Mitigating the psychologically detrimental effects of supervisor undermining: Joint effects of voice and political skill

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Abstract

It is of growing concern that supervisors sometimes engage in destructive leadership behavior to undermine their subordinates, which exacts a psychological toll on these employees. How can employees mitigate and overcome the adverse psychological effects of supervisor undermining? Invoking theories of personal agency and social competencies, this study addresses this important question by examining the effectiveness of employee voice in buffering the adverse effects of supervisor undermining on employee work-related well-being and turnover intention. Through a three-wave field study, we found that voice plays a buffering role in the relationship between supervisor undermining and these outcome variables only when employees possess high levels of political skill (i.e.,

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three-way interactions), and that this buffering effect is realized through mitigating the adverse effects of supervisor undermining on employee psychological empowerment. In contrast, when employees possess low levels of political skill, engaging in high levels of voice exacerbates the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining on employee psychological empowerment, and subsequently decreases employee work-related well-being and heightens employee turnover intention. The theoretical and practical implications of our findings are discussed.

Although organizations count on supervisory leaders to motivate and develop their employees, we are increasingly faced with the reality that supervisors sometimes engage in destructive leadership behaviors to harm and undermine their direct reports (Krasikova et al., 2013; Mackey et al., 2019; Schyns and Schilling, 2013). Research estimates that 10% to 30% of working populations suffer from supervisor undermining (Schat et al., 2006; Tepper et al., 2017), which exacts a psychological toll on employees (Schyns and Schilling, 2013) and ultimately affects how well organizations operate (Mackey et al., 2019). For example, evidence suggests that exposure to supervisor undermining detrimentally influences employees' quality of work life as indicated by decreased work engagement and job satisfaction and heightened turnover intentions (Duffy et al., 2002; O'Donoghue et al., 2016; Tepper, 2000).

It is, therefore, important to examine employee work behaviors that could help mitigate the adverse psychological consequences of supervisor undermining (Sutton, 2017; Tepper and Almeda, 2012). For instance, Tepper et al. (2015) found that employees' supervisor-directed hostile behaviors could mitigate the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining on employees' job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, psychological distress, and subjective career success. However, as Tepper et al. (2015) discussed, while engaging in hostile behaviors may be psychologically beneficial when interacting with an undermining supervisor, it can also contribute to a culture of hostility and, in the long run, be detrimental to organizational functioning and to all organizational members.

An emerging body of research suggests that employees may engage in constructive voice to change their work environment and mitigate the effects of supervisor undermining (Greenbaum et al., 2013; Mitchell and Ambrose, 2012; Tepper et al., 2001, 2007). However, research has yet to examine whether employee voice is effective in mitigating the psychologically detrimental effects of supervisor undermining (Morrison, 2014).[1]

In the current study, extending this emerging body of work, we explore the effectiveness of employee voice in mitigating the adverse effects of supervisor undermining on employee turnover intention and work-related well-being as indicated by work engagement and job satisfaction (O'Donoghue et al., 2016; Schaufeli et al., 2008). The notion of employee voice stems from Hirschman's (1970) assertion that employees may resort to voice as a political strategy to change dissatisfying work conditions to improve their

well-being before quitting. Hirschman (1970: 16) commends voicing critical opinions for changes as "political action par excellence" and highlights it as "a basic portion and function of any political system, known sometimes also as *interest articulation*." Ever since Hirschman's seminal work, the organization literature has deepened our understanding of voice as a construct (Klaas et al., 2012; Morrison, 2014; Van Dyne et al., 2003).

To heed calls for more precision in voice research (Detert and Burris, 2007; Van Dyne et al., 2003), we limit our voice construct to *change-oriented prosocial voice* towards supervisors, defined as the expression of change-oriented comments to improve rather than merely criticize the situation (Van Dyne et al., 2003). Unlike other types of voice such as acquiescent and defensive voice, prosocial voice is agentic and proactive, meaning that it seeks to exercise control over the environment (Morrison, 2014; Van Dyne et al., 2003). We focus on this specific type of voice because "only prosocial, improvement-oriented voice presents those in power with information that might actually spark learning and change" (Detert and Treviño, 2010: 249). Further, although employees can voice to coworkers or senior managers, voice to supervisors is critical: supervisors can directly address the issues raised, whereas coworkers often lack the power to address them, and skipping supervisors to go directly to senior managers can complicate the issue and risk further trouble for going above them (Detert and Burris, 2007; Detert and Treviño, 2010).

Though voice is a constructive behavioral strategy that employees can use to mitigate the adverse effects of supervisor undermining, it is also a delicate process because it implicitly or explicitly criticizes supervisors and invites their intense scrutiny (Morrison, 2014; Van Dyne and LePine, 1998). Scholars have long noted that voice is a risky behavior that can threaten supervisors, and hence may not always be effective as intended (Burris, 2012; Grant, 2013; Morrison and Milliken, 2000). Drawing from theories of personal agency and social competencies (Ewen et al., 2014; Wihler et al., 2017), we propose that the effectiveness of voice in mitigating the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining depends on employees' political skill (i.e., a three-way interaction). *Political skill* is defined as "the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/ or organizational objectives" (Ahearn et al., 2004: 311). Political skill is a social competence construct specific to work contexts (Ferris et al., 2007; Munyon et al., 2015). It can translate people's agentic motives into successful action because it enables employees to effectively recognize and capitalize on opportunities for change-oriented agentic behaviors such as voice (McAllister et al., 2018; Wihler et al., 2017). As such, political skill should help employees manage their suggestions into good currency, making the buffering effect of voice more likely to occur.

Further, because supervisor undermining affects employee well-being and turnover intention primarily by creating a sense of powerlessness (Lyu et al., 2019; Shnabel and Nadler, 2008) and because employee voice as an agentic coping strategy is driven by the motivation to exercise control over their work environment (Morrison, 2014; Tangirala and Ramanujam, 2008), we posit that employee psychological empowerment mediates the expected three-way interactions on employee work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. *Psychological empowerment* is "defined as a personal sense of
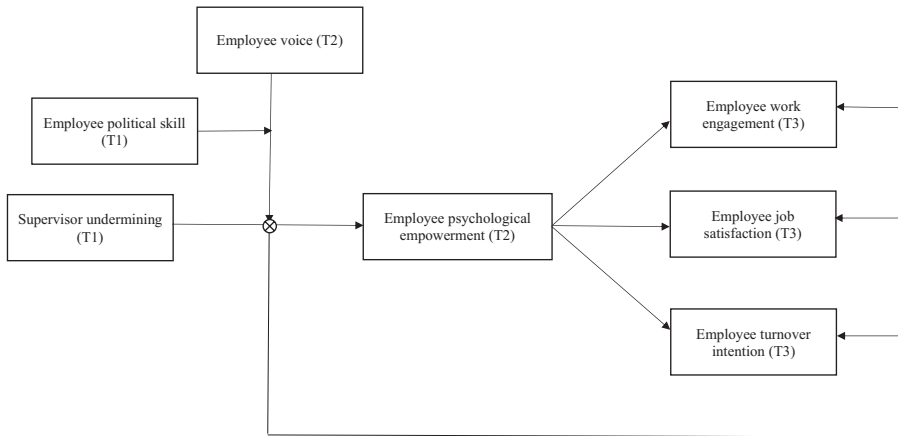
Figure 1. Conceptual model.

control in the workplace" (Seibert et al., 2011; Spreitzer and Mishra, 2002: 714). The conceptual model guiding our research is presented in Figure 1. We test our model in a three-wave field study.

