

REVIEW ARTICLE

Humble leadership: A review and synthesis of leader expressed humility

Thomas K. Kelemen¹  | Samuel H. Matthews²  | Michael J. Matthews³  | Sarah E. Henry³ 

¹College of Business Administration, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS, USA

²College of Business, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls, IA, USA

³College of Business Administration, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK, USA

Correspondence

Thomas K. Kelemen, College of Business Administration, Kansas State University, 1301 Lovers Ln., Manhattan, KS 66506, USA.
Email: kelemen@ksu.edu

Summary

Recent academic research has proliferated around the construct of humble leadership. Humble leadership involves having an accurate view of oneself, recognizing the contributions of followers, and modeling teachability. Given the growing interest in this construct, we provide a review of the humble leadership literature. First, we clarify how humble leadership has been defined and measured in the current literature and discuss how it compares to moral-based leadership approaches. Second, we review the extant literature by examining humble leadership's theoretical and nomological network, highlighting the antecedents, outcomes, moderators, and mediators. Third, we provide an overview of key methodological strengths and weaknesses. Finally, we conclude by drawing upon our review of the literature to present directions for future research that will advance the understanding of humble leadership. In sum, our review highlights the key elements and findings of where humble leadership has been and indicates ways to drive this literature forward.

KEYWORDS

humble, humble leadership, humility, leader humility, leadership

1 | INTRODUCTION

Recent news is full of stories about leaders who are arrogant, overconfident, and narcissistic (e.g., Kaplan, 2021; Mangan, 2018; McGee, 2017). They often ignore feedback from others and show a lack of empathy (Maccoby, 2004). These leaders have been at the forefront of acquisition mistakes, cover-ups, and accounting scandals. Because of these adverse effects, the idea of humble leadership has been gaining interest and popularity among both academics (e.g., Ou et al., 2014; Owens & Hekman, 2012) and practitioners (e.g., Cable, 2018; Collins, 2001a, 2001b; Taylor, 2018). Humble leadership¹ involves viewing oneself accurately, providing an appreciation of others' strengths and contributions and modeling teachability (Owens et al., 2013; Owens & Hekman, 2012). Although scholars (and philosophers) have discussed the idea of humility for many years (Greenberg, 2005; Tangney, 2000), there has recently been a rapid increase in the number of humble leadership articles published.

Because the humble leadership literature has proliferated in recent years, it is essential to review what is currently known about humble leadership and highlight steps that researchers can take to increase our knowledge of this important construct. We seek to help increase knowledge about this rapidly growing leadership behavior through four primary contributions. First, we outline the origins of humility in organizations, focusing on how humble leadership has been defined and measured in the extant literature. We also note how humble leadership compares to other moral-oriented approaches to leadership. Second, we provide a review of the existing literature on humble leadership by reviewing adopted theories, antecedents, outcomes, mediators, and moderators of humble leadership. Third, drawing on the articles in our review, we offer an assessment of the methodological approaches used to study humble leadership, noting strengths and weaknesses. Finally, based on our review and assessment of the humble leadership literature, we outline recommendations for future inquiry.

In sum, our review focuses on four questions:

1. What is humble leadership, and how is it understood and defined within the leadership literature?
2. What do we know about humble leadership based on prior research?
3. What are the methodological strengths and weaknesses of the current humble leadership literature?
4. What are the next steps for future humble leadership research?

1.1 | Review process

To provide a detailed synthesis of the current humble leadership literature, we first used Web of Science to search the contemporary literature. We included the following keywords: “humble leader*,” “leader* humility,” “leader expressed humility,” and “CEO humility.” Our search examined the abstracts, titles, and keywords of articles. One member of the author team then reviewed the articles and excluded articles that were not empirical, unrelated to the topic, or not in English. We ended up with 115 articles for our review.

2 | HUMILITY AND HUMBLE LEADERSHIP

2.1 | Humility

The term humility derives from the Latin word *humilitas*, which can be translated to mean “grounded” or “from the earth.” The dialog and examination of humility have a long history as it is deeply rooted in many religious and philosophical ideologies. For example, over 1500 years ago, Aristotle reasoned about humility and considered it a weak virtue (Greenberg, 2005). Centuries later, Kant contrasted this perspective and recognized humility as an important virtue that allows individuals to have a proper perspective of themselves (Greenberg, 2005). In line with Kant's perspective, many modern scholars have noted the virtue of humility and consider that it has value and positive aspects and is not simply the absence of negative traits such as pride, arrogance, or narcissism (Argandona, 2015; Davis et al., 2010; Tangney, 2005). Scholarly research highlights that humility includes accurate self-appraisal (Davis et al., 2010; Jeung & Yoon, 2016; Morris et al., 2005; Peterson & Seligman, 2004) and a willingness to admit mistakes (Tangney, 2000). Further, individuals who exhibit humility are often receptive to new ideas and feedback (Exline & Geyer, 2004; Jeung & Yoon, 2016; Tangney, 2005), value the different ways people and things contribute to our world (Argandona, 2015), and have a sense of transcendence (Morris et al., 2005; Tangney, 2000).

In the last several decades, organizational scholars specifically have increased their study and interest in humility and its effects on organizational outcomes (for a review, see Nielsen & Marrone, 2018). Prior research has found that humility positively relates to helpfulness (LaBouff et al., 2012), generosity (Exline & Hill, 2012), and

forgiveness (Exline et al., 2008; Powers et al., 2007). It is also associated with better social relationships (Davis et al., 2013; Peters et al., 2011), can increase positive emotions (Exline, 2012), and a wide array of other positive outcomes (Nielsen & Marrone, 2018). In general, prior research general finds that humility results in beneficial outcomes.

2.2 | Humble leadership

2.2.1 | Qualitatively defining humble leadership

One subset of the organizational humility literature focuses specifically on leaders. In the last 15 years, empirical work on humble leadership research has proliferated in large part to influential, grounded theory studies. Several studies have adopted inductive methods, drawing on humility research to specifically define the core elements of humility in relation to leaders. The first of these was done by Owens and Hekman (2012), who used grounded theory to unpack how the concept of humility might be applied to leadership. Through their research, three dimensions of humble leadership emerged: (1) willingness to see oneself accurately, (2) appreciation of others' strengths and contributions, and (3) teachability. Next, Ou et al. (2014) used an inductive approach alongside the self-experience framework (Baumeister, 1998) to define leader humility better and understand its role among CEOs. Using this framework, they proposed six characteristics of humble chief executive officers (CEOs): (1) a self-view of accepting that something is greater than the self, (2) self-awareness, (3) openness to feedback, (4) appreciation of others, (5) low self-focus, and (6) self-transcendent pursuit. Finally, Oc et al. (2015) identified nine dimensions of humble leadership through qualitative interviews: (1) having an accurate view of self, (2) recognizing follower strengths and achievements, (3) modeling teachability and being correctable, (4) leading by example, (5) showing modesty, (6) working together for the collective good, (7) empathy and approachability, (8) showing mutual respect and fairness, and (9) mentoring and coaching. Though these three articles identified some differences in the dimensions of humble leadership, core similarities remain across the studies. Most importantly, all three noted the key dimensions of an accurate self-view/self-awareness, teachability/openness to feedback, and appreciation for others. This triangulation of qualitative studies suggests that these three elements form the core of humble leadership.

2.2.2 | Empirically measuring humble leadership

Regarding empirically operationalizing the construct of humble leadership, two main articles, namely, Owens et al. (2013) and Ou et al. (2014), developed valid, reliable, and broadly used scales of humble leadership. The most common humble leadership scale measure is Owens et al., 2013, used by over three-fourths of the articles that relied on a scale measure of humble leadership. This nine-item scale

includes the three core dimensions of humble leadership (willingness to view oneself accurately, a displayed appreciation of others' strengths and contributions, and teachability).

Building upon this scale, Ou et al. (2014) used the nine items from Owens et al.'s (2013) scale and added 12 questions (for a total of 23 items). In their 12 additional items, they added three facets: (1) low self-focus, (2) self-transcendent pursuit, and (3) transcendent self-concept. This scale was the second most used scale in our review. Like Owens et al.'s (2013) scale, this scale has hitherto only been used to measure humble leadership as a single-order construct.² Although some other studies in our review used different scales (e.g., Ashford et al., 2018; Chen et al., 2018; Rego & Simpson, 2018), they were not frequently used. Thus, the Owens et al. (2013) scale and the Ou et al. (2014) scale have become the predominant scales in humble leadership research. Both scales were adequately developed and followed recommended scale development procedures (Hinkin, 1998), and they both measure humble leadership's key dimensions. In addition, the Owens et al. (2013) scale has demonstrated reliability across many different languages (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, and English) and countries (e.g., the United States, China, Singapore, South Korea, Pakistan, India, and Vietnam).

One potential limitation of these measurements is that both are other-rated scales. However, the alternative option, self-rated scales, can pose a different problem because non-humble leaders may not accurately assess their own humility (Owens et al., 2013). Indeed, one of the dimensions of humble leadership is having an accurate self-appraisal (Ou et al., 2014; Owens et al., 2013), so leaders low in accurate self-appraisal might not accurately self-rate themselves on such a measure. As such, future research might attempt to measure humble leadership using an implicit association test (IAT; see Rowatt et al., 2006 for an example of a humility IAT). However, based on the work of Oc et al. (2015), these IAT humble leadership scales may have some deficiencies and may not fully capture all aspects of humble leadership. Scale development efforts that examine the effects of including items that capture these other elements of humble leadership may also be beneficial. Neither the Owens et al. (2013) nor the Ou et al. (2014) scale is without fault; however, the general uniformity of the implemented scales in the humble leadership literature is a considerable advantage, especially when compared to sister disciplines that have seen excessive scale generation and usage (e.g., servant leadership; Eva et al., 2019).

2.3 | Comparison of humble leadership to moral-oriented leadership behaviors

Another concern with the humble leadership construct is its discriminant validity from other related leadership constructs such as authentic leadership, servant leadership, and transformational leadership. However, Owens et al. (2011) reported that humble leadership is empirically distinct from transformational, charismatic, authentic, and servant leadership (Owens, 2009). We propose that humble leadership be added to the framework of moral-oriented

leadership approaches (authentic, servant, ethical; Lemoine et al., 2019), given its theoretical overlap and similarities to these leadership views. Importantly, scholars have noted that although there is overlap among the different moral-oriented leadership styles, each is still unique from the others (Lemoine et al., 2019). Likewise, humble leadership does overlap with moral leadership approaches but still maintains a unique type of moral leadership. While prior research has documented the unique nature of humble leadership from some of these constructs (see Owens & Hekman, 2012; Rego et al., 2017), we summarize humble leadership's conceptual overlap and distinction with authentic, servant, and ethical leadership below.

2.3.1 | Authentic leadership

Authentic leadership is the moral leadership style most conceptually similar to humble leadership. Authentic leadership focuses on leaders having high levels of internal alignment between their beliefs and actions and then displaying transparency when interacting with others (Avolio et al., 2004; Lemoine et al., 2019). Both humble leadership and authentic leadership focus on a leader's self-awareness (Lemoine et al., 2019; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Owens & Hekman, 2012). Also, both concentrate on modeling their respective leadership behaviors to followers (Lemoine et al., 2019; Luthans & Avolio, 2003; Owens & Hekman, 2012). However, authenticity in and of itself may not suggest humility at all. In their qualitative work, Owens and Hekman (2012) specifically explored the relationship between authenticity and humility in leaders and found instances of “authentically arrogant” leaders. Indeed, from a theoretical perspective, being an authentic leader is about being true to oneself, and one may see themselves as superior to others and reflect shallow levels of humility. Along these lines, prior research suggests that authentic leadership is likely most effective in the presence of humility and that these types of leadership behaviors interact with one another (Diddams & Chang, 2012). Humble leadership also focuses on leaders accurately assessing their strengths and the strengths of followers (Owens et al., 2013), where authentic leadership does not. When engaging with followers, humble leaders seek to recognize both their own and their followers' capabilities and limitations. Finally, humble leadership often includes ideas of self-transcendence and the connection of oneself to others (Ou et al., 2014) which is not part of authentic leadership.

2.3.2 | Servant leadership

Servant leadership is another moral approach to leadership that shares some similarities with humble leadership, but key differences exist. Servant leaders conceive of themselves as servants first and leaders second. Indeed, the focus of servant leadership is “the development of followers as an end, in and of itself, not merely a means to reach the leader's or the organization's goals” (Ehrhart, 2004, p. 69). Humble

leadership involves an appreciation of others and recognition of the strengths and contributions of followers (Ou et al., 2014; Owens et al., 2013), which likely fosters follower development. However, this follower development is not the end target of humble leadership. In addition, Owens and Hekman (2012) note an important difference between humble leadership and servant leadership is that humble leadership models the process of becoming whereas servant leadership models serving others. Indeed, a core tenet of humble leadership is modeling teachability, which includes modeling how followers should perform their tasks and demonstrating the need to learn. In contrast, servant leadership focuses on modeling how to serve others. Another important distinction noted by Owens and Hekman (2012) is that humble leadership legitimizes uncertainty more than servant leadership does. Lastly, humble leadership also differs by including self-awareness and recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses (Rego et al., 2017).

2.3.3 | Ethical leadership

Finally, of all the moral leadership approaches, ethical leadership has the least amount of theoretical overlap with humble leadership. Although some ethical and humble leadership outcomes are similar, ethical leadership is externally focused on maintaining compliance with normative standards (Brown et al., 2005; Lemoine et al., 2019). Common subdimensions of ethical leadership include (1) character and integrity; (2) community/people-orientation; (3) motivating, encouraging, and empowering; and (4) ethical awareness (Resick et al., 2006). As mentioned above, common subdimensions of humble leadership are (1) accurate self-appraisal, (2) acknowledging follower strengths, and (3) modeling teachability (Ou et al., 2014; Owens et al., 2013). Thus, humble leadership partially overlaps with the "community/people-orientation" and the "motivating, encouraging, and empowering" dimensions of ethical leadership. For example, in certain circumstances, acknowledging followers' strengths could be seen as motivating; however, not all motivating behaviors include recognizing follower strengths (e.g., encouraging someone to improve on a weakness). Somewhat analogously, the subdimensions of "community/people-orientation" and "accurate self-appraisal" could result in similar effects of either increasing other-orientation (i.e., ethical leadership) or minimizing self-orientation (i.e., humble leadership); however, the underlying mechanisms are fundamentally distinct.

