RESEARCH REPORT

Doing Right Versus Getting Ahead: The Effects of Duty and Achievement Orientations on Employees' Voice

Subrahmaniam Tangirala
University of Maryland

Dishan Kamdar
Indian School of Business

Vijaya Venkataramani and Michael R. Parke
University of Maryland

Using role theory as the overarching framework, we propose that employees' voice has contrasting relationships with the traits of duty orientation, or employees' dispositional sense of moral and ethical obligation at the workplace, and achievement orientation, or the extent of their ingrained personal ambition to get ahead professionally. Using data from 262 employees and their managers, we demonstrate that duty and achievement orientations are, respectively, positively and negatively related to voice through their impact on voice role conceptualization or the extent to which employees consider voice as part of their personal responsibility at work. Further, we delineate how employees' beliefs about their efficacy to engage in voice and judgments about psychological safety in the organization can moderate these relationships. We discuss the implications of these findings for theory and practice.

Keywords: voice, duty orientation, achievement orientation, efficacy beliefs, psychological safety perceptions

A growing body of literature is seeking to delineate the antecedents of *voice* or the expression of challenging but constructive opinions, concerns, or ideas by employees on work-related issues (e.g., Burris, Detert, & Chiaburu, 2008; Detert & Edmondson, 2011; Morrison, Wheeler-Smith, & Kamdar, 2011; Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008b; Van Dyne, Kamdar, & Joireman, 2008; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009; see Morrison, 2011, for a review). This emerging research interest is not surprising as voice can be important for a range of organizational outcomes. By drawing attention to problems and opportunities in work practices, voice can facilitate continuous process improvement (Nemeth, 1997), help prevent mistakes or errors (Edmondson, 2003), enhance readiness for responding to unexpected situations (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001), and improve organizational performance (Mackenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011).

However, voice is a unique behavior compared with other criteria more often examined in the organizational literature such

as task performance or general employee citizenship. That is, although voice can deliver potential benefits to the organization, it can be personally risky for the employees engaging in it (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Voice involves challenging the status quo and bringing to light practices that are not functioning well at the workplace; hence, voice can elicit negative reactions such as ridicule or even sanctions from managers who often feel threatened by it (Morrison, 2011). Therefore, voice presents a dilemma for the employees: They can speak up and help positively change their organization or they can remain silent and avoid the risk of adverse personal consequences associated with voice. In this context, it is important for a study of voice predictors to take into account this predicament posed by voice.

We address this issue by proposing that when opportunities for voice arise, employees who are likely to prioritize the interest of their group over that of the self tend to speak up, whereas those who are likely to focus on the consequences to the self rather than those to their group tend to remain silent. In particular, we suggest a link between voice and the traits of *duty orientation*, or the sense of moral and ethical obligation within employees (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and *achievement orientation*, or the extent of their ingrained personal ambition to get ahead professionally (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Using role theory as our theoretical framework (Graen, 1976; Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991; Katz & Kahn, 1978), we argue that employees higher on duty orientation differ from those higher on achievement orientation in their *voice role conceptualization*, or the extent to which they perceive that engaging in voice is an integral part of their role or personal responsibility at work (cf.

Hofmann, Morgeson, & Gerras, 2003; Morrison, 1994), and, hence, diverge in the extent to which they voice. Duty orientation promotes an intrinsic commitment to act ethically or morally at the workplace (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 18). Consequently, it drives employees to work for the good of the organization without preoccupation about the personal costs for doing what is right (Moon, 2001). Therefore, employees higher on that trait should feel a greater obligation to speak up when possessing ideas or opinions that benefit the organization and, as a result, be more likely to think of voice as part of their role at work and engage in that behavior whenever required. By contrast, achievement orientation is related to a heightened personal ambition and sensitivity toward career success (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 18). Consequently, it increases focus on the self and on the ways of getting ahead at the workplace (Moon, 2001). Hence, employees higher on that trait should be attentive to the potential costs of speaking up at work such as disapproval from those in positions of power and, as a result, should be less likely to take personal responsibility for voice and could fail to engage in that behavior. That is, we propose that duty orientation has positive effects, whereas achievement orientation has negative effects on voice role conceptualization and, hence, on voice. To add conceptual nuance to our study, we also delineate the moderators that enhance the positive influence of duty orientation and suppress the negative influence of achievement orientation.

Theory and Hypotheses

Duty and Achievement Orientations

Although duty or achievement orientation can be examined as standalone traits (e.g., Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010), they have their origins as distinct dimensions of the broader personality factor of conscientiousness. Specifically, research has noted that it is useful to organize conscientiousness facets under, at least, two dimensions when examining their effects (e.g., Hough, 1992). Despite some divergence in views regarding the scope and definition of these dimensions, an influential framework, drawing from previous conceptualizations (e.g., Hogan, 1986; Hough, 1992; Jackson, Paunonen, Fraboni, & Goffin, 1996; Paunonen & Jackson, 1996; Stewart, 1999), has highlighted the utility of distinguishing the dimensions of duty and achievement orientations (Moon, 2001; Moon, Kamdar, Mayer, & Takeuchi, 2008). Within this framework, although duty and achievement orientations are expected to be correlated because certain levels of both are usually present in diligent and high performing employees, there are critical differences between the two traits.

