Social courage fosters both voice and silence in the workplace

A study on multidimensional voice and silence with boundary conditions

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Abstract

Purpose – One of the strongest and most important outcomes of trait social courage is employee voice, but researchers have only studied this relationship with unidimensional conceptualizations of voice. The purpose of this paper is to apply Van Dyne *et al.*'s (2003) three-dimensional conceptualization of voice, which also distinguishes three dimensions of silence, to provide a nuanced understanding of the relationship of social courage with voice and silence. The authors also test for the moderating effect of three contextual influences: top management attitudes toward voice and silence, supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence, as well as communication opportunities.

Design/methodology/approach – The authors conducted a four-timepoint survey with each measurement occasion separated by one week. A total of 134 participants completed all four timepoints.

Findings – The results support that social courage positively relates to prosocial voice and silence, whereas it negatively relates to defensive voice and silence as well as acquiescent voice and silence. In other words, social courage positively relates to beneficial voice and silence as well as negatively relates to detrimental voice and silence. The results also failed to support any moderating effects, suggesting that the relationships of social courage are very resilient to outside forces.

Practical implications – These findings both test prior results and discover new relationships of social courage, which can further stress the importance of courage. The authors also draw direct connections between the influence of social courage on the surrounding workplace environment – as well as the influences of the environment on social courage. While the current paper provides insights into social courage, it also directs future researchers toward new insights of their own.

Originality/value – Courage is an emergent research topic within organizations. While many authors have assumed that courage is important to work, the current paper is among the few to empirically support this notion.

Keywords Motivation, Organization citizenship behaviour, Voice, Courage, Prosocial behaviours, Social courage

Paper type Research paper

The study of courage has seen a growth of popularity in recent years, particularly in fields focused on the study of employees and businesses (e.g. management, industrial-organizational psychology). While several justifications can be provided for this growth, we suggest four primary causes. First, Rate (2010) and Rate *et al.* (2007) created and empirically supported a definition for courage, which enabled subsequent authors to better conceptualize the construct. This definition specifies that courage is, "(a) a willful, intentional act, (b) executed after mindful deliberation, (c) involving objective substantial risk to the actor, (d) primarily motivated to bring about a noble good or worthy end" (Rate *et al.*, 2007, p. 95). When applying this definition, people who repeatedly perform courageous behaviors are assumed to possess the trait of courage (Pury, C.L. and Starkey, S.J., 2010). Second, a collection of authors jointly addressed many of the theoretical issues that plagued early courage research (Detert and Bruno, 2017; Koerner, 2014; Pury *et al.*, 2007; Pury, C.L. and Lopez, S.J., 2010), which allows courage to be more easily integrated into novel theoretical perspectives and frameworks

(discussed below). Third, a measure has been created for a dimension of courage, social courage, which is defined as courage that risks the "actor's esteem in the eyes of others" (Howard *et al.*, 2017, p. 3). This measure produces appropriate validity and psychometric evidence, thereby showing that courage can be measured and studied. Fourth, this measure has been used to demonstrate that trait social courage relates to important workplace and well-being outcomes beyond established aspects of personality (e.g. conscientiousness; Howard, 2019; Howard *et al.*, 2017), but authors have recently called for more nuanced investigations into the relationship of courage with specific outcomes.

We heed this call in the current paper by researching how trait social courage relates to employee voice and silence. Traditionally defined, employee voice describes a type of behavior in which employees speak up about ineffective, inefficient and/or problematic work procedures (Van Dyne and LePine, 1998). Alternatively, silence has been typically defined as a type of behavior in which employees withhold information, opinions or questions (Milliken *et al.*, 2003; Rhee *et al.*, 2014), which can prevent businesses from identifying and correcting problematic procedures. When defined in this manner, it may seem redundant to study both voice and silence together, as voice may seem to always prohibit silence and silence may seem to always prohibit voice. We believe, which extant literature supports (Maynes and Podsakoff, 2014; Van Dyne *et al.*, 2003), that this is an overly simplistic view of the relationship between voice and silence.

While voice and silence are strongly correlated, the occurrence of one does not preclude the other. An employee may voice their concerns regarding certain workplace issues while remaining silent regarding others, thereby enacting both voice and silence behaviors. Likewise, an employee may not speak out about their concerns but may also not withhold information (as they may not have concerns or information), thereby refraining from both behaviors. These cases demonstrate that even studying unidimensional conceptualizations of voice and silence together may provide valuable insights regarding each separate type of behavior, as the two constructs are not perfectly correlated, but integrating multidimensional conceptualizations of voice and silence can further support the uniqueness of these behaviors. These multidimensional conceptualizations differentiate multiple types of voice and silence that do not lie on opposite sides of the same continuum (Maynes and Podsakoff, 2014; Van Dyne *et al.*, 2003), and these newer dimensions are rooted in the actor's intentions, that is, the justification for performing voice and silence behaviors defines the dimensions, and these justifications cause the dimensions to have differing relationships with associated antecedents and outcomes. Thus, social courage may have differential relationships with these various dimensions of both voice and silence, and, by simultaneously researching these multiple dimensions, the current study can shed light on how social courage relates employee intentions and the resultant nuances of voice and silence.

In the current paper, we apply Van Dyne *et al.*'s (2003) multidimensional perspective of voice and silence, which identifies three types of voice and three types of silence. These are prosocial voice and silence, which are behaviors performed to better the work environment; defensive voice and silence, which are behaviors performed due to coercion; and acquiescent voice and silence, which are behaviors performed due to disengagement. The relationship between social courage and this multidimensional conceptualization of voice and silence is still unknown, leaving uncertainty regarding the true impact of social courage on important employee behaviors. The approach/avoidance framework suggests that humans are motivated to perpetually approach stimuli that they perceive as beneficial, while avoiding stimuli that they perceive to be detrimental (Roth and Cohen, 1986; Elliot and Covington, 2001). In multiple studies, Howard (2019) found that social courage was primarily related to employee approach motivations and beneficial outcomes. Based on this relationship with approach motivations, we propose that social courage positively relates to prosocial voice and silence, whereas it negatively relates to defensive voice and silence and acquiescent

voice and silence. Thus, it may not only take social courage to perform voice behaviors, but it may also take social courage to not perform voice behaviors, perform silence behaviors, and even not perform silence behaviors.

