

# Voice or Consistency? What You Perceive as Procedurally Fair Depends on Your Level of Power Distance

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## Abstract

Power distance (PD) is a cultural value known for its moderating effect on subordinates' reaction to procedural justice. The reaction to procedural justice in general as well as the reaction to the *voice* criterion exclusively emerged to be stronger among low PD (LPD) than high PD (HPD) individuals. Until now, no research exists, however, on the effect of PD on Leventhal's procedural justice criteria, when measured separately. By means of two studies, the effect of PD on *voice* was therefore compared with the effect of PD on Leventhal's *consistency* criterion. *Consistency* was chosen due to HPD individuals' preference for structure and stability. Study 1 ( $n = 258$ ), a cross-cultural scenario-based study examining the effect in terms of received and violated fairness, revealed a moderating effect of PD on the reaction to *voice*, but not on the reaction to *consistency*. *Voice* was found to be exclusively important for LPD individuals, whereas *consistency* emerged to be important regardless of PD. Study 2, a mono-cultural within-subjects study ( $n = 161$ ), replicated these results. Accordingly, not *voice* but *consistency* seems to be the procedural justice criterion of particular relevance for managers to consider in times of globalization and increasing cultural diversity.

## Keywords

cultural psychology, power distance, procedural justice, voice, consistency

In the 16th century, the execution of two Dutch counts for taking a petition for religious freedom from the Dutch nobility to King Philip resulted in a shock in Europe. The reason for this to happen might have been that the counts and the King differed considerably in power distance (PD), which is according to Hofstede (1980) the extent to which less powerful members of institutions and organizations expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. While King Philip the Second of Spain aimed to establish absolute authority over his territories, demanded blind obedience, and did not accept anybody taking voice, the counts and the Dutch nobility regarded their

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right to participate in decisions by expressing their opinion as central element of fair treatment by the government (Hofstede, 2006).

Nowadays, work settings that include people with varying PD are still complicated by different expectations of managerial decision making, including the definition of what accounts for a fair procedure (e.g., Kim & Leung, 2007; Yang, Mossholder, & Peng, 2007). Today, we also know, however, that PD orientation differs not only on the country level, but also on the individual level (Brockner, 2005; Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001; for overview, see Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson's review, 2006). As the perception of justice and specifically the perception of procedural justice is known to have serious effects on individuals' work attitude and behavior (see fair process effect; for example, Van den Bos, 2005), it is important to know about PD-related perception differences and to learn how to counteract misinterpretations of managerial behavior in the future.

The present research aims therefore to explore how PD impacts employees' perception and reaction to procedural (in)justice both across countries (Study 1) and within a country (Study 2). For this purpose, we compare two specific criteria of procedural justice with each other, voice—which was repeatedly proved to be important for low power distant individuals due to its possibility to express one's opinion and thereby gaining control over the decision outcome—and consistency—which is assumed to play a significant role in high power distant individuals' procedural justice perception by ensuring uniformity in the manager's decision strategy and thereby offering the highly rated stability among high power distant individuals. Because in high power distant cultures the role of a manager is to initiate structure, in contrast to asking for the subordinates' view (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994), by including consistency in our two studies and comparing its effect to the effect of voice, more knowledge on the differences between low and high power distant individuals' fairness perception and reaction to it should be gained.

## PD

PD, as introduced earlier, is one of Hofstede's (1980, 2001) five cultural dimensions and measures a person's attitude toward varying hierarchy levels. In an organizational context, the PD orientation of employees becomes apparent in two ways, their behavior in the presence of a manager—rather submissive or not—and their expectations concerning managerial decision making and supervision—either participative and consultative or autocratic and paternalistic (e.g., Brockner et al., 2001; Hofstede, 2006). While low PD (LPD) orientation is associated with the preference for flat hierarchical structures which offer the possibility to participate in a decision process, the norms of high PD (HPD) orientation legitimize differences in decision-making power between those high and low in power, resulting in a tolerance for stronger hierarchies with strictly organized structures led by autocratic, strong managers who reach decisions without consulting subordinates (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994).

Recent studies criticized Hofstede for ignoring within-country cultural heterogeneity (e.g., Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006; Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001) and revealed that “people vary on pivotal psychological dimensions (e.g., power distance beliefs, traditionality) both on a between-country basis and on a within-country basis” (Brockner, 2005, p. 353). In line with this argumentation, PD-related effects on procedural justice in general as well as on voice explicitly were observed to appear both when measuring on a cross-cultural basis (three studies by Brockner et al., 2001; three studies by Tyler, Lind, & Huo, 2000) and mono-cultural basis (e.g., in Hong Kong: Brockner et al., 2001; Francesco & Chen, 2000; in the United States: Tyler et al., 2000). Understanding PD-related differences in procedural justice perception is central, however, to ensure a good working climate within organizations. As shown repeatedly, among the four dimensions of organizational justice—distributive, procedural, informational, and interpersonal justice (for overview, see Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001)—the perception of

procedural justice appeared to act as a particular strong predictor of work-related attitudes and behaviors (cf. Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001).

### *PD and Procedural Justice*

Procedural justice describes the fact that the fairness perception of a decision is not solely a matter of the favorability of the allocation outcome but also of the procedure used to achieve the outcome (Leventhal, 1976a, 1976b, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975, 1978). In total, procedural justice consists of seven different criteria (cf. Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001): voice (Thibaut & Walker, 1975), reflecting the possibility to express one's opinion within a decision process, and Leventhal's (1980) six criteria. According to Leventhal, a decision process in an organization is perceived as fair, if a decision is (a) consistent in the application of the allocation procedures across persons and over time (*consistency rule*), (b) free from any bias (*bias-suppression rule*), (c) accurate in the gathering and including of information (*accuracy rule*), (d) reversible or alterable in case of inaccuracy (*correctability rule*), (e) representing all basic concerns, and values of the affected persons (*representativeness rule*), and finally (f) based on personal standards of fundamental moral and ethical values (*ethicality rule*). Today, the relevance of these seven procedural justice criteria in provoking favorable reactions is a well-known fact. The effect of perceived procedural justice on individuals' attitude or behavior is also referred to as "fair process effect" (e.g., Van den Bos, 2005). In the working context, fair managerial decision procedures proved to be central, for instance, to create climates of trust (e.g., Dirks & Ferrin, 2002) and to avoid withdrawal cognitions among subordinates (e.g., Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Van Dick et al., 2004).

Interestingly, in case of HPD, the positive effect of procedural justice on work-relevant outcomes was found to be mitigated (Lee, Pillutla, & Law, 2000; Yang et al., 2007: testing procedural justice with combined procedural justice measures including voice and Leventhal's six criteria as, for instance, by Moorman, 1991, or Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). Bearing in mind that individuals high in PD are known to tolerate a more autocratic leadership style and to behave more submissively in the presence of a manager (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Hofstede, 1980; Kim & Leung, 2007), it is likely that specific criteria of the concept of procedural justice (as established in the West, see Colquitt et al., 2001) do not affect LPD and HPD individuals the same way. A procedural justice criterion which emerged to have a significantly differing effect on LPD and HPD individuals is voice.

