Do leaders’ hierarchical perceptions matter? A social dominance theory perspective of empowering leadership, abusive supervision, and team performance

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# Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES ............................................................................................................. vi  
LIST OF FIGURES .......................................................................................................... vii  
ABSTRACT ..................................................................................................................... viii  
1. CH. 1: INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................1  
  1.1 Research Gaps ........................................................................................................3  
  1.2 Scope of Study .......................................................................................................7  
  1.3 Theoretical and Practical Contributions .................................................................13  
2. CH. 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ...............................................................................14  
  2.1 Overview ................................................................................................................19  
  2.2 Social Dominance Theory ....................................................................................20  
  2.3 Social Dominance Orientation .............................................................................24  
  2.4 Power Distance Orientation ...............................................................................28  
  2.5 Abusive Supervision ............................................................................................34  
  2.6 Empowering Leadership .......................................................................................38  
  2.7 Social Dominance Theory and Interactions ..........................................................46  
  2.8 Conclusion ............................................................................................................50  
3. CH. 3: RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES .............................................52  
  3.1 Research Questions ..............................................................................................52  
  3.2 Hypothesized Relationships ...............................................................................53  
4. CH. 4: METHODS ....................................................................................................75  
  4.1 Sample and Procedure .......................................................................................75  
  4.2 Measures ..............................................................................................................78
List of Tables

1. Sample Descriptives .................................................................................................................. 145
2. Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Intercorrelations among Study Variables ................................................................................................................................. 146
3. Model Fit Results for Confirmatory Factor Analyses ............................................................... 147
4. Hierarchical Regression Results for Two-Way Interaction between Leader SDO and Leader Self-Efficacy on Abusive Supervision and Empowering Leadership .......... 148
5. Hierarchical Regression Results for Two-Way Interaction between Leader PDO and Team PDO on Abusive Supervision and Empowering Leadership .................................. 149
6. Hierarchical Regression Results for Empowering Leadership and Abusive Supervision on Team Performance ........................................................................................................ 150
7. Hierarchical Regression Results for SDO, Abusive Supervision, and Empowering Leadership of Team Performance ........................................................................................................ 151
8. Hierarchical Regression Results for PDO, Abusive Supervision, and Empowering Leadership of Team Performance ...................................................................................................... 152
9. Bootstrap Analyses of the Conditional Direct and Indirect Effects on Team Performance: Separate PROCESS Results ........................................................................................................ 153
10. Bootstrap Analyses of the Conditional Direct and Indirect Effects on Team Performance: Omnibus PROCESS Results ........................................................................................................ 154
11. Post-Hoc Hierarchical Regression Results for the Two-Way Interaction between Leader SDO and Leader PDO on Empowering Leadership ....................................................... 155
13. Post-Hoc Hierarchical Regression Results for the Three-Way Interaction among Leader SDO, Leader Gender, and Employee Gender on Abusive Supervision .......... 157
14. Post-Hoc Hierarchical Regression Results for the Three-Way Interaction among Leader SDO, Leader Gender, and Employee Gender on Empowering Leadership .... 158
List of Figures

1. Hypothesized Model ..................................................................................................159
2. Two-Way Interaction of Leader PDO and Team PDO on Empowering Leadership 160
3. Two-Way Interaction of Leader PDO and Leader SDO on Empowering Leadership ....................................................................................................................................161
4. Three-Way Interaction of Leader PDO, Team PDO, and Leader Self-Efficacy on Empowering Leadership ........................................................................................................................................162
5. Two-Way Interaction of Leader SDO and Leader Gender on Abusive Supervision 163
6. Three-Way Interaction of Leader SDO, Leader Gender, and Employee Gender on Abusive Supervision ........................................................................................................................................164
7. Two-Way Interaction of Leader SDO and Leader Gender on Empowering Leadership ........................................................................................................................................165
Abstract

Do leaders’ hierarchical perceptions matter? A social dominance theory perspective of empowering leadership, abusive supervision, and team performance

Katrina A. Graham

Leaders typically operate within an organizational structure that often puts them in a hierarchically superior position over subordinates. Despite this ubiquitous arrangement, there has been little attention on leaders’ overall beliefs about hierarchical relationships and how these beliefs affect leader behavior and team functioning. Specifically, more research is needed on how leaders’ orientations, such as dominance and power orientations, affect leadership styles and outcomes. I address this gap by examining how leaders’ hierarchical perceptions affect their leadership behaviors, and ultimately team performance. In this study, I explore the effects of leaders’ social dominance orientation (SDO) and power distance orientation (PDO) on their empowering leadership and abusive supervision behaviors directed toward their teams. Utilizing social dominance theory as a theoretical framework, I propose that leaders’ SDO will be positively related to their abusive supervision, and SDO and PDO will be negatively related to their empowering leadership of their teams. I also predict that leaders’ leader self-efficacy will interact with SDO, and followers’ team-level PDO will interact with leaders’ PDO, in influencing these leadership behaviors. I then examine moderated mediation models, and test how the proposed interactions and leadership behaviors ultimately impact team performance. To test my hypotheses, I collected multi-source data with 52 teams in the physical therapy industry. I found that teams’ PDOs moderated the relationship between leader PDO and empowering leadership, such that higher levels of empowering leadership occurred as the teams had more congruent PDOs to the leaders. Post-hoc analyses also revealed that leader self-efficacy moderated this effect, such that leader self-efficacy had both positive and negative effects on
empowering leadership depending on team and leader PDO congruence. The post-hoc results also revealed that leader gender qualified the relationships between leader SDO and leadership behaviors, with differing effects for male and female leaders, and the gender make-up of the subordinate team was also relevant to abusive supervision. Taken together, the research contributes to our understanding of leadership behavior by beginning to integrate social dominance theory with leadership theory, and offers a number of promising avenues for future theoretical development and research.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Leaders play an important role in organizational success. Leaders influence and guide employees, and enable organizations to meet their performance goals (Kaiser, Hogan, & Craig, 2008). From an employee perspective, positive leadership behaviors such as empowering leadership have been associated with numerous beneficial outcomes, including increased organizational affective commitment (e.g. Chen, Sharma, Edinger, Shapiro, & Farh, 2011; Hassan, Mahsud, Yukl, & Prussia, 2014), job satisfaction (e.g. Dewettinck & van Ameijdje, 2011; Robert, Probst, Martocchio, Drasgow, & Lawler, 2000), and higher performance (e.g. Vecchio, Justin, & Pearce, 2010). Conversely, destructive leadership behaviors such as abusive supervision lead to greater employee psychological distress (Tepper, 2000; Tepper, Moss, Lockhart, & Carr, 2007), increased deviance (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Mawritz, Mayer, Hoobler, Wayne, & Marinova, 2012; Tepper, Henle, Lambert, Giacalone, & Duffy, 2008), lower job satisfaction (Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004), and decreased job performance (Harris, Kacmar, & Zivnuska, 2007).

In organizations, leaders operate within a structure which often puts them in a hierarchically superior position over others (Bass & Bass, 2008). Organizations are hierarchical in nature (Magee & Galinsky, 2008), and leadership and hierarchy are closely intertwined. As Giessner and Schubert (2007) observe, “leaders…suppress their employees, and they are up in the organizational hierarchy. In contrast, employees are referred to as subordinates, and as being at lower levels of a hierarchy” (30). Individuals often associate organizational hierarchy with leadership (Giessner & Schubert, 2007), which suggests that the two constructs are related. However, while hierarchy and leadership are associated, leaders can have varying perspectives on how they approach relationships with subordinates. Research has found that when two parties
are asymmetrically dependent on each other—specifically, when one party has authority over another (e.g., a leader and subordinate)—this type of relationship can affect feelings of social distance between leaders and subordinates (Magee & Smith, 2013). However, leaders can also see themselves as equals with their subordinates, regardless of their superior hierarchical rank (van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Therefore, despite leaders’ superior positions over subordinates in hierarchal organizations, the types of perceptions that leaders have about their relationships with subordinates can be highly varied.

The goal of my dissertation is to better understand these varied perceptions and their impact on leadership behaviors and team performance. There has been little attention on leaders’ overall beliefs about hierarchical relationships and how they affect leader and follower outcomes. For purposes of this study, I define leaders’ hierarchical perceptions as leaders’ beliefs concerning acceptable formal and informal role differentiation between managers and subordinates in organizations. To develop this definition, I draw from MaGee and Galinsky’s (2008) conceptual review of organizational hierarchies. They described hierarchies as social ranking systems where individuals with higher ranks possess more valuable dimensions than those in lower ranks. For these rank orders to develop, individuals in the system must take on formal and/or informal roles. MaGee and Galinsky described this process as hierarchical differentiation. Therefore, when examining hierarchical perceptions, I am concerned with leaders’ beliefs about acceptable role differentiation, or formal and informal differences in rank order that should exist between leaders and their subordinates.

While leaders’ hierarchical perceptions should be relevant to leadership behaviors, more research is needed on how orientations such as dominance (Halevy, Chao, Cohen, & Livingston, 2012; Nicol, 2009) and power distance (Cole, Carter, & Zhang, 2013) affect leadership choices.
In my dissertation, I argue that how leaders perceive hierarchical relationships between leaders and subordinates should influence their leadership behaviors, and ultimately team outcomes. Additionally, I suggest that these relationships will be impacted by other leader and subordinate variables, including leaders’ beliefs about their leadership capabilities and subordinates’ own hierarchical perceptions. To date, there is very little research on how leaders view their roles as supervisors over subordinates and how this affects their leadership behaviors, and I contend that these hierarchical perceptions are relevant and important predictors of leadership behavior and ultimately team functioning.

**Research Gaps**

In my dissertation, I incorporate the role of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions, as well as contextual variables, to better understand leader and team outcomes. I seek to address three gaps in the leadership literature, and in the following paragraphs, I identify each of these gaps. First, I apply the role of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions to both empowering leadership and abusive supervision, and I suggest that understanding how leaders view hierarchical relationships is important in predicting these two leadership behaviors due to the relevance of hierarchal perceptions to both leadership constructs. Second, I discuss the importance of studying both leader and subordinate variables as moderators. While I propose that leaders’ hierarchical perceptions are relevant to their leadership behaviors, the hierarchical perceptions of their subordinates, as well as leader self-efficacy, should influence the impact of hierarchical perceptions on outcomes. Finally, due to the group nature of hierarchical relationships in organizations, I address a gap concerning our understanding of how hierarchical perceptions affect leadership and performance from a team perspective.
I examine these contributions in relation to the positive leadership behavior of empowering leadership, and the destructive leadership behavior of abusive supervision. Empowering leaders inspire their employees to engage in self-leadership through increased control and autonomy over their work (Stewart, Courtright, & Maz, 2010). Empowering leadership increases subordinate psychological empowerment (e.g. Chen, Kirkman, Kanfer, Allen, & Rosen, 2007; Raub & Robert, 2010; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Zhang, & Bartol, 2010) and has been linked to numerous positive employee outcomes (Hassan et al., 2014). However, abusive supervision is a destructive leadership behavior. Abusive supervision is defined as “subordinates’ perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors, excluding physical contact” (Tepper, 2000: 178). While various conceptualizations of destructive leadership exist (Einarsen, Aasland, & Skogstad, 2007), abusive supervision is one of the most widely researched destructive leadership construct, and it is closely related to other constructs (such as supervisor social undermining) with which it shares high overlap (Thoroughgood, Tate, Sawyer, & Jacobs, 2012).

Therefore, my dissertation seeks to address how hierarchical perceptions influence these leadership behaviors. Some research has examined the antecedents of empowering leadership (Hakimi, van Knippenberg, & Giessner, 2010) and abusive supervision (e.g. Burton, Hobbler, & Scheuer, 2012; Harris, Harvey, & Kacmar, 2011; Restubog, Scott, & Zagenscyk, 2011); however, to date, very little research exists on leader antecedents of empowering leadership (Hakimi et al., 2010), and the work on antecedents to abusive supervision has largely focused on contextual variables (Martinko, Harvey, Brees and Mackey, 2013). More research on antecedents of empowering leadership (Hakimi et al., 2010) and abusive supervision (Martinko et al., 2013) is needed with regard to how leader orientations impact leader behaviors (Halevy et al., 2012),
and specifically how leaders’ hierarchical orientations affect leadership behaviors (Nicol, 2009). Understanding the intersection of hierarchy and leadership characteristics can enable researchers better understand what types of individuals are more likely to display empowering and abusive leadership behaviors.

Additionally, examining leaders’ hierarchical perceptions can help researchers better understand how leaders relate to their subordinates. In one of the only studies to examine antecedents of empowering leadership, Hakimi and colleagues (2010) found that leaders’ feelings about their employees were relevant in determining whether or not they were empowered leaders. Similarly, Tepper, Moss, and Duffy (2011) recognized the importance of how supervisors view leader-subordinate relationships, but the authors noted that more work in this domain of abusive supervision research is needed. Because leaders are embedded in hierarchal organizations, how they view their hierarchal relationships with subordinates is an important leader antecedent to examine. Leaders have the respect and social status that comes with their hierarchical rank (Weber, 1948), and they have control over resources (Emerson, 1962). Thus, it is likely that they will develop beliefs about how they should interact with those lower in the hierarchal structure, and indeed, their hierarchical perceptions can influence how they relate to subordinates (Son Hing, Bobocel, Zanna, & McBride, 2007).

Second, my dissertation seeks to address a gap concerning the role of leader and subordinate beliefs as factors which enhance or inhibit relationships between leaders’ hierarchical perceptions and leader outcomes. Understanding the interaction of leader characteristics can help us better predict leadership behaviors, and in my model, I examine how leader self-efficacy (Chemers, Watson, & May, 2000; McCormick, 2001) affects the relationships between leaders’ hierarchical beliefs and their leadership behaviors. Additionally,
the role of the subordinates’ perceptions should also be relevant to the effect of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions on leadership behaviors. As Schaubroeck, Lam, and Cha (2007: 1028) explain, “…more research is needed on how team values shape the way followers respond to leadership.” Thus, the hierarchical perceptions of leaders should also be examined in conjunction with their teams’ hierarchical orientations, and I suggest that a subordinate team’s power distance orientation will interact with leaders’ power distance to affect leadership behaviors. Examining both leader self-efficacy and team power distance orientation as moderators will improve our understanding of how hierarchical perceptions affect leader behaviors and ultimately team performance.

The final gap I seek to address involves examining hierarchical perceptions and leadership behaviors in a team context, and linking these variables to team performance. Due to the nature of organizational hierarchy, leaders supervise a group of individuals who often work in team settings, and thus examining leadership behaviors at a team level is important for research to be relevant to organizational practice (Lim & Ployhart, 2004). When approaching leadership issues, Yammarino and Dansereau (2008) note that it is important to understand both leaders and the subordinate groups that they supervise, rather than just leader-subordinate dyads. Leadership behaviors ultimately affect the success of teams (Morgeson, DeRue, & Karam, 2010), and therefore teams can play an important role in understanding the effects of leaders’ hierarchical beliefs. While empowering leadership has been studied from a team perspective (e.g. Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Wallace, Johnson, Mathe, & Paul, 2011), research has not yet examined the role of teams in relation to antecedents of empowering leadership. Additionally, less is known about abusive supervision in teams. To date, only a few studies on abusive supervision have tested the team-level effects of abusive supervision (see Liu, Liao, & Loi, 2012;
Mawritz et al., 2012; Priesemuth, Schminke, Ambrose, & Folger, 2014). For both empowering leadership and abusive supervision, leaders’ hierarchical perceptions should be relevant to leadership of teams. Additionally, teams’ own hierarchical perceptions should interact with leaders’ hierarchical beliefs in affecting leadership behaviors. However, research has not yet examined the link between leaders’ hierarchical views, subordinate team’s hierarchical beliefs, team ratings of leadership behaviors, and ultimately team performance.

Combining these three gaps, I contend that there is a need to examine how leaders’ hierarchical perceptions, combined with additional leader and subordinate factors, affect their leadership behaviors from a team perspective. Additionally, more research is needed in order to better understand the effect of hierarchical beliefs on both abusive supervision and empowering leadership. Taken together, addressing these gaps from a hierarchical orientation perspective can contribute to our understanding of leadership theory and help researchers better understand the conditions which lead to positive forms of leadership, destructive leadership, and ultimately team performance.

**Scope of Study**

In my model (see Figure 1), I outline the relationships between leaders’ hierarchical perceptions on their leadership behavior, and then link those behaviors to team performance. I address the gaps in the literature by examining the effects of hierarchical perceptions of leader social dominance orientation and power distance orientation on both empowering leadership and abusive supervision, and integrate a team perspective on leadership behaviors and team performance. I also suggest that consistent with prior work on leadership antecedents, leaders’ self-efficacy and team power distance orientation will also play a role in affecting the relationships between leaders’ hierarchical perceptions and their leadership behaviors. I first
outline the role of social dominance orientation, and then discuss another hierarchical perception, power distance orientation. When examining moderators, I propose that leader self-efficacy can strengthen the negative effects of social dominance orientation. I also predict that a team’s power distance orientation will interact with the leader’s power distance orientation. I propose that as leader power distance increases, when a team has lower power distance orientation, there will be negative effects on leadership behavior. However, when a team has a high power distance orientation, there will be a decrease in abusive supervision. Finally, I link these leadership behaviors to team performance. Throughout the section, I also discuss how social dominance theory, the theoretical framework I utilize in my model, drives my predictions.

Social dominance theory and social dominance orientation

Social dominance theory is a theoretical perspective which seeks to explain why certain groups in societies are oppressed, and it addresses both structural and individual causes (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000; Sidanius, Pratto, van Laar, & Levin, 2004). For purposes of my dissertation, I largely focus on the individual-level (as applies to leaders) and group-level (as applies to a leader’s subordinate employee team) aspects of social dominance theory. Social dominance orientation (SDO) is defined as “one’s degree of preference for inequality among social groups” (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994: 741). When people have a high SDO, they are likely to believe that higher-status groups are inherently superior to subordinate groups, and that it is justifiable to treat people in subordinate groups with force, if necessary. SDO has previously been applied to the workplace (e.g. Umphress, Simmons, Boswell, & del Carmen Triana, 2008), and some work has examined leaders’ SDOs (e.g. Nicol, 2009; Son Hing et al., 2007). Previous research has found that SDO is related to preferences for holding dominating positions over other individuals (Duckitt, 2001). Those with a high SDO also have a preference for status (Pratto,
Stallworth, Sidanius, & Siers, 1997), control, and power (Altemeyer, 1998; De Cremer, Cornelis, & van Hiel, 2008; Driskell, Omstead, & Salas, 1993). Those high on SDO are more likely to assert their control over others by exhibiting discriminatory and oppressive behaviors (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). While SDO is a generalized orientation, it can apply to specific contexts, including organizations (O’Brien & Dietz, 2011). However, research has not yet addressed how SDO specifically applies to leader and subordinate group relationships. Thus, in the current study, I adapt the general SDO measure to the organizational context in order to address my research question concerning how leaders’ hierarchical perceptions affect outcomes. The SDO construct and measure has previously been applied at the societal level (e.g. “superior groups should dominate inferior groups”), and I adapt the measure to the organizational level (e.g. “leaders should dominate subordinates”).

I propose that SDO will be negatively associated with empowering leadership. Because empowering leadership involves considering subordinates as individuals who can make their own decisions and lead themselves (Arnold, Arad, Rhoades, & Drasgow, 2000), SDO should be negatively related to empowering leadership perceptions. Leaders with low SDOs tend to be cooperative (Duckitt, 2001) and empathetic (Guimond, Dambrun, Michinov, & Duarte, 2003) towards employees, which are approaches consistent with empowering leadership. Conversely, I expect that SDO will be positively associated with abusive supervision. People can maintain their social dominance through bullying (Tiesl, Rogosch, Oshri, & Cichetti, 2011), and bullying can act as a mechanism used to maintain social power and social status (Vaillancourt, Hymel, & McDougall, 2004). As Sidanius and colleagues (Sidanius et al., 2004) suggested, congruent with social dominance expectations, individuals with a high SDO who are in hierarchy-enhancing (e.g. leadership) roles will likely display “aggressive, demeaning, or oppressive attitudes toward
members of subordinate groups” (855). These types of behaviors are consistent with abusive supervision, where supervisors engage in hostile behaviors, including being rude, speaking disrespectfully, and expressing anger towards subordinates (Tepper, 2000).

While social dominance orientation is one tenet of social dominance theory, there are other theoretical propositions which would suggest moderators of the relationship between one’s SDO and leadership behaviors. The theory suggests that self-perceptions that can act as powerful psychological forces for individuals in dominant positions. I predict that the effect of leaders’ SDO on their leadership behaviors will be affected by how they perceive their leadership abilities—specifically, their leader self-efficacy. I draw on social dominance theory, where theoretical work suggests that leaders who develop beliefs congruent with their dominant status will use these beliefs as further justification for exerting dominant behavior (Pratto, Sidanius, & Levin, 2006). Additionally, research on leader self-efficacy has found that it can lead to detrimental leadership outcomes depending on other factors (e.g. Shipman & Mumford, 2011). Therefore, I suggest that leader SDO and leader self-efficacy will combine to have negative effects, which will result in greater abusive supervision and less empowering leadership.

*Power distance orientation*

My next set of predictions involves power distance orientation (PDO), another belief that leaders can possess about hierarchal relationships. Power distance involves the extent to which individuals believe that power in society should be distributed equally (Hofstede, 1980), and PDO concerns individual preferences for the degree of distance that should exist between higher-level and lower-level individuals (Dorfman & Howell, 1988; Kirkman, Chen, Farh, Chen, & Lowe, 2009). Similar to social dominance, power distance has been conceptualized as a cultural variable applied at a societal level (e.g., countries can differ in their power distance orientation),
but there are also individual and group-level differences. Unlike SDO research, organizational researchers have adapted the PDO construct to the organizational context in order to measure leaders’ and employees’ perceptions of acceptable power distance between leaders and their subordinates. Research has found that individuals with high PDOs are likely to see leaders as having high levels of status (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Kirkman et al., 2009). SDO and PDO are two constructs which concern hierarchical perceptions, and thus there is some overlap between PDO and SDO (Ekehammar, Akrami, Gylje, & Zakrisson, 2004; Eylon & Au, 1999). However, PDO and SDO are distinct (Jost & Hunyady, 2005). SDO concerns inequality among groups, and also encompasses how subordinate groups should be treated (e.g., with force if necessary). However, PDO concerns power distance between individuals in dominant positions and subordinates. An individual may have a high PDO, for example, and believe that leaders should have the authority to make decisions for employees, but not believe in other types of status inequalities between leaders and subordinates or that subordinates should be treated with dominant tactics.

While researchers have examined power distance in relation to empowering leadership and abusive supervision, power distance has been primarily tested as a moderator in terms of leadership outcomes, and mostly measured by the subordinate. For example, Raub and Robert (2010) reported that power values can attenuate the positive effects of empowerment on extra-role behaviors in employees, and Lian, Ferris, and Brown (2012) reported that the moderating effects of subordinates’ PDO on the relationship between abusive supervision and its consequences depended on the outcome being measured. One exception is a study by Cole et al. (2013), which examined how leader PDO interacted with team PDO to predict team outcomes.
Theoretically, Tepper (2007) suggested that employees with a high PDO may be more accepting of abusive supervision due to their acceptance of unequal relationship norms.

I suggest that due to empowering leadership involving sharing power with subordinates, a leader’s PDO will be negatively associated with their empowering leadership. However, because PDO is a different hierarchical view from SDO, and is primarily concerned with a degree of distance between leaders and subordinates—and not as directly related to using force in order to ensure compliance—I do not expect a main effect from leaders’ PDO to abusive supervision. Rather, it is the combination of the leaders’ PDO and the subordinate teams’ PDO which will predict abuse. Those in subordinate groups can “buy in” to the hierarchical system, and believe that the dominant group is deserving of their power. However, those in the subordinate group who do not believe in inequality will be more likely to reject the status quo (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Therefore, I suggest that there will be a positive relationship between leader PDO and abusive supervision when the team has a collectively low PDO, but there will be a negative relationship between leader PDO and abusive supervision when the team has a collectively high SDO. I also expect that when a team has a low PDO, the negative relationship between the leader’s PDO and empowering leadership will be more strongly negative.

*Team performance and moderated mediation*

Finally, I link the leadership behaviors of empowering leadership and abusive supervision to team performance, and also suggest that the proposed interactions will affect team performance indirectly through leadership behaviors. Performance is an important outcome of leadership (Kaiser et al., 2008) and essential to examine at a team level since leaders can have a significant impact on teams (Lim & Ployhart, 2004). Researchers have found that empowering leadership has a positive effect on team performance (Stewart, 2006; Lorinkova, Pearsall, &
Sims, 2013; Srivastava, Bartol, & Locke, 2006) and abusive supervision also negatively affects team performance (Priesemuth et al., 2014). Additionally, I propose moderated mediation models, where the interactive effects of hierarchical orientations and leader self-efficacy and team PDO will predict team performance, and these relationships will be mediated by abusive supervision and empowering leadership.

