Die Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung –

Empirische Analysen zu den Eigenschaften und dem Verhalten von Geführten sowie den Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende

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# fp	Number of free parameters
Abb.	Abbildung
aBIC	(samplesize)adjusted Bayesian Information Criterion
AIC	Akaike Information Criterion
AKempor	Arbeitskreises Empirische Personal- und Organisationsforschung
AWE	Approximate Weight of Evidence Criterion
BIC	Bayesian Information Criterion
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
cmP	Correct Model Probability
df	degrees of freedom
e.g.	exempli gratia (zum Beispiel)
engl.	englisch
Fig.	Figure
i.e.	id est
LL	Model log-likelihood
LMX	Leader-Member Exchange
LPA	Latent Profile Analysis
MLR	Maximum Likelihood with Robust standard errors
n	Stichprobengröße
n.s.	no significant difference between all profiles
o. H.	ohne Heftnummer
p.	page
pp.	pages
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SD	Standard Deviation
SRMR	Standardized Root Mean square Residual
t_1	time point 1
t_2	time point 2
Tab.	Table
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index

VHB	Verband der Hochschullehrerinnen und Hochschullehrer für Betriebswirtschaft e. V.

1 Einleitung

1.1 Ausgangssituation

Mitarbeiter[1] bilden die Basis für den Erfolg einer Organisation, da sie durch ihre Leistung maßgeblich deren Erfolg prägen (vgl. z. B. Bassi/McMurrer 2007, S. 115; Buller/McEvoy 2012, S. 52-53; Garavan et al. 2021, S. 110-112). Aus diesem Grund ist bereits viel darüber bekannt, was die Leistung von Mitarbeitern beeinflusst. Zu den untersuchten Aspekten gehören Charaktereigenschaften von Mitarbeitern (vgl. z. B. Thompson 2005), ihre Verhaltensweisen (vgl. z. B. Tims/Bakker/Derks 2015) sowie ihr Arbeitsumfeld (vgl. z. B. Dittes/Smolnik 2019) inklusive Personalmanagementmaßnahmen (vgl. z. B. Jiang et al. 2012).

Die allermeisten Mitarbeiter sind zudem **Geführte**. Dies liegt daran, dass zwar einige Mitarbeiter Führende sind, diese Führenden aber zeitgleich meistens selbst Geführte sind (vgl. Collinson 2006, S. 179; Hackman/Wageman 2007, S. 45; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 81; 91). Daher ist auch vielfältig belegt, was die Leistung von Geführten beeinflusst. Im Fokus steht dabei vor allem wie der Führende mittelbar, beispielsweise durch die Beeinflussung von Einstellungen (vgl. z. B. Wang/Tsui/Xin 2011), und unmittelbar (vgl. z. B. Ng 2017; Crede/Jong/Harms 2019) die Leistung von Geführten beeinflussen kann.

Letztgenannter Einfluss von Führenden auf Geführte ist von Relevanz, da sich Geführte durch ihre organisationale **Rolle** im Verhältnis zu Führenden auszeichnen (vgl. Katz/Kahn 1978, S. 192-197; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 84). Diese organisationale Rolle ist dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass Geführte hierarchisch unter den jeweiligen Führenden stehen (vgl. z. B. Alvesson/Spicer 2014, S. 42; Nerdinger 2014, S. 84; Weibler 2016, S. 42). Somit liegt zwischen Geführten und Führenden eine Asymmetrie der formalen Macht vor. Führende erhalten, einhergehend mit ihrer formalen Rolle, eigene Ressourcen zur Verfügung, die es ihnen ermöglichen, Geführte zu informieren, zu belohnen oder unter Druck zu setzen (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 156-

[1] Aus Gründen der besseren Lesbarkeit wird auf die gleichzeitige Verwendung männlicher und weiblicher Sprachformen verzichtet. Sämtliche Personenbezeichnungen gelten gleichermaßen für alle Geschlechter.

158; Pettigrew 1972; Yukl/Falbe 1991, S. 421-422). Beispiele für diese Verfügung über Ressourcen sind die Allokation von (Zusatz)Vergütungen, die Zuteilung von Stellen(anteilen) sowie Entscheidungen über das Anstoßen von Kündigungsprozessen von Geführten (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 156-158). Daher können Führende in aller Regel einen stärkeren Einfluss auf Geführte ausüben, als dies umgekehrt möglich ist (vgl. z. B. Yukl/Falbe 1991; Weibler 2016, S. 42; 136-137; Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 164). Diese Führenden-Geführten-Beziehungen und die damit konstituierten organisationalen Rollen finden sich unter verschiedenen Bezeichnungen in Organisationen, beispielsweise als Manager und ihre Consultants oder Abteilungsleiter und ihre Mitarbeiter (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 84).

Durch ihre hierarchiebedingte untergeordnete Position zu Führenden, hat in der Forschung für eine lange Zeit, insbesondere bis zum Anfang der 1990er Jahre, eine mehrheitliche Betrachtung von Geführten als **rein reaktiver Part** der Führenden-Geführten-Beziehung dominiert (vgl. z. B. Hollander 1992; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 84-86). Diese Betrachtung ist auch heute noch weit verbreitet und zeigt sich vor allem in der Führungsforschung. Den am umfangreichsten analysierten Aspekt stellt dabei die Reaktion von Geführten auf verschiedene Führungsstile des Führenden dar (vgl. Dionne et al. 2014, S. 11; Banks et al. 2016; Harms et al. 2017; Hoch et al. 2018; Kim/Beehr/Prewett 2018; Crede/Jong/Harms 2019; Siangchokyoo/Klinger/Campion 2020). Vor diesem Hintergrund ist umfassend untersucht, dass Geführte unter anderem mit unterschiedlichen Ausmaßen an Motivation, Stressempfinden, Arbeitsengagement und Leistung auf verschiedene Führungsstile von Führenden reagieren (vgl. z. B. Dvir et al. 2002; De Cremer 2006; Chiniara/Bentein 2016; Weiß/Süß 2016; Li et al. 2021).

Insbesondere seit den 1980er Jahren (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 86-89), haben sich zudem **dyadische Ansätze** entwickelt, die die Bedeutung des Austauschs und der wechselseitigen Wahrnehmung von Führendem und Geführtem betonen (vgl. Campbell et al. 2008, S. 556; Banks et al. 2021, S. 6). Ein Beispiel dafür stellt der Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) dar. Dieser verwies unter seiner originären Bezeichnung „Vertical Dyad Linkage Approach to Leadership“ direkt darauf, eine dyadische Betrachtung von Führung vorzunehmen (vgl. Dansereau/Graen/Haga 1975; Martin et al. 2016, S. 68).

LMX betrachtet Führende und Geführte gemeinsam, um Erkenntnisse über die wechselseitige Beziehung zwischen beiden zu erlangen (vgl. z. B. Graen/Uhl-Bien 1995, S. 225-226). Dahinter steht die Grundannahme, dass Führende nicht per se einen Führungsstil haben, sondern sich ihr Verhalten, je nach Beziehung zu einem Geführten, unterscheidet (vgl. Dansereau/Graen/Haga 1975, S. 50; 70-76). Diese Grundannahme verdeutlicht, dass im Rahmen von dyadischen Ansätzen nach wie vor der Führende als primär agierender Part und der Geführte als primär reagierender Part betrachtet werden. Dies zeigt sich auch darin, dass, obwohl vermehrt Eigenschaften des Geführten Berücksichtigung finden, diese Eigenschaften unspezifisch verbleiben. So handelt es sich meist um allgemeine Persönlichkeitseigenschaften, wie beispielsweise Gewissenhaftigkeit (vgl. Dulebohn et al. 2012, S. 1717). Unbeachtet bleiben spezifische Geführteneigenschaften, das heißt Eigenschaften, die sich aus der Geführtenrolle ergeben und nur in ihrem Kontext bestehen, wie beispielsweise Motive von Geführten. Darüber hinaus wird in den dyadischen Ansätzen zwar ebenfalls vermehrt die Wahrnehmung von Geführten berücksichtigt, dies geschieht jedoch nur vor dem Hintergrund des jeweiligen Führendenverhaltens. Ein Beispiel hierfür ist das Ausmaßes an Sympathie, welches der Geführte für den Führenden vor dem Hintergrund des Führendenverhaltens empfindet (vgl. Dulebohn/Wu/Liao 2017). Somit dominiert insgesamt auch in dyadischen Ansätzen die reaktive Betrachtung von Geführten.

Allerdings wird seit Jahrzehnten in der wissenschaftlichen Literatur betont, dass Geführte nicht nur einen rein reaktiven, sondern auch einen aktiven Part in der Führenden-Geführten-Beziehung einnehmen können und sie deshalb auch (eigenständig) erforscht werden sollten (vgl. z. B. Zaleznik 1965; Herold 1977; Kelley 1988; Hollander/Offermann 1990, S. 180; Hol1ander 1992, S. 46). Zugenommen hat eine solche Betrachtung von Geführten jedoch erst zu Beginn der Jahrtausendwende, als sich der eigenständige Strang der „**Followershipforschung**“ (im Folgenden nicht übersetzt, da sich noch keine deutsche Bezeichnung etabliert hat, vgl. Weibler 2016, S. 30) entwickelt hat (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 89). Dieser Strang beschäftigt sich mit Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen von Geführten sowie den sich daraus erge-

benden Implikationen für die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung (im Folgenden so bezeichnet, um den aktiven Part des Geführten zu betonen). Zusammenfassend lässt sich dies mit „the nature and impact of followers and following in the leadership process“ beschreiben (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 89). Die Entwicklung dieses Forschungsstrangs ist im Gegensatz zu anderen Forschungsthemen, wie beispielsweise virtueller Arbeit (vgl. Moser/Axtell 2013, S. 1) oder Diversität von Mitarbeitern (vgl. Ashkanasy/Härtel/Daus 2002, S. 308-309), nicht auf Veränderungen von Rahmenbedingungen, wie technischem Fortschritt oder Wertewandel, zurückzuführen. Stattdessen besteht in der Followershipforschung Konsens darüber, dass Geführte schon immer von Bedeutung waren (vgl. z. B. Avolio 2007, S. 25-26; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 81). Jedoch sind sie aufgrund ihrer mehrheitlich passiven Darstellung, auch begünstigt durch die passive Konnotation des vorherrschenden Begriffs „follower“ (dt. Folger, Anhänger, in der Forschung auch Geführte/r, vgl. z. B. von Rosenstiel 1991; Ridder/Hoon 2006; Nerdinger 2014; Scherm/Süß 2016; Schreyögg/Koch 2020), in der Forschung von Führenden überschattet worden (vgl. z. B. Hollander/Offermann 1990, S. 179; Baker 2007, S. 51).

1.2 Problemstellung

Geführte erlangen durch die Followershipforschung zunehmend mehr Beachtung als aktiver Teil der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung (vgl. z. B. Collinson 2006; Baker 2007; Ford/Harding 2018; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019). Jedoch zeigt sich noch immer ein starkes **Ungleichgewicht** zwischen der Anzahl an wissenschaftlichen Publikationen, die Geführte als auf Führende reagierend betrachten (Führungsforschung), und der Anzahl an wissenschaftlichen Publikationen, die den Geführten als selbstständig agierend untersuchen (Followershipforschung).

Ein Indikator dafür ist, dass sich Ende 2017 nur 22 % der Artikel, die im unter Forschenden hochangesehenen Journal The Leadership Quarterly (Impact Factor Dezember 2022: 9.924, damit Platz 4 von 213 Journals aus dem Bereich Organisationales Verhalten und Human Resource Management; VHB-Ranking 2022: A; vgl. Elsevier 2022a, 2022b; VHB e. V. 2022) veröffentlicht wurden, inhaltlich (auch) auf „followership“ bezogen (vgl. Bastardoz/van

Vugt 2019, S. 81-82). Demgegenüber steht ein, im selben Zeitraum, nahezu vollständiger (94 %) Bezug auf „leadership“ in den Artikeln des Journals, basierend auf den Abstracts der Artikel (vgl. Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 81-82). Ein ähnliches Verhältnis blieb auch in den Folgejahren 2018 bis 2021 bestehen. So schwankte der Anteil der Artikel mit Bezug zu „followership“ in einer Spannbreite von 8 % (2018) bis 19 % (2020), während die Artikel mit Bezug zu „leadership“ einen Anteil von mindestens 85 % (2019) bis maximal 93 % (2021) einnahmen.

Dieses starke Ungleichgewicht wird in der Forschung als **problematisch** angesehen, da Followership im Vergleich zu Führung als zu wenig umfangreich untersucht gilt (vgl. z. B. Avolio 2007, S. 25-26; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 747; 749; Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 165-166). Diese Forschungslücke hat zur Folge, dass zu wenig Wissen über den aktiven Anteil von Geführten an der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung vorliegt, wodurch sowohl Followership als auch Führung in ihrer Komplexität und ihrem Zusammenspiel zu eindimensional betrachtet werden (vgl. z. B. Marion/Uhl-Bien 2001, S. 409; Carsten et al. 2010, S. 559; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 89; Oc 2018, S. 231).

Aus der bestehenden Followership- und Führungsliteratur lassen sich im Besonderen drei Defizite ableiten, welche sich anhand der Oberbegriffe „follower[ship] characteristics“, „follower[ship] behavior“ und „follower[ship] outcomes“ systematisieren lassen (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 96). Es mangelt an Erkenntnissen zu (1) den Eigenschaften („characteristics“) und (2) dem Verhalten („behavior“) von Geführten sowie (3) den Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende („outcomes“).

Hinsichtlich (1) der **Eigenschaften von Geführten** ist zu kritisieren, dass diese, abgesehen von ihrer Relevanz für die Erklärung von Unterschieden in der Reaktion auf verschiedene Führungsstile oder den LMX (vgl. z. B. Dulebohn et al. 2012, S. 1719-1721; 1731-1732; van Gils et al. 2015; Matthews/Kelemen/Bolino 2021), bisher mehrheitlich unbeachtet geblieben sind. Daher ist wenig über die Unterschiede von Geführten hinsichtlich spezifischer Geführteneigenschaften bekannt (vgl. z. B. Avolio 2007, S. 28-29; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 81), das heißt hinsichtlich der Eigenschaften,

die nur in der Rolle eines Geführten zum Tragen kommen. Aus diesem Grund wird stellenweise die Position vertreten, dass Geführte bisher nahezu wie ein undifferenziertes Kollektiv sind (vgl. Collinson 2006, S. 179). Eine spezifische Geführteneigenschaft ist beispielsweise die Rollenorientierung, das heißt das Verständnis, welches Geführte von ihrer eigenen Rolle haben (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Zwar hat Rollenorientierung mittlerweile bereits Beachtung in der Forschung gefunden, ist aber mehrheitlich grob vereinfacht mit zwei Extremausprägungen, der aktiven und der passiven Rollenorientierung, betrachtet worden (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2012; Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2013; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Eine erste qualitative Studie untersucht zwar die Heterogenität der Rollenorientierung von Geführten, die Autoren verweisen aber selbst darauf, dass weitere Untersuchungen notwendig sind, um ein tieferes Verständnis der Vielfalt der Rollenorientierung sowie ihrer Ursachen und Konsequenzen zu erlangen (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 557-558). Abgesehen davon verbleiben insbesondere einige Geführten-Motive unbekannt (mit Ausnahme von Organizational Citizenship Motiven, vgl. Cooper et al. 2018; Klotz et al. 2018). So ist zwar beispielsweise bekannt, dass Geführte unterschiedliche Motive für das Schweigen gegenüber Führenden haben (sogenanntes Employee Silence; vgl. Brinsfield 2013), welche verschiedenen Motivkombinationen in Geführten diesbezüglich zu finden sind, verbleibt jedoch unklar. Verschiedene Motive für das Gegenteil, das Äußern von Vorschlägen und Ideen gegenüber Vorgesetzten (Employee Voice; vgl. van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003, S. 1360) verbleiben sogar bisher (empirisch) unerforscht (vgl. van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003, S. 1370; 1385; Parker/Wang/Liao 2019, S. 224).

Eng mit den Eigenschaften verbunden ist (2) das **Verhalten von Geführten**. Dies lässt sich exemplarisch erneut am Beispiel der Rollenorientierung festmachen, von der man weiß, dass sie das Verhalten von Geführten beeinflusst (vgl. z. B. Parker 2007, S. 421-425; Carsten et al. 2010, S. 552-554; 556). Zwar deutet die genannte qualitative Studie von Carsten und Kollegen (2010) darauf hin, dass Geführte mit eher (pro)aktiver Rollenorientierung dazu neigen, Ideen gegenüber Führenden zu äußern und zusätzliche Verantwortung zu übernehmen, während Geführte mit eher passiver Rollenorientierung dazu

tendieren, zugewiesene Aufgaben auszuführen, ohne sich darüber hinaus einzubringen (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 550-551). Dies sind allerdings erste Erkenntnisse, die weiterer Forschung mit Blick auf die Verschiedenartigkeit der Rollenorientierung und damit einhergehend weiterer potentieller Verhaltensimplikationen bedürfen (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 557-558; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 96-97). Dies gilt in ähnlicher Weise für Verhaltensimplikationen von Silence- (vgl. Brinsfield 2013, S. 694) beziehungsweise Voice-Motiven. Da wenig über die Verschiedenartigkeit von Silence- und Voice-Motiven bekannt ist, sind deren Verhaltensimplikationen auch noch mehrheitlich unbekannt. Insgesamt besteht in der Forschung eine breite Forderung, die Verschiedenartigkeit des Verhaltens von Geführten weiter zu untersuchen (vgl. z. B. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 750; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 81).

Zudem sind noch (3) die **Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende** als bestehendes Forschungsdefizit zu benennen. Obwohl bekannt ist, dass das Verhalten des Geführten auch den Führenden beeinflusst (vgl. z. B. Blom/Alvesson 2014, S. 353; Schneider et al. 2014, S. 425-426) findet diese Wirkungsrichtung nahezu keine Beachtung (vgl. Shamir 2007, S. xxvii; Oc/Bashshur 2013, S. 919). Es fehlt dahingehend insbesondere an einer Betrachtung von führendenspezifischen, das heißt den Führenden unmittelbar selbst betreffende Auswirkungen, wie beispielsweise Auswirkungen auf sein Wohlbefinden oder seine Zufriedenheit (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 748). Zwar finden sich erste empirische Studien, die führendenspezifische Auswirkungen in Form von empfundenem Stress, empfundenen Emotionen und der Motivation des Führenden untersuchen. Diese greifen jedoch entweder auf eine starke Vereinfachung in Form einer Dichotomisierung des Geführtenverhaltens (aktiv/passiv; vgl. Schneider et al. 2014; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018) zurück oder betrachten einen sehr spezifischen Ausschnitt von Interaktionen zwischen Geführtem und Führendem (Interaktionen, in denen der Geführte bewusste Einflusstaktiken anwendet; vgl. Deluga 1991). Daher verwundert es nicht, dass in der Followershipforschung weitere Untersuchungen zu Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf den Führenden gefordert werden (vgl. Shamir 2007, S. xxviii; Oc/Bashshur 2013, S. 919; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 748).

Zusammengefasst lassen sich die drei zuvor eingeführten allgemeinen Defizite bezogen auf die Eigenschaften von Geführten („characteristics“), ihr Verhalten („behavior“) sowie die Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende („outcomes“) wie folgt konkretisieren: Es bedarf weiterer Erkenntnisse zu spezifischen Geführteneigenschaften sowie zu den Verhaltensimplikationen, die aus diesen spezifischen Geführteneigenschaften resultieren. Darüber hinaus sind weitere Erkenntnisse zu den Auswirkungen, die das Verhalten von Geführten unmittelbar auf Führende selbst haben, beispielsweise auf ihr Wohlbefinden, von Bedeutung.

Die **wissenschaftliche Relevanz** weiterer (empirischer) Analysen zu den Eigenschaften und dem Verhalten von Geführten sowie den Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende ergibt sich daraus, dass die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung als „one of the most complex and multifaceted phenomena” (van Seters/Field 1990, S. 29) gilt (siehe dazu z. B. auch Weibler 2016, S. 55-61). Obwohl fast ausnahmslos alle konzeptionell-theoretischen Darstellungen der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung, den Geführten an sich sowie seinen Einfluss auf den Führenden abbilden (vgl. z. B. DeRue/Ashford 2010, S. 631; 635; Brich 2014, S. 1202; Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 181-183; Weibler 2016, S. 40-54) und auch die empirische Forschung Bedeutung und Einfluss des Geführten betont (vgl. z. B. Herold 1977, S. 229-236; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 743-747), verbleibt ohne eine umfangreichere Kenntnis des Geführten ein integraler Bestandteil dieser komplexen Beziehung mehrheitlich unbekannt. Diese Unkenntnis hat zur Folge, dass Geführte zu wenig als eigenständige Akteure bekannt sind, während Führende als zu unbeeinflusst von Geführten betrachtet werden. Letzteres hat zudem zur Folge, dass ebenfalls zu wenig über Führende bekannt ist und wie sie und ihre Tätigkeit durch Geführte und deren Verhalten beeinflusst werden (vgl. Schneider et al. 2014, S. 413; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 732). Auf einer konzeptionell-theoretischen Ebene verhindert die vorliegende Unkenntnis die Entwicklung integrativerer Führungsmodelle in der Führungsforschung und verstärkt dadurch mittelbar die bestehende Tendenz in der Forschung, den Führenden als Ursache und den Geführten als Wirkung zu verstehen (vgl. z. B. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 97-99). Auf einer empirischen Ebene sorgt das bestehende

Defizit dafür, dass aktuell zu wenig (quantitative) Messinstrumente zur Messung von Geführteneigenschaften und -verhalten sowie den Auswirkungen des Verhaltens auf Führende vorliegen (vgl. Sy 2010, S. 73; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 749-750). Dies behindert die grundsätzliche Erstarkung des Forschungsstrangs. Denn erst mit dem Vorliegen (mehrerer) validierter Messinstrumente kann vielfältige empirische Forschung mit Befragungen großer Stichproben betrieben und so die Followership- und Führungsforschung weiterentwickelt werden.

Hinsichtlich der **praxisbezogenen Relevanz** ist anzumerken, dass weitere Erkenntnisse zu Eigenschaften und dem Verhalten von Geführten von Bedeutung sind, da diese üblicherweise eine Relevanz für die Leistungsfähigkeit der Geführten aufweisen (vgl. z. B. Hakanen/Perhoniemi/Toppinen-Tanner 2008, S. 84-86; Carsten et al. 2010, S. 550-551; Ng/Feldman 2012, S. 225-227). Aus gleichem Grund ist es relevant, die Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf den Führenden zu untersuchen. Es ist hinreichend bekannt, dass das Verhalten des Führenden die Leistungsfähigkeit von Geführten beeinflusst (vgl. McColl-Kennedy/Anderson 2002, S. 552-555; Lyons/Schneider 2009, S. 742-743; Yukl 2012, S. 66; 78-80; Braun et al. 2013, S. 277-278; Meslec et al. 2020, S. 8-10). Eine identische Wirkung aus Perspektive von Führenden ist plausibel und wurde beispielsweise auch bereits für den als leistungsrelevant geltenden empfundenen Stress (vgl. Hunter/Thatcher 2007, S. 960-965) in einer ersten Studie nachgewiesen (vgl. Deluga 1991, S. 83-84). Weitere Erkenntnisse über die (leistungsrelevanten) Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf den Führenden stehen aber noch aus.

1.3 Zielsetzung und Aufbau der Arbeit

Vor diesem Hintergrund besteht das Ziel der vorliegenden Arbeit darin, die Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung zu analysieren. Dazu sollen Eigenschaften und Verhalten von Geführten sowie die Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende mittels qualitativer und quantitativer empirischer Studien untersucht werden.

Hierfür werden in **Kapitel 2** zunächst begriffliche und konzeptionelle Grundlagen zu Geführten, Führenden und ihrer Beziehung gelegt. Eingangs werden

Geführte und Führende definiert und beschrieben, bevor die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung näher ausgeführt wird. Daran anschließend wird der aktuelle Forschungsstand zu Geführten dargelegt. Dafür wird auf Erkenntnisse der Führungsforschung, auf Erkenntnisse der mit der Führungsforschung verwandten Forschung zum organisationalen Verhalten von Geführten und Führenden sowie auf Erkenntnisse der Followershipforschung zurückgegriffen. Daran anschließend wird ein spezifischer Ansatz der Followershipforschung, der rollenbasierte Followership-Ansatz, dargestellt, auf dem auch das im abschließenden Unterkapitel entwickelte Forschungsmodell basiert.

Kapitel 3 spezifiziert das vorherig aufgezeigte Forschungsmodell, indem die vier empirischen Studien der Kapitel 4 bis 7 in das Forschungsmodell eingeordnet werden. Dadurch erfolgt eine Konkretisierung der in dieser Arbeit untersuchten Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen von Geführten sowie der betrachteten Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende.

In **Kapitel 4** wird die geführtenspezifische Eigenschaft der Rollenorientierung untersucht. Dazu werden Inhalt und Struktur der Rollenorientierung von Geführten quantitativ-explorativ ermittelt. Zudem wird die Beziehung zwischen der Rollenorientierung von Geführten und ihren arbeitsrelevanten Eigenschaften (u. a. Gewissenhaftigkeit) und Verhaltensweisen (u. a. Hilfsbereitschaft gegenüber Kollegen) untersucht sowie die zeitliche Konstanz der Rollenorientierung von Geführten überprüft.

Kapitel 5 adressiert sowohl geführtenspezifische Voice-Motive als auch die Auswirkungen von durch Geführten geäußertes Voice auf Führende. Zunächst werden Inhalt und Struktur der Voice-Motive von Geführten quantitativ-explorativ ermittelt. Darauf aufbauend, werden Typen von voiceäußernden Geführten identifiziert. Diese Typen unterscheiden sich in der Ausprägung ihrer Voice-Motive sowie in ausgewählten arbeitsrelevanten Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen. Basierend auf den Unterschieden in Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen der Typen, wird im Anschluss untersucht, ob Führende von Geführten geäußertes Voice unterschiedliche wahrnehmen, wenn die Geführten unterschiedliche Eigenschaften (u. a. Extraversion) und eine unterschiedliche Verhaltensweise (Wahrscheinlichkeit, Voice zu äußern) zeigen.

In **Kapitel 6** wird der Fokus komplett auf die Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende gelegt. Es wird analysiert, wie Führende das Verhalten von Geführten in Extremsituationen wahrnehmen und welche Auswirkungen das jeweilige Geführtenverhalten auf die Führenden hat. Dazu werden Führende zu extrem positiven und extrem negativen Interaktionen mit jeweils einem Geführten interviewt.

In **Kapitel 7** verbleibt der Fokus auf den Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende. Es wird analysiert, wann Führende das Verhalten eines Geführten als besonders belastend empfinden und wie sich solche belastenden Interaktionen auf die Führenden auswirken. Um dem Umstand Rechnung zu tragen, dass Interaktionen zwischen Geführten und Führenden in verschiedenen Formen stattfinden können, werden Führende zu stressig empfundenen Face-to-Face-Interaktionen, Interaktionen per Videotelefonie und Interaktionen per E-Mail interviewt.

Kapitel 8 schließt die Arbeit ab, indem zunächst die Beiträge zur Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung, die die in den Kapiteln 4 bis 7 dargestellten Studien liefern, zusammengefasst werden. Daran anschließend werden Beiträge aufgezeigt, die sich studienübergreifend aus mindestens zwei der dargestellten Studien ableiten lassen. Abschließend werden übergreifende Schlussfolgerungen in Form von Grenzen der Arbeit und weiterem Forschungsbedarf dargelegt.

2 Begriffliche und konzeptionelle Grundlagen

2.1 Geführte, Führende und ihre Beziehung

2.1.1 Geführte

Der englischsprachige **Begriff** „follower“, in der deutschsprachigen Forschung üblicherweise „Geführte/r“ (vgl. z. B. Scherm/Süß 2016), ist zwar Namensgeber des sich auf Geführte fokussierenden Strangs der Followershipforschung, wird allerdings sprachlich nicht einheitlich genutzt. Während in der Followershipforschung zwar insgesamt der Begriff Geführte (follower) dominiert (vgl. z. B. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019), findet sich besonders in der Führungsforschung eine größere Begriffspluralität. So werden Geführte dort teilweise auch als Mitarbeiter (engl. employees; vgl. z. B. Inceoglu et al. 2018; Watkins/Fehr/He 2019) oder Untergebene (engl. subordinates; vgl. z. B. Unsworth/Kragt/Johnston-Billings 2018; Vergauwe et al. 2021) bezeichnet.

Hinzu kommt, dass sowohl in der Followership- als auch in der Führungsforschung insbesondere in Reviewartikeln, Metaanalysen und konzeptionellen Arbeiten, die Begriffe Mitarbeiter, Untergebene und Geführte stellenweise auch ohne eine klare begriffliche Abgrenzung verwendet werden (vgl. z. B. Inceoglu et al. 2018; Rudolph/Murphy/Zacher 2020; Li et al. 2021; Urbach et al. 2021). In ähnlicher Weise finden sich empirische Studien, die Geführte (follower) thematisieren, methodisch aber auf Mitarbeiter (employees) zurückgreifen, ohne dass diese begriffliche Diskrepanz geklärt wird (vgl. z. B. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018; Chiniara/Bentein 2018).

Diese Begriffsvielfalt und mangelnde Abgrenzung beziehungsweise Definition ist eine bekannte Problematik aus Followership- und Führungsforschung (vgl. Crossman/Crossman 2011, S. 482-483; Alvesson/Spicer 2014, S. 41-42; Andersen 2019, S. 277-279). Entsprechend werden Geführte in vielen Studien nicht genau definiert (vgl. z. B. Güntner et al. 2020; Sturm/Herz/Antonakis 2021; Coyle/Foti 2022). Eine genaue Definition ist allerdings nötig, um Geführte von anderen in Organisationen agierenden Personen abzugrenzen. Daher wird im Folgenden als Grundlage dieser Arbeit eine genaue Definition von Geführten hergeleitet.

Geführte lassen sich nur in Verbindung zu Führenden definieren, da beide Personengruppen lediglich in Relation zueinander bestehen (vgl. z. B. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 83). Geführte und Führende existieren dabei in verschiedenen **Kontexten**. Im sozio-politischen Kontext sind Geführte als Anhänger oder mittelbare Unterstützer eines politischen Führenden zu verstehen. Beispiele dafür beinhalten Anhänger oder mittelbare Unterstützer von Adolf Hitler, Mahatma Gandhi oder Martin Luther King (vgl. Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 81; 91; Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 166; Marcy 2020, S. 2). Im betriebswirtschaftlichen Kontext werden Geführte (und Führende) üblicherweise als Mitglieder einer Organisation betrachtet, die in einer hierarchischen Beziehung zueinanderstehen (vgl. z. B. Katz/Kahn 1978, S. 192-197; Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 181-183). Dabei lassen sich formale und informelle Geführte unterscheiden.

Typischerweise werden in der Followership- und Führungsforschung **formale Geführte** betrachtet (vgl. z. B. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 84; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 91; Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 166). Formale Geführte befinden sich in einer organisational festgeschriebenen, hierarchisch untergeordneten Position in Relation zum Führenden (vgl. z. B. Farmer/Aguinis 2005). Diese hierarchisch untergeordnete Position bringt einige Implikationen mit sich. So zeichnen sich formale Geführte üblicherweise durch einen geringeren Status, geringere Privilegien und auch eine geringere finanzielle Vergütung in Relation zu ihren jeweiligen formalen Führenden aus (vgl. z. B. Magee/Galinsky 2008; Ronay/Maddux/von Hippel 2020).

Die hierarchisch untergeordnete Position führt auch dazu, dass Geführte über weniger **formale Macht** als Führende verfügen und diese ungleiche Machtverteilung üblicherweise auch als legitim empfunden wird (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 160; Yukl/Falbe 1991, S. 422). Dadurch haben Geführte einen bedeutend geringeren Einfluss auf Führende als umgekehrt und agieren nicht komplett autonom (vgl. z. B. Yukl/Falbe 1991; Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 164). Deshalb können sich Geführte üblicherweise ihre Arbeitsaufgaben nicht frei aussuchen, sondern die Aufgabenzuteilung, ebenso wie die Kontrolle der Ergebnisse, wird typischerweise vom Führenden übernommen (vgl. Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 181-182). Zusätzlich können

Geführte durch Führende unter Druck gesetzt oder sanktioniert werden, beispielsweise durch die Zuteilung (un)liebsamer Aufgaben (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 157-158; Yukl/Falbe 1991, S. 422). Darüber hinaus können Geführte auch für aus Perspektive der Führenden gute Leistung durch die Führenden belohnt werden (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 156-157; Yukl/Falbe 1991, S. 422). Vor diesem Hintergrund ist es für Geführte im Regelfall die optimale Strategie, den Einfluss des Führenden, üblicherweise in Form seiner Anweisungen, zu akzeptieren (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 151-155). Bedingt dadurch, dass die organisationale Hierarchie die ungleiche Machtverteilung von Geführten und Führendem vorschreibt, kann bei formalen Geführten ein bestimmter Grad an Unfreiwilligkeit angenommen werden (vgl. Collinson 2017, S. 278; Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 171).

Informelle Geführte nehmen, im Gegensatz zu formalen Geführten, ihre Rolle in einem höheren Ausmaß basierend auf Freiwilligkeit ein (vgl. Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 82-83; Blom/Lundgren 2000, S. 172). Informelle Geführte ergeben sich im Rahmen eines sozialen Austauschs zwischen mindestens zwei Personen, indem eine Person die Geführtenrolle übernimmt (und die andere die Führendenrolle) (vgl. z. B. Acton et al. 2019, S. 145; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 82-84). Die Geführtenrolle wird dabei eingenommen, ohne dass eine Zuschreibung dieser Rolle außerhalb dieses sozialen Austauschs, beispielswiese bedingt durch eine festgeschriebene Organisationsstruktur, stattgefunden hätte (vgl. Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 82-84). Daher nehmen informelle Geführte üblicherweise mit einem höheren Maß an Freiwilligkeit die Geführtenrolle ein als dies bei formalen Geführtenrollen der Fall ist (vgl. Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 171-172). Die Einnahme einer informellen Geführtenrolle kann aber auch im organisationalen Kontext entstehen (vgl. Kozlowski et al. 2013, S. 585-586; Acton et al. 2019, S. 147). Informelle Geführte zeichnen sich dadurch aus, dass sie einen Teil ihrer Autonomie aufgeben, um eine Geführtenposition in Relation zu einem (informell) Führenden einzunehmen (vgl. Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 82-83). Die Einnahme einer solchen Position ist auch unter dem Begriff „Emergenz von Geführten“ (engl. follower emergence) bekannt (vgl. Cox/Madison/Eva 2022). Bedingt dadurch, dass die Rollen nicht organisational festgeschrieben sind, kann sich dabei auch eine größere Volatilität ergeben. Das heißt, die Rollen

sind dynamischer als formale Rollen und können sich kurzfristiger wandeln (vgl. z. B. Marks/Mathieu/Zaccaro 2001, S. 375).

Zusammengefasst sind **Geführte im Rahmen dieser Arbeit** daher wie folgt zu verstehen: Es handelt sich um Mitglieder einer Organisation, die entweder bedingt durch ihre formale Position oder bedingt durch die Einnahme einer Position in einem nicht vorgeschriebenen, sozialen Austauschprozess eine Machtasymmetrie zwischen sich und einem Führenden akzeptieren. Die Machtasymmetrie ist derart, dass die Geführten im Vergleich zum Führenden weniger Einfluss besitzen und üblicherweise einen Teil ihrer Autonomie aufgeben (Ausnahme: Laissez-Faire Führung; vgl. Bass/Avolio 1994, S. 4).

Als Oberbegriff für das **Verhalten von Geführten**, das heißt ihr Verhalten innerhalb der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung, wird zum Teil der Begriff Followership verwendet (vgl. z. B. Bjugstad et al. 2006, S. 304; de Zilwa 2014, S. 53-54). Diese Begriffsverwendung ist allerdings ebenfalls uneinheitlich (vgl. Crossman/Crossman 2011, S. 482-483; Andersen 2019, S. 277-279). So gibt es ein parallel verwendetes, breiteres Verständnis des Begriffs Followership, der die Einnahme der Geführtenposition, das Verhalten und die Verhaltensauswirkungen von Geführten beinhaltet (vgl. z. B. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 89; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 82). Um Verwechslungen mit diesem breiteren Verständnis zu vermeiden, wird im Weiteren das reine Verhalten von Geführten mit „Folgen“ bezeichnet. Damit wird ein semantisches Gegenstück zum bei Führenden gebräuchlichen Term der „Führung“ verwendet.

In Teilen der Forschung gibt es eine Diskussion darüber, ob Geführte nur als Geführte zu benennen sind, wenn sie auch tatsächlich im wörtlichen Sinne folgen, also Gehorsam leisten (vgl. Cornelsen Verlag GmbH 2022a). Das heißt, wenn sie eine passive Rolle einnehmen und beispielsweise keinen Widerspruch äußern oder Widerstand zeigen (vgl. Learmonth/Morrell 2017, S. 265). So ein passives Verständnis zeigt sich auch vereinzelt in Definitionen von Folgen, die beinhalten „[…] to effectively follow the directives and support the efforts of a leader […]“ (Bjugstad et al. 2006, S. 304). Allerdings ist dieses passive Verständnis dafür kritisiert worden, den Begriff Geführte und

das Folgen zu sehr zu begrenzen und unrealistisch zu vereinfachen (vgl. Collinson 2017, S. 278-279). Für die Berechtigung dieser Kritik sprechen zudem die folgenden drei Aspekte: Erstens haben konzeptionelle Arbeiten, auch schon sehr frühzeitig (vgl. Kelley 1988), darauf verwiesen, dass Geführte auch eine aktive Rolle einnehmen können (vgl. z. B. Shamir 2007). Zweitens ist sowohl in der Selbstsicht von Geführten als auch in der Fremdsicht durch Führende das mögliche aktive Verhalten von Geführten beziehungsweise die aktive Gestaltung des Folgens belegt (vgl. z. B. Carsten et al. 2010; Benson/Hardy/Eys 2016; Milosevic/Maric/Lončar 2020). Drittens ist es, bezogen auf die vorherrschende Betrachtung formaler Geführter (vgl. z. B. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 84; 89; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 91), nicht plausibel davon auszugehen, dass diese automatisch folgen (vgl. Collinson 2017, S. 278). Aus diesen Gründen wird im Folgenden der sehr passiv konnotierte Begriff „Folgen“ vermieden und lediglich der Begriff „Verhalten von Geführten“ verwendet.

2.1.2 Führende

Der **Begriff** Führende/r (engl. leader) wird in der Führungsforschung nicht einheitlich definiert (vgl. Barker 1997, S. 345-346; Northhouse 2013, S. 2-4; Alvesson/Spicer 2014, S. 41-42; Alvesson/Blom/Sveningsson 2017, S. 2-3; Alvesson 2020, S. 4; 5; 7-8). Daher werden zum Teil auch die Begriffe Manager (manager; vgl. z. B. Wu et al. 2021) oder Vorgesetzter (supervisor; vgl. z. B. Farmer/Aguinis 2005) verwendet. Zudem kommt es teilweise zur Vermischung der Begriffe oder zu Inkonsistenzen zwischen konzeptioneller und methodischer Begriffsverwendung (vgl. z. B. Stoker/Garretsen/Soudis 2019; Truninger et al. 2021).

Insbesondere hinsichtlich der Abgrenzung zwischen Führenden und **Managern** gibt es variierende Verständnisse (vgl. Alvesson/Sveningsson 2003, S. 964-965; Yukl 2010, S. 24-26; Antonakis/Cianciolo/Sternberg 2017, S. 5). Im äußersten Fall wird die Perspektive vertreten, Führende und Manager wären grundsätzlich unterschiedliche Personen mit unterschiedlichen Funktionen (vgl. Zaleznik 1981, S. 26). Einer weniger extremen Perspektive folgend, können Führender und Manager auch die Bezeichnungen für eine Person mit, je nach Definition, verschiedenen Funktionen sein (vgl. z. B. Bass 1990, S. 6-

10; 246-247). Eine potentielle Unterscheidung der Funktionen ist, dass Führende primär für die Vermittlung von Visionen, Strategien und Leitlinien verantwortlich, also eher befasst mit menschlich-motivationalen Aspekten, sind (vgl. Barker 2001, S. 473; 484; Alvesson/Sveningsson 2003, S. 964; Yukl 2010, S. 25). Damit einher geht auch, dass sie nicht über eine formale Führungsposition verfügen müssen (vgl. Barker 2001, S. 489). Dahingegen befassen sich Manager vor allem mit der Delegation und Kontrolle von Aufgaben und haben daher üblicherweise auch eine formale Führungsposition inne (vgl. Ashford/Sitkin 2019, S. 456).

Allerdings kann diese **Dichotomisierung** aus folgendem Grund als problematisch angesehen werden: Die meisten Personen, die sich selbst im, in dieser Arbeit betrachteten, organisationalen Kontext als Führende verstehen oder so von anderen gesehen werden, haben eine formale Führungsposition inne, beispielsweise die eines Managers (vgl. Alvesson/Spicer 2014, S. 42). Entsprechend wird in der empirischen Forschung auch häufig auf Manager zurückgegriffen, wenn Führende untersucht werden (vgl. z. B. Stoker/Garretsen/Soudis 2019; Truninger et al. 2021).

Daher verwundert es nicht, dass es auch breitere Definitionen von Führenden und ihren Funktionen gibt, die sowohl die menschlich-motivationale Komponente als auch die Koordination der Arbeitsaufgaben und deren Kontrolle beinhalten (vgl. z. B. Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 181). Einer solch breiteren **Definition** wird aufgrund der geschilderten Problematik gefolgt. Entsprechend werden Führende als Personen betrachtet, deren Funktion primär darin besteht, Geführte zu motivieren, Aufgaben zu koordinieren und an die Geführten zu delegieren sowie die Aufgaben zu kontrollieren (vgl. Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 181).

Dabei lassen sich, wie auch schon bei Geführten (vgl. 2.1.1), formale und informelle Positionen unterscheiden. **Formale Führende** befinden sich in einer organisational festgeschriebenen, hierarchisch übergeordneten Position in Relation zu ihren Führenden (vgl. z. B. Alvesson/Spicer 2014, S. 42; Margolis/Ziegert 2016). Diese Position ist mit verschiedenen Ressourcen ausgestattet, welche dafür sorgen, dass Führende einen stärkeren Einfluss auf Geführte ausüben können als umgekehrt (vgl. z. B. Pettigrew 1972). Eine Ressource

stellt die Legitimation dar, welche der höhere Einfluss des Führenden auf den Geführten erhält, indem die ungleichen Positionen organisational festgeschrieben sind (vgl. Franch/Raven 1959, S. 160) Darüber hinaus verfügt der Führende über Ressourcen, die es ihm ermöglichen, den Geführten zu informieren, ihn für erwünschtes Verhalten, beziehungsweise hochwertige Leistung, zu belohnen und Druck auf ihn auszuüben, damit der Geführte den Anweisungen des Führenden folgt (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 156-158; Pettigrew 1972; Yukl/Falbe 1991, S. 421-422). Diese Ressourcen zeigen sich unter anderem in Möglichkeiten, über (finanzielle) Projekte entscheiden zu können, (zusätzliche) Vergütungen für Geführte festlegen zu können und Geführte versetzen oder deren Kündigung anstoßen zu können (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 156-158; Pettigrew 1972, S. 202).