### *PD and Voice*

Voice, as introduced above, describes the perception of process control in form of receiving the possibility to voice one's view (Folger, 1977; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). In the past, various studies (e.g., Lind, Kanfer, & Earley, 1990; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1996; Thibaut & Walker, 1975) demonstrated the significance of receiving voice within a decision process to perceive a procedure as fair. The effect is explained by people's preference for procedures that grant control over the process leading to the final decision.

In the last two decades, findings of the significance of voice were challenged, however. Several researchers (Begley, Lee, Fang, & Li, 2002; Brockner et al., 2001; Francesco & Chen, 2000; Tyler et al., 2000) revealed a significant buffering effect of HPD orientation on the perception and reaction to voice. While individuals low in PD were found to react significantly more positive to decision processes offering voice as opposed to decision processes denying voice, no such tendencies (or at least much smaller tendencies) emerged among HPD individuals.

A possible explanation for these findings is offered by Wang and Clegg (2002). In line with earlier findings (Porta, Lopez-de-Silanes, Shleifer, & Vishny, 1997; Shane, 1993), they

demonstrated smaller levels of managerial trust in subordinates in HPD societies. While Chinese (HPD) and Australian (LPD) managers did not differ in their belief concerning their subordinates' ability to complete a task, Chinese, as opposed to Australian managers, showed significantly less trust in the willingness of subordinates to take responsibility for their task. This decreased level of trust was further found to be negatively related with the willingness to offer subordinates the possibility to participate in decision processes. Wang and Clegg suggest, therefore, that HPD subordinates are more used to rely on the arrangements of their boss and care less about lacking possibilities to impose voice in decisions. Beyond that, a manager who solicits voice to reach a decision may even create an impression of managerial incompetence among employees high in PD; that is why voice may not have the same significance for HPD individuals as it has for LPD individuals. If this is true and voice does not play a similarly important role in procedural justice perception among HPD individuals as it does among LPD individuals, the question arises: What is important for HPD individuals to perceive a procedure as fair and to react favorably?

### *PD and Consistency*

Van den Bos, Vermunt, and Wilke (1996) demonstrated the significance of the consistent application of decision procedures to feel fairly treated. By combining the examination of the effect of voice and consistency in one study, they revealed that only when voice was expected beforehand, the perception of voice within the vignette had a significant effect on participants' perceived fairness (consistency); if no possibility to express one's voice was expected (inconsistency), no such effect appeared or even more, the decision including the possibility to voice their opinion was evaluated as less fair than the decision including no possibility to express their opinion. The consistency rule, examined within this study, is one of Leventhal's (1980) six criteria of procedural justice and determines that procedures must be kept stable over time and across persons. According to Leventhal, once standards are set, a sudden change is seen as a violation of procedural fairness, while the compliance of set procedures will be perceived as fair.

Considering that HPD individuals are not used to being asked for their opinion (cf. Wang & Clegg, 2002), they may not expect participation in the decision process and react in a much weakened form to no-voice procedures, therefore. Consistency, on the contrary, is according to Bochner and Hesketh (1994) and several others (Davis, 1997; Gray, 1988; Vitell, Nwachukwu, & Barnes, 1993) of particular importance for HPD individuals. Bochner and Hesketh (1994) pointed out that in HPD cultures, the main duty of a manager is to initiate structure. By initiating structure and setting standards, the highly rated stability among HPD individuals is provided. Davis (1997) supported this line of argument, claiming that in contrast to LPD individuals (such as U.S. or U.K. citizens), Chinese, who are known to be high in PD, prefer to rely particularly strong on standards, rules, and formal procedures when handling uncertain work events, instead of relying on their own experiences or skills. Likewise, Gray (1988) as well as Vitell and colleagues (1993) emphasized the salience of structures and rules among HPD individuals. Because the perception of the consistent application of rules over time and across persons offers the structure aimed for among HPD cultures, knowing the rules relevant in decision processes and having the guarantee for the consistent use of these rules should be of great value among people with HPD.

To our knowledge, no studies examined the explicit effect of PD on Leventhal's consistency criterion or any other Leventhal criterion until now. Following Davis's (1997), Gray's (1988), as well as Vitell and colleagues' (1993) claim, the adherence to the consistency rule would be expected, however, to be of higher relevance among HPD individuals than receiving voice in order to feel fairly treated. In comparison with voice and Leventhal's additional procedural justice criteria, the consistency criterion may be the one which offers the structure, stability and

rules aimed for among HPD individuals. Tyler, Lind, and Huo's (2000) Relational Model of Authority points in the same direction. It states that the treatment by authorities is most important for employees who are having a personalized connection with authorities. Personalized connections are marked by the possibility to negotiate rules, and terms, to share expectations (as by receiving voice), and to act flexible depending of the situation (Farh, Hackett, & Liang, 2007). According to Tyler et al. (2000), PD beliefs shape social connections to authorities as well as to organizations. Results of various studies (Brockner et al., 2001; Lam, Schaubroeck, & Aryee, 2002; Lee et al., 2000) supported this claim, showing that employees high in PD do not have such strong personalized connections. They maintain greater distance to authorities due to their respect and loyalty to authority figures. To being able to act in the right manner, it is more important for employees high in PD, therefore to know the structures and rules related to their respective role than for employees low in PD.

Following this line of reasoning, a moderating effect of PD on the reaction to consistency is assumed. The direction of the presumed effect should be just the other way around than on the reaction to voice. Contrary to voice, the reaction to consistency may be amplified among HPD individuals, rather than mitigated. In other words, we assume that depending on the level of PD, employees evaluate a manager's way to reach far-ranging decisions not only by means of receiving voice or not, but by taking an additional criterion into account, namely the consistency of the structures applied during a decision process. By comparing the effect of PD on the perception of two specific procedural justice criteria—voice and consistency—our research expands the existing research on the moderating effect of PD on procedural justice perception (Begley et al., 2002; Brockner et al., 2001; Francesco & Chen, 2000; Wu & Chaturvedi, 2009; Yang et al., 2007). Moreover, our research was designed both to evaluate whether there are cross-cultural PD-related differences in the reaction to voice and consistency (Study 1) and to determine whether these differences can be found on the individual level also (Study 2). By doing so, we aim to contribute to the study of PD.

## Study 1

Study 1, a cross-cultural scenario study, consisted of a LPD and a HPD subsample and examined the assumed moderating effect of PD on the reaction to voice and consistency both in terms of a fair and an unfair decision situation. Participants were therefore drawn from countries anticipated to differ in PD (Eylon & Au, 1999; Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010) and compared based on their indicated *trust in the fictive manager* and their *withdrawal cognitions* subsequently to reading one of four manipulated decision scenarios.