Our study makes important theoretical and practical contributions as follows. First, we contribute empirically and theoretically to the literature on coping with the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining. Existing scholarship points to the potential usefulness of employee voice in mitigating the negative effects of supervisor undermining. Yet, whether and what makes employee voice effective in buffering the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining is not entirely clear. We make important theoretical contributions by revealing employee political skill as a boundary condition of the buffering effect of employee voice, and by identifying psychological empowerment as one psychological mediating mechanism that could account for its buffering effect. Second, our research contributes to the narrative that political behavior (i.e., voice in this case: Ferris et al., 2019; Hirschman, 1970) can have a positive effect on employees, which challenges the pervasive view that political behavior is negative. Political behavior is often depicted as a self-interested action performed to gain undeserved benefits. Yet, our research suggests that in the context of supervisor undermining, engaging in voice as a political strategy (with the aid of political skill) could have a functional role in mitigating the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining. Finally, our investigation has significant practical implications, as it demonstrates how employees can protect themselves from the adverse effects of supervisor undermining in a diplomatic way through voice behavior and applying political skill.

Theoretical background

Theories of personal agency and social competencies (Ewen et al., 2014; Wihler et al., 2017) provide the theoretical foundation for our prediction regarding the joint moderating effect of employee voice and political skill on the relationship between supervisor undermining and employee work-related well-being and turnover intention. Theories of

human agency argue that people actively seek to create and transform their environments for the better rather than passively endure them (Bandura, 1997; Grant and Ashford, 2008). To succeed, they need social competencies to package, present, and leverage their agentic behaviors in a convincing yet subtle and adaptive manner (Ewen et al., 2014). This is because they do not engage in agentic behaviors in a social vacuum but in a social context where people likely have different views and interests (Ferris et al., 2019; Morrison, 2014; Wihler et al., 2017).

Political skill has been identified as a comprehensive social competence that facilitates the success of agentic behaviors in organizations (Ewen et al., 2014; Ferris et al., 2007, 2019). Research supports the notion that political skill can enhance the effectiveness of various agentic influence behaviors (Harris et al., 2007; Treadway et al., 2005). Political skill enhances the effectiveness of agentic behaviors because politically skilled employees are good at identifying and capitalizing on opportunities for such behaviors (Ferris et al., 2019; McAllister et al., 2018; Wihler et al., 2017). Based on theories of personal agency and social competencies, we predict that the effectiveness of voice as a buffer depends on employees' political skill to identify and capitalize on the opportunities to voice.

Finally, in studying voice, we note that a lack of voice does not imply deliberate silence. In regard to this point, research has clarified that voice and silence are not polar opposites but independent constructs, as delineated in theoretical work (Pinder and Harlos, 2001; Van Dyne et al., 2003) and a recent meta-analysis (Sherf et al., 2020).

Development of hypotheses

In this section, we develop hypotheses that employee voice and political skill jointly buffer the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining on employee work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention (i.e., three-way interactions), and that the three-way interaction effects on these outcome variables are partially mediated by employee psychological empowerment. We choose psychological empowerment as a core mechanism because it is commonly assumed to be the primary psychological resource that is impaired following episodes of supervisor undermining (Aquino and Thau, 2009; Lian et al., 2012; Lyu et al., 2019; Shnabel and Nadler, 2008). That is, supervisor undermining thwarts the satisfaction of employees' intrinsic needs for competence, autonomy, and purpose that underpin psychological empowerment (Aquino and Thau, 2009; Gagné et al., 1997; Shnabel and Nadler, 2008).

The central logic underlying our proposed relationships is that voicing ideas for change can be considered as an agentic behavior through which employees intend to shape workplace arrangements and exercise personal control over their work environment, and that political skill likely improves the effectiveness of employee voice in doing so. Consequently, the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining on psychological empowerment will be weakened for employees with high levels of voice and political skill. Since psychological empowerment can enhance work engagement and job satisfaction and reduce turnover intention (Gagné et al., 1997; Seibert et al., 2011), it constitutes one psychological mechanism to explain the expected overall three-way interactions (between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and employee political skill) on

these outcome variables. We elaborate on our proposed mediated moderation relationships below.

Supervisor undermining and employee psychological empowerment

Psychological empowerment is a unitary or gestalt construct reflecting a sense of control in relation to one's work as manifested in four cognitions: meaning, self-determination, competence, and impact (Seibert et al., 2011; Spreitzer and Mishra, 2002). More specifically, employees with higher levels of psychological empowerment believe that their work is important and significant (meaning), that they are competent at performing their work (competence), that they have autonomy to decide how to perform their work (self-determination), and that they can influence strategic, administrative, or operational activities and outcomes at work (impact) (Spreitzer, 1995). These four beliefs capture an overall sense of control at work (cf. Seibert et al., 2011), which has been shown to influence a wide range of employee outcomes including job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational commitment, job strain, and turnover intention (Maynard et al., 2012; Quiñones et al., 2013).

Supervisor undermining poses a threat to employees' sense of psychological empowerment. First, supervisor undermining behaviors such as showing anger to and publicly criticizing employees convey to the employees that their work or contributions are not valued by the supervisor (Duffy et al., 2002; Tepper et al., 2008), which can decrease a sense of significance or meaning. Second, supervisor undermining behaviors also discredit the effectiveness of an employee's work behaviors and thereby can decrease a sense of competence (Conger and Kanungo, 1988). Third, supervisor undermining behaviors demonstrate the supervisor's disapproval of the undermined employees (Nahum-Shani et al., 2014), which can put the undermined employees under the supervisor's critical scrutiny and hence decrease prospects for self-determination. Finally, since supervisors maintain control over important decisions at work (Mitchell and Ambrose, 2007), when being undermined by their supervisor, employees' sense of impact on important work decisions should be reduced accordingly. In short, supervisor undermining is expected to reduce employees' sense of psychological empowerment.