Moreover, the construct of humble leadership is not focused on integrity and ethical awareness. While humble leadership behaviors often lead to integrity and compliance with normative standards, this is usually conceptualized as a byproduct instead of the impetus of humble leadership. Indeed, research on humble leadership suggests that it can, at times, result in unethical behavior (B et al., 2021). Thus, while there is some overlap between humble leadership and ethical leadership, they are still quite distinct.

3 | HUMBLE LEADERSHIP THEORIES AND NOMOLOGICAL NET

3.1 | Theories utilized in humble leadership research

In reviewing the humble leadership research, we follow the structure of past reviews on leadership to facilitate comparison across domains (e.g., servant leadership; Eva et al., 2019). Figure 1 summarizes the study of humble leadership. Although humble leadership has been investigated in many contexts, we briefly review several predominant theories (see Table 1) within the humble leadership literature. These include social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), conservations of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1989), social learning theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986), and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). We note that upper echelons theory (Ashford et al., 2018; Ou et al., 2018; Ren et al., 2020) and paradox theory (Ou et al., 2018; Owens et al., 2015; Wang, et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2017) received attention in humble leadership literature; however, because they were less common, we do not elaborate on the use of those theories here.

The most common theory to explore humble leadership is social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). The central tenet of this theory is that the internalization of social information from other actors shapes behaviors and attitudes. In the context of humble leadership, Wang, Owens, et al. (2018) aptly note that "the social cues provided by the leader in displaying humility reflect salient and relevant information that helps followers interpret the meaning of their environments and shapes their social construction of the workplace" (p. 1021). Several scholars have social information processing theory as a vehicle to understand humble leadership (e.g., Naseer et al., 2020; Wang, Owens, et al., 2018; Zhu et al., 2019). For example, Chiu et al. (2016) use this theory to demonstrate that humble leadership affects team member engagement in shared leadership. Similarly, Ou et al. (2014) posit that a humble CEO's influence is a mechanism that influences followers' attitudes and behaviors, and they report that CEO humility positively affects empowerment leadership behaviors and, subsequently, top management team (TMT) integration. Indeed, social information processing theory has proved to be a helpful lens to explain followers' cognitive responses to humble leadership.

Scholars have also consistently drawn upon the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 1998) to investigate humble leadership. This framework has been frequently adopted in leadership (e.g., Xu et al., 2015) and organizational literature (e.g., Halbesleben et al., 2009) and seeks to describe the efforts to maintain current resources and pursue additional resources. Ali, Zhang, et al. (2020) opine that humility is a valuable personal resource to facilitate cooperation and coordination. By applying the underlying logic of conservation of resources theory, Ma et al. (2019) find that humble leaders act as energizers that increase followers' relational energy and consequently give rise to followers' constructive voice behavior.

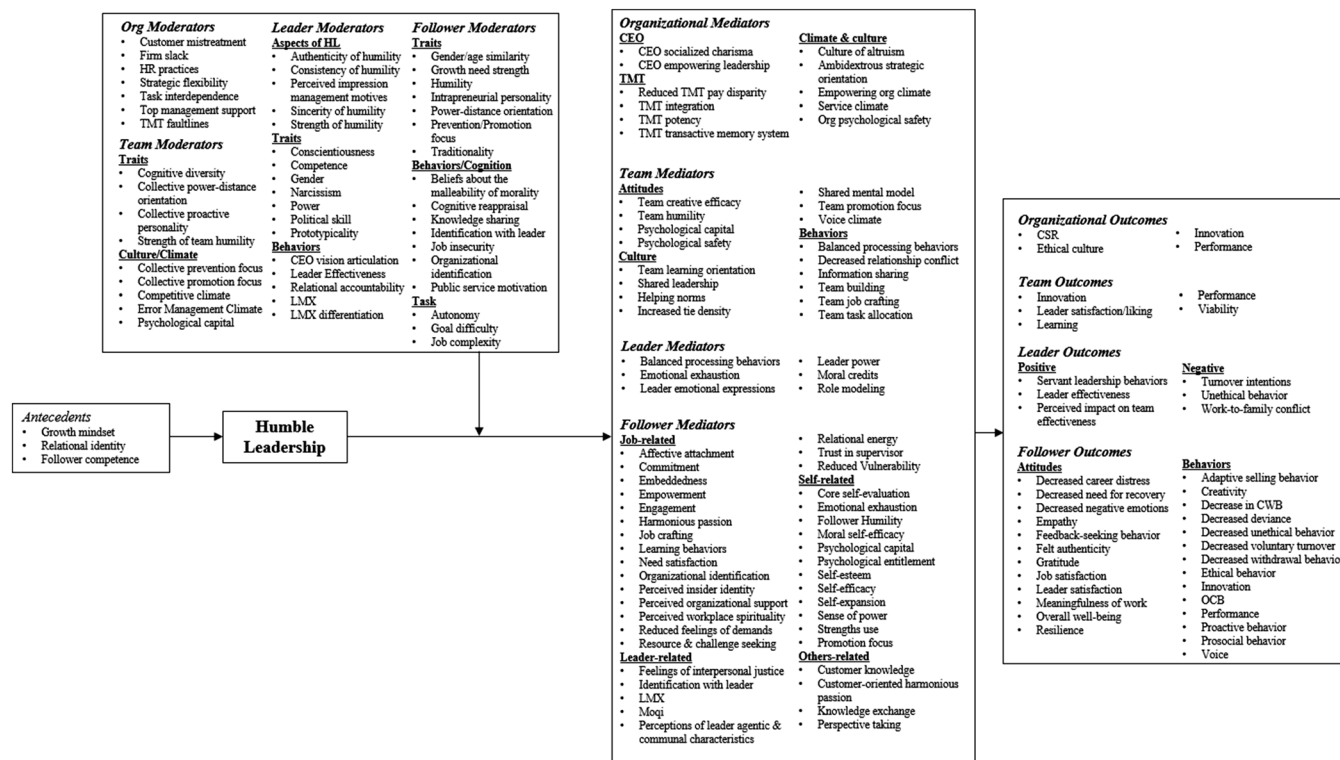


FIGURE 1 An overview of humble leadership

TABLE 1 Common theoretical perspectives

Common theoretical perspectives used to study humble leadership	
Theory	Number of studies
Social information processing theory	17
Conservation of resources theory	11
Social learning theory	9
Social exchange theory	6
Upper echelons theory	4
Paradox theory	4

Interestingly, Yang, Zhou, et al. (2019b) used this theory to examine the effect that humility has on the leader themselves and found that expressed humility served as a vehicle of leader emotional exhaustion (i.e., depleting a resource), leading to adverse downstream effects as turnover and work-family tension.

Another frequently employed theoretical lens is that of social learning theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Social learning theory is concerned with both the positive and negative consequences that shape learning in an “anticipatory manner” (Brown et al., 2005, p. 120; see Bandura, 1986). In the humble leadership literature, this perspective has been primarily used to explain the contagion effect of humble leadership. For example, Ashford et al. (2018) use this theory to argue that CEO feedback-seeking behavior—a core component of humble leadership—fuels other TMT members to exhibit more humility. Consistent with this rationale, similar studies have used social learning

theory to demonstrate that leader humility positively influences team humility and that skip-level leader humility has a trickle-down effect on team leaders (Peng et al., 2020; Ye et al., 2020).

Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) explores how “relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments” due to “certain ‘rules’ of exchange” (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005, p. 875). This paradigm is especially salient for humble leadership studies because it explains the role that the displays of humility play in reciprocity between leaders and followers. For example, Wang et al. (2019) empirically demonstrate that humble leaders elicit a sense of reciprocity from their subordinates, decreasing supervisors’ counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs). Rego et al. (2017) also use this framework to highlight how humble leaders can develop stronger social bonds with team members due to their humility. Scholars have also found that employees engage in voice behavior more frequently when paired with a humble leader (e.g., Li et al., 2018). Thus, social exchange theory has been crucial in explaining how humble leadership spurs positive behavioral responses from followers.

From these four theoretical frameworks (i.e., social information processing, conservation of resources, social learning, and social exchange), in addition to analogous perspectives in the literature (e.g., social identity theory, signaling theory, role theory, and theory of personality strength), we can see that a common approach to humble leadership is to explore how humble leaders present or signal a healthy environment for organizations, teams, and individual followers. As all leaders should, humble leaders emanate virtuous traits and behaviors, which causes a ripple effect for colleagues and followers.

3.2 | Antecedents of humble leadership

Few studies have sought to understand the antecedents or causes of humble leadership, but those that have considered its origins have highlighted both within-person factors that influence humble leadership and factors that increase observer attributions of humble leadership. Wang, Owens, et al. (2018) focused on the leaders themselves and found that two individual differences, growth mindset and relational identity (i.e., motivation and concern for connecting with others), positively relate to humble leadership. From an observer's perspective, prior research demonstrates that follower ratings of humble leadership increase when leaders ask questions (Cojuharenco & Karelaia, 2020). Relatedly, Deng et al. (2019) found that dynamic work environments augment leaders' feedback-seeking behavior, which increases humble leadership.

Interestingly, a leader's likelihood to engage in humble leadership appears to be intertwined in their relationships with others. For example, Yang, Zhang, et al. (2019) found evidence that leader attributions about followers may influence humility; specifically, when leaders perceive that a follower is more competent, they are more likely to engage in humble leadership. In contrast, Peng et al. (2020) took a top-down approach and found a trickledown effect of humble leadership, showing that a higher-level leader's humble leadership is positively related to lower-level leaders' humble leadership. Thus, humble leadership influences both a leader's relationships upward and downward in the organization.

3.3 | Outcomes of humble leadership

Prior research has primarily focused on the consequences of humble leadership. The effects of humble leadership have been studied at multiple levels of analysis (i.e., individual, team, and organizations). Although some studies have highlighted the adverse impacts of humble leadership (e.g., Qin et al., 2020; Yang, Zhang, et al., 2019; Zapata & Hayes-Jones, 2019), for the most part, the effects are positive. We review the outcomes by (a) behavioral outcomes, (b) attitudinal outcomes, and (c) performance outcomes. Like Eva et al. (2019), we summarize the effects of humble leadership based on these differential outcomes in Table 2–4.

3.3.1 | Behavioral outcomes

Humble leadership benefits individual followers in several ways. Since a critical component of humble leadership is listening to the ideas and feedback of others (Owens et al., 2013), it is not surprising that humble leadership has been found to increase follower voice behaviors (Bharanitharan et al., 2019; Jeung & Yoon, 2018; Li et al., 2018; Li, Li, et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2019; Ma et al., 2019; Shaw & Mao, 2021; Zhou et al., 2021). In fact, voice is one of the most studied follower outcomes of humble leadership (see Table 2). Relatedly, followers take their leader's example in feedback-seeking, and research has found

that humble leadership increases followers' own feedback-seeking behaviors (Qian, Liu, & Chen, 2020). Humble leadership has also been found to influence follower's personal initiative at work and increase follower's proactive behavior (Chen et al., 2018; Chen, Liang, et al., 2021), job crafting (Ding et al., 2020), taking charge (Zhang & Liu, 2019), and adaptive selling behavior (Luu, 2020a). Further, humble leadership negatively relates to inactive behaviors such as withdrawal (Qian, Zhang, & Jiang, 2020) and turnover (Ou et al., 2017; Owens et al., 2013).

Similar to moral-oriented leader behaviors, humble leadership has been found to positively relate to employee organizational citizenship behavior (OCB; Cho et al., 2021; Ding et al., 2020; Qian, Zhang, & Jiang, 2020; Tuan et al., 2021), prosocial behavior (Carnevale et al., 2019; Luu, 2021; Owens et al., 2019), and ethical behavior (Naseer et al., 2019). It has also been found in some research to reduce negative behaviors such as deviant behavior (Qin et al., 2020; Qiuyun et al., 2020), CWBs (Wang et al., 2019), knowledge hiding (Zhong et al., 2021), and unethical behavior (Owens et al., 2019). Previous research has also shown that leader–follower humility fit is important when examining behavioral outcomes (Qin et al., 2021; Shaw & Mao, 2021). And although the large majority of studies have shown that humble had beneficial effects on followers some research has shown that humble leadership can increase follower deviance by increasing followers' psychological entitlement (Qin et al., 2020) and sense of power (Qiuyun et al., 2020). Future research is needed to explain these somewhat contradictory findings.

In addition to impacting followers, humble leadership can similarly benefit teams and increase information flow (Swain, 2018). Finally, humble leadership also influences a leader's own subsequent behavior. While research in this area is small, evidence highlights a dual effect of humble leadership for subsequent leader behavior; it has been found to positively predict subsequent leader unethical (B et al., 2021) and servant behaviors (Krumrei-Mancuso & Rowatt, 2021).