Trust in the manager and withdrawal cognitions were chosen as outcome variables of interest for two reasons: first, due to their significance in the working context (e.g., Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Griffith, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Van Dick et al., 2004) and, second, due to their repeatedly demonstrated strong relationship with procedural (in)justice (Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002; Brockner et al., 2001; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; for an overview on the fair process effect, see Van den Bos, 2005). Trust in the authority emerged in Colquitt et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis to be particularly affected by the perception of fair procedures. As trust in the manager is further known as a critical factor for other positive work-relevant outcomes, such as job satisfaction or organizational commitment (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002), we included it in our research. Withdrawal cognitions, such as the intention to quit and to search for a new job, however, reflect the negative reaction to a situation and therefore the counterpart of trust. As Study 1 investigated the effect of PD on the reaction to both fair (voice, consistency) and unfair (no-voice, no-consistency) fictive decision situations,<sup>1</sup> the examination of a positive (trust) as well as a negative work attitude (withdrawal cognitions) should help to gain a more complete picture of the moderating effect of PD on the reaction to voice and consistency.



The major purpose of Study 1 is to test whether individuals of cultures with varying PD differ in their reaction to voice (no-voice vs. voice) and consistency (no-consistency vs. consistency). Based on the findings on procedural justice introduced earlier (cf. Colquitt et al., 2001), Hypothesis 1 proposes a main effect of voice (no-voice vs. voice) and consistency (no-consistency vs. consistency), regardless of individuals' PD orientation. While the violation of voice and consistency should result in less trust, but more withdrawal cognitions, receiving voice or rather consistency should lead to a significant increase in trust in the fictive manager and decreased withdrawal cognitions.

Beyond that, Hypothesis 2 suggests a moderating effect of PD on the relationship between the perceptions of voice or rather consistency and participants' trust in the fictive manager as well as their subsequent withdrawal cognitions. In other words, a moderating effect of PD is expected in case of voice as well as in case of consistency. While LPD individuals should show significant stronger differences in their reaction to voice (voice vs. no-voice; cf. Brockner et al., 2001; Francesco & Chen, 2000; Tyler et al., 2000) than to consistency (consistency vs. no-consistency); HPD individuals should—based on their tolerance and expectation of strict hierarchies—react significantly stronger to consistency (consistency vs. no-consistency) than to voice (voice vs. no-voice).

## Method

### Participants and Design

Participants in this study were 258 students ( $M_{\text{age}} = 23.71$ ,  $SD_{\text{age}} = 6.55$ ; 140 female, 117 male) from 10 different countries: Austria ( $n = 39$ ) and Germany ( $n = 35$ )—studying at the University of Salzburg (Austria)—as well as Australia ( $n = 84$ ), China ( $n = 32$ ), Japan ( $n = 18$ ), Indonesia ( $n = 16$ ), Malaysia ( $n = 12$ ), India ( $n = 10$ ), Vietnam ( $n = 8$ ), and the Philippines ( $n = 4$ )—studying (temporarily as international students) at the Flinders University in Adelaide (Australia). At both universities, students were recruited on campus and the completion of the questionnaire took place in computer laboratories. Sex ratio (University of Salzburg: 62.2% female vs. Flinders University: 60.9% female), age (University of Salzburg:  $M_{\text{age}} = 22.96$ ,  $SD_{\text{age}} = 4.54$  vs. Flinders University:  $M_{\text{age}} = 24.01$ ,  $SD_{\text{age}} = 7.19$ ), and student status (University of Salzburg: 89% full-time students vs. Flinders University: 91% full-time students) did not differ between the two sites of recruiting.

Based on Hofstede's PD-index (1980), we divided our cross-cultural sample into two subsamples, a low and a HPD subsample. By means of Hofstede's (1980) PD-index, participants from Austria (PD-index: 11), Germany (PD-index: 35), and Australia (PD-index: 36) were assigned to the LPD group, whereas students from Japan (PD-index: 54), Vietnam (PD-index: 70), India (PD-index: 77), Indonesia (PD-index: 78), China (PD-index: 80), the Philippines (PD-index: 94), and Malaysia (PD-index: 104) were classified as HPD group. Several other studies followed the same approach (e.g., Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Palich, Hom, & Griffeth, 1995) and a number of researchers (Brockner et al., 2001; Eylon & Au, 1999; Pekerti & Sendjaya, 2010) confirmed Hofstede's findings of varying PD in the countries included in this study.

To test our hypotheses, four scenarios were designed: voice, no-voice, consistency, no-consistency. Each participant had to read one scenario. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions ( $n_{\text{voice}} = 63$ ,  $n_{\text{no-voice}} = 66$ ,  $n_{\text{consistency}} = 68$ ,  $n_{\text{no-consistency}} = 61$ ) whereby an approximately equal number of subjects were assigned to each group within each culture.

### Procedure

Participants were recruited and invited to a laboratory session to fill in the computer-based questionnaire at their respective University Campus. The questionnaire existed in two different

languages: in German, which was given to students studying at the University of Salzburg, and in English, which was given to students at Flinders University in Adelaide. As English was the classroom language at Flinders University, students were familiar with this language. Versions were translated into English and back translated to ensure accuracy (Brislin, 1980). To control for language problems among Asian students two items concerning the understanding of the questionnaire were included in the English version. Participants answering the item "Have you understood everything?" with *no* and/or "Have you had any language problems?" with *yes* were excluded *ex ante* from further analysis.

At the beginning of the survey, all participants were instructed to read a vignette describing a hypothetical situation in an organization and putting themselves in the shoes of the described employee. All scenarios (voice, no-voice, consistency, or no-consistency) started with the same introduction, explaining a merger of two companies that resulted in a lot of changes. A new manager had replaced the former manager and even the daily duties of the employees had been influenced by this new expansion of the department. The changes in the department were also apparent in the way the new manager reached his decisions concerning the department. A good example therefore was the decision the new manager made concerning the reallocation of the offices. After this short introduction, the manipulation followed.

**Voice.** When it was time to come to a decision, it appeared that your new manager was very interested in your opinion. He repeatedly consulted you, as well as your previous and new colleagues, on your opinions and views. Not until he had listened to your ideas and considered other opinions did he make his final decision.

**No-voice.** When it was time to come to a decision, it appeared that your new manager was not interested in your opinion at all. He neither consulted you, nor your previous or new colleagues, about your opinions and views. He had not listened to your ideas or considered other opinions when he made his final decision.

**Consistency.** When it was time to come to a decision, it appeared that your new manager followed a well-structured decision process. He followed predetermined criteria and rules. As you were able to retrace his decision by following his defined decision criteria, the decision was easy to understand and came as no surprise.

**No-consistency.** When it was time to come to a decision, it appeared that your new manager decided in a quite spontaneous and flexible way. There was a considerable amount of uncertainty in your department about how your new manager came to his decision. As you had no idea according to what criteria your new manager reached his final decision, the decision was a total surprise for you and your workmates.

Subsequently to reading the vignette, participants were asked again to imagine themselves being in the position described within the scenario while answering the following questions. Responses to all dependent variables as well as to the manipulation check items were made on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *I totally disagree* to 7 = *I totally agree*).