> *Hypothesis 1*: Supervisor undermining negatively relates to employee psychological empowerment.

Joint moderating effects of employee voice and political skill

A basic assumption of psychological empowerment theory is that employees feel psychologically empowered when they believe they are successfully shaping and influencing organizational environments through their voice (Lee and Whitford, 2008; Spreitzer, 1996). Hence, voice can potentially help buffer the negative impact of supervisor undermining on psychological empowerment. However, for voice to be effective, employees must be able to see opportunities for voice and to capitalize on these opportunities to deliver voice in socially effective ways (Burris, 2012; Morrison, 2014), which requires skills. Drawing from theories of personal agency and social competencies (Ewen et al., 2014; Wihler et al., 2017), we posit that employee voice can buffer the adverse effect of

supervisor undermining on employee psychological empowerment when the employee has strong political skill.

Political skill is a higher-order social effectiveness construct consisting of four dimensions: social astuteness, networking ability, interpersonal influence, and apparent sincerity (Ferris et al., 2005). Social astuteness refers to the ability to accurately comprehend others and social situations. Networking ability reflects the capability to develop networks that provide diverse information and support. Interpersonal influence refers to the capacity to appropriately calibrate behaviors to subtly influence others. Apparent sincerity enables one to be perceived as genuine and trustworthy with no ulterior motive. Overall, politically skilled individuals "combine social astuteness with the capacity to adjust their behavior to different and changing situational demands in a manner that appears to be sincere, inspires support and trust, and effectively influences and controls the responses of others" (Ferris et al., 2005: 127).

Invoking theories of personal agency and social competencies (Ewen et al., 2014; Wihler et al., 2017), we propose that voice is more likely to buffer the negative effects of supervisor undermining when employees have the political skill to (1) read their environments to identify opportunities to voice and (2) express their ideas and suggestions in socially adaptive and sincere ways to fully capitalize on the voice opportunities (McAllister et al., 2018). That is, political skill represents a "read-and-appropriately-act" combination of competencies (Wihler et al., 2017) that will enhance the effectiveness of voice and produce a sense of control and mastery over work environments (Ferris et al., 2007; Frieder et al., 2019), thereby helping to buffer the negative impact of supervisor undermining on psychological empowerment.

First, politically skilled employees are better able to evaluate what kinds of ideas and suggestions are valued and when it is appropriate to voice them (i.e., opportunity recognition). Specifically, politically skilled employees can use their social astuteness to judge the needs of their organization and supervisors more accurately (Munyon et al., 2015). Similarly, they can use their networking ability to obtain diverse information to better evaluate organizational needs (Ferris et al., 2007). Employees need to have the political skill to assess such needs because whether they voice effectively depends on whether they can address "what the target considers the most important or pressing problems and opportunities" (Howell et al., 2015: 1766). By accurately gauging and understanding needs, politically skilled employees are better able to determine the best options to proceed and to avoid irrelevant issues (Frieder et al., 2019). Further, politically skilled employees could also use their social astuteness and networking ability to "read the wind" to identify the appropriate situations to bring up their ideas and present them in the best possible light (McAllister et al., 2018; Witt, 1998). Therefore, when politically skilled employees voice their ideas and suggestions, they can better highlight their competence and value and feel a greater sense of impact via their self-initiated actions.

Second, politically skilled employees are more likely to deliver their voice in socially effective ways. Even when employees have relevant ideas and recognize the appropriate opportunities to bring them up, they still need to choose the appropriate ways to voice (Morrison, 2014). Evidence shows that information presented in polite and sincere ways is more likely to be well received than messages presented in challenging or disrespectful ways (Burris, 2012; Lam et al., 2018), suggesting that employees need to attend to the manner of their voice. In this regard, politically skilled employees can use their

interpersonal influence skills and apparent sincerity to deliver their ideas and solutions adaptively and genuinely (McAllister et al., 2018). As a result of their effective voice delivery, politically skilled employees are more likely to develop a sense that they are effectively shaping and influencing organizational activities, thereby buffering the negative impact of supervisor undermining on a sense of psychological empowerment (Spreitzer, 1996).

Overall, because of their innate ability to read people and social situations and to act on that understanding to voice effectively, politically skilled employees can develop positive self-evaluations that produce a sense of personal security and calm self-confidence (Ferris et al., 2007; Frieder et al., 2019; Munyon et al., 2015; Perrewé et al., 2000). As Ferris et al. (2007: 302) argued, "feedback over time from such successful interpersonal encounters contributes to the experience of control and mastery over others in their environment, which leads politically skilled individuals to evaluate themselves positively." Consequently, although supervisor undermining could have a detrimental effect on psychological empowerment, employees with strong political skills can effectively use their voice to conserve a sense of psychological empowerment.

In contrast, when employees lack political skill, they lack the ability to anticipate organizational needs accurately and to deliver their ideas and solutions in ways that inspire trust and support. As a result, politically unskilled employees are less likely to voice effectively and less likely to develop a sense of personal control over their work environments, which will make the buffering effect of voice on the relationship between supervisor undermining and employee psychological empowerment less likely to occur. In fact, due to their inability to voice effectively, politically unskilled employees may perceive their attempts to regain a sense of control via voice behavior as futile efforts (Ashforth, 1989; Seligman, 1972). As a consequence, there is a chance that politically unskilled employees who engage in high levels of voice may become increasingly frustrated and feel more impotent and powerless in the face of supervisor undermining.

To summarize, we propose that stronger political skill will better enable employees to understand the needs of the organization and their supervisors and to use that understanding to engage in more effective voice. Consequently, employees with high voice and high political skill should be in a better position to demonstrate their competence and value and to reaffirm prospects for autonomy and impact, which, taken together, should help preserve a sense of psychological empowerment. Conversely, employees with high voice but low political skill may not maintain a sense of psychological empowerment when being undermined because they lack the capacity to effectively identify and capitalize on opportunities to voice:

> *Hypothesis 2*: Employee political skill moderates the buffering effect of voice on the relationship between supervisor undermining and psychological empowerment such that the buffering effect is more likely to occur when political skill is higher rather than lower.