3.3.2 | Attitudinal outcomes

Beyond behavioral outcomes, followers feel energized by humble leadership (Luu, 2020b) and are more engaged (Ou et al., 2014; Owens et al., 2013; Walters & Diab, 2016; Yuan et al., 2018), more committed (Ou et al., 2014), more resilient (Zhu et al., 2019), and more intent on helping (Cojuharenco & Karelaia, 2020) and sharing information with others (Nguyen et al., 2020). It also increases trust (Cojuharenco & Karelaia, 2020; Yang, Zhang, et al., 2019). Humble leadership also makes employees feel good, and it positively relates to follower affect, such as empathy (Naseer et al., 2020), felt authenticity (Oc et al., 2020), gratitude (Naseer et al., 2020), satisfaction (Krumrei-Mancuso & Rowatt, 2021; Owens et al., 2013), and emotions (D'Errico, 2019; D'Errico, 2020). Relatedly, humble leadership also enhances follower wellbeing (Luu, 2020b; Zhang & Song, 2020; Zhong et al., 2019), including enhanced follower self-efficacy (Mao et al., 2019), thriving (Ding & Chu, 2020), and meaningfulness

TABLE 2 Humble leadership and behavioral outcomes

Level	Mediator	Outcome	Article
Leader	-	Servant leadership	Krumrei-Mancuso and Rowatt (2021)
Leader	Moral credits	Unethical behavior	B et al. (2021)
Follower	Adaptive self-efficacy	Adaptive selling behavior	Luu (2020a)
Follower	Customer knowledge	Adaptive selling behavior	Luu (2020a)
Follower	Customer-oriented harmonious passion	Adaptive selling behavior	Luu (2020a)
Follower	Interpersonal justice	CWB towards supervisor	Wang et al. (2019)
Follower	Trust in supervisor	CWB towards supervisor	Wang, Zhang, et al. (2020)
Follower	LMX	Deviance	Qin et al. (2020)
Follower	Psychological entitlement	Deviance	Qin et al. (2020)
Follower	Sense of power	Deviance	Qiuyun et al. (2020)
Follower	Workplace spirituality	Ethical behavior	Naseer et al. (2020)
Follower	Psychological safety	Feedback-seeking behavior	Qian, Liu, and Chen (2020)
Follower	Identification with leader	Helping behavior	Carnevale et al. (2019)
Follower	Demand reducing	Knowledge collection/donation	Luu (2021)
Follower	Resource & Challenge seeking	Knowledge collection/donation	Luu (2021)
Follower	Moqi	Knowledge hiding	Zhong et al. (2021)
Follower	Empowerment	OCB	Cho et al. (2021)
Follower	Job crafting	OCB	Ding et al. (2020); Tuan et al. (2021)
Follower	Psychological capital	OCB	Qian, Zhang, and Jiang (2020)
Follower	Strengths use; job crafting	OCB	Ding et al. (2020)
Follower	Sense of power	Organizational deviance	Qiuyun et al. (2020)
Follower	Empowerment	Proactive behavior	Chen et al. (2018)
Follower	Need satisfaction	Proactive behavior	Chen, Liang, et al. (2021)
Follower	Moral self-efficacy	Prosocial behavior	Owens et al. (2019)
Follower	Organization-based self-esteem	Taking charge	Zhang and Liu (2019)
Follower	Moral self-efficacy	Unethical behavior	Owens et al. (2019)
Follower	Affective attachment	Voice	Shaw and Mao (2021)
Follower	Commitment/embeddedness	Voice	Zhou et al. (2021)
Follower	Empowerment	Voice	Jeung and Yoon (2018); Lin et al. (2019); Bharanitharan et al. (2019)
Follower	Identification	Voice	Li et al. (2018)
Follower	Perceived relational energy	Voice	Ma et al. (2019)
Follower	Self-efficacy for voice	Voice	Bharanitharan et al. (2019)
Follower	Voice-role conception	Voice	Li, Li, et al. (2019)
Follower	Employee job satisfaction	Voluntary turnover	Ou et al. (2017); Owens et al. (2013)
Follower	Psychological capital	Withdrawal behavior	Qian, Zhang, and Jiang (2020)
Team	Liking for leader	Information flow	Swain (2018)
Team	Psychological safety	Information flow	Swain (2018)

Note: Level denotes the level of analysis of the outcome variable.

(Luu, 2020b). For teams and organizations, humble leadership is also beneficial and has been found to facilitate constructive team and organizational elements such as psychological capital (Gonçalves & Brandão, 2017; Rego et al., 2017), team helping norms (Chiu et al., 2020), ethical culture (Cortes-Mejia et al., 2021), viability (Chiu et al., 2020), and perceptions of team effectiveness (Rego & Simpson, 2018).

In contrast to the overwhelmingly positive effects of humble leadership for followers, teams, and organizations, prior literature reveals mixed results regarding its impact on the leaders themselves. Yang, Zhou, et al. (2019b) found that humble leadership can be exhausting and positively relates to leader work–family conflict and turnover intentions. Further, Zapata and Hayes-Jones (2019) found that humble leadership made leaders seem less agentic but more communal.

TABLE 3 Humble leadership and attitudinal outcomes

Level	Mediator	Outcome	Article
Leader	Leader emotional expressions	Leader effectiveness	D'Errico (2019)
Leader	Perceptions of leader characteristics	Leader effectiveness	Zapata and Hayes-Jones (2019)
Leader	Emotional exhaustion	Turnover intentions	Yang, Zhou, et al. (2019b)
Leader	Emotional exhaustion	Work-to-family conflict	Yang, Zhou, et al. (2019b)
Follower	CEO empowering leadership; TMT integration; empowering organizational climate	Commitment	Ou et al. (2014)
Follower	Perceived organizational support	Creative process engagement	Yuan et al. (2018)
Follower	CEO empowering leadership; TMT integration; empowering organizational climate	Engagement	Ou et al. (2014)
Follower	Leader power	Engagement	Sousa and van Dierendonck (2017)
Follower	Org psychological safety	Engagement	Walters and Diab (2016)
Follower	Team learning orientation	Engagement	Owens et al. (2013)
Follower	Workplace spirituality	Empathy	Naseer et al. (2020)
Follower	Vulnerability	Felt authenticity	Oc et al. (2020)
Follower	Leader emotional expressions	Follower emotions	D'Errico (2019)
Follower	Workplace spirituality	Gratitude	Naseer et al. (2020)
Follower	-	Helping intentions	Cojuharenco and Karelaia (2020)
Follower	Trust; engagement; OCB	Knowledge sharing intentions	Nguyen et al. (2020)
Follower	-	Leader satisfaction	Krumrei-Mancuso and Rowatt (2021)
Follower	Job crafting	Meaningfulness of work	Luu (2020b)
Follower	Job crafting	Need for recovery	Luu (2020b)
Follower	Job crafting	Relational energy	Luu (2020b)
Follower	Perceived insider identity	Resilience	Zhu et al. (2019)
Follower	Work-related promotion focus	Resilience	Zhu et al. (2019)
Follower	-	Trust	Cojuharenco and Karelaia (2020); Yang, Zhang, et al. (2019)
Follower	Employee humility	Well-being	Zhong et al. (2020)
Follower	Climate	Work well-being	Zhang and Song (2020)
Follower	Psychological safety	Work well-being	Zhang and Song (2020)
Team	Team humility; team psychological capital	Team effectiveness	Rego et al. (2017)
Team	Balanced processing behaviors	Perceived impact on team effectiveness	Rego and Simpson (2018)
Team	Tie density; helping norms	Team viability	Chiu et al. (2020)
Organization	TMT decentralization	Ethical culture	Cortes-Mejia et al. (2021)

Note: Level denotes the level of analysis of the outcome variable.

Although being communal helped improve perceptions of leader effectiveness, being less agentic hurt perceptions of leader effectiveness.

3.3.3 | Performance outcomes

Humble leadership has been found to positively relate to performance across multiple levels of analysis, including followers (Ali, Li, et al., 2020; Ali, Li, Durrani, et al., 2021; Ali, Li, Haider, et al., 2021; Ali, Zhang, et al., 2020; Bahadur & Ali, 2021; Bin et al., 2020; Cho et al., 2021; Diao et al., 2019; Kirkland et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2021;

Mao et al., 2019; Wang, Owens, et al., 2018), teams (Chiu et al., 2016, 2020; Li et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2021; Owens & Hekman, 2016; Peng et al., 2020; Rego et al., 2019; Wang, Li, et al., 2020), and organizations (Ashford et al., 2018; Ou et al., 2018; Petrenko et al., 2019; Ren et al., 2020). Humble leadership also positively relates to innovation, learning, and creativity for followers (Jiang et al., 2019; Lei et al., 2021; Wang et al., 2017; Wang, Liu, et al., 2018a, 2018b; Yang, Zhou, et al., 2019a; Ye et al., 2020; Zhou & Wu, 2018), teams (Chen, Feng, et al., 2021; Chen, Liu, et al., 2021; Gonçalves & Brandão, 2017; Hu et al., 2018; Li, Zhang, et al., 2019; Liu, Mao, et al., 2017), and organizations (Mallén et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2017). It is also positively related to corporate social responsibility (e.g., CSR: Hong, 2020). And

TABLE 4 Humble leadership and performance outcomes

Level	Mediator	Outcome	Article
Follower	Engagement	Creativity	Li et al. (2021)
Follower	LMX	Creativity	Li et al. (2021)
Follower	Perspective taking	Creativity	Wang et al. (2017)
Follower	Psychological capital/safety	Creativity	Wang, Liu, et al. (2018a); Wang, Liu, et al. (2018b)
Follower	Role modeling	Creativity	Lei et al. (2021)
Follower	Team humility	Creativity	Ye et al. (2020)
Follower	Knowledge exchange and combination	Innovation	Jiang et al. (2019)
Follower	Core self-evaluation	Innovative behavior	Zhou and Wu (2018)
Follower	Work engagement	Innovative behavior	Yang, Zhou, et al. (2019a)
Follower	CEO empowering leadership; TMT integration; empowering organizational climate	Performance	Ou et al. (2014)
Follower	Emotional exhaustion	Performance	Wang, Owens, et al. (2018)
Follower	Empowerment	Performance	Ali, Zhang, et al. (2020); Cho et al. (2021)
Follower	Harmonious passion	Performance	Diao et al. (2019)
Follower	Psychological capital	Performance	Bin et al. (2020)
Follower	Relational energy	Performance	Wang, Owens, et al. (2018)
Follower	Self-esteem	Performance	Liu et al. (2021)
Follower	Self-expansion; self-efficacy	Performance	Mao et al. (2019)
Follower	Servant leadership; leader-salesperson relationship quality; customer orientation	Performance	Kirkland et al. (2021)
Follower	Service climate	Performance	Bahadur and Ali (2021)
Follower	Empowerment	Project success	Ali, Li, Haider, et al. (2021)
Follower	Innovative work behavior	Project success	Ali, Zhang, et al. (2020);
Follower	Team building	Project success	Ali, Li, et al. (2020)
Follower	Goal clarity	Project success	Ali, Li, Durrani, et al. (2021)
Team	Learning behaviors	Creativity	Chen, Liu, et al. (2021)
Team	Psychological safety; psychological capital	Creativity	Gonçalves and Brandão (2017)
Team	Team information sharing	Creativity	Hu et al. (2018)
Team	Team job crafting	Creativity	Chen, Feng, et al. (2021)
Team	Collective humility; collective promotion focus	Performance	Owens and Hekman (2016)
Team	Creative efficacy; creativity	Performance	Wang, Li, et al. (2020)
Team	Relationship conflict	Performance	Li et al. (2020)
Team	Shared leadership	Performance	Chiu et al. (2016)
Team	Team leader humility	Performance	Peng et al. (2020)
Team	Team potency	Performance	Liu et al. (2021)
Team	Team psychological capital; team task allocation	Performance	Rego et al. (2019)
Team	Team voice climate	Team innovation	Liu, Mao, et al. (2017)
Team	Team shared mental model	Team learning	Li, Zhang, et al. (2019)
Organization	Tie density; helping norms	Performance	Chiu et al. (2020)
Organization	-	CSR	Hong (2020)
Organization	CEO's socialized charisma	Innovation	Zhang et al. (2017)
Organization	Altruism	Innovation	Mallén et al. (2020)
Organization	Actual EPS relative to analysts' expectations	Performance	Petrenko et al. (2019)
Organization	TMT pay disparity; TMT integration; ambidextrous strategic orientation	Performance	Ou et al. (2018)
Organization	TMT potency	Performance	Ashford et al. (2018)
Organization	TMT transactive memory system	Performance	Ren et al. (2020)

Note: Level denotes the level of analysis of the outcome variable.

as noted previously, humble leadership improves perceptions of performance for the leaders themselves (Zapata & Hayes-Jones, 2019).

3.4 | Moderators in humble leadership

Our review highlighted several salient moderators in the study of humble leadership (see Table 5). Unsurprisingly, many of these aimed to capture attributes of the leaders' humility, such as the sincerity of the leader (Ma et al., 2019), the authenticity of leader humility (Oc et al., 2020), the strength of leader-expressed humility (also referred to as consistency of leader-expressed humility; Rego et al., 2017), and the honesty of the humility (Yang, Zhang, et al., 2019). Many other moderators emphasized characteristics of the leaders as essential factors in the relationship between humble leadership and its outcomes. Examples of these characteristics include leader narcissism (Zhang et al., 2017), conscientiousness (Wang, Li, et al., 2020), competence (Yuan et al., 2018), effectiveness (Chen, Liu, et al., 2021; Zhong et al., 2019), gender (Swain & Korenman, 2018), and prototypicality (Zhang & Liu, 2019). Other moderators focused on situational or organizational factors such as HR practices (Tuan et al., 2021), climate (Zhang & Song, 2020), and follower or team characteristics (Chiu et al., 2016; Zhong et al., 2021; Wang, Li, et al., 2020). In our review, the modal moderator was leader political skill (Li et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2019; Zhou & Wu, 2018). Not surprisingly, the effects of humble leadership are influenced by leader characteristics and situational and organizational factors. The clearest finding here is that humble leadership is most effective when it is perceived as being sincere.

3.5 | Humble leadership as a moderator

Several studies have also employed humble leadership as a moderator (e.g., Chen, 2018; Chen et al., 2019; Ma et al., 2020; Peng et al., 2020; Yang, Zhang, et al., 2019). Table 6 summarizes these studies. A majority of studies examined how humble leadership moderates the effects of other leader actions or characteristics such as leader transparency (Rego & Giustiniano, 2021), leader authority (Chiu & Hung, 2020), leader perceived overqualification (Ma et al., 2020), leader trustworthiness (Chiu & Hung, 2020), and leader narcissism (Chen, 2018; Norouzinik et al., 2021; Owens et al., 2015). Generally, humble leadership serves to enhance the positive effects of leader actions and characteristics. Humble leadership was also used to moderate the effects of organizational and team features such as organizational justice perceptions (Abbas & Wu, 2021), team leader humility (Peng et al., 2020), CSR (JWang, Zhang, et al., 2020), and informational faultlines (Yao et al., 2021). Humble leadership generally served to enhance the effects of these organizational and team features. Finally, some research examined how humble leadership moderates the effects of individual follower attributes such as emotional resistance to change (Chen et al., 2019), followers' use of their strengths (Ding & Chu, 2020), and creative process engagement (Cheung et al., 2020).