## Measures

**Trust in the manager.** Participants' trust in the fictive manager was measured with Ferres and Travaglione's (2003; Workplace Trust Survey) trust in the manager subscale (e.g., "I believe that my manager follows words through with action"; LPD:  $\alpha = .95$ , HPD:  $\alpha = .88$ ; overall:  $\alpha = .93$ ).

*Withdrawal cognitions.* By means of a three-item measure (“I think about quitting my current job,” “I intend to search for another job,” “I intend to quit my current job”), based on Mobley’s (1977) theory on employee turnover, we assessed participants’ withdrawal cognitions (LPD: Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .94$ ; HPD: Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .93$ , overall:  $\alpha = .93$ ). The measure was used quite similarly already in the past (e.g., Alexander, Lichtenstein, Oh, & Ulman, 1998).

*Manipulation check.* Manipulation check items were based on Colquitt’s (2001) procedural justice measure. Subsequently to the voice conditions (voice, no-voice) participants had to rate their level of agreement by means of two statements (e.g., “My manager gives me the opportunity to express my own point of view”); subsequently to the consistency conditions (consistency, no-consistency) also two statements followed (e.g., “My new manager applies procedures of decisions consistently”).

*Cultural identification.* To ensure that the identification with the own culture and its inherent values were not interfered by studying and living in another country, a two-item measure by Hoshino-Browne, Spencer, Zanna, Zanna, and Kitayama (2005) was employed. Participants were asked (a) with which culture they identify most and (b) how much they identify with this culture on a 22-point scale ranging in steps of 5% from 0% to 100%. Results revealed that participants identified most with the culture of the country they indicated as their nationality. The levels of the identification strength were relatively strong ( $M = 16.62$ ,  $SD = 4.21$ ), showing that the average of the participants identified more than 75% with their own culture.

## Results

### *Manipulation Check*

The manipulation check for fairness was conducted separately for voice and consistency. Results of *t* tests supported our manipulation. Participants in the voice condition appeared to feel significantly more involved in the decision process ( $M = 5.63$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ ) than participants in the no-voice condition ( $M = 2.79$ ,  $SD = 1.65$ ),  $t(133) = 11.36$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.97$ . Similarly, the perception of consistent use of structures during the decision-making process was significantly higher among participants in the consistency condition ( $M = 5.70$ ,  $SD = 1.31$ ) than in the no-consistency condition ( $M = 2.22$ ,  $SD = 1.25$ ),  $t(128) = 15.44$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 2.73$ .

### *Test of Hypothesis*

Because the experimental factor is a categorical variable with four levels (i.e., voice, no-voice, consistency, no-consistency), we used contrast coding (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003) to test our hypotheses. To compare the findings with earlier studies (e.g., Brockner et al., 2001), we tested the effects of voice (no-voice vs. voice) and consistency (no-consistency vs. consistency) separately. To test the effects of voice, we coded the voice group 0.5, the no-voice group  $-0.5$ , and both consistency groups 0 (contrast code 1 [CC1]). Analogous, to explore the effects of consistency we coded the consistency group 0.5, the no-consistency group  $-0.5$ , and both voice groups 0 (contrast code 2 [CC2]). Finally, to explore the overall voice conditions effects compared with the overall consistency conditions effects on the dependent variables, we coded both voice groups 0.5 and both consistency groups  $-0.5$  (contrast code 3 [CC3]). All upcoming analyses were calculated by using these three variables.

An inspection of the correlation coefficients (see Table 1) showed that of all control variables included (age, gender, country of birth, being an international student, cultural identification) only cultural identification was significantly correlated with trust ( $r = .15$ ,  $p = .05$ ). No significant relation at all could be found in case of withdrawal cognitions.



**Table 1.** Intercorrelations Between Procedural Justice Criteria (Voice/Consistency), Fairness (Unfair/Fair), PD (Low/High), Outcome, and Control Variables ( $n = 258$ ).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Sex										
2. Age	.04									
3. Country of birth	-.05	.13*								
4. International student	-.31**	.05	.18**							
5. Identification with culture	.10	-.00	.07	-.08						
6. Voice (CC1)	.04	-.05	.03	.10	.09					
7. Consistency (CC2)	.02	.04	.05	-.03	-.02	.00				
8. Voice versus Consistency (CC3)	-.08	.14*	.02	-.02	.05	-.02	-.04			
9. Power distance	-.07	.18**	.58**	-.03	.04	-.05	-.01	.06		
10. Trust in manager	-.07	-.09	.07	.08	.15*	.42**	.50**	.11	.07	
11. Withdrawal cognitions	.04	.10	.07	.06	-.10	-.26**	-.33**	-.06	.02	-.54**

Note. CC1: no-voice = -0.5 vs. voice = 0.5, no-consistency/consistency = 0; CC2: no-consistency = -0.5 vs. consistency = 0.5, no-voice/voice = 0; CC3: no-voice/voice = -0.5 vs. no-consistency/consistency = 0.5. PD = power distance; CC = contrast code.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

To test for our hypotheses, two separate hierarchical regression analyses were conducted—one for each dependent variable, trust and withdrawal cognitions (results of the hierarchical regression analyses are summarized in Table 2). All independent variables were standardized, and the interaction term was calculated on the basis of these standardized terms (Aiken & West, 1991). In the first step, sex, age, and the identification with the respective culture were entered as control variables; Step 2 tested for the independent effect of voice (CC1), consistency (CC2), voice versus consistency (CC3), and PD (low/high); and in Step 3, the three two-way interaction terms, Voice versus Consistency  $\times$  PD, Voice  $\times$  PD, and Consistency  $\times$  PD, were added to the hierarchical regression analysis.

The only control variable that gained (marginal) significance in Step 1 of our hierarchical regression analyses was identification with the own culture, indicating that the higher the identification with the own culture, the stronger the reaction to our vignettes.

In line with Hypothesis 1, Step 2 revealed both in case of trust and in case of withdrawal cognitions a significant main effect of voice (CC1) and consistency (CC2). As hypothesized, fair procedural treatment (voice or consistency) induced significant higher levels of trust in the supervisor and reduced withdrawal cognitions than unfair treatment (no-voice or no-consistency). In case of trust, a significant main effect appeared also for voice versus consistency (CC3); in case of withdrawal cognitions, no such effect was observed. Beyond that, results revealed a significant main effect of PD on individuals' trust in the described supervisor. While HPD was found to lead to significant higher trust levels (regardless of the procedural justice criteria manipulated); when testing for withdrawal cognitions, no significant effect was found.