**Theoretical and Practical Contributions**

This study makes both theoretical and practical contributions. First, it will make a contribution to leadership theory by expanding our understanding of antecedents to leadership behaviors and incorporating the role of hierarchical perceptions. Both the empowering leadership and abusive supervision constructs suggest the importance of hierarchical perceptions in their definitions. For example, because abuse involves a sustained display of hostile behaviors by leaders towards subordinates (Tepper, 2000), the nature of abusive supervision suggests that the leaders may believe they “get away with” this type of behavior due to their hierarchical superior position over subordinates. Examining the effects of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions on abusive supervision also contributes to the actor-focused perspective of aggression (O’Leary-Kelly, Paetzold, & Griffin, 2000), in which abusive supervision is better understood when examining how leader characteristics affect abuse (Scott, Colquitt, & Paddock, 2009). By incorporating leaders’ hierarchical perceptions, I suggest that these views align with an actor-focused theoretical framework, and contribute to our growing understanding of abusive supervision. Furthermore, empowering leadership involves leaders sharing power with their subordinates, including them in decisions (Lorinkova et al., 2013), and removing bureaucratic obstacles (Ahearne, Mathieu, Rapp, 2005), which are more likely to be present in highly hierarchical organizations (Manz & Sims, 2001). This suggests that empowering leaders should not view
followers as inferior individuals or enforce strict hierarchical boundaries. A social dominance theory perspective provides insight into how leaders’ hierarchical perceptions, including power distance and social dominance, affect empowering leadership behaviors.

The research also takes a step forward in theoretically integrating social dominance theory and leadership theory. While each theory offers unique perspectives on how those in dominate positions interact with subordinate groups, social dominance theory offers new insight into how hierarchical perceptions should affect the leadership of teams (O’Brien & Dietz, 2011). Much of our understanding of leadership is based from various relational-based perspectives, such as social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and social learning theory (Bandura, 1977). All of these theories have a social component, where employees and leaders reciprocate behavior, have varying levels of identification with one another, and employees role model leaders’ behavior. Social dominance theory is an additional theoretical perspective which aligns with the relational view of leadership. However, the prior work which integrates social dominance with leadership does not fully integrate these two theories (for an exception, see Nicol, 2009). Instead, they apply certain core tenets of social dominance—for example, the impacts of race and gender on discrimination—without considering how social dominance can apply to the existing hierarchical structure of organizations and perceptions of leader and subordinate differences. Therefore, I seek to integrate these theories by suggesting that the core component of social dominance theory, preference for hierarchical superiority, aligns with the core social component of leadership theory.

Furthermore, the research contributes to our understanding of boundary conditions that exist in both leadership and social dominance theories. Moderator variables are important in
understanding leadership processes (Howell, Dorfman, & Kerr, 1986), and social dominance theory suggests that other factors should affect how hierarchical perceptions lead to outcomes. Examining these theoretically-driven moderators in conjunction with leaders’ hierarchical perceptions adds to our understanding of how hierarchical beliefs affect leadership behaviors and team performance. While Sidanius and Pratto (2000) suggest that individuals’ self-perceptions can affect their dominance behaviors, they provide limited insights into which types of self-perceptions influence the effects of hierarchical perceptions. By examining the moderating effect of leader self-efficacy, I suggest that inflated self-perceptions of one’s abilities behave as an important self-perception boundary condition, and this extends the current theoretical model of the negative impacts of social dominance and power distance. Leader self-efficacy has typically been found to have positive direct or positive strengthening effects on leadership outcomes (Hannah, Avolio, Luthans, & Harms, 2008), but I propose that this variable may also have negative moderating effects. This suggests that leader self-efficacy is a nuanced construct which can affect leadership behaviors differently depending on context.

Additionally, I suggest that team PDO will interact with leader PDO to negatively affect leadership outcomes. I examine hierarchical perceptions of the team as a moderator by exploring the interactive effects of team PDO with leader PDO, which contributes to our knowledge of how leader and subordinate views interact to predict leader and team outcomes. I suggest that negative interactive effects may exist when teams believe in low power distance among leaders and subordinates, and when matched with an increasingly high-PDO leader, the mismatch results in negative outcomes. Therefore, examining these variables in a moderated mediation model can contribute to our understanding of the relationships that occur between leader hierarchical views
and team performance by taking into account the complex processes in which leaders affect their teams’ performance.

I also integrate PDO with SDO; while these two constructs are both hierarchical perceptions (Ekehammar et al., 2004; Eylon & Au, 1999), they have rarely been theoretically considered under the same framework (Jost & Hunyady, 2005). Therefore, I also expand current thinking on PDO by examining it from a social dominance perspective, and propose that the effects of leaders’ PDO will be driven by theoretical mechanisms suggested by social dominance theory. Additionally, while SDO is a generalized orientation, similar to PDO, it can be applied to specific group contexts (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). From a measurement perspective, adapting SDO to the organizational level aligns it with PDO, which has already been adapted to an organizational level, and provides support for the role of social dominance in specific contexts. It is an important step in fully integrating social dominance theory with organizational behavior. Adapting the SDO measure may encourage researchers to consider using a social dominance perspective as an important variable when considering differences among individuals, teams, and organizations.

Furthermore, I am exploring these issues at the team level of analysis, which contributes to our understanding of the role of hierarchical perceptions and leadership behaviors of teams. Employees are embedded in groups of teams, and leadership behaviors are not the result of singular leader and subordinate dyad relationships. Rather, “it is only when leaders and followers link together that leadership emerges” (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008: 137). Researchers should consider leadership behaviors at a team-level when considering how leadership processes emerge in organizations (Yammarino & Dansereau, 2008). The nature of hierarchy implies that a team-level perspective is needed when examining the effects of leaders’ hierarchical beliefs, and
social dominance theory additionally emphasizes the importance of groups when understanding hierarchical influences (Huddy, 2004; Sidnaius & Pratto, 2000). Yet, currently, little research in organizational behavior integrates hierarchical perspectives with subordinate teams (O’Brien & Dietz, 2011). Thus, my study will make a contribution to the literature by examining the effects of leaders’ hierarchical views within a team context, and further provides a step forward in more fully integrating social dominance theory with organizational behavior research.

In terms of practical implications, this study may inform organizations about what types of leaders are best to hire and promote. Organizations that are attempting to promote positive leadership behaviors and discourage destructive leadership may benefit from hiring leaders with hierarchical viewpoints which promote egalitarianism. Additionally, the findings could also enable organizations to design interventions to train existing leaders on the importance of not believing that subordinates are inherently “inferior” to leaders. In selection assessments, hiring managers could include measures of hierarchical perceptions. Organizations could also focus on matching leaders to subordinates which share their worldview; for example, subordinates’ perception of their leaders’ behavior will be improved when the leader and team have similar expectations of power distance. Ensuring that team values align with leader values can ultimately improve team performance through leadership behaviors. Finally, managers could also benefit from this research. By being aware of how hierarchical perceptions affect leadership behaviors, they could potentially compensate for having hierarchical perceptions that include high social dominance or a power distance orientation that is misaligned with their team. They could seek to overcome their perceptions by making an effort to treat employees as equals and frequently communicate with them. Furthermore, managers should be aware of their own leader-self efficacy, and can seek out feedback from their employees concerning their performance.
Receiving 360 feedback may be one way in which managers could increase their self-awareness (Brett & Atwater, 2001).

In summary, the goal of my dissertation is to better understand the effects of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions on their leadership behaviors and ultimately team performance. This study tests the effects of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions, and offers a complex picture concerning what conditions will lead to both positive and destructive leadership. To understand the proposed relationships, I draw on social dominance theory, which offers a theoretical perspective to help explain how leaders’ individual hierarchical orientations can affect leadership outcomes. My moderated mediation models will examine these relationships, and ultimately improve our understanding of empowering leadership and abusive supervision by integrating the role of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Leaders’ hierarchical perceptions are relevant to their leader behaviors (Son Hing et al., 2007; Nicol, 2009), and I propose that these hierarchical perceptions should affect leaders’ abusive supervision and empowering leadership. Abusive supervision and empowering leadership have implications for team outcomes, including team performance. In this study, I utilize social dominance theory to understand how leaders’ SDOs and PDOs affect their leadership behaviors, and ultimately team performance. Social dominance theory proposes that dominant individuals can play an important role in the behaviors of subordinate groups, and the theory has extensive applicability to behaviors in organization (O’Brien & Dietz, 2011). Social dominance theory addresses how dominant (or egalitarian) approaches in hierarchical social structures can oppress (or help) subordinate groups, and how the behaviors exhibited by dominant, higher-status individuals can then drive outcomes experienced by subordinate groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Thus, for my study, social dominance theory provides a guiding framework for understanding how leaders’ hierarchical perceptions affect their leader behaviors and ultimately team performance of their subordinates.

In this chapter, I review the literature regarding social dominance theory as it relates to my theoretical model. First, I discuss the theory and explain its applicability to hierarchical perceptions of leaders. I then discuss the hierarchical perception constructs in my model, including SDO and PDO. Next, I review the literature on abusive supervision and empowering leadership, with particular focus on their relevance to team performance. Then, I discuss the moderating factors which I expect to affect the relationships between leaders’ hierarchical perceptions and their leader behaviors. In my model, I propose that consistent with tenets of
social dominance theory, leaders’ SDO will interact with their leader self-efficacy perceptions to affect their leadership behaviors and team performance, and I discuss the current leader self-efficacy literature. I also propose that team power distance values will influence how the leader’s power distance will impact leader behaviors and team performance, and thus I also review the role of group characteristics, and specifically team values, in relation to social dominance theory.

**Social Dominance Theory**

Social dominance theory (SDT) is a theory which attempts to explain why certain groups in society are oppressed by other groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). The theory posits that there are both individual and structural factors which lead to the oppression of subordinate groups (Sidanius et al., 2004), and it addresses structural factors at societal and group levels. However, an additional component of the theory involves individual differences in how people view the treatment of subordinate individuals and groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). These individual differences can also help explain why individuals are more likely to engage in discriminatory or prejudiced behavior towards those in a subordinate group (Huddy, 2004). The social dominance processes operate both within and across units of analysis (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), and a great deal of theoretical work on SDT has focused on how individual dominance differences affect how individuals treat subordinate groups (Huddy, 2004). For purposes of my dissertation, I focus on individual differences among those in hierarchically superior positions in organizations—leaders—and examine how their orientations should affect how they lead their subordinate teams.

SDT suggests that societies are operated through vertical hierarchies, where status and power are unequally distributed. SDT proposes that there are three different types of group-based social hierarchies. The first is an age system, where those in adulthood have more social power
over young adults and children. The second, a gender system, concerns males having more power than females. The third type is an arbitrary system. This is a system “filled with social constructed and highly salient groups based on...any…socially relevant group distinction that the human imagination is capable of constructing” (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000, p. 33). The third type of arbitrary system can include race and social class, and much of the research on SDT has focused on racial discrimination. In the United States, for example, there is a prevalent trend of institutional discrimination against minorities, particularly African Americans. Viewing African Americans as a subordinate group has been shown to be a pervasive problem in the criminal justice system, hiring in organizations, housing, education, and health care (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000).

However, social dominance can apply to any social structure with an arbitrary hierarchy, including organizations. SDT recognizes organizations’ relevance to social dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), and O’Brien and Dietz (2011) propose that SDT has a great deal of implication for organizations due to the theory’s propositions concerning how subordinate groups are treated in a hierarchical system. They argue that additionally, the group nature of SDT has implications for organizations, where teams and groups of subordinates are prevalent. The authors point out that to date, most studies applying SDT in the workplace have mainly examined how individuals treat each other in dyadic relationships, but that future research should examine the effects of dominance at the group level (O’Brien & Dietz, 2011). Thus, the theory has implications for how leaders behave in organizations and how they treat their subordinate teams. Aiello, Pratto, and Pierro (2013) further make the argument that the tenets of SDT are important to interpersonal relationships in organizations. Due to the unequal distribution of resources that exist in
organizations, specifically the resources held by those in authority positions (e.g. leaders), SDT can help us better understand how leaders treat their subordinate teams.

Within a given hierarchical system, SDT proposes that various processes affect behavior within the system. These tenets of SDT can be applied at the societal level, but also in specific hierarchical social structures. Sidanius and Pratto (2000) describe legitimizing myths, which are “values, attitudes, beliefs, casual attributions, and ideologies that provide moral and intellectual justification for practices that either increase, maintain, or decrease levels of social inequality among social groups” (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000: 104). These myths can be either hierarchy-enhancing, where the hierarchy status is maintained or strengthened, or hierarchy-attenuating, which involves values that contradict hierarchical dominance (e.g., inclusiveness). Ideologies can also be dissensual or consensual. In consensual ideologies, the dominant and subordinate groups have agreement about the status quo, but when dissensual ideologies exist between the groups, where there is not agreement, more tension and conflict between the groups will result. This theoretical tenet has implications for team and leader values, and how team values affect the impact of leader orientations on leader behavior.

The theory also addresses behavioral outcomes experienced by dominant and subordinate groups. Sidanius and Pratto propose a behavioral asymmetry hypothesis, where those in dominant positions behave in a way which benefits themselves, but subordinates do not engage in self-beneficial behaviors to the same degree. Thus, in a system of social dominance, subordinate group members can engage in “group debilitating behavior,” where they not only partake in self-harmful behaviors, but engage in actions which can hurt their subordinate group as a whole. SDT offers mechanisms which explain this phenomenon. Individuals can believe stereotypes about themselves, and thus these beliefs become self-fulfilling prophecies. These
propositions, while they can apply to larger groups within a society, are also theorized to apply to smaller groups within an arbitrary system (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), and I suggest that these mechanisms will affect the team performance of a leader’s subordinate team.

Sidanius and Pratto (2000) distinguish SDT from other group-oriented theories in the sociological and psychological literature. First, they argue that it is different from socialization and social learning theories. These theories propose that in dominant systems, individuals have been socialized to behave in hostile or discriminatory ways, which can explain why prejudice occurs. However, these theories suggest that individuals are rewarded when they exhibit socially desirable behaviors, and attitudes are dropped when certain behaviors are punished. Yet, these theoretical approaches do not address more complicated processes (such as the use of dominant behavior even when this approach is nonproductive) that can occur in a complex system of dominant and subordinate groups. Additionally, SDT is distinct from other group-based theories, including from Social Identity Theory (SIT). Under SIT, the favored group is the “in group”—there is not an inherent hierarchy present under SIT. As such, in SIT, individuals generally give preference to their own “in group.” However, under SDT, preference is given to the dominant group, even by the subordinate groups. Research on SDT has found that subordinate groups often display out-group favoritism towards the higher-status group. Additionally, dominant groups possess feelings of superiority over subordinate groups, and the theory relies on the nature of a hierarchical social structure. These elements are not present in SIT, and therefore the theories are distinct (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000).

In their review on SDT in organizational research, O’Brien and Dietz (2011) note that some studies have been conducted on social dominance in organizations, though the studies are few, and so far, the research "has not fully taken advantage of" (67) various aspects of SDT,
including its implications for groups in organizations. The research that has been conducted is largely focused at the individual level, and has investigated the impact of individuals’ SDOs. While examining individual dominance orientations can help explain interpersonal relations, a major implication of SDT involves how dominance orientations affect intergroup relations (Huddy, 2004). The central tenets of SDT address how subordinate groups are treated, which suggests that when examining leaders’ hierarchical perceptions in an organizational context, it is theoretically appropriate to account for how they treat their subordinate teams.

The next section addresses how SDO has been applied to organizations, and specifically, to leadership.

**Social Dominance Orientation**

Under SDT, individuals can vary markedly in how they perceive hierarchal differences. One individual difference, SDO, concerns people’s belief that higher-status groups are superior to other groups, or in other words, a “generalized orientation toward group-based social hierarchy” (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000, p. 39). Additionally, those with a high SDO are likely to prefer unequal social roles among individuals in a hierarchical system (Pratto et al., 1994). Conversely, those low on SDO prefer equality and have egalitarian viewpoints on how people should be treated (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), though most researchers have framed their theoretical arguments concerning the impact of SDO in terms of high SDOs (O’Brien and Dietz, 2011). Driskell, Goodwin, Salas, and O’Shea (2006) summarize how individuals high on social dominance approach group relations, and they state that these individuals “prefer intragroup relations to be…unequal, hierarchical, and ordered along a superior-inferior dimension” (252). Thus, due to the hierarchical superior role of leaders in organizations, leaders’ SDOs are
particularly relevant to how they treat their subordinates (Aiello et al., 2013; Nicol, 2009; Son Hing et al., 2007).

The SDO construct has discriminant validity from other related concepts, and in their statistical analyses and theoretical arguments, Sidanius and Pratto (2000) distinguish it from other individual characteristics, including authoritarianism, conservatism, and personality traits. While authoritarianism involves an ego-driven defense against feeling inadequate, SDO is a “normal” individual characteristic concerning a preference for inequality. Authoritarianism is also based on the concept that it develops from experiences with authority figures, but SDO relates to the belief that certain individuals should dominate subordinate groups. Additionally, in regards to conservatism, while SDO is correlated with this orientation, they are conceptually and statistically distinct (Pratto et al., 1994). SDO is also correlated with right-wing authoritarianism, though these two constructs are also different (Altemeyer, 1988). SDO has been found to have moderate correlations with some personality variables, including a negative correlation with agreeableness and openness to experience (Sibley & Duckitt, 2008). High-SDO individuals also tend to score highly on related personality traits, such as Machiavellianism and psychoticism, and lower on morality measures (Altemeyer, 1998; Heaven & Bucci, 2001).

People who have high SDOs enjoy having power (though SDO is distinct from PDO, as I discuss shortly), control (Altemeyer, 1998; De Cremer et al., 2008; Driskell et al., 1993), and status (Pratto et al., 1997). Furthermore, individuals high in SDO are more likely than those with a low SDO to lack empathy towards others (Guimond et al., 2003), and longitudinal research has found support for the negative relationship between SDO and empathy (Sidanius et al., 2013). Low-SDO individuals, on the other hand, value cooperation (Duckitt, 2001), and low-SDO individuals have egalitarian viewpoints and prefer equality among individuals (Sidanius &
Overall, the research on SDO suggests that this orientation can affect how individuals treat subordinate groups, and should have implications for how leaders treat their subordinate teams.

SDO has been studied in an organizational context, and research has found that individuals’ SDOs are positively related to their likelihood to be employed in hierarchy-enhancing jobs (Sidanius, van Laar, Levin, & Sinclair, 2003) such as the police force (Haley & Sidnaius, 2005). High SDO individuals also prefer to hold positions of dominance over others (Duckitt, 2001) and feel that they are superior to other people (Lippa & Arad, 1999). Conversely, those with low-SDO beliefs are more likely to occupy hierarchy-attenuating jobs, such as positions in civil liberty organizations (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). SDO, therefore, goes beyond individuals seeking hierarchies with group differences, and involves “expressing the opposing motivational goals of superiority, dominance, or power over others versus egalitarian and altruistic social concern for others” (Duckitt, 2001: 50). Thus, the research on SDO in organizations further suggests that SDO should be relevant to leadership because it is an orientation which addresses how people approach hierarchical differences, particularly in groups, and how individuals treat subordinate groups.

However, to date, only a few studies have examined SDO in relation to leadership in organizations. Son Hing et al. (2007) reported that high-SDO individuals are more likely to be leaders than followers. Additionally, high-SDO leaders are more likely to make unethical decisions than low-SDO leaders when paired with certain types of subordinates. Specifically, they found that when high-SDO leaders were matched with agreeable subordinates, the leaders were more likely to make unethical decisions. Their study provided further evidence that SDO is more than just a tendency to prefer group-based hierarchies, and relates to how they treat and
interact with others, particularly in the workplace. The findings suggest that depending on subordinate characteristics, leaders with a high SDO may be more likely to engage in unethical behavior at work, which suggests that SDO should have relevance to abusive supervision. While the Son Hing et al. (2007) study contributes to our understanding of how SDO relates to leadership behavior at work, it does not address how leaders treat their subordinates as a result of their dominance orientation.

However, a study which did specifically address leader behaviors was conducted by Nicol (2009). She measured behaviors with the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ), which identifies a broad range of leadership behaviors. She found that SDO is negatively correlated with leadership behaviors such as consideration, demand reconciliation, and tolerance of uncertainty. These findings suggest that SDO is a relevant construct to leader behaviors, including consideration towards employees, which has relevance to empowering leadership. Another recent study by Aiello et al. (2013) addressed the effect of SDO on acceptable influence tactics used by leaders. The authors found that when leaders had a high SDO, they were more likely to believe that using harsh power tactics (such as coercive power) against subordinates was acceptable, which would further suggest that SDO should have relevance to abusive supervision. Conversely, the findings suggest that a leader who is against using harsh tactics may be more likely to exhibit empowering leadership behaviors, which involve showing concern for team members.

Taken together, these studies have a number of implications for understanding the effects of hierarchical orientations on leadership in organizations. High-SDO individuals are more likely to be attracted to leadership positions (Son Hing et al., 2007), yet once in leadership positions, high-SDO individual are more likely to engage in ineffective leadership behaviors (Aiello et al.,
2013; Nicol, 2009). However, one issue with these studies is that they relied on supervisor self-perceptions of their leadership behavior and tactics that they found acceptable, and did not address how subordinates respond to leaders with a high SDO. Additionally, research has not yet examined destructive leadership behaviors which could result from leaders’ hierarchical perceptions, such as abusive supervision. Thus, while these studies are important first steps in examining the effect of SDO on leadership behaviors, my dissertation seeks to expand upon these findings.

Overall, the research on SDO suggests that the construct should have a great deal of relevance to how leaders treat their subordinate groups, specifically in regards to abusive supervision and empowering leadership. Those with a high SDO are more likely to exhibit unethical interpersonal behaviors in the workplace (Shao, Resick, & Hagris, 2011), and to treat others harshly (Aiello et al., 2013), which are approaches consistent with abusive supervision. Conversely, those low on SDO have egalitarian viewpoints (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), are empathetic (Guimond et al., 2003; Sidanius et al., 2013), and more likely to engage in hierarchy-attenuating practices (i.e. reducing inequalities among those in dominant and subordinate positions; Haley & Sidanius, 2005; Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Thus, leaders low on SDO should be more likely to exhibit empowering leadership behaviors. However, SDO is not the only hierarchical orientation that leaders can possess, and in the next section, I discuss PDO and its relevance to social dominance theory and my proposed model.

**Power Distance Orientation**

While PDO is not a variable discussed in social dominance theory, the theory’s tenets can apply to PDO, and PDO is a related, but distinct, construct from SDO. SDO and PDO are conceptually different (Jost & Hunyady, 2005), though both involve leaders’ hierarchical
perceptions about relationships in organizations. The two constructs may be positively correlated (Ekehammar et al., 2004; Eylon & Au, 1999), and SDO has been studied in different power distance cultures (Hareli, Shomrat, & Hess, 2009). However, the concepts of PDO and SDO are theoretically different. Jost and Hunyady (2005) conceptually distinguish the two constructs, and they define PDO as an orientation in which individuals believe that “inequality is a natural and desirable feature of the social order; large power differences are acceptable and legitimate” (261). Power involves having influence over others, and controlling or directing their behavior (Hollander & Offermann, 1990). Thus, PDO involves believing in power differentials between those higher in the hierarchical social order and those in subordinate roles. This suggests that PDO should apply to leaders and how they view power differentials with their subordinate groups.

However, SDO is the belief that “some groups are superior to others; group-based hierarchy is a good thing” (261). Unlike PDO, which addresses the degree of power distance between leaders and subordinate groups, SDO addresses the belief to which individuals in dominant positions should be hierarchically superior to subordinate groups, and does not address power distance differentials. Dominance involves the position of an individual within a hierarchy, as well as a person being in a dominant state (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). In other words, SDO is not concerned with the level of power distance between those in a dominant and subordinate position. Rather, SDO concerns the extent to which dominance matters in the hierarchy. While both PDO and SDO are hierarchical perceptions, PDO concerns differences of power, whereas SDO is about differences in dominance. Thus, the concepts are distinct from one other, just as “power” and “dominance” are distinct constructs.
Unlike SDO, PDO can involve nurturing and supporting subordinates. In some Eastern cultures, such as in China, leaders with high PDO are often seen as paternalistic and protective of their subordinates, and they are expected to take great care to ensure subordinates’ well-being (Blunt & Jones, 1997; Westwood, 1997). In many East Asian societies, while power distance includes a high level of authoritative power and distance between leaders and subordinates, an important component of this distance involves treating subordinates humanely (Blunt & Jones, 1997; Whitley, 1992). While much of the work on the positive aspects of power distance has focused on Eastern cultures, there is evidence that power distance can vary within a culture, including the United States (e.g. Lee, Pillutla, & Law, 2000). It can also behave as a moderator on relationships between various independent factors and outcomes. For example, employees’ differing PDOs affect the relationship between organizational support and pro-organizational behaviors and performance. Using a sample in the United States, Botero and Van Dyne (2009) reported that leader-member exchange (LMX) impacted employees’ voice behavior in different ways depending on employees’ voice orientation. As LMX became higher quality, the effect on voice behavior was strengthened when employee PDO was low, and weakened when PDO was high. This suggests that as a moderator, PDO is neither a “good” nor a “bad” orientation—instead, having a high or low PDO can affect relationships in different ways.

Therefore concerning leaders, unlike SDO, individuals with high power values can still believe in treating subordinates with respect and not treating subordinates with dominating behavior (Torelli & Shavitt, 2010). Conversely, SDO is primarily concerned with dominating subordinates, and having little respect for their well-being (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). A leader could have a high PDO but a low SDO, where he or she would believe that leaders should have the power to make decisions without consulting subordinates. However, leaders may believe that
their role is to protect subordinates’ well-being and not treat them with force or other dominating behaviors. Conversely, a leader could be high on SDO and low on PDO, where he or she believes in treating subordinates with force and that leaders are inherently superior to subordinates, but still believe in engaging in consultative behaviors with subordinates (e.g. seeking their input on work-related tasks), which would be contrary to a high-PDO approach. While it may seem unlikely for leaders to have differing SDO and PDO perceptions, research has found that leaders can engage in “contradictory” behaviors, where subordinates can be treated with both forceful and supportive leadership tactics at the same time (Duffy, Ganster, & Pagon, 2002). However, generally speaking, these orientations will likely be positively correlated, even though an individual could possibly be high on one orientation and low on the other.