Allerdings ist die Macht eines Führenden üblicherweise nicht unabänderlich gegeben, sondern variiert auch, bedingt durch (wahrgenommene) Eigenschaften von Führenden (vgl. z. B. Cogliser et al. 2012; Spark/O'Connor 2021). So kann ein Führender zusätzlich Macht beziehungsweise einen stärkeren Einfluss auf einen Geführten ausüben, wenn der Geführte starke Ähnlichkeiten zwischen seinem Führenden und sich wahrnimmt oder den Führenden als Vorbild erachtet (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 161-163). Gleiches gilt dafür, dass der Führende über besonderes Wissen oder besondere Fähigkeiten verfügt (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 163-164). Ein Einfluss, bedingt durch (wahrgenommene) Ähnlichkeit, eine Vorbildfunktion oder Vorsprünge in Wissen oder Fähigkeiten, kann auch in Verbindung mit einer formalen Führungsposition auftreten (vgl. Reiley/Jacobs 2016), ist aber nicht an eine solche geknüpft.

Entsprechend sind dies Mechanismen, über die sich auch **informelle Führende** entwickeln können (auch „Emergenz von Führenden" genannt, engl. leader emergence; vgl. z. B. Hanna et al. 2021, S. 80). Informelle Führende verfügen über keine formale Führungsposition (vgl. Schneier/Goktepe 1983; McClean et al. 2018). Daher fehlen ihnen einige der Ressourcen, die die Machposition von Führenden ausmachen können. So können sie beispielsweise weder monetäre Zusatzvergütungen festlegen noch Kündigungsprozesse anstoßen. Trotzdem werden sie von anderen (Geführten) wie ein Führender wahrgenommen, sodass sie einen überproportional großen Einfluss auf

andere (Geführte) ausüben können (vgl. z. B. Kaiser/Hogan/Craig 2008, S. 97-98). Neben den beschriebenen (wahrgenommenen) Eigenschaften können noch weitere, wie die Stimme (vgl. Truninger et al. 2021) oder die persönliche Motivation die Führung zu übernehmen (vgl. Luria/Berson 2013), zur Wahrnehmung als informeller Führender beitragen. Zusätzlich können Kontextfaktoren wie Vertrauen, Sympathie und Empathie, welche Gruppenmitglieder untereinander füreinander empfinden, die Wahrnehmung einer Person als informeller Führender begünstigen (vgl. DeRue/Nahrgang/Ashford 2015).

Zusammengefasst sind **Führende im Rahmen dieser Arbeit** daher zu verstehen als Mitglieder einer Organisation, die entweder durch eine formale Führungsposition oder durch die Einnahme einer informellen Führungsposition mehr Macht als Geführte besitzen und dadurch einen höheren Einfluss auf diese ausüben können als umgekehrt. Ihre vorrangigen Funktionen bestehen in der Motivation der Geführten, der Koordination von Aufgaben sowie (primär bei formalen Rollen) in der Delegation und Kontrolle von Aufgaben (vgl. Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 181-182).

Hinsichtlich des **Verhaltens von Führenden** lässt sich in der deutschsprachigen Literatur eine Unterscheidung zwischen dem Führungsstil und dem Führungsverhalten identifizieren (vgl. Wunderer 2011, S. 204; Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 202; Kauffeld/Ianiro-Dahm/Sauer 2019, S. 110-111). In dieser Unterscheidung ist der Führungsstil ein nur begrenzt variierendes Verhaltensmuster, welches durch individuelle Grundüberzeugungen wie das eigene Menschenbild bestimmt wird (vgl. Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 202; Kauffeld/Ianiro-Dahm/Sauer 2019, S. 111). Dieses Verhaltensmuster bildet die Grenzen des Führungsverhaltens (vgl. Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 202). Das Führungsverhalten ist das tatsächlich situativ gezeigte Verhalten des Führenden innerhalb der organisationalen Einflussbeziehung zwischen Geführtem und Führendem (vgl. Wunderer 2011, S. 204). In der englischsprachigen Literatur wird hingegen üblicherweise nicht zwischen Führungsstil und dem Verhalten von Führenden unterschieden (vgl. z. B. Alvesson 2020; Heimann/Ingold/Kleinmann 2020; Stock et al. 2022). Allerdings wird bei der Kategorisierung verschiedener Verhaltensweisen von Führenden zum Teil auf den

Oberbegriff Führungsstil zurückgegriffen (vgl. Li et al. 2021). Aus Konsistenzgründen zu der in dieser Arbeit mehrheitlich verwendeten, englischsprachigen Literatur wird dem im englischsprachigen Raum vorherrschenden Verständnis gefolgt. Es wird allgemein der Term „Verhalten von Führenden" verwendet sowie der Begriff „Führungsstil" (vgl. 1.1; 1.2; 2.2.1; 2.2.2) als Oberbegriff für Verhaltensweisen von Führenden.

2.1.3 Die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung

Die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung ist durch die beschriebene **Asymmetrie** der Macht gekennzeichnet, in der Form, dass der Führende mehr Macht besitzt als der Geführte (vgl. z. B. Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 167). Entsprechend verwundert es nicht, dass der Führende durch sein Verhalten den Geführten auf vielfältige Weise beeinflussen kann. So kann er unter anderem das Arbeitsengagement des Geführten beeinflussen (vgl. z. B. Li et al. 2021), seine (psychische) Gesundheit (vgl. z. B. Weiß/Süß 2016), seine Einstellungen gegenüber der Organisation, beispielsweise in Form des Commitments (z. B. Gebert/Heinitz/Buengeler 2016), und seine Leistung (vgl. z. B. Ng 2017).

Wäre es so, dass ausschließlich die machtvollere Seite einen Einfluss ausüben könnte, wäre es folgerichtig, den Geführten tatsächlich nur als Reagierenden zu betrachten (vgl. French/Raven 1959, S. 150). Dies kann allerdings bereits durch das verbreitete Verständnis der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung als **wechselseitige Beeinflussung** widerlegt werden (vgl. z. B. Greene 1975; DeRue/Ashford 2010, S. 631; 635; Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 181).

Der Geführte beeinflusst entsprechend durch sein Verhalten auch den Führenden. Diese Beeinflussung kann (1) die Wahrnehmung des Geführten durch den Führenden betreffen, (2) das Führungsverhalten des Führenden und (3) den Führenden selbst.

(1) Bezüglich der **Wahrnehmung des Geführten durch den Führenden** hat sich gezeigt, dass Einschmeicheln, den Führenden loben und ihm Gefallen erweisen, die Sympathie, die der Führende für den Geführten empfindet, erhöhen kann (vgl. Wayne/Ferris 1990; Wayne/Liden 1995; Gordon 1996). Zudem kann sich eine gesteigerte Sympathie auch positiv auf die wahrgenommene Leistung des Geführten durch den Führenden auswirken (vgl.

Wayne/Ferris 1990; Gordon 1996). In ähnlicher Weise können bestimmte Einflusstaktiken, das heißt Versuche des Geführten, ein bestimmtes Anliegen auch potentiell gegen die Interessen des Führenden durchzusetzen (vgl. z. B. Blickle 2003), beeinflussen, inwieweit der Führende den jeweiligen Geführten mag (vgl. Wayne et al. 1997). Einflusstaktiken können darüber hinaus auch die vom Führenden wahrgenommene Eignung eines Geführten für eine Beförderung beeinflussen (vgl. Thacker/Wayne 1995).

(2) Hinsichtlich der **Beeinflussung des Führungsverhaltens** durch den Geführten, wenn auch insgesamt eher wenig erforscht, hat sich gezeigt, dass schlechte Leistung den Führenden dazu bringen kann, mehr Strukturen vorzugeben und Aufgaben verstärkt zu kontrollieren (vgl. Lowin/Craig 1968; Farris/Lim 1969; Greene 1975).

(3) Überdies kann durch den Geführten aber auch eine **Beeinflussung des Führenden selbst** erfolgen. So steht beispielsweise der Einsatz sogenannter harter Einflusstaktiken (bestimmt auftreten, höhere Autoritäten einschalten, Koalitionen bilden) durch den Geführten im Zusammenhang mit einem gesteigerten Stressempfinden des Führenden (vgl. Deluga 1991). Zudem steht das Verhalten von Geführten im Zusammenhang mit der Motivation und den Emotionen von Führenden. So kann eher aktives Verhalten von Geführten zu gesteigerter Motivation und positiven Emotionen wie Zufriedenheit und Freude beim Führenden führen (vgl. Schneider et al. 2014; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018).

Von diesen Möglichkeiten der gegenseitigen Einflussnahme abgesehen, ist zu beachten, dass jede Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung individuell ist (vgl. Dansereau/Graen/Haga 1975, S. 50; 70-76). Darüber hinaus wird sie auch durch grundlegende, aus der Psychologie bekannte Mechanismen geprägt. So kann eine wahrgenommene Ähnlichkeit zwischen Individuen dazu führen, dass diese sich gegenseitig sympathischer finden (vgl. Byrne 1971, S. 23-44). Dies ist entsprechend auch für die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung belegt. So besteht ein Zusammenhang zwischen der wahrgenommenen Ähnlichkeit zwischen Geführtem und Führendem und ihrer gegenseitigen Sympathie füreinander (vgl. Liden/Wayne/Stilwell 1993, S. 668). Zudem

steht das Ausmaß der wahrgenommenen Ähnlichkeit zwischen beiden in positiver Beziehung zum Ausmaß der wahrgenommenen Beziehungsqualität (vgl. Graen/Schiemann 1978).

Zusammengefasst besteht zwischen Geführtem und Führendem eine individuelle, zwischenmenschliche, wechselseitige Beziehung in der sich beide Seiten gegenseitig beeinflussen, auch wenn der Einfluss von Seiten des Führenden üblicherweise stärker ausfällt als von Seiten des Geführten.

2.2 Betrachtung des Geführten in der Führungs- und Followershipforschung

2.2.1 Geführte in der Führungsforschung

Klassifizierungen, die die Führungsforschung und ihre Inhalte systematisieren, variieren in den ihnen zugrundeliegenden Verständnissen (vgl. Grint 2011, S. 4-14; Oc/Bashshur 2013, S. 920-921; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 84-89; Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 191-198; Alvesson 2020, S. 3). Aufgrund des Fokus dieser Arbeit auf Geführte werden im Folgenden vier unterschiedliche **Schwerpunkte der Führungsforschung** identifiziert, die alle verschiedene Implikationen für die Betrachtung der Geführten aufweisen: (1) der Schwerpunkt auf den Führenden als Einzelperson, (2) der Schwerpunkt auf Aufgaben und Ziele in der Führung, (3) der Schwerpunkt auf relationale Ansätze und (4) der Schwerpunkt auf die Attribuierung der Führung durch Geführte. Diese vier Schwerpunkte sind nur eine exemplarische Möglichkeit, die Führungsforschung unter Berücksichtigung ihrer Implikationen für Geführte zu kategorisieren (für Alternativen siehe beispielsweise Avolio 2007, S. 26-27; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 84-89; Ford/Harding 2018, S. 9-19). Die hier vorgenommene Einteilung wurde gewählt, da sie zum einen klar abgrenzbare Schwerpunkte aufzeigt. Zum anderen zeigt die Einteilung eine Entwicklung vom ursprünglichen Schwerpunkt auf Führende hin zu integrativeren Schwerpunkten auf, die schlussendlich auch Geführte und ihre Wahrnehmung beinhalten.

(1) In den Anfängen der Führungsforschung herrschte eine große Fokussierung auf den **Führenden als Einzelperson** vor. Thomas Carlyle mit seiner „Great Men Theory“ (originär aus dem Jahr 1866; vgl. Grint 2011, S. 8), ob-

wohl aufgrund der sehr spirituellen Perspektive eher einer Art Glaubensbekenntnis als einer Theorie entsprechend (vgl. Spector 2016, S. 251), kann dabei als erster Autor der Führungsforschung gesehen werden (vgl. Grint 2011, S. 8). Er vertrat die These, dass es von Geburt an besonders fähige Personen gäbe, sogenannte „Great Men", die mehr als andere dafür geeignet seien, die Führung zu übernehmen (vgl. z. B. Carlyle 2001, S. 61-65; 148-151). Aus diesem Grund waren Geführte nur als indirekte Abgrenzung zu den „Great Men" zu sehen. Geführte galten somit als Personengruppe, die nicht, oder nur in zu geringem Ausmaß, über die notwendigen Eigenschaften, wie beispielsweise Moral (vgl, Carlyle 2001, S. 67), verfügte. Zudem gab Carlyle (2001) vereinzelte Hinweise wie Geführte sich verhalten sollten oder sich automatisch verhalten würden, wenn sie einem der „Great Men" begegnen: „[to] bow down submissive before great men" (S. 20). Letzteres unterstreicht eine seltene und wenn dann ausschließlich passive Berücksichtigung von Geführten.

Aktuellere Betrachtungen vor dem Hintergrund von Eigenschaftstheorien können als moderne Nachfolger von Carlyles Theorie gesehen werden (vgl. Northhouse 2013, S. 4). Eigenschaftentheorien befassen sich damit, welche Eigenschaften einen Führenden ausmachen, beziehungsweise welche Eigenschaften den Führenden von anderen Personengruppen unterscheiden (vgl. z. B. Colbert et al. 2012, S. 670). In reinen Betrachtungen der Eigenschaftstheorie finden Geführte zum Teil gar keine Erwähnung (vgl. Doornenbal/Spisak/van der Laken 2021). Alternativ werden sie nur sehr vereinzelt und indirekt erwähnt, indem beispielsweise thematisiert wird, inwieweit der Führende die Geführten „anziehen" beziehungsweise „zum Ziel leiten" kann (vgl. Colbert et al. 2012, S. 672; 673). Insgesamt zeigt sich damit, dass in Eigenschaftentheorien üblicherweise, sehr ähnlich zu Carlyles „Great Men Theory", Geführte nur selten und wenn, dann rein passiv betrachtet werden.

Allerdings finden sich mittlerweile auch breitere Perspektiven, die beispielsweise parallel Eigenschaften von Führenden und Situationen thematisieren (vgl. z. B. Judge/Zapata 2015; Gottfredson/Reina 2020). In diesen wird auch auf die Bedeutung der Wahrnehmung der Geführten verwiesen (vgl. Gottfredson/Reina 2020, S. 17). Die Berücksichtigung von Wahrnehmungen von

Geführten stellt somit eine etwas umfangreichere Berücksichtigung von Geführten dar.

(2) Der Schwerpunkt auf **Aufgaben und Ziele in der Führung,** teilweise auch benannt als Schwerpunkt auf die Effektivität der Führung (vgl. z. B. Avolio 2007, S. 27), kann vor allem in „traditionellen" Führungsmodellen gesehen werden (vgl. Alvesson 2020, S. 3). Ein nach wie vor einflussreiches „traditionelles" Führungsmodell ist das Kontingenzmodell nach Fiedler (vgl. Avolio 2007, S. 26-27; Oc 2018, S. 220). Der inhaltliche Fokus auf Aufgaben und Ziele zeigt sich zum einen darin, dass die primäre Funktion des Führenden darin gesehen wird, aufgabenrelevante Aktivitäten zu koordinieren (vgl. Fiedler 1964, S. 153). Zum anderen nehmen die Arbeitsaufgaben eine zentrale Rolle in Fiedlers Model ein und die Effektivität der Führung steht übergeordnet im Vordergrund (vgl. Fiedler 1964, S. 160-161). Die Betrachtung von Geführten erfolgt dabei ausschließlich passiv. So verweist Fiedler (1964) beispielsweise darauf, dass ein Führender natürlich („of course", S. 184) darin geschult werden kann, auch sehr „fest verwurzelte" Einstellungen der Geführten zu verändern, woraufhin sich auch die Wahrnehmungen der Geführten ändern können (vgl. S. 184). Allerdings verweist auch Fiedler (1964) auf die Bedeutung der Beziehung zwischen Führenden und (ausgewählten) Geführten („key members of his group", S. 159), wobei relationale Aspekte nicht der Fokus seines Modells sind. Zusammenfassend spielen Geführte in „traditionellen" Führungsmodellen eine insgesamt untergeordnete und primär passive Rolle, da Aufgaben- und Ziel(erreichung) auf Basis des Verhaltens des Führenden im Fokus stehen.

(3) **Relationale Ansätze**, stellenweise auch als „neue" Führungsmodelle benannt, zeichnen sich durch den Einbezug der Wahrnehmungen und Reaktionen des Geführten aus (vgl. Hannah et al. 2014, S. 598). Beispiele dafür sind neben dem LMX (vgl. 1.1) vor allem Führungsstile wie die charismatische und die ethische Führung (vgl. z. B. Howell/Shamir 2005; Giessner et al. 2015; Demirtas et al. 2017). So kann weder die charismatische noch die ethische Führung ohne die charakter- und situationsabhängige Wahrnehmung des Charismas beziehungsweise der Moral des Führenden durch den Geführten gesehen werden (vgl. z. B. Campbell et al. 2008, S. 556;

Meslec et al. 2020, S. 10; Banks et al. 2021, S. 6). Jedoch bleibt die Betrachtung des Geführten, trotz des Einbezugs seiner Wahrnehmung, auch bei diesen Führungsstilen primär reaktiv. Dies zeigt sich in der ethischen Führung (vgl. Banks et al. 2021, S. 6), aber auch besonders in einer Perspektive der charismatischen Führung, der sogenannten dramaturgischen Perspektive (vgl. Gardner/Avolio 1998; Sosik/Avolio/Jung 2002). Darin werden Führende als Akteur und Geführte als Zuschauer bezeichnet (vgl. Gardner/Avolio 1998, S. 32; Sosik/Avolio/Jung 2002, S. 220). Der Geführte nimmt in dieser Betrachtung somit keinen aktiven, beeinflussenden Part in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung ein. Daher verwundert es auch nicht, dass in den relationalen Ansätzen keine geführtenspezifischen Eigenschaften (vgl. 1.2) untersucht werden. Stattdessen werden allgemeine Eigenschaften wie Verträglichkeit und Arbeitszufriedenheit untersucht (vgl. z. B. Dulebohn et al. 2012, S. 1717; Hoch et al. 2018, S. 513).

(4) Die **Attribuierung der Führung durch Geführte** kann als eine geführtenzentrierte Perspektive in der Führungsforschung gesehen werden (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 86; Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 193). Zentral dafür sind Implizite Führendentheorien, das heißt subjektive Annahmen, die Geführte über durchschnittliche oder idealtypische Führende haben (vgl. Levy/Chiu/Hong 2006; Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 193). Die Impliziten Führendentheorien von Geführten sind von Relevanz, da sie beeinflussen, inwieweit Geführte Führende als effektiv, gut oder schlecht wahrnehmen (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 86). Die Impliziten Führendentheorien des Geführten können entsprechend auch darüber entscheiden, ob ein Geführter bereit ist, eine Geführtenrolle (in Relation zu einem Führenden) einzunehmen (vgl. Shondrick/Lord 2010).

Zusammengefasst werden Geführte in der Führungsforschung primär als reagierend und nicht proaktiv gesehen und besitzen lediglich allgemeine, das heißt keine geführtenspezifischen, Eigenschaften. Eine Ausnahme bilden Implizite Führendentheorien von Geführten. Diese können als geführtenspezifische Eigenschaft betrachtet werden und haben darüber hinaus auch Implikationen für die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung. So können Implizite Führendentheorien von Geführten beeinflussen, ob Geführte bereit sind, eine Ge-

führtenrolle einzunehmen. Davon abgesehen mangelt es in der Führungsforschung aber an der Berücksichtigung weiterer geführtenspezifischer Eigenschaften sowie der Untersuchung ihrer Implikationen für die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung.

2.2.2 Geführte in führungsforschungsverwandten Forschungssträngen

Neben der Führungsforschung gibt es einige andere Forschungsstränge, die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen thematisieren und daher als mit der Führungsforschung verwandt betrachtet werden können. Insbesondere Forschungsstränge, die sich mit proaktivem Verhalten von Mitarbeitern auseinandersetzen, betrachten häufiger Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen (vgl. Parker/Wang/Liao 2019). Darüber hinaus sind diese Forschungsstränge vor dem Hintergrund dieser Arbeit relevant, da Geführte dort, im Gegensatz zu der dominierenden Betrachtung in der Führungsforschung, nicht primär als reagierend betrachtet werden (vgl. 2.2.1). Proaktives Verhalten von Geführten gegenüber ihren Führenden zeigt sich dabei insbesondere in zwei Verhaltensweisen: Im Äußern von Verbesserungsvorschlägen oder Problemen, bezeichnet als **Voice Behavior** (vgl. z. B. Chamberlin/Newton/LePine 2017; Xu et al. 2019; Isaakyan et al. 2021) sowie im Einfordern von Feedback, in der Forschung bezeichnet als **Feedback Seeking** (vgl. z. B. Ashford/De Stobbeleir/Nujella 2016; Shen et al. 2019; Moss et al. 2020).

Konsistent zu der dominierenden Betrachtung von Geführten in der Führungsforschung finden sich in beiden Forschungssträngen auch rein reaktive Betrachtungen des Geführten. In diesen werden üblicherweise Zusammenhänge von Führungsstilen mit Voice Behavior, beziehungsweise Feedback Seeking, untersucht (vgl. z. B. Detert/Burris 2007; Anseel et al. 2015). Zudem gibt es in den Forschungssträngen auch relationale, aber nach wie vor reaktive Ansätze (vgl. 1.2; 2.2.1), wie Betrachtungen des LMX (vgl. z. B. Lam/Huang/Snape 2007; Dong et al. 2020).

Darüber hinaus liefern beide Forschungsstränge Erkenntnisse zu **Eigenschaften von Geführten** (sowie ihrem aus den Eigenschaften resultierenden Verhalten in der Form von Voice Behavior und Feedback Seeking) und zu den Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende. Hinsichtlich der Ei-

genschaften, sind insbesondere solche untersucht worden, die die Wahrscheinlichkeit, Voice zu äußern, beziehungsweise Feedback einzuholen, erhöhen. So kann eine hohe Selbstwirksamkeit, hohe Eigeninitiative und Kompetenzen in der Emotionsregulierung die Wahrscheinlichkeit erhöhen, dass Geführte Voice gegenüber ihren Führenden äußern (vgl. Grant 2013; Chamberlin/Newton/LePine 2017; Eibl/Lang/Niessen 2020). In ähnlicher Weise können unter anderem eine hohe Selbstwirksamkeit, hohe Gewissenhaftigkeit und ein jüngeres Alter die Wahrscheinlichkeit erhöhen, Feedback einzuholen (vgl. Krasman 2010; Anseel et al. 2015).

Somit liegt hier die identische Forschungslücke vor wie auch aktuell in der Führungsforschung. Es werden zwar Eigenschaften von Geführten erhoben, diese sind aber **nicht geführtenspezifisch** (vgl. 1.2, 2.2.1). Stattdessen verbleiben sie auf einer allgemeinen Persönlichkeitsebene oder einer demographischen Ebene. So unterbleiben beispielsweise Kenntnisse über geführtenspezifische Motive, wie Motive dafür, Voice gegenüber dem Führenden zu äußern oder Feedback vom Führenden einzuholen. Hinsichtlich des Einholens von Feedback gibt es zwar ein paar spezifischere Eigenschaften wie die sogenannte Feedback Orientierung (vgl. Linderbaum/Levy 2010) oder Feedback-Seeking-Motive (vgl. Ashford/Blatt/VandeWalle 2003; Anseel/Lievens/Levy 2007). Beide thematisieren jedoch nicht die Ebene der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung, beziehungsweise wenn, dann nur vereinzelt und allgemein (vgl. Anseel/Lievens/Levy 2007; Linderbaum/Levy 2010, S. 1401). So beziehen sich beispielsweise nur zwei aus insgesamt 20 Items zur Messung der Feedback Orientierung auf Feedback gegenüber Führenden (vgl. Linderbaum/Levy 2010, S. 1401). Beide Items bleiben zudem sehr allgemein, was sich auch darin zeigt, dass sich eines der Items auf Führende im Allgemeinen bezieht („Feedback from supervisors can help me advance in a company.“; Linderbaum/Levy 2010, S. 1401). Zudem gibt es keinen Instruktionstext, der den Geführten-Führenden-Kontext für die Beantwortung der Items hätte herstellen können, ohne dass sich die Items primär auf Führende hätten beziehen müssen (vgl. Linderbaum/Levy 2010, S. 1401).

In beiden Forschungssträngen werden zudem **Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende**, wenn auch eher spärlich (vgl. Howell et al. 2015, S. 1766; Ashford/De Stobbeleir/Nujella 2016, S. 225-226),

adressiert. Hinsichtlich des Feedback Seekings hat sich unter anderem gezeigt, dass die wahrgenommene Leistung des Geführten, der Feedback einholt, sowie die Häufigkeit des Einholens von Feedback beeinflussen, welche Motive Führende den feedbackeinholenden Geführten unterstellen (vgl. De Stobbeleir/Ashford/Sully de Luque 2010). Darüber hinaus kann das Erfragen von positivem Feedback durch Geführte zu einer negativeren Leistungseinschätzung durch den Führenden führen, wohingegen das Erfragen von negativem Feedback den gegenteiligen Effekt haben kann (vgl. Gong et al. 2017).

Hinsichtlich des Voice Behaviors ist ebenfalls der Zusammenhang mit der Leistungseinschätzung durch den Führenden untersucht worden. So kann sich geäußertes Voice von einem, aus Perspektive des Führenden vertrauenswürdigen Geführten, positiv auf die Leistungsbeurteilung des Geführten auswirken (vgl. Whiting et al. 2012). Außerdem kann ein höherer Status des Geführten dazu führen, dass Führende sein Voice Behavior positiver wahrnehmen (vgl. Howell et al. 2015). Zudem gibt es Erkenntnisse zu Voice Befürwortung (engl. Voice Endorsement; vgl. z. B. Lam/Lee/Sui 2019). Voice Befürwortung umfasst, inwieweit Führende einem geäußerten Vorschlag Wert beimessen und inwieweit sie den Vorschlag, im Hinblick auf eine mögliche Implementierung, weiterverfolgen möchten (vgl. Li et al. 2019, S. 870). Diesbezüglich hat sich gezeigt, dass Führende mit (temporär) mangelnden Selbstkontrollressourcen (Ego-Depletion, vgl. Baumeister/Vohs 2007, S. 116) eher dazu neigen, Voice nicht zu befürworten (vgl. Li et al. 2019). Überdies befürworten Führende Voice eher, wenn es direkt und höflich beziehungsweise direkt und von einem glaubwürdigen Geführten geäußert wird (vgl. Lam/Lee/Sui 2019).

Damit zeigt sich, dass Betrachtungen, die auf den Geführten zurückgehen, dominieren (z. B. Auswirkungen auf die wahrgenommene Leistung des Geführten). **Auswirkungen auf den Führenden selbst fehlen** mehrheitlich. Die rare Forschung, die mit Voice Befürwortung thematisiert wie Führende mit dem geäußerten Voice umgehen, geht in die Richtung von Auswirkungen auf den Führenden selbst. Sie ist somit ein erster Schritt. Im Besonderen mangelt es aber an Auswirkungen, die den Führenden auf persönlicher Ebene betref-

fen, beispielsweise seine Motivation, Zufriedenheit oder ähnliches. Eine Studie, die der Followershipforschung zugeordnet werden kann (vgl. 2.2.3), adressiert einen Teil dieser Forschungslücke, indem Voice Behavior als Mediator der Beziehung zwischen aktiver und passiver Rollenorientierung und der Motivation von Führenden untersucht wird (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018).

Des Weiteren gibt es drei weitere Forschungsstränge, die, dadurch dass sie Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen thematisieren, ebenfalls als führungsforschungsverwandt bezeichnet werden können. Diese Forschungsstränge sind relevant, da sie Teile der Forschungslücke, die diese Arbeit adressiert (vgl. 1.2), berücksichtigen: die **Auswirkungen von Geführtenverhalten auf Führende**. Dies sind die Forschungsstränge zu Upward-Feedback (vgl. z. B. Heslin/Latham 2003), zu Impression-Management-Taktiken (vgl. z. B. Bolino/Long/Turnley 2016) und zu Einflusstaktiken (vgl. z. B. Lee et al. 2017).

Die Forschung zu **Upward-Feedback** beschäftigt sich mit Feedback, welches Personen von anderen erhalten, die niedriger als die Person selbst in der organisationalen Hierarchie stehen (vgl. Oc/Bashshur 2013, S. 921). Entsprechend sind Feedbackgeber durchaus Geführte und die Feedbackempfänger Führende (vgl. z. B. Walker/Smither 1999; Heslin/Latham 2003; van Dierendonck et al. 2007).

Impression-Management-Taktiken sind Verhaltensweisen, die von Personen (Geführten) eingesetzt werden, um ein bestimmtes, vorteilhaftes Bild bei anderen (dem Führenden) zu erzeugen oder aufrechtzuerhalten (vgl. z. B. Bozeman/Kacmar 1997, S. 9). Dabei müssen diese Taktiken nicht bedeuten, dass Geführte zwangsläufig versuchen, ein falsches Bild zu vermitteln. Stattdessen können Geführte auch Impression-Management-Taktiken verwenden, die ihre tatsächlichen Eigenschaften widerspiegeln (vgl. Rosenfeld 1997, S. 803). Beispielhafte Impression-Management-Taktiken sind Selbstvermarktung, also das Herausstellen (und gegebenenfalls Übertreiben) eigener Stärken, sowie Einschmeicheln (vgl. z. B. Gordon 1996; Rudman 1998).

Einflusstaktiken beschreiben Verhaltensweisen einer Person (eines Geführten), die dazu dienen sollen, eine andere Personen (den Führenden) von einem bestimmten Anliegen zu überzeugen (vgl. Kipnis/Schmidt/Wilkinson 1980, S. 440). Zwei Beispiele sind das bereits genannte Einschmeicheln sowie die Überzeugung mittels rationaler Argumente (vgl. z. B. Blickle 2003, S. 4-5). Aufgrund der teilweisen inhaltlichen Überschneidung und der grundsätzlichen Ähnlichkeit beider, werden die Begriffe Impression-Management-Taktiken und Einflusstaktiken stellenweise auch **synonym** verwendet (vgl. z. B. Wayne/Ferris 1990, S. 488-489; Higgins/Judge/Ferris 2003, S. 94).

Hinsichtlich der **Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf den Führenden** zeigt sich in den Forschungssträngen zu Impression-Management-Taktiken und Einflusstaktiken ein ähnliches Bild wie auch in den Forschungssträngen zu Voice Behavior und Feedback Seeking: Die Auswirkungen beziehen sich fast ausschließlich auf die Wahrnehmung des Geführten durch den Führenden. So kann die von Geführten verwendete Impression-Management-Taktik beispielsweise beeinflussen, inwieweit der Führende den Geführten mag (vgl. Wayne/Ferris 1990; Wayne/Liden 1995; Gordon 1996). In ähnlicher Weise steht eine verwendete Einflusstaktik im Zusammenhang damit, wie sehr der Führende den Geführten mag (vgl. Wayne et al. 1997).

Die **Auswirkungen auf den Führenden selbst** werden in der Forschung zu beiden Taktiken kaum beachtet. Eine Ausnahme ist Deluga (1991). Er hat untersucht, inwieweit der Einsatz von „harten“ Einflusstaktiken von Geführten (vgl. 2.1.3) im Zusammenhang mit dem empfundenen Stress von Führenden steht. Demnach steht der Einsatz von „harten“ Einflusstaktiken im Zusammenhang mit einem höheren interpersonellen Stress des Führenden (vgl. Deluga 1991).

Die Forschung zu Upward-Feedback hingegen, berücksichtigt in mehreren Studien, (1) wie sich das Feedback auf den Führenden selbst und (2) auf seine Wahrnehmung durch die Geführten auswirkt.

(1) Die Art, wie Upward-Feedback geäußert wird, kann sich darauf auswirken, inwieweit ein Führender dazu bereit ist, das Feedback zu diskutieren oder inwieweit er zufrieden mit dem Feedback-Prozess ist (vgl. Smither/Woh-

lers/London 1995). Zudem kann Upward-Feedback dazu führen, dass Führende die Selbsteinschätzung ihrer Führung verändern, so dass negatives Feedback zu einer Verschlechterung der vorher positiveren Selbsteinschätzung und positives Feedback zu einer Verbesserung der vorher negativeren Selbsteinschätzung führen kann (vgl. Atwater/Roush/Fischthal 1995).

(2) Hinsichtlich der Wahrnehmung durch die Geführten kann Upward-Feedback zu einer verbesserten Einschätzung der Leistung des Führenden durch die Geführten führen (vgl. Atwater/Roush/Fischthal 1995; Walker/Smither 1999; Heslin/Latham 2004). Dies stellt die gespiegelte Version zur vorherrschenden Perspektive, dass Führende üblicherweise die Leistung der Geführten einschätzen, dar (vgl. z. B. Wang et al. 2018).

Zusammengefasst zeigt sich in führungsverwandten Forschungssträngen folgendes: Erstens werden keine geführtenspezifischen Eigenschaften berücksichtigt. Zweitens werden mehrheitlich keine Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf den Führenden selbst berücksichtigt, sondern die Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens beziehen sich primär auf die Wahrnehmung des Geführten durch den Führenden. Einzige Ausnahmen bilden vereinzelte Studien zu Voice-Befürwortung, eine Studie zu Einflusstaktiken von Deluga (1991) sowie wenige Studien zu Upward-Feedback. Dies unterstreicht den in der vorliegenden Arbeit gewählten Fokus, Eigenschaften und Verhalten von Geführten sowie die Auswirkungen des Verhaltens von Geführten auf Führende selbst zu untersuchen.

2.2.3 Entwicklung und aktueller Stand der Followershipforschung

Da zu Beginn des Jahrtausends wenig Followershipforschung existierte (vgl. Baker 2007, S. 50), konnte sie noch bis in die 2010er Jahre als „newly emerging field of study“ (Lapierre/Carsten 2014b, S. ix) bezeichnet werden. Sie besitzt allerdings nach wie vor „great potential to grow“ (Oc 2018, S. 231), da der Umfang der Forschung immer noch als (zu) gering angesehen wird (vgl. Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 81-82; 1.2).

Trotz allem liegen die Anfänge der Followershipforschung schon einige Jahrzehnte zurück. Obwohl es auch schon Mitte der 60er-Jahre einen Artikel gab, der aus heutiger Perspektive der Followershipforschung zugeordnet werden kann (vgl. Zaleznik 1965; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 90), wird der **Startpunkt**

des Forschungsstrangs gemeinhin als Kelleys Artikel „In Praise of Followers“ aus dem Jahr 1988 gesehen (vgl. Baker 2007, S. 50; Baker et al. 2014, S. 77; Hinrichs/Hinrichs 2014, S. 89; Blom/Lundgren 2020, S. 166). Darin thematisiert Kelley die Bedeutung von Geführten für den Erfolg von Organisationen und klassifiziert Geführte auf Basis konzeptioneller Überlegungen in effektive und weniger effektive Geführte (vgl. Kelley 1988). Dazu verortet er Geführte anhand zweier Dimensionen mit den Ausprägungen „aktiv“/„passiv“ beziehungsweise „unabhängiges, kritisches Denken“/„abhängiges, unkritisches Denken“ (vgl. Kelley 1988, S. 4-6). Effektive Geführte sieht er dabei als diejenigen, die sich durch Aktivität und unabhängiges, kritisches Denken auszeichnen (vgl. Kelley 1988, S. 5-6).

Die Unterteilung in aktive und passive Geführte, allerdings ohne die explizite Berücksichtigung von (un)abhängigem, (un)kritischen Denken, findet sich heute auch in der **empirischen Followershipforschung** (vgl. z. B. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). In dieser werden vor allem (1) Rollenorientierungen von Geführten sowie (2) Implizite Geführtentheorien inklusive ihrer beider Auswirkungen untersucht (vgl. z. B. Sy 2010). Implizite Geführtentheorien sind ein Sammelbegriff für sowohl prototypische, das heißt durchschnittliche, als auch idealtypische Annahmen, die Personen, inklusive Geführten selbst, über Geführte haben (vgl. Levy/Chiu/Hong 2006; Sy 2010; Epitropaki et al. 2013). Rollenorientierung ist die Bezeichnung dafür, wie Geführte ihre eigene Rolle und deren Ausführung sehen (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 91; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018).

Hinsichtlich der (1) **Rollenorientierungen** hat eine qualitative Studie von Carsten und Kollegen (2010) ergeben, dass sich Geführte entsprechend ihrer Rollenorientierung in passive, aktive und proaktive Geführte einteilen lassen (vgl. S. 550-551). Passive Geführte verstehen ihre Rolle als das reine Erledigen zugewiesener Aufgaben (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 550). Sie sehen bei sich selbst wenig bis keine persönliche Verantwortung, da diese in ihrer Wahrnehmung beim Führenden liegt (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 550). Aktive Geführte sehen ihre Rolle darin, wenn vom Führenden erfragt, Ideen oder Meinungen zu äußern, wobei sie letztendliche Entscheidungen grundsätzlich beim Führenden sehen (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 550). Proaktive Geführte

wiederum, sehen ihre Rolle als aktiv beeinflussender Teil der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 551) Sie betonen die Bedeutung davon, Eigeninitiative zu ergreifen, die Anweisungen des Führenden zu hinterfragen und ihm Feedback zu geben (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 550-551).

Bezogen auf die beiden ermittelten Extremausprägungen der Rollenorientierung (pro)aktiv und passiv, ist zudem je eine Skala zur quantitativen Messung entwickelt worden. Eine entwickelte Skala von Carsten und Uhl-Bien (2012) misst die sogenannten „belief[s] in the co-production of leadership“ und entspricht somit der proaktiven Rollenorientierung von Geführten (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2012, S. 214; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 741). Die Skala zur Messung der passiven Rollenorientierung wurde ebenfalls von Carsten und Uhl-Bien, gemeinsam mit ihrem Kollegen Huang, (2018) entwickelt. Sie misst die „passive orientation“.

Die Skala zur Messung der aktiven Rollenorientierung ist dazu verwendet worden, um die Verhaltensimplikationen der Rollenorientierung zu untersuchen. Eine aktive Rollenorientierung steht in positivem Zusammenhang mit Voice Behavior (vgl. 2.2.2) und konstruktivem Widerstand (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2012; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Zudem begegnen Geführte mit aktiver Rollenorientierung unethischen Anweisungen von Führenden eher mit konstruktivem Widerstand, während Geführte mit eher geringer aktiver Rollenorientierung (passiver Rollenorientierung) dazu neigen, diese zu befolgen (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2013).

Darüber hinaus sind, wenn auch sehr vereinzelt, Auswirkungen der Rollenorientierung von Geführten auf Führende untersucht worden. So besteht ein positiver Zusammenhang zwischen Geführten mit aktiver Rollenorientierung und der Motivation ihrer Führenden (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018).

Hinsichtlich (2) **Impliziter Geführtentheorien** findet sich bereits eine empirische Erhebung aus dem Jahr 1988 (vgl. Gilbert/Hyde 1988). Diese hat allerdings, vermutlich bedingt durch die zeitliche Überschneidung mit Kellys (1988) vielbeachtetem Artikel, keine breite Erwähnung in der Followershipforschung gefunden. Dies zeigt sich daran, dass spätere Artikel, die Implizite Geführtentheorien thematisieren, die Studie nicht berücksichtigen

(vgl. Sy 2010; Epitropaki et al. 2013, S. 863; Junker/van Dick 2014). Gilbert und Hyde (1988) befragten Führende zu Eigenschaften ihrer besten Geführten (vgl. S. 963), was als eine Form idealtypischer Impliziter Geführtentheorien gesehen werden kann (vgl. Sy 2010, S. 75). Darauf aufbauend identifizierten sie acht Dimensionen, die Geführtenverhalten abbilden (vgl. Gilbert/Hyde 1988, S. 962; 964). Die Dimensionen beinhalten unter anderem Motivation, Kompetenz und „speaking up" (vgl. Gilbert/Hyde 1988, S. 962; 964). Letzteres ist ein Synonym für das bereits thematisierte Voice (Behavior) (vgl. 2.2.2; z. B. Ng/van Dyne/Ang 2019).

Über zwanzig Jahre später hat Sy (2010) eine Implizite-Geführtentheorie-Skala entwickelt (vgl. z. B. Epitropaki et al. 2013; Junker/van Dick 2014; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019). Basierend auf Befragungen von Führenden und Studierenden entwickelte er sechs Dimensionen von denen drei dem Geführten-Idealtyp (Enthusiasmus, Fleiß, „Good citizen", letzteres enthält „loyal", „verlässlich" und „Teamplayer") und drei dem Gegenteil eines Geführten-Idealtypen entsprechen (Inkompetenz, Konformität, Ungehorsam) (vgl. Sy 2010, S. 78).

Whiteley, Sy und Johnson (2012) ebenso wie Coyle und Foti (2022) greifen für ihre Studien auf Sys Skala zurück. Whiteley, Sy und Johnson (2012) befassten sich dabei mit dem Pygmalion-Effekt, einer Form der selbsterfüllenden Prophezeiung in einer hierarchischen Beziehung, beispielsweise einer Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung (vgl. Rosenthal 1993). Der Pygmalion-Effekt besagt, dass hohe Erwartungen an die Leistung einer hierarchisch unterstellten Person (z. B. eines Geführten), die tatsächliche Leistung der hierarchisch unterstellten Person (des Geführten) erhöhen können (vgl. Rosenthal 1993, S. 5-12). Die Studie ergab, dass wenn Führende positive, also dem Idealtyp entsprechende, Implizite Geführtentheorien hatten (z. B. hart arbeitend, loyal), dies im Zusammenhang mit höheren Leistungserwartungen der Führenden an die Geführten stand und Geführte auch eine höhere Leistung (eingeschätzt durch andere Geführte) zeigten (vgl. Whiteley/Sy/Johnson 2012).

Coyle und Foti (2022) untersuchten den Zusammenhang zwischen Impliziten Geführtentheorien von Geführten und ihrer Arbeitszufriedenheit. Geführte

mit Impliziten Geführtentheorien, die primär dem Gegenteil eines Geführten-Idealtypen entsprechen, wiesen in Relation zu anderen Geführten eine unterdurchschnittliche Arbeitszufriedenheit auf (vgl. Coyle/Foti 2022).

Abgesehen von Sys (2010) Implizite-Geführtentheorie-Skala sowie den Skalen zur Messung der aktiven beziehungsweise passiven Rollenorientierung (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2012; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018), existieren aktuell keine (verbreiteten) Skalen, um Geführteneigenschaften, ihr Verhalten sowie die Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende (quantitativ) zu messen (vgl. Epitropaki et al. 2013, S. 863; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 749).

Daher verwundert es nicht, dass der wesentliche **Schwerpunkt der Followershipforschung auf nicht-empirischer Forschung** liegt. Dies zeigt sich unter anderem darin, dass in einem Herausgeberband zur Followershipforschung ausschließlich konzeptionell-theoretische Beiträge zu finden sind (vgl. Lapierre/Carsten 2014a).

Neben Überblicksartikel, die neben raren empirischen Erkenntnissen zu Geführten auch Forschung zu Führenden, beispielsweise bezogen auf Implizite Theorien, berücksichtigen (vgl. z. B. Epitropaki et al. 2013; Junker/van Dick 2014), finden sich zudem Paper, die sich konzeptionell/theoretisch mit den aktuell vorherrschenden begrifflichen Unklarheiten zu Geführten und der Followershipforschung befassen (vgl. 2.1.1; Crossman/Crossman 2011, S. 482-483; Andersen 2019, S. 277-279).