Employees with a strong duty orientation "adhere strictly to their ethical principles and scrupulously fulfill their moral obligations" (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 18). Consequently, they tend to be less calculative about the implications of their behaviors for personal gain, become other-oriented at work, and strive for excellence on their job due to a concern for the wellbeing of their organization (Moon, 2001). For instance, such employees deescalate commitment to work-related decisions, even at the risk of damage to personal image, when such deescalation benefits the group (Moon, 2001), engage in organizationally beneficial behaviors even when doing so is risky to the self (Moon et al., 2008), gain leadership positions not by self-serving methods but via

prosocial means such as helping out coworkers (Marinova, Moon, & Kamdar, in press), and experience guilt when unable to help coworkers in need (Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010).

By contrast, employees with a strong achievement orientation are driven by personal ambition, high aspirational level, and psychological investment in a quest for career success (Costa & McCrae, 1992, p. 18). Hence, concerns of such employees tend to be self-centered—that is, although they also strive to be hardworking and resourceful, they remain sensitive to the personal costs and benefits behind work behaviors and often evaluate whether or not such behaviors maximize their advancement in the organization (Moon, 2001). For instance, such employees escalate commitment on work-related decisions to protect personal image (Moon, 2001), desist from engaging in organizationally beneficial behaviors when such behaviors are risky to the self (Moon et al., 2008), and seek to gain leadership positions by more self-enhancing competitive methods rather than by prosocial means (Marinova et al., in press).

In this context, duty and achievement orientations will likely have the same effects on behaviors that are unambiguously beneficial for the organization *and* for employees' personal ambitions (Moon, 2001). For instance, task performance (which has positive effects on the well-being of the organization as well as the careers of employees; Rosenbaum, 1984) and citizenship such as interpersonal helping (which benefits the organization by enabling coordination at work while also serving employees' aspirations to get ahead by allowing them to build positive images and effective interpersonal networks; Hui, Lam, & Law, 2000) can have positive relationships with both duty and achievement orientations, possibly explaining the consistent positive effects of higher order conscientiousness on those outcomes (cf. Barrick & Mount, 1991). However, when a behavior is personally risky for the individuals but is valuable for the organization, there is a potential divergence in the effects of the two traits. Voice, as a behavior that precisely meets these conditions, is a useful vehicle to highlight such divergence.

Role Conceptualizations

To explicate these differential effects, we use role theory as the overarching theoretical framework (Graen, 1976; Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991; Katz & Kahn, 1978). A premise of role theory is that each employee defines for himself or herself a role in the organization that is "a conception of the office he or she occupies, and a set of attitudes and beliefs about what should and should not be done by an occupant of the office (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p. 194)." These roles govern choices that employees make among various behaviors competing for their attention at work. Employees take personal responsibility for behaviors included in role conceptualizations and omit engaging in or pay lesser attention to behaviors that are excluded (Morrison, 1994). Organizationally prescribed actions such as performance on core tasks are difficult for employees to avoid. However, when it comes to more voluntary behaviors (e.g., citizenship), employees often have wider latitude; hence, individual dispositions can strongly manifest themselves in the extent to which employees consider those behaviors as part of their roles (Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991). In other words, role conceptualization can be a critical link connecting discretionary behaviors such as voice with the employee's personality.

Further, when conceptualizing his or her role, an employee is said to reflect on "behaviors that will meet responsibilities of the office, contribute to the accomplishment of organizational objectives, and further his or her own interest (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p. 194)." Stated differently, the inclusion of behaviors not formally prescribed as job responsibilities, such as voice, in one's role conceptualization is influenced by thoughts that can be prosocial (i.e., this behavior helps/hinders the organization) as well as self-interested (i.e., this behavior helps/hinders my career goals). We argue that duty and achievement orientations affect whether prosocial or self-interested thoughts dominate when employees are defining their roles.

Duty orientation. When describing duty orientation, Costa and McCrae (1992) note, "In one sense, conscientious means 'governed by conscience,' and that aspect of C is assessed as dutifulness" (p. 18). In general, duty orientation promotes a heightened ethical and moral obligation within individuals (McCrae & Costa, 2003). An outcome of this sense of conscience and moral character is that individuals with a high duty-orientation are less prone to self-serving behaviors and are driven by an intrinsic need to prosocially contribute to their larger groups (e.g., Grant & Wrzesniewski, 2010; Marinova et al., in press; Moon, 2001; Moon et al., 2008). Voice is directly targeted at correcting and improving work processes in the organization (Van Dyne, Cummings, & Parks, 1995). Hence, by taking personal responsibility for voice, employees can feel that they are satisfying their obligation to act in the best interests of their organization. Consequently, by including voice within their roles, employees with a high duty orientation can find an avenue to fulfill their dispositional need to go beyond their self-interest and beneficially influence their workplace. Further, when defining their roles, such employees are likely not deterred by the risks involved in speaking up and challenging superiors/peers on work issues as they are focused not on personal interest or protection but on organizational success (cf. Moon et al., 2008). Hence, duty orientation should be associated with the inclusion of voice into role conceptualizations.

Hypothesis 1: Duty orientation is positively related to voice role conceptualization.

Achievement orientation. In general, achievement orientation can have a positive influence on citizenship behaviors at work. Organizations often value and professionally reward employees who go beyond prescribed job responsibilities and contribute extra effort (e.g., Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006). Employees with a high achievement orientation are driven by strong career aspirations and personal ambitions of reward (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Hence, such employees might see benefits in expanding their roles to include different citizenship behaviors. In this context, voice as a highly visible citizenship behavior can present itself as viable candidate for inclusion. In fact, initial correlational evidence from a laboratory study employing undergraduate students indicated that achievement orientation is positively related to the participants' willingness to speak up (LePine & Van Dyne, 2001).

