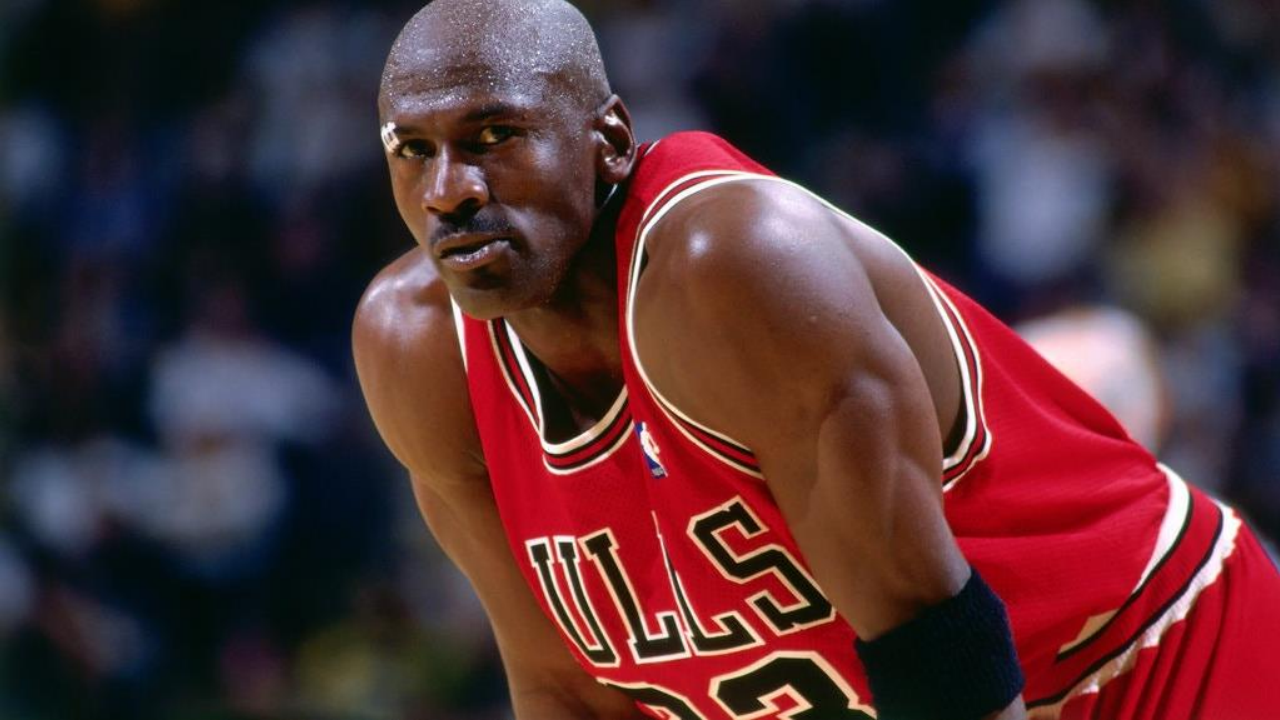
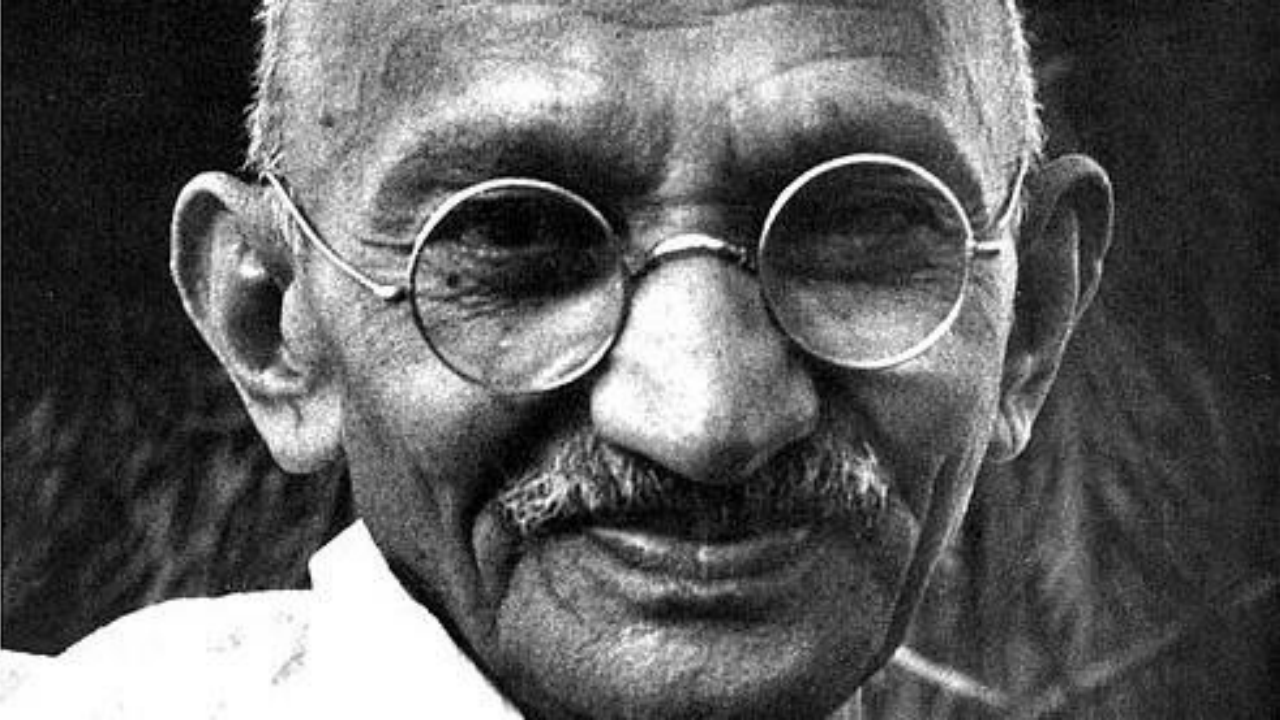


Is Anybody Listening?

