, & L. Lewis (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of organizational communication* (Vol. 1, 2316–2330). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell. http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9781118955567.wbieoc199

Lam, C. F., Lee, C., & Sui, Y. (2019). Say it as it is: Consequences of voice directness, voice politeness, and voicer credibility on voice endorsement. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 104,* 642–658. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/apl0000358

Leary, M. R., Barnes, B. D., Griebel, C., Mason, E., & McCormack, D. (1987). The impact of conjoint threats to social- and self-esteem on

evaluation apprehension. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 50,* 304–311. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2786815

Leary, M. R., & Kowalski, R. M. (1990). Impression management: A literature review and two-component model. *Psychological Bulletin, 107,* 34–47. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.107.1.34

Leary, M. R., Terry, M. L., Batts Allen, A., & Tate, E. B. (2009). The concept of ego threat in social and personality psychology: Is ego threat a viable scientific construct? *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 13,* 151–164. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1088868309342595

Liden, R. C., & Graen, G. (1980). Generalizability of the vertical dyad linkage model of leadership. *Academy of Management Journal, 23,* 451–465. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/255511

Liden, R. C., & Maslyn, J. M. (1998). Multidimensionality of leader-member exchange: An empirical assessment through scale development. *Journal of Management, 24,* 43–72. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(99)80053-1

Liu, W., Song, Z., Li, X., & Liao, Z. (2017). Why and when leaders' affective states influence employee upward voice. *Academy of Management Journal, 60,* 238–263. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.1082

Madrid, H. P., Patterson, M. G., & Leiva, P. I. (2015). Negative core affect and employee silence: How differences in activation, cognitive rumination, and problem-solving demands matter. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100,* 1887–1898. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0039380

Meindl, J. R., Ehrlich, S. B., & Dukerich, J. M. (1985). The romance of leadership. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 30,* 78–102. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2392813

Mesmer-Magnus, J. R., & Dechurch, L. A. (2009). Information sharing and team performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 94,* 535–546. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0013773

Mitchell, M. S., Vogel, R. M., & Folger, R. (2015). Third parties' reactions to the abusive supervision of coworkers. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100,* 1040–1055. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/apl0000002

Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior, 1,* 173–197. http://dx.doi.org/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031413-091328

Nemeth, C. J., Connell, J. B., Rogers, J. D., & Brown, K. S. (2001). Improving decision making by means of dissent. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 31,* 48–58. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2001.tb02481.x

Paulus, P. B., Levine, D. S., Brown, V. R., Minai, A. A., & Doboli, S. (2010). Modeling ideational creativity in groups: Connecting cognitive, neural, and computational approaches. *Small Group Research, 41,* 688–724. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1046496410369561

Peer, E., Brandimarte, L., Samat, S., & Acquisti, A. (2017). Beyond the Turk: Alternative platforms for crowdsourcing behavioral research. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 70,* 153–163. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2017.01.006

Pfeffer, J. (1992). *Managing with power: Politics and influence in organizations.* Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J.-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88,* 879–903. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879

Rogelberg, S. G. (2018). *The surprising science of meetings: How you can lead your team to peak performance.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Rousseau, D. M., & Olivas-Luján, M. R. (2013). Evidence-based management. In E. Kessler (Eds.), *The encyclopedia of management theory* (Vol. 1, pp. 265–268). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452276090

Schlenker, B. R., & Leary, M. R. (1982). Social anxiety and self-presentation: A conceptualization and model. *Psychological Bulletin, 92,* 641–669. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.92.3.641

Sherf, E. N., Parke, M. R., & Isaakyan, S. (2020). Distinguishing voice and silence at work: Unique relationships with perceived impact, psychological safety, and burnout. *Academy of Management Journal.* Advance online publication. http://dx.doi.org/10.5465/amj.2018.1428

Sherf, E. N., Tangirala, S., & Venkataramani, V. (2019). Why managers do not seek voice from employees: The importance of managers' personal control and long-term orientation. *Organization Science, 30,* 447–466. http://dx.doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2018.1273

Sherf, E. N., & Venkataramani, V. (2015). Friend or foe? The impact of relational ties with comparison others on outcome fairness and satisfaction judgments. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 128,* 1–14. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2015.02.002

Sherman, D. K., & Cohen, G. L. (2006). The psychology of self-defense: Self-affirmation theory. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 38,* 183–242. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(06)38004-5

Sijbom, R. B. L., Janssen, O., & Van Yperen, N. W. (2015). Leaders' receptivity to subordinates' creative input: The role of achievement goals and composition of creative input. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 24,* 462–478. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1359432X.2014.964215