Additionally, because the study of workplace social courage is nascent, we explore novel boundary conditions when studying these effects. Boundary conditions "place limitations on the propositions generated from a theoretical model" (Whetten, 1989, p. 492), and the study of boundary conditions is intended to shed light on which contextual conditions are salient to a construct and its relationships (i.e. generalizability) (Dubin, 1970; Bacharach, 1989; Suddaby, 2010). Although other methods exist, the use of moderators is the most common approach to explore boundary conditions (Busse *et al.*, 2017). We therefore test whether the relationship between social courage and each type of voice and silence is moderated by top management's attitudes toward voice and silence, supervisor's attitudes toward voice and silence, as well as communication opportunities – each of which have been shown to be important to the dynamics of voice and silence (Morrison, 2011; Vakola and Bouradas, 2005). In doing so, we analyze whether social courage is influenced by restrictive organizations, supervisors and even work arrangements. Social courage is associated with performing prosocial but risky behaviors, but voice and silence in some environments may be too risky for even the most courageous employees.

Together, the purpose of this paper is to answer calls to conduct additional research into the antecedents, outcomes and complexity of courage and its dimensions (Detert and Bruno, 2017; Howard *et al.*, 2017); incorporate contextual organizational factors as moderators in workplace courage research (Detert and Bruno, 2017); and establish relationships with core constructs in different domains, providing an empirical bridge to broader theories for research (Howard, 2019). By achieving these goals, the current paper provides many benefits for both current research on courage and practitioners in the field. First, the study of voice and silence can test prior results and discover new relationships of social courage, which can further stress the importance of courage in the modern workplace (Koerner, 2014). Second, investigating a multidimensional perspective of voice and silence can demonstrate that the relationships of courage with relevant outcomes may be more nuanced than previously expected, and thereby future authors should take a finer-grained perspective of social courage's dynamics (Howard and Cogswell, 2019). Third, the study of boundary conditions can provide insights into the resilience of social courage. It is possible that courage may be dampened by the environment, but it is also possible that courage can withstand most external influences and positively impact outcomes (Pury *et al.*, 2007; Pury, C.L. and Lopez, S.J., 2010). Fourth, and perhaps most importantly, the current paper links social courage with multiple domains of study, each of which can link social courage to further novel investigations and discoveries. Because empirical research on social courage is nascent, establishing relationships with core constructs in different domains is paramount in providing an empirical bridge to broader theories for future research (Detert and Bruno, 2017; Howard, 2019). Notably, we draw more direct connections between the influence of social courage on the surrounding workplace environment – as well as the influences of the environment on social courage. Therefore, while the current paper provides substantial insights into social courage, it can also direct future researchers into new insights of their own.

Background
What is courage?
Courage is an intentional, deliberate and risky behavior performed with prosocial intent (Rate *et al.*, 2007; Rate, 2010). While this definition describes a behavior, courage is most often studied as a trait. Pury, C.L. and Starkey, S.J., (2010) addressed this theoretical issue by distinguishing the treatment of courage as an accolade and as a process. When courage is

treated as an accolade, the term is most often attributed to certain people as praise, and it is intended to separate these courageous people from others. For instance, the Arthur Ashe Courage Award and the Profile in Courage Award are both intended to distinguish and celebrate individuals that possess eminent courage. At the same time, treating courage as an accolade rarely provides clear construct definitions that can sufficiently distinguish courageous from non-courageous individuals, and instead other vague terms are used to define courage with little success (e.g. valor, bravery, nerve; Pury, C.L. and Starkey, S.J., 2010). This weakness of accolade definitions often prevents them from being used in scientific studies of courage. Alternatively, when courage is treated as a process, the term is used to identify courageous behaviors, and those that repeatedly perform those behaviors are considered to possess the trait of courage. The definition created by Rate *et al.* (2007) and Rate (2010), for instance, is a process definition. Typically, process definitions can effectively distinguish courageous from non-courageous behaviors because they are based on distinct, observable actions, and thereby people can be more easily identified as courageous or not courageous. This strength of process definitions causes them to be applied more often in scientific studies, as done in the current paper to study trait social courage.

Further, courage is recognized to be a multidimensional construct, such that people may habitually perform certain courageous behaviors while withdraw from others (Howard *et al.*, 2017; Koerner, 2014; Sekerka *et al.*, 2009). The number and nature of these proposed courage dimensions differs from author to author, but three dimensions are most often discussed (Howard and Cogswell, 2019; Pury *et al.*, 2007; Schilpzand, 2008; Sekerka *et al.*, 2009).

The first of these is physical courage, which is a courageous behavior that risks the actor's physical well-being. Early research on courage most often discussed physical courage, as these works regularly examined the emergence of courage in wartime and battles (Rachman, 1990; Shaffer, 1947; Yearley, 1990). More recent authors, however, have begun to discuss other dimensions of courage in lieu of physical courage (Detert and Bruno, 2017; Howard *et al.*, 2017; Howard, 2019; Koerner, 2014; Schilpzand, 2008). These authors recognize that physical courage may not be relevant to the day-to-day interactions of most people, whereas other dimensions of courage may have a larger influence on more people's daily lives. For this reason, we study an alternative dimension of courage in the current paper.

Many authors have discussed the importance of moral courage, which is the second dimension (Gallagher, 2011; Hannah *et al.*, 2011; Sekerka and Bagozzi, 2007; Sekerka *et al.*, 2009). While moral courage is believed to influence the day-to-day life of most individuals, most authors provide differing accolade definitions to describe the construct of moral courage (Detert and Bruno, 2017; Lachman, 2007; Pury, C.L. and Starkey, S.J., 2010). The use of accolade definitions makes it difficult to distinguish courageous and non-courageous individuals for research purposes, whereas the creation and application of differing definitions makes the nature of moral courage unclear. Due to these concerns, some authors have recommended studying alternative dimensions of courage with clear and applicable definitions (Howard and Alipour, 2014; Magnano *et al.*, 2017; Smith, 2018; Tkachenko *et al.*, 2018), and we follow this repeated recommendation in the current paper.

The third commonly-identified dimension of courage is social courage, which is an act of courage in which the risks involved are to the actor's esteem in the eyes of others (Detert and Bruno, 2017; Howard and Cogswell, 2019; Howard *et al.*, 2017). Typically, social courage behaviors involve risking one's social image and/or damaging their relationships, and both of these risks commonly occur in the workplace. For instance, employees are regularly expected to give presentations in front of an audience that could be embarrassing if performed poorly, and workers are often expected to complete tasks that could cause friction (e.g. performance appraisals, teamwork). Therefore, it is relevant and important to the daily lives of most people.