However, within an organization, in contrast to a more context divested laboratory setting, voice can present itself as a risky behavioral choice for people with high achievement orientation. Expression of concern about existing work practices is typically viewed as a criticism of those in power in the organization and often elicits defensive reactions from them (Morrison & Milliken, 2000). It is, therefore, not surprising that employees who speak up are frequently labeled as complainers or troublemakers (Pinder & Harlos, 2001). Further, novel opinions are frequently rejected or even ridiculed at the workplace (Milliken, Morrison, & Hewlin, 2003), making employees concerned about the costs to their personal image when engaging in voice. Hence, voice can hold real negative consequences for employees who are focused on getting ahead in their jobs or careers. Employees with a high achievement orientation tend to take a self-interest based perspective at work and constantly monitor the extent to which their various behaviors maximize their advancement in the organization (e.g., Moon, 2001; Moon et al., 2008; Marinova et al., in press). Consequently, for them, voice, in contrast to other discretionary behaviors (e.g., enhanced job dedication or interpersonal helping) might represent a behavior that will more likely incur multiple personal costs (cf. Van Dyne et al., 1995). In this context, employees with a high achievement orientation might focus on defining their roles in a manner that excludes a discretionary behavior such as voice but includes other behaviors that have more unambiguous relationship with personal success. Thus, in our field sample, we predict

Hypothesis 2: Achievement orientation is negatively related to voice role conceptualization.

Role conceptualizations as a mediator. Role conceptualizations provide action templates for employees (Katz & Kahn, 1978): When employees think of behaviors as part of their role, they are more likely to engage in them; By contrast, when they exclude behaviors from their role, they think of those behaviors as "not my job" and, hence, likely fail to enact them (Morrison, 1994; Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997). Therefore, voice role conceptualization, which represents the extent to which employees think of voice as part of their job role, should be positively related to voice. Further, as role conceptualizations allow for structured behavioral expression of individual dispositions, they are natural candidates to act as intermediary links between distal predictors such as personality and work outcomes (McCrae & Costa, 2003). That is, employees with high duty orientation who, because of their sense of moral responsibility to the organization, consider voice as part of their role should, thereby, also engage in voice. Similarly, employees with high achievement orientation who, due to the potentially risky nature of voice, exclude voice from their role conceptualizations should, thereby, also refrain from speaking up. Thus, we predict:

Hypothesis 3: Voice role conceptualization mediates the positive relationship between duty orientation and voice.

Hypothesis 4: Voice role conceptualization mediates the negative relationship between achievement orientation and voice.

Moderating Effects of Voice Efficacy and Psychological Safety Perceptions

Role theory contends that although dispositional preferences affect whether a behavior is included in role conceptualizations, that effect is likely modified by other factors. For instance, the influence of traits on role conceptualization can be altered by employees' perceptions of their own ability (Katz & Kahn, 1978, pp. 193–194). That is, high

(low) confidence in their skill to successfully enact a behavior that is compatible with their dispositional preferences can augment (diminish) the chances of that behavior being included in the role conceptualization. Similarly, cognitions about the extent to which a behavior is disapproved rather than encouraged at work can modify the link between employees' personal predilections and their role conceptualizations (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p. 191). That is, when defining their roles, employees not only take into account whether a behavior matches their dispositional preferences but also whether it would be accepted rather than criticized by others around them. Drawing on these arguments, we examine two moderators of trait effects in our study: *voice efficacy* or employees' self-assurance about their personal capability to speak up at work (McAllister, Kamdar, Morrison, & Turban, 2007) and *psychological safety perceptions* or employees' beliefs that personally risky behaviors such as voice are not punished in the organization (Edmondson, 1999). These moderators closely map on to the factors identified above by role theory—that is, voice efficacy represents employees' confidence in their ability to speak up, and psychological safety perceptions capture employees' evaluation of the extent to which speaking up is, in general, considered appropriate by others in the organization.

Voice efficacy. Efficacy is an assessment of one's mastery of a behavior (Bandura, 1986). Voice efficacy, in particular, refers to the extent to which employees feel capable of speaking up (e.g., Ashford, Rothbard, Piderit, & Dutton, 1998). Employees with high voice efficacy believe that they have the requisite expertise to provide constructive suggestions and opinions at the workplace (McAllister et al., 2007). When paired with high duty orientation, this sense of mastery should be particularly valuable in facilitating inclusion of voice into employees' roles. That is, when employees with high duty orientation believe that they also have the required knowledge and skill to contribute suggestions and opinions on work-related matters, their sense of moral obligation to incorporate voice in their roles should be markedly strengthened. In other words, voice efficacy heightens employees' "can-do" motivation to be change-oriented (cf. Ashford et al., 1998), and duty orientation enhances their "should-do" motivation to benefit the organization (Moon, 2001). Hence, when acting in conjunction with the other, duty orientation and voice efficacy should be especially effective in enhancing voice role conceptualizations.

Hypothesis 5: The positive relationship between duty orientation and voice role conceptualization is stronger when voice efficacy is higher.