How Leader Humility Promotes Employee Voice

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Organizational Leadership Background

- Employees' ideas, suggestions, and opinions about how to improve organizational functioning are crucial to organizations' ability to adapt, change, and learn (Morrison, 2014).
- Leaders play a crucial role in setting the tone and environment around how open an organization is to employee voice (Fast, Burris, & Bartel, 2014).
- When leaders exhibit concern for others, empathy, and compassion, they make it more likely that employees will feel safe to express their improvement-oriented ideas (Detert & Burris, 2007).

Our Contribution

- Much research has shown that humility in leadership translates positively while narcissism in leadership translates negatively.
- It has also been empirically demonstrated that the positivity that leader humility creates can be manifested in many ways.
- We add to the literature by exploring the relationship between these positive effects and employee voice behavior.

Hypotheses

- **Hypothesis 1:** Leader humility will relate positively to employee promotive voice.
- **Hypothesis 2:** Leader humility will relate positively to employee task performance.
- **Hypothesis 3:** Employee promotive voice will mediate the relationship between leader humility and employee task performance.

Methods

Sample:

- N= 93 full-time employees
- 72% male, 28% female
- Mean age= 46.07 years (SD 13.57)
- 79% White, 10.4% Hispanic American, 3.4% Native American, 1.7% African American, 0.8% Asian, 4.2% Other

Measures:

- *Leader Humility (IV)*: 9 items e.g. “My supervisor acknowledges when other have more knowledge and skills than him or herself” (1=Strongly Disagree, 7=Strongly Agree) ($\alpha = .96$)
- *Employee Task Performance (IV)*: 7 items e.g. “This employee fulfilled responsibilities specified in his/her job description” (1=Strongly Disagree, 7=Strongly Agree) ($\alpha = .86$)
- *Employee Promotive Voice (DV)*: 1 item “This employee proactively develops and makes suggestions for issues that may influence our work” (1=Strongly Disagree, 7=Strongly Agree)

Results

Means, Standard Deviations, and Partial Correlations from Survey Results

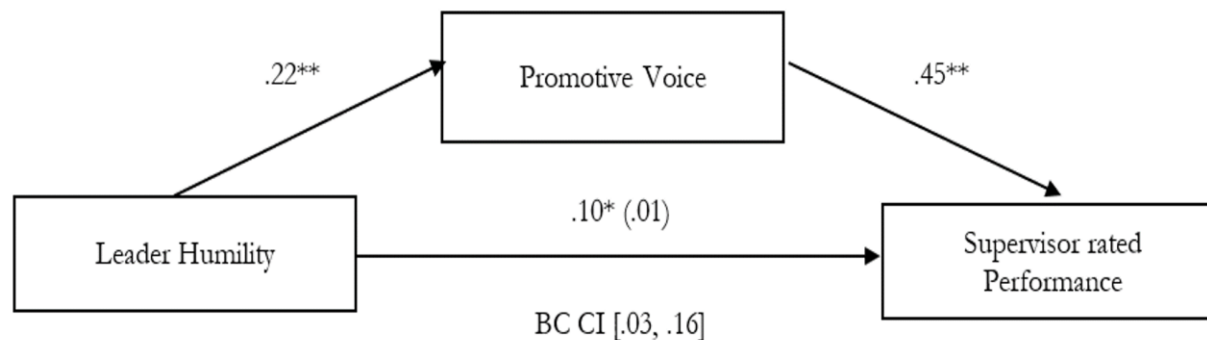
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1. Leader Humility	5.33	1.43	(.96)				
2. Promotive Voice (supervisor rated)	5.96	1.09	.33***				
3. Employee Performance (supervisor rated)	6.15	.80	.22*	.55***	(.86)		

Note. Partial Correlations controlling for supervisor, gender, and education level.

Scale reliabilities are given in parentheses.

*** $p < .01$

Results of Mediation Analysis Predicting Employee Performance



- Leaders who are perceived as humble by employees are more likely to elicit higher levels of task performance.

- Leaders who display humility in their organizations are more likely to develop a psychologically safe environment where employees feel comfortable speaking up about ideas they have.

Managerial Implications

- Given a humble leader, employee promotive voice can act as a mediating mechanism through which task performance increases.
- Organizations can holistically improve when leaders make conscious efforts to show humility.
- Practical ways to apply this knowledge can include listening to and acknowledging employees, being teachable, admitting faults, being honest, putting employees and the organization first, and having an accurate self-perception.

“Leadership is not a noun. It’s a **verb**. It’s **active**. It’s **movement**. It’s not a position, it’s a **process**.”

John C. Maxwell

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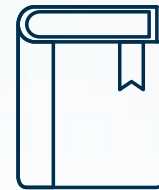


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