Further, a scale has been supported to measure social courage (Howard *et al.*, 2017) and, when paired with the construct's process definition, provides robust support for the existence of social courage. This scale of social courage is rooted in Rate *et al.*'s (2007) process definition, and has been used to show that social courage predicts important organizational and personal outcomes (Howard *et al.*, 2017; Howard, 2019), providing further support for the importance of social courage. Given these considerations, we believe that social courage is the most apt dimension of courage to study, although we do recognize the importance of other dimensions in certain situations (e.g. physical courage) or after certain theoretical issues have been sufficiently addressed (e.g. moral courage). Thus, we propose hypotheses below regarding the relationship of trait social courage with outcomes and boundary conditions.

Lastly, the current paper draws from the approach/avoidance framework, relying on the established relationship between social courage and approach motivations (Howard, 2019), as well as a central tenet of many behavioral decision-making theories: people weigh the benefits of their actions against the costs, and they perform behaviors with the most desirable benefit to cost ratio (Ajzen, 1991; Elliot and Thrash, 2002; Gagné and Deci, 2005; Ryan and Deci, 2000). When performing prosocial behaviors, people are assumed to primarily weigh the benefits produced for others against the risks to themselves. Courageous people are believed to systematically value these prosocial benefits and/or devalue these personal risks (Pury, C.L.S. and Lopez, S.J., 2010; Rate, 2010). When proposing the relationships of courage below, we utilize these assumptions and identify outcomes that produce prosocial benefits and/or personal risks as well as moderating variables that increase benefits and/or mitigate risks. These hypotheses are targeted at fulfilling the current paper's three primary purposes which in turn provides greater understanding of the complexity of social courage, its relationship(s) with salient workplace behaviors, and its interactions with environmental conditions.

Courage, voice and silence

The current paper investigates the relationship of social courage with three dimensions of voice and three dimensions of silence, as conceptualized by Van Dyne *et al.*'s (2003) multidimensional perspective. The first of these is prosocial voice. Prosocial voice is the typical conceptualization of voice in prior research (Burris *et al.*, 2013; Morrison, 2011, 2014), and it describes voluntary voice behaviors performed to improve the organization. Prosocial voice primarily benefits organizations in three manners (Brinsfield *et al.*, 2009; Klaas *et al.*, 2012; Wang and Jiang, 2015). First, employees can identify inefficiencies when performing prosocial voice. Second, organizational knowledge-sharing is improved when prosocial voice is widespread, and employees may better understand their work environments. Third, employees can contribute to organizational decision making when engaging in prosocial voice, and thereby better decisions can be made by CEOs and upper management.

Alternatively, prosocial silence describes voluntarily withholding information from others to benefit the organization (Brinsfield *et al.*, 2009; Morrison, 2014; Rhee *et al.*, 2014). Prosocial silence may be relatively passive, and an employee may engage in prosocial silence by not being forthright about company secrets. Prosocial silence may also be active, however. Some employees may feel pressure by others, such as competing organizations, to share their company's secrets, and they may feel great stress withholding these secrets. For instance, an employee could be a target of attempted blackmail to obtain company secrets, but the employee may nevertheless withhold their knowledge from others to protect their organization.

Prosocial voice and prosocial silence have both been described as prosocial extra-role behaviors (i.e. organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs); van Dyne *et al.*, 2003; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2009; Cheng *et al.*, 2013), and the dimensions of van Dyne *et al.*'s (2003)

conceptualization of prosocial voice and prosocial silence is based on actors' prosocial motivations. The definition of courage requires that associated actions are "primarily motivated to bring about a noble good or worthy end," which implies a prosocial motivation (Rate *et al.*, 2007, p. 95). Accordingly, the higher approach and prosocial motivations associated with social courage imply that the trait produces approach-oriented prosocial behaviors such as prosocial voice and silence.

At the same time, prosocial voice or silence sometimes imposes risks on the actor (van Dyne *et al.*, 2003). Speaking out about inefficient work practices may disrupt the *status quo* and upset coworkers who are content with their work routines; supervisors may even interpret prosocial voice as undue criticism regarding their decisions. Likewise, those engaging in prosocial silence withhold information from those seeking that information, and thereby they risk upsetting those individuals by protecting their organization. In these instances, employees performing prosocial voice or silence behaviors may risk their social well-being, and thereby we propose that employees with greater social courage are more likely to perform such behaviors:

H1. Social courage positively relates to (a) prosocial voice and (b) prosocial silence.

The next dimension proposed by Van Dyne *et al.* (2003) is defensive voice, which describes voice behaviors performed due to fear. An example of defensive voice is the concept of "Yes Men" (Ewerhart and Schmitz, 2000; Hynes *et al.*, 2007; Prendergast, 1993). Yes Men are a common business stereotype in which subordinates thoughtlessly agree with a CEO or upper-level manager because they fear the retaliation of not doing so. These defensive voice behaviors are believed to harm the organization, as the CEO or upper management may remain unaware of organizational issues and have fewer perspectives in decision-making processes. Similarly, defensive silence is the typical conceptualization of general silence in prior research (Donaghey *et al.*, 2011; Knoll and Van Dick, 2013; Milliken *et al.*, 2003), and it describes silence behaviors performed due to fear. Rather than agreeing to toxic organizational members, those engaging in defensive silence simply "keep their head down" and avoid discussing organizational issues altogether. Like defensive voice, defensive silence harms the organization due to reduced organizational knowledge-sharing and hampered decision-making processes.

While these toxic situations cause employees to involuntarily speak up or stay silent, certain characteristics of employees may cause them to fight these pressures. Employees with greater social courage may recognize the harm caused by defensive voice and silence, and they may resist these behaviors to benefit their organization. In doing so, these employees may endure substantial risks of retaliation from their superiors. While these risks may deter most, employees with greater social courage may remain steadfast in their resolve.

Again, the motive of the individual plays a key role. Unlike the prosocial nature of courage, defensive voice and defensive silence are a result of succumbing to fear and is rooted in self-preservation rather than benefit for others (van Dyne *et al.*, 2003). While fear has been suggested to encourage defensive voice and defensive silence (Kiewitz *et al.*, 2016; Kish-Gephart *et al.*, 2009), courage is commonly cited as a primary determinant of persisting through fear – perhaps due to its association with approach motivations (Rachman, 1990; Rate *et al.*, 2007). Due to their opposing associations with fear and approach motivations, we propose that employees with greater social courage perform fewer defensive voice and silence behaviors:

H2. Social courage negatively relates to (a) defensive voice and (b) defensive silence.