While I examine SDO and PDO in my dissertation, I recognize that leaders may have related characteristics. I suggest that consistent with Magee and Galinsky’s (2008) conceptual description of social hierarchies, leaders’ hierarchical perceptions will consist of their beliefs about acceptable informal and formal rank differences between managers and subordinates, which align closely with SDO and PDO. However, I recognize that other forms of related perceptions may exist. In the broader psychological literature, researchers have described social difference perceptions in the context of society as “system-justifying ideologies” (Jost & Hunyady, 2005: 260). These ideologies can be both economic and social in nature. Excluding purely economic ideologies, social and cultural ideologies include protestant work ethic (i.e. people should work hard), belief in a just world (i.e. people “get what they deserve,”), right-wing authoritarianism (e.g. people should conform to authority and not rebel), and political conservatism (e.g. traditional institutions should remain preserved). Some prior research on leadership has examined other hierarchical perceptions; for example, Nicol (2009) studied both
SDO and right-wing authoritarianism in relationship to leadership styles. Researchers have also examined how just world perceptions relate to leadership (Ball, Treviño, & Sims, 1994). Therefore, leaders’ beliefs about social structures can encompass a variety of orientations, but for purposes of my dissertation, I focus specifically on perceptions which address Magee and Galinsky’s (2008) description of hierarchical differentiation. PDO and SDO are two hierarchical perceptions that align most closely with social dominance theory, and they are relevant to my research question concerning how leaders view their roles in relation to subordinates.

Similar to SDT, theoretical work on power distance was originally conceptualized as a higher-level construct applicable to different cultures (Hofstede, 1980). Hofstede’s cultural value of power distance involves the extent to which power is unequally distributed among institutions and people in a society, but power distance has also been applied at an individual level. High-PDO individuals are accepting of power being unequally distributed in an organization (Clugston, Howell, and Dorfman, 2000). Organizational scholars have applied the concept of PDO to both the unit level and individual level in organization (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006). Schaubroeck et al. (2007) argued that while power distance can be applied at the individual level, power distance is a cultural value which can also affect work teams. Team values can be shared among team members, and they found support for the role of a team’s PDO in affecting the relationship between leader behaviors and team outcomes. Earley and Erez (1997) conceptualized the PDO construct as indicating the extent to which a supervisor can influence a subordinate, and whether one believes that subordinates should not question a leader’s authority. Thus, the PDO concept as applied to individuals in organizations relates to one’s acceptance of unequal distribution of authority, and the right of a leader, in his or her hierarchically superior position, to use that authority to direct the actions of subordinates.
In their meta-analysis on individuals’ PDO in organizations, Taras, Kirkman, and Steel (2010) reported that employee PDO is related to a number of outcomes. Researchers have found that employees high on PDO are more likely to be satisfied with their leaders, perceive directive leadership from their leaders, and have higher organizational commitment, conformity, and organizational justice perceptions. These findings suggest that PDO can have some positive outcomes for employees. However, low-PDO individuals are more likely to avoid unethical behavior and perceive that leaders engage in participative leadership. Theoretically, Daniels and Greguras (2014) suggested that employee PDO should also behave as a moderator in terms of how job attitudes affect behaviors. They propose that factors such as reciprocity norms are less relevant for high-PDO employees; these individuals do not focus strongly on personal relationships, and thus PDO will weaken the effects of job attitudes on job behaviors.

In terms of power distance and leadership, while some research has examined how power distance affects leader and subordinate interactions (Daniels & Greguras, 2014), very little research has examined the effects of leaders’ power distance on outcomes. Despite the relevance of leaders’ power distance to how they should interact with subordinates (Erdogan & Liden, 2002), Vidyarthi, Anand, and Liden (2014) noted that to their knowledge, until their paper, no published study had yet examined the effects of leaders’ PDOs. They found that leaders’ PDO weakened the positive effects of their emotional perceptions on their employees’ job performance. Another recent empirical study has also examined leaders’ PDO. Cole et al. (2013) reported that the congruence of leaders’ PDO and teams’ PDO was important in the team perceiving high levels of procedural justice climate. However, perceptions of this type of climate declined when the leader had a high PDO, but the team had lower levels of PDO values. They also found that these climate perceptions mediated the impact of PDO congruence on team
performance. Thus, the pairing of PDO between a leader and a team has an important positive effect on team performance. These two studies on leaders’ PDO also suggest that leader PDO is relevant to both their leadership behavior and performance, specifically at the team level, but that interactions with subordinate factors are also important.

**Abusive Supervision**

*Abusive Supervision Overview*

Abusive supervision is relevant to organizational hierarchies where employees are greatly affected by how they are treated by supervisors (Liu et al., 2012). Abusive supervision should also have relevance to SDT, which involves how dominant individuals treat subordinate groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Tepper (2000) first introduced the abusive supervision construct, which involves leaders treating subordinates with hostile nonverbal and verbal behavior (Tepper, 2000: 178). Abusive supervision affects approximately 13.6% of employees in the US (Schat, Frone, & Kelloway, 2006) and is estimated to be a great cost to organizations, numbering in the billions of dollars (Tepper, Duffy, Henle, & Lambert, 2006). There are other labels for supervisor hostile behaviors, including supervisor undermining (Duffy et al., 2002) and petty tyranny (Ashforth, 1997), and these are similar constructs which share overlap with abusive supervision, but much of the recent research on this topic has examined abusive supervision (Tepper, 2007; Martinko et al., 2013).

*Abusive Supervision Consequences and Relationship with Performance*

Tepper (2000) reported a variety of negative consequences of abusive supervision, including decreased employee work attitudes, increased psychological distress, and increased work-family conflict. Since his original paper, studies have found additional negative subordinate outcomes, which include counterproductive work behaviors, health complaints
(Duffy et al., 2002), decreased job satisfaction (Tepper et al., 2004), and employee deviance (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007). In terms of team-level outcomes, abusive supervision can affect a team’s likelihood to engage in deviance behaviors (Mawritz et al., 2012) and negatively affect their collective efficacy, group identity, and team performance (Priesemuth et al., 2014).

Abusive supervision has implications for employee performance. It is negatively related to extra-role behaviors (Zellars, Tepper, & Duffy, 2002) and decreases employee job performance (Harris et al., 2007). Harris and colleagues (2007) used a conservation of resources perspective (Hobfoll, 1989) to suggest that abusive supervision creates an environment where there is a loss of resources (where an investment of resources exceeds the expected return) and where work demands are too great for available resources. The authors argue that abusive supervision will drain resources, and thus employees will not be able to focus their time on energy on their job performance. Additionally, due to social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), employees who are mistreated will likely reciprocate that mistreatment against the supervisor and organization by not excelling in their performance duties.

Initial findings on team outcomes of abusive supervision suggest that abuse should have a negative effect on team performance. While not explicitly measuring performance, Mawritz et al. (2012) found support for the effect of a team’s abusive supervisor on work group interpersonal deviance, which is a type of counterproductive work behavior. Team leader abusive supervision also negatively affects team member creativity, a type of performance that is required in certain jobs (Liu et al., 2012). Priesemuth et al. (2014) reported that abusive supervision negatively affects team performance, and this relationship is mediated by the group’s collective efficacy. Thus, abuse should negatively affect workgroup task performance. SDT would also suggest that abuse should apply in a team context; when subordinate groups are dominated by higher-status
individuals, their performance suffers. One mechanism which explains this relationship is the “self-fulfilling prophecy” that can occur when groups of people are mistreated, where they believe in the mistreatment that they receive, and do not believe that they are capable as a group to be successful (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). This theoretical proposition is consistent with Priesmuth et al.’s (2014) finding that collective efficacy mediates the relationship between abusive supervision and team performance.

**Abusive Supervision Antecedents**

The majority of research on abusive supervision has focused on its outcomes; however, research on antecedents of abusive supervision is increasing (Martinko et al., 2013; Tepper, 2007). Researchers have reported that contextual variables, such as aggressive workplace norms (Restubog et al., 2011), organizational injustice (Aryee, Chen, Sun, & Debrah, 2008; Tepper et al., 2006; Rafferty, Restubog, & Jimmieson, 2010), and psychological contract violation (Hoobler & Brass, 2006), can influence abusive supervision. Additionally, hostile work environments (Mawritz, Dust, & Resick, 2014), particularly combined with top-level abusive supervision (Mawritz et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2012), as well as exceedingly difficult work goals (Mawritz, Folger, & Latham, 2014), can lead to supervisors’ engagement in abusive supervision.

While a number of studies have examined contextual antecedents of abuse, these prior studies do not take into account supervisor characteristics, which in addition to subordinate factors, should be important predictors of abusive supervision (Tepper et al., 2006; Tepper et al., 2011). Studies have found that supervisors’ experiences, such as their stress levels (Burton et al., 2012), conflict with their subordinates (Harris et al., 2011), and even experiences in childhood (Kiewitz et al., 2012) can predict their tendency to abuse subordinates. Additionally, a leader with a strong individual identity, when matched with a weaker collective identity, will increase
the likelihood of abusive behaviors (Johnson, Venus, Lanaj, Mao, & Chang, 2012). In terms of individual characteristics, researchers have proposed possible supervisor characteristics which could drive abuse. Supervisors may engage in abuse as a political activity (Tepper, Duffy, & Breaux-Soignet, 2012), or as a result of their Theory “X” mentality (e.g., employees should be controlled and directed; Tepper, 2007). Furthermore, leaders’ core-self evaluations may affect their propensity to abuse (Wu & Hu, 2009). Negative affect may also play a role (Tepper et al., 2006), and empirical work has found negative affect to influence the effect of supervisors’ perceptions of organizational injustice on abuse (Hoobler & Hu, 2013).

Some empirical research has begun to examine the role of supervisor traits on abusive supervision. A study by Kiazad and colleagues (Kiazad, Restubog, Zagenczyk, Kiewitz, & Tang, 2010) found that leaders’ Machiavellianism was related to abusive supervision. Xiaqi, Kun, Chongsen, and Sufang (2012) also reported that leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence were less likely to be abusive supervisors. These findings suggest that leader traits play an important role in predicting abuse, but Martinko et al. (2013) noted that these are the only two published empirical studies on supervisor traits as antecedents to abusive supervision, despite the relevance of supervisor characteristics to the abusive supervision phenomenon (Tepper et al., 2006). Thus, more work is needed in order to examine the supervisor characteristics which lead to abusive supervision. SDT would suggest that dominance perceptions should lead to oppressive and hostile treatment of subordinates. Specifically, individuals with highly dominant orientations should be more likely to accept mistreatment of subordinate groups in order to maintain their dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), and thus leaders’ hierarchical perceptions should have relevance to abusive supervision.

*Abusive Supervision at a Team Level*
Generally speaking, research on abusive supervision has been focused primarily at the individual level, but abusive supervision can also be applicable at the group level (Priesemuth et al., 2014). Mawritz et al. (2012) was one of the first papers to aggregate abuse at a team level, and found statistical justification for measuring abuse as a team-level construct where the team rates their supervisor on abusive supervision. Liu et al. (2012) similarly examined abusive supervision at the team level, and both of these papers measuring team abusive supervision incorporated top-level abusive supervision as an antecedent to team-leader abuse. Additionally, Priesemuth and colleagues (2014) drew on work in the deviance literature (e.g. Duffy, Ganster, Shaw, Johnson, & Pagon, 2006) to suggest that theoretically, abuse should apply at the group level. The authors found support for an abusive supervision climate, which concerned employees’ perceptions that abusive supervision occurred in their teams. Unlike Mawritz and colleagues’ (2012) approach, which aggregated individual ratings of abuse (e.g. using an additive model), Priesemuth et al.’s study (2014) utilized a referent-shift consensus model (Chan, 1998), and asked employees to what extent their supervisor was abusive towards members of their work group. They found statistical support for utilizing a team-level measure of abusive supervision. Liu et al. (2012) called on researchers to examine abusive supervision from a team perspective, and while these early studies offer promising findings on abusive supervision in a team context, future research can continue to better understand the impacts of abusive supervision on subordinate work groups (Priesemuth et al., 2014).

Empowering Leadership

Empowering Leadership Overview

Empowerment is a motivational process which involves employees feeling that they are able to perform well, and are motivated to perform well, due to having autonomy and meaning in
their jobs (Chen et al., 2007). Conger and Kanungo (1988) suggested that leaders should have an impact on whether employees feel empowered, and Manz and Sims (1991, 2001) described empowering leaders as leaders who focus their attention outwards towards their employees, and help their followers to feel empowered. Based on the conceptual and empirical work over the past two decades, Lorinkova et al. (2013) described empowering leadership as “sharing power with subordinates and raising their level of autonomy and responsibility” (573). In their review of empowering leadership, Stewart and colleagues (2011) summarized empowering leadership as an approach that allows followers to exhibit self-leadership, which ultimately results in higher performance. Due to the influence of empowered leadership, empowered teams are “granted more autonomy, self-direction, and control over their work environment….managers provide social and emotional encouragement, build trust and openness” (Arnold et al., 2000: 250).

Empowering leadership is relevant to hierarchical organizations, where typically, decision making is centralized and control comes from the top down. However, empowering leadership mitigates some of the top-down organizational influences, and involves leaders providing social support to their employees (Manz & Sims, 1987). In identifying subdimensions of empowering leadership, Arnold and colleagues (2000) identified five dimensions that make up empowering leadership: coaching, informing, showing concern/interacting with the team, leading by example, and participative decision making. Coaching is assisting the team members with becoming more self-reliant. Informing is when the leader explains organizational policies and generally keeps the team up-to-date on information. Showing concern/interacting with the team involves caring about the well-being of individual members in the team and staying knowledgeable about the team members’ tasks. Leading by example refers to the leader working hard, and being committed to his or her work. Finally, participative decision making is when the
leader encourages members of the team to provide their own thoughts and ideas, and then the leader uses these inputs in order to make a decision.

Empowering leadership, and specifically its dimensions, should be related to leaders’ hierarchical perceptions due to the approach that empowered leaders take with their employees. SDT proposes there are ways in which the possible negative effects of socially dominant practices are mitigated, and this can be done through hierarchy-attenuating practices. Such approaches reduce the discrepancy between higher-status and subordinate individuals, and promote a more egalitarian system (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Therefore, from an SDT perspective, empowering leadership should be a relevant construct in organizational hierarchical systems. A component of empowering leadership is showing concern for subordinates, and this includes treating them as equals (Arnold et al., 2000). Therefore, empowering leadership contains an element of egalitarianism. Egalitarianism consists of viewing employees as equal to a leader (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), which is an important component of empowering leadership (Arnold et al., 2000).

While empowering leadership can overlap with other leadership dimensions, empowering leadership has discriminant validity from related leader behaviors such as consideration and initiating structure (Arnold et al., 2000). Additionally, the construct is distinct from the Managerial Practices Survey (which consists of 14 leadership dimensions, including inspiring and mentoring, Yukl, 1989; Arnold et al., 2000). Furthermore, while empowering leadership is correlated with ethical leadership, a confirmatory factor analysis reported that these two leader constructs are distinct (Hassan et al., 2014). Based on theoretical work, and supported by empirical research including factor analyses, Pearce and Sims suggested that there are five types of vertical leadership which are distinguished from each other: aversive, directive, transactional,
transformational, and empowering leadership styles (Pearce & Sims, 2002; Pearce, Perry, & Sims, 2001). Additional research has distinguished between empowering leadership and transformational leadership (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Tekleab, Sims, Yun, Tesluk, & Cox, 2008), providing support for empowering leadership being a distinct construct separate from other supportive leadership behaviors.

Abusive supervision is type of aversive leadership which is highly relevant to maintaining hierarchical differences among leaders and subordinates (Mawritz et al., 2014b). While abusive supervision is not necessarily the direct opposite of empowering leadership, it contrasts with empowering leadership in the following ways. First, abusive supervisors have indifference towards their employees and do not care how their actions affect employees’ well-being (Tepper, 2000). However, empowering leaders have a great deal of concern for employees, and want their employees to be fulfilled in their jobs (Stewart et al., 2011). Second, abusive supervisors lack respect for subordinates and are more likely to treat them with hostile behaviors, such as speaking rudely or ignoring them (Tepper, 2000). On the other hand, empowering leadership involves respecting employees; managers who exhibit empowering leadership desire to have good relationships with subordinates (Lorinkova et al., 2013). Finally, empowering leaders communicate well with employees and share information openly and honestly (Arnold et al., 2010). However, abusive supervisors are dishonest in their communications by talking behind employees’ backs and giving them the silent treatment (Tepper, 2000). Furthermore, I suggest that abusive supervisors are interested in maintaining hierarchical differences between them and their employees, whereas empowering leaders are concerned with mitigating these hierarchical differences. Thus, these leadership types have opposite relational approaches with their employees.
Empowering Leadership Consequences and Relationship to Performance

One of the most-studied positive consequences of empowering leadership is the psychological empowerment experienced by individuals and teams (e.g. Chen et al., 2007; Chen et al., 2011; Raub & Robert, 2010; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; van Dierendonck & Dijkstra, 2012; Zhang and Bartol, 2010). Empowering leadership has also been linked to employees’ affective commitment (e.g. Chen et al., 2011; Dewettinck & van Ameijde, 2011; Hassan et al., 2014) and job satisfaction (e.g. Dewettinck & van Ameijde, 2011; Robert et al., 2000). Other outcomes of empowering leadership include increased leadership effectiveness perceptions, improved LMX (Hassan et al., 2014), and increased employee work commitment (Tuckey, Bakker, & Dollard, 2012).

The effect of empowering leadership on employees’ psychological empowerment and affective commitment have been shown to then lead to decreased turnover intentions (Chen et al., 2011), with psychological empowerment driving in-role behaviors (Raub & Robert, 2010). Empowering leadership can also lead to shared leadership (Pearce, Manz, & Sims, 2008), which then predicts employee innovative behavior (Hoch, 2013), and employees perceive empowering leaders as innovative (Spreitzer, Janasz, & Quinn, 1999). Additionally, empowering leadership has been linked to adaptability in an IT context (Kuo, Lai, & Lee, 2011), suggesting that empowering leadership is particularly relevant to innovative performance. Zhang and Bartol (2010) found that empowering leadership affects employee creativity through psychological empowerment. Empowering leadership can also play a role in the use of technology by strengthening employee self-efficacy on the use of technology and performance (Mathieu, Ahearne, & Taylor, 2007), and these findings on innovation and creativity suggest that
Empowering leadership can be particularly salient for employees’ performance in certain contexts.

Empowering leadership can affect individual employee performance (e.g. Vecchio et al., 2010), and a meta-analysis on team performance found that empowering leadership also improves team performance (Stewart, 2006). However, while most research has found positive consequences of empowering leadership, some studies have reported mixed effects, which have implications for performance. For example, when leaders encourage independent action, this can weaken the positive effect that procedural fairness has on individuals’ self-perceived status, and ultimately decrease their organizational citizenship behaviors (van Dijke, De Cremer, Mayer, & Quaquebeke, 2012). Additional research has found that teams can benefit from empowered leadership differently depending on their knowledge and experience, with employees with low levels of experience and knowledge experiencing higher performance when they were matched with an empowered leader, versus teams with more knowledge and experience (Ahearne et al., 2005). Yun, Faraj, and Sims (2005) reported that in trauma teams, empowering leadership was most effective with low trauma severity and high team experience. In summary, these studies found that empowering leadership is only sometimes effective in terms of performance depending on certain variables.

However, while the research on the relationship from empowering leadership to performance has revealed that this link is complex, overall, the effects appear to be positive (Stewart, 2000). Carmeli, Schaubroeck, and Tishler (2011) reported that when CEOs are empowered leaders, they are able to inspire their top management teams to be more potent and can increase their performance. Research has found empowering leadership leads to team performance through mechanisms such as team efficacy and knowledge sharing (Srivastava et
al., 2006), and Lorinkova et al., (2013) reported that over time, empowering leadership has a more positive relationship with team performance than directive leadership (e.g. providing external feedback and monitoring; Kahai, Sosik, & Avolio, 2004).

In summary, while the research on the outcomes of empowered leadership are complex and can depend on a variety of contextual factors, overall, employees and teams generally experience positive outcomes when matched with an empowering leader. The link of empowering leadership to performance is also consistent with SDT, which suggests that when dominant individuals control and oppress subordinate groups, their performance will suffer (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Conversely, hierarchy-attenuating practices which are consistent with empowering leadership behaviors should encourage increased team performance. When individuals treat subordinate groups with respect and attempt to attenuate differences between dominant and subordinate groups, this can increase collective efficacy of the group (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), which should then increase team performance.

**Empowering Leadership Antecedents**

The vast majority of research on empowering leadership has focused on outcomes. Researchers have called for more research on predictors of empowerment, specifically on individual differences and leadership practices (Chen et al., 2007). While some antecedents to empowering or virtuous leadership have been proposed, such as leaders’ responsibility disposition and environmental cues (Pearce, Waldman, & Csikszentmihalyi, 2006), until 2010, there was virtually no research on antecedents (Hakimi et al., 2010). Hakimi et al. (2010) noted that theirs was the first study to examine antecedents of empowering leadership, and they found that leader trust in employee integrity and performance, combined with the leader’s conscientiousness, was related to empowering leadership. Their results suggest that leadership
characteristics, combined with employee characteristics, are relevant to predicting empowered leadership behaviors. This assertion is consistent with SDT, which proposes that the combination of dominants’ and subordinate groups’ hierarchical orientations can affect treatment of subordinate groups. This treatment can include hierarchy-attenuating practices, where individuals in dominant positions attempt to mitigate hierarchical differences, an approach which is consistent with empowering leadership. When leaders’ orientations are consistent with subordinate groups’ orientations, this can lead to more harmony between groups. However, problems can occur when dissimilarity exists between dominant and subordinate groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), which suggests that empowering leadership will be more likely to occur when leader and subordinate characteristics are harmonious.

*Empowering Leadership at a Team Level*

Numerous studies have examined empowering leadership at a team level, and the leadership style has application to team functioning. Leader empowering behaviors can predict the empowerment of teams (Kirkman & Rosen, 1999; Wallace et al., 2011). Chen et al. (2007) found that empowering leadership can be conceptualized as a climate variable which affects team empowerment, and ultimately individual performance, in different ways depending on the level of interdependence among team members. Researchers have also suggested that future studies on empowering leadership should consider the effects of empowering leadership on teams, and they have found statistical support for aggregating the team members’ empowering leadership ratings at a team level (e.g. Lorinkova et al., 2014; Srivastava et al., 2006). Thus, the number of studies which have applied empowering leadership from a team perspective suggests that both conceptually and analytically, empowering leadership is appropriate to study at a team level. Applying empowering leadership at the team level is also consistent with SDT, which
suggests that the role of groups is relevant to how people are treated in a hierarchical system (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000).

**Social Dominance Theory and Interactions**

*Leader Self-Efficacy, SDO, and Leadership*

In addition to the societal and individual-level variables present in SDT, the theory also addresses contingency factors which affect how subordinate groups are treated. As previously discussed, hierarchy-enhancing myths are beliefs which reinforce the status quo of dominance over subordinate groups. Individuals in a dominant group can develop beliefs consistent with their dominance, and doing so can exacerbate the negative effects of their dominant inclinations on behaviors (Pratto et al., 2006). In my model, I suggest that leader self-efficacy—or the belief in one’s abilities to be an effective leader—will enhance the negative effects of leaders’ SDOs on leadership outcomes.

Self-efficacy is defined as “belief in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Bandura, 1997: 3). McCormick (2001) applied self-efficacy to leadership, and developed a model to explain how leader self-efficacy can affect leadership behaviors in organizations. He described how when leaders have high self-efficacy, this will enable them to work harder on their tasks and strive to meet goals. A leader high on leader self-efficacy will direct his or her behavior towards achieving leadership goals and try to influence how a subordinate group undergoes task performance processes. Chemers et al. (2001) similarly describe leader self-efficacy as a type of task-based self-efficacy which is specific to leaders’ confidence in their leadership behaviors. The literature suggests that as leaders’ leader self-efficacy beliefs increase, the more they will direct their leadership behaviors towards obtaining their leadership goals. A review of research on leader self-efficacy reported
that generally, leaders’ self-efficacy beliefs are positively related to leadership outcomes (Hannah et al., 2008). Leader self-efficacy positively predicts individuals’ motivation to lead (Chan & Drasgow, 2001), which provides further evidence that leader self-efficacy is tied to leader motivations. Leader self-efficacy is generally associated with leader success (Hannah et al., 2008; McCormick, 2001), and while this association would normally be expected to result in positive leadership outcomes, it also suggests negative outcomes for certain leaders, such as those who believe that “success” involves social dominance.

Leader self-efficacy can play a moderating role on the relationship between contextual variables and leader outcomes, and the results may not always be positive. Schruijer and Vansina (2002) proposed that leader self-efficacy may have a negative moderating effect in certain contexts. For example, if a leader lacks the mental capacity to take judicious actions, leader relational characteristics (such as leader self-efficacy) could negatively impact employee outcomes. Additionally, Vargas-Tonsing, Warners, and Feltz (2003) found that certain coaching self-efficacies, including belief in building team member’s character, can negatively impact team performance. The authors suggested that coaches who scored high in character building self-efficacy may be focusing on different leadership dimensions than were desired by team members. Another study on leader self-efficacy (conceptualizing self-confidence as a synonym of leader self-efficacy) found that leaders who were overconfident were less likely to see deficiencies with problems (Shipman & Mumford, 2011), suggesting that leader self-efficacy, when combined with other variables, can potentially have negative consequences. Shipman and Mumford (2011) further suggested that leader overconfidence may play a role in destructive leadership behaviors.
While research has not yet examined how leader self-efficacy should interact with leaders’ dominance orientations to predict leadership behaviors, I draw on SDT to suggest that in conjunction with a high SDO, leaders with a high self-efficacy of their leadership will more strongly negatively impact their employees than leaders with lower self-efficacy beliefs.