Our main hypothesis, Hypothesis 2, proposed a significant moderating effect of PD on the reaction to voice and consistency. By adding the two-way interaction term Voice versus Consistency  $\times$  PD, Voice  $\times$  PD, as well as Consistency  $\times$  PD in Step 3, this assumption was tested. According to our hypothesis, both interactions, the interaction Voice  $\times$  PD and the interaction Consistency  $\times$  PD, should gain significance; the direction should be just the other way around. Contrary to our hypothesis, no significant interaction emerged between PD and consistency. Both regression analyses, for trust and for withdrawal cognitions, revealed a significant interaction effect between voice (CC1) and PD, but not between consistency (CC2) and PD. As indicated by the results, individuals low and high in PD differed significantly in their reaction to

**Table 2.** Results of the Hierarchical Regression Analyses Predicting Trust and Withdrawal Cognitions (*n* = 258).

Predictor	Trust in the manager			Withdrawal cognitions		
	$\Delta R^2$	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>	$\Delta R^2$	<i>B</i>	<i>SEB</i>
Step 1	.03*			.02		
Sex		-.11	.06		.05	.10
Age		-.11	.06		.16	.10
Cultural identification		.21*	.06		-.17†	.10
Step 2	.44***			.18***		
Voice (CC1)		.57***	.05		-.41***	.09
Consistency (CC2)		.70**	.05		-.54***	.09
Voice vs. Consistency (CC3)		.18**	.05		-.14	.09
PD		.13*	.05		-.01	.09
Step 3	.05***			.03*		
Voice × PD		-.32***	.25		.25**	.09
Consistency × PD		-.08	.26		-.04	.09
Voice versus Consistency × PD		-.03	.18		-.08	.09
Total Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.51***			.20***		

Note. CC1: no-voice = -0.5 vs. voice = 0.5, no-consistency/consistency = 0; CC2: no-consistency = -0.5 vs. consistency = 0.5, no-voice/voice = 0; CC3: no-voice/voice = -0.5 vs. no-consistency/consistency = 0.5. PD = power distance; CC = contrast code.

†*p* < .10. \**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .01. \*\*\**p* < .001.

voice, but not in their reaction to consistency. Furthermore, no significant interaction appeared between voice versus consistency (CC3) and PD.

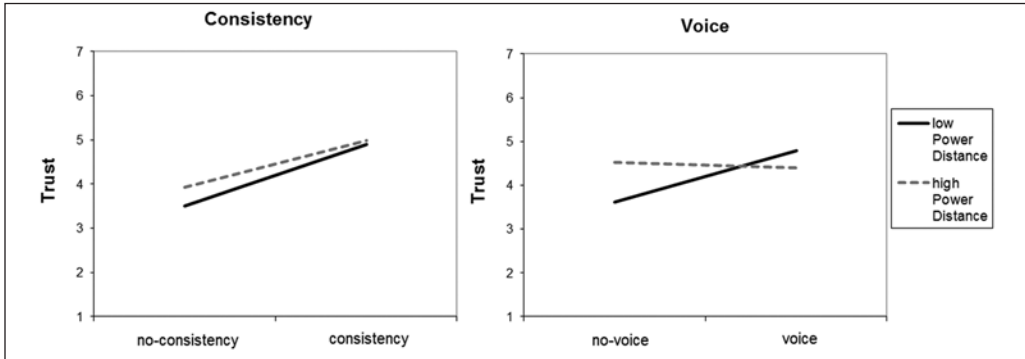
To analyze the nature of the two-way interactions, simple slopes were tested (Hayes & Matthes, 2009). Figure 1 (trust) and Figure 2 (withdrawal cognitions) depict the two-way interactions by plotting the regression lines separately for LPD and HPD.

Simple slope tests confirmed our assumption concerning the effect of PD on the reaction to voice. While LPD individuals showed significant differences in their trust-level (*B* = .89, *SEB* = .08, *p* < .001, confidence interval [CI] = [.73, 1.05]) and withdrawal cognition-level (*B* = -.68, *SEB* = .12, *p* < .001, CI = [-.92, -.44]) depending on receiving the possibility to express one’s voice or experiencing a violation of voice, no such effect emerged for HPD individuals (trust: *B* = .17, *SEB* = .10, *p* = .076, CI = [-.02, .36]; withdrawal cognitions: *B* = -.08, *SEB* = .14, *p* = .588, CI = [-.36, .20]). In case of consistency, on the contrary, LPD and HPD individuals appeared to react quite similar. Both LPD and HPD individuals showed significant decreased levels of trust (LPD: *B* = .75, *SEB* = .08, *p* < .001, CI = [.59, .91]; HPD: *B* = .57, *SEB* = .11, *p* < .001, CI = [.36, .78]) and increased levels of withdrawal cognitions (LPD: *B* = -.52, *SEB* = .12, *p* < .001, CI = [-.74, -.29]; HPD: *B* = -.56, *SEB* = .16, *p* < .001, CI = [-.86, -.25]) depending on the consistency criteria being violated or met.

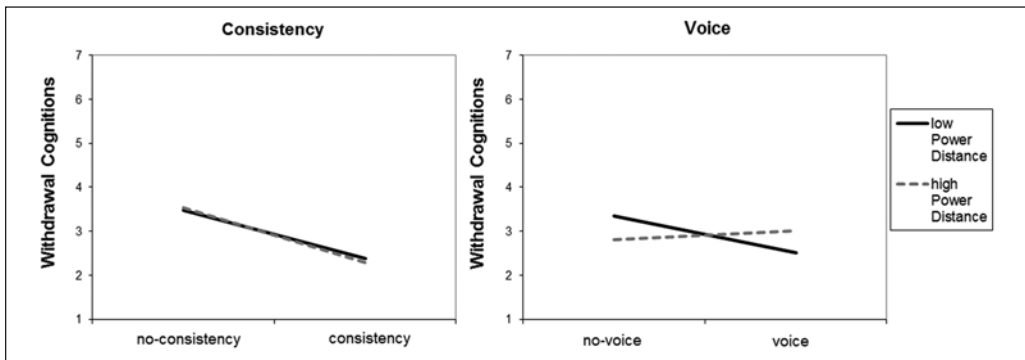
Summing up, the hypothesized buffering effect of LPD orientation on the reaction to voice was supported by the data; the hypothesized buffering effect of HPD orientation on the reaction to consistency could not be confirmed. Unexpectedly, consistency appeared to be important for people from low as well as from HPD cultures.

## Discussion

In line with previous research and our hypothesis (Brockner et al., 2001; Francesco & Chen, 2000; Tyler et al., 2000), results of Study 1 demonstrated significant greater differences in the



**Figure 1.** Simple slopes of low and high power distance predicting trust in the manager in case of violated or received fairness; separately for consistency and voice.



**Figure 2.** Simple slopes of low and high power distance predicting withdrawal cognitions in case of violated or received fairness; separately for consistency and voice.

reaction to the manipulation of voice (no-voice vs. voice) among individuals from LPD cultures than among individuals from HPD cultures. HPD individuals appeared to react quite similar to situations including voice compared with situations denying voice; interestingly, it even seems as receiving voice leads to slightly more negative reactions than receiving no-voice (see Figures 1 and 2).

Consistency turned out, as assumed, to provoke stronger reactions among HPD individuals than voice. It was found, however, that the perception of consistency as opposed to the perception of no-consistency led not only among HPD individuals to significantly more positive outcomes but also among LPD individuals. In other words, consistency appeared to provoke an overall strong reaction regardless of PD: While the perception that decision procedures were applied consistently by the manager resulted in higher levels of trust and less withdrawal cognitions, the perception of no-consistency resulted in significant less favorable outcomes.