Van Dyne *et al.* (2003) also propose the dimension of acquiescent voice, which describes performing voice behaviors due to apathy and disengagement from the organization.

Employees that engage in acquiescent voice are passive actors within their organization, and they may engage in voice behaviors because they feel it is easier than refraining. Typically, acquiescent voice behaviors are low-quality, and they preclude more fruitful voice behaviors. Similarly, acquiescent silence describes silence behaviors due to apathy and disengagement from the organization. Employees performing acquiescent silence behaviors are also passive employees in their organization, and these silence behaviors preclude more fruitful behaviors.

Abstaining from these behaviors does not pose a common risk, and performing these behaviors often produces more risk than not. Abstaining from these behaviors could, however, be performed for prosocial reasons. That is, employees with grater social courage may recognize that acquiescent voice and silence results in harmful organizational outcomes, and these employees may be systematically more likely to abstain from these behaviors for this reason.

The motivations behind social courage and acquiescent voice and silence are also contradictory. Acquiescent voice and silence lack the prosocial motivation found in all courageous actions, and they are a direct result of intentional passive behavior; however, courage has been suggested to produce higher levels of personal engagement, which is again aligned with courage's relationship to approach motivations (Wefald and Downey, 2009; Kahn, 1990). Because courage involves intentionality and engagement, individuals with high social courage will be less likely to perform the actions of a disengaged individual. Likewise, acquiescent voice and silence are likely associated with avoidance motivations due to their integral association with apathy and disengagement, both of which have been linked to avoidance motivations (Finset *et al.*, 2002; King, 2014). The underlying motivational tendencies of acquiescent voice and silence are therefore in direct opposition to the approach motivation of social courage, suggesting that employees with greater social courage perform fewer acquiescent voice and silence behaviors:

H3. Social courage negatively relates to (a) acquiescent voice and (b) acquiescent silence.

Boundary conditions
We suggest three variables that may moderate these relationships proposed above, which have already been identified as playing a central role in the occurrence of voice and silence (Brinsfield *et al.*, 2009; Morrison, 2011; Vakola and Bouradas, 2005). These three variables are top management attitudes toward voice and silence, supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence, as well as communication opportunities. Top management plays a primary role in determining the direction and strategy of an organization, and they influence whether beneficial voice and silence is encouraged and detrimental voice and silence is discouraged (and vice versa) by their formal (e.g. organizational policies, newsletters) and informal actions (e.g. interpersonal comments). At the same time, top management does not directly interact with most employees, and thereby supervisors play a large role in developing the climate and norms of an organization. These supervisors influence the performance of voice and silence by creating permissive or restrictive climates, but organizational constraints may also play a role. For instance, employees may be geographically and socially isolated, resulting in few communication opportunities. In these cases, they may be unable to perform voice behaviors and forced to perform silence behaviors, eliminating any influences of their individual differences (e.g. social courage).

We suggest that more detrimental top management attitudes toward voice and silence, detrimental supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence, as well as fewer communication opportunities cause social courage's relationship with each dimension of voice and silence to strengthen, and more positive top management attitudes toward voice and silence, positive supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence, as well as greater communication opportunities cause social courage's relationship with each dimension of voice and silence to

weaken, that is, social courage may have notable relationships with voice and silence when top management, supervisors, or environments are restrictive, as courage would be required to perform or refrain from these behaviors; however, when top management, supervisors, or environments are favorable, most every employee may be willing to perform these behaviors and therefore social courage would have a weaker effect on voice and silence. Therefore, we propose the following:

> *H4.* (a) Top management attitudes toward voice and silence, (b) supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence, as well as (c) communication opportunities moderate the relationship between social courage and each dimension of voice and silence, such that these relationships are stronger when these moderators are more permissive (i.e. favorable attitudes, greater communication opportunities).

By researching the relationship of social courage with this more nuanced voice and silence construct in conjunction with boundary conditions, we are able to obtain a better understanding of the social courage construct, the importance of social courage in the workplace, the influence of the work environment on social courage, and the relationship of courage to new domains that are important for both research and practice.

Study

Methods

To test our proposed hypotheses, we performed a time-separated study in which the predictors, moderators and outcomes were each measured at a separate timepoint.

Participants. Participants ($M_{age} = 33.33$; $SD_{age} = 9.37$; 45 percent female; 73 percent American) were recruited from MTurk and provided a small amount of monetary compensation. MTurk is a website that connects individuals willing to perform tasks on their computer, such as taking a survey, with those wanting the tasks completed. Prior studies have shown that the results obtained from MTurk samples are reliable and valid (Casler *et al.*, 2013; Hauser and Schwarz, 2016; Smith *et al.*, 2016). All participants were currently working (83 percent full time) in a variety of industries (17 percent Business and Information, 13 percent Education, 12 percent Finance and Insurance, 10 percent Health Services, 48 percent Other). Because the current study included many attention checks ("Please mark disagree to show that you are paying attention"), those that failed more than 1/6 of the attention checks were removed (14 participants). All statistics, including the sample size, reflect the sample after removing these participants.

Procedure. Participants signed up for the study via MTurk. They provided their informed consent, enrolled into the study, and completed the first survey (Time 1; 370 participants). Between one and two weeks later, participants completed the second survey (Time 2; 188 participants). They completed the third (Time 3; 153 participants) and fourth (Time 4; 134 participants) survey on each week for the following two weeks. Overall, the study was completed over the course of a month, and participants were debriefed about the project at the conclusion. Demographic information was measured at Time 1; social courage was measured at Time 2; approach and avoidance motivations were measured at Time 3; and all outcomes were measured at Time 4.

Measures. All measures included a 1 (strongly disagree)–7 (strongly agree) scale.

Social courage. The 11-item Workplace Social Courage Scale was administered (Howard *et al.*, 2017). The scale asks participants to not respond regarding their current work environment, but instead based on how they would behave after working elsewhere for five years. An example item is, "Although it may damage our friendship, I would tell my superior when a coworker is doing something incorrectly." The scale's Cronbach's α was 0.86.

Voice and silence. The three types of voice and the three types of silence were measured with the scale created by Van Dyne *et al.* (2003), which includes five items for each dimension. Example items are: "I communicate my opinion about work issues even if others disagree" (prosocial voice), "I withhold relevant information due to fear" (defensive silence) and "I passively agree with others about solutions to problems" (acquiescent voice). The Cronbach's α for each dimension exceeded 0.80.

Top management attitudes toward voice and silence. Top management attitudes toward voice and silence were measured with the five-item scale created by Vakola and Bouradas (2005). An example item is: "Top management of the company encourages employees to express their disagreements regarding company issues." The scale's Cronbach's α was 0.89.

Supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence. Supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence were measured with the five-item scale created by Vakola and Bouradas (2005). An example item is: "I believe that my supervisor handles conflicts well among his/her partners." The scale's Cronbach's α was 0.94.

Communication opportunities. Communication opportunities were measured with the five-item scale created by Vakola and Bouradas (2005). An example item is: "Communication with colleagues from other departments is satisfactory." The scale's Cronbach's α was 0.91.

Conscientiousness. Prior research has supported that conscientiousness predicts voice and silence behaviors (Crant *et al.*, 2011; Nikolaou *et al.*, 2008), and thereby any new predictor of voice and silence should be shown to predict these outcomes beyond conscientiousness. For this reason, we controlled for conscientiousness in our primary analyses. Conscientiousness was measured with the four-item mini-IPIP scale (Donnellan *et al.*, 2006; Goldberg, 1992). An example item is: "Get chores done right away." The scale's Cronbach's α was 0.79.

Results
Correlations and Cronbach's α's are included in Table I. Social courage was positively and significantly related to both prosocial voice ($r = 0.43$, $p < 0.01$) and prosocial silence ($r = 0.26$, $p < 0.01$). It was also negatively and significantly related to defensive voice ($r = -0.42$, $p < 0.01$), defensive silence ($r = -0.51$, $p < 0.01$), acquiescent voice ($r = -0.42$, $p < 0.01$) and acquiescent silence ($r = -0.48$, $p < 0.01$). These results support *H1a–H3b*.

Next, a series of stepwise regressions were conducted to test the moderating effects on each outcome. All variables were first mean-centered, and three interaction terms were created by multiplying social courage with each of the three potential moderators. Then, in each stepwise regression, social courage alone was entered into the first step, then the three moderating variables were entered into the second step, then a single interaction term was entered into the third step. If the interaction term was significant, it could then be tested alongside the other interaction terms to gauge the robustness of the interaction effect.

The results of these analyses are presented in Tables II–IV. In each stepwise regression, social courage remained a significant predictor of each voice and silence dimension when including the other variables and interaction terms (all $p < 0.01$), thereby providing additional support for *H1a–H3b*. Also, none of the interaction terms were statistically significant when tested in isolation (all $p > 0.05$), precluding any more conservative analyses of these interaction effects. *H4a–H4c* were not supported. It should be noted that top management attitudes toward voice and silence had a significant direct effect in three of these analyses (all $p < 0.05$; defensive voice, acquiescent voice, acquiescent silence), whereas supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence had a significant direct effect in one ($p < 0.05$; prosocial voice). Communication opportunities did not have a significant direct effect on any outcome.

Lastly, we replicated all analyses without controlling for conscientiousness due to possible concerns regarding the over-control of variables (Becker, 2005; Spector and Brannick, 2011). Our inferences were consistent between our original analyses and these

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Social courage	0.86										
2. Prosocial voice	0.43**	0.94									
3. Prosocial silence	0.26**	0.46**	0.81								
4. Defensive voice	−0.42**	−0.37**	−0.22*	0.93							
5. Defensive silence	−0.51**	−0.43**	−0.29**	0.83**	0.90						
6. Acquiescent voice	−0.42**	−0.49**	−0.26**	0.62**	0.58**	0.93					
7. Acquiescent silence	−0.48**	−0.42**	−0.32**	0.60**	0.67**	0.73**	0.91				
8. Top management attitudes	0.31**	0.22*	0.23**	−0.23**	−0.28**	−0.26**	−0.36**	0.89			
9. Supervisor attitudes	0.32**	0.34**	0.24**	−0.10	−0.20*	−0.19*	−0.20*	0.63**	0.94		
10. Communication opportunities	0.42**	0.33**	0.15	−0.15	−0.30**	−0.19*	−0.33**	0.59**	0.62**	0.91	
11. Conscientiousness	0.30**	0.24**	0.20*	−0.27**	−0.34**	−0.36**	−0.44**	0.19*	0.18*	0.40**	0.79

Notes: *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table I.
Correlations and Cronbach's α's of study variables

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3a		Step 3b		Step 3c	
	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t
Prosocial voice										
Constant		11.539**		11.440**		11.432**		11.321**		11.482**
1. Consc.	0.101	1.207	0.084	0.967	0.081	0.936	0.085	0.979	0.084	0.973
2. Social courage	0.396	4.717**	0.326	3.710**	0.326	3.709**	0.325	3.686**	0.328	3.738**
3. TMA			−0.049	−0.483	−0.035	−0.334	−0.059	−0.567	−0.031	−0.301
4. SA			0.228	2.202*	0.228	2.197*	0.227	2.183*	0.222	2.144*
5. CO			0.054	0.488	0.053	0.479	0.060	0.543	0.042	0.381
6a. SC × TMA					−0.055	−0.693				
6b. SC × SA							0.045	0.569		
6c. SC × CO									−0.078	−0.996
ΔR^2		0.20		0.05		0.00		0.00		0.00
Prosocial silence										
Constant		10.785**		7.133**		7.070**		7.105**		7.109**
1. Consc.	0.121	1.343	0.145	1.561	0.145	1.547	0.147	1.573	0.146	1.558
2. Social courage	0.213	2.368*	0.189	1.996*	0.190	1.991*	0.187	1.967	0.191	1.997*
3. TMA			0.136	1.246	0.140	1.253	0.123	1.114	0.140	1.262
4. SA			0.185	1.660	0.185	1.653	0.183	1.641	0.183	1.638
5. CO			−0.176	−1.485	−0.176	−1.480	−0.168	−1.405	−0.179	−1.493
6a. SC × TMA					−0.016	−0.182				
6b. SC × SA							0.061	0.726		
6c. SC × CO									−0.019	−0.229
ΔR^2		0.08		0.05		0.00		0.00		0.00

Notes: Consc. = Conscientiousness, TMA = Top Management Attitudes, SA = Supervisor Attitudes, CO = Communication Opportunities. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table II.
Moderated regression results predicting prosocial voice and prosocial silence

alternative analyses, which supports the robustness of our results. We only provide our original analyses in the primary text, but we provide these alternative analyses in Supplementary Material A.