We do not expect voice efficacy to modify the negative effects of achievement orientation. Voice efficacy does not reference external costs associated with speaking up but rather represents employees' internal confidence in coming up with and voicing suggestions and ideas (cf. Ashford et al., 1998). As discussed earlier, high achievement orientation is associated with a desire to further self-interest and get ahead in the job (Moon, 2001). Employees with such an orientation tend to constantly evaluate the extent to which their behaviors maximize career success in the organization (Moon et al., 2008). Hence, just because they feel that they have the knowledge and skills to speak up, employees with high achievement orientation do not automatically become more likely to include voice in their role. That is, voice efficacy beliefs do not answer the "what is in it for me?" question of employees

with high achievement orientation. Therefore, voice efficacy beliefs should hold little motivating potential for them. Consequently, we do not expect voice efficacy to diminish the negative effects of achievement orientation. Rather, employees with high achievement orientation will be sensitive to cognitions regarding incentives/disincentives in speaking up, an aspect captured by psychological safety perceptions.

Psychological safety perceptions. Psychological safety perceptions refer to employees' beliefs that members of their organization "will not embarrass, reject or punish someone for speaking up" (Edmondson, 1999; p. 354). They can be considered a form of "outcome expectancy" (Morrison et al., 2011). That is, when employees perceive psychological safety, they believe that the social context of their work is safe for interpersonal risk-taking and that they can challenge the status quo without negative ramifications (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009).

Psychological safety perceptions can be particularly useful in lowering inhibitions of individuals higher on achievement orientation to consider voice within their role definitions. As we make a case earlier, personal repercussions, such as the risk of being rejected or punished for speaking their mind, are potentially key reasons driving such individuals to exclude voice from their role definitions. However, when psychological safety perceptions are high, they cognitively signal to the employees that challenge-oriented behaviors such as voice do not have adverse consequences. Hence, such perceptions can act to reassure employees with higher achievement orientation that including voice in their role definitions is not detrimental to career success. Therefore, when employees with high achievement orientation perceive high psychological safety, they should be less likely to define their roles in a manner that excludes voice.

Hypothesis 6: The negative relationship between achievement orientation and voice role conceptualization is weaker when psychological safety perceptions are higher.

We do not expect psychological safety perceptions to affect or modify the positive effects of duty orientation. As discussed earlier, employees with a high duty orientation pay less attention to the personal costs associated with speaking up but rather engage in voice because of their sense of moral obligation to contribute to their workplaces (cf. Moon et al., 2008). Because of this commitment to work-related objectives rather than self-interest, they are usually not as sensitive to increases or decreases in personal risks involved with engaging in organizationally constructive behaviors (Moon, 2001). Consequently, the behavioral choices of such employees should be unaffected by variations in psychological safety perceptions. Therefore, we argue that psychological safety perceptions do not change or alter the motivating potential of high duty orientation and, hence, fail to either enhance or diminish the positive effects of duty orientation. Figure 1 summarizes our theoretical model.

Method

We collected data from employees working in a large company involved in mail management and financial services in Singapore. We requested 308 employees to participate in our study. Two hundred sixty-two employees returned the surveys for a response rate of 85% (37% male, average age = 30.49 years, average
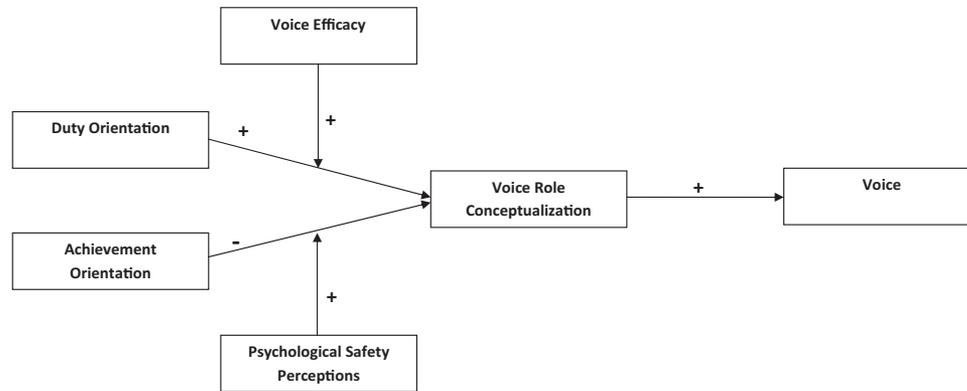
Figure 1. The effects of duty and achievement orientation on voice.

tenure = 5.20 years, 70% college graduates). Managers ($N = 42$) rated voice of the employees. These managers were identified using the organizational charts provided to us by the company; they were responsible for overseeing employees' daily work and, hence, well placed to rate employees' voice. Employees provided reports of all other variables. Numeric codes on employee surveys allowed us to match them with manager ratings.

Measures

Unless otherwise noted, 7-point Likert-type scales (1 = *strongly disagree*; 7 = *strongly agree*) were used. Table 1 provides correlations and other statistics for the study variables.

Voice. The managers rated employees using the six-item Van Dyne and LePine's (1998) voice scale. A sample item is "This employee communicates his/her opinions about work issues to others in my organization even if his/her opinion is different and others in the organization disagree with him/her."

Duty and achievement orientations. Duty orientation was measured using the eight-item dutifulness subscale of NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Sample items are "When I make a commitment, I can always be counted on to follow through" and "I adhere strictly to my ethical principles." Achievement orientation

was measured using the eight-item achievement-striving subscale of NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Sample items are "I strive to achieve all I can" and "I don't feel like I'm driven to get ahead (reverse coded)."