Den größten Teil der nicht-empirischen Forschung machen allerdings konzeptionell-theoretische Arbeiten aus, die sich auf interaktionaler Ebene mit der **Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung** beschäftigen. Dabei dominierte vor ein paar Jahrzehnten noch die interaktionale Betrachtung der organisationalen Geführten- und Führendenrollen (vgl. z. B. Hollander/Offermann 1990; Hollander 1992; Gardner/Avolio 1998). Insbesondere seit den 2000ern wird primär die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung als sozialer Austauschprozess, losgelöst von organisationalen Rollen, betrachten (vgl. z. B. Collinson 2005; Shondrick/Lord 2010; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019; Pietraszewski 2020; Tripathi 2021).

2.2.4 Der rollenbasierte Followership-Ansatz

In der bestehenden Followershipforschung können aktuell zwei unterschiedliche Ansätze identifiziert werden: der konstruktivistische und der rollenbasierte Followership-Ansatz (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 97). Der konstruktivistische Followership-Ansatz (engl. constructionist approach to followership) sieht Followership als einen gemeinsamen, sozialen Austauschprozess zwischen Geführtem und Führendem, in welchem beide interaktiv Führung beziehungsweise das Folgen (followership) und die damit verbundenen Auswirkungen gemeinsam gestalten (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 98-99; siehe exemplarisch z. B. Blom/Alvesson 2014; Blom/Lundgren 2020; Einola/Alvesson 2021). Dieser Ansatz entspricht somit der Perspektive, die aktuell in konzeptionell-theoretischen Artikeln der Followershipforschung vorherrscht (vgl. 2.2.3).

Der **rollenbasierte Followership-Ansatz** (engl. role-based approach to followership) stellt eine andere Perspektive dar und sieht den Geführten als zentralen Akteur in der Beziehung mit seinem Führendem (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 97-99; siehe exemplarisch z. B. Carsten et al. 2010; Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2013; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Daher wird der rollenbasierte Followership-Ansatz auch als „reversing the lens“ (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 97; alternativ auch: „revers(e/al) (of) the lenses“; Shamir 2007, S. ix; xxi; Carsten et al. 2010, S. 559) bezeichnet, weil er das geführtenzentrierte Äquivalent dazu darstellt, wie Führung in der Forschung traditionell betrachtet wird. Der Ansatz bietet einen wesentlichen Vorteil im Hinblick auf die vorliegende Arbeit, die das Ziel hat, Eigenschaften und Verhalten von Geführten sowie die Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende in den Fokus zu setzen: Er schränkt die kausale Wirkungsrichtung ein (vgl. Collinson 2014, S. 39). Diese Einschränkung ermöglicht eine stärkere Fokussierung auf den Geführten, seine Eigenschaften, seine Verhaltensweisen und seine Verhaltensauswirkungen auf den Führenden. Deutlich wird dies daran, dass wissenschaftliche Artikel, vor dem Hintergrund des konstruktivistischen Ansatzes, Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf den Führenden bisher nur in kleinem Umfang (vgl. Blom/Alvesson 2014, S. 349; 351)

beziehungsweise in Randbemerkungen aufgezeigt haben (vgl. z. B. Einola/Alvesson 2021, S. 853). Daher liegt den folgenden empirischen Analysen der rollenbasierte Followership-Ansatz zugrunde.

Der rollenbasierte Followership-Ansatz kann nur angewendet werden, wenn eine klar definierte Rolle vorliegt (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 90). Auch wenn theoretisch auch informelle Rollen klar festgelegt sein können (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 89), sind diese üblicherweise dynamischer und dadurch weniger eindeutig (vgl. Acton et al. 2019). Hinzu kommt, dass bei informellen Rollen auch Eigensicht (in vorliegenden Falle Geführtensicht) und Fremdsicht (im vorliegenden Falle Führendensicht) nicht deckungsgleich sein müssen (vgl. DeRue/Ashford 2010, S. 634-635). Aus diesem Grund besteht bei informellen Geführtenrollen die Schwierigkeit, dass diese nur unter sehr bestimmten Bedingungen (keine große Dynamik in der informellen Rollenzuschreibung; identische Eigen- und Fremdsicht) vor dem Hintergrund des rollenbasierten Followership-Ansatzes geeignet sind. Daher werden im Folgenden ausschließlich formale Rollen von Geführten und damit auch von Führenden betrachtet.

2.3 Entwicklung eines Forschungsmodells zur Analyse der Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung

Zur Einordnung der Studien dieser Arbeit wird im Folgenden ein **Forschungsmodell** aufgezeigt, welches exemplarisch einen Geführten und einen Führenden sowie deren betrachtete Beziehung abbildet (vgl. Abb. 2.1). Um zu verdeutlichen, dass es sich bei Geführtem und Führendem um die Inhaber der jeweiligen organisationalen Rolle handelt, werden sie als „formaler Geführter“ beziehungsweise als „formaler Führender“ benannt. Zudem ist der Rahmen um das Forschungsmodell mit der Bezeichnung „Organisation“ versehen, um den vorliegenden Kontext zu verdeutlichen.

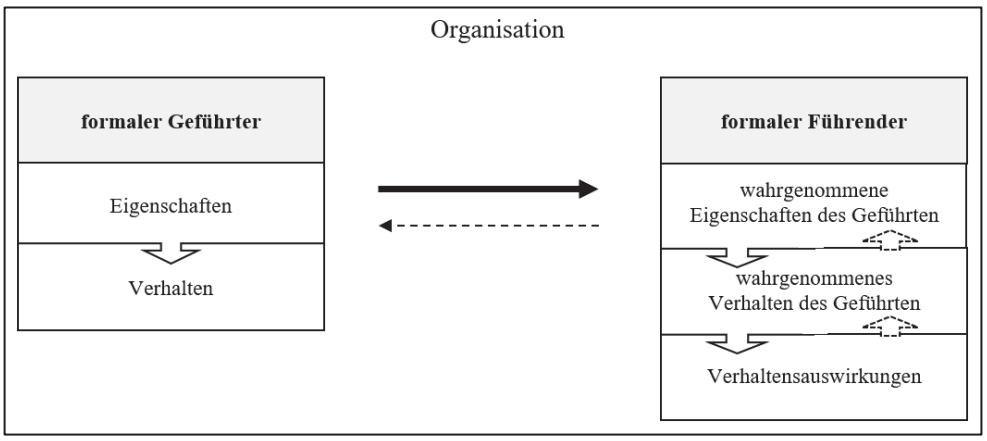


Abb. 2.1: Forschungsmodell zur Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung

Der im Forschungsmodell dargestellte horizontale schwarze Pfeil zeigt, vom Geführten ausgehend, auf den Führenden, da diese Arbeit den rollenbasierten Followership-Ansatz als Ausgangspunkt der empirischen Analysen wählt, der den Geführten als beeinflussenden Part der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung betrachtet (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 97-99; 2.2.4). Vom Führenden zum Geführten findet sich ebenfalls ein horizontaler, allerdings gestrichelter Pfeil. Die Strichelung visualisiert, dass zwar ein Einfluss des Führenden auf den Geführten vorliegt, dieser sich jedoch einzig auf die Zuschreibung der organisationalen Rolle des Geführten begrenzt, da die Rolle des Geführten ohne einen Führenden nicht zu definieren ist (vgl. z. B. Katz/Kahn 1978, S. 196).

Wie sich ein Geführter verhält wird maßgeblich durch seine Eigenschaften geprägt (vgl. z. B. Parker 2007, S. 421-425; Carsten et al. 2010, S. 552-554; 556). Aus diesem Grund bildet das Forschungsmodell die Eigenschaften als erstes Element des Geführten ab, welche, mit einem Pfeil verbunden dargestellt, das Verhalten desselbigen beeinflussen. Zwar ist ebenfalls belegt, dass das Verhalten, ebenso wie daraus resultierende Verhaltensauswirkungen, auch Eigenschaften beeinflussen können, allerdings sind dies Veränderungen, die nur im zeitlichen Verlauf geschehen können (vgl. Tasselli/Kilduff/Landis 2018). Da diese Wirkungsrichtung im zeitlichen Verlauf in dieser Arbeit nicht betrachtet wird, ist im vorliegenden Modell nur die Einflussrichtung von Eigenschaften auf Verhalten abgebildet.

Die selbst wahrgenommenen Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen des Geführten müssen nicht identisch mit der Fremdwahrnehmung durch den Führenden sein (vgl. Fiske 1993, S. 163-164; Avolio 2007, S. 28-29). Daher sind aus Perspektive des Führenden die wahrgenommenen Eigenschaften sowie das wahrgenommene Verhalten entscheidend (vgl. Hollander 1992, S. 46-47; 49-52). Aus dem wahrgenommenen Verhalten des Geführten ergeben sich wiederum die Verhaltensauswirkungen auf den Führenden. Diese Verhaltensauswirkungen können wiederum zurück auf die Wahrnehmung des Verhaltens und darüber auf die Wahrnehmung der Eigenschaften wirken (vgl. Tate 2008, S. 26-27). Diese Wirkungsrichtung ist in Relation zur ersten, von untergeordneter Bedeutung, da sie sich, wie auch schon beim Geführten beschrieben, ebenfalls nur in zeitlichen Verläufen zeigen kann. Da die vorliegende Arbeit aber zum Teil die Wahrnehmung der Führenden über zeitliche Verläufe hinweg betrachtet, wird diese Richtung mitabgebildet, aber, zur Abgrenzung zur vorherrschenden Wirkungsrichtung, lediglich mit gestrichelten, vertikalen Pfeilen dargestellt.

3 Einordnung der Kapitel 4 bis 7 in das Forschungsmodell

In den Kapiteln 4 bis 7 werden quantitative und qualitative empirische Untersuchungen zur Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung, im spezifischen zu den Eigenschaften und dem Verhalten von Geführten sowie den Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende, beschrieben. Im Folgenden erfolgt eine Einordnung der Studien in das zuvor aufgezeigte Forschungsmodell. Diese Einordnung ist in Abbildung 3.1 dargestellt. Das zuvor aufgezeigte Forschungsmodell ist durch grauhinterlegte Kästchen dargestellt. Rechts neben den grauhinterlegten Kästchen schließen sich konkretisierende Kästchen an, die in konsekutiver Reihenfolge die Inhalte der einzelnen Kapitel aufzeigen. Die jeweiligen Kapitelinhalte sind durch eine Umrandung voneinander abgegrenzt und durch eine gefettete Kapitelbezeichnung gekennzeichnet. Pro Kapitel wird zudem mit einer Fettung der primär betrachtete Untersuchungsgegenstand aufgezeigt.

Kapitel 4 und **5** widmen sich den Eigenschaften und dem Verhalten der Geführten. Da bisher Eigenschaften und Verhalten von Geführten wenig Beachtung gefunden haben (vgl. Collinson 2006, S. 179; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019, S. 81), und wenn dann isoliert und in Bezug zu Verhaltensweisen des Führenden (vgl. z. B. Schyns/Kroon/Moors 2008; Cogliser et al. 2009; Tepper et al. 2018), wird in beiden Kapiteln ein personenzentrierter Ansatz mittels latenter Profilanalysen gewählt. Dies ermöglicht die alleinige Fokussierung auf Geführte sowie eine simultane Berücksichtigung verschiedener Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen (vgl. Morin/Gagne/Bujacz 2016, S. 8).

Kapitel 5, 6 und **7** widmen sich zudem den Verhaltensauswirkungen auf den Führenden. Da Verhaltensauswirkungen auf den Führenden bisher fast gänzlich unerforscht sind, wird dazu vor allem auf Interviews zurückgegriffen (Kapitel 6 und 7). Diese eignen sich besonders dafür, bisher wenig erforschte Phänomene detailliert zu erfassen (vgl. Döring/Bortz 2016, S. 64-67). Zudem wird in Kapitel 5 ein Quasi-Experiment mittels Szenarien eingesetzt, um Kausalzusammenhänge zu überprüfen (vgl. Aguinis/Bradley 2014, S. 352). Die Szenarien basieren auf zuvor explorierten, quantitativen Erkenntnissen (Kapitel 5).

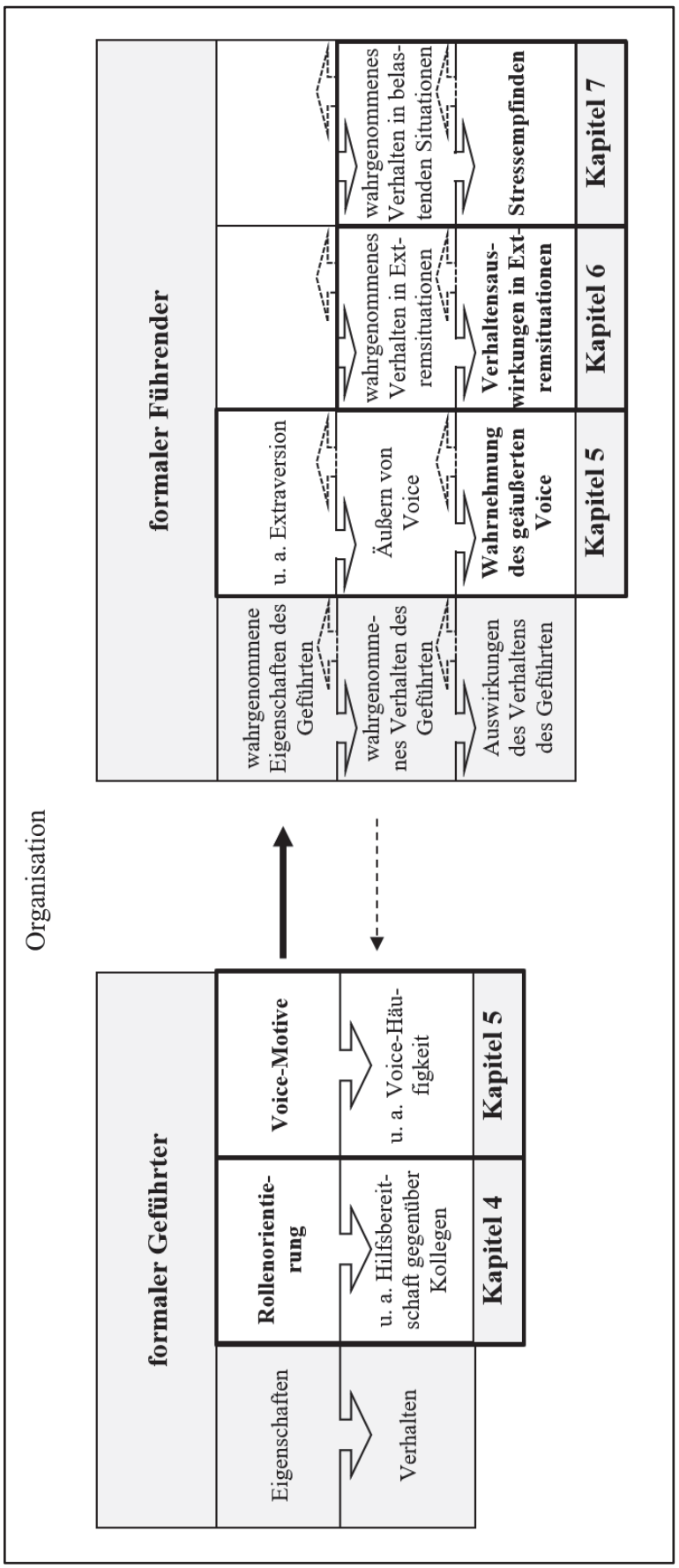


Abb. 3.1: Einordnung der Kapitel 4 bis 7 in das Forschungsmodell zur Rolle des Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung

Kapitel 4 („How do you see your role as a follower? A quantitative exploration of followers' role orientation") thematisiert die Rollenorientierung von Geführten, das heißt, wie Geführte ihre eigene Rolle betrachten und ausführen (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018; 2.2.3). Dies ist relevant, da die Rollenorientierung beeinflusst, wie sich Geführte im Rahmen ihrer organisationalen Rolle verhalten (vgl. Parker 2007, S. 421-425; Carsten et al. 2010, S. 552-554; 556). Allerdings fehlt es bisher an einer quantitativen Untersuchung der inhaltlichen Struktur, der Heterogenität und der zeitlichen Konstanz der Rollenorientierung von Geführten sowie einer Untersuchung des Zusammenhangs der Rollenorientierung mit arbeitsbezogenen Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen (vgl. z. B. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 558; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 98; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 750). Diese Studie liefert einen Beitrag zur Schließung dieser Forschungslücke, indem, aufbauend auf einer Skala zu Impliziten Geführtentheorien (vgl. Sy 2010), die Rollenorientierung von Geführten über zwei Zeitpunkte exploriert wird und dabei weitere, im organisationalen Rahmen relevante, Geführteneigenschaften und -verhaltensweisen Berücksichtigung finden.

In **Kapitel 5** („How do managers perceive employees' voice? Investigating the role of employees' motives") wird im Kontrast zu der breiteren Rollenorientierung ein spezifisches Verhalten von Geführten, das Äußern von Voice gegenüber Führenden, betrachtet. Dazu werden in einem ersten Schritt die Motive, die Geführte haben können, wenn sie Voice äußern, sogenannte Voice-Motive, untersucht. Dies ist von Bedeutung, da Motive als Einflussfaktor dafür gelten, warum Geführte Voice äußern, diese allerdings bisher empirisch noch nicht multidimensional erforscht worden sind (vgl. z. B. van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003, S. 1370; 1385; Lam/Lee/Sui 2019, S. 654; Parker/Wang/Liao 2019, S. 224).

In einem zweiten Schritt wird zudem untersucht, wie Führende das von Geführten geäußerte Voice wahrnehmen hinsichtlich ihrer Voice Befürwortung (vgl. 2.2.2) und der Voice Wertschätzung. Dies ist relevant, da die Wahrnehmung von Voice durch Führende bisher nur spärlich untersucht worden ist (vgl. z. B. Burris/Detert/Romney 2013, S. 35). Und wenn, dann wurden meist nur singuläre Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen berücksichtigt (vgl. Fuller et al. 2015; Grant 2013), obwohl Geführte verschiedene für Führende

wahrnehmbare Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen parallel aufweisen (vgl. z. B. Dulebohn et al. 2012, S. 1717). Die Studie adressiert diese Forschungsbedarfe, indem verschiedene Voice-Motivtypen, das heißt Gruppen von Geführten mit unterschiedlicher Voice-Motivstruktur inklusive verschiedener Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen, explorativ identifiziert werden. Darauf aufbauend wird untersucht, wie Führende von verschiedenen Voice-Motivtypen geäußertes Voice wahrnehmen und was die Wahrnehmung der Führenden beeinflusst.

Kapitel 6 („A shift in perspective: Examining the impact of perceived follower behavior on leaders“) legt einen alleinigen Fokus auf die Wahrnehmung von Führenden. Es thematisiert, wie Führende (die Eigenschaften sowie) das Verhalten ihrer Geführten in Extremsituationen, das heißt in extrem positiven und extrem negativen Interaktionen, wahrnehmen und welche Auswirkungen dieses Geführtenverhalten auf sie hat. Auf Basis halbstrukturierter Interviews wird somit die mehrheitlich unerforschte, aber als wichtig geltende, Perspektive eingenommen, das Geführte ein beeinflussender Teil der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung sind (vgl. z. B. Shamir 2007, S. xxviii; Schneider et al. 2014, S. 413; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 747). Die Studie liefert Beiträge zur Vielfalt und dem Ausmaß in dem das Geführtenverhalten Führende beeinflusst sowie zu die empfundenen Auswirkungen beeinflussenden Rahmenbedingungen.

Kapitel 7 („When do leaders feel stressed by their followers? An examination of face-to-face and virtual interactions“) legt erneut einen Fokus auf die Wahrnehmung von Führenden. Es thematisiert, in welchen Interaktionen Führende das Verhalten ihrer Geführten als belastend empfinden. Denn obwohl belegt ist, dass Geführte das Stressempfinden ihrer Führenden beeinflussen können, und Stress eine besonders im Arbeitskontext relevante Größe darstellt, ist wenig darüber bekannt (vgl. Deluga 1991, S. 83-84; 87; Hunter/Thatcher 2007, S. 960-965). Die Studie adressiert diese Forschungslücke, indem Führende zu als besonders belastend empfundenen persönlichen, digitalen (via Videotelefonie) sowie E-Mail-Interaktionen mit Geführten interviewt werden. Somit wird zudem den verschiedenen Formen, in welchen Geführte und Führende im Arbeitskontext interagieren, Rechnung getragen (vgl. Graen/Hui 2001; Rosen et al. 2019; Contreras/Baykal/Abid 2020).

4 How do you see your role as a follower? A quantitative exploration of followers' role orientations[1] [2]

4.1 Introduction

It has long been known that **followers** play a crucial part in the leader-follower relationship (e.g., Hollander/Webb 1955; Zaleznik 1965). For instance, followers can affect leaders' behavior and state of mind and have an overall high share in the success of an organization (Herold 1977; Podsakoff/MacKenzie 1997; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018; Gesang/Süß 2021). Compared to leaders, however, followers have received only little attention as current research is rather leader-centric (e.g., Shamir 2007; Agho 2009; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014; Sturm/Herz/Antonakis 2021; Tripathi 2021). As a result, followers' role orientation, being the beliefs followers have about their (hierarchically subordinate) role in relation to their leaders and how they execute their role, has to date been rarely investigated (e.g., Carsten et al. 2010; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Nevertheless, followers' role orientation is of central importance, as it shapes their behavior (e.g., Parker 2000, 2007; Carsten et al. 2010).

Current research mainly considers followers' **role orientations** as two (simplified) extremes, in which followers view their role as either (pro-)active or passive (e.g., Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2013; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). An active role orientation is characterized by believing that one is a co-creator of success, which includes feeling responsible for work achievements and feeling the need to contribute (e.g., Kelley 1988; Shamir 2007). This understanding can result in behavior such as expressing ideas of one's own accord to the leader and taking on additional responsibilities (Carsten et al. 2010). Followers believing their role to be passive see their leaders as solely responsible and understand their role as just carrying out assigned tasks without thinking

[1] Eine vorherige Fassung dieses Beitrags ist in Frontiers in Psychology 13 (o. H./2022), 952925 erschienen.

[2] Eine vorherige Fassung dieses Beitrags wurde auf der Jahrestagung des Arbeitskreises Empirische Personal- und Organisationsforschung (AKempor) in Hamburg (27.09.2019) präsentiert sowie für die 16th International Human Resource Management Conference in Paris (coronabedingt ausgefallen) angenommen.

outside the box (e.g., Kelley 1988; Shamir 2007), which can result in followers just reacting and doing exactly what they are told without engaging any further (Carsten et al. 2010).

However, this dichotomous view is too general as followers' role orientations are more complex (Carsten et al. 2010; Sy 2010). First, (pro-)active and passive are rather at the extreme ends of a continuum, with followers also being somewhere in between (Carsten et al. 2010). Second, there seem to be more dimensions besides activity/passivity, as has already been addressed conceptually (e.g., Kelley 1988, 2008), and empirically, in the thematically related field of Implicit Followership Theories (IFTs) (Sy 2010) as well as in a first qualitative examination of followers' role orientation (Carsten et al. 2010). Possible further dimensions include the degree of conformity or the degree of team orientation (Kelley 2008; Sy 2010). Researchers, thus, call for a(n) (quantitative) empirical examination of followers' role orientation, its heterogeneity, and its consequences for followers' behavior (e.g., Carsten et al. 2010; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018).

Consequently, the **aim** of this study is twofold: First, it is to explore (the content of) followers' role orientations. Second, it is to identify how far followers differ with regard to their role orientations and their resulting behavior (regarding personal initiative, voice behavior, and helpfulness to colleagues).

For this purpose, data was collected at two points in time via a sample of German employees. Content and statistical analyses of an IFT scale (Sy 2010) were conducted to adapt the scale to the purpose of measuring role orientations. Based on the adapted scale, latent profile analyses were generated including a check of the stability of the followers' latent profile affiliation.

The present study offers several **contributions** to the literature on followership: First, it provides quantitative evidence for the heterogeneity of (the role orientation of) followers (Carsten et al. 2010). Second, it elucidates the link between followers' role orientation and behavior (e.g., Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). Third, it provides information about the link between personality traits and role orientation (e.g., Epitropaki et al. 2013; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Fourth, it sheds light on the underlying structure of role orientation

and its consistency (Carsten et al. 2010; Sy 2010). Fifth, it gives recommendations for the quantitative measurement of followers' role orientation based on the IFT scale, to help tackle the issue that to date only very few validated scales exist that measure followership (e.g., Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018).

4.2 Implicit Theories, followers' role orientation, and the relation of followers' role orientation to their behavior

One needs to consider **Implicit Theories** to understand the formation of role orientations (e.g., Shondrick/Lord 2010; Kalish/Luria 2021). Implicit Theories are socio-cognitive beliefs that people rely on to cope with life's complexity, resulting in simplified classifications by ascribing stereotypical traits and skills to certain groups of people (Lord/Foti/De Vader 1984; Weiss/Adler 1981).

In organizational settings, primarily two different groups can be differentiated, based on the group members' hierarchical positions: leaders and followers (e.g., Levy/Chiu/Hong 2006; Epitropaki et al. 2013; Junker/van Dick 2014). Consequently, IFTs and Implicit Leadership Theories exist as simplified assumptions about "the traits and abilities that characterize" followers or leaders (Epitropaki/Martin 2004, p. 293). Based on their IFTs, followers shape their role orientation —sometimes also referred to as self-schema (Epitropaki et al. 2013) or follower beliefs (Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2013)— meaning they shape beliefs about what their role is and how to enact it (e.g., Carsten et al. 2010, Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018).

Specific role orientations can only be formed and expressed if there is a clearly defined setting in which to enact the role (Carsten et al. 2010). This clearly defined setting applies to formal follower roles but not to informal follower roles (e.g., Walter et al. 2012; Luria/Berson 2013). Moreover, formal roles are in current research on followers and leaders the predominantly considered roles (e.g., Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019; Blom/Lundgren 2020), and are therefore especially relevant. Formal follower roles are characterized by a hierarchically subordinate position in relation to the respective leaders. Leaders have exclusive resources that constitute their higher position and enable them to inform, incentivize, or put pressure on their followers (e.g., French/Raven 1959; Yukl/Falbe 1991; Farmer/Aguinis 2005). These formal

follower roles exist in different variants in organizations wherever people are hierarchically subordinate to an assigned leader, e.g., researchers in relation to their professors or consultants in relation to their managers (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014).

Followers' role orientations evolve when the individuals are exposed to interactions in hierarchical relationships (e.g., Kuhn/Laird 2011). These interactions can also include experiences early in life through hierarchical interactions with (early) caregivers, as has already been shown for experiences with one's own parents with regard to certain Implicit Leadership Theories (Keller 1999, 2003). It is, therefore, plausible to assume that also IFTs and thus a follower's role orientation can be affected by parental imprint (Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019). Nevertheless, role orientations further develop when being exposed to the workplace and the relations therein (Hunt/Boal/Sorenson 1990; Carsten et al. 2010; Kalish/Luria 2021).

Apart from this rather general knowledge on the development of role orientations (also largely taken from the literature on Implicit Theories), expertise on the content and stability of followers' role orientations is still scarce (Carsten et al. 2010; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). This is why a simplified (active versus passive) understanding of role orientation is currently predominant (Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2012, 2013; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). One rare exception is Carsten and colleagues' (2010) qualitative study of followers' role orientations. They discovered that followers' role orientations can vary along a continuum from passive over active to proactive.

Furthermore, they found the respective role orientation to affect a **follower's behavior** in various ways. It can have an impact on general work-related behavior, such as the effort the follower displays in everyday work. Moreover, due to followers` primary reference point for interpreting their role, role orientations have implications for followers' behaviors towards leaders, for instance by affecting the offering of feedback, the voicing of ideas, as well as showing constructive resistance (Carsten et al. 2010; Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2012, 2013; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Finally, a follower's role orientation can also affect colleagues, for example, via varying degrees of team orientation (Carsten et al., 2010).

If or to what extent a follower's role orientation changes over time, is currently unclear. While it has been shown that Implicit Leadership Theories can be stable in time, considering 12-months (Epitropaki/Martin 2004), the same has been demonstrated in a study examining IFTS, however, for a shorter period of only three months (Sy 2010). The aforementioned Carsten and colleagues (2010) identified that followers whose role orientation is not in accordance with the workplace, can experience stress and discomfort, rather than adopting their orientation to the environment, thereby also indicating a certain stability of role orientations. Nonetheless, there are also indications that a follower's role orientation can change, for instance, when a naturally proactive follower gets a new, more authoritarian leader and tries to reduce the proactive execution of the role (Carsten et al. 2010).

Finally, it is important to specify the present and (apart from the specification to the follower-leader relationship) rather broad understanding of role orientation which sees role orientation as a set of attributes such as proactively thinking about problems (Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). However, it is neither "specific job behavio[u]rs" (Morrison 1994, p. 1555), like whether a follower aims to come to work early (referred to as role definition; Morrison 1994; Kamdar/McAllister/Turban 2006), nor is it about whether specific job aspects, like delivery times, are of the followers' concern (understanding of role orientation of Parker/Wall/Jackson 1997; Howell/Boies 2004; Parker 2007). The present understanding is chosen because first, it provides a clear distinction between followers' role orientation and followers' behaviors, and second, it allows examining role orientations that may apply to followers in general by not being closely tied to the followers' actual scope of activity.

4.3 Procedure, scale adaption, and sample

For empirically investigating followers' role orientations, the factor structure of role orientation was examined at two measurement occasions. This was done statistically via an analysis of item distributions, correlations, and a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), as well as based on substantive arguments. Each time, a Latent Profile Analysis (LPA) was conducted and profiles, being groups of followers, were identified that are as uniform as possible regarding their role orientations and as diverse as possible to the role orientations of the

other profiles/the other groups of followers (Muthén/Muthén 2015). CFA and LPA were conducted with Mplus 7.4., while item distributions and correlations were analyzed with IBM SPSS Statistics 26.

An **adapted version of Sy's (2010) IFT scale** was used to measure (self-assessed) role orientations. However, Sy's scale was validated by external assessment. Leaders (and students, who can be considered as followers; Sy 2010) were asked how characteristic eighteen attributes (e.g., "productive") are for a follower. Nonetheless, there is reason to assume that the same attributes apply to followers' self-assessment of their role orientation. Research on self-schemas, which, as presented, can be seen as a synonym for role orientation, posits that people tend to use the same classifications for themselves as they ascribe to others (Catrambone/Beike/Niedenthal 1996). Since most leaders are also followers themselves (Collinson 2006; Hackman/Wageman 2007), it stands to reason that the same attributes apply to external as well as self-assessment. Additionally, the only existing empirical examination of followers' role orientations (Carsten et al. 2010), points to some of the same attributes in the followers' self-view as in Sy's IFT-scale (namely the factors Conformity, Good Citizen, Industry, and the item "exited" of the Enthusiasm factor; Epitropaki et al. 2013).

To survey self-assessed role orientation, an introductory statement was generated which reads as follows: "To answer the following questions, please think of your role as an employee of your immediate (disciplinary) supervisor. To what extent do you agree with the statements?" The term "employee" was chosen because "follower" is uncommon in German everyday language. However, the understanding of what a follower is was ensured by referring to the employee's role in relation to the immediate disciplinary supervisor (German everyday language for "leader"). Moreover, because in German there is a feminine and masculine version of "supervisor", participants were asked beforehand what gender their immediate disciplinary supervisor was. The corresponding word form was then used in the questionnaire.

The introductory statement was followed by "In my role as an employee, I see myself as …", followed by a total of 17 randomly displayed attributes, for example "...hardworking". To ensure that the participants remained in their

follower role, "In my role as an employee I see myself as…" was repeated each time after six attributes. The attributes of the IFT scale were translated into German and then back-translated by a bilingual German/English native speaker. For one attribute ("soft spoken") there is no appropriate German translation. Closest would be "eine Person der leisen Töne" (literally "a person of soft tones"). Although this expression exists, it is highly uncommon in everyday language, which was confirmed during a discussion with 15 researchers (who conduct research in different fields of organizational behavior). Moreover, the bilingual native speaker emphasized that there is no German equivalent. Therefore, this attribute was excluded.

Consequently, role orientation was measured based on the described, adapted IFT scale. Participants responded on a 10-point scale ranging from "fully disagree" to "fully agree". All other scales, if not reported otherwise, were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "fully disagree" to "fully agree".

Additional measures were collected to better understand potential differences between the individuals in the different profiles. Therefore, core self-evaluation traits (comprising self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability; α = .87; Stumpp et al. 2010), as well as extraversion (α = .86), agreeableness (α = .75), and conscientiousness (α = .67) of the Big Five personality traits (Rammstedt/John 2005, measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "very inapplicable" to "very applicable") were collected, as they are relevant in explaining followers' behavior and performance in the workplace (e.g., Judge/Bono 2001; Thomas/Whitman/Viswesvaran 2010; Chiaburu et al. 2011).

Regarding behavioral outcomes, personal initiative (α = .80; Frese et al. 1997), voice behavior (α = .90; Liu/Zhu/Yang 2010), and helpfulness towards colleagues (a component of Organizational Citizenship Behavior; α = .76; Staufenbiel/Hartz 2000; measured on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "does not apply at all" to "applies completely") were measured. These were selected to cover a wide range of behavior at work: Personal initiative being of general importance for success at work (Hakanen/Perhoniemi/Toppinen-Tanner 2008), voice behavior being a vital indicator for followers' behavior towards their leader (Walumbwa/Schaubroeck 2009),

and helpfulness towards colleagues covering behavior towards other followers. Additionally, age, gender, education, whether the follower is also a leader, and how long the participant has been employed were collected.

Moreover, a 2-item short scale measuring social desirability was included (Satow 2012; "I would never speak ill of a colleague or my employer"; "I have gossiped about others or thought badly of them before" (reverse)). One item was mixed with the items of the aforementioned core self-evaluation traits scale, the other item was mixed with items of the Big Five scale, to make it harder for participants to recognize and outsmart the social desirability scale. To make the mixing of items possible, the originally 4-point scale, with a total sum of 7 and 8 to be considered as a strong indicator for a participant to respond in a socially desirable way, got converted into a 5-point scale. Participants' answers were then transformed back into the originally 4-point scale (e.g. with 1 equating to 0.8) and participants with a total sum higher than 6,65 (80 % and higher of the maximum sum) were excluded.

An **online survey** was conducted in 2019. Respondents were generated through professional contacts and by posting the questionnaire's link on professional social networks. Although it is debated whether and how far incentives increase the likelihood to participate (e.g., Singer/Ye 2013), participants were given the option to choose between either taking part in the raffle of two vouchers or having 50 cents donated to a charitable cause for their completed questionnaire (two options to reduce bias due to personal preference).

The **sample** size after controlling for implausibility and social desirability is n = 211 (t_1). The sample consists of 63.51 % females, the average age is 28.09 (Standard Deviation (SD) = 6.82) and 5.69 % are also leaders themselves. Respondents were invited to participate in a follow-up questionnaire (time lag: one month). 115 participants agreed to be contacted for this second survey. Anonymity was ensured via the generation of an anonymous code for each participant. One reminder was sent two weeks after the follow-up questionnaire. After controlling for implausibility, social desirability, and questionnaires filled in twice (only the first got considered) the sample size is n = 69 (t_2). Sample t_2 consists of 55.07 % females, the average age is 31.26 (SD = 10.10) and 7.25 % are also (disciplinary) leaders themselves. This data was

used to re-examine the factor structure of role orientation (see: 4.4.4). After also controlling for unassignable anonymous codes, the sample size decreased to n = 51. This subsample consists of 52.94 % females, has an average age of 31.76 (SD = 10.02) and, 7.84 % are also (disciplinary) leaders themselves. This data was used to check whether participants latent profile affiliation was stable in time (see: 4.4.3).

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Examination of the factor structure of role orientation

In the following, the **factor structure of role orientation** is examined to verify whether the factors identified by Sy (2010) can also be replicated in followers' self-assessment of their role orientation.

Figure 4.1 shows the second order structure of Sy's (2010) scale with three Followership Antiprototype factors (Insubordination: rude, bad-tempered, arrogant; Incompetence: uneducated, slow, inexperienced; Conformity: easily influenced, follows trends), as well as three Followership Prototype factors (Good Citizen: reliable, loyal, team player; Enthusiasm: exited, happy, outgoing; Industry: goes above and beyond, hardworking, productive), and the statement that introduced the items in the questionnaire.

The distribution of two of the collected items was salient. "Rude" as well as "uneducated" showed nearly no variance with about 77.73 % (rude) and about 72.99 % (uneducated) of the followers answering with a 1 or 2 on the 10-point scale, indicating that followers might not see their role as being rude or uneducated.

Regarding **rude(ness)** research on workplace incivility indicates that incivility is likely to be triggered by, among other things, job dissatisfaction, felt injustice, and work exhaustion (Blau/Andersson 2005). These aspects underscore the situational character of rudeness, which can be a reaction to negatively perceived circumstances (see also Schilpzand/De Pater/Erez 2016). Moreover, (although the consequences of being rude in the workplace have not been extensively investigated; Schilpzand/De Pater/Erez 2016), being rude can lead to being excluded by colleagues (Scott/Restubog/Zagenczyk 2013), therefore leading to unpleasant consequences in the workplace. The

situational character, as well as the possible negative consequences, make it unlikely that followers per se define their role as being rude.

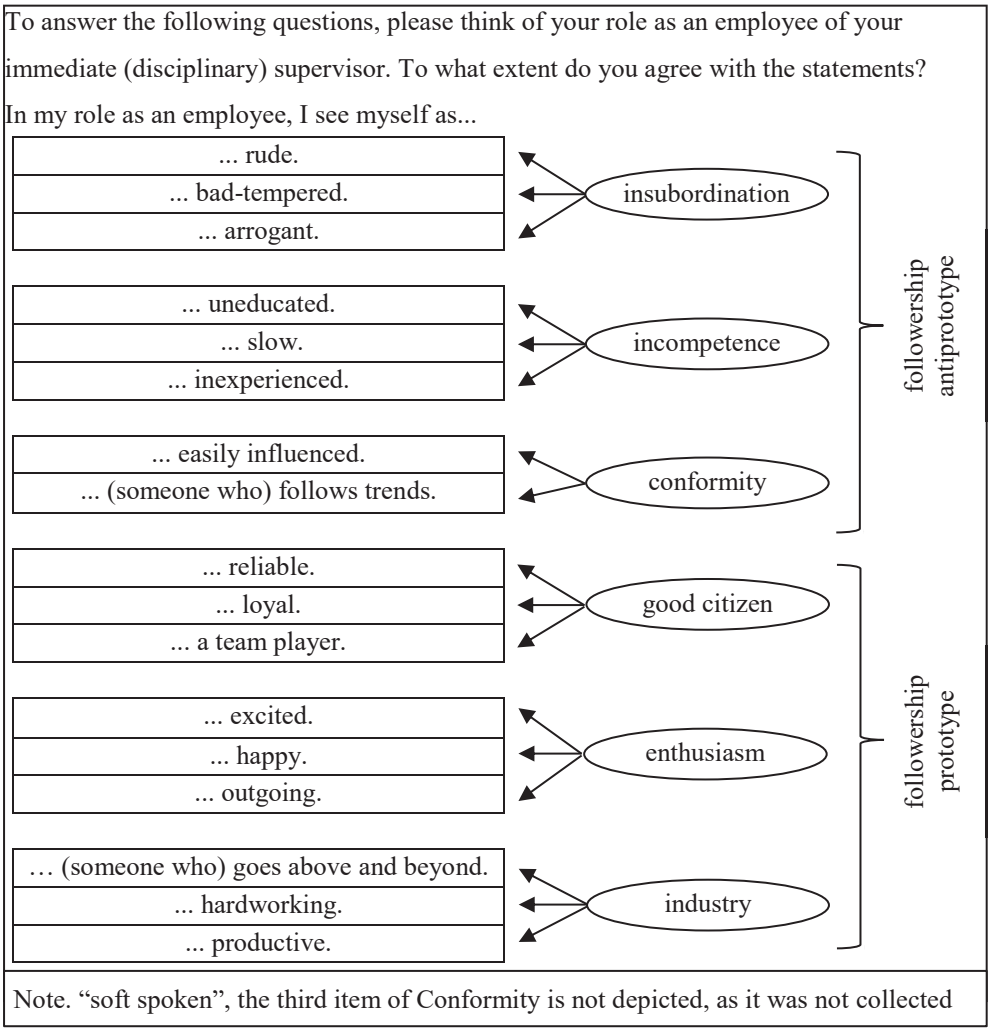


Fig. 4.1: Sy's (2010) Followership Prototype and Followership Antiprototype and their query in the study

Concerning **uneducated** it is most likely that followers do not see themselves as uneducated, as usually, followers are only in their respective position if they are qualified for the job. Although followers may differ in their education, a follower's role orientation does not aim at a comparison either with colleagues or with the leader. While there may be circumstances, such as a(n) (extreme) lack of qualified staff (e.g., Beechler/Woodward 2009) or obtaining a job based on contacts/personal favors, where a follower may not be adequately qualified, these circumstances usually do not occur frequently. Additionally, and most importantly, it is very unlikely that a follower under these circumstances sees the follower role as being uneducated, sticks to that, and refuses to improve and learn. If a follower had such a role orientation, it would

instead be very likely that the follower would have (severe) difficulties at work due to low performance and would have to adjust the understanding of the follower role in the long run.

Bivariate correlations showed that the two remaining items of the Insubordination factor **arrogant and bad-tempered** had only a very weak (linear) relationship with each other (considering here and in the following ≤ .30 a very weak relationship; correlation: .16). This might be due to while arrogance is a trait (e.g., Meagher et al. 2015), being bad-tempered is a situational mood (which additionally makes it less likely to be a component of a role orientation). As bad-tempered and rude (see above) share their situational character and also their negative connotation, here is a possible explanation why "bad-tempered" showed variance, while "rude" did not. Being bad-tempered can but does not necessarily translate to interaction with leaders and colleagues, while being rude is characterized by being rude to another person (e.g., Vahle-Hinz/Baethge/van Dick 2019). Therefore, it is likely that followers stated varying degrees of seeing themselves as bad-tempered, as it does not necessarily affect another person in a bad way.

Between the two Conformity items **easily influenced and follows trends** a slightly higher but still weak statistical relationship (correlation: .22) is found. While in a follower's role orientation, being directly aligned to a follower's role in relation to the leader, the former one is directly assigned to the influence of the leader, "follows trends" is a much looser reference, due to the rather abstract "trends". While these two Conformity items may work when examining IFTS (as although followers are still defined by their lower hierarchical position, the leader is not omnipresent in the sole term "follower"), for followers' role orientation the direct versus abstract reference seems to make a relevant difference.

Additionally, the two remaining items **slow and inexperienced** of the Incompetence factor also showed a weak relationship (correlation: .28). Instead, "slow" seemed to be related to "productive" (correlation: -.50), which is plausible as productivity is usually understood as the amount of work one is able to do, given a particular period of time (Cambridge University Press 2014a). That "slow" did not fit well with "inexperience" is reasonable as a relation is

most probably in the way that an inexperienced follower tends to be slower than an experienced one. However, this understanding (again) implies a situational component and does not apply when estimating the general understanding of one's follower role.

Lastly, bivariate correlations revealed that the item **reliable** only added little to the understanding of the factor Good Citizen (both correlations < .30). From a content perspective, this is plausible since the items "team player" and "loyal" focus exclusively on relationship aspects between people, whereas "reliable" can refer to people (to rely on someone) or to objects and also tasks, like when a follower performs tasks in a reliable way (Cambridge University Press 2014b). In German, there are two different terms for this distinction. However, both their English translations are "reliable". It is "zuverlässig" being for people as well as objects/tasks, and "verlässlich" (close to "trustworthy") being for people only (Cornelsen Verlag GmbH 2022b, 2022c). Because the former is more commonly used in the work context this term was used in the present study.