Discussion
The goal of the current paper was to provide a detailed investigation of the relationships between social courage, voice and silence. As suggested by the approach/avoidance framework (Roth and Cohen, 1986; Elliot and Covington, 2001; Howard, 2019), the results supported that social courage has a positive relationship with prosocial voice and silence, whereas it has a negative relationship with defensive voice and silence as well as acquiescent voice and silence. In other words, social courage positively relates to beneficial forms of voice and silence as well as negatively relates to detrimental forms of voice and silence, perhaps as a result of their mutual associations (or lack thereof) with prosocial motivation and approach tendencies.

The current hypotheses of direct effects were guided by the approach/avoidance framework as well as tenets of behavioral decision-making theories (Ajzen, 1991; Gagné and Deci, 2005; Ryan and Deci, 2000), and, because each of these hypotheses were supported, these two theoretical approaches are also supported as valuable methods to identify the relationships of social courage. As argued by prior authors, current research on courage and social courage is relatively atheoretical, and calls have been made for the better integration and study of theory within this literature (Detert and Bruno, 2017; Koerner, 2014; Pury, C.L. and Lopez, S.J., 2010). Although the current paper did not test the applied theoretical perspectives, *per se*, it nevertheless demonstrated that these perspectives may be apt in identifying the relationships of social courage. Therefore, social courage may be a trait that

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3a		Step 3b		Step 3c	
	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t	β	t
Defensive voice										
Constant		6.957**		6.957**		6.890**		6.975**		6.986**
1. Consc.	−0.129	−1.533	−0.151	−1.725	−0.150	−1.713	−0.152	−1.736	−0.150	−1.710
2. Social courage	−0.376	−4.463**	−0.404	−4.535**	−0.404	−4.519**	−0.402	−5.600**	−0.400	−4.482**
3. TMA			−0.238	−2.327*	−0.241	−2.299*	−0.227	−2.186*	−0.224	−2.158*
4. SA			0.091	0.872	0.091	0.869	0.092	0.884	0.086	0.823
5. CO			0.166	1.486	0.166	1.481	0.158	1.410	0.158	1.410
6a. SC × TMA					0.011	0.132				
6b. SC × SA							−0.054	−0.683		
6c. SC × CO									−0.063	−0.805
ΔR^2		0.19		0.04		0.00		0.00		0.00
Defensive silence										
Constant		8.228**		7.698**		7.626**		7.629**		7.630**
1. Consc.	−0.175	−2.208*	−0.163	−1.959	−0.162	−1.946	−0.162	−1.948	−0.163	−1.957
2. Social courage	−0.446	−5.620**	−0.425	−5.029**	−0.425	−5.011**	−0.426	−5.013**	−0.427	−5.022**
3. TMA			−0.176	−1.812	−0.178	−1.790	−0.179	−1.809	−0.182	−1.835
4. SA			0.047	0.478	0.047	0.476	0.047	0.473	0.049	0.494
5. CO			0.020	0.185	0.020	0.185	0.021	0.200	0.023	0.212
6a. SC × TMA					0.008	0.107				
6b. SC × SA							0.013	0.168		
6c. SC × CO									0.025	0.329
ΔR^2		0.29		0.02		0.00		0.00		0.00

Notes: Consc. = Conscientiousness, TMA = Top Management Attitudes, SA = Supervisor Attitudes, CO = Communication Opportunities. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table III.
Moderated regression results predicting defensive voice and defensive silence

partially drives approach motivations and/or decision-making processes, and these associated theoretical frameworks may be valuable in identifying further outcomes and processes associated with courage and social courage.

Linking trait social courage with voice and silence behaviors also links the construct with further theoretical frameworks associated with these outcomes beyond those applied in the current paper. Much theoretical work has been developed to understand the dynamics of voice and silence, notably the work of Van Dyne *et al.* (2003) and Klaas *et al.* (2012). Van Dyne *et al.* (2003), in addition to proposing their multidimensional perspective of voice, made several propositions regarding these dimensions by "applying basic attribution processes and stressing the more ambiguous overt cues provided by silence compared to voice" (p. 1361). Basic attribution processes can also be used to detail the signaling and "ripple effect" of courage on coworkers (e.g. courage begets courage), and the study of ambiguous overt cues can be used to understand "quiet courage" (e.g. courage without an audience) – both of these being long-standing areas of research (Adams *et al.*, 1997; Geller, 2016; Walton, 1986). Alternatively, Klaas and colleagues (2012) highlighted that much is still unknown about these "alternative forms" of voice, and these authors also made multiple propositions to spark the study of these alternative dimensions by identifying seven categories of voice antecedents. While the current paper satisfied the call by these authors to study alternative forms of voice, social courage falls within only one of these categories: trait-like characteristics. Klaas *et al.* (2012) highlighted that variables within each category may have consistent effects and these variables may also produce unique interactions with variables from other categories, which was not studied in the current paper. Therefore, these existing frameworks of voice and silence may be adapted to develop a holistic framework around the outcomes of social courage, now that social courage has been associated with such outcomes.

	Step 1 β	Step 1 t	Step 2 β	Step 2 t	Step 3a β	Step 3a T	Step 3b β	Step 3b t	Step 3c β	Step 3c t
Acquiescent voice										
Constant		9.242**		9.253**		9.201**		9.238**		9.170**
1. Consc.	−0.241	−2.922**	−0.271	−3.167**	−0.272	−3.162**	−0.272	−3.169**	−0.271	−3.166**
2. Social courage	−0.333	−4.039**	−0.343	−3.942**	−0.343	−3.923**	−0.342	−3.911**	−0.346	−3.951**
3. TMA			−0.203	−2.022*	−0.198	−1.930	−0.194	−1.908	−0.211	−2.072*
4. SA			−0.042	−0.410	−0.042	−0.409	−0.041	−0.398	−0.039	−0.379
5. CO			0.202	1.853	0.202	1.845	0.197	1.789	0.207	1.884
6a. SC × TMA					−0.018	−0.225				
6b. SC × SA							−0.040	−0.521		
6c. SC × CO									0.039	0.509
ΔR^2		0.23		0.04		0.00		0.00		0.00
Acquiescent silence										
Constant		9.807**		9.404**		9.294**		9.298**		9.323**
1. Consc.	−0.302	−3.859**	−0.287	−3.597**	−0.286	−3.566**	−0.286	−3.574**	−0.288	−3.591**
2. Social courage	−0.367	−4.695**	−0.343	−4.211**	−0.343	−4.205**	−0.345	−4.222**	−0.344	−4.213**
3. TMA			−0.289	−3.093**	−0.298	−3.114**	−0.299	−3.153**	−0.296	−3.107**
4. SA			0.083	0.869	0.083	0.867	0.082	0.853	0.085	0.888
5. CO			0.054	0.533	0.055	0.534	0.061	0.593	0.058	0.564
6a. SC × TMA					0.034	0.462				
6b. SC × SA							0.048	0.668		
6c. SC × CO									0.029	0.407
ΔR^2		0.31		0.05		0.00		0.00		0.00