Team Power Distance Values, PDO, and Leader Behaviors

In addition to intentions of the dominant group, characteristics of the subordinate group can also affect the consequences of hierarchical perceptions. According to SDT, subordinate groups can be complicit, and actually reinforce, the types of dominance behaviors exhibited by higher-status individuals. This has implications for how a leader’s subordinate team will react to the leader. These self-fulfilling beliefs can help strengthen the status quo, and SDT suggests that subordinates play an important role in how they are treated by individuals in dominant positions. Those in subordinate groups can “buy in” to the hierarchical system, and believe that the dominant group is deserving of their power. However, those in the subordinate group who do not believe in inequality will be more likely to reject the status quo (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000).

Thus, I examine the relationship between leaders’ PDOs, team PDOs, and the interaction of the two on leader behaviors. Some work has examined employees’ PDO in relationship to the leadership constructs in my model. In terms of abusive supervision, consistent with predictions made by Tepper (2007), those high on PDO are less likely to interpret abuse as unfair (Lian et al., 2012). Additionally, the negative effects of abusive supervision on outcomes such as health and job satisfaction are lessened when subordinates have high PDOs (Lin, Wang, & Chen, 2013). Furthermore, high-PDO subordinates are less likely to view abuse as violating interactional justice (Wang, Mao, Wu, & Liu, 2012). These findings suggest that employee power distance can play an important moderating role concerning relationships with abusive supervision. This
idea is consistent with the tenets of SDT, which suggests that the hierarchical perceptions of subordinate groups can affect their treatment by dominant leaders.

In regards to PDO and empowering leadership, Robert and colleagues (2000) also examined the effect of power distance on the effects of empowering leadership. They found that in high power distance cultures, specifically in India, empowering leadership was negatively associated with job satisfaction. Yet, in other cultures, including the United States (which has a low power-distance culture), empowering leadership was positively associated with satisfaction. However, while not measuring empowering leadership specifically, Eylon and Au (1999) found that regardless of one’s power distance culture, empowerment has a positive effect on satisfaction. Consistent with these findings, even across differing cultures, empowerment is generally positively related to in- and extra-role behaviors, suggesting that empowerment can still be effective even in non-Western contexts (e.g. China and Japan; Raub & Robert, 2010). Yet, those in high power distance cultures have been found to exhibit higher performance when they are disempowered as opposed to empowered (Eylon & Au, 1999). Based on these mixed findings, it is important to note that my dissertation will apply to a Western context, as the link between empowerment and performance may not be as clear in a non-Western context.

Therefore, the power distance of employees can have interaction effects with leadership variables and how they perceive their leaders. I propose that how employees rate their leader on his or her leadership will depend on the congruence between a team’s power distance values and a leader’s PDO. While employee PDO has primarily been examined at the individual level, researchers have also examined PDO values at the team level. Schaubroeck et al. (2007) reported that when teams have a high PDO, the effects of transformational leadership on team potency is stronger than when teams have a lower PDO. The authors proposed that high PDO teams are
more sensitive to the inputs of their higher-status leader. Additionally, the authors proposed that power distance is a value applicable to the team level, and found statistical support for aggregating team member’s PDO ratings. Schaubroeck et al.’s (2007) findings suggest that high PDO teams may be less likely to negatively interpret the behaviors of their leaders, and be more receptive to the actions of their leaders. Thus, high PDO leaders will be more accepted by high PDO team.

Additionally, Cole et al. (2013) found support for the importance of leader PDO and team PDO congruence, and how similarities on these values can positively impact team outcomes. Along these lines, SDT suggests that when there is agreement between dominant individuals and subordinate groups, less tension and conflict will result (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), which implies that the combination of a leader’s PDO and team’s PDO should affect empowering and abusive leadership.

**Conclusion**

In summary, the literature on employees’ hierarchical perceptions reveals that while some is known about the impact of these orientations on behaviors, little is known about how leaders’ hierarchical perceptions influence their leadership behaviors. Just a few studies have examined the relationship between leaders’ SDO and leadership, and similarly, little research has examined the impact of leaders’ PDO on leadership outcomes. Additionally, to date, only a few studies have examined leader characteristics which impact abusive supervision, and very little research addresses leader characteristics which impact empowering leadership. By integrating leaders’ hierarchical perceptions with their abusive supervisory and empowering leadership behaviors, my study will make contributions to the leadership literature. In my model, I also make the link from leadership behaviors to team performance, incorporate leader and subordinate moderators,
and propose moderated mediation. These effects are also important to examine from a team perspective, and SDT provides a relevant theoretical lens to examine these team-level relationships.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

In Chapter 3, I present the hypothesized relationships in my model as I seek to understand the effect of leaders’ social dominance and power distance orientations on their empowering and abusive leadership behaviors, and ultimately team performance. Throughout my hypotheses, I utilize a SDT perspective (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000) to provide a guiding framework for the predictions. I first outline my general research questions, and then specifically discuss each of the hypothesized relationships.

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions on their leadership styles and resulting unit functioning. Based on SDT (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), I propose that how leaders approach their relationships with their subordinate groups will affect their abusive and empowering leadership behaviors, and that abusive supervision and empowering leadership will affect team performance. I also propose factors which should impact these relationships, including leaders’ leader self-efficacy, and the PDO of the subordinate team. Together, my hypothesized relationships make up moderated mediation models (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007). My study seeks to address the following research questions:

1. Do leaders’ social dominance and power distance orientations affect their abusive and empowering leadership behaviors?
2. Under what conditions are the relationships between leaders’ hierarchical orientations and leader behaviors strengthened or diminished?
3. Do these leadership behaviors and interactions lead to team performance?

In the next sections, drawing from SDT and other relevant empirical and theoretical work, I outline my hypothesized relationships.
Hypothesized Relationships

Social Dominance Orientation and Leadership Behaviors

SDT suggests that individual differences in SDO affect how individuals treat subordinate groups in hierarchical settings (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Individuals who are high in SDO prefer having power, control (Altemeyer, 1998; De Cremer et al., 2008; Driskell et al., 1993), and status (Pratto et al., 1997), and I suggest that these propensities will have relevance to leadership behaviors.

In terms of how high SDO leaders are likely to treat their subordinates, SDT suggests that there should be negative effects of how high-SDO individuals treat others (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), and empirical research has found support for this proposition. SDO is negatively related towards empathic feelings about other people (Guidmond et al., 2003; Sidanius et al., 2013), and high-SDO individuals are concerned about being superior over others instead of having concern about them (Duckitt, 2001). They can also be cruel and cold towards subordinate groups (Pratto et al., 2006). This lack of concern for employees is consistent with abusive supervision due to abusive supervisors’ propensity to engage in inconsiderate and rude actions towards subordinates (Tepper, 2000). Specifically, abusive supervision “refers to behaviors that reflect indifference…” (Tepper, 2000: 179), which is consistent with the lack of empathy exhibited by high-SDO individuals towards subordinate groups.

SDT also suggests that high-SDO individuals dominate subordinate groups by engaging in discriminatory, oppressive behaviors towards them (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Indeed, abusive supervision involves coercion and exhibiting hostile behaviors towards subordinates (Tepper, 2000). Sidanius and colleagues (2004) further suggest that those high on SDO are more likely to engage in “aggressive, demeaning, or oppressive attitudes towards members of subordinate
groups” (855) than those low in SDO. By engaging in these behaviors, high-SDO individuals can establish their dominance in a way that is also consistent with their beliefs in the subordinates’ inferior status, and treat them with coercion and force (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Leaders with high SDOs are also more likely to endorse the use of harsh power tactics (such as using coercive power, i.e. punishing subordinates; Aiello et al., 2013).

These oppressive SDO tendencies are consistent with abusive supervision behaviors, which involve hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors towards subordinates (Tepper, 2000). Indeed, research has found that individuals’ SDO is correlated with their acceptance of abuse tactics (Larsson, Björklund, & Bäckström, 2012). While Larsson et al.’s (2013) study examined particularly harsh abuse—specifically, participants’ beliefs in the legitimization of torture-like tactics used in a military prison setting—their study suggests that high-SDO individuals are more tolerant of hostile behaviors towards subordinate groups. Therefore, I suggest that when leaders have a high SDO, they will likely display interpersonal abusive behaviors towards subordinate teams such as speaking rudely to them, putting them down, and making negative comments about them.

**Hypothesis 1:** A leader’s SDO will be positively related to the abusive supervision of his or her team.

While high SDO is associated with being cold, cruel (Duckitt, 2001), and endorsing the use of harsh power tactics (Aiello et al., 2013), those with low SDO have egalitarian beliefs about groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). They have empathetic feelings towards other people (Guidmond et al., 2003; Sidanius et al., 2013). Showing concern for team members, which includes caring for their well-being and treating them as equals, is an important subcomponent of empowering leadership (Arnold et al., 2000). This suggests that the egalitarian and empathic
tendencies displayed by low-SDO individuals should be related to leaders’ empowering leadership behaviors. Additionally, low-SDO people value cooperation (Duckitt, 2001), and research has found that as leaders, they are more likely to display cooperation behaviors with their subordinates than those high on SDO (Nicol, 2009). Empowering leaders cooperate with their employees and keep them informed on important company decisions, and “informing” is a second subdimension of empowering leadership (Arnold et al., 2000). Another common behavior displayed by those with low SDO is treating those in subordinate groups with respect, cooperating with them, and valuing their opinions (Sidanius & Pratto). This aligns with a third subdimension of empowering leadership; specifically, participative decision making. Empowering leaders interact with the subordinate team and including them on key decision making (Arnold et al., 2000).

SDT also suggests that low-SDO individuals will engage in hierarchy-attenuating practices, which involve mitigating hierarchical discrepancies between high status and subordinate individuals. These hierarchy-attenuating practices involve “reducing…inequality through reduction in status and power differentials between dominant and subordinate groups” (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000: 94). Hierarchy-attenuating practices are meant to offset the effects of hierarchy-enhancing institutions on subordinate groups (Haley & Sidanius, 2005), and organizations are a type of hierarchy-enhancing institution in which leaders and subordinates are differentiated (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Hierarchy-attenuating practices involve encouraging egalitarianism between dominant and subordinate groups (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). Egalitarianism, or the belief in equal treatment for all individuals, is consistent with the empowering leadership subdimension of showing concern. Empowering leaders treat their employees as equals who have are as inherently valuable and worthy as leaders (Arnold et al.,
Individuals low on SDO are described as egalitarian (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), which suggests that low-SDO leaders should behave in ways which promote equality between subordinates and managers.

Hierarchy-attenuating practices also encourage participative decision making, showing concern for subordinate groups, and keeping them informed. These practices align with three important subdimensions of empowering leadership (Arnold et al., 2001; Lorinkova et al., 2013). For example, those who work for civil rights organizations are described by Sidnaius and Pratto (2000) as engaging in hierarchy-attenuating practices. These individuals work to offer a voice to subordinate groups, educate them on available options, seek their input, and give them equal rights in society. They have a great deal of empathy for those in less fortunate positions. Specifically, some civil rights workers have been involved in fighting for the rights of African Americans (a societal subordinate group) to have equal access to housing and jobs. These hierarchy-attenuating practices involve supporting subordinate groups and their rights, and even favoring subordinate groups over dominant individuals at times (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000).

Applied to organizations, this would suggest that individuals involved in hierarchy-attenuating practices within the organization would attempt to mitigate the inequality between subordinate employee groups and higher-status leaders. Empowering leaders help mitigate the type of top-down hierarchical control that upper management often exerts in organizations (Manz & Sims, 1987), and SDT would suggest that this mitigation of top-down influences is a hierarchy-attenuating practice. Conversely, a high-SDO individual will be more likely to engage in hierarchy-enhancing practices that are meant to enhance differentials between subordinate and dominant groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000).
Thus, based on the inclusive, empathetic, and informative tendencies of low-SDO individuals, in addition to their engagement in hierarchy-attenuating practices, I suggest that a leader’s SDO will be negatively related to his or her empowering leadership behaviors.

*Hypothesis 2: A leader’s SDO will be negatively related to empowering leadership of his or her team.*

**Social Dominance Orientation and the Moderating Role of Leader Self-Efficacy**

My next research question involves the moderating effect of how socially dominant supervisors perceive their leadership abilities. I suggest that when a socially dominant leader has high leader self-efficacy beliefs, this will exacerbate the negative effects of SDO on abusive supervision.

According to SDT, individuals in dominant positions can develop legitimizing myths, which include beliefs meant to maintain social inequality among different groups (Sidnaius & Pratto, 2000). These types of myths are psychological forces endorsed by dominant individuals, and will allow these individuals to further justify their dominance. People in dominant positions can develop psychological justification for their dominant behaviors, and when they adapt these justification motives, this can further increase their dominating behavior (Pratto et al., 2006). These types of beliefs are also called hierarchy-enhancing beliefs, which exacerbate the negative effects of dominance mindsets on behaviors (Sidnaius & Pratto, 2000). I therefore argue that when leaders have a high leader self-efficacy, or confidence in their leadership abilities, this will be a type of psychological legitimizing myth, or hierarchy-enhancing belief, that will be congruent with their SDO. I propose that this type of self-perception will be a justification motive for further establishing dominance over subordinate groups. In other words, when a leader has a high SDO and a high leader self-efficacy, his or her beliefs about being effective in a
dominant leadership role will strengthen the negative effect of SDO on his or her leadership behaviors.

Theoretical work on leader self-efficacy suggests that leaders will direct their leadership behaviors to be consistent with their goals. While researchers investigating leader self-efficacy do not address dominance specifically, they propose that leaders high on leader self-efficacy will be more successful in meeting their aspirations (Chemers et al., 2000; Hannah et al., 2008; McCormick, 2001). Leaders with high leader self-efficacy will work especially hard on tasks that meet his or her goals (McCormick, 2001). Thus, I suggest that a leader with high leader self-efficacy and high SDO will direct his or her efforts towards dominance goals. While research has found that leader self-efficacy generally results in positive outcomes (Hannah et al., 2008), leader self-efficacy can also have negative consequences, depending on other factors (Schruijer & Vansina, 2002; Shipman & Mumford, 2011; Vargas-Tonsing et al., 2000). Certain leader characteristics may not be suitable for particular tasks, and under these conditions, leader self-efficacy can potentially have a negative moderating effect on outcomes (Schruijer & Vansina, 2002). Additionally, Vargas-Tonsing et al. (2002) found that coaches who focused on certain types of goals could negatively affect team outcomes, and they proposed that when a leader focuses on certain goals that are not consistent with the need of team members, team performance will suffer. Thus, the research suggests that leader self-efficacy can have a “dark side” when paired with other leader characteristics or leader-subordinate orientations.

Additionally, leader self-efficacy concerns leaders’ confidence beliefs (Shipman & Mumford, 2011), and Mayeux and Cillessen (2008) found support for the strengthening effect of confidence in one’s status on the relationship between individuals’ dominance and their aggressive behavior. The authors suggest that when individuals have favorable perceptions about
their status, these beliefs will be consistent with their dominance mindset, which will allow them to further justify their aggressive behavior. Their findings are consistent with SDT’s theoretical propositions concerning hierarchy-enhancing beliefs in which dominant individuals develop mindsets about their roles and capabilities which are consistent with dominating behavior.

Therefore, I propose that a high-SDO leader will be more likely to be abusive with his or her subordinate group, and that this relationship will be strengthened when he or she has high leader self-efficacy. When a high-SDO leader is confident in his or her leadership abilities, he or she will direct intense effort in leadership behaviors which are consistent with socially dominant goals. On the other hand, a high-SDO leader with low leader self-efficacy will have less congruence between his or her SDO and leader self-efficacy beliefs. Thus, high SDO will lead to abusive supervision, with the effect being strengthened by leader self-efficacy.

*Hypothesis 3: Leader self-efficacy will moderate the relationship between a leader’s SDO and abusive supervision, such that the positive relationship will be stronger when a leader has high leader self-efficacy.*

I also expect that the negative relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership will be stronger when a leader has high self-efficacy. Empowering leadership involves behaviors such as participative decision making and showing concern for the team (Arnold et al., 2000). For a low-SDO leader, who values the voice of subordinates, having high leader self-efficacy will result in directing his or her goals towards hierarchy-attenuating practices, which should increase his or her empowering leadership behaviors. Hierarchy-attenuating practices involve engaging in behaviors which mitigate differentials with subordinate groups (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). I suggest that leaders with a low SDO will be even more likely to engage in
hierarchy-attenuating practices which result in empowering leadership behaviors when they have high leader self-efficacy.

Research has found that leader self-efficacy can have a positive moderating effect on employee outcomes, depending on the circumstances (Hoyt, 2005), which is consistent with Schruijer and Vansina’s (2002) proposition that other variables, including leader characteristics, should interact with leader self-efficacy to affect employees. While leader self-concept perceptions have not yet been studied in relation to empowering leadership, Hakimi et al. (2010) suggested that empowering leadership carries an element of risk, where an empowering leader can be held accountable for the actions of his or her team. This level of risk associated with being an empowering leader suggests that when a leader has a propensity to display empowering behaviors (due to low SDO), another leader characteristic, such as leader self-efficacy, should strengthen the negative effect of SDO on empowering leadership behaviors. A leader who is high on leader self-efficacy engages in self-regulatory processes (McCormick, 2001) where the confidence possessed by the leader (Shipman & Mumford, 2011) should allow the leader to overcome obstacles and work harder (McCormick, 2001), including overcoming risks associated with empowering behaviors. This suggests that a leader with a propensity to be empowering, based on low-SDO views, will be more likely to engage in empowering leadership behaviors when leader self-efficacy is high. Conversely, a high-SDO leader who has high leader self-efficacy will less likely to engage in empowering leadership behaviors than a high-SDO leader with low leader self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 4: Leader self-efficacy will moderate the relationship between a leader’s SDO and empowering leadership, such that the negative relationship will be stronger when a leader has high leader self-efficacy.
Power Distance Orientation and Leadership Behaviors

In addition to SDO, PDO is another leader hierarchical perception which I expect to affect leadership behaviors. While I propose a negative main effect from PDO to empowering leadership, I do not expect PDO to directly influence abusive supervision. Research has found that power orientations do not necessarily predict harsh or negative leadership tactics; for example, power-holding individuals can display concern for subordinates, behave benevolently, and care about them as individuals (Torelli & Shavitt, 2010). Additionally, PDO can involve paternalistic, caring, and protective behaviors towards subordinates (Blunt & Jones, 1997; Westwood, 1997), which does not align with abusive supervisors’ indifference towards subordinates. Therefore, PDO should not be directly related to abusive supervisory behaviors, which involve leadership behaviors such as speaking disrespectfully to subordinates (Tepper, 2000). However, I do suggest an interactive effect with a leader’s PDO and the subordinate team’s PDO, which I will discuss after first addressing the main effect of PDO on empowering leadership.

Individuals with a high PDO believe in power being unequally distributed in organizations (Clugston et al., 2000) and that it is inappropriate for subordinates to question the authority of the leader (Earley & Erez, 1997). As an orientation, PDO contradicts an empowering leadership perspective. Individuals with a high PDO prefer a disproportionate distribution of power (Clugston et al., 2000), and believe that leaders should be able to exert their power over subordinates (Dorfman & Howell, 1988). Additionally, high-PDO leaders are more likely to use behavior that is autocratic in nature (Brockner et al., 2001), whereas low PDO leaders are more likely to engage in consultative behaviors with their teams (Cole et al., 2013). Empowering leaders share power with their employees, and allow them to have autonomy (Lorinkova et al.,
2013), which is an approach consistent with the hierarchy-attenuating practice of sharing power with subordinates (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Empowering leaders also involve employees in participative decision making, share information with them, (Arnold et al., 2000) and encourage them to exhibit self-leadership (Stewart et al., 2011). This is in contrast to a high PDO perspective, where employees are not expected to participate in decision making processes or have discretion in how they conduct their work (Earley & Erez, 1997). Furthermore, power distance involves protecting subordinates from various top-down influences, and only informing them of information when necessary (Blunt & Jones, 1997). This approach contradicts empowering leadership, where leaders regularly keep employees up-to-date on organizational happenings (Arnold et al., 2000).

Thus, I propose a negative relationship between leaders’ PDO and their empowering leadership behaviors. When a high-PDO leader manages a team, he or she will be likely to believe in high power differentials between leaders and subordinate groups, and engage in hierarchy-enhancing practices that enforce the leader’s power and diminish the team’s power. Conversely, low-PDO leaders will engage in power-specific hierarchy-attenuating practices, which involve sharing power with subordinates. This approach is consistent with empowering leadership, and I therefore suggest that leaders’ PDO should be negatively related to their empowering leadership of the team.

Hypothesis 5: A leader’s PDO will be negatively related to empowering leadership of his or her team.

Power Distance Orientation and the Moderating Role of Team Power Distance

While I propose a main effect between leaders’ PDOs and their empowering leadership, I do not expect a main effect between leaders’ PDOs and their abusive supervision. Abusive
supervision involves leaders engaging in hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors towards their subordinates, and while SDO suggests a disregard for the fair treatment of subordinate groups (e.g., using force if necessary), power distance is an individual orientation which involves beliefs about the power differentials between subordinates and their leaders. However, the construct does not imply that high power distance leaders will necessarily mistreat their employees. A high-PDO leader could believe in power distance in organizations, but still treat their employees respectfully (Torelli & Shavitt, 2010). Indeed, more relevant to the relationship between leader PDO and abusive supervision should be the PDO of subordinates (Tepper, 2007). Research has found that subordinates’ PDO can affect relationships with abusive supervision, and I suggest that the congruence of a leader’s PDO and team PDO will interact to predict abusive supervision.

At a team level, Cole and colleagues (2013) reported that the combination of a leader’s PDO and team’s PDO is important to predicting team performance and team organizational citizenship behavior, and when there is incongruence with a high-PDO leader, these team outcomes suffer. They argued that when high-PDO leaders are paired with high-PDO teams, the teams will be likely to believe that their leaders’ behaviors are fair and accept the high power distance between the leader and subordinate. Yet, there can be an unfavorable match when a leader has a high PDO and a team is low on PDO. Specifically, they found that this interaction led to the strongest decrease in a team’s perceptions of procedural justice climate.

SDT would similarly suggest an interaction in which team values play a role in how teams are treated. Sidanius and Pratto (2000) discuss the role of hierarchical consensuality, which is when “there is a high degree of consensus within the social system as to which groups are dominant and which subordinate” (52). They suggest that when subordinate groups agree with the status quo of hierarchical distance between those in dominant positions and
subordinates, there will be less tension and conflict between dominant individuals and subordinate groups. Subordinate groups can have favorable perceptions of dominant individuals, and subordinate groups can accept the status quo, even if doing so is to their own detriment (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). The suggestion that consensuality benefits the treatment of subordinates also aligns with a supplementary perspective. Under a supplementary view, the most harmonious outcomes occur when people “match” in their values and behaviors (Muchinsky, & Monahan, 1987). From this perspective, leaders will respond favorably to subordinates who complement their existing value systems.

Thus, SDT suggests that when there is agreement between dominant individuals and subordinates, a cooperative agreement exists and the leader does not need to actively establish his or her position of power. This type of congruence will occur when the power distance value system between leaders and subordinates are aligned. However, when there is disagreement with leader, negative outcomes will be more likely to occur.

As leader PDO increases, abusive supervision should increase when teams have low PDO. When a dominant individual believe in having power over subordinate groups, but the subordinate group does not agree with this power distribution, more conflict between the dominant and subordinate group will arise. Furthermore, in this scenario, the dominant individual will not respond favorably to their status quo being challenged. A high-PDO leader is more likely to use autocratic behaviors (Brockner et al., 2001), and combined with a team who has low PDO, SDT suggests that as leader PDO increases, he or she will be more likely to behave aggressively towards a team which challenges the power status quo. A low-PDO team may make a high-PDO leader feel threatened in that a high-PDO leader could feel as though his or her power status is question. Research has found that when an individual’s ego is threatened,
he or she can react aggressively in return (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). In order to re-establish the power dynamic, a high-PDO leader may engage in hostile behaviors such as abusive supervision. Thus, the team with low PDO could provoke abusive supervision as leader PDO increases. Indeed, research on abusive supervision has suggested that employees can be provocative victims, particularly when they engage in dominating social behavior themselves. For example, Aquino and Byron (2002) reported that employees who engaged in behaviors such as demanding explanations were more likely to be treated aggressively in return. A mismatch between a leader with high PDO and a team with low PDO could also cause conflict, which would result in abusive supervision; Tepper et al. (2011) reported that when supervisors perceived dissimilarity between themselves and their subordinates, this increased relationship conflict, which in turn led to abusive supervision.

Consensuality will also apply to high-PDO teams as leader PDO increases. When teams with a high PDO are accepting of a high power distance between themselves and their leaders, they will avoid challenging the leaders’ power, which will reduce their leaders’ likelihood of engaging in abusive supervision. Additionally, when teams conform to their low-power distance roles, they will be more likely to be treated respectfully and paternalistically as leaders’ PDO increase (Blunt & Jones, 1997). Therefore, I suggest that there will be a positive relationship between leaders’ PDO and abusive supervision when the team has a low PDO and a negative relationship between leaders’ PDO and abusive supervision when the team has a high PDO.