In **summary**, there is both statistical and content evidence that (1) followers' see themselves as neither "rude" nor "uneducated". (2) "Arrogant" and "bad-tempered" do most certainly not form one factor. The same applies to "easily influenced" and "follows trends" as well as to "slow" and "inexperienced". (3) "Reliable" probably does not fit the Good Citizen factor.

The now remaining factors Good Citizen, Enthusiasm, and Industry have also (except for the item "happy") been identified in Carsten et al.`s (2010) qualitative study of follower's role orientations (see also: Epitropaki et al. 2013). They found that followers varied in how far they saw their role as being a "team player" and "loyal" to their leader (Good Citizen factor) (Carsten et al. 2010). Followers also differed in how far they regarded their role as showing personal initiative, taking over responsibilities, and voicing own ideas (Industry factor, and "excited" and "outgoing" of the Enthusiasm factor; Epitropaki et al. 2013) (Carsten et al. 2010). Although "happy" was not identified in Carsten and colleagues' (2010) study and is also rather situational, making it less suitable for role orientations, it remains included in the following analysis due to the statistical reason of avoiding two two-item factors.

A **CFA** was performed using the three remaining Followership Prototype factors, the results of which are depicted in Figure 4.2.

The items "goes above and beyond" and "hardworking" were allowed to load on each other (as they were the only items that indicated an overfulfillment of follower requirements), while all other items were exclusively allowed to load on their own factors. The factor loading of "team player" was rather low (< .50). Nevertheless, due to no argument to drop "team player" from a content (non-statistical) perspective, the item was not removed.

Although the Chi-Square Test of Model Fit was significant ($\chi^2(16) = 29.945$, $p = .018$), the other indicators proved the model to have a very good fit with Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .064, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .978, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = .962, and Standardized Root Mean square Residual (SRMR) = 0.034.

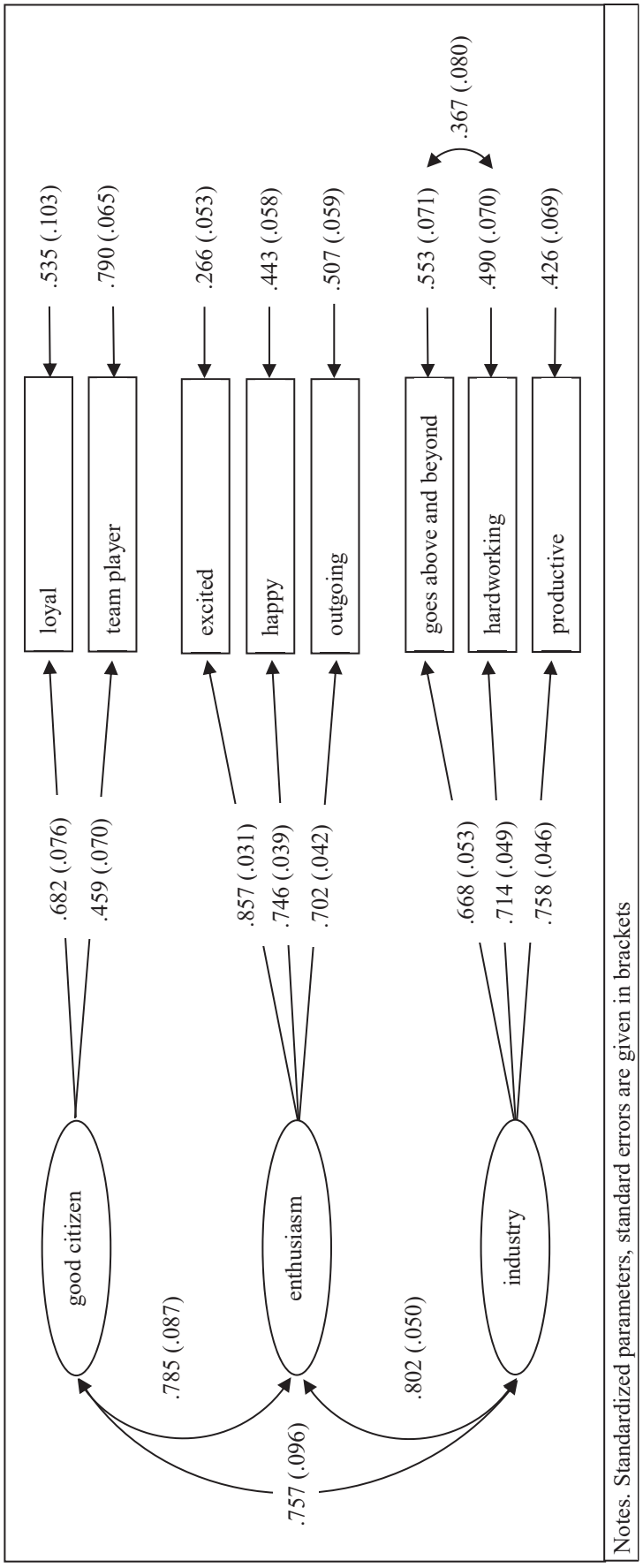


Fig. 4.2: Confirmatory Factor Model (Followership Prototypes)

4.4.2 Latent profile analysis of followers' role orientation

Based on the proposed model, an **LPA** was conducted (Muthén/Muthén 2015; Nylund-Gibson/Choi 2018). Latent profiles (one to ten) were generated based on the means, which is a common and accepted procedure (e.g., Mäkikangas et al. 2018). For means and variances, MLR estimator (Maximum Likelihood estimation with Robust standard errors) was used, as were 10,000 random starts with 1,000 final stage optimizations (or final "picks") and 100 initial stage iterations for the generation of the latent profile solutions. Table 4.1 shows the statistical results of the analysis.

Model	LL	#fp	AIC	BIC	aBIC	AWE	cmP	Entropy
1 Profile	-1106.485	6	2224.971	2245.082	2226.07	2239.42	0.000	NA
2 Profiles	-1043.078	10	2106.156	2139.674	2107.988	2130.23	0.000	0.776
3 Profiles	-1017.454	14	2062.908	2109.834	2065.473	2096.63	0.992	0.783
4 Profiles	-1011.576	18	2059.153	2119.486	2062.451	2102.50	0.008	0.83
5 Profiles	-1006.021	22	2056.041	2129.782	2060.073	2109.03	0.000	0.735
6 Profiles	-1001.529	26	2055.058	2142.206	2059.822	2117.68	0.000	0.742
7 Profiles	-996.433	30	2052.866	2153.422	2058.363	2125.12	0.000	0.825
8 Profiles	-990.522	34	2049.045	2163.008	2055.275	2130.93	0.000	0.808
9 Profiles	-983.839	38	2043.678	2171.049	2050.641	2135.20	0.000	0.834
10 Profiles	-978.752	42	2041.504	2182.282	2049.2	2142.66	0.000	0.856

Notes. LL: Model log-likelihood; #fp: Number of free parameters; AIC: Akaike information criterion; BIC: Bayesian information criterion, aBIC: (samplesize)adjusted BIC; AWE: Approximate Weight of Evidence Criterion; cmP: correct model Probability

Tab. 4.1: Statistical results from the latent profile analysis (t_1)

The analysis revealed **three latent profiles** to be the best solution. Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) (2109.834) and Approximate Weight of Evidence Criterion (AWE) (2096.63) showed minima, indicating the best solution and the Correct Model Probability (cmP) (.992) indicated that this model was the most likely to be correct (in comparison to the other nine models). In addition, the three and four-latent-profile model were checked for statistically significant differences in the three considered factors. While with the three-latent-profile model all role orientation factors were statistically significant, with the four-latent-profile model, there were non-significant differences. The three-latent-profile solution was robust to changes in the number of random

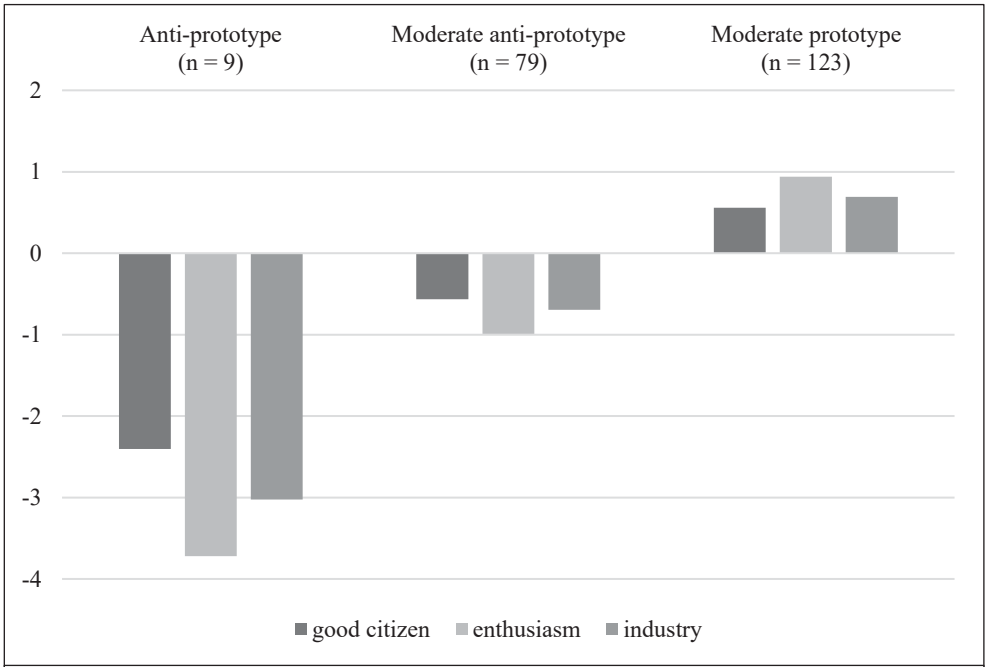
start and the number of final "picks" for 100,000 and 2,000 as well as 200,000 and 10,000.

The grand mean and standard deviation, as well as the means of Good Citizen, Enthusiasm, and Industry for the three latent profiles, and the profiles sample sizes are depicted in Table 4.2.

	Grand mean	SD	Profile 1 (n = 9)	Profile 2 (n = 79)	Profile 3 (n = 123)
good citizen	8.047	1.260	5.644	7.480	8.607
enthusiasm	6.956	1.612	3.235	5.966	7.894
industry	7.730	1.321	4.707	7.034	8.422
Notes. n = 211; SD = standard deviation					

Tab. 4.2: Mean levels of role orientation factors in the three-latent-profile solution (t_1)

Figure 4.3 shows the latent profiles. All profiles have the same structure of underlying factors, in the way that Enthusiasm is the (positively or negatively) dominating factor, followed by Industry, and then Good Citizen. (Additional note: To ensure that this result was not due to a relatively high correlation of the Enthusiasm item "excited" with the three Industry items (Pearson Correlations of .49, .50, .54), the profiles were again generated with exclusion of this item. The structure of the profiles stayed the same.)



Note. Zero line is the grand mean

Fig. 4.3: Profiles of the three-latent-profile solution (t_1)

The first profile has the strongest below-average manifestations of all three followership prototype factors. Therefore, it is labelled Anti-Prototype. The second profile is characterized by more positive, but still below average, manifestations of the factors and is thus named Moderate Anti-Prototype. The third profile also has moderate, however above-average manifestations of the factors and is therefore labelled Moderate Prototype.

The **Anti-Prototype** profile consisted of four male and five female followers, average age was 26.33 (SD = 5.148) and the followers had been employed for on average 3.11 years (SD = 2.37). These characteristics made the Anti-Prototype profile the youngest (however age was not statistically significant) and the least professionally experienced (significant: p-values: .04 and .03) profile.

The **Moderate Anti-Prototype** profile consisted of 59.49 % female followers. The average age was 28.92 (SD = 8.52) and the followers had been employed for on average 5.59 years (SD = 7.69). This profile was the oldest and most professionally experienced (although both variables were non-significant).

The **Moderate Prototype** profile consisted of one non-binary follower, 82 female and 40 male followers. The average age was 27.67 (SD = 5.56), and the followers had been employed for on average 5.19 years (SD = 5.56).

		Anti-prototype (1)	Moderate anti-prototype (2)	Moderate prototype (3)	Significant order
traits	agreeableness	2.555	2.878	3.131	n.s.
	conscientiousness	3.444	3.662	4.091	1 = 2 < 3
	extraversion	2.471	3.010	3.832	1 = 2 < 3
	core self-evaluation traits	3.166	3.248	3.865	1 = 2 < 3
behaiors	personal initiative	3.079	3.400	4.082	1 < 2 < 3
	voice behavior	2.356	3.142	3.545	1 < 2 < 3
	helpfulness towards colleagues	2.663	5.043	5.716	1 < 2 < 3

Notes. n = 211; Differences based on auxiliary 3-step 'BCH' approach with χ^2-tests of equality between latent profiles; n.s. = no significant differences across all latent profiles

Tab. 4.3: Differences in means for traits and behaviors of the three latent profiles (t_1)

Subsequently, the profiles were tested for significant mean differences in **traits and behaviors**. The results are shown in Table 4.3.

Agreeableness was not significantly different across all profiles. However, followers of the Moderate Prototype profile had the significantly highest levels of conscientiousness, extraversion, and core self-evaluation traits compared to the other profiles.

Concerning behaviors, all profiles were statistically different from each other. Followers of the Anti-Prototype profile had the lowest scores on personal initiative, voice behavior, as well as helpfulness towards colleagues, followed by the followers of the Moderate Anti-Prototype profile, while followers of the Moderate Prototype profile had the significantly highest levels on these behaviors.

4.4.3 Check of the stability of the latent profile affiliation

For the **check of the stability** of the latent profile affiliation, profiles were generated again with the subsample of t_2 (n=51), using again the MLR estimator, 10,000 random starts, 1,000 final stage optimizations, and 100 initial stage iterations. The statistical analysis was not as unambiguously clear as in t_1. BIC and AWE were close for the one to three-profile solution. However, BIC showed a minimum with three profiles, while AWE showed a minimum with one profile, and cmP indicated four profiles to be the best solution, as shown in Table 4.4.

Model	LL	#fp	AIC	BIC	aBIC	AWE	cmP	Entropy
1 Profile	-264.689	6	541.378	552.969	534.131	555.83	0.126	NA
2 Profiles	-257.882	10	535.765	555.083	523.687	559.85	0.044	0.725
3 Profiles	-247.120	14	522.24	549.285	505.331	555.96	0.795	0.849
4 Profiles	-242.392	18	520.785	555.558	499.045	564.14	0.850	0.85
5 Profiles	-239.154	22	522.308	564.808	495.737	575.29	0.000	0.862
6 Profiles	-236.724	26	525.449	575.676	494.047	588.07	0.000	0.907
7 Profiles	-229.000	30	518.043	575.998	481.81	590.30	0.000	0.968
8 Profiles	-224.145	34	516.29	581.972	475.226	598.18	0.000	0.979
9 Profiles	-218.570	38	513.14	586.549	467.245	604.66	0.000	0.969
10 Profiles	-213.593	42	511.186	592.322	460.46	612.34	0.000	0.856

Notes. LL: Model log-likelihood; #fp: Number of free parameters; AIC: Akaike information criterion; BIC: Bayesian information criterion, aBIC: (samplesize)adjusted BIC; AWE: Approximate Weight of Evidence Criterion; cmP: correct model Probability

Tab. 4.4: Statistical results from the latent profile analysis (t_2)

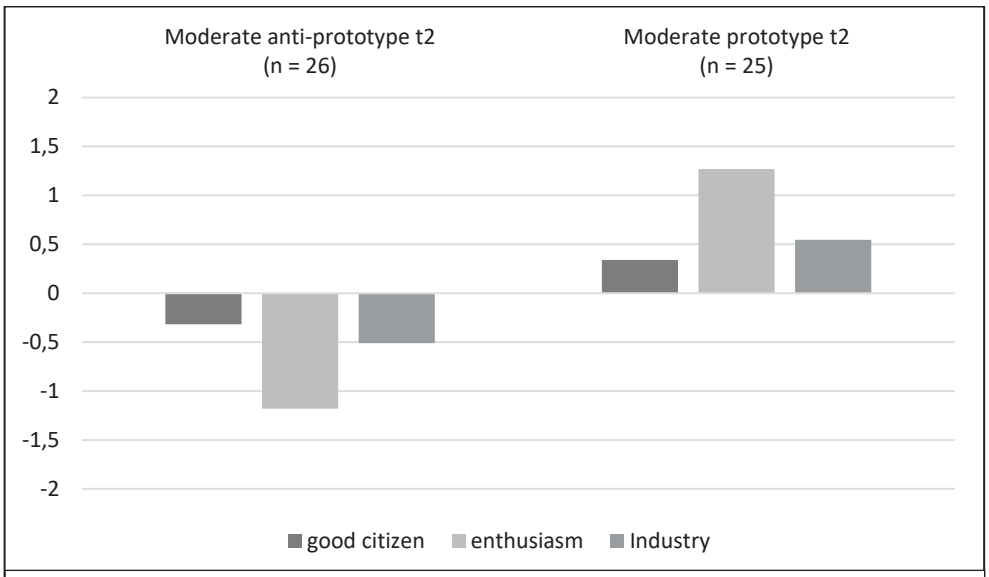
Nevertheless, rather small sample sizes can lead to statistical fit indices being less reliable (Nylund-Gibson/Choi 2018). Due to the importance of drawing on well-separated classes, especially when having a small sample size (Nylund-Gibson/Choi 2018), the two-, three-, and four-profile solutions were checked for significant differences in the role orientation factors. The **two-profile solution** was the only one with all profiles being significantly different from each other and was therefore chosen. This solution was robust to changes in the number of random starts and the number of final "picks" (100,000 with 2,000, and 200,000 with 10,000).

Table 4.5 shows the grand mean, standard deviation, means of the role orientation factors, and the profiles' sample sizes.

	Grand mean	SD	Profile 1 (n = 26)	Profile 2 (n = 25)
good citizen	7.765	1.856	7.448	8.105
enthusiasm	6.627	2.369	5.447	7.896
industry	7.830	1.470	7.321	8.377
Notes. n = 51; SD = standard deviation.				

Tab. 4.5: Mean levels of role orientation factors in the two-latent-profile solution (t_2)

Figure 4.4 shows the latent profiles. All profiles have (again) the same structure with Enthusiasm still being the dominating factor, followed by Industry, and last Good Citizen. Although the elevations vary a bit (which is most certainly due to the smaller sample and, therefore, a different mean), the manifestations can now as before be described as Moderate due to the highest deviations from zero being around 1, resulting in a Moderate Anti-Prototype profile and a Moderate Prototype profile.



Note. Zero line is the grand mean

Fig. 4.4: Profiles of the two-latent-profile solution (t_2)

Regarding the **latent profile affiliation**, 24 of the 51 followers who participated in t_2 had been in the Moderate Anti-Prototype profile in t_1, while 27 had been in the Moderate Prototype profile in t_1. It is not surprising that no follower who had been in the Anti-Prototype profile in t_1 participated in the second survey. This is because the profile was small (although statistically, two followers would have participated if participation had been equally distributed across all profiles) and these followers had the significantly lowest levels of personal initiative, which may be an additional reason. About 76.47 % of the followers remained in their previous profile.

12 followers changed their profile (five from Moderate Anti-Prototype to Moderate Prototype and seven vice versa). A closer analysis of these 12 followers was conducted, taking the class affiliation probabilities into account. These indicate the probability with which a follower belongs to a particular profile. In t_1 for instance, the average probability with which followers were assigned to their profile was .90 (Median: .97; SD: .13) The analysis revealed that four followers already had been rather closely assigned to their profile in t_1 with their probabilities ranging from .57 to .68, while three followers had been very closely assigned to their profile in t_2 (probabilities between .57 and .62). These seven followers (13.37 %) could therefore not be assigned to profiles as clearly as others, which also explains the switching between profiles.

However, no reason could be found for the five remaining followers (9.80 %) who also switched profiles.

About 53.8 % of the followers in the **Moderate Anti-Prototype** profile (t_2) were male, the average age was 31.81 (SD = 11.32), and the followers had been employed for on average 7.54 years (SD = 8.51).

Regarding the **Moderate Prototype** profile (t_2), 60 % of the followers were female, the average age was 31.72 (SD = 8.71) and the average time of employment was 7.28 years (SD = 9.21).

In the next step, the profiles were tested for significant mean differences in **traits and behaviors** (α = 5 %). The results are shown in Table 4.6. Except for voice behavior that showed no significant difference, all findings from t_1 were replicated: Agreeableness was (again) not significantly different. Followers of the Moderate Prototype profile (t_2) had the significantly highest levels of conscientiousness, extraversion, core self-evaluation traits, personal initiative, and helpfulness towards colleagues.

		Moderate anti-prototype (1)	Moderate prototype (2)	Significant order
traits	agreeableness	2.889	3.024	n.s
	conscientiousness	3.653	4.129	1 < 2
	extraversion	2.690	3.964	1 < 2
	core self-evaluation traits	3.409	3.835	1 < 2
behaviors	personal initiative	3.444	3.987	1 < 2
	voice behavior	3.158	3.291	n.s.
	helpfulness towards colleagues	5.272	5.838	1 < 2

Notes. n = 51; Differences based on auxiliary 3-step 'BCH' approach with χ^2-tests of equality between latent profiles; n.s. = no significant differences across all latent profiles

Tab. 4.6: Differences in means for traits and behaviors of the two latent profiles (t_2)

4.4.4 Re-examination of the factor structure of role orientation

A **re-examination of the factor structure** of role orientation was conducted to find out whether the findings on the factor structure of role orientation in t_1 also occur in t_2.

Regarding the finding of t_1 that (1) followers do not see themselves as "rude" and "uneducated", sample $t_{2.1}$ supports that. About 78.26 % answered with a

1 or 2 on the 10-point scale for "rude" (t_1: 77.73 %) and 73.91 % answered with a 1 or 2 for "uneducated" (t_1: 72.99 %).

The same is valid for (2), that "arrogant" and "bad-tempered" do not form one factor (correlation: .23, t_1: .16). The items "easily influenced" and "follows trends" showed a slightly different, however still just about acceptable correlation in t_2 of .33 (t_1:.22; considering > .30 acceptable as in t_1). There was no indication that the higher correlations could be due to skewed items and/or the smaller sample size, as the distribution properties of the items had been checked in advance. "Slow" and "inexperienced" correlated stronger and acceptable this time at .38 (t_1: .28), albeit "slow" still correlates more strongly with "productive" (-48; t_1: -.50).

Regarding that (3) "reliable" does not fit the Good Citizen factor, $t_{1.2}$ supported this with correlations with the other items of < .30 (as in t_1).

As in t_1, a CFA with the three remaining factors was performed. The model showed a worse, albeit acceptable, fit compared to the model in t_1. The Chi-Square Test of Model Fit was again significant ($\chi^2(16) = 29.650$, p=.020) and the other indicators proved the model's acceptable fit with CFI = .929, TLI = .876, Standardized Root Mean square Residual SRMR = 0.068, and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation RMSEA = .110.

4.5 Discussion

4.5.1 Implications of the findings regarding followers' role orientation

Regarding the considered **three role orientation factors**, this study reveals Enthusiasm, followed by Industry, and last Good Citizen to have the largest manifestations in differences in followers' role orientations. Considering that high levels of Enthusiasm and high levels of Industry can be seen as representing an active role orientation, while low levels of both can be viewed as a passive role orientation (Epitropaki et al. 2013), the findings indicate that followers' role orientations indeed primarily differ in (pro-)activity and passivity, thereby supporting the (qualitative) findings of Carsten and colleagues (2010). Nevertheless, of importance are also relational aspects (Good Citizen) that do not fit into the activity-passivity continuum. That relational aspects matter again supports Carsten and colleagues (2010), who found that followers differ in how far their role orientations include being loyal and a team

player. Against the background of the relatively small sample size (n = 31) of Carsten and colleagues' (2010) study and their call for replications with various methodologies, this study strengthens the legitimacy of their findings on basis of a much larger population.

However, apart from this (quantitative) replication of Carsten and colleagues (2010) findings, this study also contributes to a further deepening of the understanding of followers' role orientations. The findings show that Enthusiasm, Industry, and Good Citizen can clearly be differentiated and have a hierarchy in their explanatory power for differences in followers' role orientations. Enthusiasm can be considered as a "**work attitude**" that can be located along an activity-passivity continuum, meaning that followers have a rather enthusiastic (active) or rather non-enthusiastic (passive) attitude towards their work (environment), including the leader (De Hoogh et al. 2005). Industry shows the dedication to work hard and thereby comprises, in contrast to Enthusiasm, an explicit performance component. Industry thus describes a positive/negative "**work ethic** —a commitment to the value and importance of hard work" (Miller/Woehr/Hudspeth 2002, p. 452). Lastly, Good Citizen can be seen as a form of "cooperativeness towards the leader". Future research may benefit from concretizing and expanding the understanding of followers' work attitude and followers' performance-related work ethic, to further concretize followers' activity-passivity as well as from specifying followers' cooperativeness towards the leader with additions to the current attributes (team player, loyal).

While **stability in the followers' role orientations** was shown for three-quarters of the sample over a period of four to six weeks, there are plausible reasons to assume that especially followers' Enthusiasm and Good Citizen(ship) may be affected by leaders or the followers' work environment. Followers' work attitude (Enthusiasm) has been shown to be positively related to charismatic leadership (De Hoogh et al. 2005). This is especially plausible as leader behavior has been shown to (causally) affect follower attitudes, for example, job satisfaction (Skogstad et al. 2014). Additionally, followers' "cooperativeness towards the leader" (Good Citizen) may be particularly affected by the contextual, sometimes temporary, quality of the leader-follower relationship.

This is because the extentto which a follower is willing to cooperate, can depend on the perceived trustworthiness and honesty of the respective leader (rule of reciprocity; van de Calseyde/Evans/Demerouti 2021). Consequently, especially Enthusiasm and Good Citizen may be important when future research examines (potential) (in-)consistencies in followers' role orientations over longer periods. When examining these, research may consider additional variables like "change in leader-(ship)", "(change in) perceived trustworthiness of the leader", "critical incidents with the leader" or such, to shed light on causes for (potential) changes in role orientations.

Apart from this, there are still additional reasons to look for within the followers themselves when further examining the stability of followers' role orientations. One is an examination of **followers' implicit person theories** (IPTs), beliefs about the extent to which personal characteristics are (un-)changeable (Seitz/Owens 2021). IPTs can be a means to explain why some followers may have a very stable role orientation, even under changing circumstances, while other followers may not.

Jointly considering followers' role orientations, traits, and behaviors, the study identified **three clearly distinct profiles** (Anti-Prototype, Moderate Anti-Prototype, Moderate Prototype). Members of the profiles (i.e., followers) differ in their role orientations and behavior (with voice behavior being only significantly different in t_1) and partially in traits. The followers of the Moderate Prototype have the highest values in the collected items of role orientation, indicating that they see their role as having an active "work ethic", an active "work attitude", and a high "cooperativeness towards the leader". This understanding of their role is in accordance with them having the highest (self-reported) values in proactive behavior, as personal initiative, voice behavior and helpfulness towards colleagues all can be considered proactive (Frese et al. 1997; Parker/Wang/Liao 2019) or non-incentivized and therefore proactive behavior (Organ, 1997). Furthermore, the members had at both points in time the significantly highest values in collected traits of which especially conscientiousness can be seen as valuable in the workplace (e.g., Barrick/Mount 1991).

However, although in this study named Moderate-Prototype, indicating via the term "prototype" a positive connotation, which is in line with a tendency in research and practice to view followers' proactivity positively (e.g., Thomas/Whitman/Viswesvaran 2010; Morrison 2014; Chamberlin/Newton/LePine 2017), not all leaders may favor a rather active understanding of the follower role. This phenomenon has been labelled "**the initiative paradox**", which describes a follower's proactivity only to be positive as long as the proactivity is in line with the leader's expectations (Campbell 2000). A general fit between leaders' (and followers') expectations and followers' (and leaders') behaviors is moreover likely to positively affect the leader-follower relationship (e.g., van Gils/van Quaquebeke/van Knippenberg 2010). This is why it may be relevant to capture how followers see their role when they are applying for a position with frequent leader-follower interaction (e.g., assistant to the management), to select an applicant with a degree of proactivity that is in line with the respective leader's expectations. Potential means to capture followers' role orientations in application processes may be situational judgment tests (McDaniel et al. 2007; Bledow/Frese 2009). In these tests, applicants are presented with descriptions of work-related situations. They then need to select how they would most likely react from a given number of options, or they need to rank different options according to their likeliness (McDaniel et al. 2007; Bledow/Frese 2009). For assessing a follower's role orientation, the work-related situation should concern the applicant's (i.e., potential follower's) understanding of his/her role respectively his/her behavior towards the leader. For instance, the work-related situation could include a (potential) follower's option to behave in an outgoing way towards the leader. The (potential) follower then could be given several options to choose or rank how s/he would behave. The options should cover varying degrees of outgoingness to depict a rather high level (i.e., active) and a rather low level (i.e., passive) of outgoingness.

4.5.2 Recommendations for the quantitative measurement of followers' role orientation

The study points to a current inaccuracy in the followership literature, the lack of **differentiation between IFTs and role orientations**. The present study

demonstrates that there is a difference between "followers' social constructions of the follower role" (IFTs) and "followers' social constructions of 'their own' [follower] roles" (role orientations; Coyle/Foti 2022, p. 125). Both points in time indicate that, for instance, some characteristics (e.g., "uneducated") found to be part of (leaders` and) followers' IFTs (Sy 2010), are not part of followers' role orientations. This stresses the importance of differentiating both concepts (and, concerning the measurement, the importance of establishing two related but separate constructs). However, in current research, the terms IFT and role orientation are often used synonymously (Epitropaki et al. 2013; Junker/van Dick 2014). or role orientations are referred to as IFTs (Coyle/Foti 2022). A similar aspect concerns concepts/constructs closely related to role orientations, such as follower beliefs. Although follower beliefs are referred to as how followers "see their role" (Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2012, p. 211; which is why they were considered synonymous with role orientations; see: Conceptual background), their measurement refers to the follower role in general, as an exemplary item shows: "Followers should be on the lookout for suggestions they can offer to superiors" (Carsten/Uhl-Bien 2012, p. 214). The present study indicates that there is a need to concretize the measurement to the own specific follower role when wanting to gain insights into how follower see their own (specific) role. This is especially relevant as both, followership and leadership literature, in parts lack clear conceptual understandings (e.g., Andersen 2019; Alvesson 2020). Therefore, recommendations for the quantitative measurement of followers' role orientation are provided in the following.

The present findings lead to the following conclusion when wanting to draw on Sy's (2010) IFT-scale for **measuring followers' role orientation**: "rude" and "uneducated" is in all probability not a part of followers' role orientation. While "reliable" as well as "arrogant" and "bad-tempered" may have a part in followers' role orientation they do not belong to the factor Good Citizen respectively do not form the factor Incompetence. Regarding the term "reliable", one solution may be to use trustworthy instead (or "verlässlich" instead of "zuverlässig" in German). As to "bad-tempered" it may be helpful not to use this item due to its situational character, thereby contradicting the chances of surveying a general understanding of a follower's role.

With regard to whether "easily influenced" and "follows trends" form one factor (Conformity factor), the findings are ambiguous. However, even in the best case (t_2) the correlations are close to being not acceptable. Overall, the difference in content regarding the direct reference to the leader via "easily influenced" and the abstract reference via "follows trends" is likely to cause difficulties. Nevertheless, the qualitative study by Carsten and colleagues (2010) indicates that following the "'leader's way'" (Carsten et al. 2010, p. 550) is an important characteristic to capture particularly passive role orientations (see also: Epitropaki et al. 2013). Therefore, it may be especially fruitful not to disregard these items/this factor, but to try to create additional items (ideally as an addition to "easily influenced" due to its direct reference) in order to capture the degree of conformity of a follower's role orientation.

Concerning "slow" and "inexperienced" the correlations in t_2 were acceptable, however, "slow" both times correlated stronger with "productive". Additionally, there is (again) the difficulty with the situational character of "inexperienced", why it may be useful, to exclude "inexperience" entirely. Moreover, it could be a solution to form a new factor, consisting of "productive" and "slow" (reversed), that could be named "efficiency". "Productive" could then no longer be part of the factor Industry. However, the remaining items of the factor ("goes above and beyond", "hardworking") have indeed a higher connotation of diligence than "productive", which is why a separation may be sensible. To avoid potential problems due to two-item measures, the generation of additional items may be helpful.

Finally, one note regarding the item "happy" (Enthusiasm factor). It is (also) very situational and, therefore, not well suited for capturing role orientations (which may be a reason why happiness was no relevant characteristic in Carsten et al.'s (2010) qualitative study). It also showed relatively high correlations with items of the Industry factor. Nevertheless, it remained in this study to avoid having two two-item measures, although an exclusion of "happy" did not lead to different profiles anyway. Overall, it may be useful to replace "happy" with a less situational and less overlapping term.

In **summary regarding the measuring**, the following recommendations can be given: First, excluding any items with situational character is sensible

("happy", "inexperienced", "bad-tempered"). Second, items with a direct reference to the leader-follower relationship (e.g., "easily influenced") should be prioritized over items with an indirect reference (e.g., "follows trends"). Items with a direct reference should also not be mixed with items with an indirect reference in the same factor. Third, creating a factor called "efficiency" comprising "productive" and "slow" is plausible. Fourth, "rude" and "uneducated" can most likely be dropped from any measurement of followers' role orientations. Fifth, to broadly capture followers' role orientations in the future, more items, especially some that capture passive role orientations need to be generated.

4.6 Limitations

The **small sample size** in t_2 is a major limitation of this study. The sample used for re-examining the factor structure of role orientation (t_2) can be considered adequate (Cattell 1978; MacCallum et al. 1999), although there is no consensus on sample sizes for confirmatory factor analysis. Nunnally (1978), for instance, recommends a sample size of n=80 (for eight items) instead of n=69 here. However, the subsample of t_2 is very small. This is why especially the stability of the latent profile affiliations, and the (potentially causal) links between followers' role orientation and behavior need further investigation.

In addition, **causality** cannot be derived from the present study. Although the (with one exception: voice behavior) consistency in both points in time in role orientations, traits, and behaviors of the Moderate Prototype and the Moderate Anti-Prototype is an indicator of a causal relationship, a Latent Transition Analysis, ideally considering three points in time (to first check for stability of the profile affiliation and then consider traits/behaviors to derive causality) would be a way to test a causal relationship (Lanza/Bray/Collins 2013). Conducting an LPA of followers' role orientations and their behaviors may therefore be an avenue for future research.

Additionally, regarding the sample structure, a potential **nonresponse bias** may have led to followers of the Moderate Anti-Prototype and the Moderate Prototype profiles being (at least slightly) overrepresented. An indication of this mechanism can be seen in the drop-out from t_1 to t_2. The dropout suggests that followers with low personal initiative may be more likely not to respond

(however this indication needs to be taken with caution, considering the overall small size of the Anti-Prototype profile). A similar phenomenon has been found regarding conscientiousness, although findings were mixed (Rogelberg et al. 2003), and conscientiousness has most probably not been the decisive factor in this study, as otherwise more followers of the Moderate Anti-Prototype profile would not have responded either. Overall, one way to mitigate the potential nonresponse bias could be to prepay participants before they participate in the survey (Rose/Sidle/Griffith 2007). Although this approach is not free of limitations either, it may then be fruitful to compare the results of a prepaid sample with the results of the present, incentivized convenience sample.

Moreover, **only three factors** (Enthusiasm, Industry, and Good Citizen) could be considered for the LPA. Thus, for instance, no insights could be obtained on the likely relevant factor Conformity (Carsten et al. 2010). By giving recommendations for the quantitative measurement of followers' role orientation, this paper aims to support upcoming research on additional factors of followers' role orientation. In this way, a more refined understanding of followers' role orientations can be generated in the future.

5 How do managers perceive employee voice? Investigating the role of employees' motives[1] [2]

5.1 Introduction

Why some employees express **voice (speak up)** to their managers has been a central interest of research (e.g., Gorden/Infante/Graham 1988; Morrison/Phelps 1999; Botero/van Dyne 2009; Xu et al. 2019; Li/Tangirala 2021). A wide range of antecedents, such as employees' character traits, job attitudes, beliefs, and schemas, have been identified that either motivate or inhibit employees to express voice (Morrison 2014; Chamberlin/Newton/LePine 2017). However, the underlying motives, being the motivation for voice behavior due to employees' needs (Folger 1993; Kehr 2004), have mostly been neglected in research so far (e.g., van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Parker/Wang/Liao 2019). The voice-receiving managers' perspective has also received only little attention (Howell et al. 2015; Wåhlin-Jacobsen 2020; Duan/Zhou/Yu 2021). This is surprising since managers' perception links employees' expressions of voice to (potential) beneficial outcomes for individuals and organizations (Morrison 2014). Depending on managers' perception of the value and utility of voice, proposals are either endorsed or dismissed (Whiting et al. 2012; Morrison 2014).

As a result, there are currently three major shortcomings in the voice literature: First, **employees' motives for expressing voice** have mostly been considered separately (e.g., van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012), which is problematic as employees usually have mixed motives when engaging in a specific behavior (Penner/Midili/Kegelmeyer 1997; van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012). Voice behavior, due to being improvement-oriented, can be seen as possessing prosocial elements (e.g., van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003), but the underlying motives are not necessarily (solely) prosocial

[1] Dieser Beitrag ist in Zusammenarbeit mit Robin Stumpf entstanden. Die Anteile an diesem Beitrag betrugen etwa 50 % (Gesang) und 50 % (Stumpf). Die Autorin der vorliegenden Arbeit war an der Konzeption der Studie, ihrer Durchführung, ihrer Auswertung sowie an der Diskussion der Ergebnisse maßgeblich beteiligt.

[2] Eine vorherige Fassung dieses Beitrags wurde auf der Jahrestagung der Wissenschaftlichen Kommission Personal im VHB (WKPers) in Düsseldorf (17.09.2020) sowie auf der WORK2021 – Work beyond Crises (13.10.2021) präsentiert.

(van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Fuller et al. 2007; Parker/Wang/Liao 2019). For instance, employees can also have impression management motives, as voice can be helpful for self-promotion and for creating a positive image (Fuller et al. 2007). This is why research has called for a multi-faceted investigation of employees' motives for expressing voice (Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012).

Second, considerations of employees' motives for expressing voice have so far been primarily conceptual (exception: Kim et al. 2013). Therefore, empirical investigations of these motives are lacking (e.g., Lam/Lee/Sui 2019; Parker/Wang/Liao 2019). This is especially relevant since the sparse empirical evidence (Kim et al. 2013) showed results that are in contrast to some conceptual arguments (e.g., Parker/Wang/Liao 2019).

Third, most research dealing with **managers' perception of voice**, considers the voicing employee as possessing only a single trait or behavior (e.g., Grant 2013; Fuller et al. 2015). Though just like employees usually have mixed motives, they also possess various traits and behaviors concurrently (e.g., Dulebohn et al. 2012). For this reason, the momentarily prevailing approach is too simplistic and fails to examine the perception of voice when expressed by an employee who possesses various traits.

In summary, both, the (conceptual) consideration of single motives for expressing voice as well as the consideration of single traits and behaviors are oversimplified and thus prevent a more holistic understanding of employee voice and its perception. Therefore, this study's **aim** is to investigate employees' motives for expressing voice, these motives' relationship to traits and behavior, and how managers perceive voice expressed by employees with these certain traits and behavior.

To do so, we explore the factor structure of employees' motives for expressing voice and based on these, we use a person-centered approach to identify different employee types (Study 1). These types represent groups of employees who have divergent motives for expressing voice when compared to other types but homogeneous motives within their groups. To gain detailed insights into the different employee types, we also consider voice-related traits and behaviors (e.g., felt responsibility for constructive change, likelihood to

voice) to investigate how far the identified employee types differ in their traits and behaviors.

Drawing on these employee types, we examine how the same voice content (promotive voice; Liang/Farh/Farh 2012) is perceived when being proposed by the identified employee types with their differences in traits (extraversion, agreeableness, felt responsibility for constructive change) and behavior (likelihood to voice) (Study 2). To do so, we conduct a randomized, vignette-based quasi-experiment with managers, who state how they perceive an employee type's proposal in terms of the attributed value and endorsement (Burris 2012; Burris/Rockmann/Kimmons 2017).

We make several **contributions** to the research on voice: First, we investigate the multidimensionality of motives for expressing voice (Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012). Second, we shed light on the connection between employees' motives for expressing voice and their traits and behaviors (Maynes/Podsakoff 2014). Third, we contribute to research on managers' perception of voice, that is, the differences in perception that arise from differences in the expressing employees' traits and behaviors (Whiting et al. 2012; Burris/Detert/Romney 2013).

5.2 Study 1: Employees' motives for expressing voice

5.2.1 Conceptual background

Employees' motives for expressing voice, being their underlying motivation for "verbal behavior that is improvement-oriented and directed to a specific target who holds power inside the organization in question" (Detert/Burris 2007, p. 870), remain largely unexplored empirically (e.g., Lam/Lee/Sui 2019; Parker/Wang/Liao 2019).

One **rare empirical examination** is the study of Kim and colleagues (2013). Kim and colleagues (2013) investigated voice behavior and motives in the thematically close field of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). OCB is a voluntary, non-incented behavior that aims at supporting and improving the occupational and work environment (Organ 1997). As OCB and voice both share the aim of improving organizational functioning, voice is sometimes considered a form of OCB (e.g., van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Grant/Mayer 2009; Kim et al. 2013). Kim and colleagues (2013) found that

organizational concern motives, reflecting caring about the organization's well-being and being committed to the organization (Rioux/Penner 2001), were positively related to voice OCB, a slightly broader concept than the above-stated definition of voice behavior that also includes encouraging others to speak up. As voice behavior refers to improving organizational functioning, the positive relationship with organizational concern motives is plausible (Detert/Burris 2007; Kim et al. 2013).

Kim and colleagues (2013) data provided no support for a positive relationship between prosocial motives, the desire to have good relationships with co-workers/managers (e.g., Rioux/Penner 2001), and voice OCB. Moreover, they only found partial support for a positive relationship between impression management motives, the desire to build a favorable impression or to get recognition for one's skills, achievements, or similar (e.g., Rioux/Penner 2001; Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012), and voice OCB (support in one out of two studies).

However, these findings stand in contrast to **theoretical considerations** of motives for expressing voice in the literature (although there may be content-related reasons for the discrepant results such as the deviating understanding of voice OCB). There is widespread consensus that voice can be driven by prosocial motives (van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012; Liang/Farh/Farh 2012; Morrison 2014; Parker/Wang/Liao 2019). This is because voice behavior is improvement-oriented and constructive, which is why it has also been called "prosocial in nature" (Morrison 2014, p. 179). Although in comparison to prosocial motives less addressed in the literature (Morrison 2014), there are also sound reasons to assume that voice behavior can be motivated by impression management motives (Fuller et al. 2007; Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012 use the term "self-promotional", pp. 329- 330; Morrison 2014). As voice is often directed at a manager, who is usually responsible for the voicing employee's professional advancement, the voicing employee may feel a particular desire to make a good impression and to display his/her own skills/achievements (Fuller et al. 2007).