Voice role conceptualization. Following prior research (e.g., Van Dyne et al., 2008), we asked employees to report the extent to which they viewed each of the six items from Van Dyne and Lepine's (1998) voice measure as part of their personal responsibility on the job using a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *Definitely not part of my job*; 7 = *Definitely part of my job*). A sample item is "Communicating your opinions about work issues to others in your organization even if your opinion is different and others in the organization disagree with you."

Voice self-efficacy. Three-item self-efficacy (competence) subscale of Spreitzer's (1995) psychological empowerment measure was adapted to focus specifically on voice. A sample item is "I am self-assured about my capabilities to speak up on work-related issues in my organization."

Psychological safety perceptions. Following research that examined psychological safety at the individual level of analysis (Detert & Burris, 2007), we used four items from Edmondson's (1999) psychological safety measure. Sample items are "Employ-

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations Among Key Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Organizational tenure (years)	5.20	4.42	—											
2. Age (years)	30.49	6.01	.65*	—										
3. Education[a]	.30	.46	−.12	−.27*	—									
4. Gender[b]	.63	.48	.03	.04	.02	—								
5. Social status of the manager	4.29	1.62	−.11	−.07	.05	−.04	(.82)							
6. Face time with the manager	4.35	1.25	.04	.02	−.05	−.03	.02	(.85)						
7. Duty Orientation	4.17	1.15	.03	−.02	.05	.00	.08	.00	(.92)					
8. Achievement Orientation	4.49	1.25	.02	−.05	.08	−.09	.01	.11	.40*	(.92)				
9. Voice efficacy	4.10	1.37	−.03	−.01	.02	.04	.01	.18*	.06	.23*	(.86)			
10. Psychological safety	4.23	1.58	.04	.00	−.07	−.05	.04	.27*	.20*	.26*	.21*	(.91)		
11. Voice role conceptualization	4.40	1.26	−.04	−.12*	.08	.11	−.15*	−.16*	.17*	−.13*	.15*	.30*	(.89)	
12. Voice (manager's reports)	3.77	1.41	.03	−.00	−.03	.01	−.19*	.04	.12*	−.09	.30*	.33*	.34*	(.95)

Note. $N = 262$. Internal consistency reliabilities appear in parentheses along the diagonal.
[a] Dummy coded: 1 = no college degree; 0 = college degree.   [b] Dummy coded: 1 = female; 0 = male.
* $p < .05$.

ees in this organization feel comfortable bringing up problems and tough issues" and "It is safe to take a risk in this organization."

Control variables. We controlled for employee characteristics that can influence key relationships in our model: gender, age, organizational tenure and educational level. It is possible that gender influences voice, with men confronting fewer psychological obstacles in asserting their viewpoint (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1997). Similarly, employees, who are more experienced (as reflected in their tenure or age), may have more familiarity with operations that can enhance their ability to speak up. Further, employees possessing higher levels of education might demonstrate greater confidence in speaking up.

Additionally, although we measured voice using managers' ratings to minimize common-source threats, such observer ratings can be a source of bias (Dalal, 2005). Hence, we controlled for two aspects of employees' interaction with the managers that can act as omitted variables. First, the ability of a manager to observe voice can be affected by the face time that he or she has with the employees. Hence, we controlled for face time using three items from Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1994; sample item: "The nature of my job is such that my manager is seldom around me when I am working" reverse-coded)." Second, the social status of the managers is known to influence voice from the subordinates—that is, employees are often hesitant speaking up in the presence of high status managers, which can reduce the occasions available for such managers to observe voice (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008a). Hence, we controlled for manager's status using three items from Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades (2002; sample item: "In my organization, my manager is held in high regard"). This allowed us to rule out potential power differentials between the observers and the targets as a driver of our results.

Analytical Approach

Our model was conceptualized at the individual level of analysis. However, the managers in our sample provided voice ratings for multiple employees reporting to them (average number of employees per manager = 6.24). Hence, our observations potentially violated the independence assumption. Therefore, we checked for the presence of nesting effects (Bliese, 2000). First, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated no significant between-group differences on voice ($F = .92$, $p > .05$). Moreover, intraclass correlation coefficient 1 (ICC1; .01) and ICC2 (.09) scores for voice indicated insufficient between-group variance and unreliable differentiation at the group-level. Second, one-way ANOVA indicated that the independent variables (i.e., duty and achievement orientation, psychological safety, voice efficacy, and voice role conceptualization) demonstrated neither any significant between-group variance ($p > .05$) nor any sufficient/reliable between-group differentiation (all ICC1 values were below .06; all ICC2 values were below .29). Given this lack of support for nesting effects, we analyzed the data by a single-level regression-based path analysis using a maximum likelihood estimator in Mplus 6.1 (Muthén, & Muthén, 1998–2010). This approach allowed for simultaneous examination of the individual links in our conceptual model *and* integrative tests of mediation and modera-

tion using a bootstrapping methodology (cf. Edwards & Lambert, 2007).

Results

To begin with, confirmatory factor analysis indicated discriminant validity of the following: voice, voice role conceptualization, duty orientation, achievement orientation, voice efficacy, psychological safety, face time with the manager, and manager's status.[1]

Table 2 presents the results pertaining to the individual links in our conceptual model from the regression-based path analysis. Duty orientation was positively related to voice role conceptualization ($b = .29$, $p < .05$; Table 2, $X{\rightarrow}M$ model), supporting Hypothesis 1. Further, achievement orientation was negatively related to employees' voice role conceptualization ($b = -.22$, $p < .05$; Table 2, $X{\rightarrow}M$ model), supporting Hypothesis 2.