A significant main effect appeared for voice versus consistency in case of trust, yet no significant interaction between PD and the variable voice versus consistency emerged. As the variable CC3 included both fair and unfair scenarios, a valid interpretation of the results is difficult. To compare the moderating effect of PD on the reaction with voice and consistency explicitly, more research has to be done.

Summing up, results revealed a significant moderating effect of PD on the reaction to voice, but not on the reaction to consistency. It may be assumed, therefore, that PD has not an effect on

the reaction to procedural justice in general, but on voice explicitly. Thus, Study 1 provides a valuable contribution to our knowledge on PD-related procedural justice perception to test the generality of the results found within this study; further research that compares LPD and HPD individuals' reaction to (no-)voice and (no-) consistency directly is needed, however.

Beyond that, Study 1 was certainly not without limitations. First of all, the moderating effect of PD on the reaction to voice and consistency was examined by including individuals from countries which are known for their either particular LPD or HPD orientation, but not by measuring individuals' PD itself. Secondly, the effect of the manipulated decision situation was tested by variations in individuals' trust and withdrawal cognitions. Even though it is known, based on research on the fair process effect (Van den Bos, 2005), that the perception of fair or rather unfair treatment leads to variations in trust in the manager and withdrawal cognitions, the results, to their full extent, could partly also result from varying basic norms or attitudes—such as variation in the basic trust levels or tendencies to withdraw—linked to rather LPD or HPD. Especially because PD appeared to have a significant effect on trust regardless of the procedural justice criteria manipulated (see Table 2), more research is needed to allow a valid statement concerning the effect of voice versus consistency on LPD and HPD individuals' fairness evaluation. Third, our subjects were students, who themselves had only little work experience. And last but not least, Study 1 tested the effect of PD on the reaction to voice and consistency between subjects only. If the moderating influence of PD on individuals' reaction to voice and consistency is still limited to the voice effect only, when receiving both a manipulated voice and a manipulated consistency scenario within one questionnaire, cannot be assured by means of this study.

Therefore, Study 2 had four major aims: (a) to evaluate whether the cross-culturally examined PD-related variations in the reaction to voice and consistency were actually attributable to differences in individuals' PD orientation, (b) to examine the moderating effect of PD on the reaction to voice and consistency not in terms of subsequent outcomes (trust, withdrawal cognitions) but on the fairness perception itself, (c) to test this effect by means of employees with actual work experience, and (d) to allow an intraindividual comparison of the reaction to voice and consistency depending on individuals' PD.

## Study 2

Study 2 measured the moderating effect of PD on the relationship between no-voice/no-consistency and participants' respective fairness evaluation. Fairness evaluation was chosen as dependent variable in Study 2 to assure that the effect found in Study 1 was due to the fair process effect (see Van den Bos, 2005). To compensate for the limitations of Study 1, Study 2, a within-subjects study, assessed PD with a self-report measure by means of an employee sample and compared its effect on individuals' fairness evaluation of an unfair voice and an unfair consistency scenario directly. To test if PD-related variations in the perception of voice and consistency exist also at the individual level, this was done within one country.

Based on the results of Study 1, it is hypothesized that PD has a moderating effect on the fairness evaluation of no-voice, but not on the fairness evaluation of no-consistency. In other words, Hypothesis 1 presumes that only if the possibility to voice one's opinion is denied LPD and HPD individuals should differ in their fairness perception; in case of no-consistency, no significant difference should appear in contrast.

Furthermore, significant intraindividual differences in fairness evaluation are assumed regarding to individuals' PD. Hypothesis 2 suggests that individuals low in PD perceive the no-voice scenario as significantly less fair than the no-consistency scenario, whereas individuals high in PD should perceive no-consistency as significantly less fair than no-voice.

## Method

**Participants.** Participants of Study 2 were 161 Austrian employees ( $M_{\text{age}} = 37.07$ ,  $SD_{\text{age}} = 11.39$ ; 81 female, 80 male), working in the industrial (19.9%), service (22.4%), health (8.7%), or financial sector (5.6%), in the educational field (21.1%) or a field different than the ones asked for (21.7%).

## Procedure and Measures

Each participant had to read and evaluate the fairness of two vignettes, one vignette describing a no-voice situation, and another one describing a no-consistency situation.

**No-voice.** The department of the company you are working for needs to save costs due to financial restrictions. This has a considerable impact on your working conditions, so you are directly concerned. Your supervisor decides that only he or she has power of decision on the actions to be taken. The employees or employee representatives are not involved. You as an employee have no possibility to make suggestions and you are not given voice by your supervisor.

**No-consistency.** As part of your work schedule, you and your colleagues need to present results in front of your supervisor as part of a meeting. The presentation and the results will be rated by your supervisor, which is very important for you as part of your assessment of performance. His or her judgment will be announced publicly during the meeting. However, you cannot comprehend his or her grading. Presentations and results that you consider as of good quality are sometimes rated badly, whereas obviously bad ones are rated well. You are unable to identify any pattern based on which ratings are made and the judgments seem to be of arbitrary character.

**Fairness evaluation.** Immediately after reading each vignette, participants were asked to put themselves in the shoes of the employee described in the scenario while indicating *how fair they would estimate the behavior of the supervisor*. Responses were made on a 7-point scale ranging from *very unfair* (1) to *very fair* (7).

**PD.** PD was examined by means of eight items: Four items of Earley and Erez (1997; for example, "In work-related matters, managers have a right to expect obedience from their subordinates"), one item of Maznevski, DiStefano, Gomez, Noorderhaven, and Wu (1997; "The highest ranking manager in a team should take the lead"), and three items designed within the GLOBE Program<sup>2</sup> (Carl, Gupta, & Javidan, 2004). As most PD measures were designed for country-level analyses only (see Kirkman & Shapiro, 2001), we measured PD by the combination of different measures, including items that were constructed specifically for use at the individual level of analysis (e.g., Maznevski et al., 1997). Responses to Earley and Erez's measure as well as Maznevski's item were made on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*I totally disagree*) to 7 (*I totally agree*). Responses to the GLOBE items were as well given on a 7-point scale, sample items for the GLOBE measure are: "In this organization, important organizational decisions should be made by" (1) employees, (7) management, or recoded "In this organization, subordinates should" (1) obey their boss without question, (7) question their boss when in disagreement. The internal consistency of our combined measure was .78 (1 = reflecting a LPD belief, 7 = reflecting a HPD belief).

## Results

An inspection of the correlation coefficients (see Table 3) showed that only age was correlated with the fairness evaluation of no-voice and no-consistency. As indicated by the results, people



**Table 3.** Intercorrelations Between PD, Fairness Evaluation of No-Voice/No-Consistency, and Control Variables ( $n = 161$ ).