Spector, P. E., & Brannick, M. T. (2011). Methodological urban legends: The misuse of statistical control variables. *Organizational Research Methods, 14,* 287–305. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1094428110369842

Sproull, L., Subramani, M., Kiesler, S., Walker, J. H., & Waters, K. (1996). When the interface is a face. *Human-Computer Interaction, 11,* 97–124. http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327051hci1102_1

Steele, C. M. (1988). The psychology of self-affirmation: Sustaining the integrity of the self. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 21,* 261–302. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60229-4

Tangirala, S., & Ramanujam, R. (2012). Ask and you shall hear (but not always): Examining the relationship between manager consultation and employee voice. *Personnel Psychology, 65,* 251–282. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.2012.01248.x

Triplett, N. (1898). The dynamogenic factors in pacemaking and competition. *The American Journal of Psychology, 9,* 507–533. http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1412188

Tuckey, M., Brewer, N., & Williamson, P. (2002). The influence of motives and goal orientation on feedback seeking. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 75,* 195–216. http://dx.doi.org/10.1348/09631790260098677

Uziel, L. (2007). Individual differences in the social facilitation effect: A review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Research in Personality, 41,* 579–601. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2006.06.008

Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54,* 1063–1070. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.6.1063

Zajonc, R. B. (1965). Social facilitation. *Science, 149,* 269–274. http://dx.doi.org/10.1126/science.149.3681.269

(*Appendices follow*)

Appendix A

Items Used in Studies

Items Used in Study 1a

Image Threat (α = .81; 1 = "*Extremely untrue*" to 5 = "*Extremely true*")

1. I was not really worried about what my colleagues would think of my performance (R)
2. I was not concerned about what my colleagues would think of me (R)
3. I was worried about the impression I would make
4. I didn't really worry what my colleagues would think of me (R)
5. I didn't really care if my colleagues knew the type of suggestions and concerns I got (R)
6. I didn't want my colleagues to know what type of suggestions and concerns I received
7. I was concerned about my colleagues hearing the content of the suggestions and concerns I received
8. It didn't worry me if my colleagues knew how I've performed at something (R)

Ego Threat (α = .85; 1 = "*Extremely untrue*" to 5 = "*Extremely true*")

1. I had a negative attitude toward myself
2. It didn't really lower my self-worth (R)
3. It didn't really change the way I feel about myself (R)
4. It was hard to feel good about myself
5. I didn't really worry about it because I still felt I am a person of worth (R)
6. I tried to avoid it because it made me feel bad about myself
7. I was worried about receiving these comments
8. It didn't really worry me because I still had a positive attitude toward myself (R)

LMX (α = .78)

1. Does your subordinate usually know where he or she stands with you? Does your subordinate usually know how satisfied you are with what he does? (1 = "*Rarely*" to 5 = "*Very often*")
2. How well do you understand your subordinate's job problems and needs? (1 = "*Not at all*" to 5 = "*A great deal*")

3. How well do you recognize your subordinate's' potential? (1 = "*Not at all*" to 5 = "*Fully*")
4. What are the chances that you would use your power to help your subordinate solve problems in his or her work? (1 = "*None*" to 5 = "*Very high*")
5. What are the chances that you would "bail out" your subordinate at your expense? (1 = "*None*" to 5 = "*Very high*")
6. You have enough confidence in your subordinate that he or she would defend and justify your decision if you were not present to do so. (1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 5 = "*Strongly agree*")
7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your subordinate? (1 = "*Extremely ineffective*" to 5 = "*Extremely effective*")

Endorsement (α = .95; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 5 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. I took (I am planning to take) this subordinate's comments into consideration
2. I supported (I am planning to support) this subordinate's comments
3. I think this subordinate's comments should be implemented
4. I agree with this subordinate's comments
5. This subordinate's comments are valuable

Manager Self-efficacy (α = .84; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 5 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself
2. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them
3. In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me
4. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind
5. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges
6. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks
7. Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well
8. Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well

Items Used in Study 1b

Image Threat (α = .98; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. This situation could have created a negative impression about me in the eyes of others
2. This situation could have made others think negatively of me
3. This situation could have created doubts in others about my abilities
4. This situation could have hurt my status
5. This situation could have raised question about my competence in the eyes of others
6. This situation could have created doubts in others about my capabilities
7. This situation could have hurt my image in the eyes of others

Ego Threat (α = .96; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. This situation made it hard to feel good about myself
2. This situation made me doubt whether I am a person of worth
3. This situation made me personally feel bad about myself
4. This situation made me question my own competence
5. This situation made me doubt my abilities
6. This situation made me question my capabilities
7. This situation made me doubt whether I had the necessary skills