We tested for the significance of indirect effects of duty and achievement orientation on voice in our path model using a bootstrapping based approach that involved 1,000 data draws (cf. Edwards & Lambert, 2007). Our analysis indicated that there were significant unconditional indirect effects of duty orientation (.10), 95% CI [.04, .18], $p < .05$, and achievement orientation (−.08), 95% CI [−.16, −.03], $p < .05$, on voice via role conceptualizations. This indicated that the duty orientation-voice relationship was mediated by voice role conceptualization, supporting Hypothesis 3, and that the achievement orientation-voice relationship was mediated by voice role conceptualization, supporting Hypothesis 4.

Further, duty orientation interacted with voice efficacy to predict voice role conceptualization ($b = .11$, $p < .05$; Table 2, $X^*Z{\rightarrow}M$ model). Simple slopes test (Aiken & West, 1991) indicated that duty orientation was more positively related to role conceptualization when employees had higher ($b = .43$, $p < .05$; +1 SD) rather than lower ($b = .16$, $p < .05$; −1 SD) voice efficacy, supporting Hypothesis 5 (Figure 2 illustrates the interaction). Additionally, achievement orientation interacted with psychological safety perceptions to predict voice role conceptualization ($b = .07$, $p < .05$; Table 2, $X^*Z{\rightarrow}M$ model). Simple slopes test (Aiken & West, 1991) indicated that achievement orientation was less negatively related to role conceptualization when employees perceived higher ($b = -.20$, $p < .05$; +1 SD) rather than lower ($b = -.43$, $p < .05$; −1 SD) psychological safety, supporting Hypothesis 6 (Figure 3 illustrates the interaction).

To confirm our overall model, which hypothesized a combination of mediation (Hypotheses 3 and 4) and moderation (Hypotheses 5 and 6), we estimated how the indirect effects of duty and achievement orientations on voice (via role conceptualization) varied as a function of our two moderators (voice efficacy and psychological safety). These indirect effects (i.e., first-stage mediated moderation) in our path model were examined using the bootstrapping approach described earlier (cf. Edwards & Lambert, 2007). Results indicated that the indirect effects of duty and achievement orientation significantly differed as a function of the moderators ($p < .05$). That is, the positive indirect effect of duty orientation on voice was stronger when employees had higher voice efficacy (.16; $p < .05$; +1 SD) than lower voice efficacy

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[1] The results of the confirmatory factor analysis are available on request from Subrahmaniam Tangirala.

Table 2

Results of Regression-Based Path Analysis in Mplus 6.1

Predictor	Baseline model		Direct effects (X→Y) Voice	Mediation		Moderation (X*Z→M) Voice role concept.		
	(M) Voice role concept.	(Y) Voice		(X→M) Voice role	(M→Y) Voice			
Intercept	6.29*	4.56*	4.44*	6.12*	2.35*	6.80*	7.00*	6.98*
Age (years)	−.03*	−.01	−.01	−.03*	.00	−.03*	−.04*	−.04*
Organizational tenure (years)	.02	.01	.01	.02	−.01	.01	.03	.02
Education[a]	.11	−.09	−.07	.13	−.11	.21	.18	.18
Gender[b]	.27	.02	−.03	.22	−.11	.21	.22	.22
Social status of the manager	−.12*	−.16*	−.18*	−.13*	−.13*	−.14*	−.17*	−.17*
Face time with the manager	−.15*	.04	.07	−.13*	.11	−.25*	−.25*	−.25*
Duty			.26*	.29*	.16	.24*	.29*	.28*
Achievement			−.21*	−.22*	−.13	−.33*	−.31*	−.30*
Voice efficacy						.16*	.17*	.16*
Psychological safety						.31*	.33*	.32*
Duty × Voice Efficacy							.11*	.12*
Achievement × Psychological Safety							.07*	.08*
Duty × Psychological Safety								−.04
Achievement × Voice Efficacy								.01
Voice role conceptualization					.34*			
R^2	.08*	.04	.08*	.15*	.16*	.32*	.36*	.36*
ΔR^2			.04[c]	.07[c]	.08[c]	.17[c]	.04[d]	.00[d]

Note. N = 262. Unstandardized regression weights with maximum likelihood estimator. Substantive variables were mean centered when testing for interactions. X = independent variables (duty and achievement orientations); M = mediator; Y = dependent variable; Z = moderators (voice efficacy and psychological safety); concept. = conceptualization.
[a] Dummy coded: 1 = no college degree; 0 = college degree. [b] Dummy coded: 1 = female; 0 = male. [c] Incremental variance over the baseline model. [d] Incremental variance over the previous model.
* $p < .05$.

(.04; *ns*; −1 SD). The negative indirect effect of achievement orientation on voice was weaker when employees perceived higher psychological safety (−.06; *ns*; +1 SD) than lower psychological safety (−.15; *p* < .05; −1 SD). This highlighted the robustness of empirical evidence for our conceptual model.