3.6 | Nonsignificant results

An overwhelming majority of the studies reported all significant findings, and this observation is consistent with other domains of leadership studies (Eva et al., 2019). This finding is anticipated, primarily when leader humility is the focal antecedent (e.g., Jiang et al., 2019; Wang, Owens, et al., 2018). However, several studies reported nonsignificant results (e.g., Ashford et al., 2018; Li et al., 2018; Yang, Zhang, et al., 2019); most of these nonsignificant results were related to moderation effects. For example, Ren et al. (2020) failed to support the notion that strategic flexibility moderates the role between the CEO's humble leadership behaviors and TMT transactive memory system.

4 | METHODOLOGICAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESS OF HUMBLE LEADERSHIP RESEARCH

4.1 | Quantitative research

A majority of prior studies on humble leadership have been quantitative; however, a small number of qualitative (e.g., Owens & Hekman, 2012) studies have also been conducted. Even though the vast majority of prior research on humble leadership has been quantitative, this is in line with other leadership literature (e.g., servant leadership: Eva et al., 2019) and trends in leadership research (Antonakis et al., 2014). Humble leadership has been quantitatively studied in several different countries (see Figure 2), with most samples coming from China and the United States. However, humble leadership has been studied in other diverse countries (e.g., several studies were conducted in Portugal and Pakistan). Figure 2 summarizes the countries used in field study samples of humble leadership.

Most of the quantitative studies in our review were correlational field studies. The studies that included correlational designs almost exclusively relied upon a Likert scale measure of humble leadership. Petrenko et al. (2019) was one exception and used video recording of leaders as the source of their measure of humble leadership. We see this as a more robust research design as survey measures do not capture leader behaviors but rather rater perceptions of behavior. Thus, future research that can use more direct measures of humble leadership is warranted.

As noted previously, most of the studies that used a Likert scale to measure humble leadership employed the Owens et al. (2013) scale, and the Ou et al. (2014) scale was the second most commonly used scale. Researchers who have used humble leadership survey measures have almost ubiquitously treated the construct of humility as unidimensional in their research and rarely examine individual facets (see Ashford et al., 2018 for an exception). This practice has generated consistency across the literature, but given the mature state of the literature, it may be warranted to examine the facets of humble leadership to see if they differentially affect outcomes.

When employing a humble leadership survey, prior research has followed the same procedure to assess humble leadership, with

TABLE 5 Moderators of humble leadership

Level	Moderator	Outcome	Article
Leader	CEO narcissism	CEO's socialized charisma	Zhang et al. (2017)
Leader	Gender	Leadership potential	Swain and Korenman (2018)
Leader	Honesty-humility	Turnover intention; work-to-family conflict	Yang, Zhou, et al. (2019b)
Leader	Leader effectiveness	Creativity	Chen, Liu, et al. (2021)
Leader	Relational accountability	Unethical behavior	B et al. (2021)
Follower	Apparent sincerity of leader	Voice	Ma et al. (2019)
Follower	Attributions of impression management motives	Trust	Yang, Zhang, et al. (2019)
Follower	Authenticity of leader humility	Felt authenticity	Oc et al. (2020)
Follower	Autonomy	OCB; performance	Cho et al. (2021)
Follower	Chinese traditionality	Proactive behavior	Chen, Liang, et al. (2021)
Follower	Climate	Psychological safety	Zhang and Song (2020)
Follower	Cognitive reappraisal	Creativity	Wang et al. (2017)
Follower	Customer mistreatment	Service performance	Bahadur and Ali (2021)
Follower	Gender and age similarity	Performance	Mao et al. (2019)
Follower	Goal difficulty	Performance	Kirkland et al. (2021)
Follower	Growth need strength	Creativity	Wang, Liu, et al. (2018a)
Follower	Knowledge sharing	Creativity	Wang, Liu, et al. (2018b)
Follower	HR practices	OCB	Tuan et al. (2021)
Follower	Humility	Knowledge hiding; performance	Zhong et al. (2021); Diao et al. (2019)
Follower	Implicit theory of morality	Prosocial behavior; unethical behavior	Owens et al. (2019)
Follower	Impression management attribution	Perception of leader hypocrisy	Bharanitharan et al. (2021)
Follower	Intrapreneurial personality	Innovation	Abbas and Wu (2019)
Follower	Job complexity	Innovation	Jiang et al. (2019)
Follower	Job insecurity	Feedback seeking behavior	Qian, Liu, and Chen (2020)
Follower	Leader competence	Creative process engagement	Yuan et al. (2018)
Follower	Leader effectiveness	Well-being	Zhong et al. (2019)
Follower	Leader identification	Proactive behavior	Chen et al. (2018)
Follower	Leader political skill	CWB towards supervisor; innovative behavior	Wang et al. (2019); Zhou and Wu (2018)
Follower	Leader prototypicality	Taking charge	Zhang and Liu (2019)
Follower	LMX differentiation	Helping behavior	Carnevale et al. (2019)
Follower	Organizational identification	Organizational deviance	Qiuyun et al. (2020)
Follower	Perceived leader power	Performance	Wang, Owens, et al. (2018)
Follower	Power distance orientation	Prosocial voice; empowerment	Jeung and Yoon (2016, 2018)
Follower	Prevention/promotion focus	Voice; knowledge sharing	Li, Li, et al. (2019); Luu (2021)
Follower	Public service motivation	Meaningfulness of work; need for recovery; relational energy	Luu (2020b)
Follower	Sales managers' adaptive selling	Adaptive selling behavior	Luu (2020a)
Follower	Self-serving attribution	Deviance	Qin et al. (2020)
Follower	Successful context	Leader effectiveness	Zapata and Hayes-Jones (2019)
Follower	Task dependence and competitive climate (3-way interaction)	Creative performance	Ye et al. (2020)
Follower	Team cognitive diversity	Performance	Liu et al. (2021)
Follower	Team conflict	Creativity	Lei et al. (2021)
Follower	TMT faultlines	Voluntary turnover	Ou et al. (2017)
Team	Authority centralization	Team performance	Peng et al. (2020)

TABLE 5 (Continued)

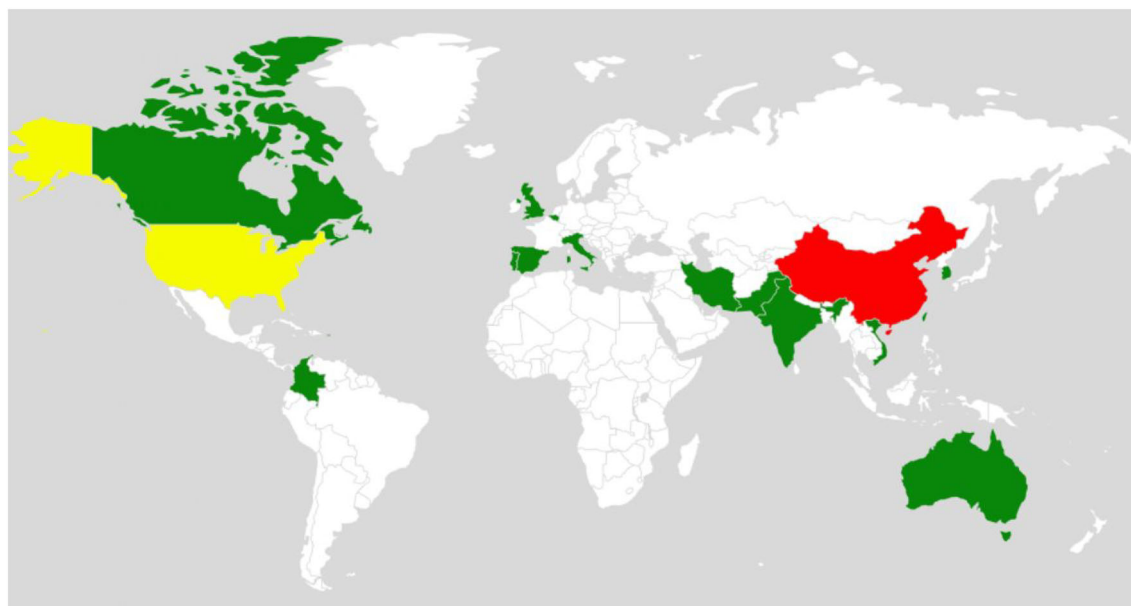
Level	Moderator	Outcome	Article
Team	Cognitive diversity	Performance	Liu et al. (2021)
Team	Consistency of leader-expressed humility	Team psychological safety	Rego et al. (2021)
Team	Leader conscientiousness	Performance	Wang, Li, et al. (2020)
Team	Leader-leader exchange (LLX)	Team creativity	Chen, Feng, et al. (2021)
Team	Leader political skill	Performance	Li et al. (2020)
Team	Prevention/promotion focus	Team learning	Li, Zhang, et al. (2019)
Team	Strength of leader-expressed humility	Team effectiveness	Rego et al. (2017)
Team	Strength of team humility	Team effectiveness	Rego et al. (2017)
Team	Strength of team psychological capital	Team effectiveness	Rego et al. (2017)
Team	Team future orientation	Performance	Wang, Li, et al. (2020)
Team	Team performance capability	Team performance	Chiu et al. (2016)
Team	Team power distance value	Team creativity	Hu et al. (2018)
Team	Team proactive personality	Team performance	Chiu et al. (2016)
Team	Top management support	Project success	Ali, Li, et al. (2020)
Organization	CEO narcissism	Firm innovation	Zhang et al. (2017)
Organization	CEO vision articulation	Performance	Ashford et al. (2018)
Organization	Firm slack	CSR	Hong (2020)
Organization	Organizational culture/support	Project success	Ali, Li, Durrani, et al. (2021); Ali, Li, Haider, et al. (2021)
Organization	Strategic flexibility	Start-up enterprise performance	Ren et al. (2020)
Organization	Task interdependence	Team innovation	Liu, Mao, et al. (2017)

Note: Level denotes the level of analysis of the moderator.

TABLE 6 Humble leadership as a moderator

Level	IV	Moderator	Outcome	Article
Leader	Narcissism	Humble leadership	Female's gender-leader integration	Chen (2018)
Leader	Leader transparency	Humble leadership	Receptiveness to employees	Rego et al. (2021)
Follower	Perceived overqualification	Humble leadership	Career distress	Ma et al. (2020)
Follower	Perceived overqualification	Humble leadership	Career planning	Ma et al. (2020)
Follower	Leader authority	Humble leadership	Compliance	Chiu and Hung (2020)
Follower	Leader trustworthiness	Humble leadership	Compliance	Chiu and Hung (2020)
Follower	Creative process engagement	Humble leadership	Creativity	Cheung et al. (2020)
Follower	Leader narcissism	Humble leadership	Engagement	Owens et al. (2015)
Follower	Leader narcissism	Humble leadership	Follower perceptions of effectiveness	Owens et al. (2015)
Follower	Leader narcissism	Humble leadership	Innovative behavior	Norouzinik et al. (2021)
Follower	Organizational justice	Humble leadership	Innovative behavior	Abbas and Wu (2021)
Follower	Strengths use	Humble leadership	Self efficacy; thriving at work	Ding and Chu (2020)
Follower	CSR	Humble leadership	Voice	Wang, Zhang, et al. (2020)
Follower	Emotional resistance to change	Humble leadership	Voice	Chen et al. (2019)
Team	Informational faultlines	Humble leadership	Creativity	Yao et al. (2021)
Team	Team leader humility	Humble leadership	Team performance	Peng et al. (2020)
Organization	CSR	Humble leadership	Climate	Wang, Zhang, et al. (2020)

Note: Level denotes the level of analysis of the outcome variable.



Note: green = 1-10; yellow = 11-20; orange = 21-39; red = 40+

FIGURE 2 Sample country of origin for field study samples of humble leadership. Note: green = 1-10; yellow = 11-20; orange = 21-39; red = 40+

almost every study in our review using follower reports (see Wang et al., 2017 and Yuan et al., 2018 for exceptions). As a result, nearly every correlational field study in our review relied upon multisource data to test their hypothesized relations. The use of multisource data is desirable as it reduces common method bias. In addition, a majority of studies also used temporal separation between their independent and dependent variables. This temporal separation features a more robust research design than simply collecting data at one point in time since it improves the ability to assert the direction of relations. Finally, while a majority of studies in our review used subject scale measures of their outcome variables, several studies used objective measures such as return on investment (ROI; Ou et al., 2018), archival data of employee performance (Owens et al., 2015; Wang, Owens, et al., 2018), Abnormal Returns, Tobin's Q, and Total Shareholder Returns (Petrenko et al., 2019). Using more of these types of outcome measures improves objectivity and reduces common method bias concerns (Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Studies that adopted correlational field study designs examined the effects of humble leadership across several levels of analysis. A few articles focused on the impact of humble leadership at the firm or organizational level of analysis (e.g., Ou et al., 2014) and the team-level of analysis (e.g., Owens et al., 2013). However, not surprisingly, most studies focused on the individual follower or leader level of analysis. Finally, studies predominately relied on only one sample when testing their hypothesis; however, several articles did use multiple samples to test their hypotheses (e.g., Mallén et al., 2020; Owens & Hekman, 2016; Rego & Simpson, 2018) and when possible, this should be encouraged.