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Sex					
2. Age	.35**				
3. Industrial sector	-.09	.20*			
4. Power distance	.01	-.10	-.01		
5. Fairness evaluation of no-voice	-.02	-.27**	.03	.30**	
6. Fairness evaluation of no-consistency	.11	-.16*	-.06	.09	.31**

Note. PD = power distance.  
 \* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

higher in age received both the violation of the voice criterion and the violation of the consistency criterion as significantly more unfair than people low in age. No correlation could be found for sex and industrial sector. Consequently, except age, all control variables were excluded from further analysis.

Hypothesis 1, which assumed that PD has a moderating effect on the fairness evaluation of no-voice, but not on the fairness evaluation of no-consistency, was tested using a repeated-measures MANOVA. The fairness evaluation of both situations (no-voice and no-consistency) was labeled *procedural justice evaluation* and entered as within-subjects factor, PD as between-subjects factor, and age as covariate.

In line with earlier research (e.g., Brockner et al., 2001; Francesco & Chen, 2000; Tyler et al., 2000), results yielded a significant main effect of PD between subjects,  $F(1, 159) = 9.52, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .057$ . Tests of within-subjects effects revealed further a significant main effect of procedural justice evaluation,  $F(1, 120) = 6.78, p = .010, \eta_p^2 = .05$ , pointing at a significant difference in the evaluation of fairness in terms of voice and consistency. In other words, regardless of participants' PD orientation, the fairness evaluation was significantly lower when the possibility to express one's opinion was violated ( $M = 2.53, SD = 1.40$ ) than when the decision lacked of consistency ( $M = 2.74, SD = 1.54$ ).

Of particular interest, however, was the interaction between PD and procedural justice criteria. In line with Hypothesis 1, the variation in individuals' evaluation of no-voice versus no-consistency appeared to be affected by individuals' PD,  $F(1, 159) = 4.38, p = .038, \eta_p^2 = .04$ . When tested separately for no-voice and no-consistency, results showed that only in case of no-voice individuals low and high in PD differed in their fairness evaluation,  $t(158) = 4.02, p < .001, B = .52, SE = .13, \eta_p^2 = .06$ , but not in case of no-consistency,  $t(158) = 1.15, p = .252, B = .17, SE = .15, \eta_p^2 = .01$ . No significant interaction appeared for age and procedural justice evaluation,  $F(1, 159) = 1.34, p = .12, \eta_p^2 = .30$ .

To test for Hypothesis 2—proposing that individuals low in PD would perceive the no-voice scenario as significantly less fair than the no-consistency scenario, whereas individuals high in PD would perceive the no-consistency scenario as significantly less fair than the no-voice scenario—participants were classified on the basis of a median split as relatively high or low in PD. An additional repeated-measures  $t$  test was calculated separately for these two groups. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, results revealed that LPD individuals evaluated the violation of voice ( $M = 2.28, SD = 1.31$ ) indeed as significantly more unfair than the violation of consistency ( $M = 2.61, SD = 1.29$ ),  $t(81) = -2.16, p = .034$ . HPD individuals, on the contrary, did not show a significant variation in fairness evaluation in regard to violated voice ( $M = 2.97, SD = 1.45$ ) or violated consistency ( $M = 2.80, SD = 1.75$ ),  $t(78) = -.33, p = .740$ . An inspection of the means supported our assumption of a decreased fairness evaluation in case of no-consistency than in case of no-voice;

the difference did not gain significance, however. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was only partly supported by the results.

## **Discussion**

The purpose of Study 2 was to evaluate the findings on the varying moderation effect of PD on people's reactions to procedural justice, more specifically on voice and consistency. Based on the results of Study 1, it was assumed that PD has a moderating effect on the fairness evaluation of violated voice, but not on the fairness evaluation of violated consistency. Results of Study 2 replicated the results of Study 1, showing a similar effect of PD on individuals' fairness evaluation as on individuals' reaction to procedural (un)fairness. In comparison with Study 1, Study 2 examined the PD effect on the fairness evaluation of voice and consistency more directly. In line with Study 1, however, results of Study 2 revealed that only in case of violated voice LPD and HPD individuals differ in their fairness evaluation; in case of violated consistency, no such differences appeared.

Beyond that, the within-subjects design of Study 2 enabled us to test for intraindividual differences in fairness evaluation in regard to no-voice and no-consistency. As expected, the within-subjects comparison of the fairness evaluation in regard to no-voice and no-consistency revealed that LPD individuals perceived the violation of voice as significantly more unfair than the violation of consistency. In line with earlier findings (Brockner et al., 2001; Francesco & Chen, 2000; Tyler et al., 2000), voice appeared to play a significant role in LPD individuals' fairness evaluation. Unexpectedly, individuals high in PD were found to do not differ in their fairness perception of no-voice and no-consistency decisions. As assumed, a slightly more negative fairness evaluation appeared in case of violated consistency as opposed to violated voice; yet, the difference was not significant. A possible explanation for the missing support of Hypothesis 2 may be that even if results confirmed that there are variations in PD within Austria—a LPD country—Austrians' HPD may not be as high as the one of individuals originating from HPD countries. To examine this assumption, more intercultural research is needed.

Interestingly, the fairness evaluations of no-voice and no-consistency appeared to be further affected by age. As indicated by the results, people high in age perceived the violation of voice and consistency as significantly more unfair than people low in age. Contrary to our findings, Schmitt, Baumert, Gollwitzer, and Maes (2010) found decreased victim sensitivity among older people. Their study showed that with increased age people react significant less sensitive to situations which are to the advantages of others and to one's own disadvantages. In relation to the workplace, Bal, Lange, Ybema, Jansen, and van der Velde (2011) demonstrated just recently, however, that older employees with strong relationships to their leaders feel specifically hurt by procedural injustice and show increased turnover intention if unfairly treated. As participants in Study 2 were employees, this effect may come true for our sample as well. The older the participants, the more they felt hurt by the behavior of the supervisor described in the scenario. Interestingly, just a small number of studies examined the role of age as a predictor of justice perception to our knowledge. Further research in this field may help understanding possible generation gaps.

## **General Discussion**

Summing up the results of our presented studies, two issues were of particular interest: (a) the variations in the moderating effect of PD on voice and consistency and (b) the role of consistency in HPD individuals' procedural justice perception. In regard to issue (a), the missing relationship between PD and the reaction to consistency is quite interesting. The similar reaction to consistency of individuals low and high in PD emerged somewhat unexpected. Yet, the effect was found across both studies, demonstrating that PD does not only affect the fairness evaluation of

the use of (in)consistent structures and rules within decision situations but also the reaction to it. Offering consistency in the application of rules and structures seems to guarantee a kind of safety net that helps people to orientate. According to our research, the reliability gained thereby appears to be important for individuals regardless of their PD level. In contrast to our initial expectation, consistency may be a criterion of relevance, therefore, independent of individuals' PD. As the perception of consistency in general (when measured explicitly), and the relationship between the perception of consistency and PD specifically are poorly researched until now, our two studies provide a valuable contribution to the understanding of variations in procedural justice perception.