Psychological empowerment, in turn, will increase work engagement and job satisfaction and decrease turnover intention. Because psychological empowerment fulfills intrinsic human needs for autonomy, competence, and purpose, and gives employees a

sense of personal control at work (e.g., Gagné et al., 1997; Spreitzer and Mishra, 2002), psychologically empowered employees are more likely to experience greater work engagement, defined as a positive work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003), and to develop positive affective feelings towards their jobs (i.e., job satisfaction: Judge and Klinger, 2008). Indeed, considerable research suggests that psychological empowerment has a positive effect on work engagement and job satisfaction (Maynard et al., 2012). Further, researchers have also found that psychological empowerment can reduce turnover intention (Harris et al., 2009), defined as an employee's conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave their current organization (Tett and Meyer, 1993). When feeling empowered, employees are in an active motivational state. They believe that they can shape and influence stressful situations for the better (Spreitzer and Mishra, 2002), which gives them a reason to stay. Further, Seibert et al. (2011) suggest that when feeling empowered, employees will perceive the net benefit of finding an alternative job to be lower due to the uncertainties of developing psychological empowerment in a new workplace, decreasing their intention to quit.

Therefore, we propose that psychological empowerment will mediate the effect of the three-way interaction between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and employee political skill on work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. As it has already been established that psychological empowerment affects these outcomes, this hypothesis partly constitutes a constructive replication. We further note that we specify a partial mediation effect of psychological empowerment here because there may be other mechanisms through which this three-way interaction can influence employee well-being outcomes. For example, politically skilled employees may use voice to protect not only psychological resources of empowerment but also job resources, which can also affect work-related well-being outcomes (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Thus, a partial mediation effect of psychological empowerment is hypothesized:

> *Hypothesis 3*: Psychological empowerment partially mediates the three-way interaction between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and employee political skill on employee work engagement (3a), job satisfaction (3b), and turnover intention (3c).

Integrating the above reasoning, we predict an overall three-way interaction between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and employee political skill on employee work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention. That is, our arguments above posit psychological empowerment as a theoretical mechanism to explain the existence of an overall three-way interaction effect on these employee outcome variables. Therefore, we propose:

> *Hypothesis 4*: Employee political skill moderates the buffering effect of voice on the relationship from supervisor undermining to employee work engagement (4a), job satisfaction (4b), and turnover intention (4c) such that the buffering effect is more likely when employee political skill is higher rather than lower.

Method

Participants and procedures

We conducted a three-wave field study to test our hypotheses. The participants were 266 nurses from two hospitals in China. After communicating the survey purpose and procedure to hospital leaders, we obtained their approval to conduct the study in the hospitals. The hospital leaders were then asked to help inform their nurses of the study. All nurses were told that participation was voluntary. They were also informed that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time with no penalty and would be paid 25 CNY (around USD$3.50) for the completion of each survey as a small token of our appreciation for their cooperation and time. All participants were assured that their survey responses would be strictly confidential and would only be analyzed in an aggregated form by university researchers.

The participating nurses completed surveys with a one-month interval between each wave of surveys. Supervisor undermining and employee political skill were measured at Time 1. Employee voice and psychological empowerment were measured at Time 2. Employee work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention were measured at Time 3. All surveys were coded to allow data matching. In total, we obtained completed surveys from 266 out of 305 contacted nurses, representing a response rate of 87%. Of the 266 nurse participants, all but two were female, with an average age of 31.64 years (SD = 6.73). Sixty-two percent of participants had a professional college certificate, and the remaining 38% had a bachelor's degree.

Measures

All measures originally in English were translated and back-translated by two bilingual management researchers (Brislin, 1980). A seven-point Likert scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree) was used for all measures unless otherwise noted.

Supervisor undermining (Time 1) was measured using Vinokur et al.'s (1996) seven-item measure, which has been used in previous studies (e.g., Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Nahum-Shani et al., 2014). Sample items include, "Your supervisor criticizes you" and "Your supervisor acts in an unpleasant or angry manner toward you." A five-point scale from 1 *(Not at all)* to 5 *(A great deal)* was used. Cronbach's alpha was 0.96.

Political skill (Time 1) was measured using the 18-item political skill inventory developed by Ferris et al. (2005). Sample items include, "I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others" and "I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to others." Cronbach's alpha was 0.92.

Voice (Time 2) was measured with the three-item supervisor-directed prosocial voice measure from Detert and Burris (2007). Sample items include, "I speak up to my supervisor with ideas to address employees' needs and concerns" and "I give suggestions to my supervisor with ideas about doing things differently." Cronbach's alpha was 0.89.

Psychological empowerment (Time 2) was measured with the 12-item psychological empowerment scale (Spreitzer, 1995). Sample items include, "The work I do is meaningful to me" and "I am confident about my ability to do my job." Cronbach's alpha was 0.93.

Work engagement (Time 3) was measured with the nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2003). Sample items include, "When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work" and "I am immersed in my work." Cronbach's alpha was 0.96.

Job satisfaction (Time 3) was measured with the three-item measure developed by Cammann et al. (1983). Sample items include, "All in all, I am satisfied with my job" and "In general, I like working here." Cronbach's alpha was 0.97.

Turnover intention (Time 3) was measured with the three-item measure developed by Cammann et al. (1983). Sample items include, "I will probably look for a new job in the next year" and "I frequently think of quitting this job." Cronbach's alpha was 0.95.

Control variables. We controlled for human capital variables of age, education, and tenure with supervisors because they reflect the level of knowledge and experience the individual brings to their work and may influence their capacity to deal with supervisor undermining and consequently psychological empowerment (Seibert et al., 2011). Further, we controlled for gender, which can influence how people experience workplace stressors (Treadway et al., 2005). Finally, since the nurses were from two hospitals, we created a dummy variable to control for organizational differences. We note that removing these control variables from our analyses did not change the significance patterns, as we report below.

Results

Table 1 presents descriptive information on the study variables. Prior to hypothesis testing, we performed a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) to assess the discriminant validity of our study measures (see Table 2). We compared seven alternative models and confirmed that Model 1, the hypothesized seven-factor model, had a good fit: $\chi^2(303, N = 257) = 618.20$, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.95, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) = 0.94, root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.06. Further, as shown in Table 2, Model 1 had a significantly better fit than did all the alternative models.

To test our hypotheses, we conducted hierarchical linear modeling analyses to account for the potential nonindependence of observations since nurses are nested within supervisors (i.e., 266 nurses reporting to 61 supervisors). Indeed, the ICC1 was 0.25 for psychological empowerment, 0.16 for work engagement, 0.22 for job satisfaction, and 0.22 for turnover intention, which supports the appropriateness of hierarchical linear modeling analyses (Bliese and Hanges, 2004). We conducted the hierarchical linear modeling analyses using Stata 16 (StataCorp, 2019).