Although most quantitative studies were correlational field studies, there were several experimental designs; a few were pure

experiments (e.g., Zapata & Hayes-Jones, 2019), and several were experiments paired with correlational designs (e.g., Owens & Hekman, 2016). The mixed design of correlational field studies paired with experimental designs is among the strongest empirical designs as they are high in both external and internal validity. Experiments are fundamental because they allow scholars to make causal claims (Antonakis et al., 2010; Lonati et al., 2018). Several different experimental designs were employed, including vignettes (e.g., Cojuharenco & Karelaiia, 2020; Rego et al., 2019; Swain, 2018; Zhu et al., 2019) and experiential recall (e.g., Qin et al., 2020). These experimental studies highlight the ability to manipulate humble leadership. The studies that only utilized experiments utilized multiple samples, and studies to test their hypotheses ranged from two to five. Experiments were also used to understand the effects of humble leadership at the team (e.g., Owens & Hekman, 2016) and individual levels of analyses (e.g., Zapata & Hayes-Jones, 2019).

4.2 | Quantitative weaknesses and opportunities

While several strengths exist in the humble leadership literature, we highlight four methodological weaknesses that serve as opportunities for future work. First, even though prior research has adopted experimental designs and approaches for the study of humble leadership, many studies still suffer from endogeneity issues, making causal claims related to the effects of humble leadership unsubstantiated. Endogeneity arises due to missing variables, reverse causality, measurement errors, selection bias, and common-method variance (Antonakis et al., 2010), resulting in inconclusive findings (Sajons, 2020). To

counter endogeneity issues, scholars can use experimental designs; however, laboratory settings and experimental vignettes, which are commonly used by experimental designs in humble leadership research, suffer from realism and external validity issues. One approach that researchers can use to counter endogeneity issues while maintaining external validity is the use of instrumental variables. In an instrumental design, researchers can collect data from organizations and actual leaders and use an instrumental variable that is exogenous from the dependent variable, thus allowing for casual claims to be made and data collected in a realistic setting (see Antonakis et al., 2010 and Semadeni et al., 2014 for more detail on instrumental variables). In our review, Bharanitharan et al. (2021) attempted an instrumental design; however, their instruments were not valid. As such, future research that can propose and test valid instruments of humble leadership is warranted. Future research may also consider field experiments (Eden, 2021) or natural experiments (Sieweke & Santoni, 2020) as a way to capture both external validity and demonstrate casual effects.

Second, Likert scales dominate how researchers have measured humble leadership. However, these scale measures do not actually measure a leader's behavior but rather the perception of behavior as reported by followers (or rater). Indeed, prior research has shown that followers' characteristics affect how they view leadership behaviors (Wang, Liu, et al., 2018a). Future research should attempt to disentangle leader behaviors from follower (or rater) perceptions of their behavior to understand this relationship better. For example, future research could use content analysis dictionaries to measure the humble leadership behaviors of CEOs or leader social media (Matthews et al., 2022).

Third, and related to our second point, the study of humble leadership has been tightly focused on general humility. Nevertheless, research by Owens et al. (2019) notes that this perspective of leader humility "may be overly simplistic as research suggests that people can vary in the degree of their humility across different contexts" (p. 148). Indeed, emerging research on humility suggests that humility is linked with situational factors (Leary et al., 2017). Future research that can examine humble leadership within the context of specific situations, such as moral/ethical situations (Owens et al., 2019), high-pressure situations, or uncertain situations, should add to our understanding of humble leadership. These studies are also likely to explain more variation in domain-specific humble leadership outcomes than general humble leadership studies.

Finally, quantitative studies of humble leadership have primarily come from Eastern samples (see Table 7). This trend is a unique feature of the humble leadership research. However, cultural factors of samples in the humble leadership research are generally ignored, and this omission raises important questions about the role of culture in understanding the effects of humble leadership. Previous research has suggested that cultural variables, both at a national (Dickson et al., 2003) and individual (Matthews et al., 2021) level, can influence the effectiveness of various leader behaviors. Thus, researchers need to do a better job at addressing how culture may influence the effects of their study.

4.3 | Qualitative research

As noted earlier, a few studies in our review adopted qualitative methods to understand the effects and nature of humble leadership. There were several qualitative studies (e.g., D'Errico & Poggi, 2019; Hutt & Gopalakrishnan, 2020; Oc et al., 2015; Owens & Hekman, 2012; Shannonhouse et al., 2019) and most primarily relied upon semi-structured interviews as a source of data collection to define the elements of humble leadership. In addition to semi-structured interviews, Oc et al. (2015) also used an open-ended questionnaire sent to employees to validate their findings in their semi-structured interviews. Further, D'Errico and Poggi (2019) sought to understand how to capture leader humility via body, face, and voice using qualitative and quantitative techniques. The samples in these studies included religious humanitarian leaders (Shannonhouse et al., 2019), Singaporean MBA students and full-time employees (Oc et al., 2015), and religious, military, and corporate leaders (Hutt & Gopalakrishnan, 2020; Owens & Hekman, 2012).

5 | AGENDA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The past decade has seen a quickly accelerating stream of humble leadership research that has helped us better understand this important leadership construct. However, there is still much to learn. Based on our review of the extant literature, we highlight four key areas for future research in humble leadership research: (1) research on the antecedents to humble leadership, (2) dynamic, within-leader research on humble leadership, (3) research on the consequences of humble leadership for the leader, and (4) research that tests the discriminative validity of humble leadership compared to related moral-oriented and constructive theories of leadership (e.g., transformational leadership and servant leadership) and unstudied boundary conditions of humble leadership. As we discuss these different directions for future research, we also highlight potentially useful, understudied theories in the humble leadership research that can drive this field forward, including socioemotional selectivity theory, experiential learning theory, followership theory, sensemaking, affective events theory, and transformative learning theory. Overall, while we have learned a great deal about humble leadership behaviors in the past decade, there is still much more to explore. Table 7 summarizes our proposed directions for future research.

5.1 | Antecedents of humble leadership

Although research has begun to examine the antecedents of humble leadership (Owens & Hekman, 2012; Wang, Owens, et al., 2018), there is still much to learn about the unique factors that predict this behavior. Owens and Hekman (2012) qualitatively illustrated contextual antecedents of humble leadership. However, few other studies in our review explored its antecedents (e.g., Cojuharenco & Karelaia, 2020; Deng et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2020; Wang, Owens, et al., 2018;

TABLE 7 Future directions and recommendations for humble leadership

Area of humble leadership	Potential research questions	Useful understudied theories
Antecedents		
Leader factors	What leader individual differences or experiences predict humble leadership?	Experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984)
Contextual factors	What are the potential organizational and situational antecedents of humble leadership?	Sensemaking perspective (Weick, 1993)
Followership	In what ways can follower humility inspire leader humility?	Followership theory (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014)
Learnability	How can leaders learn humble leadership? Does humble leadership training help?	Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1997)
Dynamic nature		
Career shifts	In what ways do leaders exhibit more humble leadership later in their careers? How does humble leadership change over time?	Socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen et al., 2003)
Temporal fluctuations	Does humble leadership exhibit daily (or hourly) fluctuations? What daily aspects affect humble leadership?	Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996)
Consequences of humble leadership for the leader		
Positive leader outcomes	Are there any positive emotional benefits for leaders engaging in humble leadership? What are the daily benefits of humble leadership behavior for the leader?	Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996)
Career consequences of humble leadership	In what ways do leaders suffer from humble leadership in terms of career progression?	Career progression paradox (O'Mahony & Bechky, 2006)
Moderating effects	In what ways does leader humility disproportionately benefit or hurt leaders of different genders, races, ages, cultures, or social groups?	Social role theory (Eagly & Wood, 2011)
Humble leadership effects and boundaries		
Effects on performance and OCB outcomes	How do the effects of humble leadership on employee performance outcomes compare with the effects of transformational leadership, ethical leadership, charismatic leadership, authentic leadership, and servant leadership?	
Boundaries of humble leadership	How does culture influence the effects of humble leadership?	

Yang, Zhang, et al., 2019). Although findings in this area are still in their infancy, prior studies suggest that both individual and organizational factors predict humble leadership. Thus, there are several opportunities to expand the literature by exploring potential antecedents.

For example, Wang, Owens, et al. (2018) found that individual factors such as the leader's incremental theory of the self and relational identity positively predict humble leadership. Future research should build on this to explore what other individual differences predict humble leadership, such as personality traits, experiences, or emotional intelligence. Theories such as experiential learning theory

(Kolb, 1984) may serve as a helpful lens in investigating if specific life experiences predict humble leadership. Experiential learning theory explains how an individual's experiences prompt reflection and knowledge development. Therefore, future research could explore if personal and professional experiences prompt a leader's humble behavior. For example, does prior experience with a humble (or not-so-humble) leader influence an individual's likelihood to exhibit humility with their own followers?

Further research should explore factors that increase perceptions of humble leadership. Cojuharenco and Karelaia (2020)

demonstrated this by exploring how a leader's practice of asking questions increased followers' perceptions of humility in their leader. Further research could expand this area by exploring other factors that contribute to perceptions of humble leadership. Qualitative research may be instrumental in obtaining rich descriptions regarding followers' perceptions and interpretations of humble behaviors. For example, scholars could utilize attribution theory (Heider, 1958) to explore what types of leader behaviors influence followers' attributions of humility. Because women tend to exhibit leadership styles that are more democratic and participatory (Eagly & Johnson, 1990), are followers more likely to attribute displays of humility to internal causes if the leader is female? Given the beneficial effects of humble leadership (e.g., Ou et al., 2014; Rego et al., 2020; Petrenko et al., 2019), scholars should extend knowledge in this area by investigating its origins.

Research should also consider contextual factors as humble leadership antecedents (or moderators of other antecedents). Peng et al. (2020) found a trickle-down effect of humble leadership from higher-level leaders to lower-level leaders, indicating that organizational factors influence humble leadership. Future research might also examine organizational justice (Liu et al., 2017) as an antecedent of humble leadership. Another potential area involves organizational climates, which, based on a sensemaking perspective (Weick, 1993), should inform leaders of appropriate behavior. Are moral-oriented organizational climates emphasizing gratitude (Fehr et al., 2017) or forgiveness (Fehr & Gelfand, 2012) likely to increase humble leadership? No article explored how followers' behaviors, such as humility, inform leader humble behaviors. This underexplored area could be a fascinating avenue for future research, and scholars could rely on followership theory (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). For example, in what ways can follower humility inspire leader humility? How is expressed leader humility informed by follower behaviors? Although research has previously explored a top-down approach to team humility (e.g., Rego et al., 2017; Ye et al., 2020), researchers may consider a constructionist approach (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) and the vital role of followers (Matthews et al., 2021) in exploring how followers help create humble leadership.

Another potentially fruitful avenue for this might be to explore organizational leader training to highlight different factors that might increase humble leadership. Can this leadership be developed through leader development programs? Transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1997) suggests that adults can change the way they think and act, and prior research on humility has found that intervention workbooks can increase participants' perceptions of humility (Lavelock et al., 2017). However, training was not effective for spiritual leaders (Cuthbert et al., 2018). So, there is promising evidence, but concern, that humble leadership may be learnable. Future researchers could use field studies and longitudinal designs to evaluate the impact that humble leadership training interventions have on evaluations of leader effectiveness. In addition, scholars could explore the impact of mentors in humble leadership development. Because Peng et al. (2020) demonstrated that humble leadership at the senior level of management impacts humble leadership at a lower level of

management, future research could explore if leaders exhibit more humble leadership when they have a mentor who is also humble.

5.2 | Dynamic nature of humble leadership

Prior research has generally adopted a static view both of humility (Morris et al., 2005) and of humble leadership (Owens et al., 2013); that is, humble leadership is often conceptualized as an interpersonal characteristic (Chiu et al., 2016) or stable behavior (Ou et al., 2014). While prior research demonstrates between-leader differences in humble leadership, we conjecture that humble leadership can fluctuate over time, between domains, and across situations. Indeed, no empirical study in our review dynamically measured humble leadership. Prior research on leadership indicates that longitudinal designs and dynamic, short-term designs effectively capture leader behavior changes (Kelemen, Matthews, & Breevaart, 2020; McClean et al., 2019). We thus encourage future research to consider how humble leadership may change over a more extended period. For example, how do leaders display humble leadership more (or less) throughout their careers? Qualitative research suggests that leaders might engage in more humble leadership behaviors after experiencing failure (Owens & Hekman, 2012), and previous research has also found humble leadership to have a stronger impact when leaders have more power (e.g., Wang, Owens, et al., 2018). Thus, leaders may be more likely to display humble leadership later in their careers after experiencing failure and are likely to possess more power. Relatedly, socioemotional selectivity theory (Carstensen et al., 2003) suggests that as individuals age, their time horizon shrinks, and they become more communal and focused on creating meaning and purpose. As leaders age, they may engage in more humble leadership behaviors such as spotlighting followers and acknowledging others' strengths due to their increased focus on relationships and others. Humble leadership may serve to drive meaning as leaders use humble leadership behaviors to build and develop rising employees.

We also encourage future research to adopt designs that capture shorter, more dynamic shifts in humble leadership. Prior research suggests that leader behaviors vary daily (e.g., Breevaart et al., 2014), and scholars have encouraged future research to examine the daily causes and consequences of humble leadership (Kelemen, Matthews, & Breevaart, 2020). Thus, we reiterate this call for future research to consider humble leadership's dynamic, daily aspect. For example, what daily factors may enhance or curtail humble leadership? In what ways do leaders exhibit daily fluctuations in humble leadership? Do the daily effects of humble leadership mirror those found in prior research? Scholars may elect to adopt affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), which suggests that work features influence emotions, to see how discrete emotions cause humble leadership and are caused by humble leadership. In attempting to examine more dynamic aspects of humble leadership, future research may need to alter the focus or reduce the items of the humble leadership scale, which is consistent with other leadership constructs such as transformational leadership (Breevaart et al., 2014).