Motives other than organizational concern, impression management, and prosocial value motives have been addressed only sporadically. Single conceptual studies have dealt with voice behavior motivated by justice and political motives (i.e., to express voice out of felt injustice or out of tactical considerations; Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012) as well as disengagement and self-protective motives (i.e., to express voice out of resignation or fear; van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003).

In **summary**, there are sound reasons to assume that voice behavior can be motivated by prosocial, impression management, and organizational concern motives, as well as other motives such as self-protection. Due to the overall fragmented theoretical and also scarce empirical knowledge on motives fpr expressing voice, an exploratory approach is chosen in the following, based on a (Citizenship) motive scale with the dimensions prosocial value (i.e., prosocial), impression management, and organizational concern (Rioux/Penner 2001).

5.2.2 Method and Sample

First, the factor structure of employees' motives for expressing voice is examined for content and statistically, using the above stated Citizenship Motive Scale by Rioux and Penner (2001) also used by the aforementioned Kim et al. (2013). Second, based on this structure, an LPA is conducted (Meyer/Morin 2016) to identify different employee types (or groups of employees).

For the **measurement of the motives**, we had to provide the participants with an understanding of voice behavior. For that, we considered various definitions of voice (van Dyne/LePine 1998; Premeaux/Bedeian 2003; van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Detert/Burris 2007; Tangirala/Ramanujam 2008; Bashshur/Oc 2015) and considered how voice in experimental designs has typically been operationalized (Burris 2012; Whiting et al. 2012; Burris/Rockmann/Kimmons 2017) to identify the main similarities. This process led to our description of voice as "offering constructive opinions, ideas, or suggestions for improvement to one's manager." Participants read the definition and then were asked to rate how important the following, randomized

motives were in their decision to express voice, ranging from "not at all important" (1) to "very important" (7). As OCB and its motives are broader than voice, we excluded items of the Citizenship Motive Scale, that did not fit our context (e.g., "I raise my voice because I want to be a well-informed employee"). In the end, the scale comprised eight organizational concern items (α=.86), eight prosocial value items (α=.88), and ten impression management items (originally ten items per dimension; α=.87).

Additional measures were collected to describe the resulting profiles., "felt responsibility for constructive change" (α=.82; Morrison/Phelps 1999) and "proactive personality" (α=.59, construct was due to the low value no longer considered; Parker 1998) were collected to cover the constructive and proactive nature of voice (e.g., van Dyne/LePine 1998; Detert/Burris 2007). Moreover, we collected "perspective-taking" (α=.79; Davis 1980) as a proxy for being prosocial and measured "voice efficacy", referring to confidence in one's ability to speak up (α=.86; based on Spreitzer's (1995) self-efficacy (competence) subscale, following Tangirala et al. (2013)), as it affects whether employees will express voice or not (e.g., McAllister et al. 2007). In addition, the "Big Five personality traits" (agreeableness, α=.71; neuroticism, α=.70; extraversion, α=.84; openness to experience, α=.73; and conscientiousness, α=.52, the last no longer considered due to low value; Rammstedt/John 2005) were collected because of their explanatory role in differences in employee voice (e.g., Maynes/Podsakoff 2014; Chamberlin/Newton/LePine 2017). Concerning behavioral outcomes, "likelihood to voice" (adapted version of van Dyne/LePine 1998; α = .87) and "voice frequency" (adapted version of Burris/Rockmann/Kimmons 2017; α = .81) were considered to determine whether certain motives lead employees to speak up more often.

For descriptive statistics, age, gender, education, tenure, industry, and whether the employee is also a manager (a disciplinary leader) were considered. Lastly, a scale measuring the potential for a social desirability bias was included (Satow 2012).

The **sample** was generated via an online survey from July to August 2020. The survey was addressed to German employees. It was shared with professional contacts and in professional social networks. After controlling for implausibility and social desirability (n = 201), 64.7 % of the sample are women, the average age is 35.6 years (SD = 10.89), and 14.4 % are managers.

5.2.3 Results

5.2.3.1 Examination of the factor structure of employees' motives for expressing voice

To identify the **factor structure of motives for expressing voice**, we first considered bivariate correlations (Pearson correlations). Items that correlated highly with each other (≤ 0.60) were checked for substantive arguments that they might form a subdimension. If an argument was identified, all remaining items were checked to see if this argument also applied to them, so that they could be added to this subdimension. For example, "To stay out of trouble" and "To avoid a reprimand from my boss" correlated at .71. Both pointed at protecting oneself from negative consequences. The two items were complemented by "Because I fear appearing irresponsible", as due to the "fear" component, this item also fitted the "self-protection" motive. Finally, if more than three items formed a subdimension, as was the case with the factor "collegial helpfulness" (Figure 5.1), items with a clear reference to the workplace (in this case because of their reference to "co-workers") were given preference. Three items were considered the maximum to avoid a large imbalance in the number of items per factor.

The final items and their factor structure are shown in Figure 5.1.

The Chi-Square Test of model fit for the identified factor structure was significant ($\chi^2(62) = 84.889$, $p < .028$), but the model had a very good fit, as indicated by the other indicators: Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .043, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .978, Tucker–Lewis Index (TLI) = .968, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = 0.038.

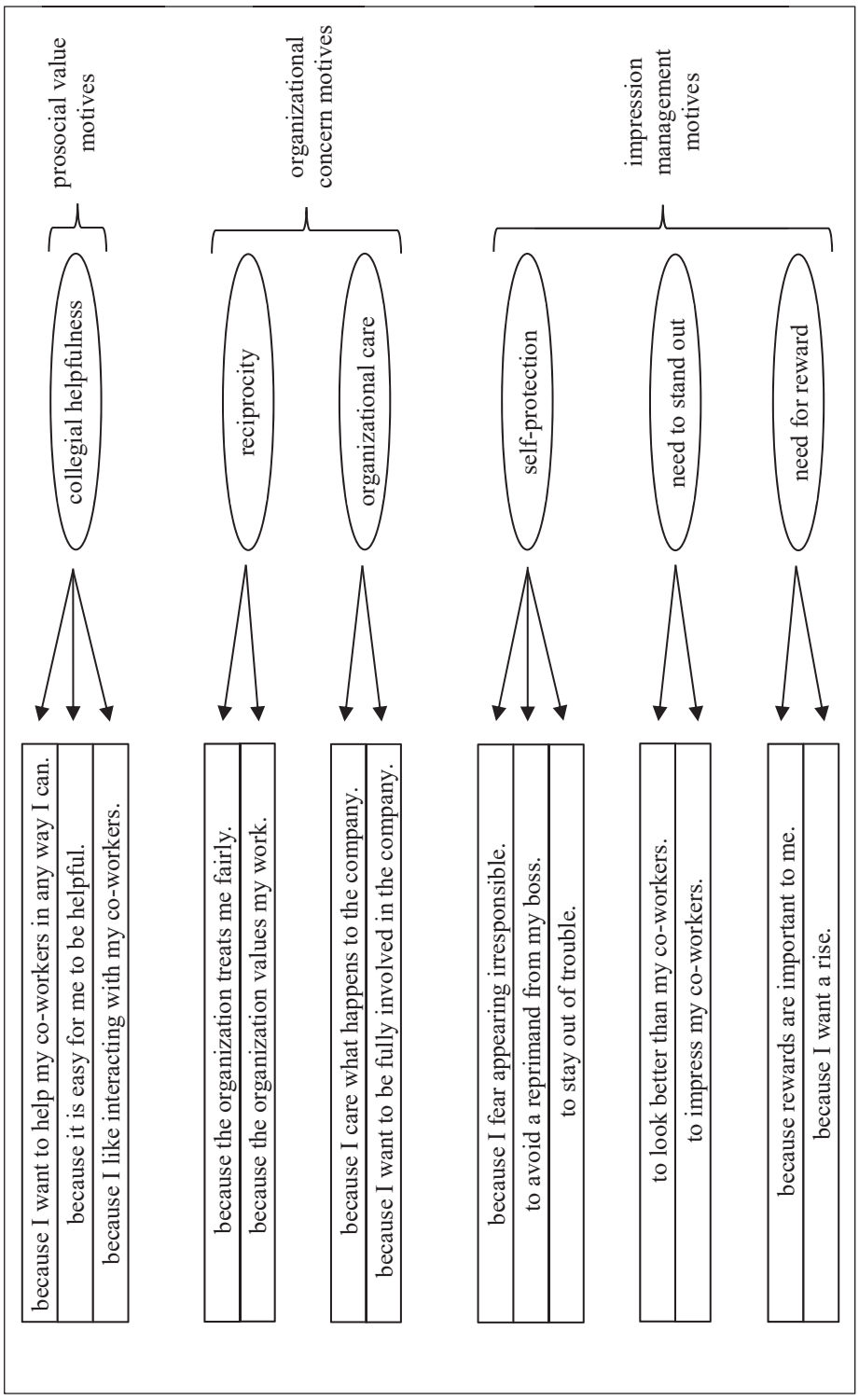


Fig. 5.1: Selected items of Rioux and Renners's (2001) Citizenship Motives Scale and their identified structure in explaining motives for expressing voice

5.2.3.2 Latent profile analysis of employees' motives for espressing voice

We used this factor structure in conducting an **LPA** (Muthén/Muthén 2015). Considering the factors' means, based on MLR estimator, we generated one to ten latent profiles with 10,000 random starts, 1,000 final stage optimizations, and 100 initial state iterations. Table 5.1 shows the results.

Model	LL	#fp	AIC	BIC	aBIC	AWE	cmP	Entropy
1 Profile	-2180.772	12	4385.543	4425.183	4387.165	4414.446	0.000	NA
2 Profiles	-2129.554	19	4297.108	4359.871	4299.676	4342.869	0.000	0.746
3 Profiles	-2082.765	26	4217.53	4303.416	4221.044	4280.151	0.001	0.821
4 Profiles	-2057.597	33	4181.194	4290.203	4185.654	4260.674	0.992	0.829
5 Profiles	-2043.992	40	4167.983	4300.115	4173.389	4264.323	0.007	0.800
6 Profiles	-2032.562	47	4159.124	4314.380	4165.476	4272.323	0.000	0.796
7 Profiles	-2021.98	54	4151.959	4330.338	4159.258	4282.018	0.000	0.834
8 Profiles	-2008.767	61	4139.534	4341.036	4147.779	4286.452	0.000	0.864
9 Profiles	-1997.903	68	4131.806	4356.431	4140.996	4295.583	0.000	0.833
10 Profiles	-1989.608	75	4129.216	4376.963	4139.352	4309.852	0.000	0.846

Notes. LL: Model log-likelihood; #fp: Number of free parameters; AIC: Akaike information criterion; BIC: Bayesian information criterion. aBIC: (samplesize)adjusted BIC; AWE: Approximate Weight of Evidence Criterion; cmP: correct model Probability

Tab. 5.1: Statistical results from the latent profile analysis

The analysis shows that the four-profile model is the optimum. Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) (4290.203) and Approximate Weight of Evidence Criterion (AWE) (4260.67) have minima which indicates that this is the best solution, and Correct Model Probability (cmP) (.992) states the highest likelihood for this model to be correct. This model was robust to higher numbers of random starts (100,000 and 200,000) and higher numbers of final-stage optimizations (2,000 and 10,000).

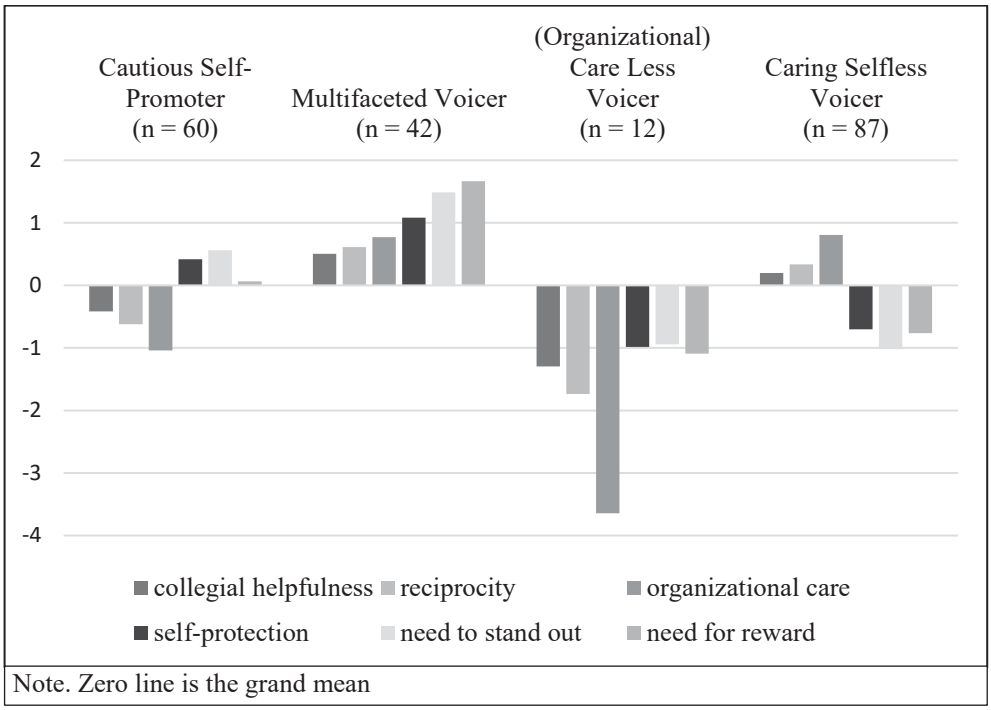
	Grand mean	SD	Profile 1 (n = 60)	Profile 2 (n = 42)	Profile 3 (n = 12)	Profile 4 (n = 87)
collegial helpfulness	5.493	1.280	5.079	5.995	4.195	5.689
reciprocity	4.881	2.585	4.260	5.493	3.145	5.219
organizational care	5.356	2.002	4.314	6.128	1.711	6.163
self-protection	3.196	2.738	3.614	4.277	2.212	2.491
need to stand out	2.607	2.144	3.170	4.095	1.665	1.587
need for reward	3.468	2.749	3.533	5.136	2.379	2.704

Notes. n = 201; SD = standard deviation

Tab. 5.2: Descriptive statistics of the four latent profile solution

Table 5.2 shows the descriptive statistics of the four latent profiles, the grand mean, the standard deviation (*SD*), the means of the six motive factors, and the size of the profiles' groups.

The latent profiles are shown in Figure 5.2.



Note. Zero line is the grand mean

Fig. 5.2: Profiles of the four-latent-profile solution

The first profile has above-average manifestations of self-protection and need to stand out, while the other factors are close to or below average. Therefore, we named this profile **Cautious Self-Promoter**. Among those in this profile group, 68.3 % were women, the average age was 32.35 years (*SD* = 8.163), and 5 % were leaders.

The second profile has above-average manifestations of all motives for expressing voice, although motives driven by impression management dominate. Therefore, we labelled this profile **Multifaceted Voicer**. Of those in this profile, 59.5 % were women, along with one diverse member, the average age was 34.88 years (*SD* = 10.395), and 24.4 % were leaders.

The third profile is characterized by below-average manifestations of all motives for expressing voice, with organizational care having the lowest manifestation. Therefore, this profile is named the **(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer**. Seven women (58.3 %) and one leader were members of this profile, with an average age of 34.17 years (*SD* = 8.032).

The fourth profile is dominated by an organizational care motive, while all motives that belong to impression management are below average, so this profile is named the **Caring Selfless Voicer**. Among the members of this group, 65.5 % were women, 18.4 % were leaders, and the average age was 38.39 years (*SD* = 12.445). Differences in the profiles in gender and age were non-significant at a 5 % level.

Next, the profiles were checked for significant **differences in the collected traits**. Table 5.3 shows these differences. Members of the "Multifaceted-Voicer-Profile" had the significantly highest level of extraversion. Regarding felt responsibility for constructive change, members of the "(Organizational)-Care-Less-Voicer-Profile" had the significantly lowest levels, followed by members of the "Cautious-Self-Promoter-Profile", while the two remaining profiles had the highest values and did not differ among one another. Regarding likelihood to voice, the "Cautious-Self-Promoter-Profile" and the "(Organizational)-Care-Less-Voicer-Profile" had the significantly lowest levels, while members of the "Multifaceted-Voicer-Profile" and the "Caring-Self-less-Voicer-Profile" had the significantly highest. All other differences did not result in a clear order for the profiles.

		Cautious Self-Promoter (1)	Multi-faceted Voicer (2)	(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer (3)	Caring Selfless Voicer (4)	Significant order (α = 5 %)
traits	perspective-taking	4.749	4.898	4.410	5.280	1 < 4; 3 < 4
	extraversion	3.219	3.954	3.052	3.372	1 = 3 = 4 < 2
	agreeableness	3.018	2.586	2.490	2.969	2 < 1 = 4
	neuroticism	3.243	2.863	2.939	2.734	4 < 1
	openness	3.182	3.432	3.449	3.593	1 < 4
behaviors	voice efficacy	5.092	6.178	5.083	6.042	1 = 3 < 2; 1 < 4
	FRCC	3.194	4.245	2.515	3.934	3 < 1 < 4 = 2
	LTV	5.060	6.221	4.702	6.044	1 = 3 < 2 = 4
	voice frequency	4.153	4.909	3.700	4.514	1 < 2

Notes. Differences based on auxiliary 3-step 'BCH' approach with χ^2-tests of equality between latent profiles; openness = openness to experience; FRCC = felt responsibility for constructive change; LTV = likelihood to voice

Tab. 5.3: Mean differences for traits and behaviors of the four latent profiles

5.2.4 Discussion of study 1

We found support for **different employee types** that could be separated based on motives of prosocial value, organizational concern, and impression management. The four resulting profiles (Cautious Self-Promoter, Multifaceted Voicer, (Organizational) Care-Less Voicer and Caring Selfless Voicer) could be clearly separated from each other and above that have shown to differ with regard to the underlying traits and behaviors. Most importantly, this underlines in contrast to Kim et al. (2013), that not only organizational concern motives, but also prosocial motives and impression management motives are important for an employee's decision to express voice.

Regarding the **three subdimensions of the impression management motives**, "self-protection", "need to stand out" and "need for reward", the former one has already been addressed in the voice literature. However, not with reference to impression management, but as a stand-alone type of voice called Defensive Voice (van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003). While "self-protection" has elements of impression management (as can be seen through the item "Because I fear appearing irresponsible") there may also be reasons to separate this subdimension from the other two. While "need to stand out" and "need for reward" have a clear reference to influencing others' impressions of oneself through appearing better than others or through status (reward, raise), the reference for "self-protection" is less unambiguous. Regarding the two items "To avoid a reprimand form my boss" and "To stay out of trouble" it is unclear whether the motive is primarily to avoid a bad impression or to avoid bad consequences for oneself. The latter would be an argument for separating "self-protection" from "impression management" to make it stand-alone. Future research may resolve the current uncertainty by clarifying the driving motives for self-protection.

With regard to the **organizational concern motives**, we identified two subdimensions, "reciprocity" and "organizational care". Especially the "reciprocity" subdimension may be interesting from the managers' perspective. As "reciprocity" includes whether the organization treats the employee fairly (Figure 5.1), managers may, through their leadership, affect the perception of fairness and may, by these means, foster or impede voice behavior. When

wanting to foster voice behavior, to try to adopt an ethical leader behavior might be helpful, as it includes treating employees fairly by, for instance, avoiding favoritism (e.g., Kalshoven/Den Hartog/De Hoogh 2011).

In a rather similar way, "**collegial helpfulness**", the identified subdimension of the prosocial value motives, might be encouraged or hindered by the managers' leadership. Helping behavior related to co-workers can be supported by servant leadership (Hunter et al. 2013). While servant and ethical leadership slightly overlap as both include the manager's power sharing with employees (Ehrhart 2004; Kalshoven/Den Hartog/De Hoogh 2011), they are fairly distinct. This can be seen, in the fact that servant leadership has no direct reference to fairness, while ethical leadership has no serving component, which is considered to be responsible for fostering (collegial) helpfulness (Ehrhart 2004; Kalshoven/Den Hartog/De Hoogh 2011; Hunter et al. 2013). While the relationship between both leadership behaviors and voice behavior has been studied separately (e.g., Chen/Hou 2016; Lapointe/Vandenberghe 2018), future research may benefit from comparative studies. These may investigate which of the two may promote voice behavior the most under which circumstances.

Overall, the identified profiles lead to a challenging situation regarding **managers' perception of voice**. If a manager is confronted with a voicing individual, as voice is usually directed to a supervisor (e.g., Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018; Sherf/Tangirala/Venkataramani 2019; Xu et al. 2019), knowing and understanding different motives might be a fruitful way to better evaluate and reward employee voice. Yet, managers will not perceive the voicing individuals' motives as they are latent in nature, but their traits and behaviors. More specifically, if managers judge employees' voice not only because of the content, but also because of the traits and behaviors (instead of the underlying motives) there might be a bias with regard to how to deal with voice.

5.3 Implications of Study 1 for Study 2

To better understand the potential differences in valuation (and endorsement) between the motive profiles and their associated traits and behaviors, we examine the differences in the perceptions of voice in Study 2 via a vignette-

based quasi-experiment. For that, we draw on the **identified trait and behavioral differences** between the profiles in Study 1. For practical reasons (duration of the survey and receptivity of the respondents), we limited the number of traits/behaviors depicted in the vignettes to four. Because we aimed to depict the members of the four profiles as diverse as possible, while their differences should be empirically sound, we excluded traits/behaviors that only showed significant mean differences between two profiles (which led to the exclusion of neuroticism, openness to experience, voice frequency, see Table 3). Furthermore, for the sake of realism of our vignettes, we excluded voice efficacy, as it is a highly personal and therefore little visible trait. Lastly, we excluded perspective-taking, as we had the closely related trait agreeableness as well, and agreeableness is in comparison more visible, and therefore better suited for the scenarios than perspective-taking. The remaining considered characteristics are shown in Table 4.

Profile	traits			behavior
	extraversion	agreeableness	FRCC	LTV
Cautious Self-Promoter	Ø	Ø+	Ø-	Ø-
Multifaceted Voicer	Ø+	Ø-	Ø+	Ø+
(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer	Ø	Ø-	Ø--	Ø-
Caring Selfless Voicer	Ø	Ø+	Ø	Ø+
Notes. Ø-- = far-below-average; Ø- = below-average; Ø = average; Ø+ = above-average				

Tab. 5.4: Characteristics of the members of the profiles considered in Study 2

We twice deviated from the identified significant mean differences and tolerated significant differences on a 10 %-α-level: (1) Concerning felt responsibility for constructive change, we considered a difference between the "Multifaceted Voicer Profile" and the "Caring Selfless Voicer Profile" (p=.053) to have four distinct manifestations. (2) Regarding agreeableness, we took into account a difference between the "Cautious Self-Promoter Profile" and the "(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer Profile" (p=.092).

5.4 Study 2: Employee traits and managers' perceptions of voice

5.4.1 Conceptual background and propositions

Regarding **managers' perception of voice** (the few existing) studies demonstrate that managers perceive voice more positively if it is expressed by an employee who is perceived as an expert, as trustworthy (Whiting et al. 2012;

Lam/Lee/Sui 2019; Li et al. 2019), who identifies with his/her profession (Burris/Rockmann/Kimmons 2017) and who has a high social status (Howell et al. 2015). We expand this research by investigating how voice is perceived by managers if being expressed by prototypical members of our identified profiles (Study 1). In doing so, we also address the current research gap, that most research deals with the perception of single traits/behaviors (e.g., Grant 2013; Fuller et al. 2015). However, this is oversimplistic as employees possess various traits and behaviors concurrently (e.g., Dulebohn et al. 2012).

Due to the prevailing focus on single traits/behaviors, we first address how **single traits** can be perceived and then argue, how profiles of these traits may be perceived. As a result, we do not hypothesize but pose propositions to emphasize our investigation's exploratory nature.

People with high levels of **extraversion** are perceived as active and dominant, characteristics that are usually appreciated at work (Dunn et al. 1995). However, an employee's dominance can negatively affect managers' perceptions of these employees' expression of voice. Dominance is closely linked to extraverts' strong achievement and power orientation (Roccas et al. 2002). Regarding the latter, Urbach and Fay's (2018) findings showed that a perceived power motive behind the expression of voice decreases managers' intention to support an idea because managers attribute egoistic intentions to the idea. The expressed voice is also perceived as a potential power threat because managers may be made aware of their own power instability, leading them to reject the proposal even if it would benefit the organization (Maner et al. 2007; Maner/Mead 2010). Therefore, we propose that managers tend to perceive voice expressed by an employee who has a high level of extraversion as neutral to negative.

People with a high degree of **agreeableness** are usually perceived as trustworthy (Costa/McCrae/Dye 1991; Ben-Ner/Halldorsson 2010), prosocial (Graziano/Eisenberg 1997), and likable (Jensen-Campbell et al. 2002). If an employee who expresses voice is seen as trustworthy, managers are more likely to view that employee's proposal as constructive and intended to improve organizational functioning (Whiting et al. 2012). The attribution of

agreeable persons as prosocial is, among other things, due to the trait's association with modesty and altruism (Graziano/Eisenberg 1997; McCrae/Costa 1999). As agreeable employees are perceived as likable, managers tend to remember situations in which the employee behaved positively (Johnson et al. 2002), while situations of poor performance are excused by circumstances and not attributed to the employee (Isen et al. 1985). Therefore, we propose that managers tend to perceive the voice of an employee who has a high level of agreeableness positively.

Regarding **felt responsibility for constructive change**, there is evidence that managers can perceive its change component as challenging (Fast/Chen 2009). Managers who have low managerial self-efficacy tend to feel threatened by any proposed change because of their perception that they will not be able to execute their leadership role in the altered situation (Fast/Chen 2009). This suggests that some managers perceive voice expressed by an employee with a high level of felt responsibility for constructive change as rather negative. Nevertheless, this argument is applicable to voice in general, as all voice is associated with change to varying degrees (e.g., Morrison/Phelps 1999; Fuller/Marler/Hester 2006). However, the constructive component of felt responsibility for constructive change is positive, as constructiveness is usually perceived as beneficial and helpful (Whiting et al. 2012; Fuller et al. 2015). Therefore, we propose that managers tend to perceive the expression of voice by an employee who has a high level of felt responsibility for constructive change as neutral to positive.

Whether managers value employees' expression of voice also depends on the employee's **likelihood to voice**. Assuming that a low/high likelihood to voice is perceived as a high probability of the employee expressing nearly none/very frequent voice, we can consider the study of Huang et al. (2018). They demonstrated that both a low frequency and a high frequency of (prohibitive) voice resulted in negative evaluations of the employee, as an employee who uses voice frequently may be seen as not having thought out an idea well (Liang/Farh/Farh 2012), while a low frequency can result in the impression that the employee makes little effort to improve the status quo. However, since managers generally tend to reward voice (e.g., Whiting et al. 2012; Fuller et al. 2015), we propose that managers tend to perceive

a low or high level of likelihood to voice as negative while a medium level is perceived as positive.

Regarding the **profiles of traits**, we now look at the four different profiles that were created based on the results of Study 1. We start with the profile whose voice we consider to be perceived as best and end with the profile we consider to be perceived as worst. Because we assume that an average level of extraversion will not have an additional explanatory value, we omit this level-trait combination in our explanations.

Since members of the **Caring Selfless Voicer Profile** have above-average agreeableness and at least average felt responsibility for constructive change, managers are likely to perceive their expression of voice as trustworthy, prosocial, and constructive. With these traits, we contend that above-average likelihood to voice (in contrast to our singular examination of likelihood to voice, above) does not have a negative impact because prosocial and constructive suggestions do not usually seem to be not well thought out.

Proposition 1: Managers perceive the expression of voice by members of the Caring Selfless Voicer Profile most positively.

Members of the **Cautious Self-Promoter Profile** also have above-average agreeableness but below-average felt responsibility for constructive change. Because of these employees' agreeableness, managers are likely to perceive their expression of voice as trustworthy and prosocial, but their below-average felt responsibility for constructive change, in combination with their below-average likelihood to voice, may lead managers to perceive these employees as passive and uncaring. However, these employees' social nature, which includes acting in accordance with others' needs (Nyhus/Pons 2005) has a caring component automatically, what makes a negative perception unlikely.

Proposition 2: Managers perceive the expression of voice by members of the Cautious Self-Promoter Profile second most positively.

The **Multifaceted Voicer Profile** members' above-average extraversion, combined with their below-average agreeableness, may lead to a negative perception of their expression of voice. The already negative perception that can arise due to the dominance-component of extraversion and the related

power motivation, leaving managers to assume egoistic intentions and perceiving the voice to be a power threat (Urbach/Fay 2018), may be intensified. The below-average agreeableness makes it likely that the employee is egoistic and only concerned about his own advancement. Against this background, the members' above-average likelihood to voice is likely to further strengthen this perception. Thus, the constructive (and therefore positive) component of the members' above-average felt responsibility for constructive change may not matter, as it is likely being overshadowed.

Proposition 3: Managers perceive the expression of voice by members of the Multifaceted Voicer Profile as the second-most negatively.

As members of the **(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer Profile** have below-average agreeableness and far below-average felt responsibility for constructive change, managers are likely to perceive their expression of voice as neither trustworthy nor prosocial or constructive, leading to a highly negative perception. Given these members' below-average likelihood to voice, managers are likely to perceive them as generally uncaring, which may strengthen the already negative perception of their expression of voice.

Proposition 4: Managers perceive the expression of voice by members of the (Organizational) Care-Less Voicer Profile as most negatively.

5.4.2 Method and Sample

We conducted a randomized **vignette-based quasi-experiment** using four scenarios to test our proposals. By confronting participants with hypothetical situations, their intentions and behaviors can be assessed while controlling for confounding effects (Aguinis/Bradley 2014). A pilot study was conducted with 112 German employees, which led us to adjust the scenarios slightly to increase realism and the clarity of the manipulations.

For the main study, **data** were collected from 204 German managers (disciplinary leaders for at least two employees) during January 2021 using the nonprobability access panel respondi, which is similar to Amazon's Mechanical Turk. The managers all read a short introduction that asked them to imagine that they were managers who had recently taken over a leadership position in a newly founded department with their current employers. They needed to recommend one of their employees for a trainee program to prepare

them as professional experts or for a leadership position (We used two kinds of positions to avoid creating biases about "typical" leader characteristics, such as extraversion (Bono/Judge 2004). Because they were new in their positions and had known their staffs for only two weeks, they would use a personality assessment given to them by the human resources department. This assessment would juxtapose employees' personality traits against those of the other employees in the entire department so the manager could see to what extent the employee's personality traits deviated from the average.

After this introduction, the managers were randomly assigned to one of four **scenarios** that described one of the four profiles. In these scenarios, they were asked to imagine that they were sitting in their office and examining the personality assessment of an employee (e.g., a member of the "Caring Selfless Voicer Profile"). The personality traits were given, each accompanied by a depiction of a two-sided arrow indicating whether the employee's personality trait was above average, (far) below average, or average. Additionally, there were three describing sentences per personality trait (e.g., "in comparison to the other employees in the department, the employee feels a personal sense of responsibility to bring about change at work to a lower/the same/higher extent.") These were incorporated to strengthen the understanding of the respective personality trait, even if participants were not that familiar with personality traits.

Next, the managers read that, while they were engrossed in the personality assessment, the employee whose assessment they were looking at entered the office and proposed an idea for process optimization (promotive voice, aimed at reducing costs and throughput times, held constant in all four scenarios). We deliberately chose **promotive voice** because its good intention is more easily recognized compared to other forms of voice (Burris 2012; Liang/Farh/Farh 2012).

Then, the managers read that they had to **evaluate the employee's idea** and had to trust their intuition since they had known this employee for only a short time. At the end of the scenario, managers were given a summary of the personality assessment containing the descriptions of the traits and the two-sided arrow with the traits' manifestation.

Next, participants were asked to **evaluate the proposal** using two established scales, *endorsement of voice* (α = .92; Burris 2012) and *valuation of voice* (α = .87; Burris/Rockmann/Kimmons 2017) and to state the reasons that influenced their assessment using a free text field. Additionally, participants were asked for their own motives for expressing voice (as in Study 1; scale adapted from Rioux and Penner (2001), prosocial value motives α = .90; organizational concern motives α = .88; impression management motives α = .94).

We included attention (Kung/Kwok/Brown 2018) and instructional **manipulation-check** items (Oppenheimer/Meyvis/Davidenko 2009), such as "Which personality traits were shown in the personality assessment?" Participants were asked for their ratings for realism (M = 3.73; SD = .926) and sympathy (M = 3.54; SD = .844) via one-item measures on a five-point Likert scale (from "not at all realistic/sympathetic" to "totally realistic/sympathetic").

We also collected the participants' gender, age, organizational tenure as well as the managers' length in managerial responsibility.

The final sample size after excluding incomplete questionnaires and participants who failed the attention- or/and manipulation-checks (as done before, e.g., Gao/Greenberg/Wong-On-Wing 2015; Lee et al. 2019) or who gave implausible answers was n = 204. Among the participants, 61.3 % were men, and their average age was 45.71 years (SD = 11.160) years. They had an average of 24 years (SD = 11.901) of work experience and 12.29 years (SD = 9.534) of managerial responsibilities.

5.4.3 Results

Table 5 summarizes the results of an independent sample t-test on **differences in the endorsement and valuation of voice** among the scenarios.

	Scenario	n	M	SD	df	t-value	p-value
endorse-ment of voice (valua-tion of voice)	Cautious Self-Promoter	41	5.078 (5.232)	.838 (.969)	90	2.006* (1.757)	.048 (.082)
	Multifaceted Voicer	51	4.624 (4.824)	1.240 (1.208)			
	Cautious Self-Promoter	41	5.078 (5.232)	.838 (.969)	91	-.076 (.005)	.940 (996)
	(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer	52	5.092 (5.231)	.943 (.967)			
	Cautious Self-Promoter	41	5.078 (5.232)	.838 (.969)	99	-.251 (-.553)	.803 (.581)
	Caring Selfless Voicer	60	5.123 (5.341)	.927 (.989)			
	Multifaceted Voicer	51	4.624 (4.824)	1.240 (1.208)	101	-2.161* (-1.891)	.033 (.062)
	(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer	52	5.092 (5.231)	.943 (.967)			
	Multifaceted Voicer	51	4.624 (4.824)	1.240 (1.208)	109	-2.425* (-2.485*)	.017 (.014)
	Caring Selfless Voicer	60	5.123 (5.341)	.927 (.989)			
	(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer	52	5.092 (5.231)	.943 (.967)	110	-.175 (-.598)	.861 (.551)
	Caring Selfless Voicer	60	5.123 (5.341)	.927 (.989)			
Notes. *p < 0.05; M = mean; SD = standard deviation; df = degrees of freedom							

Tab. 5.5: Independent sample t-test for the four scenarios

The "Caring Selfless Voicer Profile" had the highest values in the dependent variables, while the "Multifaceted Voicer Profile" had the lowest.

T-tests revealed no support for our propositions: The "Caring Selfless Voicer Profile" was not perceived most positively (Proposition 1), the "Cautious Self-Promoter Profile" was not perceived second most positively (Proposition 2), the "Multifaceted Voicer Profile" was not perceived second most negatively (Proposition 3), and the "(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer Profile" was not perceived most negatively (Proposition 4).

However, the "Multifaceted Voicer Profile" was significantly most negatively perceived in terms of endorsement of voice. Regarding the valuation of voice, there was only one significant difference in the way that the "Multifaceted Voicer Profile" was significantly more negatively perceived than the "Caring Selfless Voicer".

Managers also provided **reasons for their assessments of the proposal**. As suggested in the voice literature (e.g., Morrison 2014; Howell et al. 2015), the

reasons they mentioned fit into four categories: the content of voice, the manner of communication, source factors, and recipient factors. Among the main reasons that were mentioned, 34.4 % were related to the voice-expressing employee. We divided this category into stated personality traits (23.1 %, e.g., "his agreeableness" and "his below-average evaluation"), other traits (8.7 %, e.g., "the employee's experience" and "unfriendly"), and attributed motive (2.6 %, e.g., "No quid pro quo, such as more salary or promotion required" and "I think he wants to draw attention to himself right at the beginning"). We could not determine why managers inferred the employee's other traits, since we provided information only about the manipulated traits and did not describe the employee otherwise.

We conducted an **additional t-test** to analyze whether the significantly more negative perception of the Multifaceted-Voicer's proposal was something the leaders did consciously, based on how we described the Multifaceted-Voicer's personality in the scenario. For this purpose, we identified all leaders whose unfavorable perception of the Multifaceted-Voicer's proposal could be clearly attributed to the stated personality traits through the given reasons these leaders provided. When excluding those leaders (15,7 %, leaving n = 43), the significant difference disappeared (t-values between 1. 101 and 1.640; p-values > 0,1).

We furthermore conducted a **re-examination of the factor structure** of employee's motives for expressing voice, to validate the factor structure (see "Examination of the underlying factor structure of employees' motives for expressing voice" for results in Study 1). Therefore, we analysed the managers who additionally stated that they had colleagues (as some motives refer to colleagues which is why no manager who stated not to have colleagues was included). The resulting sample size is n = 136. The Chi-Square test of Model Fit was again significant ($\chi^2(62) = 93.819$, $p < .0056$), but RMSEA (.061), CFI (.966) TLI (.950), and SRMR (0.054) indicate that the model has a very good fit, thereby providing additional support for our identified structure of employees' motives.

5.4.4 Discussion of study 2

We found that **voice is perceived most negatively** when it is expressed by an employee who has above-average values in extraversion, felt responsibility for constructive change, and likelihood to voice and below-average values in agreeableness (Multifaceted Voicer Profile). High extraversion in combination with low agreeableness is likely to have fostered in some of the managers the anticipated effects of attributing power and selfish motives, rather than prosocial motives, behind the expression of voice (Graziano/Eisenberg 1997; Roccas et al. 2002; Urbach/Fay 2018). Below-average agreeableness may also have led to the employee's being disliked (Jensen-Campbell et al. 2002). This argument is supported by some of the reasons the managers provided for their assessments in our quasi-experiment ("I just don't like him" and "unfriendly").

Our results support the literatures' findings regarding the **role of the voicing employee** for managers' perception of voice. Next to the employee's expertise, trustworthiness (Whiting et al. 2012), and status (Howell et al. 2015), our study demonstrates that also the employees' characteristics influence whether voice is perceived positively or not.

The findings may also be transferred to other forms of business communication such as **organizational dissent**, i.e., the disagreement about organizational practices (Kassing 1998), which is conceptually closely related to voice (Garner 2013; Wåhlin-Jacobsen 2020). For example, Garner (2016) demonstrated that organizational dissent is more positively perceived by managers if a solution is presented, while repetition and pressure lead to the opposite. However, the employee's role and especially the role of his/her characteristics have been mostly neglected in research on organizational dissent and other forms of business communication so far.

5.5 General Discussion

This study's aim was to investigate employees' motives for expressing voice, these motives' relationship to traits and behavior, and how managers perceive voice expressed by employees with these certain traits and behavior.

Regarding the motives for expressing voice, we found support for a **motive structure** that consists of subdimensions of the established motives of prosocial value, organizational concern, and impression management in both studies. This is not surprising since voice behavior is predominantly seen as constructive, helpful and aiming to advance organizational functioning, however, it can also be used for one's own career advancement (e.g., van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Detert/Burris 2007; Fuller et al. 2007; Liang/Farh/Farh 2012). The finding that impression management motives can be about as important as prosocial (value) motives for some employees (Cautious Self-Promoter) underlines that it may be sensible to drop descriptions of voice behavior as "prosocial in nature" (Morrison 2014, p. 179). Although regarding voice as prosocial (in nature) has been derived from its constructiveness and its intent to make a positive contribution, not necessarily from the absence of any non-prosocial motives such as impression management (van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003; Morrison 2014), this term may hinder a realistic picture of some of the causes of voice behavior. Nonetheless, the relevance of impression management motives is very likely to vary between different employees, as they might be nearly irrelevant for some as well (e.g., (Organizational) Care-Less Voicer). Overall, future research may benefit from deliberately considering impression management or perhaps other self-serving motives, to get a fuller picture of voice behavior and its causes.

With regard to the **valuation/endorsement** of the (expressed voice of the members of the) profiles, further relevant contributions can be made. These contributions primarily concern the "Multifaceted Voicer" as well as the "(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer".

First, the overall negative assessment of the "**Multifaceted Voicer**'s" voice is not in accordance with all of the profile members' underlying motives. While these members' impression-management motives have the highest values of all profiles, "Multifaceted Voicers" also have the highest values in motives related to collegial helpfulness and reciprocity, and the second-highest values for organizational-care motives, only slightly surpassed by the "Caring Selfless Voicers". This result shows that the negative perception of voice expressed by "Multifaceted Voicers" could overshadow these voicers' poten-

tially positive motives. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the participants who had an unfavorable perception of the "Multifaceted-Voicer's" proposal that could be attributed to the stated personality traits (through the given reasons for the proposal) was 15.7 %, and that when excluding them, the significant differences between the profiles disappeared. This strengthens that there are indeed managers who (at least through our scenario) were not negatively affected by the "Multifaceted-Voicers" personality traits and is in line with our finding that only 23.1 % of all managers indicated that their perception was influenced by the (stated) personality traits.

Second, we expected that voice expressed by the "**(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer**" who shares below average agreeableness with the "Multifaceted Voicer" would be perceived as the most negative. However, this type's expression of voice was perceived better than expected, as the type`s far below-average felt responsibility for constructive change and below-average likelihood to voice did not lead to exclusively negative perceptions. Some participants (15.4 %) stated that they were positively surprised by the employee's suggestion or that they valued the employee's initiative (e.g., "I was pleasantly surprised that this employee had the courage to be constructive"; "He has taken over responsibility").

Nevertheless, the values for the "(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer's" motives are far below-average, with the values for all motives, especially the organizational-concern motives, being by far the lowest compared to all other profiles. Therefore, members of this profile are most likely to have no motives for expressing voice that would be beneficial to the manager, colleagues, or the organization. However, a motive structure as detected through the LPA does not necessarily correspond to a motive in an individual case, as an "(Organizational) Care-Less Voicer" may speak up with the motive to, for instance, improve organizational functioning, despite his far below-average organizational-concern motive. Moreover, even if an employee speaks up because of self-serving motives like the need to stand out, the proposal itself can still be beneficial to the organization (Grant/Mayer 2009).

5.6 Limitations

We need to take our studies' limitations into account when considering the results. First, the employees and managers surveyed were employed exclusively in **Germany**. Research shows that employee traits, behavior, and perceptions depend on the cultural background (Chen/Francesco 2000; Boudreau/Boswell/Judge 2001). For example, Boudreau, Boswell, and Judge (2001) indicated that the qualities associated with extraversion, such as sociability, tend to be valued in European companies with collaborative environments, whereas self-confidence plays a more prominent role in the United States. Therefore, our results cannot be transferred to other cultures, but future research could determine whether motives for expressing voice and the perception of voice differ based on the cultural context.

Second, both Study 1 and Study 2 were conducted during the **COVID-19 pandemic**. Due to the radical changes in individuals' lives, the external validity of our findings may be limited. A glance at the literature demonstrates, for example, that social isolation leads to an increased turnover intention, less commitment, and lower job performance (Ozcelik/Barsade 2018; Kniffin et al. 2021; Prommegger et al. 2021). Overall, the motives for expressing voice may have changed during the pandemic. For instance, in Prommegger et al.' (2021) study, the participants' person-organization fit changed between the first and second wave of the pandemic. As a greater person-organization fit can lead to more altruistic concerns for the organization (Lemmon/Wayne 2015), the organizational concern motives may have been lower than before the pandemic. Therefore, further research may clarify whether our findings are generalizable to the post-pandemic period. However, other measured variables are not likely to have changed, like the Big Five personality traits, due to their stability (Cobb-Clark/Schurer 2012).