*Hypothesis 6: Team PDO will moderate the relationship between PDO and abusive supervision, such that the relationship between leader PDO and abusive supervision will be positive when team PDO is low and negative when team PDO is high.*
Additionally, I expect the team’s PDO to affect the negative effect of a leader’s PDO on empowering leadership. When leaders have a low PDO, they will be more likely to engage in consultative behaviors with their teams. However, high-PDO leaders will be less likely to allow participative decision making (Cole et al., 2013; Earley & Erez, 1997). Therefore, as teams’ PDO increase, more issues will likely arise between high-PDO leaders and their teams. Faced with this contradiction in power perspectives, high-PDO leaders will be even less likely to show concern for the team. The problems experienced between the team and leader, including increased conflict (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), would further disrupt the positive interpersonal processes that are necessary for effective empowering leadership (Lorinkova et al., 2013).

Empowering leadership requires a high level of team and leader coordination (Lorinkova et al., 2013). When dissensuality, or different beliefs, exists between dominant individuals and subordinate groups, coordination and cooperation among the will likely suffer (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). This suggests that there will be a lack of communication between when a team has a low PDO and a leader has a high PDO, which is a necessary condition for empowering leadership (Arnold et al., 2000). While teams with high PDOs and leaders with low PDOs could also be similarly mismatched, this would not necessarily create the negative dissensuality outcomes and interpersonal problems. A leader who is low on PDO would encourage empowering leadership, and teams that have a high PDO may not be as comfortable with the status quo. SDT would suggest that consistent with their PDOs, high PDO-teams would not challenge the leader, and still be receptive to empowering processes. Additionally, research on PDO in employees and empowering leadership has found that even in high PDO cultures, employees with high PDO can respond positively to empowering leadership (Robert et al.,
Thus, as team PDO decreases, the team will encourage even fewer empowering leadership behaviors from a high-PDO leader.

*Hypothesis 7: Team PDO will moderate the relationship between leader’s PDO and empowering leadership, such that the negative relationship will be stronger when a team has a low PDO.*

*The Effect of Leadership Behaviors on Team Performance*

In my next set of hypotheses, I include team performance as an outcome that results from empowering leadership and abusive supervision. However, I do not specifically propose a relationship from leaders’ hierarchical orientations to team performance with leader behaviors mediating these relationships. Instead, I discuss the indirect effects that exist by making the link between leadership behaviors and team performance. I then address the interaction effects of leaders’ orientations, leader self-efficacy, and team PDO on team performance. Finally, I suggest moderated mediation, where mediation exists as a result of the interactive effects of the first-stage relationships.

Mathieu and Taylor (2006) distinguished between mediation and indirect effects. Mediation occurs when a variable, X, has a total effect on another variable, Y. However, I do not expect there to be a main effect relationship from leaders’ hierarchical perceptions to team performance; instead, it is only through their leadership behaviors that this relationship exists. Mathieu and Taylor (2006) described this type of relationship as an indirect effect, where there is a casual sequence of variables. In this case, X and Y are not necessarily related; however, the indirect effect of X on Y can be affected by an intercepting variable (or “M”). I use theoretical rationale in my hypotheses to argue that the effect of leader orientations, or X, on leader
behaviors, or M, exists, and that there should be a relationship between leader behaviors, or M, to team performance, or Y. This is an indirect effect relationship.

For example, more specifically, I do not predict that leaders with a high PDO will necessarily have a direct negative effect on their team’s performance. This prediction would simplify a relationship that depends on a complex variety of factors. For example, Zhang and Begley (2011) reported that a high PDO can actually increase team participation, particularly in a high-PDO culture. Thus, even though I predict that a leader’s high PDO will lead to decreased empowering leadership, and that empowering leadership will increase team performance, I do not expect a main effect from the leader’s PDO to team performance. However, I do expect interactive effects of leaders’ hierarchical orientations on team performance. Additionally, I propose that these interactive effects on performance will be mediated through the leadership behaviors of empowering leadership and abusive supervision, and later, I propose moderated mediation models.

Therefore, my next set of hypothesized relationships involves the effects of abusive supervision and empowering leadership on team performance. SDT (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000) suggests that dominant practices can lead to behavioral outcomes for subordinate groups. When subordinate groups are treated in a hostile manner, and made to believe that they are inferior to those in dominant positions, they can engage in debilitating behaviors which harm their own group. This can be due to the role of self-fulfilling prophecy, where subordinate groups behave in accordance with how they are perceived by individuals in dominant positions (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Research has found that this self-debilitating behavior can manifest in underperformance in tasks, even when the subordinate group believes that they are just as competent as those in dominant roles (Pratto et al., 2006).
Research has found support for the negative relationship between abusive supervision and individual performance (Harris et al., 2007) and extra-role work behaviors (Zellars et al., 2002). At the team level, abusive supervision against the group can lead to team deviant behaviors (Mawritz et al., 2012) and decreased team creativity (Liu et al., 2012). Consistent with SDT’s proposition that dominant behaviors can lead to attitudes consistent a self-fulfilling prophecy (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), Priesemuth and colleagues (2014) reported that when a leader abuses a team, the team’s collective efficacy suffers, which in turn negatively affects their group performance. Therefore, I suggest that there should be a negative relationship between abusive supervision and team performance.

Hypothesis 8: Abusive supervision will be negatively related to team performance.

Additionally, I suggest that empowering leadership is relevant to team performance. Under SDT, empowering leadership should involve hierarchy-attenuating leadership behaviors. Unlike hierarchy-enhancing practices, which will lead subordinate groups to engage in self-debilitating behaviors, hierarchy-attenuating practices should reduce feelings of inferiority and cause the subordinate group to feel as though they can be successful (Sidnaius & Pratto, 2000). When an empowering leader shares power with the team, this can increase the team’s ability to have an influence on team outcomes, which raises their efficacy. Additionally, empowering leaders show concern for their teams, and the trust that the team feels in the leader decreases cognitive obstacles, which can limit feelings of efficacy. In turn, these feelings of self-efficacy predict team performance (Srivastava et al., 2008).

Prior work on empowering leadership has found that this leadership style positively influences employee performance (Carmeli et al., 2011; Vecchio et al., 2010). Empowering leadership has been linked to team performance (Srivastava et al., 2008), and while it can take
time to have a positive effect on team performance due to the processes involves (e.g. team empowerment, coordination, and development of mental models), overall, this leadership style is related to team performance (Lorinkova et al., 2013). Thus, I suggest that there should be a positive relationship between empowering leadership and team performance.

**Hypothesis 9: Empowering leadership will be positively related to team performance.**

**Interactive Effects on Team Performance and Moderated Mediation**

Next, I examine the interactive effects of leader SDO and leader self-efficacy on team performance. I then propose that abusive supervision and empowering leadership mediate this interactive relationship in terms of moderated mediation.

SDT suggests that the effects of dominant individuals on subordinate groups are complex, with the treatment of subordinate groups by individuals in dominant positions ultimately affecting subordinates’ behavior (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Additionally, these relationships can be affected by a variety of factors, including how those in dominant positions perceive their own behaviors. Thus, a leader’s hierarchical orientations, combined with their leader self-efficacy, should have an impact on team performance.

Sidanius and Pratto (2000) suggest that the oppressive effects of dominance will impact how subordinates behave. As previously argued, leader self-efficacy can be conceptualized as a type of hierarchy-enhancing belief, or legitimizing myth, which strengthens the negative effects of dominance. When subordinate groups are privy to a dominant individual who exerts dominance forcefully, their performance will suffer more strongly than when a dominant leader has low leader self-efficacy and will not direct his or her actions as strongly towards dominating subordinate groups. As a result of dominant approaches, subordinate groups can develop self-fulfilling prophecies. These self-fulfilling prophecies occur when subordinates believe in the
stereotypes about them possessed by dominant individuals. Additionally, a decrease in performance can occur when subordinate groups engage in self-debilitating behaviors, which are behaviors that harm their own subordinate group as a result of dominant approaches (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Indeed, a review on the empirical research on SDT and subordinate group performance reports that multiple studies have found a negative relationship between dominance and subordinate group performance (Pratto et al., 2006).

More specific to the mechanisms that occur when leader SDO and leader self-efficacy interact to predict performance, a study by Vargas-Tonsing et al. (2002) reported that coaches’ leader self-efficacy concerning developing their team’s character adversely affected the team’s performance. While the study reported a main effect relationship, the authors proposed that under conditions in which the team did not need this type of coaching behavior, leader self-efficacy negatively harmed performance. The authors suggested that this relationship could be explained by the decreased efficacy experienced by teams as a result of coaches who directed their goals towards behaviors inconsistent with the team’s needs. Specifically, they proposed that when coaches believed in their ability to increase character-building skills of their teams, this approach was contrary to what was needed by some teams in order to be successful performers. Shipman and Mumford (2011) similarly suggest that overconfident leaders may be blind to the needs of certain situations, and their overconfidence overrides their ability to be receptive to various cues. In other words, combined with other variables (in this case, leader SDO), leaders high on leader self-efficacy will more likely to ignore the needs of a situation, including the needs of their subordinate team. This suggests that leaders with a high SDO, who will already be likely to behave in ways which contradict the interests of their subordinate teams (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), will more negatively impact team performance when they have high
self-efficacy beliefs. Similar to the coaches in Vargas-Tonsing et al.’s (2002) study, these-high SDO leaders with high leader self-efficacy will be more likely ignore the needs of their subordinate teams than leaders low in self-efficacy beliefs. This disregard for what the team needs to be successful will ultimately harm team performance.

I expect that these interactive effects of leader SDO and leader self-efficacy on team performance will occur through mediating mechanisms. While leader SDO, when interacted with leader self-efficacy, should affect team performance, it is through the treatment of their subordinate team that this relationship exists. Leadership behaviors provide information to the team about the leaders’ dominance, and I suggest that empowering leadership and abusive supervision should mediate these relationships. As previously discussed, the positive effect of SDO on abusive supervision should be strengthened by leader self-efficacy, and the negative effect of SDO on empowering leadership should be also be strengthened by leader self-efficacy. Further, these leadership behaviors should then lead to team performance as detailed above. Therefore, I propose moderated mediation relationships, with abusive supervision and empowering leadership mediating the interactive relationship of leader SDO and leader self-efficacy on team performance.

*Hypothesis 10: Abusive supervision will partially mediate the negative interaction effect of leader SDO and leader self-efficacy on team performance.*

*Hypothesis 11: Empowering leadership will partially mediate the negative interaction effect of leader SDO and leader self-efficacy on team performance.*

My final hypotheses examine the interactive effects of leader PDO and team PDO on team performance. I also propose that these interactive effects on performance occur through the mediators of abusive supervision and empowering leadership, resulting in moderated mediation.
Bashshur, Hernández, & González-Romá (2011) found that when leaders and teams have similar perceptions, this correspondence can increase team performance. SDT similarly suggests that dissensuality in beliefs between subordinate groups and dominant individuals can negatively impact subordinate outcomes (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), including subordinate group performance (Pratto et al., 2006). When dominant individuals and subordinate groups have differing perspectives about the status quo, more conflict and tension will result between dominant individuals and subordinates (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), which will decrease a team’s willingness to engage in positive performance behaviors.

I propose that the negative interactive effects of leader PDO and team PDO on team performance will occur through mediating mechanisms. As Cole et al. (2013) reported, leaders’ PDO, paired with their team’s PDO, affected team performance through procedural justice climate. They found that the lowest procedural justice climate perceptions resulted from a high-PDO leader matched with low-PDO team, and this in turn negatively affected team performance. They reported partial mediation, which suggests that other mediator(s) could play a role in the relationship between the team-leader PDO interaction and team performance. I suggest that empowering leadership and abusive supervision should also partially mediate the interactive effects on performance that occur when team PDOs complement leader PDO. As previously argued, I expect that there will be a positive relationship between leader PDO and abusive supervision when team PDO is low, but a negative relationship when team PDO is high. These interactions will affect team performance indirectly through abusive supervision. Furthermore, leader PDO will more negatively impact team performance through empowering leadership when team PDO is high. Thus, I suggest moderated mediation hypotheses where the interactive
effects of leader PDO with team PDO on team performance are mediated through leaders’ abusive supervisory behaviors and empowering leadership behaviors.

*Hypothesis 12: Abusive supervision will partially mediate the interaction effect of leader PDO and team PDO on team performance.*

*Hypothesis 13: Empowering leadership will partially mediate the negative interaction effect of leader PDO and team PDO on team performance.*
CHAPTER 4: METHOD

Sample and Procedure

I collected data from 15 small- to mid-sized outpatient physical therapy organizations across the United States. Unlike other physical therapy settings, such as hospitals, outpatient physical therapy clinics provide care to patients who visit the clinic location for appointments. The organizations had clinic locations across 16 states in the U.S., including locations in the northeast, south, and midwest. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics of the companies. The organizations employed a total of 1,584 individuals, with the average company having 106 employees (min = 39, max = 195, SD = 56.1). The organizations included 191 outpatient clinic locations, with an average of 12.7 clinics per organization (min = 4, max = 25, SD = 7.1).

Based on conceptual definitions and feedback from managers, I operationalized each clinic as a team. Teams work together in order to promote organizational goals (Argote & McGrath, 1993); they contribute to the performance of the group and organization, and engage in interpersonal processes related to performance outcomes (Mathieu, Maynard, Rapp, & Gilson, 2008). A key hallmark of teams is that they are interdependent in their tasks and see themselves, as well as are seen by others, as a collective team (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003). The clinics within physical therapy organizations fit this definition. In particular, I interviewed both clinic directors and top-level managers from a handful of companies regarding the composition and tasks of clinics. The managers communicated that all the part-time and full-time employees in an individual clinic were a part of well-defined work team that engaged in interdependent tasks, and the clinic members also perceived their work group as a team. While individual employees were held responsible for their work performance, clinic directors were ultimately accountable for the overall performance and success of the clinics. Clinic directors were the clearly defined leader of
a clinic location and were seen by clinic employees as their direct managers, and held a formal role as the leader where they established goals for the team were responsible for their development (Morgeson, DeRue, & Karam, 2010).

The subordinate team members included all full- and part-time staff at the clinics who worked for the clinic directors. These teams consisted of a variety of specialists, including physical therapists and occupational therapists, physical therapy assistants, physical therapy and occupational therapy aides/techs, administrative support staff, and athletic directors. According to the managers at the organizations, all the clinic employees engaged in interdependent tasks that were instrumental to providing high-quality care for patients. Providing care to patients is the primary mission of the companies, and is consistent with the proposition that teams should have a clearly defined purpose (Sounstrom, de Meuse, & Futrell, 1990). Additionally, while many clinics were open long hours and on at least one day on the weekend (e.g., 7am - 8pm six days per week), the employees regularly overlapped their shift times with other employees and knew everyone who worked for the clinic.

I coordinated with the CEOs/top-level management at these organizations, who provided me with their employee rosters. The rosters contained employees’ names, clinic locations, and job titles. I utilized online surveys in order to collect my study variables. First, I created an online registration survey and two separate data collection online surveys. One of the data collection surveys was for leaders to complete, and the other data collection survey was for subordinate team members. Then, the CEOs/top-level managers sent emails with the registration survey link to their staff, and encouraged them to complete the surveys. At the end of the registration survey, participants were redirected to either the leader survey or the subordinate survey. Employees were initially given approximately two weeks to complete the surveys. The CEOs/top-level
managers were instructed to send follow-up reminders to their employees after one week. After the initial two weeks, the CEOs/top-level managers were provided with the organization’s completion rates. They were given the opportunity to send another reminder about the surveys and extend the deadline for another two weeks. I was not typically included on the communication between the CEOs/top-level managers and their employees concerning reminders and/or extensions. Thus, the employees were given two to four weeks total to complete the surveys. The employees and clinic directors were assured that their responses were confidential and anonymous.

Ultimately, 191 clinics across the 15 physical therapy companies were invited to participate in the study. I used the following criteria in order to develop my final sample. First, I could only analyze data where the leader had matched subordinate team responses, which reduced the number of usable teams to 92. Second, I only included subordinate surveys where at least two subordinate team members completed the survey. Because a team is defined as collective of individuals who work together (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003), examining a subordinate team of one person would not allow for aggregation of multiple team member responses. Using these criteria reduced the number of usable teams to 64, and excluded three physical therapy companies from inclusion. Finally, in order to ensure that the subordinate team responses were capturing an accurate picture of the subordinate team dynamic with the leaders, I excluded teams that did not have at least a 50% response rate from subordinate team members. This further reduced the sample by 10, resulting in 52 teams. Thus, the final response rate at the clinic level was 27%. For the teams with usable data, the average team size of subordinate team members (excluding the leader) was 7.6 (min = 3, max = 27, SD = 6.79). The average number of team members who completed the surveys was 5.1 (min = 2, max = 15, SD = 3.78). The average
subordinate team in the final sample had a 67% completion rate. Table 1 provides details concerning the response rates for each organization.

Of the 52 leaders, 62% were male and 38% were female. Their average age was 38.4. In terms of race and ethnicity, 96% were White, 2% were Hispanic, and 2% were Asian. They had an average of 12 years of full-time work experience, 5.9 years of experience in a managerial role, had worked in their organization for approximately 6.4 years, and had been a clinic director for 3.6 years. Ninety-eight percent had a post-graduate degree and 2% possessed a college degree. The final sample of subordinates consisted of 260 individuals, of whom 26% were male and 74% were female. Their average age was 24 years old. 85% of the subordinates were White, 5% were African American, 4% were Asian, 3% were Hispanic, and 3% were other races. Their mean number of full-time work experience years was 9.4, and they had worked in their organization for an average of 3.1 years. The mean tenure with their leaders was 1.8 years. In terms of education, 50% had a post-graduate degree, 24% had a college degree, 15% had an associate’s degree, and 11% had a high school diploma. In summary, the sample was racially homogenous and the participants were also highly educated.

Measures

The leader completed measures addressing SDO, PDO, leader self-efficacy, and team performance. The team members responded to measures concerning their leader’s abusive supervision, empowering leadership, and the team’s power distance. All measures had a Cronbach’s alpha of .70 or higher, which demonstrates adequate reliability (Nunnally, 1978). The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations are presented in Table 2. The individual items are listed in the Appendix.
**Power distance orientation**

For PDO, I used the 8-item measure created by Earley and Erez (1997) based on Hofstede’s (1980) conceptual description of power distance. Supervisor respondents answered on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree”; 7 = “strongly agree”). The alpha reliability of this scale was .81.

**Social dominance orientation**

For SDO, I adapted the 16-item SDO measure created by Sidanius et al. (1996). Rather than answer questions about whether they believed certain groups in society should dominate other groups, my measure adapted these questions to ask participants whether leaders should dominate subordinate employees.

Thus, I employed a referent shift in my SDO measure, in which I applied the items from a higher-order level to a lower-order level; specifically, I adapted the measure from a societal level to an organizational level. Chan (1998) developed parameters for identifying a composition model, and identified several types of compositions models. An additive model exists when lower-level measures are summed or averaged for the group. However, I did not average various leaders’ SDOs; each individual’s SDO were treated separately. A direct consensus model is appropriate for aggregating individual-level measures of a group phenomenon. With a direct consensus, agreement among individuals is important to this model’s composition. I did not consider agreement because leaders are expected to differ on their SDOs. SDO is an individual difference, and because only one individual per team completed the measure, there was no need for any group agreement of raters. With a dispersion model, variance within a group is a way to operationalize a construct. I was not concerned with variance among leaders’ SDOs—each individual completing the SDO measure was in a separate group, and there was only one larger
group of the sample, therefore it would be impossible to compare variances. A process model involves shifting processes from a lower level to a high-level parameter. However, SDO is not a process; it is an individual characteristic that is trait-like (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), making it a measure that is more appropriate for a referent-shift. Hence, the direct consensus, additive, dispersion, and process models were not appropriate to my measure.

Therefore, I contend that Chan’s referent-shift model was the most relevant to addressing SDO perceptions of leaders in organizations. Referent-shift models occur when attributes are shifted from a lower-level to a higher-level construct, or vice versa. Chan suggested that researchers should operationalize their construct at the appropriate level of analysis. He argued that the level of analysis depends on the research question, and an established construct at the group level can then move down to the individual level. Klein and Kozlowski (2000) similarly suggested that adapting constructs must be theoretically relevant to one’s research questions. The fundamental content of the construct remains the same, but the referent specifically addresses the level of analysis, as defined by the researcher. While referent-shift models typically occur when lower-level constructs are shifted to a higher level, and aggregated among multiple raters, my measure employed a reverse referent-shift direction, where a higher-order construct is applied to a lower-level setting. Chan recognized that composition models can begin at a higher level and be moved down to a lower level, and while he discussed this directionality in limited terms, the same theoretical arguments concerning how referent shifts are made can apply. Thus, consistent with my research question, which involves understanding leaders’ hierarchical perceptions about subordinate groups in organizations, in order to assess leaders’ SDO, I moved from a higher-level societal construct to a lower-level, organizational context.
While less common to employ a referent shift to a lower-level construct, other researchers have made similar measure adaptations. As part of my rationale for adjusting the original SDO scale, and applying it from the societal to an organizational context (where general groups in society are applied to groups of “leaders” and “subordinates”), I drew on the scale development of PDO. Earley and Erez (1997) and Dorfman and Howell (1988) conceptualized power distance as a general cultural variable which can specifically apply to how leaders should approach relationships with their subordinates. In their development of the new measure, they addressed cultural values generally. They distinguished between the societal level, in which individuals have general beliefs about groups in society, and the organizational level—specifically, beliefs about how a leader should approach decisions and control with employees. They considered leaders and subordinates as important actors which impact both individual and collective outcomes. Higher-level societal orientations can subtly influence how leaders and employees work together (Dorfman & Howell, 1988; Earley & Erez, 1997), which suggests that orientations such as generalized SDO (e.g., an individual’s belief that certain groups in society should dominate) impacts an individual’s beliefs about how leaders should interact with subordinate groups in an organization. Sidanius and Pratto (2000) also suggested that individuals’ SDO will apply to certain contexts where group distinctions exist. In terms of PDO, the PDO measures ultimately developed by Earley and Erez (1997) and Dorfman and Howell (1988) applied the larger societal group perception of power distance (Hofstede, 1980) to the organizational level, and the measures address how leaders and teams should interact. These measures have been used extensively in the management literature in order to measure individual’s PDO within the specific context of the workplace.
SDT suggests that SDO, which addresses individual preferences for group-based inequality in society, can apply to specific groups. Sidanius and Pratto (2000) described SDO as a general construct, but one that is relevant to any group distinction. The authors state that “the groups most likely to be the targets of social dominance…will be those groups that are most salient and that define the sharpest power differential” (61). Social dominance can apply to any social hierarchical structure and arbitrary group distinction. In a hierarchical organization, I suggest that the group distinctions which should be the most salient to leaders, and involve the “sharpest power differential,” will be leaders and subordinate groups. In an organizational setting, leader and subordinate designations are crucial defining roles for employees, where hierarchical differences among employee guide how tasks are coordinated (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). However, individuals should still vary in whether or not they see these leader and subordinate groups as being unequal and subordinate groups being deserving of forceful treatment.

Just as individuals can vary in their perception of societal group inequities (Sidnaius & Pratto, 2000), individuals in organizations should have differing beliefs about leader-subordinate group (in)equality. While the SDO measure was created to capture individuals’ generalized orientations, Sidnaius and Pratto’s (2000) assertion that this preference can apply to a specific group distinction suggests that the measure is appropriate to adapt to a specific context. Therefore, I adapted the original SDO measure to apply to leaders and subordinates. For example, the original SDO item of “some groups of people are just more worthy than others” was adapted to “leaders are just more worthy than subordinates.” I utilized the wording of “subordinates” due to the emphasis of subordinate groups in SDT, and thus my adapted measure was consistent with the theory (Sidnaius & Pratto, 2000) and relevant to hierarchical
organizational structures that consist of leaders and subordinates (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). The original SDO scale consists of two subdimensions; specifically, dominance and egalitarianism. However, the two-factor analysis of the scale provides a poorer fit than a one-factor solution for the scale, and Sidanius and Pratto (2000) suggested that both theoretically and statistically, there was no justification for considering the dimensions as independent. Additionally, prior research utilizing the SDO measure has reported it as one factor.

For this measure, leader participants answered items on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree”; 7 = “strongly agree). The alpha reliability was .83.

**Abusive supervision**

Subordinates answered questions about their leader using Priesmuth et al.’s (2014) adaption of Tepper’s (2000) original 15-item abusive supervision scale. While ratings of abusive supervision have typically been measured at the individual dyadic level (e.g., “my boss ridicules me”), Priesmuth et al. modified a shortened scale of abusive supervision (five items of active abuse; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007) to reflect a referent shift (Chan, 1998). Unlike my measure of leader SDO, the referent shift for abusive supervision occurred for the receiver (the subordinate employee) and not the leader. The purpose of this referent shift was to address how supervisors abuse members their subordinate groups, rather than individual employees. A sample item was “my supervisor ridicules members of my work group.” Using Priesmuth et al.’s measure is consistent with my conceptual arguments, where I propose that leaders’ hierarchical perceptions affect how they treat their subordinate groups. While Priesmuth and colleagues’ study only included five items, which is a commonly used shortened measure of the abusive supervision scale, I adapted the full 15-item measure from Tepper (2000) and applied the referent shift to all
the items. Employees answered this measure on a 7-point scale from “never” to “always.” The alpha reliability was .95.