5.3 | Consequences of humble leadership for the leader

More research could also examine the effects of humble leadership on the leaders themselves. This research avenue is especially salient as scholars begin to explore how humble leadership may differ across time and context. As noted previously, prior research has found that humble leadership affects perceptions of leader competence (Zapata & Hayes-Jones, 2019). Humble leadership can be emotionally exhausting, resulting in leader turnover intentions and work–family conflict for leaders low in trait honesty-humility (Yang, Zhou, et al., 2019b). However, further research could seek to explore the potentially enriching consequences of humble leadership. For example, previous research has examined the interrelationships between humble leadership and spirituality (Shannonhouse et al., 2019), and scholars may consider building on how these inform each other. Other potential research questions can explore how humble leaders experience increased personal wellbeing when exhibiting these behaviors or how expressed humility fosters an increased sense of impact. Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) may similarly be beneficial in understanding these effects. Relatedly, scholars might seek to understand the positive or negative consequences for the leaders themselves consistent across genders, races, and ages. For example, based on social role theory (Eagly & Wood, 2011), men and women are expected to behave differently based on societal norms, and women may be penalized more or receive less benefit for engaging in humble leadership than men in terms of competence perceptions or career advancement. Also, in looking at these personal consequences of engaging in humble leadership behaviors, scholars should examine if cultural contexts influence the personal effects.

Further, research might also consider the career consequences of humble leadership. If humble leadership mediates team performance (Peng et al., 2020), facilitates employee creativity (Cheung et al., 2020), and sparks OCBs (Ding et al., 2020), then in what ways do these outcomes translate into leader career advancement or stagnation? The results of our review highlight the generally positive effects of humble leadership on followers, teams, and organizations, so it could be predicted that humble leadership results in career advancement. However, humble leaders may avoid highlighting their positive effects, which could be detrimental to their career advancement. Indeed, prior research suggests that individuals are less certain if humility is desirable in social roles, like leadership (Exline & Geyer, 2004). The moderating role of a team or organizational context is anticipated to inform the benefits and costs of expressed humble leadership.

5.4 | Humble leadership effects and boundaries

Future scholarly work needs to establish where humble leadership rests within the nexus of different leadership behaviors. Some prior studies controlled for relevant leadership constructs when examining the effects of humble leadership. For example, Owens and

Hekman (2016) reported that the effects of humble leadership were still significant when controlling for transformational leadership, and Owens et al. (2019) examined the effects of leader moral humility while controlling for ethical leadership. However, many of the studies in our review did not control for other leadership behaviors when exploring the effects of humble leadership. Prior research suggests that moral approaches to leadership (i.e., servant leadership, authentic leadership, and ethical leadership) have stronger effects on extra-role behaviors such as OCB but weaker effects on in-role performance when compared to transformational leadership (Hoch et al., 2018). Empirical tests that pit these different leadership styles against humble leadership will provide more apparent evidence of the effects of humble leadership above and beyond these constructs. For example, in what ways does humble leadership drive in-role or extra-role behaviors (or both!) when controlling for related leader behaviors?

Research should also consider key boundary conditions of humble leadership. As shown in Table 5, research has looked at a variety of moderators such as followers' self-serving attribution (Qin et al., 2020) and followers' perceptions of their leader's power (Wang, Owens, et al., 2018). However, more research is needed to understand the contextual conditions in which humble leadership is more (or less) effective. For example, a majority of samples used to study humble leadership have come from an Eastern context. Prior research has generally ignored these potentially critical cultural influences on understanding the effects of humble leadership (see Rego et al., 2019 for an example of an exception). To increase our understanding of culture and humility, scholars could examine if humble leadership is more influential in Eastern cultures because this type of leadership is more acceptable for followers in these cultures. Future research could also use meta-analytic correlations to see which humble leadership outcomes are stronger in particular cultures and similar across cultures. Also, work is changing (Harvey et al., 2018), and understanding how humble leaders may be responsive to these changes, such as non-traditional working hours (Bolino et al., 2021) or pet-friendly work policies (Kelemen, Matthews, Wan, & Zhang, 2020), would be necessary for future inquiry. Finally, due to the increase in telecommuting, it is essential to understand how the effects of humble leadership are influenced when working in a virtual (or hybrid) environment.

6 | CONCLUSION

Until recently, the scholarly consideration of humble leadership has been sporadically mentioned but not rigorously explored. Over the past 10 years, though, there has been a sharp increase in the work done on this important topic. This recent work has increased the collective knowledge regarding humble leadership and its antecedents, moderators, and outcomes. Scholars have discovered that humble leadership can positively impact outcomes such as innovation (e.g., Jiang et al., 2019), learning (Chen, Liu, et al., 2021), job satisfaction (Owens et al., 2013), and performance (e.g., Ou et al., 2018). However, more work is still needed for us to improve our understanding of humble leadership. For example, scholars need to account for

common method bias in their humble leadership study designs, more research needs to be done on the antecedents of humble leadership, and we need a deeper understanding of the potentially dynamic nature of humble leadership. We hope that future research will continue to explore key aspects of this vital leadership construct.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank Marie Dasborough for her support during the review process and to our three anonymous reviewers.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ This construct is also referred to as leader humility and leader expressed humility. However, for consistency, we refer to it as humble leadership throughout our manuscript.
- ² One reason for this might be because the six-factor construct only has slightly better fit statistics than the one-factor construct (Ou et al., 2014).

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

Data sharing is not applicable—no new data generated.

ORCID

Thomas K. Kelemen  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3637-2258>

Samuel H. Matthews  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6175-7141>

Michael J. Matthews  <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6958-1235>

Sarah E. Henry  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1382-4389>

REFERENCES

- Abbas, W., & Wu, W. (2019). The moderating role of intrapreneurial personality in relation between leader humility and innovative behavior. *Human Systems Management*, 38, 329–337. <https://doi.org/10.3233/HSM-190548>
- Abbas, W., & Wu, W. (2021). Organizational justice, leader humility, and service Employees' innovative behavior in a collectivistic culture: The case of Pakistan. *Revista Brasileira de Gestão de Negócios*, 23, 153–179.
- Ali, M., Li, Z., Durrani, D. K., Shah, A. M., & Khuram, W. (2021). Goal clarity as a link between humble leadership and project success: The interactive effects of organizational culture. *Baltic Journal of Management*, 16, 407–423. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BJM-09-2020-0341>
- Ali, M., Li, Z., Haider, M., Khan, S., & Din, Q. M. U. (2021). Does humility of project manager affect project success? Confirmation of moderated mediation mechanism. *Management Research Review*, 44, 1320–1341. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-10-2020-0640>
- Ali, M., Li, Z., Khan, S., Shah, S. J., & Ullah, R. (2020). Linking humble leadership and project success: The moderating role of top management support with mediation of team-building. *International Journal of Managing Projects in Business*, 14.
- Ali, M., Zhang, L., Shah, S. J., Khan, S., & Shah, A. M. (2020). Impact of humble leadership on project success: The mediating role of psychological empowerment and innovative work behavior. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 41, 349–367. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-05-2019-0230>
- Antonakis, J., Bastardo, N., Liu, Y., & Schriesheim, C. A. (2014). What makes articles highly cited? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(1), 152–179. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.10.014>
- Antonakis, J., Bendahan, S., Jacquart, P., & Lalive, R. (2010). On making causal claims: A review and recommendations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(6), 1086–1120. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.10.010>
- Argandoña, A. (2015). Humility in management. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 132(1), 63–71. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2311-8>
- Ashford, S. J., Wellman, N., Sully de Luque, M., de Stobbeleir, K. E., & Wollan, M. (2018). Two roads to effectiveness: CEO feedback seeking, vision articulation, and firm performance. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 39, 82–95. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2211>
- Avolio, B. J., Gardner, W. L., Walumbwa, F. O., Luthans, F., & May, D. R. (2004). Unlocking the mask: A look at the process by which authentic leaders impact follower attitudes and behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15(6), 801–823. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2004.09.003>
- B, D. K., Lowe, K. B., Bahmannia, S., Cui, L., & Chen, Z. X. (2021). A wolf in Sheep's clothing: Exploring the relationship between leader humility and unethical behavior. *Journal of Management*, 01492063211029708.
- Bahadur, W., & Ali, A. (2021). Linking leader humility with service performance: The role of service climate and customer mistreatment. *Asian Business & Management*, 1–22.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.84.2.191>
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social Foundations of Thought and Action: A Social Cognitive Theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Baumeister, R. F. (1998). The self. In D. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp. 680–740). McGraw-Hill.
- Bharanitharan, D. K., Lowe, K. B., Bahmannia, S., Chen, Z. X., & Cui, L. (2021). Seeing is not believing: Leader humility, hypocrisy, and their impact on followers' behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 32(2), 101440.
- Bharanitharan, K., Chen, Z. X., Bahmannia, S., & Lowe, K. B. (2019). Is leader humility a friend or foe, or both? An attachment theory lens on leader humility and its contradictory outcomes. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 160, 729–743. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3925-z>
- Bin, D., Sok, K. M., Sok, P., & Mao, S. (2020). The tipping point: Mitigating the curvilinear effect of frontline service employee's perception of leadership humility on frontline service performance. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, 31.
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. John Wiley.
- Bolino, M. C., Kelemen, T. K., & Matthews, S. H. (2021). Working 9-to-5? A review of research on nonstandard work schedules. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 188–211.
- Breevaart, K., Bakker, A., Hetland, J., Demerouti, E., Olsen, O. K., & Espevik, R. (2014). Daily transactional and transformational leadership and daily employee engagement. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 87(1), 138–157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12041>
- Brown, M. E., Treviño, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 97(2), 117–134. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2005.03.002>
- Cable, D. (2018). How humble leadership really works. *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2018/04/how-humble-leadership-really-works>
- Carnevale, J. B., Huang, L., & Paterson, T. (2019). LMX-differentiation strengthens the prosocial consequences of leader humility: An identification and social exchange perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 96, 287–296. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2018.11.048>
- Carstensen, L. L., Fung, H. H., & Charles, S. T. (2003). Socioemotional selectivity theory and the regulation of emotion in the second half of life. *Motivation and Emotion*, 27(2), 103–123. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1024569803230>
- Chen, C., Feng, J., Liu, X., & Yao, J. (2021). Leader humility, team job crafting and team creativity: The moderating role of leader-leader

- exchange. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 31(1), 326–340. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1748-8583.12306>
- Chen, H., Liang, Q., Feng, C., & Zhang, Y. (2021). Why and when do employees become more proactive under humble leaders? The roles of psychological need satisfaction and Chinese traditionality. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 34, 1076–1095. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOCM-12-2020-0366>
- Chen, L. (2018). Thinking paradoxically: How and when female narcissistic leaders integrate gender-leader identities. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 46, 339–352. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.6910>
- Chen, L., Liu, S., Wang, Y., & Hu, X. (2021). Humble leader behavior and team creativity: The team learning perspective. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 36.
- Chen, L., Zhang, L., Zhang, Z. D., & Gao, H. (2019). Does emotional resistance to change definitely stifle voice behavior? Revealing the reversal effect of humble leadership. *Current Psychology*, 1–16.
- Chen, Y., Liu, B., Zhang, L., & Qian, S. (2018). Can leader “humility” spark employee “proactivity”? The mediating role of psychological empowerment. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 39, 326–339.
- Cheung, S. Y., Huang, E. G., Chang, S., & Wei, L. (2020). Does being mindful make people more creative at work? The role of creative process engagement and perceived leader humility. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 159, 39–48. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2019.12.003>
- Chiu, C. Y., Balkundi, P., Owens, B. P., & Tesluk, P. E. (2020). Shaping positive and negative ties to improve team effectiveness: The roles of leader humility and team helping norms. *Human Relations*, 0018726720968135.
- Chiu, C. Y., Owens, B. P., & Tesluk, P. E. (2016). Initiating and utilizing shared leadership in teams: The role of leader humility, team proactive personality, and team performance capability. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 101, 1705–1720. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000159>
- Chiu, T. C., & Hung, Y. (2020). Impacts of leader humility between authority and trustworthiness on compliance: Tests of three-way interaction. *Psychological Reports*, 0033294120973942.
- Cho, J., Schilpzand, P., Huang, L., & Paterson, T. (2021). How and when humble leadership facilitates employee job performance: The roles of feeling trusted and job autonomy. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 28(2), 169–184. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051820979634>
- Cojuharenco, I., & Karelai, N. (2020). When leaders ask questions: Can humility premiums buffer the effects of competence penalties? *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 156, 113–134. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2019.12.001>
- Collins, J. C. (2001a). *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap ... and Others Don't*. Random House.
- Collins, J. C. (2001b). Level 5 Leadership: The Triumph of Humility and Fierce Resolve. *Harvard Business Review*, 79, 67–76.
- Cortes-Mejia, S., Cortes, A. F., & Herrmann, P. (2021). Sharing strategic decisions: CEO humility, TMT decentralization, and ethical culture. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04766-8>
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 874–900. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206305279602>
- Cuthbert, A. D., Davis, E. B., Aten, J. D., Short, A., Yarbrough, C. A., Lavelock, C. R., van Worthington, E. L., Davis, D. E., Hook, J. N., & Tongeren, D. R. (2018). Cultivating humility in religious leaders: The effectiveness of a spiritually integrated positive psychology intervention. *Spirituality in Clinical Practice*, 5(4), 227–239. <https://doi.org/10.1037/scp0000185>
- Davis, D. E., Worthington, E. L. Jr., & Hook, J. N. (2010). Humility: Review of measurement strategies and conceptualization as personality judgment. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5(4), 243–252.
- Davis, D. E., Worthington, E. L. Jr., Hook, J. N., Emmons, R. A., Hill, P. C., Bollinger, R. A., & van Tongeren, D. R. (2013). Humility and the development and repair of social bonds: Two longitudinal studies. *Self and Identity*, 12, 58–77.
- Deng, X., Gao, B., & Li, G. (2019). The effects of dynamic work environments on entrepreneurs' humble leader behaviors: Based on uncertainty reduction theory. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 2732. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.02732>
- D'Errico, F. (2019). ‘Too humble and sad’: The effect of humility and emotional display when a politician talks about a moral issue. *Social Science Information*, 58, 660–680. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0539018419893564>
- D'Errico, F. (2020). Humility-based persuasion: Individual differences in elicited emotions and politician evaluation. *International Journal of Communication*, 14, 20.
- D'Errico, F., & Poggi, I. (2019). Tracking a leader's humility and its emotions from body, face and voice. In *Web Intelligence* (Vol. 17, No. 1, pp. 63–74). IOS Press.
- Diao, H., Song, L. J., Wang, Y., & Zhong, J. (2019). Being passionate to perform: The joint effect of leader humility and follower humility. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1059. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01059>
- Dickson, M. W., den Hartog, D. N., & Mitchelson, J. K. (2003). Research on leadership in a cross-cultural context: Making progress, and raising new questions. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14(6), 729–768.
- Diddams, M., & Chang, G. C. (2012). Only human: Exploring the nature of weakness in authentic leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(3), 593–603.
- Ding, H., & Chu, X. (2020). Employee strengths use and thriving at work the roles of self-efficacy and perceived humble leadership. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, 19, 197–205. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000262>
- Ding, H., Yu, E., Chu, X., Li, Y., & Amin, K. (2020). Humble leadership affects organizational citizenship behavior: The sequential mediating effect of strengths use and job crafting. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 65. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00065>
- Eagly, A. H., & Johnson, B. T. (1990). Gender and leadership style: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(2), 233.
- Eagly, A. H., & Wood, W. (2011). Social role theory. In *Handbook of Theories in Social Psychology* (Vol. 2) (pp. 458–476).
- Eden, D. (2021). The science of leadership: A journey from survey research to field experimentation. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 32(3), 101472. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2020.101472>
- Ehrhart, M. G. (2004). Leadership and procedural justice climate as antecedents of unit-level organizational citizenship behavior. *Personnel Psychology*, 57(1), 61–94.
- Eva, N., Robin, M., Sendjaya, S., van Dierendonck, D., & Liden, R. C. (2019). Servant leadership: A systematic review and call for future research. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 30(1), 111–132. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2018.07.004>
- Exline, J. J. (2012). Humility and the ability to receive from others. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 31, 40–50.
- Exline, J. J., Baumeister, R. F., Zell, A. L., Kraft, A. J., & Witvliet, C. V. O. (2008). Not so innocent: Does seeing one's own capacity for wrongdoing predict forgiveness? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94, 495–515. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.94.3.495>
- Exline, J. J., & Geyer, A. L. (2004). Perceptions of humility: A preliminary study. *Self and Identity*, 3, 95–114. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576500342000077>
- Exline, J. J., & Hill, P. C. (2012). Humility: A consistent and robust predictor of generosity. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 7, 208–218. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2012.671348>
- Fehr, R., Fulmer, A., Awtrey, E., & Miller, J. A. (2017). The grateful workplace: A multilevel model of gratitude in organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 42(2), 361–381.