Hypothesis 1 states that supervisor undermining negatively relates to psychological empowerment. As shown in Table 3 (Model 1), supervisor undermining was significantly related to psychological empowerment ($\gamma = -0.15$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2 posits a three-way interaction between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and employee political skill on employee psychological empowerment. We first ran an analysis to examine the two-way interaction between supervisor undermining and employee voice on employee psychological empowerment, which was nonsignificant as shown in Table 3 ($\gamma = -0.04$, $p = 0.43$, Model 2). We then introduced political skill as the moderator of the two-way interaction effect. Results supported a

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, and correlations among study variables.

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1 Age	31.58	6.73	–											
2 Education	1.38	0.49	0.07	–										
3 Gender	0.01	0.09	-0.03	0.02	–									
4 Tenure with supervisor	4.37	3.68	0.22**	-0.06	-0.06	–								
5 Organization dummy	0.38	0.49	-0.42**	-0.32**	-0.07	-0.04	–							
6 Supervisor undermining	1.67	0.80	-0.15*	-0.08	-0.05	-0.01	0.19**	*.96*						
7 Political skill	4.55	0.84	0.01	-0.01	0.08	0.06	-0.10	-0.04	*.92*					
8 Voice	4.36	1.24	-0.04	0.12	-0.01	0.04	-0.06	0.08	0.33**	*.89*				
9 Psychological empowerment	4.99	0.98	0.02	0.10	0.06	0.04	-0.13*	-0.15*	0.40**	0.45**	*.93*			
10 Work engagement	4.23	1.31	0.05	0.05	0.08	0.04	-0.06	-0.14*	0.31**	0.38**	0.39**	*.96*		
11 Job satisfaction	4.65	1.40	0.06	0.01	0.05	0.11	-0.13*	-0.19**	0.28**	0.30**	0.37**	0.77**	*.97*	
12 Turnover intention	3.48	1.46	-0.21**	-0.03	0.00	-0.08	0.14*	0.26**	-0.19*	-0.03	-0.23**	-0.38**	-0.54**	*.95*

$N = 266$. SD = Standard deviation; *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$. Reliability coefficients appear in bold italic along the diagonal. Age and tenure with supervisor were measured in years. Education was coded 0 for "high school", 1 for "vocational/technical college certificate," and 2 for "bachelor's degree." Gender was coded 0 for female and 1 for male.

Table 2. Comparison of measurement models of key study variables.

Model	Description	χ^2	d.f.	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	$\Delta\chi^2$(d.f.)
1	Hypothesized seven-factor model	618.20	303	0.95	0.94	0.06	Baseline
2	Six-factor model (job satisfaction and turnover intention combined)	1623.85	309	0.80	0.77	0.13	1005.65 (6)**
3	Five-factor model (work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention combined)	1631.72	314	0.80	0.77	0.13	1013.52 (11)**
4	Four-factor model (psychological empowerment, work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention combined)	2002.39	318	0.74	0.72	0.14	1384.19 (15)**
5	Three-factor model (voice, psychological empowerment, work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention combined)	2479.89	321	0.67	0.64	0.16	1861.69 (18)**
6	Two-factor model (political skill, psychological empowerment, work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention combined)	2764.27	323	0.63	0.60	0.17	2146.07 (20)**
7	One-factor model	4821.78	324	0.32	0.26	0.23	4203.58 (21)**

$N = 266$; $**p < 0.01$. The hypothesized seven-factor model served as the baseline model. All alternative models were compared with it. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker–Lewis index; RMSEA = Root mean squared error of approximation.

significant three-way interaction effect between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and employee political skill on employee psychological empowerment ($\gamma = 0.11$, $p < 0.05$, Model 3).

We plotted the three-way interaction effect in Figure 2a according to the procedures from Cohen et al. (2003). As shown, when employees engaged in high levels of voice but lacked political skill, supervisor undermining had a stronger, detrimental effect on psychological empowerment ($\gamma = -0.36$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that using voice without political skill could backfire in the context of supervisor undermining. When employees engaged in high levels of voice and possessed high levels of political skill, the detrimental effect of supervisor undermining on psychological empowerment was mitigated ($\gamma = -0.06$, $p = 0.51$), suggesting a buffering effect of voice. A buffering effect occurs when "good compensates for bad" (Cohen et al., 2003; Gardner et al., 2017: 616). In this case, high levels of voice and political skill jointly protected psychological empowerment from the negative impact of supervisor undermining. From this definition, although the negative slope was also nonsignificant for employees with low levels of voice and low levels of political skill ($\gamma = -0.14$, $p = 0.31$), it does not indicate that low voice and low political skill helped to protect psychological empowerment from the negative impact of supervisor undermining. Indeed, the simple slope suggests that these employees (who do not voice and lack political skill) experienced low levels of psychological empowerment even when their supervisors did not engage in undermining. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 3. HLM analyses for hypothesis testing.

Variables	Model 1: Psychological empowerment	Model 2: Psychological empowerment	Model 3: Psychological empowerment	Model 4: Work engagement	Model 5: Work engagement	Model 6: Job satisfaction	Model 7: Job satisfaction	Model 8: Turnover intention	Model 9: Turnover intention
Intercept	4.95 (0.21)**	4.99 (0.19)**	4.92 (0.18)**	4.08 (0.26)**	4.10 (0.25)**	4.86 (0.28)**	4.88 (0.28)**	3.51 (0.31)**	3.50 (0.30)**
Age	−0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)	−0.01 (0.01)	−0.04 (0.01)**	−0.04 (0.01)*
Education	0.08 (0.12)	0.04 (0.11)	0.08 (0.11)	0.09 (0.15)	0.07 (0.15)	−0.08 (0.17)	−0.11 (0.16)	−0.07 (0.18)	−0.05 (0.18)
Gender	0.32 (0.64)	0.47 (0.59)	0.24 (0.56)	1.02 (0.81)	0.96 (0.80)	0.47 (0.87)	0.42 (0.86)	0.38 (0.93)	0.43 (0.92)
Tenure with supervisor	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)
Organization dummy	−0.19 (0.18)	−0.12 (0.15)	−0.09 (0.14)	0.08 (0.19)	0.10 (0.19)	−0.26 (0.22)	−0.23 (0.22)	0.07 (0.25)	0.05 (0.24)
Supervisor undermining (SU)	**−0.15 (0.07)***	−0.20 (0.07)**	−0.21 (0.07)**	−0.26 (0.10)**	−0.21 (0.10)*	−0.28 (0.11)*	−0.23 (0.11)*	0.36 (0.12)**	0.31 (0.12)**
Voice		0.33 (0.04)**	0.29 (0.04)**	0.36 (0.06)**	0.30 (0.07)**	0.29 (0.07)**	0.22 (0.07)**	0.01 (0.07)	0.07 (0.08)
SU × voice		**−0.04 (0.05)**	0.00 (0.05)	0.00 (0.08)	0.00 (0.08)	−0.10 (0.08)	−0.10 (0.08)	0.04 (0.09)	0.04 (0.09)
Political skill (PS)			0.27 (0.06)**	0.26 (0.09)**	0.19 (0.09)*	0.21 (0.10)*	0.14 (0.10)	−0.21 (0.10)*	−0.16 (0.10)
SU × PS			0.05 (0.08)	0.03 (0.11)	0.01 (0.11)	−0.02 (0.12)	−0.03 (0.12)	0.04 (0.13)	0.05 (0.13)
PS × Voice			0.03 (0.04)	0.03 (0.06)	0.03 (0.06)	0.07 (0.07)	0.06 (0.07)	0.00 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)
SU × Voice × PS			**0.11 (0.05)***	**0.18 (0.07)****	**0.16 (0.07)***	**0.19 (0.08)***	**0.16 (0.07)**	**−0.17 (0.08)***	**−0.15 (0.08)**
Psychological empowerment					**0.23 (0.09)****		**0.25 (0.09)****		**−0.21 (0.10)***
Variance (Level 2 intercept)	0.204	0.114	0.092	0.141	0.120	0.252	0.201	0.358	0.346
Variance (Level 1 residual)	0.708	0.607	0.549	1.159	1.129	1.306	1.277	1.471	1.450
Pseudo R^2	0.013	0.234	0.325	0.237	0.259	0.201	0.225	0.134	0.149
Δ Pseudo R^2	0.012	0.094	0.109	0.066	0.028	0.051	0.030	0.043	0.018
Deviance	712.443	658.079	628.851	820.020	813.236	862.869	856.055	901.317	896.906