**Empowering leadership**

I measured empowering leadership by having subordinates complete three subdimensions of Arnold et al.’s (2000) empowering leadership questionnaire. In their scale development, Arnold et al. reported five distinct sub-factors. However, I only examined three of these five subdimensions due to the theoretical arguments made in my hypotheses. I measured leaders’ participative decision-making (e.g. listening to group members’ ideas), informing (e.g. explaining company decisions), and showing concern (e.g. treating employees as equals). I did not incorporate leading by example and coaching. While these are important elements of empowering leadership, I suggest that the linkages from leaders’ hierarchical perceptions to empowering leadership exist due to leader behaviors that include involving employees in decisions and caring about their well-being. Respondents completed this measure using a 7-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The alpha reliability was .98.

**Leader self-efficacy**

Leaders measured their leader self-efficacy with Chemers et al.’s (2000) 8-item leadership efficacy measure on a 7-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree to 7 = “strongly agree”). A sample item was “I know a lot more than most what it takes to be a good leader.” This scale had an alpha reliability of .81.

**Team power distance**

Subordinates answered power distance using the same measure as leaders who rated their PDO. While individual team members addressed their beliefs about power distance, these individual ratings were aggregated to capture the team’s PDO. This additive model approach
(Chan, 1998) is used when summing each employee team member’s rating of PDO, and was used by Schaubroeck et al. (2007) and Cole et al. (2013) to assess team PDO. The alpha reliability of this measure was .78.

**Team performance**

The leaders rated team performance using Zellemer-Bruhn and Gibson’s (2006) 5-item team performance measure. Respondents answered on a 7-point scale (1 = “very inaccurate”; 7 = “very accurate”). A sample item was “This team achieves its goals,” and the alpha reliability was .93.

**Controls**

I controlled for the gender and age of leaders and subordinate teams. Research on SDO has found that men are more likely to have high SDOs than women (Pratto et al., 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 2000); additionally, researchers have reported that demographic variables can affect relational outcomes (Tsui & O’Reilly, 1989). Demographic diversity in teams can also affect team outcomes (Finkestein & Hambrick, 1990). For example, research on leadership, including abusive supervision, has controlled for various employee and supervisor demographics, including age and gender (e.g. Lian et al., 2010; Lian et al., 2014; Tepper et al., 2011).

Second, consistent with work on team-level empowering leadership (Srivastava et al., 2006) and abusive supervision (Priesmuth et al., 2014), I controlled for the leader’s tenure with the subordinate group and the size of the team due to the potential impact of these variables on team outcomes.

I also considered controlling for the company, given that there were 12 different companies used in the final sample. However, due to the need to enter multiple dummy variables, which would drastically reduce my degrees of freedom (Stockburger, 1998), as well as
sample size restrictions for hierarchical linear modeling (Hofmann, 1997), I instead analyzed whether there was a statistical need to control for the company designation. I examined whether any company had differences in independent and dependent variable means from the sample average, which would suggest that some aspect of the company was influencing the results. I conducted t-tests for all study variables for each company in order to compare the company means to the means of the entire sample. One company revealed a significant different value of leader PDO, and another company for leader self-efficacy. However, there were no significant differences with any other study variables, including dependent variables. Therefore, since there was no statistical need to control for company designation and since doing so would greatly reduce the degrees of freedom for the team-level analyses, I did not include company designation as a control.

**Data Analysis**

*Common Method Bias*

Consistent with the recommendations made by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003), in order to reduce common method bias, I solicited responses from multiple raters. The leader characteristics and team performance were measured by the leaders, while the leaders’ abusive supervision and empowering leadership, as well as the team PDO, were rated by the subordinate team members. Due to the multi-source approach, no relationships in my proposed model were completed by the same source.

*Aggregation*

First, before analyzing my data, I aggregated the team ratings of power distance, abusive supervision, and empowering leadership. I examined the between-group and within-group agreements using intraclass correlations (ICCs; Bliese, 2000; James, 1982). The ICC(1) concerns
agreement between group members after a significant finding based on a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). I then examined the ICC(2)s. The ICC(2) reveals whether the groups can be distinguished from each other. The ICC(1) results were .14 for team power distance, .26 for empowering leadership, and .44 for abusive supervision and met commonly accepted standards (Bliese, 2000). The one-way ANOVA for the variables demonstrated that they were significantly different across teams ($F = 1.76, p < .01$ for team power distance, $F = 2.63, p < .001$ for empowering leadership, and $F = 3.40, p < .001$ for abusive supervision). The ICC(2) values were .43 for team power distance, .62 for empowering leadership, and .78 for abusive supervision.

While the ICC(2) values were relatively low, this was likely due to the number of respondents in each given team. The average team response in my sample was 5.1, and utilizing smaller groups result in lower ICC(2) values than larger groups (Bliese, 2000; Brown & Treviño, 2006).

Additionally, I examined the $r_{wg(j)}$ values to ensure that the measures were justifiably aggregated at the unit level. Adequate $r_{wg(j)}$ values are greater than .70 in order to ensure that team agreement is significantly different from non-team agreement (Bliese, 2000). In my analyses, I compared the results with a rectangular distribution. A rectangular, or uniform distribution, is the standard comparison point when assuming non-agreement. The results indicated that the $r_{wg(j)}$ values were all acceptable: empowering leadership = .93, abusive supervision = .98, and team power distance = .87. Therefore, due to sufficient evidence of the appropriateness of aggregating these variables at the team level, I proceeded with my analyses.

**Confirmatory Factor Analyses**

I conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) in LISREL 8.8 (Jöreskog & Sorbom, 2006) to determine the discriminant validity of the constructs. This procedure uses maximum likelihood estimation. Table 3 provides the results of the CFAs. To assess the fit of my
hypothesized model, I examined the chi-squared difference test to examine whether higher-factor models had statistically significantly better fit than lower-factor models. Next, I examined the comparative fit index (CFI) and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR). For an acceptable fit, I examined the data to see if it met the acceptable fit requirements of a minimum .90 CFI and .08 or below SRMR. CFI values above .90 are generally considered adequate (Bentler, 1990), and Hu and Bentler (1999) suggested that an SRMR less than .08 indicates good fit.

I first conducted a CFA with the individual employee responses (N = 260). This CFA examined the employee variables of team PDO, empowering leadership, and abusive supervision. Based on a change in chi-square test and the fit statistics, results indicated that the three-factor model had significantly better fit ($\chi^2 (942) = 4,605.49, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .93, \text{SRMR} = .07$) than the two-factor model (where empowering leadership and abusive supervision loaded on the same factor; $\chi^2 (944) = 5,912.89, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .90, \text{SRMR} = .09; \Delta \chi^2(2) = 1307.40, p < .001$) and the one-factor model ($\chi^2 (945) = 6,404.76, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .89, \text{SRMR} = .11; \Delta \chi^2(3) = 1799.27, p < .001$).

While the CFA supported a three-factor solution where empowering leadership and abusive supervision were distinct constructs, due to the high negative correlation between these leadership variables ($r = - .78$; see Table 2), I also conducted a multicollinearity analysis with three regressions. I first regressed both leader behaviors on team performance. Then, I regressed abusive supervision on empowering leadership, and vice versa. The results revealed that multicollinearity did not occur. The tolerance statistic at which multicollinearity becomes an issue is .20 and below, and all results revealed higher tolerance statistics. Second, Variance Inflation
Factors (VIF) above 5.0 suggest multicollinearity (Field, 2013), but both abusive supervision and empowering leadership did not meet the threshold.

My second CFA analyzed the leader variables. For this CFA, my sample consisted of 52 responses. Due to the small sample size and research on SEM which suggests that one’s sample size should be no less than 5-10 times the number of observed variables (McDonald & Ho, 2002), I was limited to 10 observed variables in my CFA analyses for leaders. Because of the number of items of each measure, it was necessary to create parcels. I created the parcels using recommendations provided by Landis, Beal, and Tesluk (2000). They suggested that parcels should contain observed items with various levels of factor loadings on the latent construct. For example, in my first parcel for any variable, I first included the item with the highest factor loading and the lowest factor loading, and moved on to the second-highest factor loading and second-lowest factor loading for the second parcel. I continued this process until all the items were loaded on a pre-designated number of parcels by creating a mean of the individual scale scores.

Ultimately, I created two parcels for each of the four latent constructs, with the exception of leader PDO, which had three parcels. I compared the four-factor model to a three-factor model, with SDO and PDO on the same factor. The results revealed that the four-factor model had significantly better fit ($\chi^2 (21) = 58.03, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .77, \text{SRMR} = .15$) than the three-factor model ($\chi^2 (24) = 85.17, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .56, \text{SRMR} = 16; \Delta \chi^2(3) = 27.14, p < .001$). Next, I compared the four-factor model to a two-factor model, which grouped leader self-efficacy with SDO and PDO, and a one-factor model, which added team performance onto the same factor. Based on the change in chi-square test and the fit statistics, the results indicated that the four-factor model fit better than the two-factor model ($\chi^2 (26) = 134.53, p < .001, \text{CFI} = .33, \text{SRMR} =$
.20; \Delta \chi^2(5) = 76.50, p < .001) and the one-factor model (\chi^2 (27) = 196.22, p < .001, CFI = .00, SRMR = .23; \Delta \chi^2(6) = 138.19, p < .001). While the four-factor model had CFI and SRMR results below the desired parameters, the model remained the best fit among the various solutions for the leader variables. Lower fit statistics often occur with small sample sizes (Ullman, 2001).

**Hypotheses Testing**

I used a two-tailed \( p < .05 \) cutoff when examining the significance of findings, with the exception of my interaction hypotheses, where I employed a \( p < .10 \) cutoff. Interactions in field studies can reduce statistical power (Evans, 1985; McClelland & Judd, 1993), and in cases of lower statistical power, Type II errors are more likely to occur. Therefore, while the stringent \( p \)-value cutoffs present in social science research are an attempt to reduce Type I errors, the limited statistical power that exists in small samples with field study interactions can inflate the risk of Type II errors (Aguinis et al., 2010). This approach is consistent with prior research on teams that has reported results using a \( p < .10 \) cutoff (e.g. Chatman & Flynn, 2001; Simons, Pelled, & Smith, 1999).

In order to test the hypotheses, I first used hierarchical regression. I then utilized Hayes’ (2013) PROCESS macro, which is based on Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes’ (2007) moderated mediation macro to test the moderated mediation effects. This method was developed from procedures that were proposed by Shrout and Bolger (2002) and developed by Preacher, Hayes, and Rucker (Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007). The PROCESS results provide both direct and conditional indirect effects with bias-corrected confidence intervals by bootstrapping the data 5,000 times. The results indicate to what extent the first-stage interaction affects the dependent variable thorough the mediator. Significant effects occur when the bias-corrected confidence intervals do not contain zero.
CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

Before testing my hypotheses, I mean centered the variables (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2002). I used hierarchical regression to examine Hypotheses 1-10. To test Hypothesis 1 and 2, I regressed leader SDO on abusive supervision after taking into account the control variables (see Table 4). The results revealed that leader SDO was not related to abuse ($B = .03, ns$), nor was leader SDO related to empowering leadership ($B = -.07, ns$). Thus, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were not supported. Hypothesis 3 predicted an interactive effect of leader SDO and leader self-efficacy on abusive supervision, but the interaction was not significant ($B = -.19, ns$). There was also no significant interactive effect of leader SDO with leader self-efficacy on empowering leadership ($B = .17, ns$), and Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

I next examined the hypotheses involving power distance (see Table 5). For Hypothesis 5, PDO was not negatively related to empowering leadership ($B = .01, ns$). Contrary to the Hypothesis 6 prediction, there was no significant interactive effect of leader PDO and team PDO on abusive supervision ($B = -.16, ns$). However, for Hypothesis 7, there was an interactive effect of leader PDO and team PDO on empowering leadership ($B = .26, p < .10$). Figure 2 plots the interaction in which team PDO is plotted as one standard deviation above the mean (high team PDO) and one standard deviation below the mean (low team PDO). A simple slopes analysis revealed that there was no significant relationship between leader PDO and empowering leadership when team PDO was low ($b = -.22, t = -.86, ns$) or high ($b = .19, t = 1.10, ns$). However, consistent with guidelines suggested by Dawson (2014), selecting a value of the moderator at one standard deviation below and above the mean is arbitrary and does not address whether a theoretically meaningful interaction exists. In order to identify the value of the moderator at which the relationship between leader PDO and empowering leadership became
significant at a $p < .10$, I conducted a Johnson-Neyman technique analysis (Johnson & Fey, 1950). This analysis reveals the region of significance at which values of the moderator become significant. I found that there was a negative relationship between leader PDO and empowering leadership when team PDO was at values of 2.10 or below, which was approximately two standard deviations below the mean.

Addressing the second stage of my proposed model, after taking into account the control variables, I examined whether empowering leadership or abusive supervision were related to team performance (see Table 6). Abusive supervision was not related to team performance ($B = .10, ns$) and neither was empowering leadership ($B = -.02, ns$). Thus, Hypotheses 8 and 9 were not supported. When both abusive supervision and empowering leader were examined together, neither abusive supervision ($B = .22, ns$) nor empowering leadership ($B = .15, ns$) were related to team performance. Table 7 provides the results for leadership behaviors to team performance after controlling for SDO. However, including leader SDO did not improve the results for leadership behaviors to team performance ($B = .11, ns$ for abusive supervision and $B = -.04, ns$ for empowering leadership). Table 8 further provides the results from leadership behaviors to team performance when controlling for leader PDO, but the results for abusive supervision ($B = .10, ns$) and empowering leadership ($B = -.02, ns$) were not significant.

In order to examine Hypotheses 10-13, I conducted moderated mediation analyses with PROCESS (see Table 9). I ran the models with empowering leadership and abusive supervision in separate analyses. Given the separate analyses for leader SDO and leader PDO, two different moderated mediation models were required for both empowering leadership and abusive supervision, which resulted in four moderated mediation analyses. The results indicated that the direct effect of leader SDO on team performance was not significant ($b = -.28, SE = .17, 95\% CI$
Furthermore, the confidence intervals for the indirect effects of leader SDO on team performance through abusive supervision contained zero for all levels of leader self-efficacy. Thus, Hypothesis 10 was not supported. Additionally, the indirect effects of leader SDO on team performance through empowering leadership did not support Hypothesis 11 as all confidence intervals at various levels of the leader self-efficacy moderator contained zero.

Next, I tested Hypotheses 12 and 13 (see Table 9). There was no direct effect of leader PDO on team performance, and the conditional indirect effects of leader PDO on team performance at various levels of team PDO through abusive supervision were not significant. Hence, Hypothesis 11 was not supported. The confidence intervals for the conditional indirect effects between leader PDO on team performance at all levels of the moderator also contained zero. Therefore, Hypothesis 13 was not supported. Finally, I ran two omnibus moderated mediation models with both abusive supervision and empowering leadership contained in the same analysis (see Table 10). However, all resulting confidence intervals contained zero, providing further evidence that Hypotheses 10-13 were not supported.

Post-Hoc Analyses

Due to the non-significant findings for the vast majority of my hypothesized results, I tested alternative models utilizing the model variables.

Given my predictions that both leader SDO and leader PDO should impact leadership behaviors, I examined the interactive effects of leader SDO and PDO on empowering and abusive supervision. I found a significant interactive effect on empowering leadership ($B = -.37$, $p < .05$; see Table 11). Figure 3 plots the interaction at one standard deviation below and above the mean, and the simple slopes analysis revealed a positive relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership when leader PDO was low ($b = .44$, $t = 1.67$, $p < .10$), but no
relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership when leader PDO was high ($b = - .22, t = -1.30, ns$). In order to examine the point at which there was a negative relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership, I conducted a Johnson-Neyman technique analysis. When leader PDO reached values of 4.39, there was a negative relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership at the $p < .10$ level. However, utilizing PROCESS, I did not find significant moderated mediation results to team performance.

My next post-hoc analysis concerned a three-way interaction where leader self-efficacy qualified the significant two-way interaction of leader PDO and team PDO. Due to my propositions that leader self-efficacy can exacerbate the negative effects of leader’s hierarchical perceptions, I tested whether the matching of leader PDO with team PDO on empowering leadership would be affected by leader self-efficacy. The results are provided in Table 12. I found that the hypothesized interactive effect of leader PDO and team PDO on empowering leadership was moderated by leader-self efficacy ($B = .39, p < .05$). Figure 4 plots the interaction. The graph reveals the relevance of high leader self-efficacy to the interaction of leader PDO and team PDO on empowering leadership. When a leader had high self-efficacy, as his or her PDO increased, teams with a high PDO rated their leader as more empowering ($b = .61, t = 2.17, p < .06$). However, there was a different relationship for teams with low PDO. When the leader had high self-efficacy, as his or her PDO increased, there was no relationship of leader PDO on empowering leadership ($b = - .36, t = -1.54, ns$). The difference between these slopes was significant ($t = 2.76, p < .01$). The interactive effects were not related to team performance through empowering leadership; thus, moderated mediation was not supported for this three-way interaction.
Given the relevance of leader gender to social dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), I explored the interactive effects of leader SDO with leader and subordinate team gender. Table 13 presents the results for abusive supervision. Leader SDO interacted with leader gender to predict abuse \( (B = -.28, p < .10) \), such that there was a crossover effect with differing relationships for male and female leaders. However, the results revealed no statistically significant impact of leader SDO and abusive supervision for male leaders \( (b = .25, t = -1.58, ns) \) or female leaders \( (b = -.25, t = -1.45, ns) \). Figure 5 plots the interaction. The gender makeup of the subordinate team further qualified the two-way relationship \( (B = -.49, p < .05) \). Table 13 provides the hierarchical regression results. Figure 6 graphs the results with one standard deviation above the mean being a largely female subordinate team (97% female) and one standard deviation below the mean being more representative of a mixed gender team (59% female). The strongest negative relationship between leader SDO and abusive supervision occurred when a female leader was paired with a largely female subordinate team \( (b = -1.27, t = -2.80, p < .01) \). This relationship differed significantly from the positive relationship between leader SDO and abusive supervision when largely female subordinate teams worked under a male leader \( (b = .63, t = 2.24, p < .05; \text{ slope difference: } t = -3.29, p < .01) \). The negative relationship between female-led teams with largely female subordinate teams also significantly differed from male-led, mixed-gender subordinate teams \( (t = -2.97, p < .01) \) and female-led, mixed-gender subordinate teams \( (t = -3.29, p < .01) \). However, neither the two-way nor three-way interaction with leader and subordinate team gender resulted in moderated mediation effects on team performance.

I then examined the interactive effects of leader SDO and gender on empowering leadership (see Table 14). Leader SDO interacted with leader gender to predict empowering leadership \( (B = .34, p < .05) \). Figure 7 plots the interaction. The results revealed a positive
relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership for female leaders ($b = .35, t = 2.23, p < .05$), and a negative relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership for male leaders ($b = -.39, t = -1.78, p < .10$). However, there was no significant three-way interaction among leader SDO, leader gender, and subordinate team gender on empowering leadership ($B = .30, ns$). After conducting PROCESS analyses for both of these interactions, there was also no evidence of moderated mediation effects on team performance.
CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine how leaders’ hierarchical orientations affected their leadership behaviors and ultimately team performance. I utilized a social dominance theory perspective to predict that leader SDO would be negatively related to empowering leadership and positively related to abusive supervision, with leader self-efficacy exacerbating the negative effects of leader SDO on leadership behaviors. I also examined leader PDO, and suggested that leader PDO would be negatively related to empowering leadership. I further proposed that the PDO of the leader’s team would interact with leader PDO to predict abusive supervision and empowering leadership. I then examined the indirect effects of the independent variables and moderators on team performance through leadership behaviors. In order to test my hypotheses, I collected data from 52 different teams across 12 physical therapy companies.

Summary of Findings

Hypothesized Findings

After conducting hierarchical regression and moderated mediation analyses, I found that all the hypotheses, with one exception, were not significant. Leader SDO was not related to empowering leadership or abusive supervision, and it did not interact with leader self-efficacy. Furthermore, there were no indirect effects of leader SDO and leader self-efficacy on team performance through the leadership behaviors. Leader PDO was also not negatively related to empowering leadership, and there was no interactive effect of leader PDO and team PDO on abusive supervision. There was a moderating effect of leader PDO and team PDO on empowering leadership such that there was negative effect of leader PDO on empowering leadership when team PDO was approximately two standard deviations below the mean. This effect was in the expected direction, where leaders were less likely to display empowering
leadership as their PDOs became higher when teams had low power distance. However, there were no significant indirect effects of leader PDO and team PDO on leadership behaviors to team performance.

Reflections on Non-Significant Findings

I detail several reasons below related to the nature of my sample as to why it could have resulted in non-significant findings. The physical therapy setting represents a particular context which may have played an important role in the results. In particular, I discuss both the external influences of context, including organizational structure, as well as the internal psychological mechanisms that may have resulted from context. I further propose that while the physical therapy context provides a situation in which leaders’ orientations may not express themselves in isolation, they may have an effect when combined with other variables, which I explore in the discussion of my post-hoc results.

Context is an important consideration when predicting employee behavior, and is relevant to leadership. Influences such as organizational cultures and team dynamics can have an impact on leadership processes and outcomes (Liden and Antonakis, 2009). Furthermore, research on traits has suggested that environment interacts with individuals’ characteristics in order to affect behavior (Tett & Brunett, 2003; Tett & Guteermann, 2000), including leadership (House, 1996). Indeed, context can affect leadership behaviors and subordinate teams’ evaluations of leadership (Antonakis, Avolio, & Sivasubramaniam, 2003). For example, researchers have found that organizational cultures such as those involving respect or accepting aggressive behaviors in the workplace can influence leadership behaviors (O’Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). When organizational cultures promote certain acceptable behaviors, this can impact the expression of leaders’ characteristics on their leadership behaviors. Thus, across different contexts, leaders’
SDOs and PDOs may affect their leadership behaviors in differing ways. Since the outpatient physical therapy setting is just one context in which leadership operates, this context may have had an impact on my results.

Meyer, Dalal, and Hermida (2011) identified situational facets that are applicable to how situations interact with individual characteristics to impact behaviors. Examining these facets in the context of the outpatient physical therapy setting may provide insights into the non-significant findings. One of these facets, constraints, may apply to managerial elements of the physical therapy organizations. Constraints involve limitations imposed on individuals that affect their ability make decisions and act without the influence of outside forces. Based on my discussions with the physical therapy companies, the executives indicated that there were often open lines of communication between subordinate employees and top-level management. In addition to reporting to their clinic directors, employees could also often directly approach top-level management. Therefore, the influence of top-management on subordinate employees could be considered a constraint that limited the leaders’ authority as top-level managers. In this case, top-level management constrains the leaders’ ability to have full authority and control over their subordinate teams, thus limiting their opportunities to engage in their preferred leadership behaviors. This may be a case of limited managerial discretion, where leaders have less autonomy to engage in leadership behaviors (Finkelstein & Hambrick, 1990).

Additionally, due to the nature of physical therapy organizational set-ups, clinic directors may have been limited in their ability to freely exhibit leadership behaviors with their subordinates. Research has found that the physical set-up of an office—for example, an open office space versus separate offices—can affect employee outcomes (Evans & Johnson, 2000; Oldham & Brass, 1987; Smith-Jackson & Klein, 2009). In my visitation of physical therapy
clinics and through discussions with top management at these companies, in most cases, all the employees and clinic directors worked in an open space with patients present. Clinic directors are often required to be on their “best behavior” in front of patients (Edwards et al., 2004), which may have affected how and when their personal characteristics were expressed in their interactions with employees.

Another facet, consequences, relates to implications that result from an individual’s actions. The clinic directors may perceive that certain consequences could occur due to their hierarchical orientations, and thus these orientations were less likely to directly affect their leadership behaviors. For example, if the leaders were abusive to their subordinate employees—particularly to highly-skilled employees such as physical therapists—those employees may have left for other opportunities in a healthy job market. The leaders may foresee negative consequences of expressing abusive behavior, such as the difficulty of rehiring replacements, and curb the expression of their abusive and empowering leadership behaviors.

Surprisingly, the relationships between empowering leadership and abusive supervision and team performance were also not significant. The outpatient physical therapy context and characteristics of subordinate teams may have played important roles in these non-significant findings. The subordinate team sample was highly educated and may have had a great deal of autonomy in their jobs, and these are aspects which can affect employees’ intrinsic motivation levels (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Their intrinsic motivation may also have been driven by the job’s high significance with helping patients (e.g., to what extent employees have a significant impact on others’ lives; Grant, 2008; Hackman & Oldman, 1976). Therefore, because of their intrinsic motivation, subordinate team performance may have been influenced by a variety of factors which motivated them internally. For potential external motivators, various influences beyond
leadership behaviors could have also played a role. As previously mentioned, employees in the outpatient physical therapy organizations often interacted with top-level management. Therefore, the executives of the organization may have directly affected the subordinate teams’ performance and reduced the effects of the clinic directors’ leadership. Furthermore, the subordinate employees’ performance may also have been influenced by their fellow team members (Cogliser & Schriesheim, 2000) rather than primarily by their clinic directors.

The setting in which clinic directors and subordinate clinic teams frequently interact with patients may also provide an additional explanation for the nonsignificant findings. Physical therapist organizations have service climates (Mayer, Erhart, & Schneider, 2009), which encompass employees’ beliefs that quality customer care is expected and supported by the organization (Schneider, White, & Paul, 1998). Thus, the behaviors of both clinic directors and team members may have been influenced by their perceptions of a shared service climate. The strength of the service climate may have important impacts on differences in empowering leadership, abusive supervision, and team performance, such that leader and leadership influences on these outcomes may be limited in a physical therapy setting.