Supplementary Analysis

Although the findings above suggested support for our theory, we made an untested assumption in our conceptual model that duty (achievement) orientation increases (decreases) concern for the organization and others in it and, hence, decreases (increases) sensitivity to personal costs for speaking up. To verify this assumption we collected supplementary data. We administered surveys to 271 employees (55.7% male, average age = 31.6 years, average tenure = 4.04 years, 64% college graduates, 80% response rate) from a different division in the same company where the original data were collected. Data analysis indicated that duty and achievement orientations (measured using the same scales as in the
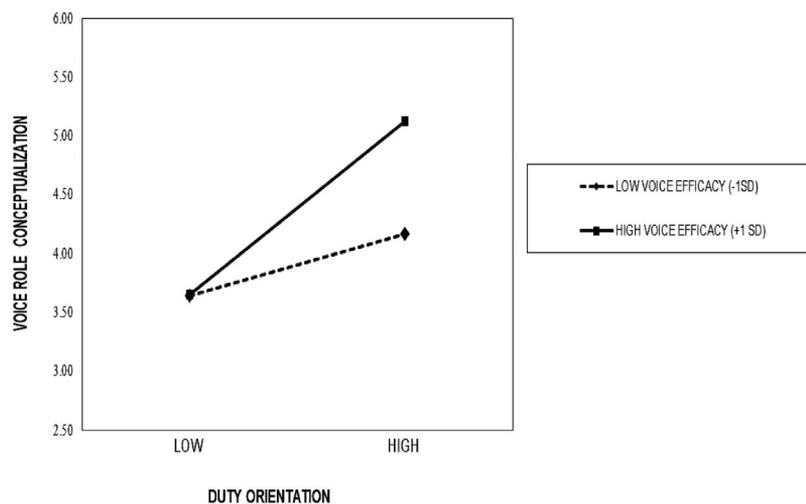

Figure 2. The interactive effects of duty orientation and voice efficacy on voice role conceptualization.
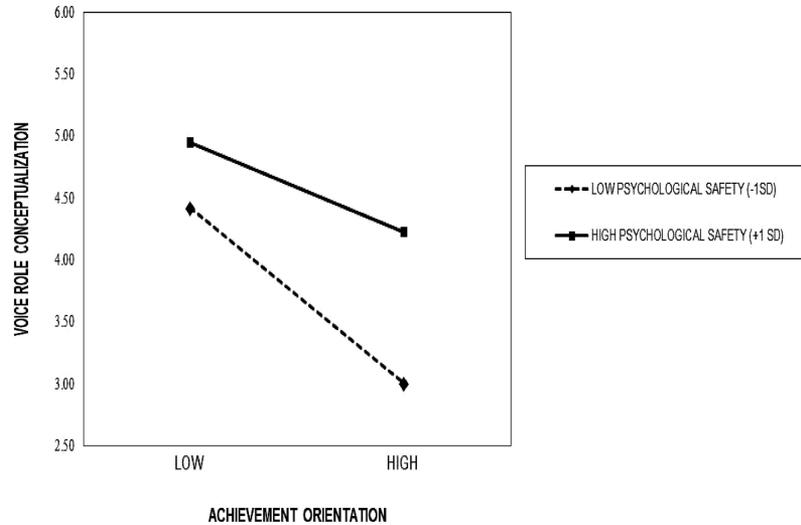
Figure 3. The interactive effects of achievement orientation and psychological safety perceptions on voice role conceptualization.

original study) were, respectively, positively and negatively related (partial correlations) to variables that represent concern for the organization and others in it: (a) *prosocial motivation* (Grant, 2008; .45, $p < .05$ vs. $-.35$, $p < .05$; a sample item is "I care about benefitting others through my work," $\alpha = .93$) and (b) *other-orientation* (De Dreu & Nauta, 2009; .45, $p < .05$ vs. $-.37$, $p < .05$; Sample item: "At work, I am concerned about the needs and interests of others such as my colleagues," $\alpha = .93$), indicating that duty orientation increased concern for the organization and others in it, whereas achievement orientation decreased it. Further, duty and achievement orientations were differentially related to the sensitivity of employees to the costs involved in speaking up. Specifically, employees were asked to report about the extent to which engaging in the behaviors on the voice scale (used in the original study) has negative personal consequences in the organization ($\alpha = .95$). Regression results indicated that such perceptions of risk in voice were positively related to achievement orientation, $b = .22$ (.06), $p < .05$, and negatively related to duty orientation, $b = -.38$ (.09), $p < .05$; the difference between the two was significant, $\Delta b = .59$ (12), $p < .05$, indicating that achievement orientation, in contrast to duty orientation, increased attentiveness to personal costs of speaking up. This analysis strengthened our confidence in the conceptual arguments underlying our model.

Discussion

In support of our overall model, we found that duty orientation had positive effects and achievement orientation had negative effects on voice role conceptualization and, thereby, on voice. Further, voice efficacy strengthened the positive influences of duty orientation, whereas psychological safety perceptions weakened the negative influences of achievement orientation.