Accountability (α = .88; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. During this situation, I felt that I would be held accountable for how I act in response to [subordinate's initials]'s idea
2. During this situation, I felt that I would have to explain my actions in response to [subordinate's initials] 's idea
3. During this situation, I felt that I would hear from others if things with the idea that [subordinate's initials] raised do not go the way that they should
4. During this situation, I felt that I would be closely scrutinized on how I act on [subordinate's initials] 's idea
5. During this situation, I felt that I would need to justify the way I act on [subordinate's initials]'s idea

LMX (α = .90; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 7 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. [Subordinate's initials] usually knows how satisfied I am with him/her
2. I understand [subordinate's initials]'s problems and needs

3. I recognize [subordinate's initials]'s potential well
4. I would be personally inclined to use my power to help [subordinate's initials] solve problems in work
5. I would be willing to "bail [subordinate's initials] out", even at my own expense, if s/he really needed it
6. I have enough confidence that [subordinate's initials] would defend and justify my decisions if I was not present to do so
7. I view my working relationship with [subordinate's initials] as extremely effective
8. [Subordinate's initials] usually knows where s/he stands with me

Endorsement (α = .93; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 7 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. I have taken or will take [subordinate's initials]'s idea into consideration
2. I have supported or will support [subordinate's initials] 's idea
3. [Subordinate's initials] 's idea has been or will be implemented
4. I agree with [subordinate's initials] 's idea
5. [Subordinate's initials]'s idea is valuable

Manager Self-efficacy (α = .92; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 7 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself
2. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them
3. In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me
4. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind
5. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges
6. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks
7. Compared to other people, I can do most tasks very well
8. Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well

Manager Voice Solicitation (α = .83; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 7 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. I ask my employees to tell me about things that I think would be helpful for improving this organization
2. I ask my employees to tell me about how things have been done in their previous job(s)
3. I seek out task-related knowledge from my employees
4. I ask my employees what skills they have that I may not know about that might contribute to our performance here

(Appendices continue)

Manager Negative Affect (α = .83; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 5 = "*Extremely*")

During the situation when [subordinate's initials] raised his or her idea, I felt . . .

1. . . . afraid
2. . . . nervous
3. . . . upset
4. . . . ashamed
5. . . . hostile

Manager Narcissism (α = .83; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 7 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. People see me as a natural leader
2. I hate being the center of attention (R)
3. I am an average person (R)
4. I get bored hanging around with ordinary people
5. Many group activities tend to be dull without me
6. I know that I am special because everyone keeps telling me so
7. People often think my stories are boring (R)
8. Those with talent and good looks should not hide them
9. I like to get acquainted with important people
10. I feel embarrassed if someone compliments me (R)
11. I insist on getting the respect that I deserve
12. I have been compared to famous people
13. I am likely to show off if I get the chance

Employee Status (α = .94; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 7 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. [Subordinate's initials] has a great deal of prestige in my organization
2. [Subordinate's initials] possesses high status in my organization
3. [Subordinate's initials] occupies a respected position in my organization
4. [Subordinate's initials] has a position of prestige in my organization
5. [Subordinate's initials] possesses a high level of prominence in my organization

Items Used in Studies 2a and 2b

Voice Setting Manipulation Check (Study 2a: α = .98, Study 2b: α = .97; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 5 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. Riley spoke up about the marketing strategy privately to you, one-on-one (R)
2. Riley publicly spoke up about the marketing strategy in front of other employees

Image Threat (Study 2a: α = .98, Study 2b: α = .97; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. This situation creates a negative impression about me in the eyes of my other employees
2. This situation makes my other employees think negatively of me
3. This situation creates doubts in my other employees about my ability to come up with a successful marketing strategy
4. This situation hurts my status as a department head
5. This situation questions my competence in the eyes of my other employees
6. This situation creates doubts in my other employees about my capability to set up a successful marketing strategy
7. This situation hurts my image in the eyes of my other employees

Ego Threat (Study 2a: α = .96, Study 2b: α = .95; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. This situation makes it hard to feel good about myself
2. This situation makes me doubt whether I am a person of worth
3. This situation makes me personally feel bad about myself
4. This situation makes me question my own competence
5. This situation makes me doubt my ability to be a department head
6. This situation makes me question my capabilities to set up a successful marketing strategy
7. This situation makes me doubt whether I had the necessary skills to come up with a successful marketing strategy