- Fehr, R., & Gelfand, M. J. (2012). The forgiving organization: A multilevel model of forgiveness at work. *Academy of Management Review*, 37(4), 664–688. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2010.0497>
- Gonçalves, L., & Brandão, F. (2017). The relation between leader's humility and team creativity: The mediating effect of psychological safety and psychological capital. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 25, 687–702. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-06-2016-1036>
- Greenberg, J. (2005). *Kant and the Ethics of Humility: A Story of Dependence, Corruption, and Virtue*. Cambridge University Press.
- Halbesleben, J. R., Harvey, J., & Bolino, M. C. (2009). Too engaged? A conservation of resources view of the relationship between work engagement and work interference with family. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94(6), 1452–1465. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0017595>
- Harvey, J., Bolino, M. C., & Kelemen, T. K. (2018). Organizational citizenship behavior in the 21st century: How might going the extra mile look different at the start of the new millennium? In M. R. Buckley, A. R. Wheeler, & J. Halbesleben (Eds.), *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management* (Vol. 36) (pp. 51–110). Emerald Publishing.
- Heider, F. (1958). *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*. Wiley. <https://doi.org/10.1037/10628-000>
- Hinkin, T. R. (1998). A brief tutorial on the development of measures for use in survey questionnaires. *Organizational Research Methods*, 1, 104–121.
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1989). Conservation of resources: A new attempt at conceptualizing stress. *American Psychologist*, 44(3), 513–524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.44.3.513>
- Hobfoll, S. E. (1998). *Stress, Culture, and Community: The Psychology and Philosophy of Stress*. Hemisphere. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4899-0115-6>
- Hoch, J. E., Bommer, W. H., Dulebohn, J. H., & Wu, D. (2018). Do ethical, authentic, and servant leadership explain variance above and beyond transformational leadership? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Management*, 44, 501–529. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206316665461>
- Hong, S. M. (2020). CEO humble leadership and corporate social responsibility: The moderating effect of firm slack. *The Journal of Economics, Marketing and Management*, 8(2), 27–38. <https://doi.org/10.20482/jemm.2020.8.2.27>
- Hu, J., Erdogan, B., Jiang, K., Bauer, T. N., & Liu, S. (2018). Leader humility and team creativity: The role of team information sharing, psychological safety, and power distance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103, 313.
- Hutt, C., & Gopalakrishnan, S. (2020). Leadership humility and managing a multicultural workforce. *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*, 9, 251–260. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SAJBS-08-2019-0147>
- Jeung, C. W., & Yoon, H. J. (2016). Leader humility and psychological empowerment: Investigating contingencies. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 31, 1122–1136. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-07-2015-0270>
- Jeung, C. W., & Yoon, H. J. (2018). When leadership elicits voice: Evidence for a mediated moderation model. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 24, 40–61. <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2017.42>
- Jiang, H., Liu, W., & Jia, L. (2019). How humble leadership influences the innovation of technology standards: A moderated mediation model. *Sustainability*, 11, 5448. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11195448>
- Kaplan, M. (2021, July 17). The shocking and rude ways WeWork's ex-CEO Adam Neumann treated staff. <https://nypost.com/2021/07/17/the-shocking-ways-weworks-ex-ceo-adam-neumann-treated-staff/>
- Kelemen, T. K., Matthews, S. H., & Breevaart, K. (2020). Leading day-to-day: A review of the daily causes and consequences of leadership behaviors. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 31, 101344. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2019.101344>
- Kelemen, T. K., Matthews, S. H., Wan, M., & Zhang, Y. (2020). The secret life of pets: The intersection of animals and organizational life. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 41, 694–697.
- Kirkland, J. C. R., Edwards, B. D., & Flaherty, K. E. (2021). The effect of honest and humble leadership on salesperson customer orientation. *Journal of Business Research*, 130, 49–58.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. Prentice-Hall.
- Krumrei-Mancuso, E. J., & Rowatt, W. C. (2021). Humility in novice leaders: Links to servant leadership and followers' satisfaction with leadership. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2021.1952647>
- LaBouff, J. P., Rowatt, W. C., Johnson, M. K., Tsang, J. A., & Willerton, G. M. (2012). Humble persons are more helpful than less humble persons: Evidence from three studies. *Journal of Positive Psychology*, 7, 16–29.
- Lavelock, C. R., Worthington, E. L. Jr., Griffin, B. J., Garthe, R. C., Davis, D. E., & Hook, J. N. (2017). Humility intervention research: A qualitative review. In *Handbook of Humility*. Routledge.
- Leary, M. R., Diebels, K. J., Davisson, E. K., Jongman-Sereno, K. P., Isherwood, J. C., Raimi, K. T., Deffler, S. A., & Hoyle, R. H. (2017). Cognitive and interpersonal features of intellectual humility. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 43(6), 793–813.
- Lei, S., Peng, L., & Guo, Y. (2021). Investigating the effect of leader humility on subordinates' service creativity: A moderated dual path model. *Current Psychology*, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-01887-1>
- Lemoine, G. J., Hartnell, C. A., & Leroy, H. (2019). Taking stock of moral approaches to leadership: An integrative review of ethical, authentic, and servant leadership. *Academy of Management Annals*, 13(1), 148–187. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2016.0121>
- Li, J., Liang, Q., Zhang, Z., & Wang, X. (2018). Leader humility and constructive voice behavior in China: A dual process model. *International Journal of Manpower*, 39, 840–854. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJM-06-2017-0137>
- Li, M., Zhang, P., Xia, Y., & Liu, W. (2019). Shaping the shared mental model: How leader humility helps teams to learn. *Journal of Management & Organization*, 25(5), 653–671.
- Li, X., Li, M., Fu, J., & Ullah, A. (2019). Leader humility and employee voice: The role of employees' regulatory focus and voice-role conception. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 47, 1–12.
- Li, X., Xue, J., & Liu, J. (2021). Linking leader humility to employee creative performance: Work engagement as a mediator. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 49(6), 1–7.
- Li, Y., Wei, F., Chen, S., & Yan, Y. (2020). Effects of CEO humility and relationship conflict on entrepreneurial performance. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 31, 489–508.
- Lin, X., Chen, Z. X., Herman, H. M., Wei, W., & Ma, C. (2019). Why and when employees like to speak up more under humble leaders? The roles of personal sense of power and power distance. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 158(4), 937–950.
- Liu, H., Chiang, J. T. J., Fehr, R., Xu, M., & Wang, S. (2017). How do leaders react when treated unfairly? Leader narcissism and self-interested behavior in response to unfair treatment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 102(11), 1590–1599. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000237>
- Liu, S., Lucy Liu, X., Wang, H., & Wang, Y. (2021). Humble leader behavior and its effects on performance at the team and individual level: A multi-perspective study. *Group & Organization Management*, 10596011211024429. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10596011211024429>
- Liu, W., Mao, J., & Chen, X. (2017). Leader humility and team innovation: Investigating the substituting role of task interdependence and the mediating role of team voice climate. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8, 115. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01115>
- Lonati, S., Quiroga, B. F., Zehnder, C., & Antonakis, J. (2018). On doing relevant and rigorous experiments: Review and recommendations. *Journal of Operations Management*, 64, 19–40.

- Luthans, F., & Avolio, B. J. (2003). Authentic leadership development. *Positive Organizational Scholarship*, 241, 258.
- Luu, T. T. (2020a). Can sales leaders with humility create adaptive retail salespersons? *Psychology & Marketing*, 37, 1292–1315.
- Luu, T. T. (2020b). Can humble leaders nurture employee well-being? The roles of job crafting and public service motivation. *Personnel Review*, 50, 789–811. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-12-2019-0701>
- Luu, T. T. (2021). Knowledge sharing in the hospitality context: The roles of leader humility, job crafting, and promotion focus. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 94, 102848. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102848>
- Ma, C., Ganegoda, D. B., Chen, Z. X., Jiang, X., & Dong, C. (2020). Effects of perceived overqualification on career distress and career planning: Mediating role of career identity and moderating role of leader humility. *Human Resource Management*, 59, 521–536.
- Ma, C., Wu, C. H., Jiang, X., & Wei, W. (2019). Why and when leader humility promotes constructive voice: A crossover of energy perspective. *Personnel Review*, 49, 1157–1175.
- Maccoby, M. (2004). Narcissistic leaders: The incredible pros, the inevitable cons. *Harvard Business Review*, 82(1), 92–92.
- Mallén, F., Domínguez-Escrig, E., Lapiedra, R., & Chiva, R. (2020). Does leader humility matter? Effects on altruism and innovation. *Management Decision*, 58(5), 967–981. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-11-2018-1180>
- Mangan, D. (2018, March 16). 'Pharma bro' Martin Shkreli bragged 'I have a 150 IQ' and 'no overt psychological issues.' He was wrong. CNBC. <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/03/16/martin-shkreli-bragged-about-iq-and-having-no-overt-psych-issues.html>
- Mao, J., Chiu, C. Y., Owens, B. P., Brown, J. A., & Liao, J. (2019). Growing followers: Exploring the effects of leader humility on follower self-expansion, self-efficacy, and performance. *Journal of Management Studies*, 56, 343–371. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12395>
- Matthews, M. J., Matthews, S. H., Wang, D.(D.), & Kelemen, T. K. (2022). Tweet, like, subscribe! Understanding leadership through social media use. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 33(1), 101580. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2021.101580>
- Matthews, S. H., Kelemen, T. K., & Bolino, M. C. (2021). How follower traits and cultural values influence the effects of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 101497. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2021.101497>
- McClean, S. T., Barnes, C. M., Courtright, S. H., & Johnson, R. E. (2019). Resetting the clock on dynamic leader behaviors: A conceptual integration and agenda for future research. *Academy of Management Annals*, 13(2), 479–508. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2017.0081>
- McGee, C. (2017, June 22). Travis Kalanick's resignation should be a warning to other big personalities in Silicon Valley, says investor. CNBC. <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/06/22/travis-kalanicks-fall-is-a-lesson-for-tech-founders-says-paul-meeks.html>
- Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 1997(74), 5–12.
- Morris, J. A., Brotheridge, C. M., & Urbanski, J. C. (2005). Bringing humility to leadership: Antecedents and consequences of leader humility. *Human Relations*, 58, 1323–1350.
- Naseer, S., Syed, F., Nauman, S., Fatima, T., Jameel, I., & Riaz, N. (2020). Understanding how leaders' humility promotes followers' emotions and ethical behaviors: Workplace spirituality as a mediator. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 15, 407–419. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2019.1615103>
- Nguyen, D. T., Teo, S. T., Halvorsen, B., & Staples, W. (2020). Leader humility and knowledge sharing intention: A serial mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 3416.
- Nielsen, R., & Marrone, J. A. (2018). Humility: Our current understanding of the construct and its role in organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 20(4), 805–824. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12160>
- Norouzinik, Y., Rahimnia, F., Maharati, Y., & Eslami, G. (2021). Narcissistic leadership and employees' innovative behaviour: Mediating roles of job embeddedness and job engagement. *Innovations*, 1–26.
- Oc, B., Bashshur, M. R., Daniels, M. A., Greguras, G. J., & Diefendorff, J. M. (2015). Leader humility in Singapore. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 26, 68–80. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.11.005>
- Oc, B., Daniels, M. A., Diefendorff, J. M., Bashshur, M. R., & Greguras, G. J. (2020). Humility breeds authenticity: How authentic leader humility shapes follower vulnerability and felt authenticity. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 158, 112–125.
- O'Mahony, S., & Bechky, B. A. (2006). Stretchwork: Managing the career progression paradox in external labor markets. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(5), 918–941.
- Ou, A. Y., Seo, J., Choi, D., & Hom, P. W. (2017). When can humble top executives retain middle managers? The moderating role of top management team faultlines. *Academy of Management Journal*, 60, 1915–1931. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2015.1072>
- Ou, A. Y., Tsui, A. S., Kinicki, A. J., Waldman, D. A., Xiao, Z., & Song, L. J. (2014). Humble chief executive officers' connections to top management team integration and middle managers' responses. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 59, 34–72. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0001839213520131>
- Ou, A. Y., Waldman, D. A., & Peterson, S. J. (2018). Do humble CEOs matter? An examination of CEO humility and firm outcomes. *Journal of Management*, 44, 1147–1173.
- Owens, B. P. (2009). *Humility in Organizational Leadership*. University of Washington.
- Owens, B. P., & Hekman, D. R. (2012). Modeling how to grow: An inductive examination of humble leader behaviors, contingencies, and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55, 787–818.
- Owens, B. P., & Hekman, D. R. (2016). How does leader humility influence team performance? Exploring the mechanisms of contagion and collective promotion focus. *Academy of Management Journal*, 59, 1088–1111. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.0660>
- Owens, B. P., Johnson, M. D., & Mitchell, T. R. (2013). Expressed humility in organizations: Implications for performance, teams, and leadership. *Organization Science*, 24, 1517–1538. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1120.0795>
- Owens, B. P., Rowatt, W. C., & Wilkins, A. L. (2011). Exploring the relevance and implications of humility in organization. In *Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship* (Vol. 1) (pp. 260–272).
- Owens, B. P., Wallace, A. S., & Waldman, D. A. (2015). Leader narcissism and follower outcomes: The counterbalancing effect of leader humility. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 100, 1203–1213. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038698>
- Owens, B. P., Yam, K. C., Mao, J. H., Bednar, J., & Hart, D. (2019). The impact of leader moral humility on follower moral self-efficacy and behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104, 146.
- Peng, A. C., Wang, B., Schaubroeck, J. M., & Gao, R. (2020). Can humble leaders get results? The indirect and contextual influences of skip-level leaders. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 27, 329–339.
- Peters, A. S., Rowatt, W. C., & Johnson, M. K. (2011). Associations between dispositional humility and social relationship quality. *Psychology*, 2, 155–161. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2011.23025>
- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*.
- Petrenko, O. V., Aime, F., Recendes, T., & Chandler, J. A. (2019). The case for humble expectations: CEO humility and market performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, 40, 1938–1964.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88, 879–903. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879>