While I argue that the physical therapy context could have inhibited the direct expression of leaders’ hierarchical orientations, there could be other variables which interact with leaders’ hierarchical orientations in order to impact leadership behaviors. Depending on a particular context, multiple factors influence how leaders behave and are perceived by other in the workplace (Lord, Brown, Harvey, & Hall, 2001). In other words, it may take more than one factor for hierarchical orientations to impact leadership. While I have suggested that the physical therapy setting may limit the direct expression of leaders’ hierarchical orientations on their own, there may be a combination of leader and team characteristics that interact in the setting in order
to influence leadership behaviors. I previously suggested that elements of the organization, including the constraints and consequences faced by leaders in outpatient physical therapy settings, may limit the expression of their hierarchical orientations. However, the extent to which these situations send cues to individuals on appropriate ways to behave depends on the individuals, and may not override likely behavior in all individuals (Cooper & Withey, 2009). Leader behaviors are not influenced by leadership traits and interpersonal attributes alone—rather, multiple leadership traits and demographic characteristics are relevant to leadership effectiveness (DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey, 2011). Therefore, in order to more fully explore my non-significant findings, I examined whether leadership behaviors may be impacted by a variety of leadership characteristics and demographic variables present in my hypothesized model.

Post-hoc Findings

The post-hoc findings revealed several insights into the importance of examining multiple factors when considering when hierarchical orientations impact leadership behaviors. First, leader PDO and leader SDO interacted to predict empowering leadership. There was a positive relationship between leader SDO on empowering leadership when leaders had a low PDO. This finding is counterintuitive, and suggests that leader SDO can positively impact empowering leadership when leaders have low PDO. However, the relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership was negative when leaders have high PDO (above approximately 1.5 standard deviations above the mean). The results suggest that the negative effects of hierarchical orientations on empowering leadership may reach a “tipping point” when both leader PDO and SDO is high. Thus, individually, the negative effects of these orientations may be stifled by other influences, but together, they provide a stronger driver of leadership behavior.
However, moderated mediation results concerning the indirect effects on team performance were not supported.

Next, I found that leader self-efficacy qualified the two-way interaction between leader PDO and team PDO. Specifically, there was a positive relationship between leader PDO and team PDO on empowering leadership when leader self-efficacy was high, though moderated mediation was not supported. The findings suggest that the supplementary nature of leader and team PDO was further strengthened when the leader had strong beliefs in his or her ability to lead. Power distance likely aligns well with leader self-efficacy, where a leader is expected to make the decisions. However, when a team had a low PDO, self-efficacy did not impact the negative relationship between leader PDO and empowering leadership. This suggests that a high-PDO leader who is confident in his or her abilities to lead may be even less empowering with a team that does not value power distance. Both the two-way interaction between leader PDO and team PDO as well as the three-way interaction with leader self-efficacy align with arguments that leadership behaviors are a function of leaders and teams. Leadership is not necessarily a linear process, whereby leaders’ characteristics directly impact their behaviors. Instead, contingency approaches to leadership suggests that other factors, including team characteristics, are important in influencing leaders’ behaviors (Cole et al., 2009; Cole et al., 2013; Fielder, 1978; Liden & Antonakis, 2009; Peters, Hartke, & Pohlmann, 1985). The three-way interaction revealed that one leader characteristic, leader self-efficacy, was only relevant in the presence of other leader and team variables.

Additionally, I explored the moderating effects of gender due to its relevance to my hypothesized model. Gender plays an important role in how subordinates perceive leadership styles (Kushell & Newton, 1986; Park, 2006), and SDT suggests that gender is highly relevant to
social dominance (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). I found that gender interacted with SDO to affect abusive supervision and empowering leadership such that there were differences between male and female leaders. However, the relationships for each were not statistically significant. As the three-way interaction results revealed, there was a negative effect of leader SDO on abusive supervision when female leaders were paired with a majority-female team. However, the other gender and subordinate gender matches did not reveal a negative relationship between leader SDO and abuse, and moderated mediation was not supported. This result further supports a view of leadership in which both leader and subordinate characteristics should be considered when examining leadership behaviors.

A two-way interaction also occurred between leader SDO and leader gender on empowering leadership, where male clinic directors were more likely to be seen as less empowering as their SDOs increased. However, there were no interactive indirect effects on team performance through empowering leadership. This results concerning gender provide credence to the hypothesis that leader SDO is negatively related to empowering leadership, but the hypothesis is only supported when examining male leaders. Conversely, female leaders were seen as somewhat more empowering as their SDOs increased. Thus, SDO may be a gender-relevant construct to leadership, particularly in a physical therapy setting. Researchers have found that male and female physical therapists experience some differing work experiences (Öhman, Stenlund, & Dahlgren, 2001; Rozier, Raymond, Goldstein, & Hamilton, 1998). Therefore, the results may provide insight into SDO and leader gender differences in the physical therapy industry.
Theoretical Implications

I next discuss the theoretical implications of the research. First, I examine the importance of considering both leader and team characteristics together when predicting leadership behaviors. However, this approach does not discount the role of leaders’ characteristics on leader behaviors. Second, I therefore also review how the research can inform the actor-focused perspective of leadership, in which a combination of leadership variables impact empowering leadership and abusive supervision. Third, I review implications for gender and leadership. Finally, I highlight the integration of social dominance with power distance perspectives.

Joint Leader and Team Influences

By integrating social dominance and leadership theories, we gain a better understanding of when leader characteristics are related to dominance impact leadership behaviors. The results indicated that leader PDO impacted empowering leadership and abusive supervision, but only in the presence of subordinate factors. Specifically, I found that a leader’s PDO resulted in lower empowering leadership when the team had a low PDO. SDT proposes that power balances between those in dominant positions and those in subordinate positions are cooperative—subordinates play an important role in how they are treated and impacted by those in superior positions (Sidnaius et al., 2004). In support of this proposition, researchers have found that better outcomes occur when leader PDO and team PDO supplement one another (Cole et al., 2013). However, when subordinates and those in powerful positions have differing views of the status quo, and these perspectives clash, negative treatment against subordinates is more likely to occur (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Leadership theory similarly proposes that leadership behavior is the result of a relational interplay between leaders and subordinates, where leader and subordinate characteristics interact (Klein & House, 1995; Howell & Shamir, 2005). Concerning values,
leadership styles are related to the extent to which employees perceive that their values are congruent with their leaders (Hoffman, Bynum, Piccolo, & Sutton, 2011). Therefore, the interactive effect of leader PDO and team PDO on empowering leadership supports the propositions suggested by SDT, and provides evidence of how SDT can inform leadership theory.

While theoretical and empirical work on leadership has extensively examined the impact of leader characteristics on leader behaviors, more research is needed to examine how subordinate team values influence leader behaviors (Liden & Antonakis, 2009). SDT offers new insights into how subordinate teams can play a role in their own treatment. The “cooperative game” between those in hierarchically superior positions and those in subordinate groups is an important mechanism through which leadership behaviors should occur (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). Thus, it is important to examine to what extent subordinate team members are accepting of the hierarchical status quo between leaders and subordinates, and to what extent their value congruence affects leadership behaviors. Expanding beyond hierarchical perceptions, the cooperative theoretical perspective could also apply to various leader and team dynamics. For example, the extent to which leaders and subordinate teams value close social relationships, and cooperate with shared assumptions about appropriate personal relationships, could play a role with leadership behaviors and team outcomes (Pettinger, 2005).

**Actor-Focused Perspective**

However, while the cooperative and congruent dynamics between leaders and subordinates are important in understanding leadership behaviors, one should not discount the important role of leader characteristics. Leader characteristics are highly relevant to how leaders behave (Judge, Bono, Ilies, & Gerhardt, 2002; Judge, Rodell, Klinger, Simon, & Crawford,
Consistent with prior research, my findings suggest that utilizing an actor-focused perspective of leadership is also relevant when applying social dominance to leadership behaviors. Specifically, the actor-based perspective of aggression suggests that aggression can be understood by examining how particular characteristics of individuals influence their aggressive behavior (O’Leary et al., 2011), and it focuses on the leader rather than subordinates. The actor perspective is particularly relevant to situations in which managers violate expected justice norms (e.g., by exhibiting in abusive supervision), and this perspective provides insight into what types of leaders are more likely to engage in destructive behaviors at work (Scott, Colquitt, & Paddock, 2009). My post-hoc findings support an actor-based perspective where leader characteristics impact abusive supervision and empowering leadership. Rather than considering an actor-focused model with single leader characteristics, my results suggest that a combination of leadership factors will interact to predict abusive supervision and empowering leadership. I found that SDO can influence abusive supervision in differing ways based on leaders’ gender, which suggests that an actor-focused perspective of abusive supervision should consider both individual characteristics and demographic variables when examining leaders’ influence on their behaviors.

While the actor-focused perspective has typically been applied to research on aggression, it is also relevant to empowering leadership. Research on antecedents of empowering leadership is nascent, but researchers should consider how leader characteristics motivate empowering leadership behaviors (Hakimi et al., 2010). Due to the high negative correlation between abusive supervision and empowering leadership in my sample, the results suggest that empowering leadership contrasts with abusive supervision. Thus, scholars should not only consider the actor-focused perspective in relation to leadership behaviors which violate justice expectations, but
also consider the full range of the perspective and apply it to cases where leader behaviors exceed justice expectations. Since empowering leadership involves showing concern about subordinates and giving them a voice to express their opinions (Arnold et al., 2000), it is a leadership behavior which provides high levels of fairness to employees. On support of an actor-focused perspective, leader SDO and leader gender interacted to predict empowering leadership.

I also found support for a third leader factor which can impact empowering leadership. Leader self-efficacy qualified the leader PDO and team PDO interaction, and the results suggest that leaders’ confidence in their ability to lead can be beneficial to the relationship between leader PDO and empowering leadership when teams agree with the leader on acceptable power distance. However, leader self-efficacy may harm this relationship when they disagree. The findings are consistent with suggestions by researchers that depending on other variables, leaders who are overconfident in their abilities can end up failing to engage in important leadership tasks (Shipman & Mumford, 2011). The finding also expands our understanding of an actor-focused perspective on empowering leadership, and a full theoretical omnibus model examining the impact of various leader characteristics on leader behaviors would need to examine a wide range of trait-like characteristics (e.g. SDO, other system-justifying ideologies such as right-wing authoritarianism), demographic variables (e.g. gender, race, age), and task-specific characteristics (e.g. leader self-efficacy, tolerance for ambiguity).

Gender and Leadership

The results concerning gender also have implications for research on gender in leadership. Prior research on women and leadership has suggested that women are seen as possessing “feminine” traits, such as being nurturing and supportive (Oakley, 2000). However, work on gender roles and leadership suggests that stereotypes of women in leadership can be
disrupted when individuals are given cues that conflict from stereotypical gender beliefs (Dasgupta & Asgari, 2004). Theoretical perspectives (Eagly & Karau, 1991; Rosette & Toste, 2010) on gender and leadership offer conflicting propositions for female leaders’ outcomes, particularly when they have “masculine” characteristics. One the one hand, female leaders who engage in “masculine” behaviors or roles may be perceived as less effective leaders due to stereotypical gender inconsistency; on the other hand, employees may have more positive perceptions of female leaders who are both “feminine” and “masculine.” Role congruity theory suggests that women are negatively perceived by others in a leadership position due to leader roles conflicting with stereotypical female roles in society (Eagly & Karau, 1991). Based on this perspective, female leaders who have high SDOs should be perceived negatively due to role congruity, since social dominance is highly related to perceptions of male dominance (Pratto et al., 2006). However, my results support a different view. A contrasting theoretical perspective to role congruity suggests that there may be a leadership advantage for female leaders who take on “masculine” characteristics due to their ability to take on both argentic roles and communal behaviors, which are both valued in contemporary organization (Rosette & Tost, 2010).

Consistent with this perspective, female leaders may be more highly rated on their leadership abilities by being neither “feminine” nor “masculine.” Kark, Waismel-Manor, and Shamir (2012) found that more positive perceptions on leadership occurred when both males and females displayed “androgynous” leadership characteristics. Under these circumstances, leaders were rated as more transformational by subordinates than when they were either stereotypically masculine or feminine. Thus, gender in leadership is more nuanced than strict masculine vs. feminine differences, and both female and male leaders can be seen as “androgynous” in their leader characteristics. Rosette and Tost (2010) also reported the female leaders were rated more
highly when their success was seen as being due to internal attributions. This finding suggests that females with high SDOs may receive higher leadership ratings when they believe that they have a “right” to be hierarchically superior to their subordinates, and SDO can be conceptualized as an internal driver which impacts their leadership behaviors. Their female gender leads to them being seen as communal, but it is only with the presence of a “masculine” trait—i.e. SDO—that they are also seen as agentic. However, for male leaders who are already seen as agentic, high levels of SDOs may negatively impact their leadership behaviors. My post-hoc results indicated that male leaders were rated by their subordinate teams as less empowering and more abusive when they had high SDOs, suggesting that when males had high social dominance, this further enhanced their “masculine” leadership, which involves being aggressive, assertive, and dominating (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). However, when low on SDO, male leaders can be seen as both agentic and communal.

While from a SDT perspective, this finding appears somewhat counterintuitive, it aligns prior work on gender and social dominance. Men are more likely to have higher SDOs than women (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), and given that dominant behavior is typically viewed by people as being a “masculine” characteristic (Koenig et al., 2011), female leaders who are socially dominant may be able to compensate for negative leadership perceptions than can result from their gender. These findings, therefore, expand upon our current understanding of both SDT and gender in leadership and suggest that social dominance may not always have negative effects. While prior research has consistently demonstrated the negative outcomes of social dominance, including its detrimental effects on leadership behaviors (Nicol, 2009) and discrimination in hiring (Umphress et al., 2008), the theory has not considered situations in which social dominance may be beneficial. This current limited perspective with SDT may be
due to how a vast majority of social institutions involve hierarchical designs where men are hierarchically superior to women. Thus, work on SDT can benefit from insights on what occurs women (traditionally in a subordinate role across various social hierarchies) are placed in hierarchically superior roles to subordinate groups. Future research could also explore the benefits of social dominance when members of other traditionally repressed subordinate groups (i.e., racial minorities) take on hierarchically-superior roles.

The three-way interaction among leader SDO, leader gender, and team gender composition on abusive supervision further adds a nuanced perspective on social dominance, gender, and leadership. The results revealed that a strong negative relationship between leaders’ SDOs and their abusive supervision occurred when they had a largely female team. This finding suggests that predominately female teams are less likely to feel abused by the high-SDO female leaders, and more abused when the female leaders have low SDOs. It may be the case that largely female teams are receptive to androgynous female leaders, whom they see as role models respect for being dominant. Research on gender preferences has found that females (compared to males) prefer to hire other females at a greater rate (Gorman, 2005). Furthermore, females in teams are more likely to engage in informal leadership roles, which have a number of positive team outcomes (Neubert, 1999). Thus, largely female teams may perceive their female leader as less abusive as she becomes more socially dominant because she is fulfilling an important leadership role.

However, the interaction results indicate that largely female teams respond more negatively to male leaders as their social dominance increases. In those cases, they may be influenced by societal mechanisms in place due to social dominance. In society, men are typically in a hierarchically superior position to women (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), and
predominately female teams may feel further subjugated to a subordinate role when their male leader is dominant. Furthermore, male leaders may treat predominately female teams more forcefully when they have a tendency to believe that socially inferior groups, including women, should be treated with dominance. Interestingly, more gender-equal teams with both a mix of male and female subordinates—whether paired with a male or female leader—did not rate their leader as being more abusive depending on the leader’s SDO. Mixed-gender teams may be less likely to see social dominance as resulting in abusive behavior. Additionally, since social dominance involves the role of men as being hierarchically superior at the societal level, leaders with high SDOs may view a mixed-gender team that consists of both genders as more deserving of a certain level of respectful treatment than largely female teams. Low-SDO leaders are also more likely to treat all individuals with respect (Guidmond et al., 2003). Therefore, mixed-gender teams may be “buffered” from the effects of leaders’ SDOs on leadership behaviors.

Integration of Social Dominance and Power Distance

My study further makes a contribution to the literature by aligning social dominance with power distance. While some theoretical work on understanding both of these variables in a larger system-justifying ideology framework exists (e.g., Jost & Hunyady, 2005), despite their similarities as two hierarchical perceptions, theory has not yet fully considered these characteristics in conjunction. I integrate power distance and social dominance in the following ways. First, from both a theoretical and empirical perspective, I adapt the original SDO measure to an organizational-specific context. Theoretically, social dominance has typically been conceptualized and described as a generalized orientation that can have effects in a variety of social hierarchies, including government (Sidnaius & Pratto, 2000), the police force (Haley & Sidanius, 2005), and organizations (O’Brien & Dietz, 2011). However, while Sidanius and Pratto
(2000) discussed how social dominance can apply to group perceptions in specific contexts, research has not yet addressed how SDO operates between groups within a specific social hierarchy. For example, an individual may have a generalized SDO that does not directly correspond to how they view group differences in a specific context. This suggests that in a specific context, one’s SDO could possibly differ from their generalized orientation. Addressing SDO at the organizational level also provides an empirical contribution by measuring how leaders view differences between themselves and subordinates. It aligns the measure with PDO, which is similarly a generalized orientation in societies that has frequently been applied to leaders in organizations.

I further integrate PDO and SDO in my post-hoc analyses by examining their interactive effects on abusive supervision and empowering leadership. While there was no significant interaction effect on abusive supervision, leader SDO and leader PDO interacted to predict empowering leadership. The relationship between leader SDO and empowering leadership was weakened when a leader had a high PDO, suggesting that when a leader possesses both of these hierarchical traits, their leadership style is negatively impacted. However, when a leader has a low PDO, they are seen as more empowering as their social dominance increases. This was an unexpected finding. It may be the case that high-SDO leaders with low PDOs engage in behaviors which employees perceive as empowering. Unlike PDO, which involves power distance relationships between leaders and subordinates, SDO does not take into account whether the leader believes in removing decision-making and agency from a subordinate. Thus, a leader who is high on SDO may treat their subordinate team with forceful, dominant behaviors, but still allow employees to exhibit voice behavior. A high-SDO, low-PDO leader who treats his or her subordinate team with force may still be seen by the team as “caring” for their well-being.
Furthermore, psychological research on individuals who are in relationships where one partner is dominant can feel emotional attachment to that individual, and conflicting cues can exacerbate the subordinate partner’s need to feel controlled by the other person (Dutton & Painter, 1993). Therefore, when a leader sends conflicting cues with a low PDO and a high SDO, teams may feel more empowered as levels of social dominance increase. However, future research would be needed to explore the mechanisms at play.

**Practical Implications**

The findings also have practical implications for organizations. The interactive effect of leader PDO on team PDO on empowering leadership suggests that organizations should be cognizant of matching leaders to teams that share similar values. When leaders and teams agree on the appropriate ways for leaders to behave, empowering leadership improves. The post-hoc analysis concerning the interactive effects of leader SDO and PDO also suggest that hiring managers should be thoughtful of leaders’ hierarchical perceptions, and ensure that leaders do not possess both high PDO and SDO beliefs. Furthermore, while leader self-efficacy generally has positive results on employee outcomes (Hannah et al., 2008), it can be a negative characteristic when leaders’ PDO increases for low-PDO teams. Thus, when congruence does not exist for leaders and their employees when a team has a low PDO, a leader who is confident in his or her abilities will be less empowering. Organizations may benefit from not hiring overly-confident leaders when there is low congruence between leader and team values.

The results concerning gender and leadership also provide important practical implications. While female leaders who display stereotypically masculine traits can experience prejudice (Eagly & Karau, 2002), my results suggest that women who have high SDOs exhibit more effectual leadership behaviors than women low in SDOs. This provides further support to
the argument that women should not be passed over for leadership positions due to characteristics that align with “masculine” behaviors. Conversely, male leaders benefit from being low on social dominance. The results provide further evidence to support the benefits of hiring of individuals that are seen as androgynous leaders (Kark et al., 2012). However, I am not suggesting that female leaders should adopt negative traits. Instead, organizations should not overlook female leaders who may display more stereotypically “masculine” inclinations, including social dominance. Organizations can further apply the results in hiring decisions by not considering gender specifically, but by looking to hire leaders who have the potential to engage in both agentic and communal leadership, whether they are male or female (Rosette & Toste, 2010).

**Limitations**

The study had a number of limitations. First, the sample was collected from a specific industry involving outpatient physical therapy. As previously discussed, the outpatient physical therapy setting is a unique context that may have played an important role in the results. Therefore, the results—including the post-hoc analyses—may have limited generalizability. However, in support of the generalizability of the results, teams in the physical therapy sample align with the makeup of other teams that have been studied with similar study variables (e.g. for PDO, see Cole et al., 2013), where a clearly defined leader manages a team of individuals with shared goals. This suggests that the results may be generalizable in similar settings, particularly in healthcare. Relationships among leaders and teams in healthcare have frequently been tested in hospital settings (e.g. de Jong, Jeroen, Curseu, & Leenders, 2014; Nembhard, & Edmonson, 2006), and findings from this study could contribute to our understanding of teams and leaders in
the healthcare industry, where service climates and patient care are highly important (Meyer et al., 2009).

Another limitation, and perhaps one related to the lack of significant findings with team performance, concerns the performance measure. In my sample, the leaders rated their teams’ performance. While using leaders’ performance ratings is frequently utilized in teams research (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), researchers suggest that objective performance measures are also important in capturing the effects of leader behaviors on team performance (Kaiser et al., 2008). Recently, research on leaders and teams has used both objective and subjective performance measures (e.g. Grant et al., 2011). Therefore, future research could test my proposed relationships by examining how abusive supervision and empowering leadership relate to objective team performance, such as clinic-level outcomes (e.g. patient visits, patient cancellations, and clinic revenue).

The cross-sectional nature of the design also limits my ability to draw causal conclusions. Due to the measures being collected from the subordinate teams and clinic directors at the same time, I cannot assume that the interactive effects of SDO and PDO with other variables directly led to the leadership behaviors. While SDO and PDO are trait-like variables (Dorfman & Howell, 1988; Sidanius & Pratto, 2000), unlike personality traits, they may be influenced by the environment (Sidanius et al., 2004). Thus, it is possible that a leader may have been abusive or empowering with their subordinates, and this interacted with other variables to shift their PDOs or SDOs. Similarly, while the relationships between abusive supervision and empowering leadership to team performance were not supported, these hypotheses would be better measured with a time-lagged design. Collecting performance data weeks or months after measuring the
other variables would provide greater insight into how hierarchical orientations and leadership behaviors affect team performance.

Another limitation of the study was that I examined subordinate teams as all one group. These subordinate teams consisted of employees in a variety of job roles at the clinics, including front desk staff, physical therapists, physical therapy aides, and athletic trainers. Within the subordinate teams, while they all work together towards the same goal of helping patients, there may be subtle subhierarchies that exist. Like research that has examined subcultures within organizations (Hofstede, 1998), SDT suggests that socially-based hierarchies do not require formally defined roles. Physical therapists and occupational therapists require a great deal of educational training, and possess at least a bachelor’s degree, if not a master’s degree. However, other roles in the organization, such as front desk staff and physical therapy aides, are entry-level positions with lower educational requirements. While I included all subordinate team members despite their job roles due to the clinic team’s alignment with the theoretical conceptualization of a team, I was not able to assess whether informal subhierarchies exist within subordinate teams and how that could have affected the proposed relationships.

Finally, the lack of diversity in the sample was also a significant limitation. The leaders were 96% White, while subordinates were 85% White. This racial homogeneity limits the generalizability of the findings to teams in organizations where racial minorities occupy leadership positions. The sample was also highly educated, with 98% of the leaders possessing a post-graduate degree and 74% of the subordinates having at least a college degree. The lack of variability in education and race suggests that leaders likely came from similar backgrounds, and this may have had an impact on the findings.
Future Research

The results provide a number of avenues for future research that I highlight below. First, while I found interactive effects, the present research does not address the specific mechanisms through which these relationships occur. Second, due to the likely relevance of context to my non-significant findings, I explore future directions related to context. I further discuss directions concerning “too much of a good thing,” leadership inconsistency, demographic variables, and other approaches to hierarchical orientations.

Mediators

Future could examine mediators between the interactive effects and outcomes. SDT suggests that relationship conflict between leaders and their subordinate teams should play an important role in affecting leaders’ empowering leadership and abusive supervision (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). While I did not find direct effects of these hierarchical perceptions on leadership behaviors, there may be mediators for the significant interactive effects. For example, the congruence between team PDO and leader PDO on empowering leadership may occur due to reduced relationship conflict between the leader and subordinate team. While not proposed by SDT, another potential mediating mechanism is self-esteem threat. Self-esteem threat occurs when a leader feels threatened by his or her subordinate(s) (Leary, Twenge, & Quinlivan, 2006), and this negatively affects his or her positive leadership behaviors (Yu & Duffy, 2014). It may be that as leaders’ PDOs increase, when faced with a low-PDO team, their self-esteem feels threatened and they are less likely to engage in empowering leadership.

Examining mediators of the post-hoc analyses would also be a promising direction for future research. While I suggested that the interactive effects of leader SDO could be due to leaders fulfilling both agentic and communal leadership roles, and gender and SDO
complementarity may result in subordinates viewing their leaders as “androgynous,” further research would be needed to examine whether this occurs. Studies could address this question by testing to what extent subordinate teams perceive their leaders as being masculine and/or feminine.