$N = 266$. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$. Table entries represent unstandardized parameter estimates with standard errors in parentheses. Values in bold are relevant to tests of hypotheses.
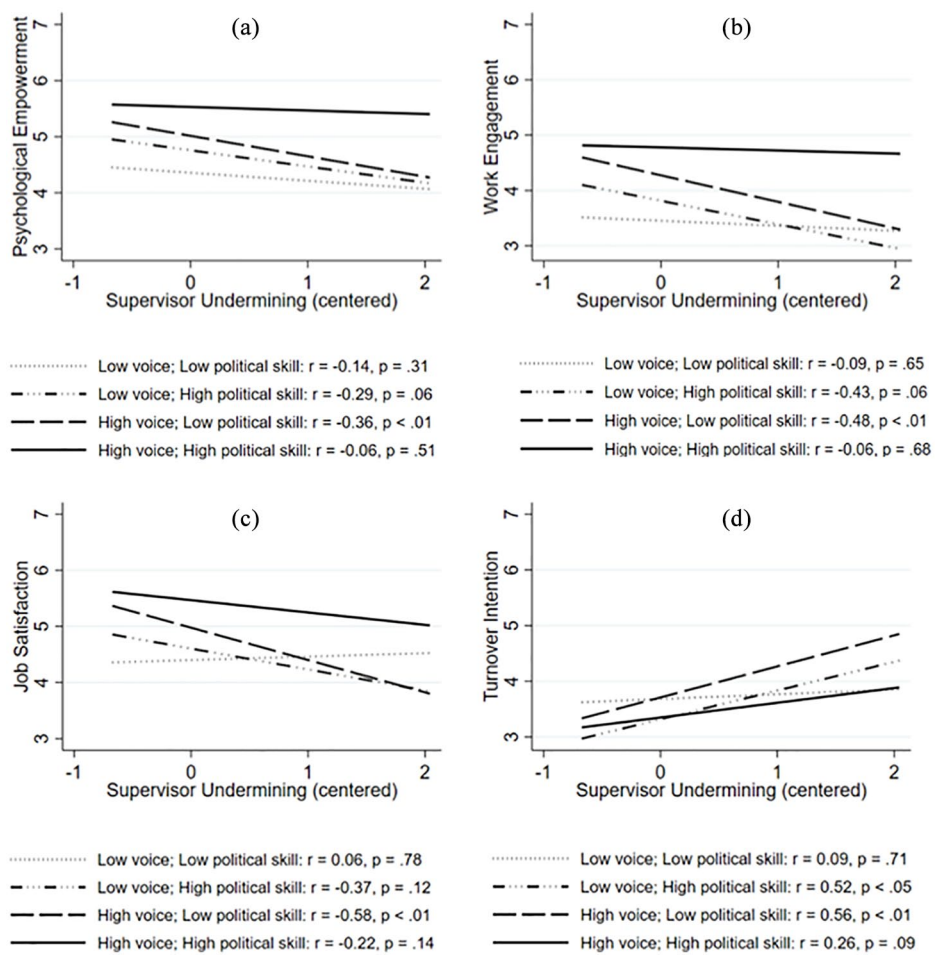
Figure 2. Three-way interactions between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and employee political skill.

Hypothesis 3 states that the three-way interaction between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and employee political skill influences employee work engagement (Hypothesis 3a), job satisfaction (Hypothesis 3b), and turnover intention (Hypothesis 3c) via the mediating effect of psychological empowerment. As shown in Table 3, supporting Hypothesis 3a, there was a significant three-way interaction between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and political skill on psychological empowerment ($\gamma = 0.11$, $p < 0.05$, Model 3), which in turn significantly related to work engagement ($\gamma = 0.23$, $p < 0.01$, Model 5). We adopted Morgan-Lopez and MacKinnon's (2006) formula to directly calculate the mediated moderation effect, which is the product term of the above two path coefficients, $\gamma = 0.024$. We then used the Monte Carlo method to test its significance via the RMediation package in R (Tofighi and MacKinnon,

2011), which showed that the mediated moderation effect was significant: Monte Carlo 95% CI = [0.001, 0.059], supporting Hypothesis 3a.

Using the same procedures, we found support for Hypotheses 3b and 3c. Specifically, supporting Hypothesis 3b, there was a significant three-way interaction between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and political skill on psychological empowerment ($\gamma = 0.11, p < 0.05$, Model 3), which in turn significantly related to job satisfaction ($\gamma = 0.25, p < 0.05$, Model 7). The mediated moderation effect was 0.026, Monte Carlo 95% CI = [0.001, 0.064]. Supporting Hypothesis 3c, there was a significant three-way interaction between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and political skill on psychological empowerment ($\gamma = 0.11, p < 0.05$, Model 3), which in turn significantly decreased turnover intention ($\gamma = -0.21, p < 0.05$, Model 9). The mediated moderation effect was -0.023, Monte Carlo 95% CI = [0.000, -0.058]. Though the 95% CI included zero, this mediated moderation effect was significant when using a 90% CI ($= [-0.054, -0.002]$). The 90% CI corresponds to a one-tailed, $\alpha = 0.05$ hypothesis test, which is justified in mediation research and given a priori hypothesis (Preacher et al., 2010: 217). Further, as shown in Table 3, psychological empowerment partially mediated the three-way interaction effect on work engagement and fully mediated the three-way interaction effect on job satisfaction and turnover intention.