Notes: Consc. = Conscientiousness, TMA = Top Management Attitudes, SA = Supervisor Attitudes, CO = Communication Opportunities. *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$

Table IV.
Moderated regression results predicting acquiescent voice and acquiescent silence

Further, the current results provide evidence that social courage may influence domains that have yet to be integrated into the study of courage. For example, prosocial voice is predicted by organizational identity, organizational-based self-esteem, and other associated state and state-like constructs (Hastings and Payne, 2013; Rafferty and Restubog, 2011). Social courage has yet to be associated with such workplace-relevant state or state-like constructs, although these outcomes have been shown to be pivotal mediators and moderators of the relationship between similar individual differences (e.g. prosocial tendencies, honesty-humility) and beneficial organizational outcomes (Ceschi *et al.*, 2016; Chirumbolo, 2015). Social courage may be a contributing factor into the facilitation of such positive states, which may both explain its relationship with presently known beneficial outcomes (e.g. prosocial voice and silence) as well as identify further outcomes. Notably, due to their common associations with approach motivations, the effects of social courage on outcomes may be mediated by achievement striving and goal orientations, and thereby these potential mediators may be used to identify other outcomes of social courage. Similar sentiments could be expressed for the other five dimensions of voice and silence. That is, the state and state-like antecedents of defensive silence may have a relevance to social courage and be used to identify associated moderators and mediators. Therefore, the current results can link social courage to a broad network of other domains.

The results also demonstrated that these relationships were not moderated by influences from top management, supervisors, or work arrangements. This finding suggests that the relationships of social courage are resilient to outside forces, which adheres to early theoretical work on courage. This early theoretical work declared that courage is a virtue capable of defeating any obstacle (Rachman, 1990; Shaffer, 1947; Yearley, 1990); battles in war are decided not by military strategies, for example, but rather by the courage of the

soldiers executing those strategies. While the current results cannot support such a strong statement, they do support more recent notions regarding the capabilities of courage. Authors have suggested that courage is a primary determinant of confronting injustices (Detert and Bruno, 2017; Koerner, 2014; Lachman, 2007; Pury, C.L. and Starkey, S.J., 2010; Schilpzand, 2008), and they stress the importance of courageous employees in performing whistleblowing behaviors. For example, Sherron Watkins is often used as an example of courage in action (Beenen and Pinto, 2009; Lucas and Koerwer, 2004; Watkins, 2003), and the current results support that Watkins's courage may have indeed caused her to resist outside pressures and report the unethical actions occurring at Enron.

At the same time, the current results suggest that the effects of social courage may not be particularly enhanced by the environment. While top management, supervisors and work arrangements did not dampen the effects of social courage, they also did not strengthen the effects of social courage. This finding goes against prior theoretical work on courage. Some authors have suggested that workplaces can develop conducive environments to widen the impact of courage (Beenen and Pinto, 2009; Lucas and Koerwer, 2004; Schilpzand, 2008; Watkins, 2003), but the current results suggest that such efforts may be ineffective. While we call for the study of further moderating effects below, it should also be recognized that these tests may produce null effects that are theoretically important and impactful to demonstrate – whether they are intended to dampen or strengthen the effects of social courage.

From a theoretical perspective, social courage may be important in testing the boundaries of context-relevant theories and frameworks, and such investigations may be important to theory-testing in addition to the study of courage. Trait activation theory, for instance, proposes that the effects of traits are activated only in trait-relevant contexts, and therefore traits may have no effect in irrelevant contexts, strong effects in directly-relevant contexts and varying effects between these two extremes (Tett and Burnett, 2003; Tett *et al.*, 2013). For instance, extraversion may have little effect on job performance in a blue-collar work environment, but it may strongly relate to job performance in a sales work environment. Courage, as suggested by prior authors, may be notably resilient to these activation effects of contexts (Geller, 2016; Rachman, 1990; Yearley, 1990), and theories such as trait activation theory may not be applicable to social courage. If the case, future researchers could identify categories or domains of trait and trait-like variables that are resistant to such activation effects, and subsequent theoretical work could identify the justifications for which these traits are resistant to contextual influences.

Lastly, when accounting for social courage, top management attitudes toward voice and silence had a significant effect on three types of voice and silence; supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence had a significant effect on only one; and communication opportunities did not have a significant effect on any. It appears that attributes of the actor and top management influence voice and silence, but supervisors and work arrangements have a smaller influence. It is also possible that the effect of supervisors and work arrangements are primarily due to the power bestowed by top management, and thereby the effects of these two sources are nullified when accounting for the effects of top management – at least regarding their effects on voice and silence. While these two possibilities provide notable theoretical implications, they cannot be confirmed without the future research directions discussed next.

Future research directions
The current paper supported that the relationship between social courage and voice is more nuanced than previously discovered, and the relationship depends on the type of voice. This finding produces three primary directions for future research. First, we investigated a popular multidimensional conceptualization of voice, but other conceptualizations exist.

Studying these other conceptualizations could provide an even deeper understanding of this relationship, but it could also provide better insights on the ultimate effect of social courage on organizations. For instance, Maynes and Podsakoff (2014) produced a four-dimensional conceptualization of voice, which distinguishes two types of prosocial voice (supportive and constructive) and two types of detrimental voice (defensive and destructive). The dynamics of these types of voice may be wholly different than the currently applied conceptualization, and thereby the current results cannot be assured to generalize to this alternative framework. Second, authors should integrate the previously discussed frameworks of voice and silence to identify the broader nomological net of social courage, including mediators and moderators. Third, authors should conduct more detailed investigations into the other outcomes of social courage, as most of the construct's supported outcomes were studied using unidimensional perspectives. Particularly, social courage has been shown to positively relate to OCBs and negatively relate to counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs), but both of these outcomes can be differentiated regarding behaviors toward the organization (OCB-O, CWB-O) or coworkers (OCB-I, CWB-I) (Berry et al., 2012; Carpenter et al., 2014). Given the interpersonal nature of social courage, it is possible that it has a stronger relationship with OCB-I and CWB-I than OCB-O and CWB-O, which can only be discovered with additional research.