Third, although we examined employees' motives for expressing voice in two separate studies to substantiate our motive structure, we have **cross-sectional data**. Therefore, no causality between the identified motives and the associated traits and behaviors can be derived. Future research could re-examine the link between the motives for expressing voice and traits and behaviors over time. Examining the permanence of motives for expressing voice over several

time spans could also be beneficial to validate this link. In addition, the sub-dimensions we identified were measured using only two- and three-item (sub-)scales. Future research could further investigate the (potential) need for these subscales and may generate additional items.

6 A shift in perspective: Examining the impact of perceived follower behavior on leaders[1 2 3]

6.1 Introduction

The importance of the **follower** in the leader-follower relationship has long been recognized in the leadership field, and has gained additional momentum in the last two decades by growing research on followership (e.g., Zaleznik 1965; Herold 1977; Baker 2007; Ford/Harding 2018; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019). Nevertheless, leaders are still predominantly seen as the influencing actor in this relationship (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). As a result, a lot is known about how leaders' behavior affects followers, for instance their mental health, commitment, or performance (e.g., Wang et al. 2011; Schweizer/Patzelt 2012; Montano et al. 2017). Although followers' behavior also affects leaders themselves (e.g., Blom/Alvesson 2014; Schneider et al. 2014), only little is known about it so far (e.g., Shamir 2007; Agho 2009; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Despite a majority consensus that followers can have an active part in the leader-follower relationship (e.g., Benson/Hardy/Eys 2016; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018; Ford/Harding 2018), the consideration of the influencing follower has mostly been empirically neglected, which might have also been fostered by the passive connotation of the term "follower" (Baker 2007; Carsten/Harms/Uhl-Bien 2014). To reduce this current imbalance in knowledge, we shift the prevailing perspective and take a look at how followers' behavior affects leaders.

The **impact** that followers' behavior can have on leaders is dependent on leaders' individual perceptions of this behavior (Hollander 1992). This is because behavior in a human interaction is never objective but is shaped by the subjective interpretation of the behaviors' witnesses

[1] Dieser Beitrag ist in Zusammenarbeit mit Stefan Süß entstanden. Die Anteile an diesem Beitrag betrugen etwa 50 % (Gesang) und 50 % (Süß). Die Autorin der vorliegenden Arbeit war an der Konzeption der Studie, ihrer Durchführung, ihrer Auswertung sowie an der Diskussion der Ergebnisse maßgeblich beteiligt.

[2] Eine vorherige Fassung dieses Beitrags ist im Scandinavian Journal of Management 37 (2/2021), 101156 erschienen.

[3] Eine vorherige Fassung dieses Beitrags wurde auf der Jahrestagung des Arbeitskreises Empirische Personal- und Organisationsforschung (AKempor) in Salzburg (22.11.2018) präsentiert.

(Watzlawick/Bavelas/Jackson 2011). Consequently, different leaders can perceive an identical behavior of a follower entirely differently.

One aspect relevant for understanding **leaders' subjective perception** of followers' behavior are beliefs leaders have about the prototypical role behavior of followers (e.g., Epitropaki et al. 2013). Research on Implicit Followership Theories examines these beliefs (e.g., Sy 2010; Junker/van Dick 2014). The most prevalent ones are two extremes of beliefs: On the one hand, there are leaders believing followers to be rather active or co-productive by e.g., engaging in solving problems, thereby implying to serve as co-creators of leadership (e.g., Kelley 1988; Baker 2007; Shamir 2007). On the other hand, there are leaders believing followers to be rather passive by e.g., staying quiet and leaving decision making to the leaders themselves (e.g., Kelley 1988; Baker 2007; Shamir 2007).

Current research on the impact (perceived) follower behavior can have on leaders, has used this classification (Schneider et al. 2014; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). It has concluded that active followers can increase leaders' motivation and can evoke positive emotions like contentment, joy, and delight, while passive followers can decrease leaders' motivation and can cause negative emotions like defiance, worry, and agitation (Schneider et al. 2014; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). However, the behavior and its perception in the leader-follower relationship is "one of the most complex and multifaceted phenomena" (van Seters/Field 1990, p. 29). Thus, it is not surprising that (the belief of) follower behavior is not necessarily congruent with actual behavior and hence with its perception (Alipour/Mohammed/Martinez 2017).

The present study addresses this subject matter, by taking a look at leaders' perceptions of followers' behavior in situations these leaders have actually experienced. The **aim** of our study is to explore, how the perceived behaviors have influenced the leaders. We begin by illustrating the role-based approach to followership, the approach our study builds on, and then review the current state of research on followers' influence on leaders to substantiate our identified research gap. Then we discuss the conceptual background of our study, which serves as the basis for our interview guide, followed by an explanation

of our qualitative approach with twenty-one semi-structured interviews and our method of analysis. Next, we present our results and then discuss our findings, while the limitations of our study are stated afterwards. We close with a conclusion. We close with a conclusion.

With this investigation, our paper addresses claims for a more extensive emphasize on the impact that followers' behavior has on leaders (e.g., Shamir 2007; Oc/Bashshur 2013; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). In doing so, we make a number of **contributions** to the research on followership: First, we reveal the richness of the impact followers' behavior can have on leaders. Second, we provide evidence that there are specific positively/negatively perceived interactions, which were the starting point of a series of following interactions. These following interactions had similar patterns. Third, we demonstrate, based on interactions that had similar circumstances, that leaders differ substantially in how and to what extent followers' behavior affects them, thereby revealing evidence for two leader extreme types of perception, the "empathetic" leader and the "self-centered" leader. Fourth, we find that the extent of the hierarchical difference between leader and follower might be the main aspect accounting for the intensity of impact of perceived follower behavior.

6.2 The role-based approach to followership, followers, and their influence on leaders

Most research on followers has been covered by the field of followership, which deals with the characteristics of followers, their behavior, as well as the thereby resulting consequences for the leader-follower relationship in other words, "the nature and impact of followers [and following] in the leadership process" (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, p. 89). Current research thereby looks at followership from two different approaches (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). Both are not entirely distinct, but vary in their point of view of investigation. The constructionist approach understands followership as a process in which followers and leaders interact with each other to co-create followership, leadership, and their related outcomes (e.g., Collinson 2006). The role-based approach in contrast regards the follower as the causal actor in the leader-follower relationship (e.g., Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018).

This paper takes on the latter approach by investigating how leaders perceive the behavior of their followers and how this behavior affects them. The **role-based approach** has also been labelled “reverse the lenses” (e.g., Shamir 2007, p. ix) or “reversing the lens” (e.g., Uhl-Bien et al., 2014, p. 97), because it is the reverse view on how leadership has traditionally been looked at. While leaders have predominantly been seen and studied as being the causal actor in the leader-follower relationship (e.g., Harms/Credé 2010; Banks et al. 2016; Hoch et al. 2018), the role-based approach to followership takes an equivalent stance, but replaces the leader by the follower.

Followers are, by this approach followers based on their role in relation to their leaders (Katz/Kahn 1978; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). While this role can be informal, grounded on being perceived as a follower although not formally occupying this position (as has been shown with respect to informal leaders, e.g., Lord/Foti/De Vader 1984; Zhang/Waldman/Wang 2012), our study focusses on the formal follower role. This means, followers are defined by their inferior hierarchical position with respect to their leaders. Leaders, in their formally superior hierarchical role can wield power over followers by, for instance, their very own resources to inform, reward, or coerce the follower (French/Raven 1959; Yukl/Falbe 1991; Nahavandi et al. 2015). This leader-follower relation and the thereby constituted follower role can be found in various constellations in organizations, for instance with respect to managers and their employees or leaders and their subordinates (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014).

We take the role-based approach as the angle of perspective of our study. As an empirical perspective on the **impact of followers’ behavior on leaders** has, for the most part, been absent from current followership research (For exceptions, see the aforementioned Schneider et al. (2014) and Carsten, Uhl-Bien and Huang (2018)), we are going to look at three other branches of research: research on impression management tactics, research on upward influence tactics, and research on the leader’s leadership style dependence on followers’ performance. These followership-related research fields help to specify the research gap we seek to reduce.

Impression management is the control of the impression a person has about another (Tedeschi/Riess 1984). When it comes to followers' impression management towards their leaders, research has shown that ingratiation and such closely related tactics as praising the leader and doing the leader favors can increase the leader's liking for a follower (Wayne/Ferris 1990; Wayne/Liden 1995; Gordon 1996). In addition, a follower's impression management tactic can influence the leader's performance rating of the follower, both directly as well as indirectly through increased liking (Wayne/Ferris 1990; Gordon 1996).

Besides, a follower uses **upward influence tactics** to convince the leader when having a specific ambition, for instance aiming to receive a personal advantage (Kipnis/Schmidt/Wilkinson 1980). These tactics comprise among others rational persuasion or the involvement of higher authorities to exert pressure on the leader (e.g., Yukl/Falbe 1990). Rather similar to the just stated findings, studies show that the chosen upward influence tactic is associated with leader's liking for a follower (Wayne et al. 1997). Moreover, the chosen tactic can influence the leader's perception of the follower's promotability (Thacker/Wayne 1995).

All of these studies have in common that, although they examine the influence of the follower's tactics on the leader's perception, the effects are always related to specific follower-related parameters, such as his or her performance, but do not consider leader-related parameters. The only exception we found is Deluga (1991), who investigated how a follower's upward influence tactics are related to the stress the leader feels when dealing with this follower. The findings reveal that the use of hard influence tactics (bringing in higher authorities, forming coalitions, and being assertive) is associated with higher interpersonal stress of the leader (Deluga 1991).

Finally, research on how the leader's **leadership style depends on the follower's performance** has shown that, when followers perform highly, leaders loosen their supervision, impose less structure, increase their acceptance of the followers' needs, and show more appreciation of the followers' performance (Lowin/Craig 1968; Farris/Lim 1969; Greene 1975). Although these

findings indeed point to a specific leader parameter, being his or her leadership style, these findings have main shortcomings. On the one hand, the division into high and low performing followers (Lowin/Craig 1968; Farris/Lim 1969) as well as a very isolated view which makes the influence of confounding factors highly likely (Greene 1975), create a simplicity that is far from reality. On the other hand, a leader's leadership style is just one of many potential leader parameters.

In **summary,** our concern with the current knowledge of follower's influence on leaders, we have two main issues: First, the consideration of specific leader parameters is too scarce. Unaddressed parameters may include, for instance, the leader's (occupational) effort, feelings, or attitudes. Second, examinations of the follower's impact have been restricted primarily to simplistic and, therefore, unrealistic conditions. As stated in the introduction, followers are not just active or passive. In the same way they are neither just high-performing nor just low-performing. The complexity of actual leader-follower interactions makes an observation of the impact of a follower's behavior on the leader in greater breadth and variety highly necessary.

6.3 Conceptual background

To address our research interest and establish a foundation for our interview guide, we take a step back and form a general understanding of the way a leader's perception of a follower's behavior and hence the follower's impact on the leader is generated. Therefore, we mainly draw on basic research of human-, and leader perception.

A **leader's individual perception** of a follower's behavior is contingent on so-called schemes. Schemes are cognitive processes and belief structures on which humans rely to reduce complexity and make sense of their surroundings (Eden/Leviatan 1975; Weiss/Adler 1981; Lord/Kernan 1987). They are simplified categorizations that ascribe certain characteristics to similar kinds of situations and groups of people (Lord/Foti/De Vader 1984). These ascriptions are grounded in Implicit Followership Theories (IFTs), being subjective assumptions, that are based on socialization and experiences (Levy/Chiu/Hong 2006). IFTs examine the implicit assumptions that leaders (or followers themselves) have about followers (Carsten et al. 2010;

Sy 2010). Leaders vary in their assumptions about which characteristics the stereotypical as well as the proto- and antiprototypical follower has/should have and how he or she behaves/should behave (e.g., Sy 2010; Epitropaki et al. 2013; Junker/van Dick 2014). However, these implicit assumptions are especially important when the leader has not known the follower for long, as the more both interact, the more the IFT's importance diminishes in favor of the actually made experiences with this follower (Raudenbush 1984). Thus, a leader interprets the perceived behavior of a follower based on his or her IFTs and on the experiences with this follower (e.g., Eden/Leviatan 1975; Fiske 1993; Whiteley/Sy/Johnson 2012).

However, a **leader's experience with a follower** does not necessarily have to be firsthand. As leaders usually have several followers and only possess limited time, the extent of personal, bilateral communication is often restricted (Kipnis/Cosentino 1969; Dansereau/Graen/Haga 1975; Whitaker/Dahling/Levy 2007). This stresses the importance of experiences, the leader does not make in person himself, but indirectly via third parties. This is why feedback, a leader receives about a follower is of importance (Goodwin/Wofford/Boyd 2000). This feedback adds to the leader's personal experiences with this follower (Lord/Kernan 1987).

Additionally, as has already been stated in the previous section, research has already shown the **importance of liking and performance** when it comes to the perceived behavior of followers (e.g., Wayne/Ferris, 1990; Wayne/Liden 1995; Dulebohn/Wu/Liao 2017). While liking is important in every human interaction, performance derives its importance from the work context. Usually leaders perceive a follower's behavior as more positive, if they feel liking for this follower and if the follower performs highly (e.g., Wayn/Liden, 1995).

Concerning the effect a **perceived behavior** has on the individual, extreme situations like extraordinarily positively or negatively perceived interactions usually have the strongest impact, as these extreme situations typically imply greater consequences (Taylor 1991). The effect is normally a bit stronger for especially negative situations than it is for especially positive ones (Taylor 1991).

6.4 Method

6.4.1 Procedure and participants

We used qualitative **interviews** due to their methodological strength in capturing (leaders') detailed, individual perceptions (Bryman/Stephens/à Campo 1996; Coyle 2016). The interviews were held in German, the interviewees' native language, and were conducted only by telephone. This was purposely done, because interviews via the telephone offer a higher social distance com-pared to personal interviews (Vogl 2013). On the one hand, this reduces potential biases due to facial expressions or other nonverbal communication (Ward/Gott/Hoare 2015). On the other hand, this can reduce the feeling of restraints and social pressure due to higher anonymity (Glogowska/Young/Lockyer 2011). As some leaders might perceive the influence of a follower as illegitimate because of the leader's higher hierarchical position (Hollander/Offermann 1990), we regarded these aspects as very important, even though the precise research interest was not explicitly named throughout the interviews.

To ensure a **heterogeneous sample**, we interviewed leaders of different age, different gender and from various industries and institutions. The requirements for being interviewed were that the participants had (1) currently or less than one year ago a disciplinary leadership position for (2) at least one year where he/she (3) led two or more followers. Because our study focusses on two interactions between the leader and one follower, we chose two followers as the minimum number while also enabling diversity by ensuring that there were several interactions due to the restriction of having leadership experience for at least one year.

The **leaders** were recruited via professional contacts and professional social networks. Because we had some difficulties recruiting female leaders, while also believing that they would add to the diversity of perceptions, we put extra emphasize on recruiting them by posting in specific female leadership social network groups. We interviewed one female leader who had been in her leadership position for just 11 months. This discrepancy to our requirement only became apparent after the interview. As the interview progressed as intended,

and there was therefore no difference in course compared to the other interviews, we decided to keep this interview in our analysis. In contrast, we also conducted one interview with a female leader who answered very monosyllabically, and, also after various inquiries refused to give more detailed answers thereby being systematically different from all other interviews. We therefore excluded this interview from our analysis.

The interviews were described generally as dealing with "the interactions between leaders and their employees" to avoid bias when revealing the uncommon perspective of our research interest. We used the term employee because in German everyday language there is no commonly used equivalent to the term "follower". Closest to "follower" would be "led employee" or "guided employee", terms that are unusual. However, there is an everyday understanding of what a follower and leader is. This understanding also fits the leader-follower definition of our study, being a disciplinary leader and his/her employees.

Several leaders agreed to participate in the interviews only if no company-specific information were collected, so we did not systematically collect information on the industrial background. We saw this as no obstacle, as our focus is on the individual perception, not on the formation of perception, being driven by for instance having been socialized in a specific industrial context. Nevertheless, we chose leaders from different organizations to increase the possibility of diverse perceptions. This is why all but two of the interviewees were from different organizations, and the two leaders from the same organization worked in separate locations, therefore also offering variety.

The final **sample** consisted of six female and fifteen male leaders. The average leader in our sample is 45,7 years old (median: 50 years), leads 35 followers (median: 15 followers), has been in his current position for approximately five years and two months (median: 4.0 years), and spends approximately 38 percent of his working time in direct interaction with his subordinates (median: 30 %). One leader had been retired for less than a year and stated this information for his last occupational position. The interviews were conducted from July 2018 to April 2019 and took an average of 40 minutes.

The **interview guide** was structured as follows: First, the leaders were asked two broad questions about their occupations and their everyday work to "break the ice". Thereafter, they were asked to describe an interaction between themselves and one employee that had taken place at work and that they had perceived especially positively. Leaders were explicitly suggested to take some time to identify an interaction to ensure that they really chose a particular situation and one they had a profound memory of. We limited their choice of interaction to one in the workplace with just one employee to reduce confounding factors. Leaders were then asked to describe the interaction in detail (e.g., "How did the interaction come about?" "How did you perceive the behavior of this follower?"). Next, the leaders were asked to describe the impact this interaction had on them and how they dealt with this impact (e.g., "What was going on in your mind during this interaction?" "If you had a similar interaction with this follower again, how would you (re)act?"). Subsequently, the leaders described their so far experiences they had had with the employee. If they had also already experienced an interaction similar to the just stated one, they were asked to describe it and state the similarities and differences between the two interactions. Then leaders were asked to leave the interaction and just focus on the follower, their experiences with this person, and whether others had provided feedback about him or her (e.g., "Have you ever received feedback concerning this follower's behavior and/or performance from any third-party?" "If so, what was the feedback like?"). Hereafter, an anonymous code for the described follower was generated. This code was needed to enable the assignment of questions concerning the follower in an additional online survey, sent to the leaders one week after the interviews. This marked the ending of the questions concerning the especially positively perceived interaction.

Then, the leaders were asked to describe an interaction that they had perceived as especially negative. The same questions, starting with the description of the interaction and ending with the generation of a second code, were therefore asked anew.

Finally, the leaders were asked whether they wanted to add something on- or off-topic that they thought might be relevant to the topic of the interview. After this, the interview was completed.

The interviews were accompanied by **two short online surveys**. One was sent to the leaders prior to the interview containing demographic and leadership-related questions (e.g., number of employees supervised). Moreover, leaders were asked for their IFTs ("Please think of the ideal/opposite of an ideal follower. In your opinion, which characteristics should such a follower have?") using Sy's (2010) eighteen items for Prototype-Followers and Anti-Prototype-Followers. The items were translated by one researcher and were then back-translated by a bilingual German-English native speaker. The second online survey, sent to the leaders one week after the interviews, asked them to assess the performance of the followers mentioned in the interviews as well as to indicate how much sympathy they felt for them. Blank spaces were provided for these answers to keep the answers open and individual. We delayed these questions to one week after the interview to avoid the high possibility of bias when stating performance and sympathy while having just described a particular positively or negatively perceived interaction. Moreover, the second survey again included the questions on Followership-(Anti-)Prototypes, as there is uncertainty about the permanence of these IFTs (Sy 2010).

6.4.2 Data analysis

Interviews were transcribed and then analyzed using the **Gioia methodology** because it allows the content of the interviews to be approached openly but in a structured and therefore comprehensible way (Gioia/Corley/Hamilton 2013). In a first step, first-order concepts were assigned to statements in the interviews using codes close to the original wording in the interviews. In a second step, second-order themes were assigned to the first-order concepts. These themes go beyond the wording in the interviews and allow researchers to bring in their knowledge. In a third step, the second-order themes were condensed to aggregate dimensions, which reveal the connections and relationships between the second-order themes. Apart from the assignment of the first-order concepts, the attribution of the second-order themes and the formation of the aggregate dimensions were iterative processes that included circles of going back and forth within the interviews and the recurrent adjustment of themes and dimensions. Table 6.1 shows coding examples that illustrate our approach.

first order concept	second order theme	aggregate dimension
• employee does not listen • employee remains inactive • employee only shrugs his/her shoulders	passive follower behavior (ignorance)	(perceived) follower behavior
• employee insists on his/her view • employee is not willing to reflect his/her behavior • employee blames others	unregenerate follower behavior (ignorance)	
• sleepless nights due to worries • stomachache due to thoughts • emotional drain leading to many thoughts	negative effect on mood with physical consequences	impact of (perceived) follower behavior
• feeling of joy • pleasant feeling • feeling of contentment	positive emotion	

Tab. 6.1: Coding examples based on the GIOIA methodology

While our analysis and the derived results have a subjective nature, we aim to prove the **rigor of this study**. By justifying our procedure and methodology plus giving multiple, specific examples of quotes and the associated coding, we endeavor to make our procedure as transparent and comprehensible as possible. This is also why when giving quotes and describing different dimensions and patterns of interactions in the following sections, we will also state the corresponding leaders (e.g., L1). Overall, this is to ensure the trustworthiness in our results, the key component of valuable qualitative research (Pratt/Kaplan/Whittington 2020).

6.5 Results

6.5.1 Overview of interactions, leader's characteristics, follower's characteristics, and follower's impact on leaders

We first provide an overview of the interactions, leader's characteristics, follower's (perceived) characteristics and follower's (perceived) impact on leaders that our investigation revealed. To do so, we will point out our identified aggregate dimensions. All these dimensions are going to be covered in the following result sections. Figure 6.1 shows the identified (aggregate) dimensions in summary and, given in brackets behind the dimensions, the result section which mainly covers it. We found two aggregate dimensions, leaders

consistently showed in their descriptions of both positive and negative interaction: (1) leader's primarily considered perspective and (2) leader's attempt to understand the follower's behaviors. We therefore labelled them as being context-independent.

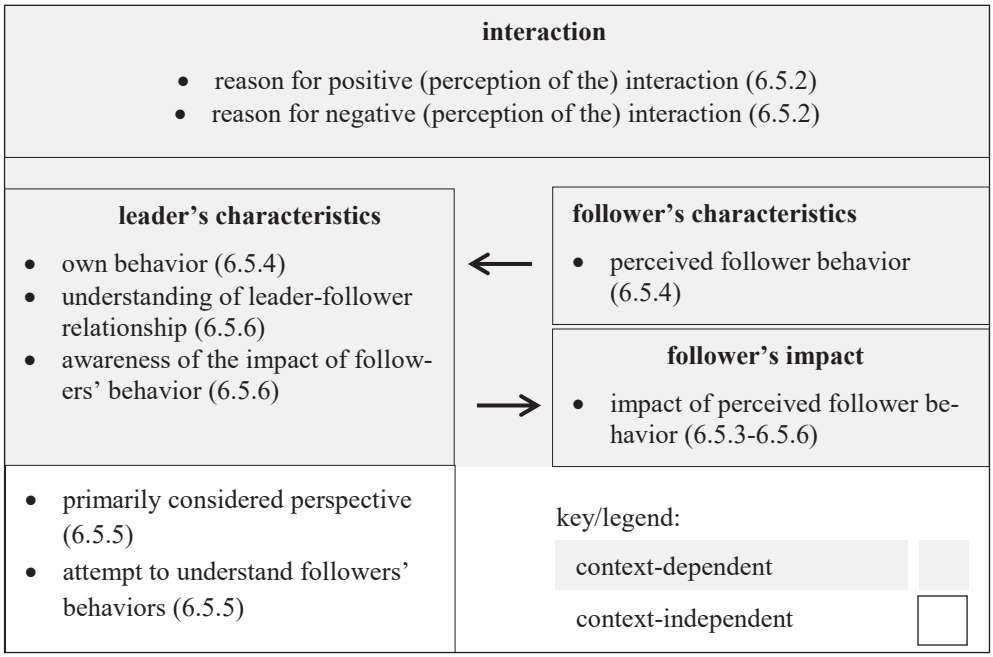


Fig. 6.1: Identified (aggregate) dimensions concerning interactions, leader's characteristics, follower's characteristics, and follower's impact

In section 6.5.2 we look at the interactions the leaders chose when describing an interaction they perceived as particularly positive or negative. We are therefore going to state the reasons for the positive/negative (perception of the) interaction.

In section 6.5.3 we reveal the variety of impact of the perceived follower behavior on leaders. All subsequently following sections (6.5.4-6.5.6) will also deal with the impact of the perceived follower behavior as this is our main research interest.

In section 6.5.4 we take a closer look at two interactions, one positively and one negatively perceived, that were both striking because they let to a series of following interactions with similar patterns. We are thereby especially going to look at how the leaders perceived the follower's behavior and how the leaders behaved themselves.

In section 6.5.5, we derive two leader extreme types of perception, the "empathetic leader" and the "self-centered leader". These two leader extreme types differ substantially in their primarily considered perspective and their attempt to understand followers' behaviors.

Finally, in section 6.5.6 we consider the context-dependent understanding of the leader-follower relationship as that of "equal partners". We examine how this understanding affects the leader's awareness of the impact of followers' behavior and thereby also the intensity of that impact.

6.5.2 Reasons for a positive or negative perception of the interaction

The reason for positive (perception of the) interaction and the reason for negative (perception of the) interaction include two aspects at once: the reason for the interaction (either a conversation or a short-termed or longer termed situation) and the reason for the positive or negative perception of the interaction (e.g., bad performance of the follower).

We identified one positive and one negative reason that were leader-centric, meaning that the leaders did not perceive the interactions positively/negatively due to a follower's behavior, but due to the **leader's own behavior**. The positive interaction we identified as leader-centric was a conversation with a follower the leader had anticipated would be difficult but that he mastered nonetheless, that is to say he achieved his intended goal of the conversation (conversation in which the leader sees him/herself as having mastered a challenging situation; L3, L7, L8, L11, L17, L19):

> "It was a challenging situation for me because I appreciate the employee, but I don't think she meets the requirements of this talent program. […], and I take that as a positive example because, in this conversation, I managed to keep her motivated [...] and we are still working very, very well together today." (L7)

The negative one was exactly the opposite: a conversation in which the leader did not succeed in reaching the goal of the conversation (conversation in which leader sees him/herself as having failed; L10, L17, L18):

> "I failed to convince the employee that this [career move offered] was the right decision." (L17)

All other reasons for positive or negative (perception of the) interaction were (mainly) based on the **follower's behavior**. Concerning the positive ones, there were three other manifestations. One was a situation where leader and follower had worked together as a team and had achieved a satisfying result (successful teamwork of leader and follower, L1, L2, L10):

> "Like in the movie, good cop, bad cop. I was the bad cop, he was the good cop. [...] and that we finally came to the conclusion that we wanted to come to." (L10)

Then there were situations in which the follower **successfully executed a challenging task** with a high degree of autonomy (situation revealing autonomous, successful task completion of the follower; L9, L21). A situation in this context was usually a longer enduring task, due to the challenging character of the task:

> "That he also gets the freedom of choice, a freedom that he has used. And that he led this team really well during my absence." (L21)

Finally, a situation was positively perceived due to the follower's doing more than he/she was expected to do (situation revealing **personal initiative** of the follower; L4, L5, L13, L14, L15, L18, L20). A situation could thereby be a one-time incident, or a longer enduring timespan, where the follower performed above the expected. Overall, this was the by far most frequently stated reason for a positively perceived interaction:

> "The positive [...] is the 'proactive'. So that he practically also did more, as had actually been expected at first." (L14)

Since both the autonomous, successful task completion as well as the follower's personal initiative usually caused a series of subsequent (positively perceived) interactions, we have a look at these in section 6.5.4.

Concerning reasons for negative (perception of the) interaction, there were two remaining manifestations that also dealt with the follower's behavior. One was a situation in which the follower had an **emotional outburst** that affected other colleagues (situation where follower has an emotional outburst with impact on the collective; L4, L7). The impact on colleagues is notable, as no leader described an emotional outburst that affected only him/herself:

> "[...] because the colleague was so concerned [...] with her emotional feelings that it was actually no longer possible for the whole group to concentrate on the things we had set out to do." (L7)

Ultimately, the most frequently stated reason for a negative (perception of the) interaction was a conversation about a follower's **bad performance**. This bad performance could be low quality and/or delayed task completion, or bad performance-related behavior, such as unannounced absences (conversation about the follower's bad performance (-related behavior)). The conversation was either about a one-time incident (L1, L2, L13) or the culminating conversation in a series of regular conversations, also called "escalation/stress discussion" (L3, L5, L6, L8, L9, L11, L15, L19, L20, L21). As the latter is a very frequent and complex observation we made, we address this specific interaction and its consequences in detail in the upcoming section 6.5.4.

Table 6.2 sums up the identified reasons for leader's positive or negative perception of the interaction.

focus	positive perception	negative perception
leader's behavior	conversation in which leader sees himself as having…	
	… successfully mastered a challenging situation	… failed
leader's and follower's behavior	successful teamwork of leader and follower	
follower's behavior	situation revealing follower's…	situation where follower has an emotional outburst with impact on the collective
	… autonomous, successful task completion … personal initiative	conversation about the follower's bad performance (-related behavior)

Tab. 6.2: Reasons for leader's positive or negative perception of the interaction

6.5.3 Diversity of follower's impact on leaders

We discovered that the followers' behaviors affected leaders on an emotional, attitudinal and behavioral level. Concerning the **emotional impact**, we detected emotional effects based on an affect, such as feelings of joy or anger. Moreover, there were emotional mood effects, for instance a feeling of frustration. Mood effects implied a longer duration of the emotion than the short-

timed affect. Finally, we also identified effects on mood with physical consequences. These being the most extreme emotional impact, as sleepless nights due to worries:

> "[...] I had a sleepless night or two [thinking about the experienced behavior of a follower]." (L6)

Regarding the **attitudinal impact**, leader's either saw their attitude confirmed by a follower's behavior, reflected their attitude, this means they scrutinized their own attitude, or changed their attitude:

> "Before this situation, I assumed that it was my actions that determined how I dealt with the employees, whether we would be successful afterwards or not. And she taught me a little that this is not always the case." (L11)

The attitudinal impact could be related only to the specific follower in the interaction (individually), or to followers in general (occupational collective), as seen above, or it could, in the most intense way, even leave the occupational context and create a global change in the leader's attitude:

> "[the experience with this follower] inci[ted] me to think differently, to respect other ways of thinking and to critically examine my own opinion." (L10)

With regard to the **behavioral impact**, the leader either maintained his/her behavior (no change), changed his/her behavior individually (regarding the specific follower whose behavior was perceived), or changed his/her behavior occupational collectively, meaning towards a group of employees:

> "[...] that I'm more critical on probation, with new employees." (L5)

Finally, the last kind of impact was the impact on **occupational effort**. Occupational effort (with the particular follower) was usually somewhere between very low/far below average and massive/far above average. We will stress this component in the following results section.

Table 6.3 summarizes the different levels of impact, a follower's behavior could have on leaders.

intensity / level of impact	low		high
emotional	affect	mood	mood with physical consequences
attitudinal	confirmation	reflection	change
	individual, occupational collective, global		
behavioral	no change	individual change	occupational collective change
occupational effort	low/far below average		massive/far above average

Tab. 6.3: Diversity of follower's impact on leaders

6.5.4 Patterns in positively or negatively perceived interactions

We took a closer look at the positively perceived interactions in which the follower had shown personal initiative or autonomous, successful task completion as well as the negatively perceived interactions based on an escalation/stress discussion. We found that these interactions caused a series of following interactions that had **similar patterns**. Figure 6.2 shows this pattern for the interactions initiated by the follower's personal initiative and autonomous, successful task completion. The impact of perceived follower behavior on the leaders is depicted in the grey boxes.

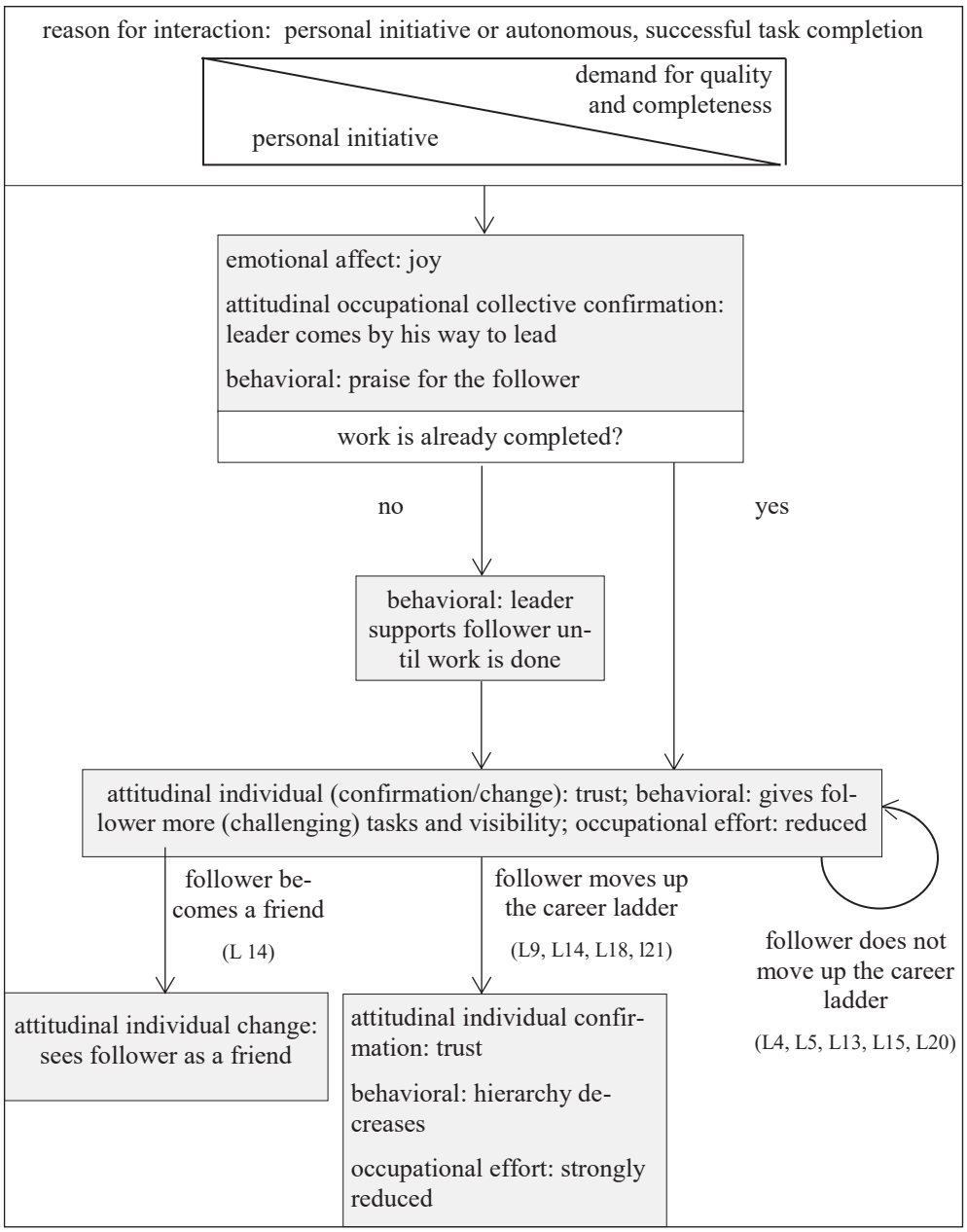


Fig. 6.2: Similar pattern of a positively perceived interaction, based on personal initiative respectively autonomous, successful task completion

The **pattern of the positively perceived interaction** in which a follower showed personal initiative is similar to the pattern in which a follower showed autonomous, successful task completion. The only difference is that leaders varied in their demand for quality and for the degree of task completion. If a follower showed personal initiative, the work did not need to be completely elaborated or done. For instance, one leader praised the follower's initiative

going “beyond the end of the [follower’s] nose.” (L4) while adding that “Even if I didn't quite like some things, they weren't quite thought through yet.” (L4).

During the interactions in which the personal initiative/successful task completion was revealed, leaders were affected on emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral levels. Leaders felt joy and moreover sometimes saw their follower’s high-quality work/personal initiative as a confirmation of their leadership style: “Well, you did not do everything wrong with your employees.” (L4). Furthermore, leaders always praised the follower’s behavior: “Then, of course, I praised her tremendously.” (L20). Such appraisal could, based on the context, be interpreted as having two main reasons: to mirror the joy the leader felt by showing contentment and appreciation, and to keep the follower motivated and encourage similar behavior in the future. If the work had not been completed yet (as stated that was just the case when follower’s showed personal initiative), leaders supported their followers until the work was done, sometimes even to the extent that they completed the work themselves.

Based on this whole experience, leader’s confidence in the follower’s abilities and overall **trust** evolved. If a leader had not felt trust for this particular follower before, such trust was newly generated. If the leader already trusted the follower, the feeling of trust was deepened, leading the leader to delegate more (challenging) tasks to this follower: “(…) of course, you have greater confidence in the employee to entrust him with difficult tasks.” (L5). At the same time, the leader also reduced his or her own occupational effort due to this trusted follower: “So there is little control required (…) there's little need for correction.” (L15).

Moreover, leaders sometimes gave their followers more opportunities for visibility by presenting their done work to colleagues or customers, resulting in some **followers’ moving up the career ladder** to become, for instance, deputy to the leader. Such promotions further decreased the leader’s occupational effort. Some work could be shared or done together, causing leaders to feel more relaxed and allowing them at the same time to handle more tasks than before: “(It) made me a bit more relaxed, calmer, because I knew someone was there. (...) I no longer had to keep everything under control alone. It certainly gave us the opportunity to do more things than I could have done on

my own." (L20). Aside from professional aspects, such trust also enriched the leader on a human level because the chemistry between the leader and the follower was usually good: "That simply enriched me a bit in human terms when someone nice, so committed with the same goals is at my side." (L20). This "enrichment in human terms" was felt especially by one leader whose relationship to the follower entered the private sphere: "I can't hide the fact that he's now one of my closer friends." (L14).

Overall, the **reoccurring theme** in this pattern of interactions related to facets of the leader's trust in the follower: First, the leader's trust in the follower's abilities. Second, the leader's trust that the follower would execute the assigned tasks according to the leader's expectations without being extensively controlled. Third, the leader's trust that the follower would not act in a way that was harmful to the leader (or the organization), which is sometimes also referred to as loyalty. The importance of this last facet of trust was especially stressed when the follower became deputy to the leader, thereby approaching the leader in hierarchy and becoming potentially more threatening. We discuss this major theme of trust in the discussion section.

Figure 6.3 shows the pattern of a **negatively perceived interaction** based on an escalation/stress discussion. As already stated, an escalation/stress discussion was a conversation about repeatedly bad performance (-related behavior) with the aim of encouraging the follower to improve his or her performance. What was common to all leaders was their discomfort with these conversations: "So basically, I didn't feel really good about it myself." (L5). During the conversation, followers tended to react to the leader's demand for improved performance in one of two ways: (1) promising to improve or (2) showing ignorance by, for instance, not acknowledging their poor performance or even actively denying it.

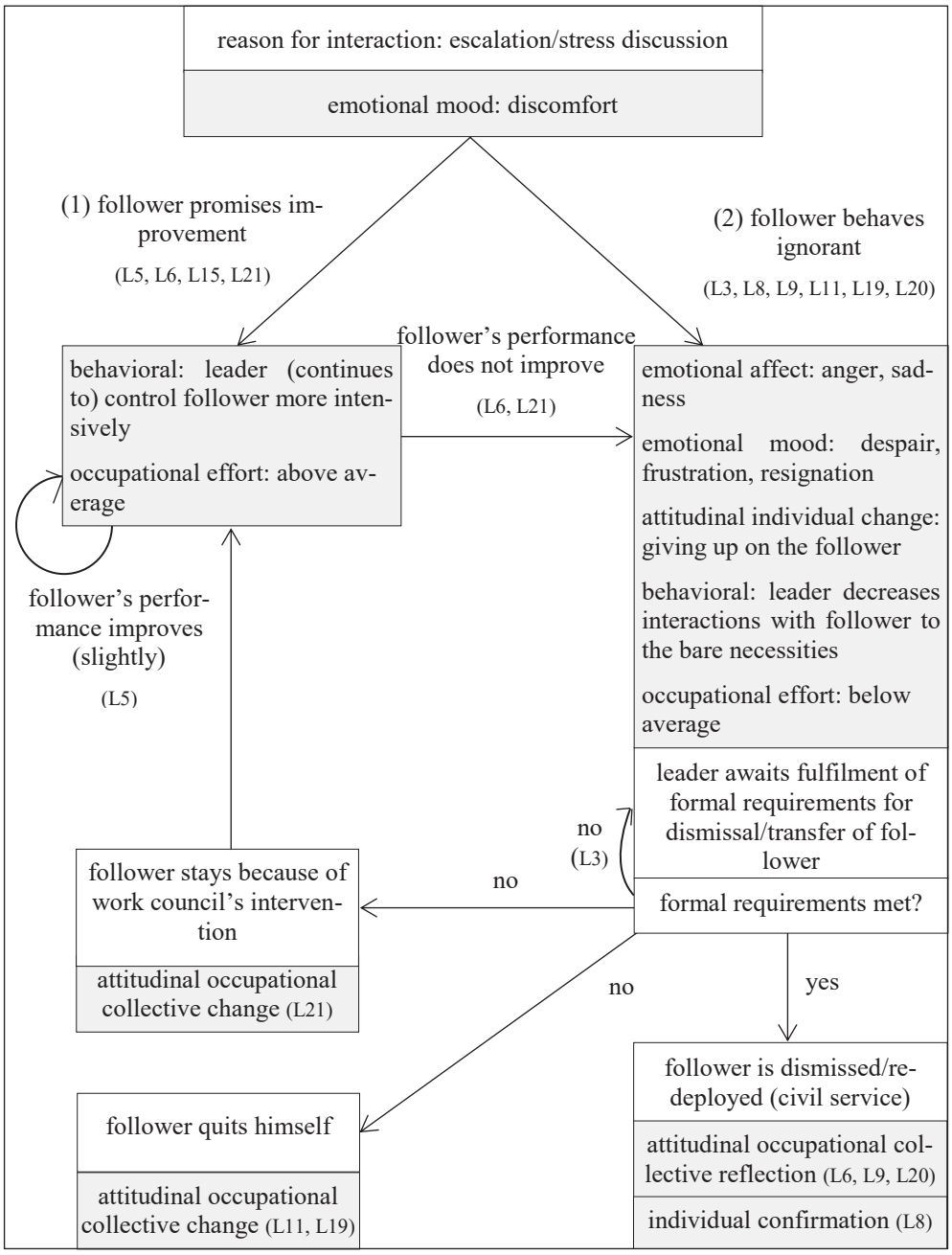


Fig. 6.3: Pattern of a negatively perceived interaction, based on an escalation/stress discussion

(1) If a **follower promised to improve**, the leader continued to control the follower more intensively in order to check on his or her performance. Continued, because the follower had already been controlled intensively before, as the escalation/stress discussion had been the culminating point in the follower's repeatedly bad performance. Leaders experienced above-average occupational effort as a result: "Yes at least three times as high, I would say, as with other employees. Maybe even five times as high." (L21). If the follower's performance improved (slightly), the leader still maintained this high

level of control. However, a follower's performance did not always improve. When performance did not improve, leaders felt and reacted in the same way they did when a follower showed ignorance during the escalation/stress discussion.