Hypothesis 4 predicts overall three-way interaction effects between supervisor undermining, employee voice, and political skill on work engagement (Hypothesis 4a), job satisfaction (Hypothesis 4b), and turnover intention (Hypothesis 4c). As shown in Table 3, results supported our hypothesized significant three-way interaction effects on work engagement ($\gamma = 0.18, p < 0.01$, Model 4), job satisfaction ($\gamma = 0.19, p < 0.05$, Model 6), and turnover intention ($\gamma = -0.17, p < 0.05$, Model 8). The interaction patterns are shown in Figures 2b, 2c, and 2d, respectively. The patterns were similar to each other and to Figure 2a. When employees engaged in high levels of voice but lacked political skill, supervisor undermining had stronger, detrimental effects on employee work engagement ($\gamma = -0.48, p < 0.01$, Figure 2b), job satisfaction ($\gamma = -0.58, p < 0.01$, Figure 2c), and turnover intention ($\gamma = 0.56, p < 0.01$, Figure 2d). When employees engaged in high levels of voice and possessed high levels of political skill, the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining on employee work engagement ($\gamma = -0.06, p = 0.68$, Figure 2b), job satisfaction ($\gamma = -0.22, p = 0.14$, Figure 2c), and turnover intention ($\gamma = 0.26, p = 0.09$, Figure 2d) were mitigated, suggesting a buffering effect of voice when employees had strong political skill, supporting Hypothesis 4.

To evaluate the robustness of our hypothesized relationships, we retested all hypotheses with control variables removed. The significance patterns remained the same. Further, although our main focus was to explore the three-way interaction effects on employee well-being outcomes and turnover intention, there are more nuanced relationships we could examine. For example, although political skill as a social effectiveness construct can moderate the effectiveness of voice, it can also affect employees' tendencies to voice. Further, turnover intention is a conceptually more distal outcome than job satisfaction and work engagement. Previous research also suggests that job satisfaction is a proximal antecedent of turnover intention (Hom et al., 2017) and that work engagement is a proximal antecedent of job satisfaction (Schaufeli et al., 2008). For additional information purposes, we conducted more fine-grained supplemental analyses to examine possible serial

mediation effects (Tofighi and MacKinnon, 2016). The complete results of these various supplemental tests are available in the Appendix (online).

Discussion

Recent research suggests that employees may use voice behaviors to mitigate the adverse effects of supervisor undermining (Mitchell and Ambrose, 2012; Tepper et al., 2007). However, as Morrison (2014) reviewed, the effectiveness of employee voice as a buffer was unclear. To extend this emerging scholarly conversation, the purpose of the present study was to investigate whether, when, and why employee voice buffers the psychologically detrimental effects of supervisor undermining on employee turnover intention and work-related well-being outcomes including work engagement and job satisfaction. Through a three-wave field study, we found that voice plays a buffering role in the relationship between supervisor undermining and employee work-related well-being and turnover intention when employees possess high levels of political skill, and that this buffering effect is realized through mitigating the adverse effect of supervisor undermining on employee psychological empowerment. In contrast, when employees possess low levels of political skill, engaging in high levels of voice exacerbates the detrimental effect of supervisor undermining on employee psychological empowerment, and in turn decreases employee work-related well-being and heightens employee turnover intention. These findings have significant theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretical implications

Implications for the supervisor undermining literature. Research over the past two decades has clearly established that exposure to supervisor undermining has detrimental effects on employees (Duffy et al., 2002; Mackey et al., 2019; Schyns and Schilling, 2013; Tepper et al., 2017). How employees can mitigate and overcome the adverse effects of supervisor undermining is a topic that is increasingly attracting scholarly attention (Sutton, 2017). Invoking theories of personal agency and social competencies (Ewen et al., 2014; Wihler et al., 2017), our study significantly contributes to this scholarly conversation by addressing the effectiveness of employee voice in buffering the adverse effect of supervisor undermining, its boundary condition, and the underlying psychological mechanism that can explain its effectiveness. Specifically, we make important theoretical contributions by identifying employee political skill as a boundary condition of the buffering effect of employee voice and by identifying psychological empowerment as a psychological mediating mechanism that could account for its buffering effect. Our research will help shift the typical depiction of the undermined employee as either a powerless victim or hostile rebel towards being an agentic actor capable of producing diplomatic solutions for dealing effectively with supervisor undermining.

In doing so, our study also contributes to the conceptual conjecture that political behavior can have an adaptive, positive effect on employees. Traditionally, political behaviors have been viewed as illegitimate actions performed to gain undeserved benefits (Mintzberg, 1983). As Mintzberg (1983: 118) argued, "The System of Politics is one of voice, but often of a clandestine nature." More recently, scholars have argued that

political behavior is an important component of agentic, social influence processes in organizations and can have negative, positive, or neutral outcomes (Ellen III, 2014; Ferris et al., 2019; McAllister et al., 2015). Contributing to this line of thought, this study suggests that voice as a political strategy is functional in mitigating the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining.

Implications for the psychological empowerment literature. Despite Spreitzer (1996: 484) originally noting that psychological empowerment is "based on the assumption that individuals can have a high level of 'voice' in shaping and influencing organizational activities," there is little research examining how employees use their own voice to obtain and maintain a sense of psychological empowerment. Most research on psychological empowerment has focused on identifying the social structural characteristics of the work environment that facilitate or hinder psychological empowerment (for reviews, see Maynard et al., 2012; Seibert et al., 2011). Though focusing on social contextual antecedents of psychological empowerment is obviously important as prior research has demonstrated, the social-structural approach is nonetheless incomplete as it ignores the agentic role of employees in empowering themselves through their own agentic behaviors such as voice. Our study thus takes a step towards filling this critical gap by demonstrating that employees, particularly politically skilled employees, can sustain and maintain a sense of psychological empowerment in the face of supervisor undermining by engaging in voice. This investigation is particularly important given that unfavorable work conditions such as social undermining may not be totally removable from the workplace. As such, the social-structural approach to psychological empowerment needs to be coupled with an agentic perspective that informs employees that they can protect their psychological empowerment themselves by actively seeking to shape the workplace via exercising voice in a politically skilled way when working conditions are unfavorable.