Issue (b), the assumed and, in part, confirmed role of consistency in HPD individuals' procedural justice perception, may thereby not be the cause of an increased PD level only but also be due to the general significance of consistency in individuals' fairness perception. As shown by Van den Bos et al.'s study (1996), discussed earlier in this article, the consistency over time rule was found to have a significant influence on individuals' reaction to voice. Depending on participants' expectations of procedures used within a decision situation (voice/no-voice), they reacted differently strong to received voice. Related to our results, it may be assumed that while consistency is a procedural justice criterion important regardless of PD, voice is a procedural justice criterion particularly important for individuals low in PD who prefer a more participative management style.

Considering Van den Bos et al.'s (1996) findings as well as the result of our two studies, it might be concluded that consistency is kind of a hygiene factor, whereas voice acts more as a satisfier (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). In accordance with Herzberg et al.'s Two-Factor Theory, voice reflects a factor enabling individuals to take influence in managerial decisions, and, therefore, affecting the job content themselves; whereas consistency, on the contrary, represents a more pivotal job context factor (working condition) controlled by the supervisor. Following Herzberg et al. (1959) as well as subsequent studies on the dual factor approach (e.g., DeShields, Kara, & Kaynak, 2005), deficient working conditions (= hygiene factors), such as inconsistent decision strategies, lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction and demotivation. In other words, while consistency may be important for individuals' procedural fairness perception and satisfaction at work regardless of prevalent values, receiving voice might be able to lead to even more favorable outcomes, such as higher levels of trust and lower levels of withdrawal cognitions, under certain circumstances, namely, in case of LPD. In line with this assumption are also the results brought about by Tata, Fu, and Wu (2003), who examined the effect of uncertainty avoidance—another dimension of Hofstede's dimensions of national culture—on the perception of consistency. Contrary to their initial hypothesis, they also could not find any perceptual differences between people low and high in uncertainty avoidance.

To explain the differential effects of voice depending on individuals' PD level, the research conducted by Avery and Quiñones (2004) could be of further interest. By means of two studies, they showed that the fairness evaluation of perceived voice depends on the value people place on voice. Depending on the value an individual placed on the possibility to voice one's opinion, the perception versus the violation of voice led to a significant difference in procedural justice perception. While among people who evaluated voice as very important the perception versus the violation of voice led to significant differences in procedural fairness perception, among people who evaluated voice as less important no significant differences appeared. The results indicated that even if voice is an important factor in evaluating the fairness of a decision process, it may not have the same effect on everybody or rather in every situation. Linking this finding to PD, it may be assumed that depending on the level of PD, the value placed on voice vary and therefore also individuals' reaction to it. This could be one of the reasons for the diminished effect of voice on the fairness perception and reaction among HPD individuals. As a consequence, future research on the PD–voice relationship as well as on the relationship between PD and other

criteria of Leventhal (1980) should test whether the effect of PD on the reaction to these criteria is mediated by the value people place on the specific criterion (e.g., voice).

Summing up, our attempt to identify a criterion of similar importance for HPD individuals as voice has for LPD individuals was only partly successful. Nevertheless, our two studies contribute to the research on intercultural procedural fairness perception in a very significant way. It shows that procedural justice criteria—as known today—are valued differently by individuals low and high in PD. Considering the relevance of knowing about what is considered as fair, and, thereby, results in more favorably work-related outcomes among HPD individuals, the two studies should be just the beginning of research on the effect of PD on procedural justice criteria different than voice. Future studies should examine individuals' fairness evaluation and reaction to voice and consistency within one study; by doing so, the fair process effect (cf. Van den Bos, 2005) found within this study can be tested once again.

Bearing in mind that a procedural justice criterion is different from voice and consistency may be more important among HPD individuals; it is further recommended that studies include scenarios manipulating all/more criteria of procedural justice separately (Leventhal's criteria and voice). Yet, it must not be forgotten that the application of entirely different procedures, not known to Western people, may be valued among HPD individuals and influence therefore their fairness perception and reaction to it. Intercultural research cooperations as well as qualitative research might be of help to provide clarification. To further test our assumption concerning the varying functions of procedural justice criteria in terms of Herzberg et al.'s (1959; Two-Factor Theory, research is certainly needed also in this field. A central recommendation of our article is, therefore, to place greater emphasis on the differentiation between procedural justice criteria in the future and to analyze the value that individual criteria have on individuals' procedural fairness perception.

Considering the methodological differences between Study 1 and Study 2, the results provide strong support for the assumption of a differential effect of PD on the fairness perception and reaction to voice and consistency. To evaluate the generality of the results found, future research should test the same effect by including both implicit and explicit scenarios describing the violation of procedural justice. As emphasized within Van den Bos' research (1999), the way the variable of interest is manipulated has a significant influence on the effects obtained finally. He distinguished between a fair voice procedure and two kinds of unfair voice procedures, implicitly and explicitly no-voice. While in the implicit no-voice procedure participants were not informed about possible voice opportunities, in the explicit no-voice procedure, participants were explicitly told that they do not have any voice opportunities. Results of two studies (Van den Bos, 1999) revealed significant variations in the reaction to the two kinds of no-voice procedures; no research is known so far, however, on differences in consistency manipulation. Future research should therefore include an additional implicit no-voice as well as an implicit no-consistency vignette to gain a more complete picture.

Furthermore, to examine whether PD moderates people's reactions to voice or rather not moderate people's reaction to consistency also in a real-life situation, it is recommended to test the effect again, yet not by a scenario-based, role-playing study, but by asking the participants to think of a real decision situation. By thinking of a real-life situation while evaluating the consistency or rather the voice received, the answers given by the participants may reflect individuals' everyday behavior better than answers received when using a scenario-based survey. However, studies including real-life situations may lead to increased fear of lacking anonymity and therefore to an increased level of socially desirable answers. Thus, combination of both (e.g., Brockner et al., 2001) may be best.

In summary, our research brings along quite important practical implications. Depending on the cultural origin of the employees the opportunity to voice one's opinion might lead to a particular high fairness perception and therefore to positive work-related outcomes. As PD appeared

to differ both across cultures and within cultures, it is not enough, however, to give voice depending on subordinates' nationality, but also to pay attention if individuals within a culture vary in their preference for being involved in decision processes or not. Considering that contextual norms do not always allow to consider in detail which kind of decision procedures are preferred or rather perceived as inadequate by the people affected by the decision, it may be advisable to try to provide at least consistency in the way decisions are reached. Regardless of PD the consistency of procedures applied in decisions turned out to be of great importance. To maximize subordinates' reactions to significant managerial decisions consistent rules over time and across persons should be applied. Managers should be aware of the significance of the consistency rule, and try their best to apply it whenever the contextual norms legitimize it.

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### Notes

1. The manipulation of voice (explicit voice) as opposed to no-voice procedures (explicit no-voice) has been frequently used in procedural justice research (e.g., Van den Bos, 1999); in relation with consistency, no studies comparing the effect of received versus violated consistency are known.
2. The German Version of the GLOBE items (not published by now) was kindly provided by Felix Brodbeck. Brodbeck, Hanges, Dickson, Gupta, and Dorfman (2004) were also the first in analyzing the power distance measure in the organizational context. We want to express our gratitude for his support.

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