(2) The **follower's ignorant behavior** led the leader to feel anger and sadness because of the impasse, causing despair, frustration, and resignation, which resulted in the leader's giving up on the follower: "(…) so I have to be honest with you, I've more or less given up on her [the follower] by now, (…)" (L3). Because the leader had given up, he or she reduced the number of interactions with the follower. Therefore, leaders kept their occupational effort with this follower to a minimum by interacting with them only when there was real necessity and keeping these interactions as short as possible: "So I tried to stay professional (…) but apart from that I also tried to keep my distance a bit more than from other employees." (L11). This led to below-average occupational effort for the leader. Leaders were just waiting for the chance to dismiss this follower, a move that always had formal requirements that needed some time to be met. Meanwhile, the follower either quit himself, or when time had passed and the requirements were met, the follower was dismissed or redeployed (if a dismissal was not legally possible).

What was noticeable was what happened when the formal requirements for dismissal could not be met. In our findings, this was due to the intervention of the work council, a German institution that represents employees' interests. The leader then controlled the follower intensively again, leading to constantly high occupational effort for the leader. This was most probably because there was no way for the leader to avoid this follower and his or her poor performance. The leader had to accept that the follower would remain on his/her team and so was forced to keep an eye on his/her performance.

Regarding the impact these whole series of interaction had on the leaders, they always perceived an **attitudinal occupational collective impact**, so the impact referred to followers in general. Some leaders perceived an attitudinal change (L11, L19, L21), stating for instance that "I had to learn that there are employees where even with the best of wills and good words, very little improvement can be achieved." (L21). Or they reflected on their own behavior (L6, L9, L20): "(…) that I was wondering: Wait, stop, are you asking too

much? (…) Or is it really just this person? (…) you could also reflect yourself a bit on the situation." (L20). However, one leader (L8) just saw his already existing opinion of the bad performing follower confirmed (individually conforming), which was the smallest stated impact by far. We address the leader characteristics that may account for this very low perceived impact in the next section.

6.5.5 Two leader extreme types of perception: the empathetic and the self-centered leader

Given perception's complexity and strong dependence on contextual factors (e.g., van Seters/Field 1990), we used interactions whose circumstances were similar to explore whether leaders differed concerning the impact, perceived follower behavior had on them. By using the experience of the escalation/stress discussion, we were able to employ the largest amount of data and to draw on a negatively perceived interaction, given the advantage that negative interactions usually have stronger effects than positive ones do (Taylor 1991).

As extreme types of perception should be situationally stable, to really detect types and no extreme circumstances or situations, we systemized the leaders using the two largely situation-stable dimensions, leaders' primarily considered perspective and leaders' attempt to understand followers' behaviors.

We found that two leaders, L8 and L15, were two opposite extreme types of perception. We labelled one the **"self-centered" leader** (L8), whereas we labelled the other one the "empathetic" leader (L15). The "self-centered" leader's attempt to understand followers' behavior is barely existing. When we asked this leader why the follower behaved the way he did in the escalation/stress discussion, the leader reacted by saying "That's a really good question. [...] I can't even answer why, for what reason, how come he acts like that.", implying that he had never thought about why his follower behaved like that. One also needs to consider, that an explicit question concerning why a follower behaved the way he did, was not necessary in any other interview. Leaders always included, unrequested, at least one reason for the followers' behavior in their description of the interactions. Additionally, the escala-

tion/stress discussion had been the culminating point in a series of conversations. In this case "[It's] probably been the fifth or sixth conversation [...].". Therefore, this leader had several chances to understand the follower's behavior, bud he never tried. This "self-centered" leader's primary perspective was solely his own, leading to statements such as "Well, for one thing, it's not an employee I think is helping me implement the strategy. [...] Well, I won't get anywhere with him.". These statements show that this leader views followers as tools, rather than human beings with individual motives and needs. The impact the perceived follower behavior had on this leader was marginal: "[...] I came to the conclusion that the feedback I received in advance was correct [that this follower is reluctant to change], and that this employee cannot and must not play any role in the future of this organization." (L8). The leader viewed this interaction as confirmation of his already existing picture of this follower and as an underpinning of his intention to dismiss this follower.

The **"empathetic" leader** (L15), however, showed a completely different behavior and perception. The leader's attempt to understand the follower's behavior was extensive. When describing the interaction, the leader explained various reasons for the follower having shown bad performance-related behavior (too many absences and below-average productivity). He stated that the follower had secondary employment and a mother in need of care. This leader argued a lot from the follower's perspective, calling his reasons for the absences "understandable" under these circumstances. Most striking was that the empathetic leader stated that "Of course, you think about it three times: father of two children, if I kick him out, someone who has also passed fifty, who will never find a job again—what do you do with a colleague like that?". Although this follower caused an extra amount of work in the form of extra supervision and guidance, the empathetic leader still put the follower's perspective first, hesitating to consider this follower for dismissal. Concerning the impact of perceived follower's behavior, this leader did not only state a work-related one, like the additional amount of effort when dealing with this follower, but also one that affected him as a person, independent from the work context: "It's a personal burden, of course!", this leader stated when explaining the possibility of dismissing this follower. Thus, the thoughts the

empathetic leader had concerning this follower, affected the leader on a private, personal level and were not bound only to the occupational sphere.

One factor that may have accounted for the contrasting perceptions of the empathetic leader and the self-centered leader is **whether the leader liked the follower**. We accounted for this possibility through our survey fielded to the interviewers one week after the interviews. The self-centered leader stated that “I respect him [this follower], but I don't take to him.”, whereas the empathetic leader stated: “The relationship is not marked by any particular aversion, but there is no particular sympathy either.” (L15). These two statements are similar and dismiss the possibility of a different perception based on individual aversion to or affection for the follower.

To stress why we consider the dimensions we chose to be **largely situationally stable**, we want to point to the self-centered and empathetic leaders’ description of the positively perceived interaction. While the self-centered leader in his description also primarily considered his own perspective which became apparent by statements such as: “She has a similar mentality to me.” or “[…] I have positive experiences, positive experiences also in the sense of "My expectations are met", that I prefer to work with someone like that rather than with someone where it is rather difficult to achieve what I want to achieve.”, the empathetic leader still put the follower’s perspective first: “But with this employee […] I had to point out to him from time to time that he should please think of himself and allow himself a little more free time.”. Regarding the empathetic and self-centered leaders’ attempt to understand the follower’s behavior both situations did not offer a specific reason for the leaders to question their follower’s behavior, because in these situations there was no misunderstanding or the like. The empathetic leader described a situation revealing personal initiative of the follower (see 6.5.2). As the follower’s personal initiative led to good work results and did not cause any problems, misunderstandings or need for corrections, apart from the before mentioned advice to the follower to think about himself/herself and his/her free time, there was no need to try to understand the follower’s behavior. Regarding the described positively perceived interaction of the self-centered leader, it was a situation the leader had anticipated to be difficult but where he reached his intended aim nonetheless (conversation in which the leader sees him/herself

as having mastered a challenging situation, see 6.5.2). It was a conversation where the leader needed to find a solution that fitted the follower's and his interest. He had expected the interests to be very different but then discovered that they were not. A questioning of the follower's behavior was therefore not necessary.

However, there were pairs of positively and negatively perceived situations that both allowed for an observation of leader's attempt to understand followers' behavior. All other leaders who had described conversation(s) in which [they saw themselves] as having mastered a challenging situation (L3, L11, L19) and had by coincidence also all described a negative situation due to an escalation/stress discussion were suitable for this investigation. This was because in contrast to the self-centered leader's situation, where the problem virtually disappeared because he had misjudged the difficulty of the situation in advance, in the other situations there were actual problems that needed to be solved. This made attempts to understand followers' behavior useful and therefore also occurring. These three leaders who described such situations (L3, L11, L19) will be addressed in the following segment. While we will stick our presentation of findings to the negatively perceived situation of an escalation/stress discussion for reasons of complexity, we want to point out that their assignment with regard to their attempt to understand followers' behavior was consistent for both situations. However, we will come back to this dimension and its implication in the discussion section of this paper.

We positioned the self-centered leader and the empathetic leader in a **matrix of leader types of perception**, shown in Figure 6.4. As these two leaders are contrary extremes, they are located at two opposite quadrants of the matrix. Furthermore, we positioned all other leaders who had described an escalation/stress discussion in the matrix. All leaders are placed in the center of the quadrats. This is to depict that the absolutely exact position in the matrix is not vital, but the assignment to the manifestations of the two dimensions is, as the placement in the matrix nevertheless requires a certain degree of abstraction (Collier/LaPorte/Seawright, 2008). To further stress this degree of abstraction, the lines in the matrix are dashed and there are overlaps in the quadrants regarding the intensity of impact of perceived follower behavior on the leader.

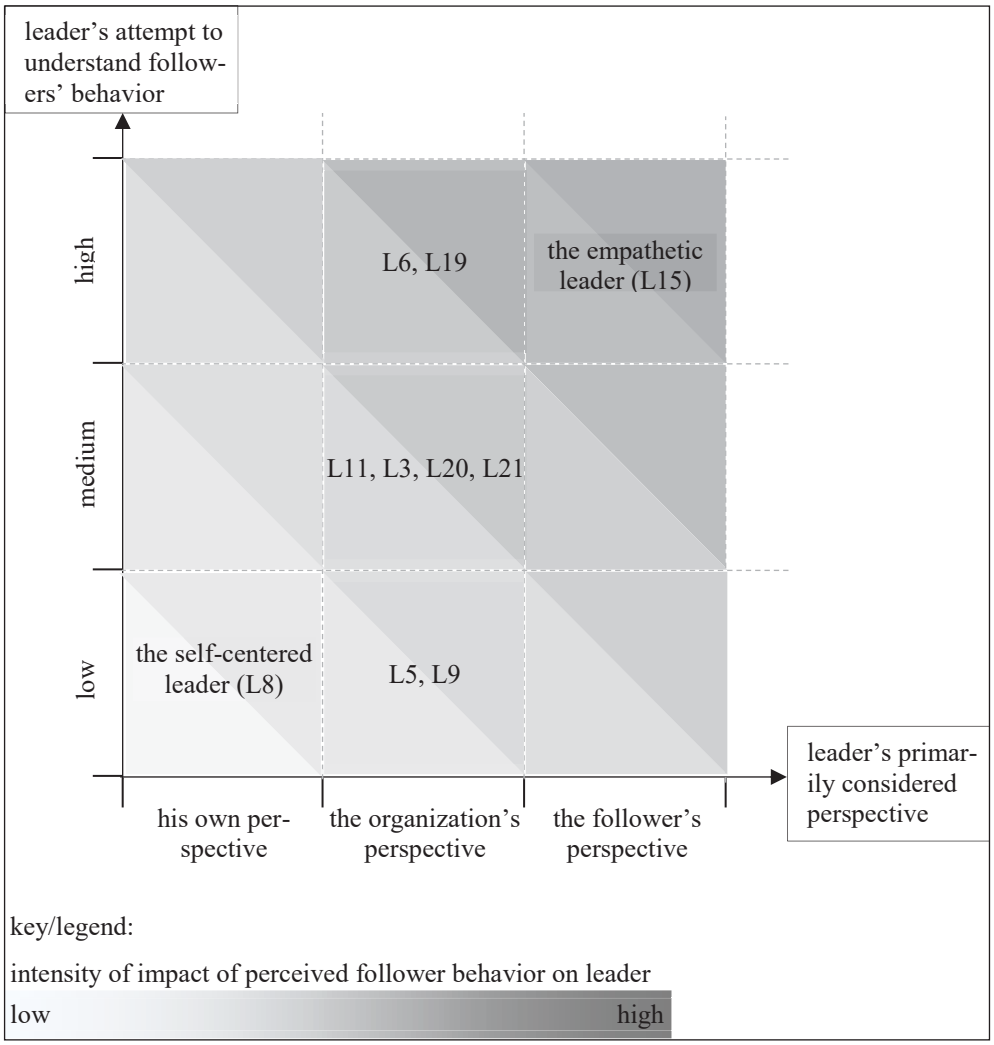


Fig. 6.4: Different leader types of perception

All remaining leaders were assigned to the **organization's perspective**. Since leaders do not interact with followers as private persons but as persons in the leader role in a professional context, it is not surprising that most leaders argued based on this perspective. The perspective was revealed by statements such as: "Well, for me the work of the people is of course always the most important thing." (L3).

The organization's perspective is also what primarily distinguishes L6 and L19 from the empathetic leader. As the empathetic leader did, these two leaders extensively tried to understand followers` behavior. This became apparent by wanting "[...] to hear from him first of all reasons why, for what reason, how come?" (L6), and then probing further by continuing to ask " [...] why is that? Do you have any problems there? Or can you get help somewhere if you

can't cope with any appointments or anything else?" (L6), besides also considering private circumstances like "[...] liv[ing] at a distance for a while with his girlfriend [...]" (L19). Nevertheless, overall the consideration of the organization's perspective dominated the consideration of the follower's perspective. This can be summarized by "[...] at some point in time, you really have to disregard all those personal things that the employee has and say what is for the good of the company as a whole." (L19).

Leaders with a **medium attempt to understand the followers` behavior** were characterized by on the one hand trying to understand the follower's behavior by for instance "[...] ask[ing] her why and for what reason." (L3). On the other hand, these leaders did not get a full picture of the reasons for that behavior, leaving some aspects still unclear like "whether she did not want this [necessity of obeying certain rules] or whether she really did not understand it, I cannot really say, [...]" (L3).

Leaders with a **low attempt to understand the followers' behavior** did not really get to why the follower showed this (low-performing) behavior: "[…] but for some reason [he] is not performing," (L5). However, these leaders did not relate the followers' behavior to themselves, as the self-centered leader did, but stuck to the organizations' perspective. This was evident through references to the organization's performance or closely related characteristics such as customer satisfaction: "[...] this is actually the most important characteristic, the customer satisfaction." (L9).

Concerning the **intensity of perceived impact** of follower behavior, as depicted in Figure 6.4, the two leaders with a low attempt to understand the followers' behavior experienced a rather minor impact compared to the other leaders that was also solely bound to the occupational sphere. It included reviewing the way of explaining tasks to followers while coming to the conclusion that overall the explanations work (L9, no behavioral change, see now and in the following 6.5.3 for the designations in italics), being a bit frustrated due to the low performance of the follower (L9, emotional mood impact), and being "[...] more critical on probation, with new employees." (L5). The latter one being an occupational collective change to a rather small group of employees, being thereby the most intense impact in this quadrant.

Leaders with a **medium attempt to understand follower's behavior** also expressed for instance attitudinal or behavioral occupational collective changes but to bigger, more general groups of employees: "So I may have had to learn that there are employees where, even with the best of wills and good words, very little improvement can be achieved." (L21) or "Before this situation, I assumed that it was my actions that determined how I dealt with the employees, whether we would be successful afterwards or not. And she taught me a little that this is not always the case." (L11). One leader also expressed effects on mood with physical consequences that touched the personal sphere: "[...] who also caused me a stomach ache." (L20).

The leaders with a **high attempt to understand the followers' behavior** described a rather high impact, with for example an occupational collective attitudinal and behavioral change that concerned the whole role as a leader: "[...] and he was just someone who undermined [my] role a lot and always tried to work against it, and so it was a very formative experience for me, because he actually helped me find my role and my point of view, [...]" (L19), and effects on mood with physical consequences which unambiguously left the occupational sphere and extended into the personal sphere "[...] ha[ving] a sleepless night or two [thinking about the experienced behavior of a follower]." (L6).

6.5.6 The most intensive impact: working together as equal partners

Nevertheless, when it comes to the impact of perceived follower behavior on leaders, we want to refer to another observation we made. We found three positively perceived leader-follower interactions in which the understanding of the leader-follower relationship was that of **equal partners** (L1, L2, L10):

> "[…] can be that I say, okay, I'm the one giving the instructions here now. But that's not how I looked at it at that moment, but how we interacted as a team." (L10)

> "So, in general, I had the feeling that we really worked together as partners, not necessarily like a manager or an employee, but rather, yes, like a team, where everyone makes a contribution." (L1)

> "[…] there wasn't any difference in the hierarchy or anything, but simply a collaborative work on the whole project." (L2)

The reason we add this observation is that these three leaders in these specific interactions expressed the most intense impact of perceived follower behavior across all interviews and all depicted interactions. Leader 10 stated that this interaction with his follower

> "[the experience with this follower] inci[ted] me to think differently, to respect other ways of thinking and to critically examine my own opinion." (L10).

This is a global attitudinal change that affects the work as well as the private sphere and has general implications for this leader when he or she interacts with other people.

Leader 1 and Leader 2 did not describe a global attitudinal change but something nevertheless entirely different from what all other interviewed leaders expressed:

> "And then he showed me how to approach things differently sometimes. For example, if we implement a new system here, [...]." (L1)

> "He communicates very clearly, so I can take a page from his book." (L2)

This is where the dimension **degree of perceived impact of the follower's behavior** comes into play. These two leaders perceived the followers as kinds of role models by stating that "he showed me" and "I can take a page from his book". This implies that both were well aware that these followers had an impact on them.

This observation indicates that, although an empathetic leader is most likely to experience a high impact of perceived follower behavior on him/herself, a cooperative non-hierarchical leader-follower relationship (within the still formally hierarchical relationship) seems to outdo this impact.

6.6 Discussion

We found that **personal initiative** was the primary reason for a positively perceived interaction. Research on prototypical and anti-prototypical IFTs has stressed the importance of personal initiative (Sy 2010, "goes above and beyond"), but to the best of our knowledge, these IFTs have not yet been ranked according to their significance. Our study indicates that personal ini-

tiative could be more important than other characteristics of followers. Followers primarily positively stood out from the crowd based on personal initiative, which reduced the leader's occupational effort and the associated, leading to reduced stress, amount of work and suchlike. Future research could explore the potential hierarchy in leaders' proto-/antiprototypical IFTs.

The importance of personal initiative also partly supports Kelley's (1988; 2008) conceptual work on followers. In Kelly's conceptual model of types of followers, "star followers" are the ideal followers, and one of their positive characteristics is initiative. Our study supports this view. Future research could examine other characteristics that Kelley considered, such as independent critical thinking (Kelley 1988; 2008), to determine whether Kelley's follower typology holds true empirically.

We also found that the main mechanism in the pattern of the positively perceived situation is likely to be **trust**. This trust was the outcome of the leader's experiences with the follower and thereby got developed over time. Our results hence meet the definition of "trust as an emergent state" (Burke et al. 2007, p. 609). This state of trust in the follower led the leader to for instance have positive emotions and reduced occupational effort because of less need for control. It also enhanced leader's willingness to delegate tasks to the follower and to help the follower climb the career ladder. Therefore, it could also result in even more occupational relief for the leader, when a follower became his or her deputy. However, this kind of trust has been examined primarily from the perspective of followers' trust in their leaders (e.g., Lapidot/Kark/Shamir 2007). How leader's trust in a follower can enhance positive emotions and such as from the leader's perspective, could be a promising line for future research. In such research, it could be fruitful to look at three facets of trust: leaders' trust in the followers' abilities, leaders' trust in the follower that he or she would perform to the leaders' expectations without extensive supervision, and leaders' trust that the follower will not treat the leader in a way that causes him or her harm (sometimes also called loyalty). Additionally, although loyalty is included in Sy's (2010) prototypical IFTs, the importance of trustworthiness in IFTs and its distinction from loyalty could generate further insights.

Concerning the negatively perceived interactions that are due to poor performance (-related behavior), Lowin and Craig (1968), Farris and Lim (1969), and Greene (1975) all indicated that the closeness of **supervision** as well as the degree of initiated structure are higher when a follower performs poorly. Although our investigation supports this finding for the most part, we found that supervision and, therefore, also structure remains high only when the leader has not given up on the follower. This finding stresses the importance of context when estimating the required amount of supervision and leader's occupational effort. Future research could also examine circumstances other than the work council's intervention (L21) that, from the leader's perspective, might prevent the follower from being dismissed, such as a shortage of skilled labor or the follower's personal connections within the organization. This research could then explore how the leader deals with this situation and how it affects him or her.

Regarding the negatively perceived interactions at the end of which the follower got dismissed, all leaders, apart from the self-centered leader, stated an attitudinal occupational collective reflection or change. This is according to our understanding a **high impact**, as it either led the leaders to question their own leader behavior or it led to a general change in estimating specific situations with followers or followers themselves. However, this finding does not fit Oc and Bashshur's (2013) conceptual work on leaders' and followers' social influence. They argued that a follower's social influence is high when he or she has strength (e.g., future potential to have power over the leader due to for instance possessing from the leader's view valuable resources like information or expertise), immediacy (e.g., frequent and close contact with the leader), and many sources of impact (e.g., a coalition of other followers who support the follower). In the interactions in which the poorly performing follower was finally dismissed, the follower had none of these characteristics. Nevertheless, the follower's behavior had a significant influence. One reason for this difference in our findings from those of Oc and Bashshur (2013) could be that they primarily considered behavioral and comparatively immediate effects. However, an attitudinal reflection or change needs time to develop and time to be made visible through the leader's subsequent behavior. Therefore, we encourage future research to take a closer look at long-term effects

that followers' behavior can have on leaders and to further explore the variety of attitudinal effects.

Overall, the fact that follower's behavior can affect a leader's behavior and his feelings in the work context has been little examined (e.g., Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). However, our study revealed a **richness of influence on emotional, behavioral, and attitudinal levels**. We also showed that a follower's impact is not necessarily bound to the occupational context but can affect the leader's private sphere if, for example, a leader experienced sleepless nights because of a follower's behavior, changed how he or she accepted other persons' opinions, or became personal friends with the follower. Although it is highly likely that effects on the private sphere are rare and only occur in extreme situations, future research could examine these. This is especially relevant as we saw that effects on the private sphere can be both, positive (new friendships) and negative (viewing dealing with a low performing follower as "a personal burden"). Particularly, negative effects on the private sphere could backlash at the occupational sphere, leading to reduced productivity and increased stress for the leader. Further studies could investigate how leaders can reduce potential negative effects of followers' behavior on their private spheres.

Regarding the **intensity of perceived impact of follower behavior**, we discovered that the two dimensions leader's attempt to understand followers' behavior and leader's primarily considered perspective may be suitable to explain differences in this. While we stated prove why we consider these dimensions to be situationally stable, it was not always possible to examine them in both described situations (see 6.5.5). To further prove the situational stability of the dimensions, future research should investigate them also in none-extreme situations as well as in conflict situations where a questioning of followers' behavior is by circumstance needed to solve the situation. Apart from that, a relational approach might be useful in further investigations.

The **lack of a strict hierarchy** was the main mechanism in determining the highest impact of follower's behavior on leaders. This means although the leader still formally possessed his superior hierarchical position, the situation did not lead the leader to execute the characteristics of this formal role. That

the hierarchy (or power)-relation between leader and follower is (despite their formal relationship) two-sided, has already been conceptually stressed (Collinson 2005). However, the leaders' age and leadership experience may have an additional stake in this. The leaders who perceived the strongest impact of their followers' behavior (see 6.5.6) were all young (a maximum of 31 years old), and had been in a leadership position for no more than three and a half years. Future research should therefore examine the impact of flat hierarchy with leaders, possessing different characteristics, for instance regarding age and leadership experience. This helps to clarify, whether working on a non-hierarchical level with a follower per se leads to the highest perceived impact, or whether hierarchy just is one component and other follower characteristics also foster the perception of a strong impact.

These follower characteristics lead us to another aspect. Our study focused on the leaders' perception of follower behavior, however not on the **formation of perception**, or in other words the underlying reasons for different perceptions. Apart from the aforementioned follower characteristics there are still plenty more options for future research regarding these underlying reasons. For instance research has shown that (followers') perceptions of the leader behavior (leadership style) are associated with an organization's culture (Liden et al. 2014). We believe that this also holds true for leaders' perception of followers' behavior especially since it has already been proven that an organization's culture affects leaders' perception (Ravasi/Schultz 2006). Future research could thereby for instance examine the role of an organization's culture in leaders' formation of perception of follower behavior.

In addition, we made two "side-findings" that are not at the center of this study. The first concerns the **consistency of IFTs**. As we described in the method section, we asked leaders at two points in time to state their prototypical and anti-prototypical IFTs. Only two leaders showed consistency in these. Research on IFTs is to date still scarce (for exceptions see: Carsten et al. 2010; Sy 2010; Junker/van Dick 2014). However, one study each on IFTs as well as Implicit Leadership Theories (ILTs) has pointed to the stability of these implicit theories (Epitropaki/Martin 2004; Sy 2010). Nevertheless, these findings of stability could be due to relatively steady circumstances in these studies (Junker/van Dick 2014), as research on ILTs has already extensively

proven their contextual dependence (e.g., Brodbeck et al. 2000; Dickson/Resick/Hanges 2006; van Quaquebeke/van Knippenberg/Eckloff 2011). This is why we join Junker and van Dick (2014) in their claim for a longitudinal, long-term investigation of IFTs (and ILTs) in various, changing contexts, like for instance followers or leaders who change workplaces.

The second "side-finding" has to do with two leaders (L12, L16) who, after several attempts, were unable to confine their discussion to a specific interaction with one follower but always fell back into general statements about their leadership behavior. One of these leaders even stated after the interview that he/she was happy to have had the opportunity to explain how leadership is handled in his/her organization, although this was neither the goal nor the topic of the interview. We interpret this outcome as an indicator that some leaders are unaware of the possibility that they might be affected by their followers. While we see why this might be the case (leaders might feel their power to be undermined), we think it is important to stress that a follower's effect can be manifold and does not have to be specifically occupational or based on hierarchy. To **raise leaders' awareness** that followers' behavior will affect them, whether they like it or not, might be sensible. Such higher awareness might for instance reduce leader's stress in negative interactions for reasons of being more conscious of different follower behaviors. Moreover, a higher awareness in positive interactions might, among other things, widen the leader's horizon to new perspectives. From our point of view, the most important lesson for leaders is not to put this kind of influence of follower's behavior on a level with hierarchical power. Although the degree of hierarchy and followers' impact on leaders are probably not completely independent (see 6.5.6), our findings also reveal various levels of influence when follower and leader work together in a "common" formal hierarchical relationship.

Regarding the overall focus of our study, we further want to reflect on our purposely chosen **one-sided view of leaders' perception** of their followers' behavior. This somehow separate and dichotomous stance in viewing the follower on the one side and the leader on the other side, has been criticized due to not meeting the complexity of leader-follower interactions (e.g., Collinson 2014; Collinson 2017). However, there is one important advantage in this

one-sided view: it "limit[s] and fix[es] [the] causal direction." (Collinson 2014, p. 39). This is exactly what we aimed to achieve. We see the massive imbalance regarding the enormous knowledge we have about leaders' behavioral impact on followers on the one hand and the very rare things we know about followers' behavioral impact on leaders on the other hand, as a valid reason to have used this one-sided approach.

Based on our study, we want to encourage future research to (of course) purposely **make use of this one-sided view** as long as the knowledge imbalance is still that massive. Our analysis shows that even this one-sided view is very complex and therefore needs to be considered in focus. Relational approaches have, however, made findings regarding the followers impact on the leader only in small side notes as for instance when noting that "The elected leader, for instance, frequently oscillated between being happy with followers' engagement and frustrated over their perceived passivity, […]" (Einola/Alvesson 2021, p. 853). While Einola's and Alvesson's research focus was just different (the dynamic relationship between leaders and followers in teams), we aim to stress with this example that both approaches have strengths and weaknesses and that we currently see the strength of the one-sided approach prevailing when focusing on followers' impact on leaders.

6.7 Limitations

As usual, our study has some limitations. We could not control for all factors that may have let to **biases in the leaders' descriptions** of the interactions. Although we tried to reduce biasing circumstances by conducting all interviews via the telephone and not revealing the uncommon perspective of our study (see 6.4.1), aspects such as the leader's mood during the interaction (Avramova/Stapel/Lerouge 2010) or the process of retrospection, the recall bias (Bruner 1987), may have distorted the leaders' descriptions. Moreover, and also probably the most prominent bias due to our research subject are potentially biased descriptions due to impression management of the leaders (Alvesson 2003). It is highly likely that no leader wanted to appear unfavorably, which might be the reason why no leader described a negatively perceived situation where he/she raised the voice or had clearly behaved wrong.

However, we nevertheless were presented a large variety of different situations and different extents by the leaders. We also critically examined the leaders depictions by for instance not labeling a leader as high in his/her attempt to understand followers' behavior when although having said to have extensively asked the follower for his reasons for behavior, he/she still showed lack of knowledge regarding the follower's behavior (see 6.5.5). However, if future research may be conducted on the two dimensions "leader's primarily considered perspective" and "leader's attempt to understand followers' behavior", this research may also consider the followers' view to reflect on the differences in the perceived behavior.

Our sample moreover consists only of German leaders, and **cultural differences** may affect how followers behave and how this behavior is perceived (Chen/Francesco 2000). More specifically, in Germany the leader-follower culture is characterized by a rather high performance orientation and at the same time a relatively high level of participation, being the leader's tendency to show participative behavior towards followers (Szabo et al. 2001; Gupta/Hanges/Dorfman 2002; Martin et al. 2013). Due to these contextual specificities, our results may not be transferred to other countries. There are also national differences in some context factors, such as the effect of the work council in section 6.5.4. Therefore, investigations in other national/cultural contexts would be useful.

Our observations are also based on a small sample. Moreover, though we followed a purposive sampling strategy, our sample also contains aspects of a **convenience sample**, due to having been generated via professional social networks and contacts (Robinson 2014). So, until proven with a much larger sample size, our findings need to be taken with caution and are not representative. This emphasizes another avenue for future research: As Carsten, Uhl-Bien and Huang (2018) already pointed out, validated quantitative instruments for exploring followership need to be developed. This is a prerequisite to determine whether our findings may be considered representative.

7 When do leaders feel stressed by their followers? An examination of face-to-face and virtual interactions[1] [2]

7.1 Introduction

Work **stress** can have negative implications for both individuals and organizations, including decreased job satisfaction, loss of motivation, and health-related issues on the individual level, and increased turnover, decreased productivity, and early retirements on the organizational level (e.g., Moreau et al. 2004; Donald et al. 2005; Podsakoff/LePine/LePine 2007; Nixon et al. 2011). Due to these manifold effects, research has been keen to investigate stressors in the workplace. Against this background, various determining factors have been investigated, for instance, work time, workload, and psychological demands (Stansfeld/Candy 2006; Bowling et al. 2015; Kivimäki et al. 2015).

However, stress in the workplace can also be caused by social interactions (Cartwright/Cooper 1997), such as those between leaders and their followers. Regarding the bilateral leader-follower interaction, one direction —leaders' behavioral impact on followers' perceived stress—has been researched intensively (e.g., Harms et al. 2017). This emphasis has been laid for profound reasons: Leaders, through their hierarchical position, directly influence followers' work environment, tasks and thus stress, for instance via the granting of autonomy (French/Raven 1959; Sparr/Sonnentag 2008; Bowling et al. 2015; Theorell et al. 2015). Moreover, leaders are usually followers themselves (e.g., Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019), making research on leaders' impact on followers' stress also applicable to some of their own interactions in the workplace.

Nonetheless, it is widely recognized that followers' behavior also affects leaders (e.g., Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018; Ford/Harding 2018; Einola/Alvesson 2021; Gesang/Süß 2021). However, to date empirical knowledge

[1] Dieser Beitrag ist in Zusammenarbeit mit Ingo Klingenberg und Stefan Süß entstanden. Die Anteile an diesem Beitrag betrugen etwa 50 % (Gesang) und 30 % (Klingenberg) und 20 % (Süß). Die Autorin der vorliegenden Arbeit war an der Konzeption der Studie, ihrer Durchführung, ihrer Auswertung sowie an der Diskussion der Ergebnisse maßgeblich beteiligt.

[2] Eine vorherige Fassung dieses Beitrags wurde auf der Jahrestagung der Wissenschaftlichen Kommission Personalwesen im VHB (WKPers) in Düsseldorf (16.09.2021) präsentiert.

about how **follower behavior affects leaders' stress** is scarce (for one exception see: Deluga 1991), although an examination of leaders' follower-induced stress is of value for several reasons: First, followers are a vital part of leaders' social interactions at work (e.g., Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019). Second, stress has been shown to affect decision-making and performance (Hunter/Thatcher 2007; Thompson 2010), making it particularly relevant in the work context to understand any potential source of stress. Third, high levels of leader stress have been associated with abusive supervision (Harms et al. 2017), which is related to increases in followers' emotional exhaustion (Han/Harms/Bai 2017), making leaders' stress and its causes also relevant to followers. Fourth, leaders' stress may also rub off on their followers, as has already been demonstrated for emotions and emotional contagion (Barsade 2002; Johnson 2008), making leaders' stress especially relevant when experienced in immediate interaction with followers.

Against this background, our **aim** is to investigate which of leaders' interactions with a follower leaders perceive as particularly stressful and why. For this purpose, we draw on interviews to capture detailed descriptions of the interactions as well as detailed explanations for why they are perceived as stressful. We consider three forms in which leaders typically interact with followers, namely face-to-face interactions (Graen/Hui 2001), virtual interactions via videotelephony, a form that has rapidly increased in importance since the outbreak of COVID-19 (Contreras/Baykal/Abid 2020), and e-mail communication (Rosen et al. 2019).

Our study offers several **contributions** to current research: First, it expands the to date scarce knowledge on the impact of followers' behavior on leaders (e.g., Oc/Bashshur 2013; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018) by examining which behaviors leaders perceived as stressful in which form of interaction (face-to-face, virtual, e-mail), and which consequences (e.g. emotional) result for leaders from these interactions. By doing so, this study secondly enriches research on the antecedents of leaders' stress by examining the so far under-researched social stressor follower (e.g., Harms et al. 2017). Third, it sheds light on followers' behavioral patterns that leaders perceive as stressful, thereby expanding research on followers' (context-dependent) behavioral patterns (e.g., Thacker/Wayne 1995; Wayne/Shore/Liden 1997). Forth, it

contributes to research on communication differences in face-to-face and virtual interactions by examining potential buffering as well as boosting effects of social proximity and social distance in the leader-follower interaction (e.g., Zimmermann/Wit/Gill 2008).

The paper is structured as follows: We start by defining stressors, stress reactions, coping, and resilience. Then we turn to the context of our study by defining leaders, followers, and their relationship, and depicting what is currently known about leaders' stress caused by followers' behavior. Next, we outline the basis for our interview guide and explain and describe our chosen procedure, the sample of 21 semi-structured interviews, and our data analysis using the Gioia methodology. We then present our results, discuss them, and point out limitations of our study. We end with a conclusion.

7.2 Stressors, stress reaction, coping, and resilience

Stress is a generic term that includes four central, procedural elements: stressors, individual appraisal, stress reactions, and coping.

A **stressor** is a stimulus that has the potential to cause a stress reaction. Work is a potential source of stress, as work time, workload, and psychological demands (Stansfeld/Candy 2006; Bowling et al. 2015; Kivimäki et al. 2015) are stressors that have the potential to cause stress reactions. A distinction can be made between daily hassles (sometimes the term micro-stressors is used synonymously, e.g., McLean 1976; Kanner et al. 1981) and undesirable (work-)life events (Gersten et al. 1974; also called major life events, Kanner et al. 1981; DeLongis et al. 1982). Daily hassles are rather common stressors that tend to occur in everyday life and are therefore to a certain degree expectable (Kanner et al. 1981). Work-related examples of daily hassles include work overload or underload, too many meetings, and difficulties with colleagues or supervisors (Frankenhaeuser/Gardell 1976; Kanner et al. 1981). Although single or few daily hassles usually do not cause severe stress reactions, a large number or/and continuous daily hassles can cause chronic stress reactions that can have such serious health implications as depression or burnout (Pearlin 1989; McGonagle/Kessler 1990; Otis/Pelletier 2005; Reinke/Chamorro-Premuzic 2014). Undesirable (work-)life events (sometimes also called major live events, Kanner et al. 1981; DeLongis et al. 1982)

are stressors that change one's (work-)life in a negative way (e.g., Gersten et al. 1974; Rabkin/Struening 1976). One example is the loss of a job (Rabkin/Struening 1976). Undesirable work-life events have the potential to cause intensive stress reactions or even traumas (Kersting et al. 2005).

The **individual appraisal** is a (mostly unconscious) process in which individuals evaluate whether a stressor can potentially cause harm or whether a loss has already occurred. The appraisal is for instance influenced by personal experience, and personal norms, values, and beliefs. Put simply, if individuals assess a stressor as (potentially) harmful, they evaluate whether the stressor is either a challenge that causes a positive stress reaction (eustress), or a hindrance that causes a negative stress reaction (distress) (LePine/Podsakoff/LePine 2005; Webster/Beehr/Love 2011).

A **stress reaction** is a biological process caused by an exchange between the vegetative nervous system and the adrenal cortex. If a threat occurs or is anticipated, the production of the stress hormone cortisol and increased metabolism put the human body under tension. From an evolutionary biological perspective, stress reactions have the function of enabling the person to withstand fight-or-flight situations. Therefore, in the short run, stress reactions canincrease attention and performance. However, in the long run, steady or prolonged stress reactions can have serious negative effects on behavior, emotions, and/or psychological and physical health (Nixon et al. 2011).

Coping refers to actions or emotional processes that have the goal of ending stress reactions. Coping actions can be either functional or dysfunctional, so some coping strategies can have a positive effect of even terminating the stress reaction, while others have no effect or even increase the stress reaction by creating new stressors or worsening emotions. While no particular way of coping is considered superior, some authors assume a goodness-of-fit hypothesis that some coping strategies work in some settings while others do not (Folkman/Moskowitz 2004).

All in all, stress is a subjective perception. Thus, not every stressor causes a stress reaction in each individual. It is rather a matter of individual **resilience** if a stressor has an impact. Individual resilience is the ability to withstand adversity or to "bounce back", that is to recover quickly from a stress reaction

(Smith et al. 2008; Masten 2011). Consequently, resilient individuals either appraise stressors less often as (potentially) harmful (resistance) or are able to find adequate coping strategies (reconfiguration/bounce back).

7.3 Leaders, followers, and leaders' stress caused by follower behavior

In our understanding of leaders and followers, we draw on the role-based approach to followership (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). It reverses the prevailing view of active leaders and reactive followers by considering followers to be the causal actors in relation to their leaders (e.g., Gesang/Süß 2021). This approach is particularly fruitful in the context of our study as it focuses on the follower-to-leader direction that has been largely overlooked to date. While leaders' behavior has been widely studied as a cause of followers' stress, as shown in a relatively recent meta-analysis by Harms and colleagues (2017), the reverse perspective is largely absent.

In the role-based approach, **leaders and followers** are defined by their roles in relation to each other (Katz/Kahn 1978; Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). While these roles can be formal, ascribed by the individual's formal organizational position, they can also be informal, ascribed by the subjective perception of being (perceived as) a leader or follower although not possessing the formal organizational position (e.g., Ensari et al. 2011). We stick to formal roles, because informal leader and follower roles are not the subject of this study and also very complex (e.g., Walter et al. 2012; Luria/Berson 2013), thereby likely to lead to heterogeneity in descriptions we do not aim for, thus blurring our research focus.

The formal leader role is characterized by a hierarchically superior position of the leader in relation to formal followers. Leaders possess resources like the ability to control information (Pettigrew 1972) that (formal) followers do not have, enabling them to incent and apply pressure to followers to make them comply with the leader's instructions (e.g., French/Raven 1959; Yukl/Falbe 1991). This is why leaders can exert a much stronger influence on their (formal) followers than the other way around (e.g., Yukl/Falbe 1991; Bastardoz/van Vugt 2019). Leaders' influence on followers includes among other things the (not) granting of autonomy and the allocation of workload,

aspects that have been shown to be stressors (e.g., Daniels/Guppy 1994; Bowling et al. 2015). By contrast, followers do not have comparable means to influence leaders or leaders' stressors at work.

Nevertheless, **leaders' can feel stressed due to interactions with their followers**. Deluga (1991) found that followers' use of hard influence tactics, meaning followers were assertive, brought in higher authorities, or formed coalitions with other followers, was related to increases in leaders' interpersonal stress. Additionally, interpersonal conflicts, a universal stressor at work (e.g., Mazzola/Schonfeld/Spector 2011), may also appear between leaders and followers However, they have been investigated so far only either generally, without considering leader or follower roles (e.g., Ilies et al. 2011), or with regard to the leader-follower relationship but from followers' perspective (e.g., Volmer 2015).

Regarding interpersonal stress and conflicts, the form in which leaders interact with their followers can offer additional insights. Common forms include face-to-face interactions, virtual interactions via videotelephony, which has gained strongly in importance since the COVID-19 outbreak (Contreras/Baykal/Abid 2020), and e-mail communication (Rosen et al. 2019). These forms differ in the terms of the extent of visual and auditory transmission (e.g., Purvanova/Bono 2009). While face-to-face interaction is considered the "richest" form of communication due to excessive sight and hearing of the other person, in videotelephony auditory and visual perception is reduced, while in e-mail communication both are absent. This phenomenon has been called the "cues-filtered-out perspective" (e.g., Irmer/Chang/Bordia 2000). This is why e-mail communication is considered the most error-prone form of communication (Day/Scott/Kelloway 2010). It is therefore not surprising that ambiguous e-mails and besides also emotionally charged e-mails can be perceived as stressful and are therefore a potential stressor (Brown/Duck/Jimmieson 2014). This demonstrates that the form of communication can influence leaders' interpersonal stress and conflicts with their followers.

In summary, therefore, we examine which interactions with followers are perceived as particularly stressful by leaders and why, considering face-to-face, virtual, and e-mail interactions.

7.4 Method

7.4.1 Conceptual background

Taking the aforementioned knowledge into account, we want to outline the basis for our interviews and the interview guide, respectively. As stressors, stress reactions, and individuals' dealing with stress reactions by coping are complex and highly subjective, interviews are particularly well suited for investigation, as they can capture detailed, individual perceptions (Bryman/Stephens/à Campo 1996; Coyle 2016). To take full advantage of these strengths, it is important to broadly consider aspects of (1) what constitutes a stressful interaction and (2) what can result from an interaction that is perceived as stressful.

(1) **Stressful interactions** can be caused by the (perceived) behavior of another individual, in our case followers' behavior (Deluga 1991). The same follower behavior can be perceived as stressful for different reasons by different leaders due to individual appraisal (Folkman/Moskowitz 2004), which is why it is important to concretize the reasons for the (stressful) perception. As (stressful) follower behavior is very likely to cause a stress reaction and stress reactions are closely linked to a leaders' mental state (Mohr et al. 2006), it is also of relevance to consider leaders' thoughts and feelings. Since a stress reaction sets the human body under tension (Lyon 2011), it is also reflected in behavior. Therefore, it is also relevant to consider how and for what reasons the leaders themselves behaved in the interaction.

(2) Regarding what can **result from stressful interactions** one thing is that the leaders' mental state of the leaders may still be affected after the initial interaction has ended (Folkman/Moskowitz 2004). Additionally, it is likely that the leaders take measures to cope with the stressful interaction as coping is a normal reaction to stressful events (Lazarus 1993). Apart from this, the experience with followers (in a stressful interaction) can affect how leaders deal with these followers as well as with other followers who were not part of the initial interaction, afterwards (Gesang/Süß 2021).

7.4.2 Procedure and Participants

We used professional social networks and professional contacts to recruit leaders. The interviews were described as dealing with "personal and digital

interaction(s) between leaders and their employees [German everyday language for follower]" to minimize any potential self-selection bias or biases in descriptions when revealing our primary interest of leaders' stress.