- Powers, C., Nam, R. K., Rowatt, W. C., & Hill, P. C. (2007). Associations between humility, spiritual transcendence, and forgiveness. *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion*, 18, 74–94.
- Qian, S., Liu, Y., & Chen, Y. (2020). Leader humility as a predictor of employees' feedback-seeking behavior: The intervening role of psychological safety and job insecurity. *Current Psychology*.
- Qian, X., Zhang, M., & Jiang, Q. (2020). Leader humility, and subordinates' organizational citizenship behavior and withdrawal behavior: Exploring the mediating mechanisms of subordinates' psychological capital. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17, 2544. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17072544>
- Qin, X., Chen, C., Yam, K. C., Huang, M., & Ju, D. (2020). The double-edged sword of leader humility: Investigating when and why leader humility promotes versus inhibits subordinate deviance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 105, 693.
- Qin, X., Liu, X., Brown, J. A., Zheng, X., & Owens, B. P. (2021). Humility harmonized? Exploring whether and how leader and employee humility (in) congruence influences employee citizenship and deviance behaviors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 170(1), 147–165.
- Qiuyun, G., Liu, W., Zhou, K., & Mao, J. (2020). Leader humility and employee organizational deviance: The role of sense of power and organizational identification. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 41, 436–479.
- Rego, A., & Giustiniano, L. (2021). Are relationally transparent leaders more receptive to the relational transparency of others? An authentic dialog perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04792-6>
- Rego, A., Melo, A. I., Bluhm, D. J., e Cunha, M. P., & Júnior, D. R. (2021). Leader-expressed humility predicting team psychological safety: A personality dynamics lens. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 174, 669–686. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-020-04622-1>
- Rego, A., Owens, B., Leal, S., Melo, A. I., e Cunha, M. P., Gonçalves, L., & Ribeiro, P. (2017). How leader humility helps teams to be humbler, psychologically stronger, and more effective: A moderated mediation model. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 28, 639–658. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.02.002>
- Rego, A., Owens, B., Yam, K. C., Bluhm, D., Cunha, M. P. E., Silard, A., Gonçalves, L., Martins, M., Simpson, A. V., & Liu, W. (2019). Leader humility and team performance: Exploring the mediating mechanisms of team PsyCap and task allocation effectiveness. *Journal of Management*, 45, 1009–1033.
- Rego, A., & Simpson, A. V. (2018). The perceived impact of leaders' humility on team effectiveness: An empirical study. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 148, 205–218. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-3008-3>
- Ren, Q., Xu, Y., Zhou, R., & Liu, J. (2020). Can CEO's humble leadership behavior really improve Enterprise performance and sustainability? A case study of Chinese start-up companies. *Sustainability*, 12, 3168.
- Resick, C. J., Hanges, P. J., Dickson, M. W., & Mitchelson, J. K. (2006). A cross-cultural examination of the endorsement of ethical leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 63(4), 345–359.
- Rowatt, W. C., Powers, C., Targhetta, V., Comer, J., Kennedy, S., & Labouff, J. (2006). Development and initial validation of an implicit measure of humility relative to arrogance. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 1(4), 198–211. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760600885671>
- Sajons, G. B. (2020). Estimating the causal effect of measured endogenous variables: A tutorial on experimentally randomized instrumental variables. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 31(5), 101348.
- Salancik, G. R., & Pfeffer, J. (1978). A social information processing approach to job attitudes and task design. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 23, 224–253. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2392563>
- Semadeni, M., Withers, M. C., & Trevis Certo, S. (2014). The perils of endogeneity and instrumental variables in strategy research: Understanding through simulations. *Strategic Management Journal*, 35(7), 1070–1079.
- Shannonhouse, L. R., Mize, M. C. B., Hall, M. E. L., Aten, J. D., Wang, D. C., Davis, E. B., & van Tongeren, D. R. (2019). The behaviors, benefits, and barriers of humanitarian aid leader humility. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 47, 143–159.
- Shaw, K. H., & Mao, J. (2021). Leader–follower congruence in humility and follower voice: The mediating role of affective attachment. *Current Psychology*, 1–10.
- Sieweke, J., & Santoni, S. (2020). Natural experiments in leadership research: An introduction, review, and guidelines. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 31(1), 101338.
- Sousa, M., & van Dierendonck, D. (2017). Servant leadership and the effect of the interaction between humility, action, and hierarchical power on follower engagement. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 141(1), 13–25. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2725-y>
- Swain, J., & Korenman, L. (2018). In their humble opinion: How expressions of humility affect superiors' assessments of leadership potential in the US Army. *Military Psychology*, 30(6), 507–527. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0895605.2018.1503002>
- Swain, J. E. (2018). Effects of leader humility on the performance of virtual groups. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 12, 21–37. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21552>
- Tangney, I. P. (2000). Humility: Theoretical perspectives, empirical findings and directions for future research. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 19, 70–82. <https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2000.19.1.70>
- Tangney, J. P. (2005). Humility. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of Positive Psychology* (pp. 411–419). Oxford University Press.
- Taylor, B. (2018). If humility is so important, why are leaders so arrogant? *Harvard Business Review*. <https://hbr.org/2018/10/if-humility-is-so-important-why-are-leaders-so-arrogant>
- Tuan, L. T., Rowley, C., Masli, E., Le, V., & Nhi, L. T. P. (2021). Nurturing service-oriented organizational citizenship behavior among tourism employees through leader humility. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 46, 456–467. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2021.02.001>
- Uhl-Bien, M., Riggio, R. E., Lowe, K. B., & Carsten, M. K. (2014). Follower-ship theory: A review and research agenda. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(1), 83–104. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.11.007>
- Walters, K. N., & Diab, D. L. (2016). Humble leadership: Implications for psychological safety and follower engagement. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 10, 7–18.
- Wang, J., Zhang, Z., & Jia, M. (2017). Understanding how leader humility enhances employee creativity: The roles of perspective taking and cognitive reappraisal. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 53, 5–31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021886316678907>
- Wang, J., Zhang, Z., & Jia, M. (2020). Echoes of corporate social responsibility: How and when does CSR influence employees' promotive and prohibitive voices? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 167, 253–269. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04151-6>
- Wang, L., Owens, B. P., Li, J. J., & Shi, L. (2018). Exploring the affective impact, boundary conditions, and antecedents of leader humility. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103, 1019.
- Wang, X., Li, H., & Yin, H. (2020). Antecedents and consequences of creativity in teams: When and how leader humility promotes performance via team creativity. *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, 54(4), 843–856. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.410>
- Wang, Y., Liu, J., & Zhu, Y. (2018a). How does humble leadership promote follower creativity? The roles of psychological capital and growth need strength. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 39, 507–521. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-03-2017-0069>
- Wang, Y., Liu, J., & Zhu, Y. (2018b). Humble leadership, psychological safety, knowledge sharing, and follower creativity: A cross-level investigation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 1727. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01727>

- Wang, Y., Luo, W., Zhang, J., & Guo, Y. (2019). More humility, less counter-productive work behaviors? The role of interpersonal justice and trust. *Frontiers of Business Research in China*, 13, 20. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s11782-019-0069-7>
- Weick, K. E. (1993). The collapse of sensemaking in organizations: The Mann gulch disaster. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 628–652.
- Weiss, H. M., & Cropanzano, R. (1996). Affective events theory. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 18(1), 1–74.
- Xu, A. J., Loi, R., & Lam, L. W. (2015). The bad boss takes it all: How abusive supervision and leader-member exchange interact to influence employee silence. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 26(5), 763–774. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.03.002>
- Yang, J., Zhang, W., & Chen, X. (2019). Why do leaders express humility and how does this matter: A rational choice perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1925.
- Yang, K., Zhou, L., Wang, Z., Lin, C., & Luo, Z. (2019a). Humble leadership and innovative behaviour among Chinese nurses: The mediating role of work engagement. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 27, 1801–1808.
- Yang, K., Zhou, L., Wang, Z., Lin, C., & Luo, Z. (2019b). The dark side of expressed humility for non-humble leaders: A conservation of resources perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1858. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01858>
- Yao, J., Liu, X., & He, W. (2021). The curvilinear relationship between team informational faultlines and creativity: Moderating role of team humble leadership. *Management Decision*, 59, 2793–2808. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-12-2019-1698>
- Ye, B. H., Tung, V. W. S., Li, J. J., & Zhu, H. (2020). Leader humility, team humility and employee creative performance: The moderating roles of task dependence and competitive climate. *Tourism Management*, 81, 104170.
- Yuan, L., Zhang, L., & Tu, Y. (2018). When a leader is seen as too humble: A curvilinear mediation model linking leader humility to employee creative process engagement. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 39, 468–481. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-03-2017-0056>
- Zapata, C. P., & Hayes-Jones, L. C. (2019). The consequences of humility for leaders: A double-edged sword. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 152, 47–63.
- Zhang, H., Ou, A. Y., Tsui, A. S., & Wang, H. (2017). CEO humility, narcissism and firm innovation: A paradox perspective on CEO traits. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 28, 585–604. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2017.01.003>
- Zhang, W., & Liu, W. (2019). Leader humility and taking charge: The role of OBSE and leader prototypicality. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 2515.
- Zhang, Z., & Song, P. (2020). Multi-level effects of humble leadership on Employees' work well-being: The roles of psychological safety and error management climate. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 3150. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.571840>
- Zhong, J., Zhang, L., Li, P., & Zhang, D. Z. (2019). Can leader humility enhance employee wellbeing? The mediating role of employee humility. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 41, 19–36.
- Zhong, J., Zhang, L., Xiao, H., & Wen, Q. (2021). Antecedents and consequences of follower moqi: Leader humility, follower humility, and knowledge hiding. *Current Psychology*, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02001-1>
- Zhou, F., & Wu, Y. J. (2018). How humble leadership fosters employee innovation behavior: A two-way perspective on the leader-employee interaction. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 39, 375–387. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-07-2017-0181>
- Zhou, X., Wu, Z., Liang, D., Jia, R., Wang, M., Chen, C., & Lu, G. (2021). Nurses' voice behaviour: The influence of humble leadership, affective commitment and job embeddedness in China. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 29, 1603–1612. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jonm.13306>
- Zhu, Y., Zhang, S., & Shen, Y. (2019). Humble leadership and employee resilience: Exploring the mediating mechanism of work-related promotion focus and perceived insider identity. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 673.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Thomas K. Kelemen is an Assistant Professor of Management at Kansas State University. He received his PhD from the University of Oklahoma. His research interests include leadership, organizational citizenship behavior, and job design.

Samuel H. Matthews is an Assistant Professor of Management in the College of Business at the University of Northern Iowa. He received his PhD from the University of Oklahoma. His research interests include leadership and job design.

Michael J. Matthews is a doctoral student at the University of Oklahoma. His research interests include leadership, workplace mistreatment, and prosocial behaviors.

Sarah E. Henry is a doctoral candidate at the University of Oklahoma. Her research interests include prosocial behavior, impression management, and global careers.

How to cite this article: Kelemen, T. K., Matthews, S. H., Matthews, M. J., & Henry, S. E. (2023). Humble leadership: A review and synthesis of leader expressed humility. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 44(2), 202–224. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2608>