Theoretical Contributions

We make several contributions to the literature. First, voice presents a predicament for the employees (e.g., Morrison & Mil-

liken, 2000): By speaking up, employees can contribute constructively toward improving their organizations. However, they have to weigh such positives for their organizations against the risk of adverse personal consequences involved in questioning or challenging peers and superiors. In this context, we highlight how dispositional inclinations of employees can drive them to favor voice over silence (and vice versa). Specifically, employees with high duty orientation speak up due to a focus on fulfilling their (morally riven) obligation toward the organization (Costa & Mc-Crae, 1992) rather than on the risk to the self (Moon, 2001). By contrast, employees with high achievement orientation remain silent due to their emphasis on career success and personal ambition (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and the concomitant focus on outcomes to the self rather than on benefits to the organization (Moon, 2001). Consequently, using duty and achievement orientations as exemplars, we underscore how voice research can enhance conceptual precision and predictive validity by selecting antecedents that target the manner in which employees weigh the trade-off between the interests of the self (which are often served when they do not rock the boat by airing dissenting views) and those of the organization (which are often served when they speak truth to power).

Second, we add to research on duty and achievement orientations by delineating how they are distinctly related to voice. The only other study that has explored the relationship between these narrower facets of conscientiousness and voice was reported in LePine and Van Dyne (2001). Although this study was an important starting point in explicating how Big Five personality factors, in general, influence voice, it did not examine how duty and achievement orientations, in particular, are connected with voice (mediators) or the conditions in which they have stronger rather than a weaker relationship with voice (moderators). Moreover, that study was conducted in the laboratory where undergraduate students worked on a team decision-making exercise. Consequently, it might have represented a psychologically safer context for speaking out and might not have fully replicated conditions in organizations where there are real negative personal consequences

for employees seeking to challenge the work-related status quo; this was potentially the reason that it did not find differential effects of duty and achievement orientations on voice. The current study builds on this prior work and points the way for future research on the topic by not only explicating conceptually derived mediators and moderators of the effects of duty and achievement orientations on voice but also by examining these traits in a field setting that likely brought forth the divergent consequences of duty and achievement orientations.

Finally, although voice research has indicated that role perceptions can influence voice (Van Dyne et al., 2008), it has overlooked how such perceptions can connect employee traits with voice. By examining voice role conceptualizations as mediators, we bring to the attention of voice research an important historical viewpoint that personality is a collection of all possible social roles that people prefer to play in their life and, hence, should be manifested in the nature of roles that people take responsibility for in social settings; a corollary of which is that role making can be the critical link between personality and behaviors such as voice (cf. McCrae & Costa, 2003). Moreover, by examining main as well as interactive effects of duty and achievement orientations on role perceptions, we extend broader research that has employed role theory to explain work behavior (e.g., McAllister et al., 2007; Morrison, 1994; Parker et al., 1997) by underscoring the complex ways in which traits in conjunction with cognitions (beliefs about voice efficacy and psychological safety) affect how employees conceive of their roles.

Limitations and Future Research

The following limitations, which point to future research directions, should be noted. First, due to our cross-sectional design, we cannot conclusively establish causality in the reported relationships. For instance, based on theory and prior empirical research, we argued that role conceptualizations act as antecedents of voice. However, it is possible that there is bidirectionality in this relationship as employees who speak up at work might, over time, also incorporate voice in their roles. It is important for research to longitudinally examine voice so that causality in its relationship with the antecedents studied here can be better established. Second, theoretically, we made a case that employees with higher duty orientation have increased concern for others in the organization (cf. Moon, 2001) and therefore include voice their role conceptualizations and speak up. However, empirically, we did not directly capture such prosocial motives of employees in our study. Similarly, we conceptually made a case that employees with higher achievement orientation take a self-interest based perspective at the workplace and constantly monitor the extent to which their various behaviors maximize their advancement in the organization (e.g., Moon, 2001). Consequently, we argued that such employees are likely to perceive multiple personal costs in engaging in voice, might focus on defining their roles to exclude voice, and might fail to speak up. However, in our study, we did not directly examine whether or not higher achievement orientation was influencing voice and voice role conceptualization via perceptions of negative instrumentality or risk. Although our supplementary analysis provided suggestive evidence on this front, it is important for future research to more directly examine prosocial motives and perceived instrumentality as variables that might explain or intervene in the

association between duty/achievement orientation and voice/voice role conceptualization. Finally, we examined our variables at the individual-level of analysis. A multilevel study that explores how the effects of duty/achievement orientation are influenced by factors such as work-unit climate will extend our understanding of the social contexts in which those dispositions have stronger or weaker effects on various work behaviors.

Managerial Implications

Managers have to be aware that employees differ in their duty and achievement orientations and, thereby, in the extent to which they act with a sense of moral obligation toward the organization and, consequently, place the concerns of the organization over their own. This recognition will help managers, who want to encourage voice, to tailor their interventions to the specific personality-based strivings of their employees.

For instance, opportunities for mastering competencies needed to speak up on the job (e.g., training on technical as well as communication skills) can increase voice efficacy (cf. Bandura, 1986); this can especially help employees with high duty orientation to think about including voice in their role at the workplace and to speak up on issues of organizational significance. By contrast, public encouragement and reward of work experimentation and being considerate of new ideas without rejecting or punishing employees for speaking up can enhance psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999); this can be especially useful in removing disincentives that prevent employees with high achievement orientation from taking personal responsibility for voice and, hence, for candidly speaking up with their concerns at the workplace.

Conclusion

In this study, we highlight how voice is better explicated as a behavior that can involve a trade-off between the interests of the self and those of the organization. Employees driven by a trait-based morally driven sense of obligation (duty orientation), in contrast to those motivated by personal ambition (achievement orientation), are more likely to work toward the benefit of their larger group and speak up at work. These findings, we hope, will stimulate further nuanced research on the antecedents of voice that factors in its distinctive nature.

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