Similarly, the current paper investigated the relationship of social courage with silence for the first time, and the significant results further emphasize the importance of social courage to organizations and their representative employees. Future research should continue this trend of investigating novel outcomes of social courage. We suggest that future research should investigate the influence of social courage on well-being outcomes. An initial link has already been established (Howard, 2019; Howard et al., 2017), but much is still unknown regarding the extent that social courage may benefit – or possibly even harm – personal well-being.

Further, in performing these investigations, researchers should also incorporate three novel approaches to the study of social courage. First, very few studies have investigated the mediators of social courage. Howard (2019) successfully incorporated the approach/avoidance framework to better understand how social courage influences outcomes, but other frameworks and theories should be applied to identify further explanatory mechanisms. Second, we studied social courage from a trait perspective, but social courage can also be studied from a behavioral perspective (Howard and Cogswell, 2019), that is, researchers can study the antecedents and outcomes of social courage events. Trait social courage may have a positive relationship with well-being, for example, but behavioral social courage events may produce temporary reductions to well-being due to produced stress. By using a behavioral approach, researchers may identify how individual social courage events may appear detrimental but cumulatively produce positive personal effects. Third, researchers should study mediators via this behavioral approach. Howard and Cogswell (2019) predicted, in accordance with decision-making theories, that perceived benefits and risks would mediate the relationship between antecedents and behavioral social courage; however, they did not find support for most antecedents. This finding leaves much unknown regarding why people may engage in social courage behaviors.

The current results suggested that the effects of courage are robust to outside influences – influences intended to both strengthen as well as dampen the effects of courage; however, more research is needed to definitively support this notion. Future research should further test the moderators of social courage's relationships to determine the extent that the construct is indeed resilient to outside pressures, perhaps focusing on more powerful contextual influences. For instance, abusive supervisors have repeatedly been shown to deter positive subordinate behaviors (Tepper, 2007; Zellars et al., 2002), and thereby employees working alongside abusive supervisors may produce fewer outcomes associated with social courage. The same may be

true regarding toxic work environments (Chamberlain and Hodson, 2010; Gardner, 2012). Alternatively, certain human resource interventions have been suggested to enable courage and strengthen its effects (Beenen and Pinto, 2009; Lucas and Koerwer, 2004; Schilpzand, 2008; Watkins, 2003), such as creating safer environments and clear whistleblowing policies, but the effects of such interventions on social courage have not been tested. The uncertainty regarding these possible moderators highlights a clear need for future research, which could further develop the theory surrounding courage and social courage.

Lastly, in studying these expanded dynamics of social courage, researchers should apply novel theories to better understand the construct. The current paper utilized the approach/avoidance framework as well as tenets of behavioral decision-making theories (e.g. weighing risks and benefits) (Ajzen, 1991; Pury, C.L.S. and Lopez, S.J., 2010) to develop hypotheses, but we did not test the applicability of a specific theory. For instance, we did not test whether approach or avoidance motivations mediated the observed relationships, as it was outside our scope of a nuanced investigation into social courage's relationship with multiple dimensions of voice and silence as well as associated boundary conditions. Applying and testing novel theories, however, can provide a more holistic understanding of social courage and identify direct, moderating and mediating effects in an integrated model. General theories and frameworks used to describe motivation and behaviors (e.g. self-determination theory; Gagné and Deci, 2005; Ryan and Deci, 2000) could inform research on social courage, but theories and frameworks regarding ethical decision making (e.g. Schwartz, 2016; Trevino, 1986) could provide the greatest insights into social courage. We call on future research to apply these ethical decision-making theories and frameworks, and, in doing so, assess the relationship of social courage with other ethics-related individual differences as well as cognitive processes associated with ethical decision making.

Practical implications
Given these theoretical implications, certain practical implications should be emphasized. These results stress the importance of cultivating a courageous workforce. Typically, courage is conceptualized as a trait (Pury *et al.*, 2007; Pury, C.L. and Lopez, S.J., 2010; Rate, 2010; Rate *et al.*, 2007), so practitioners may consider the importance of the construct to business needs and develop selection systems that identify courageous individuals. At the same time, courageous behaviors themselves have been shown to be predicted by many antecedent factors (Howard and Cogswell, 2019). Organizations should thereby also implement interventions in their organizations that could foster these conducive environments. For instance, organizations could administer training programs to enable their supervisors to adopt empowering leadership styles, which has been shown to predict behavioral social courage in prior research (Howard and Cogswell, 2019)

While no variable had a statistically significant moderating effect, top management attitudes toward voice and silence did have a significant direct effect on voice and silence. Practitioners should ensure that top managers are sending positive messages to employees, such as delivering company memos and/or emails that are supportive of beneficial voice and silence. Failing to do so could not only cause companies to miss the benefits of beneficial voice and silence, but also inadvertently encourage detrimental forms of voice and silence. Organizations could likewise implement training programs for supervisors to be more encouraging of beneficial voice and silence, although supervisors had a weaker effect on voice and silence.

Limitations
Like all studies, certain limitations should be noted. While the current study temporally separated the measurement of antecedents, moderators and outcomes by one week or more, each variable was gauged via self-report. The temporal separation of variables reduced some methodological biases (Conway and Lance, 2010; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2003), but others

likely remain due to the common measurement format. Similarly, some variables may be better studied by obtaining assessments of peers or supervisors, such as voice or silence, but researchers have supported that relationships obtained via self-reports of two similar variables, OCBs and CWBs, produce similar results as relationships obtained via other-reports (Berry *et al.*, 2012; Carpenter *et al.*, 2014). It is expected that obtaining other-reported voice and silence would have produced similar results in the current study, but we nevertheless urge future authors to further test these results using alternative research designs. In performing these future studies, researchers should likewise utilize other sample sources. Particularly, the sample used in the current paper was quite diverse, representing a wide array of industries. While a diverse sample helps ensure the generalizability of results, it also causes difficulties in assessing responses around a common issue or scenario, such as the moderators tested in the current paper. A beneficial future study could replicate the current results using a more homogeneous sample, in which the analyses and discussion could be more catered to the specific population of interest.

Conclusion

The goal of the current paper was to obtain a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between social courage, voice and silence. The results demonstrated that social courage positively relates to beneficial voice and silence as well as negatively relates to detrimental voice and silence. The results also showed that this relationship is resilient and not moderated by top management attitudes toward voice and silence, supervisor attitudes toward voice and silence, or communication opportunities. Therefore, the results showed that the relationships of social courage are robust, and the construct may both positively relate to voice and negatively relate to voice as well as both positively relate to silence and negatively relate to silence – depending on the type of voice and silence.

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