Implications for the theories of personal agency and social competencies. Our study expands the scope of the theories of personal agency and social competencies (Ewen et al., 2014; Ferris et al., 2019; Wihler et al., 2017) to the context of coping with the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining. Prior research applying the theories has been limited to examining two-way interactions between agentic behaviors and political skill on performance outcomes. We extend these studies by examining the joint effect of employee voice and political skill in mitigating the negative effects of supervisor undermining on employee work-related well-being and turnover intention (i.e., three-way interactions). Our study demonstrates how theories of personal agency and social competencies may be important theoretical lenses for understanding the conditions under which employee agentic behaviors could be effective/ineffective in protecting employees from the adverse psychological effects of supervisor undermining. Heeding calls for more precision in voice research, our research focuses squarely on supervisor-directed, change-oriented voice as the focal agentic behavior. Moving forward, future research could extend our study to examine whether political skill similarly enhances the effectiveness of other change-oriented agentic behaviors such as issue-selling to top-level executives (Dutton and Ashford, 1993) and other forms of voice such as voice to coworkers (Morrison, 2014) and defensive voice (Van Dyne et al., 2003) in mitigating the negative effects of supervisor undermining.

Practical implications

Our research findings have meaningful implications for employees and their organizations. For employees, our findings suggest that they can maintain a sense of psychological empowerment and work-related well-being if they improve their political skill and, if needed, resort to voice when faced with supervisor undermining. Our recommendation is meaningful because finding a new job cannot ensure the absence of an undermining supervisor. It is therefore critically important for employees to learn how to effectively manage the negative consequences of supervisor undermining (Sutton, 2017). Our recommendation also contributes to the recent trend in the literature that seeks to unveil diplomatic solutions beyond the frequently studied destructive responses. Nevertheless, it is also important to highlight our finding that without strong political skill, engaging in high levels of voice can exacerbate the detrimental effects of supervisor undermining on psychological empowerment, work-related well-being, and turnover intention. These findings thus suggest that resorting to voice is not without potential cost, and employees must hone their political skill in order to effectively reap the potential benefits of engaging in such voice in the context of supervisor undermining.

For organizations, our findings suggest that they should take every measure to reduce or remove supervisor undermining, as supervisor undermining decreases employees' psychological empowerment, work engagement and job satisfaction, and increases their turnover intention. Further, organizations may find it beneficial to encourage employees to voice ideas for changes and improvements and train their employees with respect to social and political skills. This latter training might include information on how to effectively gauge organizational priorities, incorporate them into their voice, identify appropriate opportunities to voice, and express their suggestions in socially effective ways (Ferris et al., 2011). Ferris et al. (2007) suggested that political skill is a tacit knowledge that needs to be trained through dedicated practice and learning from mentors and role models. Organizations hence may provide employees with experiential development or mentoring programs to improve their employees' political skill. Employees may also proactively look for such opportunities to develop their own political skill to make them more capable of feeling psychologically empowered at work.

Limitations and additional future directions

Despite our study's contributions, it has limitations that future research can consider addressing. One issue is that our measures are susceptible to common method bias since they are based on employee reports. To mitigate this risk, we have adopted a time-lagged design (Podsakoff et al., 2003; Spector, 2006). Moreover, methodologists have demonstrated that significant interaction effects cannot be an artifact of common-method biases (Evans, 1985; Siemsen et al., 2010). Thus, our major findings regarding the significant three-way interactions on psychological empowerment, work engagement, job satisfaction, and turnover intention cannot be attributed to common-method bias. Nonetheless, future research should consider replicating our findings via alternative measurement sources to address this potential concern. For instance, assessments of an employee's political skill might be made by coworkers; however, in five studies and 10 samples,

Ferris and colleagues have presented evidence that self- and other-reports of political skill function similarly, and that self-reported political skill does not correlate with social desirability (Blickle et al., 2011; Ferris et al., 2008).

Another potential limitation is related to our sample, which is a group of nurses from China. As such, the degree to which our findings generalize across different occupations and cultural contexts is an open question. This issue may be particularly germane with respect to countries and cultural contexts that vary greatly on cultural dimensions such as power distance or assertiveness. Power distance refers to the degree to which members of a collective expect (and should expect) power to be distributed equally (Javidan et al., 2006). Countries that score high on this cultural dimension are more socially and politically stratified, where those in positions of authority such as supervisors expect and receive obedience. On the other hand, assertiveness concerns the degree to which individuals are (and should be) confrontational and aggressive in their relationships with others (Javidan et al., 2006). Workers in highly assertive countries would be expected to speak up more than those in less assertive countries. As such, both the level and variability in voice could be affected by national/cultural norms, which in turn may affect the occurrence or magnitude of effects observed in our research. Future research directly replicating and extending our study to different occupational and cultural contexts will help test the robustness of our findings across settings.

A related concern is that although our theory is not gender-bound, our sample consists mainly of female nurses. The generalizability of our findings to male or gender-balanced samples and occupations remains an empirical question. This type of research would be informative as prior research indicates that the relative effectiveness of different types of influence tactics (agentic, communal, and neutral) for achieving work-related changes differs somewhat for female and male actors and with respect to the gendered nature of work (male-dominated, female-dominated, or gender-balanced) (Smith et al., 2013). That said, we note that our female-dominant nurse sample is representative of nursing insofar as gender is concerned. Worldwide, nursing is a heavily female-dominated profession (Boniol et al., 2019; US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020), especially in China, where only 2.1% of nurses are male (Yang and Hao, 2018).

Conclusion

In summary, researchers are beginning to coalesce around the notion that employee voice can be beneficial in counteracting the negative effects of supervisor undermining. This study advances that stream of research by considering how voice, in interaction with political skills, can buffer the detrimental impacts of supervisor undermining with regard to psychological empowerment and, ultimately, work engagement and job satisfaction. Recognizing that supervisor undermining will continue to occur in organizations, this investigation opens a new avenue and foundation for studying the effects associated with such undermining and provides practical suggestions for workers to adopt diplomatic ways to manage the adverse effects of supervisor undermining.

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Supplemental material

Supplemental material for this article is available online.

Note

1   Although the justice literature has examined the effectiveness of voice, it conceptualizes voice as the extent to which organizations give employees the opportunity to express their views prior to a decision (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998), rather than a voluntary constructive act initiated by employees. As Morrison (2014: 179) commented, "Although research on procedural justice has shown that employees feel more valued and a greater sense of control when they are given the opportunity to express their views prior to a decision, we cannot necessarily conclude from this finding that employees will also feel more valued and in control when they choose to speak up voluntarily."

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