Accountability (Study 2a: α = .87, Study 2b: α = .85; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. I would be held accountable for how I act in response to Riley's concerns
2. I would need to explain my actions in response to Riley's concerns
3. I would hear from others if things with the marketing campaign do not go the way that they should after Riley raised concerns
4. I would be closely scrutinized on how I act on Riley's concerns
5. I would need to justify the way I act on Riley's concerns

Items Used in Study 3

Voice Setting Manipulation Check (α = .98; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 5 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. [Subordinate's initials] spoke up about the marketing strategy privately to you, one-on-one
2. [Subordinate's initials] publicly spoke up about the marketing strategy in front of other employees

(Appendices continue)

LMX Manipulation Check (α = .91; 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 7 = "*Strongly agree*")

1. [Subordinate's initials] usually knows how satisfied I am with him/her
2. I understand [subordinate's initials]'s problems and needs
3. I recognize [subordinate's initials]'s potential well
4. I would be personally inclined to use my power to help [subordinate's initials] solve problems in work
5. I would be willing to "bail [subordinate's initials] out", even at my own expense, if s/he really needed it
6. I have enough confidence that [subordinate's initials] would defend and justify my decisions if I was not present to do so
7. I view my working relationship with [subordinate's initials] as extremely effective
8. [Subordinate's initials] usually knows where s/he stands with me

Image Threat (α = .98; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. This situation could have created a negative impression about me in the eyes of my other employees
2. This situation could have made my other employees think negatively of me
3. This situation could have created doubts in my other employees about my ability to come up with a successful marketing strategy
4. This situation could have hurt my status as a department head
5. This situation could have questioned my competence in the eyes of my other employees

6. This situation could have created doubts in my other employees about my capability to set up a successful marketing strategy
7. This situation could have hurt my image in the eyes of my other employees

Ego Threat (α = .96; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. This situation makes it hard to feel good about myself
2. This situation makes me doubt whether I am a person of worth
3. This situation makes me personally feel bad about myself
4. This situation makes me question my own competence
5. This situation makes me doubt my ability to be a department head
6. This situation makes me question my capabilities to set up a successful marketing strategy
7. This situation makes me doubt whether I had the necessary skills to come up with a successful marketing strategy

Accountability (α = .87; 1 = "*Not at all*" to 7 = "*To a great extent*")

1. I would be held accountable for how I act in response to Riley's concerns
2. I would need to explain my actions in response to Riley's concerns
3. I would hear from others if things with the marketing campaign do not go the way that they should after Riley raised concerns
4. I would be closely scrutinized on how I act on Riley's concerns
5. I would need to justify the way I act on Riley's concerns

Appendix B

Scenario Texts

You are the head of Marketing for Xantippe, a company specializing in frozen fast food. As the head of Marketing, and its most experienced member, you set the marketing strategy of the company, coordinate marketing projects from start to finish, and directly manage the work of a team of 12 employees.

For the last two months, you, together with your team, have worked hard on developing a marketing campaign for a new product called "Fat-Free French Fries".

After giving it much thought and drawing on your experience, you decided to go with an event marketing strategy. This strategy involves organizing events where people can directly sample the product. In particular, to advertise healthy features of Xantippe's French Fries, you are planning to promote it at events related to a

healthy lifestyle, with a special focus on sporting events. You have had your employees run the numbers and you are sure that this strategy will be a great success.

You have frequently used this strategy before with similar markets and products. Your ability to successfully lead and implement this strategy in the past is a big reason for your career success.

You already got initial support from the top management, and so far, your company has already invested about $10,000 out of $100,000 yearly budget allocated for this project in the initial set up of the campaign.

Earlier today, you walked into the open office space where your 12 employees work. You were chatting with some of the employees, checking in on their work.

(Appendices continue)

Private voice: Suddenly, Riley, one of the employees, approached you and asked to privately speak to you, one-on-one, about the campaign.

Alone in your office, Riley said privately:

Public voice: Suddenly, Riley, one of the employees, approached you and publicly, in front of the other 11 employees in the open office space, spoke up about the campaign.

With the other 11 employees listening, Riley said publicly:

"I have been thinking about it and I have to say, I am really concerned about the current strategy for the new fries' campaign. It is focusing on advertising our product at sporting events. But, do people at these events really care about French Fries? Recent market research shows that people don't pay attention and easily forget products that they try at these kinds of events.

I just can't see it working!

If it were up to me, I would go with an online campaign. Advertisement with online banners on social media like Facebook or Twitter should get customers attention much better than the current strategy. Going ahead with the current strategy is a big risk. We know that this campaign is extremely important and I am worried that we will completely miss the sales targets!"