Furthermore, the questions raised by the three-way interaction among leader SDO, leader gender, and gender composition of the subordinate team also provide avenues for future research. While I proposed that predominately female teams are more susceptible to their male and female leaders’ SDOs in regards to abusive supervision, there were no impacts of leader SDO on mixed-gender teams. Studies could examine reasons for these differing effects, including whether mixed-gender teams are treated differently by leaders. The cross-over effect between leader gender and leader SDO on abusive supervision for largely female teams also suggests that these may be treated differently by high-SDO female leaders and by high-SDO male leaders. Various mechanisms could explain this effect, including gender identification with the leader. Other influences may also be at play, including perceptions of appropriate leadership styles for predominately female teams, and the influence of gender norms. An experimental method could address this line of questioning. Student leaders and their subordinate teams could be told that leader gender should impact specific tasks in various ways, and this method would allow researchers to control for other variables that may affect the gender interactions.

**Contextual Factors**

As previously discussed, the possible reasons for my non-significant findings could be due to various contextual influences within an organization. These different contexts could affect the expression of leaders’ hierarchical orientations in numerous ways. For example, top-management’s involvement with employees may send cues to leaders that repress their
hierarchical orientations. Future research could explore the impact of hierarchical orientations in settings in which leaders have full reign over their employees, with little communication between front-line employees and top-level management. There may also be a significant influence of top management on subordinate employees. Empirical research has found support for a trickle-down model, where top-level managers’ proclivities affect first-line managers’ leadership behaviors, such as abusive supervision (Mawritz et al., 2014a). This suggests that executives’ PDOs and SDOs may be relevant to front-line managers’ leadership behaviors. Studies could examine to what extent PDOs and SDOs influence leader behaviors and team outcomes throughout the organization.

Furthermore, organizational climates may impact the effects of leaders’ hierarchical orientations. I suggested that in a service climate, where the primary goal of the employees is to satisfy customers (Meyer et al., 2009), the expression of SDO and PDO by leaders may be stifled. However, other climates—such as ones which value aggression and success over all else (O’Reilly et al., 1991)—may encourage leaders to engage in leadership behaviors consistent with their SDOs and PDOs. Additionally, these variables may also act as moderators within an organization. For example, varying levels of leaders’ perceptions of service climate could impact the expression of their hierarchical orientations. When leaders view that service climate is weak, there may be direct relationships between their hierarchical orientations and leadership and team outcomes.

“Too Much of a Good Thing”

Next, the findings concerning leader self-efficacy suggest that this leadership characteristic can affect empowering leadership in different ways depending on leader and team PDO characteristics. While I proposed linear moderating relationships, the different effects of
leader self-efficacy suggest that it may be “too much of a good thing” when high-PDO leaders work with low-PDO teams. Propositions related to “too much of a good thing” suggest that curvilinear relationships can exist when individuals reach high levels of a particular trait (Grant & Schwartz, 2011). Thus, when a positive characteristic such as leader self-efficacy increases to high levels, it may have detrimental effects. Research on overconfidence in leadership suggests that leaders may be less effective and blind to various problems when they reach high levels of leader self-efficacy (Shipman & Mumford, 2011).

In order to examine other cases in which leader self-efficacy could be “too much of a good thing,” researchers could manipulate this type task-based self-efficacy (Yeo & Neal, 2006) in the lab. The non-significant finding on the interaction between leader SDO and leader self-efficacy may be due to the limited variability of leader self-efficacy in my sample. The leaders rated themselves high on leader self-efficacy, with little variance. Thus, the sample consisted of very few leaders who had low self-efficacy. A lab study could increase the variance in leader self-efficacy and more accurately model curvilinear relationships that occur with “too much of a good thing.”

**Leadership Consistency**

One possible reason for the study’s non-significant findings, and a potential avenue for future research, involves consistency in leadership behaviors. It may be the case that leaders are not always consistent in how they treat their subordinates (Duffy et al., 2002). For example, the abusive supervision measure asks subordinates the frequency that their leaders exhibit abusive behaviors (e.g. “never,” “often,” “always”). However, research has not yet examined how day-to-day differences in abusive supervision and empowering leadership are affected by leader characteristics and ultimately impact employee outcomes.
It may be that leaders’ hierarchical perceptions influence the variation of leadership behaviors; for example, a leader with a high SDO may consistently display low levels of abusive supervision with one incident per day. However, a low-SDO leader may not be abusive for weeks, and then one day, commit an egregious abusive behavior. In both cases, the subordinate employee could rate these leaders as “sometimes” being abusive. In my physical therapy sample, this situation may have applied and partially explained why the SDO to leadership behaviors relationships were not significant. Future research with experience sampling methodology, such as a diary study (Fisher & To, 2012), would provide insight into the nuances of how hierarchical perceptions affect empowering leadership and abusive supervision.

Demographic Influences

While the sample lacked racial and educational diversity, it did contain gender diversity. However, the clinic directors were predominately male (62%), while subordinate team members had a minority of male employees (26%). This gender breakdown raises questions concerning how social dominance occurs in organizations with similar leader and subordinate team disparity. This may have also implications for how employees expect their leaders to behave.

The findings concerning the role of gender in leadership, specifically for the positive effects of social dominance for female leaders, also has implications for future research on social dominance in the workplace. Current SDT is limited in that it does not address what occurs when individuals who traditionally have been in subordinate hierarchical roles, such as women, are positioned higher in the hierarchy. Future research could examine how this plays out in other common arbitrary-set hierarchies in societies, including racial and ethnic disparities (Sidanius & Pratto, 2000). For example, social dominance may similarly result in more positive leadership behaviors for leaders in racial minorities. While my sample only consisted of two non-White
leaders, thus preventing me from conducting this analysis, a more racially diverse sample could explore these avenues of inquiry.

*Other Hierarchical Orientation Effects*

While I considered leaders’ SDOs and PDOs in this study, a number of other system-justifying ideologies (Jost & Hunyady, 2005) may impact leadership behavior. For example, right-wing authoritarianism has been found, like SDO, to impact prejudice (Whitley & Bernard, 1999). However, future research could impact its effect on leadership behaviors, such as autocratic styles of leadership. Other system-justifying ideologies may interact with leaders’ hierarchical orientations, such that a combination of a number of these characteristics influences leader behavior. Furthermore, SDO and PDO may have effects on other leader behaviors in the workplace, beyond abusive supervision and empowering leadership. For example, as prior research suggests, SDO can be related to discrimination in hiring (Umphress et al., 2008). SDO and PDO may also relate to leader-member exchange (LMX) differentiation, where leaders have a variety of relationship types with their individual subordinate team members (Boies & Howell, 2006). Leaders who see individual employees as less threatening than others may be more likely to support and encourage these employees, whereas subordinates who are seen as threatening to leaders’ dominance or power are less likely to be a part of a high-LMX relationship. Thus, leaders with high SDOs and PDOs may have higher LMX differentiation within their subordinate team, and future research could explore this possibility.

**Conclusion**

Social dominance theory has a great deal of implications for leadership in organizations (O’Brien & Dietz, 2011). I proposed that leaders’ hierarchical perceptions, including their SDOs and PDOs, would affect their leadership behaviors and ultimately team performance. While the
majority of hypotheses were not supported, a number of interactive findings suggest that leaders’ hierarchical orientations interact with various team and leader characteristics, including leader gender, team PDOs, and leader self-efficacy to predict abusive and empowering leadership behaviors. The results suggest that social dominance theory is a nuanced theoretical perspective to examine leadership behaviors, and integrating social dominance with leadership theory provides important insights into how leaders interact with and affect their subordinate teams.
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TABLE 1

Sample Descriptives

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<td>69%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>67%</td>
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### TABLE 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Intercorrelations among Study Variables

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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>--</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.02</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.15</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.29*</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>(.78)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>.09</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<td>-.13</td>
<td>(.81)</td>
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<td>-.27*</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.29*</td>
<td>-.18</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>(.95)</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-.15</td>
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<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.78***</td>
<td>(.95)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Team performance</td>
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<td>.14</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.22</td>
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<td>.32*</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>(.93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
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<td>37.39</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>34.27</td>
<td>1.78</td>
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<td>1.32</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>6.06</td>
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<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: N = 52; SDO = social dominance orientation; PDO = power distance orientation; reliabilities for are in parentheses on the diagonal; reliabilities for subordinates calculated at the individual level (N = 260); supervisor and employee gender coded as 1 = male, 2 = female; *** p < .001; ** p < .01; * p < .05, * p < .10.
### TABLE 3

**Model Fit Results for Confirmatory Factor Analyses**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>$\Delta\chi^2(\Delta$df)</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>SRMR</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Employee Variables</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Hypothesized three-factor model</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two-factor model (Empowering leadership and abusive supervision combined)</td>
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<td>944</td>
<td>1307.40 (2)***</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-factor model (Team PDO added)</td>
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<td>945</td>
<td>1799.27 (3)***</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.11</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Leader Variables</strong></td>
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<td>Hypothesized four-factor model</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
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<td>Three-factor model (SDO and PDO combined)</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>27.14 (3)***</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two-factor model (Leader self-efficacy added)</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>76.50 (5)***</td>
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<td>.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-factor model (Team performance added)</td>
<td>196.22***</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>138.19 (6)***</td>
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<td>.23</td>
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</tbody>
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*N = 52 for leaders, N = 260 for subordinate employees; SDO = social dominance orientation; PDO = power distance orientation; The lower-factor models were compared to the hypothesized three-factor model for employees and four-factor model for leaders; CFI = comparative fit index. SRMR = standardized root mean square residual; *** $p < .001.$
TABLE 4

Hierarchical Regression Results for the Two-Way Interaction between Leader SDO and Leader Self-Efficacy on Abusive Supervision and Empowering Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Abusive Supervision</th>
<th>Empowering Leadership</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leader age</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
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<td>.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
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<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and team tenure</td>
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<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team size</td>
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<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO</td>
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<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader self-efficacy (LSE)</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO x LSE</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| $\Delta R^2$                   | .19    | .00    | .00    | .03    | .09    | .01    | .00    | .03    |
| $R^2$                          | .19    | .19    | .29    | .19    | .09    | .10    | .10    | .12    |
| $\Delta F$                     | 1.73   | .06    | .02    | 1.59   | .76    | .24    | .00    | 1.19   |
| $F$                            | 1.73   | 1.79   | 1.81   | 3.40   | .76    | 1.00   | 1.00   | 2.19   |
| $df$                           | 6, 45  | 1, 44  | 1, 43  | 1, 42  | 6, 45  | 1, 44  | 1, 43  | 1, 42  |

Notes: $N = 52$; Standardized betas are reported; SDO = social dominance orientation; LSE = leader self-efficacy.
## TABLE 5
Hierarchical Regression Results for the Two-Way Interaction between Leader PDO and Team PDO on Abusive Supervision and Empowering Leadership

<table>
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<th>Empowering Leadership</th>
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</thead>
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<td>-.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leader age</td>
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<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
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<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
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<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and team tenure</td>
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<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team size</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader PDO</td>
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<td>.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team PDO</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader PDO x Team PDO</td>
<td>-.16</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Δ$R^2$                          | .19     | .00     | .02     | .09     | .00     | .01     | .06     |
| $R^2$                           | .19     | .19     | .21     | .09     | .09     | .09     | .16     |
| Δ$F$                            | 1.73    | .11     | 1.20    | .76     | .00     | .27     | 2.91*   |
| $F$                             | 1.73    | 1.84    | 3.04    | .76     | .76     | 1.03    | 3.94    |
| $df$                            | 6, 45   | 1, 43   | 1, 42   | 6, 45   | 1, 44   | 1, 43   | 1, 42   |

Notes: $N = 52$; Standardized betas are reported; PDO = power distance orientation; *$p < .10$. 
### TABLE 6

Hierarchical Regression Results for Empowering Leadership and Abusive Supervision on Team Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(AS)</td>
<td>(EL)</td>
<td>(Omnibus)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader gender</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader age</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
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<td>-.26</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>-.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and team tenure</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team size</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive supervision</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.22</td>
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</table>

\[ \Delta R^2 \]

\[ R^2 \]

\[ \Delta F \]

\[ F \]

\[ df \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>( \Delta R^2 )</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( R^2 )</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.11</td>
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<tr>
<td>( \Delta F )</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( F )</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>1.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>( df )</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Notes: N = 52; Standardized betas are reported; AS = abusive supervision; EL = empowering leadership; Step 2 is reported from three separate regressions with the leadership behaviors regressed separately and then together.*
### TABLE 7

Hierarchical Regressions Results for SDO, Abusive Supervision, and Empowering Leadership on Team Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3 (AS)</th>
<th>Step 3 (EL)</th>
<th>Step 3 (Omnibus)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader gender</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader age</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>-.27$^+$</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td>-.28$^+$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and team tenure</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team size</td>
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<td>.11</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leader SDO</td>
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<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abusive supervision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowering leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\Delta R^2$               | .09    | .05    | .01         | .00         | .01              
$R^2$                     | .09    | .15    | .16         | .15         | .16              
$\Delta F$                | .78    | 2.68   | .47         | .07         | .35              
$F$                       | .78    | 3.46   | 3.93        | 3.53        | 3.81             
$df$                      | 6, 45  | 1, 44  | 1, 43       | 1, 43       | 1, 42            

Notes: $N = 52$; Standardized betas are reported; SDO = social dominance orientation; AS = abusive supervision; EL = empowering leadership; Step 3 is reported from three separate regressions with the leadership behaviors regressed separately and then together; $^*p < .10$. 
TABLE 8
Hierarchical Regressions Results for PDO, Abusive Supervision, and Empowering Leadership on Team Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3 (AS)</th>
<th>Step 3 (EL)</th>
<th>Step 3 (Omnibus)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader gender</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader age</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>-.26</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>-.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and team tenure</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team size</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader PDO</td>
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<td>-.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive supervision</td>
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<td></td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowering leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| $\Delta R^2$                | .09    | .01    | .01         | .00         | .02              |
| $R^2$                      | .09    | .09    | .10         | .10         | .11              |
| $\Delta F$                 | .78    | .05    | .38         | .01         | .38              |
| $F$                        | .78    | .83    | 1.21        | .84         | 1.21             |
| $df$                       | 6, 45  | 1, 44  | 1, 43       | 1, 43       | 1, 42            |

Notes: $N = 52$; Standardized betas are reported; SDO = social dominance orientation; AS = abusive supervision; EL = empowering leadership; Step 3 is reported from three separate regressions with the leadership behaviors regressed separately and then together.
### TABLE 9
Bootstrap Analyses of the Conditional Direct and Indirect Effects on Team Performance: Separate PROCESS Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Indirect Effects: AS</th>
<th>Indirect Effects: EL</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$b$</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>LLCI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low LSE (5.16)</td>
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<td>.17</td>
<td>-.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium LSE (5.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High LSE (6.40)</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader PDO</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Team PDO (2.64)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Team PDO (3.31)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** $N = 52$; Unstandardized betas are reported; SDO = social dominance orientation; LSE = leader self-efficacy; PDO = power distance orientation. A 95% confidence interval is reported.
TABLE 10

Bootstrap Analyses of the Conditional Direct and Indirect Effects on Team Performance: Omnibus PROCESS Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Direct effects</th>
<th>Indirect Effects: AS</th>
<th>Indirect Effects: EL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( b ) ( SE ) ( LLCI ) ( ULCI )</td>
<td>( b ) ( SE ) ( LLCI ) ( ULCI )</td>
<td>( b ) ( SE ) ( LLCI ) ( ULCI )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO</td>
<td>-.28 .17 -.62 .07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low LSE (5.16)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.06 .16 -.10 .65</td>
<td>-.04 .19 -.71 .19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium LSE (5.78)</td>
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<td>.00 .11 -.23 .16</td>
<td>-.01 .10 -.25 .18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High LSE (6.40)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.06 .22 -.75 .12</td>
<td>.02 .19 -.24 .61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader PDO</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Team PDO (2.64)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.01 .07 -.07 .27</td>
<td>-.04 .11 -.37 .11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Team PDO (3.31)</td>
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<td>-.02 .05 -.26 .04</td>
<td>.00 .06 -.15 .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Team PDO</td>
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<td>-.05 .11 -.40 .07</td>
<td>.03 .11 -.11 .39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: \( N = 52 \); Unstandardized betas are reported; SDO = social dominance orientation; LSE = leader self-efficacy; PDO = power distance orientation. A 95% confidence interval is reported.
### TABLE 11

**Post-Hoc Hierarchical Regression Results for the Two-Way Interaction between Leader SDO and Leader PDO on Empowering Leadership**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
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<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Step 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader gender</td>
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<td>.16</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader age</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and team tenure</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team size</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader PDO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO x Leader PDO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.37*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ΔR²                            | .09    | .01    | .00    | .10    |
| R²                             | .09    | .10    | .10    | .20    |
| ΔF                             | .76    | .24    | .11    | 5.47*  |
| F                              | .76    | 1.00   | 1.11   | 6.58   |
| df                             | 6, 45  | 1, 44  | 1, 43  | 1, 42  |

*Notes: N = 52; Standardized betas are reported; SDO = social dominance orientation; PDO = power distance orientation; *p < .05.*
TABLE 12
Post-Hoc Hierarchical Regression Results for the Three-Way Interaction among Leader PDO, Team PDO, and Leader Self-Efficacy on Empowering Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Step 4</th>
<th>Step 5</th>
<th>Step 6</th>
<th>Step 7</th>
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</thead>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and team tenure</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team size</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader PDO</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team PDO</td>
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<td>-.04</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td>Leader PDO x Team PDO</td>
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<td>Leader PDO x Leader self-efficacy</td>
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<td>.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team PDO x Leader self-efficacy</td>
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<td>-.27</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader PDO x Team PDO x Leader self-efficacy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Notes: N = 52; Standardized betas are reported; PDO = power distance orientation; * p < .05, + p < .10. |
TABLE 13

Post-Hoc Hierarchical Regression Results for the Three-Way Interaction among Leader SDO, Leader Gender, and Employee Gender on Abusive Supervision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Step 4</th>
<th>Step 5</th>
<th>Step 6</th>
<th>Step 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader age</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader and team tenure</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team size</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.16</td>
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<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.19</td>
</tr>
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<td>.03</td>
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<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.13</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader gender</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.32*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO x Leader gender</td>
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<td>-.28*</td>
<td>-.28+</td>
<td>-.57**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO x Employee gender</td>
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<td>-.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader gender x Employee gender</td>
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<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader SDO x Leader gender x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-.29*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee gender</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| ΔR²                                      | .15    | .00    | .01    | .03    | .07    | .00    | .11    |
| R²                                       | .15    | .15    | .16    | .19    | .26    | .26    | .37    |
| ΔF                                       | 2.10*  | .02    | .53    | 1.43   | 4.19*  | .01    | 7.03*  |
| F                                        | 2.10   | 2.12   | 2.65   | 4.08   | 8.27   | 13.05  | 20.08  |
| df                                       | 4, 47  | 1, 46  | 1, 45  | 1, 44  | 1, 43  | 2, 41  | 1, 40  |

Notes: N = 52; SDO = social dominance orientation; ** p < .01, * p < .05, + p < .10.
### TABLE 14

Post-Hoc Hierarchical Regression Results for the Three-Way Interaction among Leader SDO, Leader Gender, and Employee Gender on Empowering Leadership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Step 4</th>
<th>Step 5</th>
<th>Step 6</th>
<th>Step 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leader age</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee age</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.20</td>
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<td>.35*</td>
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| $\Delta R^2$                       | .06    | .00    | .03    | .01    | .10    | .04    | .04    |
| $R^2$                             | .06    | .06    | .09    | .10    | .20    | .24    | .28    |
| $\Delta F$                        | .76    | .15    | 1.42   | .24    | 5.62*  | .99    | 2.21   |
| $F$                               | .76    | .91    | 2.33   | 2.57   | 8.19   | 9.18   | 11.39  |
| $df$                              | 4, 47  | 1, 46  | 1, 45  | 1, 44  | 1, 43  | 2, 41  | 1, 40  |

Notes: $N = 52$; SDO = social dominance orientation; ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, *$p < .10$. 
FIGURE 2

Two-Way Interaction of Leader PDO and Team PDO on Empowering Leadership

Note: PDO = power distance orientation.
FIGURE 3
Two-Way Interaction of Leader PDO and Leader SDO on Empowering Leadership

Note: PDO = power distance orientation.
Three-Way Interaction of Leader PDO, Team PDO, and Leader Self-Efficacy on Empowering Leadership

Note: PDO = power distance orientation.
FIGURE 5

Two-Way Interaction of Leader SDO and Leader Gender on Abusive Supervision

Note: SDO = social distance orientation.
FIGURE 6

Three-Way Interaction of Leader SDO, Leader Gender, and Employee Gender on Abusive Supervision

Note: SDO = social distance orientation.
FIGURE 7

Two-Way Interaction of Leader SDO and Leader Gender on Empowering Leadership

Note: SDO = social distance orientation.
APPENDIX: MEASURES

*Power distance orientation* (Earley & Erez, 1997)

1. In most situations, leaders should make decisions without consulting their subordinates.
2. In work-related matters, leaders have a right to expect obedience from their subordinates.
3. Subordinates who often question authority sometimes keep their leaders from being effective.
4. Once a leader makes a decision, subordinates working for the leader should not question it.
5. Subordinates should not express disagreements with their leaders.
6. Leaders should be able to make the right decisions without consulting with others.
7. Leaders who let their subordinates participate in decisions lose power.
8. Rules should not be broken—not even when the subordinate thinks it’s in the best interest of the group.

*Social dominance orientation* (adapted from Sidanius, Pratto, Sinclair, & van Laar, 1996)

1. Leaders are just more worthy than subordinates.
2. In getting what leaders want, it is sometimes necessary to use force against subordinates.
3. Leaders should dominate subordinates.
4. To get ahead in an organization, it is sometimes necessary for leaders to step on subordinates.
5. If subordinates stayed in their place, we would have fewer problems.
6. It’s probably a good thing that leaders are at the top and subordinates at the bottom.
7. Subordinates should stay in their place.
8. Sometimes subordinates must be kept in their place.
9. It would be good if leaders and subordinates could be equal. (R)
10. Equality among leaders and subordinates should be our ideal. (R)
11. Leaders and subordinates should be given an equal chance in an organization. (R)
12. We should do what we can to equalize conditions for leaders and subordinates. (R)
13. Increased equality among leaders and subordinates is beneficial to an organization. (R)
14. We would have fewer problems if we treated leaders and subordinates more equally. (R)
15. We should strive to make leader and subordinate pay more equal. (R)
16. Leaders should not dominate in an organization. (R)

Abusive Supervision (based on Priesmuth et al., 2014, adapted from Tepper, 2000; changed “supervisor” to “leader”)

1. My leader ridicules members of my work group.*
2. My leader tells me members of my work group that our thoughts or feelings are stupid.*
3. My leader gives members of my work group the silent treatment.
4. My leader puts down members of my work group in front of others.*
5. My leader invades the privacy of members of my work group.
6. My leader reminds members of my work group of past mistakes and failures.
7. My leader doesn’t give members of my work group credit for jobs requiring a lot of effort.

8. My leader blames members of my work group to save himself/herself embarrassment.

9. My leader breaks promises he/she makes to members of my workgroup.

10. My leader expresses anger at members of my work group when he/she is mad for another reason.

11. My leader makes negative comments about members of work group to others.*

12. My leader is rude to members of my work group.

13. My leader does not allow members of my work group to interact with each other.

14. My leader tells members of my work group that they are incompetent.*

15. My leader lies to members of my work group.

*Active abuse items used by Priesmuth et al. (2014), adapted from Mitchell & Ambrose’s (2007) shortened active abuse scale; I have applied the adapted wording to all 15 original items of Tepper’s (2000) scale.

**Empowering Leadership Questionnaire (ELQ) (Arnold et al., 2000)**

**Participative Decision-Making**

1. Encourages work group members to express ideas/suggestions

2. Listens to my work group's ideas and suggestions

3. Uses my work group's suggestions to make decisions that affect us

4. Gives all work group members a chance to voice their opinions

5. Considers my work group's ideas when he/she disagrees with them

6. Makes decisions that are based only on his/her own ideas

**Informing**
7. Explains company decisions
8. Explains company goals
9. Explains how my work group fits into the company
10. Explains the purpose of the company's policies to my work group
11. Explains rules and expectations to my work group
12. Explains his/her decisions and actions to my work group

Showing Concern/Interacting with the Team
13. Cares about work group members' personal problems
14. Shows concern for work group members' well-being
15. Treats work group members as equals
16. Takes the time to discuss work group members' concerns patiently
17. Shows concern for work group members' success
18. Stays in touch with my work group
19. Gets along with my work group members
20. Gives work group members honest and fair answers
21. Knows what work is being done in my work group
22. Finds time to chat with work group members

Leader self-efficacy (Chemers et al., 2000)
1. I know a lot more than most what it takes to be a good leader.
2. I know what it takes to make a team accomplish its task.
3. In general, I’m not very good at leading a team of my peers. (R)
4. I am confident of my ability to influence a team I lead.
5. I have no idea what it takes to keep a team running smoothly. (R)
6. I know how to encourage good team performance.

7. I am able to allow most team members to contribute to the task when leading a team.

8. Overall, I doubt that I could lead a team successfully. (R)

Subordinate group performance (Zellemer-Bruhn & Gibson, 2006)

1. This team achieves its goals.

2. This team accomplishes its objectives.

3. This team meets the requirements set for it.

4. This team fulfills its mission.

5. This team serves the purpose it is intended to serve.
VITA

Katrina Alexis Graham was born in Williamsburg, Virginia. She attended the University of Virginia and received her B.A. in History. She received her M.S. in Human Resource Development from Villanova University and her Ph.D. in Organizational Behavior from Drexel University. Her research interests include leadership, ethics, and teams.