Participants were leaders who (1) held a disciplinary leadership position for (2) at least two years and (3) (had) led at least three different followers and (4) were currently working remotely or partly remotely. Criterion one was chosen for leaders (and their followers) to meet our definition of leader and follower (see 7.3). Two years of leadership experience were chosen to guarantee that the leaders had experienced various face-to-face interactions before the pandemic led to widespread virtual interactions. The criterion of three followers was chosen to increase the chance that the different interactions (face-to-face, virtual: videotelephony, virtual: e-mail) were with different followers. The last criterion ensured that leaders had experienced virtual interactions via videotelephony. During data collection (after the first ten interviews), we weakened the second criterion to include leaders with less than two years of leadership experience, as we realized we might gain more variance by including the perspective of less experienced leaders. In total, we interviewed three leaders with less than two years of leadership experience. We clarified in advance that they had already experienced various face-to-face interactions.

We aimed for a **heterogeneous sample** in terms of age (minimum: 30 years; maximum: 60 years), gender (13 male, 8 female), leadership experience (minimum: 10 months; maximum: 28 years) and organizational affiliation (leaders from nineteen different organizations, two pairs of leaders from the same organization, but different departments), to obtain a wide variety of interactions perceived as stressful. The average leader in our sample is 41 years old (median: 38 years), leads 16 followers (median: 9 followers) and has been in a leadership position for seven years and six months (median: 3 years).

Interviews were conducted by telephone from May to December 2021 and were held in German, the leaders' native language. The telephone was chosen to avoid overlap with the media of the interactions described in the interviews (face-to-face, virtual via videotelephony, e-mail). Five interviews were held via videocall, without video transmission to be close to a conversation via telephone, because the leader's organization no longer used telephones (three

leaders) or the leaders were currently abroad/not in Germany (two leaders). Interviewing was folded after a perceived saturation of variety in the interactions described occurred (Robinson 2014). In total, 21 interviews were held with an average duration of 54 minutes.

The **interview guide** was structured in the following way: To get the leaders in the mood for conversation, they were first asked two general questions that had nothing to do with our research interest (e.g., "What is your field of activity in your position?"). These were followed by a question that served as a segue into the description of the first interaction that the interviewee perceived as stressful ("What positive aspects do you associate with your (leadership) position in direct, personal interaction with your employees?").

Then, the leaders were asked to describe one face-to-face interaction that took place at work and involved only one follower, where they personally found the follower's behavior particularly stressful. The interaction was limited to just one follower to reduce complexity and to focus on one-to-one interactions. Leaders were first requested to describe the interaction and its stressful character in detail (e.g., "What led to the interaction?", "How did you perceive the follower's?": "How did you behave (and why)?"; "What did you find stressful about the interaction and why?") Then they were asked to state how they felt in the interaction (e.g., "What were your thoughts during this interaction?"). Subsequently, the actual interaction was left and leaders were asked about how this interaction continued to have an effect on them (e.g., "What was going on in your mind after the interaction"; "How did this interaction affect your interaction with this employee?"). These questions concluded the segment on the first interaction.

Subsequently, a question that served as a segue into the description of the second interaction that was perceived as stressful followed ("What positive aspects do you associate with your leadership (position) in rather indirect, virtual interaction with your employees?"). The same questions (questions of the last paragraph) were then asked again in the context of a virtual interaction via videotelephony with one follower at work.

Afterwards, the same questions were asked a third time in the context of an e-mail conversation with one follower at work. Because many leaders could

not think of any stressful e-mail conversation with one follower, we extended the setting to an e-mail conversation with multiple followers and to e-mail conversations were the leader was in carbon copy.

Lastly, the specific interactions were left and leaders were asked to reflect on their leadership position in general. They were therefore asked to indicate which positive aspects they associate with their position and which aspects they find stressful.

The interview terminated with a question on whether the leaders wanted to add something else that s/he thought may be relevant in light of the subject of the interview.

7.4.3 Data analysis

Interviews were analyzed using the **Gioia methodology** (Gioia/Corley/Hamilton 2013), which allowed the interviews' content to be dealt with openly but at the same time in a structured and comprehensible manner. The openness of this methodology was considered important, as although there is already a lot of knowledge about stress and coping (at work), stress and coping of leaders, especially considering follower-induced stress, is a very little-known context.

Coding followed a three-step iterative process: First, codes, the so-called first-order concepts, that were near the original wording used in the interviews were assigned to relevant statements from the interviews. Second, the proximity to the original wording was abandoned and we, the researchers, brought in our knowledge by attributing so-called second-order themes to the first-order concepts. Third, the second-order themes were consolidated into aggregate dimensions. These aggregate dimensions revealed links and relationships between the different aggregate dimensions. The assignment of the second-order themes and the forming of the aggregate dimensions were iterative circles that included rereading the interviews and thereby repeatedly adapting themes and dimensions. All interviews were coded independently before discussing the coding and reaching a consensus. This consensus was then discussed with the third author.

In line with Pratt, Kaplan and Whittington (2019) we consider the trustworthiness of our method, data, and results to be essential to providing valuable qualitative research. Therefore, we justify our method in detail and provide

several quotes, the corresponding leader (e.g., L1), and the associated coding to make our approach and results comprehensible and verifiable.

7.5 Results

7.5.1 Systematization of the findings

For better comprehensibility of our results, we briefly present the structure of our results section in the following. The structure is based on the aforementioned distinction between daily hassles and undesirable work-life events and is depicted in Figure 7.1.

We start with results on interactions that addressed rather everyday issues and were perceived as low to moderately stressful, thus daily hassles. In section 5.2 we first depict daily hassles that were caused by the virtuality of a virtual interaction. In section 5.3 we have a look at daily hassles in all other personal interactions. That is, we jointly consider virtual interactions with daily hassles that did not originate from the virtuality and daily hassles in face-to-face interactions. Based on these personal interactions we derive prototypical patterns in personal interactions with daily hassles in section 5.4. Afterwards, in section 5.5, we turn to interactions that were perceived as highly stressful, and therefore work-life changing (thus undesirable work-life events, see 7.2). We then leave personal interactions and take a look at daily hassles in written interactions in section 5.6. Finally, in section 5.7, we present a special type of leader we identified, resilient leaders, and describe how they deal with potentially stressful interactions.

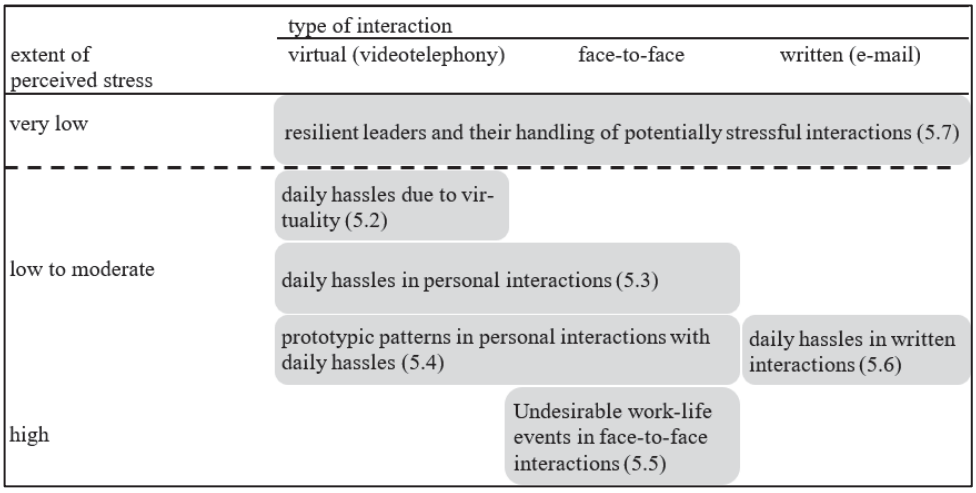


Fig. 7.1: Systematization of the findings regarding the interactions perceived as stressful and the leaders dealing with the interactions

7.5.2 Daily hassles due to virtuality

We identified three daily hassles that arose as a result of the virtuality of the interaction.

One was where a **leader felt personally attacked** because a follower supposedly mimicked him/her (L3):

> "And in the course of a meeting with a colleague [follower], I temporarily had made a wrong interpretation of a statement, so that I had the feeling that my colleague [follower] was mimicking me." (L3)

This, as the leader points out her-/himself, "wrong interpretation" was due to a time delay of image and sound transmission during videotelephony.

The second was an **unfriendly misunderstanding in virtual communication** (L8):

> "The person in my team didn't quite see why she should do something, and I simply had the impression that it was also due to the virtual setting that we talked at cross purposes. […] And that one thing or another came across a bit more unfriendly than it should have." (L8)

According to the leader, the misunderstanding and its unfriendly character resulted from a loss of "certain nuances in the tonality" due to the virtuality.

The third daily hassle that was due to virtuality was an interaction between a **leader and several followers**, as the leader could not think of any stressful interaction with just one follower (for detailed information on this leader see 7.5.7 Resilient leaders and their handling of potentially stressful situations). The leader described the loss of control due to virtual distance as stressful (L2):

> "And what I often notice is that people have their headphones on in a [virtual] meeting, are present somehow, but are occupied with other topics. [...] I find that stressful and disturbing." (L2)

This situation was caused solely by the virtual distance, since, as the leader points out, it would not occur in face-to-face meetings:

> "That wouldn't happen in a meeting when you're sitting together somewhere. I mean, there are still specialists who are paddling around on

> their cell phones, but that can be prohibited if necessary. But on the screen, that's simply no longer controllable."

Aside from these specific interactions, leaders sporadically expressed both stress-buffering and stress-boosting effects of virtuality. These effects primarily result from virtual communication's ability to "objectif[y] to an excessive degree." (L10). That is, virtual communication reduces the transmission of facial expressions, gestures, emotions and atmosphere, giving greater focus to the pure spoken word (cues-filtered-out perspective, see 7.3). Consequently, virtual communication generally tends to be perceived less personal and more factual.

On the one hand this stronger factual focus can be **stress-buffering** in that it can reduce the number of problematic interactions:

> "Conflicts or behavior that I'm not happy with, I've had less often over [videotelephony] or just since we've been home, because maybe you do focus more on what you're talking about when you're talking." (L1)

Additionally, the reduced transmission of emotions and atmosphere can be beneficial regarding negative emotions/atmospheres:

> "[…] we wouldn't have perceived those bad tempers as extreme throughout the day [virtually] as would have been the case on site." (L17)

This reduced transmission may not only result from the reduced transition of atmosphere but also from a more exclusive group of followers with whom information is shared:

> "It's actually gotten better [the negative atmosphere particularly caused by one follower] because, since we're no longer all sitting together in one office, [...] the [follower] doesn't get to hear as much about the other [followers'] business. And he always liked to interfere in the business of the others [...] And now he can't do that anymore. Because if there are things that he is not responsible for in his job, he no longer even notices them digitally." (L4)

On the other hand, there is a **stress-boosting** effect resulting from the focus on the spoken word and—depending on the size of the video image—the (very) limited view of facial expressions and gestures:

> "He [the follower] just tries to be funny, makes remarks that others can then perceive as derogatory [...] Since you only have an incomplete message, namely only the spoken word, neither gestures nor facial expressions, nor anything else that could defuse any remarks, it just comes across as a bit dumb." (L2)

Overall, the incomplete sight of mimic and gestures is something all leaders revered to (L1 (…) L21):

> "Everything is simply less nuanced. A bit 'lost in translation', I would say. That things that you might otherwise get across with body language don't come across." (L8)

> "The intimacy is reduced because the interaction is purely on [my] verbal expression and maybe you can still see something in the facial features. But you can't see my gestures now, how I gesture with my hands, whether I'm perhaps standing relaxed, whether I have my arms crossed." (l15)

Nevertheless, leaders point out that it often makes **no difference** to them whether an interaction has taken place virtually or in person:

> "But, I have to say, that [conversation] would have gone exactly the same way in person." (L1)

> "That would probably have been the same [...] if it had come up like that in a normal [non-virtual] conversation" (L16)

> "So [stressful interactions] happen online the same way. I can't feel any difference there." (L20)

This is why in the following, we analyzed virtual interactions whose stressful character was not due to virtuality together with stressful face-to-face interactions, thereby using the summarizing term personal interaction.

7.5.3 Daily hassles in personal interactions

We identified five different types of daily hassles leaders experienced in personal interactions.

The first and second daily hassle are related to followers' performance: **a follower's one-time poor task performance during time constraints** (L1, L5, L13) and a follower's long-term poor performance (L7, L20, L21).

The first was characterized by followers executing a task in an unsatisfactory manner. The time constraints either resulted from the need for the task to be done quickly (L1, L13) or from that the task itself was not urgent, but that the leader did not see a timely opportunity to take the time to re-explain the task to the follower (L5). These time constraints resulted in the leaders' doing all of or part of the task themselves.

Follower's long-term poor performance resulted in a similar way as the previous stressor in additional effort for the leader (e.g. through the frequent checking of tasks).

Both these daily hassles share that they led to additional occupational effort for the leader through for instance taking over tasks and checking regularly on the follower. While the one-time poor task performance was mentioned only in addition to time constraints, the long-term poor task performance was not related to such circumstances.

The third daily hassle is not related to the performance of the follower, as all leaders stated they were "satisfied" (L7) to "very satisfied" (L1, L9) with their followers' performance. In spite of the satisfactory performance, leaders experienced an **unexpectedly problematic feedback conversation** (L1, L7, L9) with these followers. In these conversations, leaders gave feedback to the followers, sometimes in the established form of a (semi-)annual feedback conversation, sometimes on a less established basis. What made these feedback conversations unpleasant was an unexpected reaction by the follower:

> "I was surprised by the reaction and that's why it was a bit unpleasant. [...] That was definitely an unpleasant conversation." (L1).

The nature of these unexpected reactions varied. It could be that a follower disagreed and expressed resistance against the received (positive but not very

positive) feedback (L1), that a follower took feedback very personally (L9), or that a follower came up with a non-feedback-related idea that was from the leader's perspective, completely unfeasible (reduction in working hours by 20 percent with no change in salary, but without taking the outstanding salary increase, L7).

The fourth daily hassle was a **follower being reserved** (L4, L8, L12) such that the leader could not properly assess the follower's abilities, the follower's dealing with tasks, and the status of the work the follower should complete:

> "Solely the reserved and this quietness [I found stressful], because I then just can't properly assess what [skill] level the employee [follower] himself is at." (L4)

> "[...] didn't know how to deal with him, definitely." (L4)

The lack of understanding of the follower could also translate into a lack of trust:

> "[It took] away a bit of the trust I had in [him/her]" (L8)

The unexpectedly problematic feedback conversation as well as the follower being reserved share one common aspect. Both include leaders' loss of control. In the first case related to a situation that no longer progresses according to the leader's wishes. In the second case related to the follower that the leader is not able to assess the follower properly.

The fifth stressor was neither performance oriented nor related to any loss of control. It is a **follower's constantly bad mood, which may cause other followers to quit** (L3, L17):

> "Of course, I also have the fear that the motivation and joy of the work of the other three [followers] is affected by this colleague [follower]. And in the worst-case scenario, some of the three [followers] may no longer want to work under me and may look for something else." (L3)

The constant character resulted from that both leaders stated the respective follower was "not open to criticism" (L17) or "miss[ed the] ability to take criticism" (L3), and would therefore not change his/her behavior.

7.5.4 Prototypic patterns in personal interactions with daily hassles

Interactions due to followers' poor performance (follower's one-time poor task performance during time constraints, follower's long-term poor performance) followed a similar pattern (see Figure 7.2).

Followers' poor performance was characterized by the follower not doing a task, or doing it very badly. Leaders felt slightly angry because of the poor performace or found it difficult to understand, why the follower had performed in this way, as the leaders considered themselves to be open to any .check backs, if the followers had had problems with the task. If there were high time constraints, meaning the task had to be done quickly, or the leader did not have enough time to give the follower feedback in time for the follower to complete the task him/herself, the leader completed the task entirely him/herself. The involvement of the leader in the task (completion), and therefore his additional occupational effort, decreased with decreasing time constraints. When there were rather medium time constraints, the leader did a part of the task him/herself. If there were no time constraints, the leader did not contribute to the task completion.

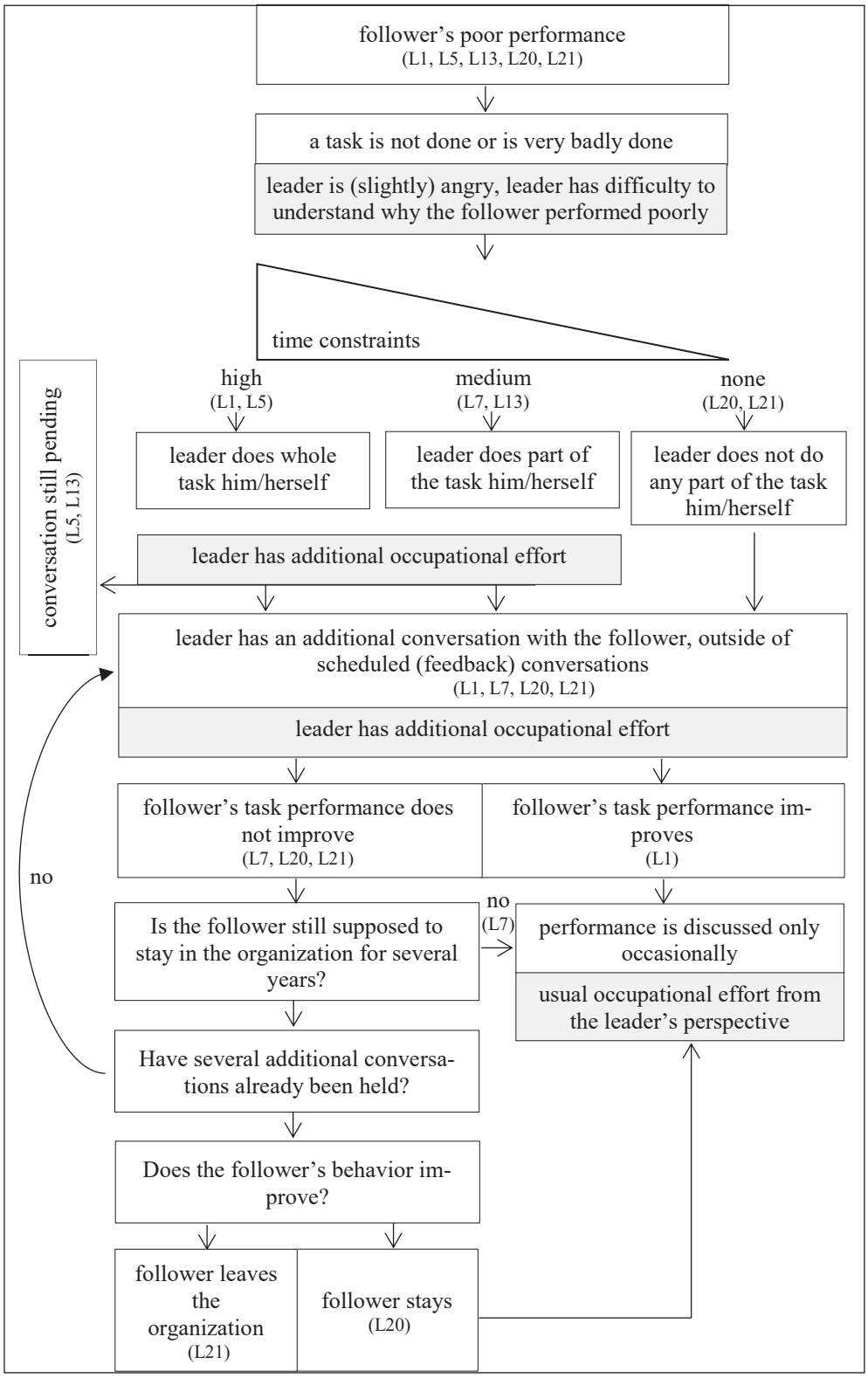


Fig. 7.2: Prototypic pattern in interactions due to followers' poor performance

All leaders initiated an extra conversation with the respective follower about his/her poor task performance, resulting in (further) additional occupational effort for the leader, as it was a conversation outside of any scheduled (feedback) conversations. In the conversation leaders explained why they considered the task to have been completed poorly and how they wanted the follower's task performance to change.

One leader summarized the additional effort caused by the follower's poor task performance (during time constraints) in the following way:

> "[…] you rely on the work being made easier for you. And now it is rather made more difficult, because on the one hand you have to find time for [correcting the task] and on the other hand you need to teach the follower [how to do the task properly]." (L5)

After these conversations, the follower's task performance either improved (L1) or not. If it did not improve and the follower was supposed to stay in the organization for still some time, leaders initiated further conversations. After a serious of extra conversations, the follower's task performance either improved or the follower left the organization (in the present case due to finding a new job voluntarily, L21).

In the case of improvement in the follower's task performance or if the performance did not improve but the follower was to leave the organization in the relatively near future (for instance due to retirement, L7), the leaders only discussed the follower's performance occasionally, for instance in general feedback conversations. Thereby, the leaders did not experience any further additional occupational effort, as such feedback was part of their usual work.

Additionally, also the **unexpectedly problematic feedback conversations** followed one pattern (see Figure 7.3).

After the unexpected reaction of the follower, leaders' emotions included feeling (slightly) shocked, unpleasant, and/or (slightly) upset. Leaders' then tried to mitigate or end the unexpected reaction of the follower, by convincing him/her of the received positive but not very positive feedback (L1), by convincing him/her that the proposed idea was unfeasible (L7), or by trying to calm down the follower's emotions (L9). However, the leaders failed in doing so which is why they ended the from their perspective unpleasant interaction

by terminating the conversation: “we then terminated the appointment, or let’s say interrupted it.” (L7)

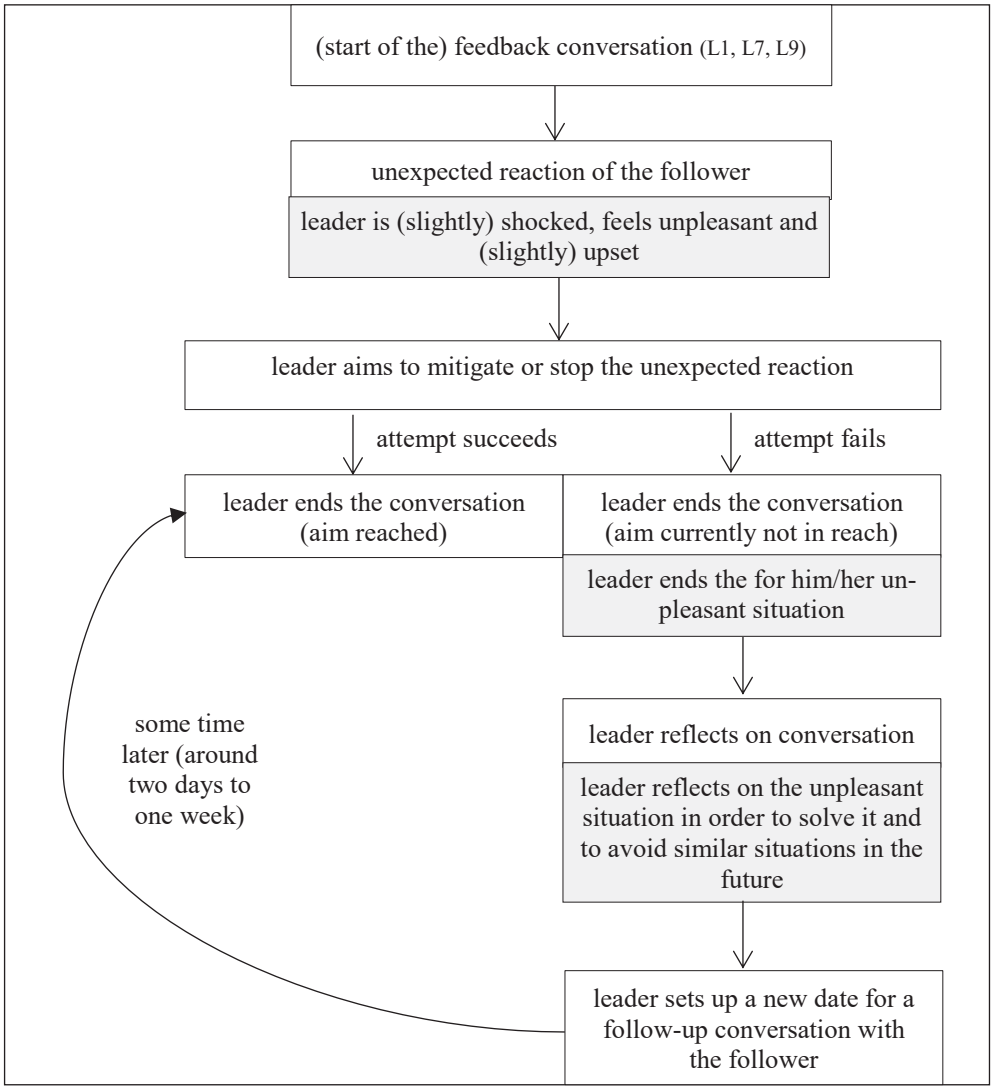


Fig. 7.3: Prototypic pattern in unexpectedly problematic feedback conversations

All leaders then took some time to reflect on the interaction: “I sat for half an hour and recalled [the conversation]. And thought "What happened?"” (L1). They did so to figure out how to resolve the situation and how to avoid similar situations in the future: “What can I do better the next time?” (L9).

They then set up a follow-up conversation, which was around two days to one week after the initial conversation. In the follow-up conversation all leaders succeeded to resolve the originally unexpected reaction: “She [the follower] then understood [the positive but not very positive feedback].” (L1)

7.5.5 Undesirable work-life events in face-to-face interactions

Apart from daily hassles, three leaders (L10, L15, L16) described undesirable work-life events:

> "That's one of the things that shaped me the most. [...] Very unpleasant from A to Z." (L16)

All three events involved the dismissal of a follower due to his repeatedly poor performance, and were characterized by the **occurrence of multiple, simultaneous stressors**. One leader (L16) had to dismiss a follower (1) without it being his/her own decision, (2) whom the leader had placed in the (leadership) position him/herself (indicating a potential loss of reputation),

> "That makes it much more difficult because then you are even questioning your own decision and need to reverse it [...]."

and (3) who had become a personal friend.

> "A good personal friend who just didn't perform the way I hoped."

The friendship had evolved through work, and on that basis, the leader had nominated the follower for the leadership position from which he was then dismissed. The friendship did not last:

> "So we're not friends anymore, but I think we respect and accept each other. And there's still sporadic contact."

Although the circumstances were severely stressful for the leader, the conversation with the follower about the dismissal was unexpectedly easy. First, this was because the follower had already realized that he was not suited for the position:

> "Surprisingly, [the conversation] went much better than I anticipated and expected because somehow he got his way on his own and realized himself that this was not the optimal thing for him. Respectively, his 60 or so people gave him enough feedback that he didn't fall off his chair completely surprised."

Second, the leader gave the follower the option to give up the position without loss of face:

> "That made the conversation a little easier, that I was able to show him an internal development opportunity that eventually worked out. He left six months later anyway, but at least he had the option of not just clearing out the desk and walking out."

The other two situations (L10, L15) were no one-time incidents but covered a **longer period of time**. Both shared that (1) money already had been lost (L10) or was in danger of being lost (L15) and (2) both leaders had a relatively constant additional workload over a longer period of time (some months to a year) due to this follower:

> "Especially when legal issues have to be checked again, everything has to be extremely clean, and we have to be careful in communication about what we say and how we say it. Many departments, HR, management, communication, are involved and that makes it complicated. Particularly because, in the context of severance pay, such exit talks or exit phases also involve large sums of money." (L15)

Additionally, one of the leaders was new to her/his first leadership position and struggled with (3) the fact that the dismissal had not been his/her own decision and that (4) s/he was negatively surprised by the follower's uncooperativeness and did not know how to deal with it:

> "[…] I didn't understand, I couldn't comprehend, I was surprised [by the extent of uncooperativeness of the follower]." (L15)

The other leader was more experienced, had therefore initiated the dismissal him/herself, but found it stressful that s/he (3) had failed in changing the follower's work attitude,

> "Questioning this "everyone else is to blame" to a certain extent was also a point in th[ese] conversation[s]. Admittedly, this was not really successful."

and (4) had (unsuccessfully, as the follower did not improve) changed processes and also demanded that processes be changed to support the follower in fulfilling his tasks (thus, similar to L15 indicating also the potential for a loss of reputation):

> "And if you do everything for the employee, also change everything: Make workplace changes, change processes. So I changed processes for the employee. and the result is no change in behavior. […] Other departments have adapted their processes just to please the employee."

7.5.6 Daily hassles in written interactions

Most of the leaders we interviewed could not think of an email interaction with one follower that they found stressful (L1, L2, L3, L4, L5, L6, L7, L8, L9, L10, L11, L14, L17, L18, L19, L20, L21).

However, there were three exceptions. The first is where leaders felt personally attacked or got (unintendedly) **personally attacked** (L12, L16).

The feeling of personal attack was based on leader's subjective interpretation that a follower was implying s/he had bad qualities:

> "If I feel I'm being accused of malice. Revenge or injustice, if I have the feeling that this is being insinuated or that I am treating someone badly." (L12)

When a leader got (unintendedly) personally attacked the email included a clear insult, but the email was not intended to be read by the particular leader:

> "If you as the addressee are not supposed to be the recipient and then you get a mail where it says something like 'Did you see what he [the leader] wrote again, the stupid idiot' or something like that." (L16)

The second was an **urgent, difficult-to-solve matter**, where a follower with a history of mental illness wrote an email about his/her high workload. The stressful character resulted from the urgency and the inability to have a solution at hand:

> "In this respect, it was stressful for me because of the topic itself and the urgency with which it now actually had to be discussed and sorted out." (L15)

The third was an email where a **follower tried to** "**delegate something back** [to the leader]" (L13). Since the delegation of tasks is leaders' responsibility,

the leader felt that the follower exceeded the boundaries of her/his organizational role and disregarded the leader's role. This is why the leader found the content of the email/the behavior to be "inappropriate" (L13).

Due to the rare response on email interactions with one follower, we expanded our questions to emails with multiple followers and to emails where the leaders were in carbon copy. The resulting, overarching themes were **inappropriate emails to customers** and/or escalating email distribution lists.

Regarding the emails to customers, the inappropriateness resulted either from tone (L7) or from content (L8) although also a combination of inappropriate tone and content is plausible:

> "And there were a few emails from the [follower], where he approached customers in a way that was completely correct in terms of content, but very, very brusque in terms of manner." (L7)

> "The tonality was fine. That wasn't the issue. It was really about the content. […] He didn't put himself in the customer's shoes at all. What is important for him [the customer]?" (L8)

The **escalating email distribution lists** meant that followers either expanded their email distribution lists in an inadequate way during an email conversation (L2, L7) or that they, from the start, unnecessarily included other employees, among others the leader (L2, L11).

These distribution lists can also include customers, which can lead to the leader making an unfavorable impression to customers:

> "And then it all escalates. The unpleasant thing is that under certain circumstances it escalates to the [customer] and that the [customer] then notices disputes at the lowest level and then gets the impression that "The managers don't have anything under control. I have to intervene now. "" (L2)

Additionally, escalating email distribution lists could also occur with no reference to customers, namely when two followers had a dispute (L2) or when a follower wanted to solve a private, non-work-related problem (L11):

> "The point was, he always has a radio and something didn't work on this radio. Then, instead of asking individual people, he sent an e-mail

> to all, [...] simply to ask if anyone had a clue about radios [...] [To] over 160 people, many of whom are not even in our building, but in a completely different location." (L11)

7.5.7 Resilient leaders and their handling of potentially stressful situations

Additionally, we identified two rather **resilient leaders** (L2, L6), characterized by feeling (almost) no stress:

> "I haven't had anything [...] that weighs on me for a really long time, because that's something I don't let happen anymore." (L2)

Both leaders point to their **live experience** (L2: 59 years; L6: 40 years), working experience, and leadership experience (L2: 20 years; L6: 12 years), which taught them to deal with (potentially) stressful situations:

> "One has also learned in life. I am already a bit older." (L2)

> "I would say I have learned to deal with [unpleasant tasks] very well [through years of working experience]." (L6)

Regarding the dealing with (potentially) stressful situations, both leaders have developed **measures**:

> "If situations arise that could potentially be stressful, [...] then I actually take measures." (L2)

For both leaders, these measures include to "settle these things [problems, potential misunderstandings or misconduct] immediately" (L6) respectively to "always quickly look for the appropriate solution" (L2) and to choose direct, personal communication over written communication for instance by "call[ing] there" (L2) when receiving a potentially problematic e-mail (something, also other leaders referred to, e.g., L10, L20).

However, both have a different **attitude towards the separation of work and private life**. While L2 "simply make[s] a strict distinction. […] Home is private, work is work", a reason why this leader "only ever worked from home when [s/he] couldn't do it any other way", L6 has a different approach. L6 makes no strict separation, but in contrast to L2 emphasizes the importance of her/his work that s/he "considers important and [which] is also important".

Additionally, L6 clearly **delimits her/his responsibilities**. S/he sees followers (including short-term followers like interns) as solely responsible for voicing potential problems, dissatisfactions or such as:

> "So my credo at my department is 'If you don't speak out about your problems, it's your own fault.' I can only change things, or we can only address things if we know that someone has a different understanding or a different feeling."

> "If you [the intern] end up saying 'Boar, what a crap internship', then it's your own fault. Because you're in the 'debt collectible'. You want the internship. I'm not in the obligation to provide."

Additionally, L6 emphasizes that it is important to **take time to give feedback** and explain tasks, especially to low performing followers to avoid doing the work of the low performing followers him/herself (other leaders also referred to this importance, although sometimes it was, in the short run, more efficient to do a part or even all of the task themselves (e.g., L5, L7) although the leaders knew this approach was "not sustainable" (L5)).

In spite of these measures, both leaders can experience interactions that, while not stressful, they find "annoying" (L2):

> "[…] the question is how to interpret stressful [interaction]. I am simply annoyed then." (L6)

While L6 sometimes experiences annoying interactions with one follower, L2 can hardly think of any, but finds group video calls, where several followers are involved, annoying, when s/he has the feeling that some followers are not paying attention (see Section 5.2). L2's situation is thus forced upon him/her (by the Covid-19 circumstances). It would most likely not occur if working from home had not been imposed temporarily.

Overall, as both leaders have adapted to the circumstances of their job (position) through experience and deriving measures (successfully), they meet the definition of **resilience by reconfiguration** (see Section 2). Moreover, the description of mildly stressful interactions as "annoying" points to that they (very shortly) perceive stress, however, get back to their non-stressed state

quickly, which is in line with successful coping in the form of "bouncing back" (see Section 2).

7.6 Discussion

Harms and colleagues (2017) summarize stress to be an individual's perception of "a threat to something of value to them" (p. 179). Therefore, it is necessary to clarify what is of value to leaders, in order to aggregate our findings.

(1) First, a certain **degree of control** is of particular value for leaders. While having a certain degree of control over one's own work life is a central need for most people (e.g., van den Broeck et al. 2010), being in control is especially relevant from leaders' perspective. This is because the leader role goes along with extra responsibilities. Leaders are responsible for delegating tasks and ensuring that followers execute their tasks as successful as possible (e.g., Banks et al. 2018). In this way, leaders can be considered as having a higher degree of personal responsibility for an organization's success than their followers (e.g., Day/Lord 1988; Yukl 2008).

(2) Second, **resources** are of value for leaders, meaning all the means that help leaders to successfully execute their leadership position (Hobfoll 1989; Halbesleben et al. 2014). Leaders' possess resources inherent to their role (e.g., Pettigrew 1972), like additional budget or their followers, as well as resources that are non-inherent to their role, like for instance (private) friends.

(3) Third, the **leader role** itself is of value to leaders as it constitutes their hierarchical position. This is why leaders may engage in selfish behavior or behavior that is harmful to others and/or the organization when their role is threatened (e.g., Williams 2014).

We classified the stressors identified in our study according to the three categories mentioned (see Table 7.1). If not stated otherwise (in brackets), the stressors occurred in face-to-face or personal interactions.

(1) leader's loss of control	(2) (potential) loss of the leader's valuable resources	(3) threats to leader's role
• loss of control due to virtual distance (virtual) • unexpectedly problematic feedback conversation • follower being reserved • dismissal of a follower without it being leader's own decision • follower's uncooperativeness during dismissal • follower's one-time poor task performance during time constraints	• loss of reputation • follower's constantly bad mood may lead to other followers quitting indicating a loss of followers • loss of organizational money • additional workload indicating loss of time • loss of a personal friend	• personal attack due to being (supposedly) mimicked (virtual) • unfriendly misunderstanding in virtual communication (virtual) • feeling or getting (unintendedly) personally attacked (e-mail) • follower delegating a task back to the leader (e-mail)
• follower's long-term poor performance • leader failing to change the follower's work attitude • urgent difficult to solve matter (e-mail)		
Note. If not stated otherwise (in brackets), stressors appeared in personal interactions		

Tab. 7.1: Categorization of stressors due to leader's loss of control, a (potential) loss of the leader's valuable resources, and threats to leader's role

Our **categories are not absolutely exclusive**. For instance, a potential loss of a valuable resource is also a loss of control. In a similar way, a threat to the leader role may also imply a potential loss of control over the leader role while the leader role itself can also be considered a resource. However, we have chosen to use the present distinction because we are convinced it separates the most important aspects of a leadership role: The leader role itself (and its

threat) is what constitutes a leader and leaders' higher degree of control is a (if not the) central aspect of the leader role. Additionally, stressors were only classified as resources when they were clearly designatable (reputation, followers, money, time, personal friend), to avoid any blurry reference to resources.

We categorized **three stressors to cover all three categories** (see bottom row in Table 7.1) because they, from our point of view, covered a leader's loss of control, the potential loss of a valuable resource, and a threat to the leader's role simultaneously. For instance, a follower's long-term poor performance could be seen as a loss of control because the leader did repeatedly not manage to change the follower's undesirable behavior. At the same time, the leader lost a (potentially) valuable resource, this particular follower. And lastly being unable to change the follower's behavior could be seen as a threat to one's leader role because it implies being unable to execute the leader role successfully.

Additionally, it is salient that the stressors that are (3) threats to leader's role only occur in more **distal forms** of interaction, namely via videotelephony and via e-mail. One reason for this may be the "reduced saliency of social rules" (Friedman/Currall 2003, p. 1332) that can especially occur in e-mail-conversations. This may explain why a follower delegated a task back via e-mail, thereby disregarding the formal position of the leader, or why followers wrote unkind e-mails about a leader.

Overall, this overview transfers findings to general stressors (e.g., Cohen 1980) to the leader-follower context from the leaders' perspective. These findings thereby enrich our scarce knowledge on the impact follower behavior can have on leaders (e.g., Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). In the following, we will discuss some further findings from our study.

The **stress-buffering and stress-boosting effects of virtuality** regarding leaders' felt stress enrich the knowledge of consequences of the cues-filtered-out perspective with regard to the leader-follower context. Additionally, that the majority of leaders in our sample referred to virtual interactions as having gone the same way as face-to-face interaction strengthens a position in the

literature on e-leadership namely that e-leadership or e-followership (considering followership here to be the behavior of followers) can be seen as "exhibit[ing] exactly the same content and style as traditional face-to-face leader[follower]ship" (Avolio/Kahai 2003, p. 327). However, as can be seen in our virtual interactions (for instance regarding the less controllable virtual meeting, 7.5.2), this is not always the case (see also e.g., Purvanova/Bono 2009). Future research may therefore benefit from especially considering e-followership as the (perceived) behavior of followers via virtual means like videotelephony.

Our findings on **daily hassles** partly support the findings of Deluga (1991) that followers' use of hard upward-influence tactics (bring in higher authorities, building a coalition, assertiveness, use of forceful or/and emotional behavior) is associated with higher degrees of leaders' (interpersonal) stress. For instance, a follower who took feedback very personally (L9, unexpectedly problematic feedback conversation) can be considered as showing elements of emotional behavior. However, the other two unexpectedly problematic feedback conversations were rather dominated by an exchange of arguments (L1, L7). This is an indicator that also rational upward-influence tactics, which include to bring in logical arguments, can be perceived as stressful if occurring unexpectedly.

Regarding **undesirable work-life events**, all included the dismissal of a follower. That being close to being dismissed respectively feeling job insecurity is associated with or can cause an impairment of well-being has been proven (e.g., Sverke/Hellgren/Näswall 2002; Gaunt/Benjamin 2007; Lam/Fan/Moen 2014; De Witte/Pienaar/De Cuyper 2016), as well as that finally being dismissed can lead to symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (McKee-Ryan et al. 2009). However, the perspective that a dismissal may also be stressful for the person executing the dismissal, respectively for a leader, has not been addressed so far. Nevertheless, that feeling is plausible via several mechanisms. For instance, via indirect effects of an increased occupational effort due to paper works and such as associated with a follower's dismissal (L10, L15). Moreover, a potential reputational damage can be burdensome if a leader needs to dismiss a follower s/he hired (L15) or if a leader

had initiated (unsuccessful) changes for the now-fired follower (L10). Additionally, more direct effects, rather unconsciously via mood or emotional contagion (Neumann/Strack 2000; Barsade 2002), as well as rather conscious effects by feeling with the follower are plausible. In this regard, highly empathetic leaders in particular may feel stressed when dealing with an employee who potentially needs to be fired (Gesang/Süß 2021).

As leaders tend to argue from the organization's perspective (Gesang/Süß 2021), it is also not surprising that undesirable work-life events included the loss of money of the organization and that the stressful e-mail conversations often included inappropriate behavior of followers towards customers. In contrast to other identified stressors that are rather hard to be reduced through organizational rules, organizations may benefit, if not already in place, from formulating "e-mail guidelines". These may include to always use a businesslike tone when communicating with customers and rules on which content is (not) appropriate to be shared with customers. Additionally, guidelines on the size of e-mail distribution lists are advisable, to reduce the occurrence of "escalating" e-mail distribution lists. The latter aspect may also help to decrease the potential stressor of e-mail overload (Barley/Meyerson/Grodal 2011).

Of the five **leaders with the longest leadership experience** (between 13 and 28 years), two described undesirable work-life events, two were what we classified as resilient leaders, and only one described daily hassles. This may be an indicator that very experienced leaders tend to experience fewer stressors in everyday work life (or that leaders only stay in their position if they become relatively resilient to usual daily hassles). However, although the overall mechanism is plausible given that time can increase the ability to deal with stressors (Aldwin 2007), future research may benefit from verifying this mechanism and from examining further measures that leaders might take to cope with (daily) stress.

Nonetheless, the interviews revealed that leaders, due to their higher hierarchical position have, compared to followers, **more means to end a stressful interaction** and to regain control of a situation. This can be seen, for instance,

in personal interactions where leaders ended a stressful interaction by terminating the meeting, or in the fact that in the unexpectedly problematic feedback conversation all leaders reached their goal in the subsequent conversation. Moreover, that most leaders could not recall any e-mail from a follower, perceived as stressful, further strengthens that leaders have a higher potential to stress followers than vice versa. It is highly likely that followers, although most probably not yet studied (Harms et al. 2017), can experience e-mails by their leaders as stressful. Particularly since some followers (figures on this subject vary and are to date rather scarce, but possibly even more than 50 percent; Hogan/Kaiser 2005) consider their immediate leaders to be the worst part of their job. This is also in line with a leader who stated that delegating can be relaxing through being able to hand over tasks to others (L5).

Nevertheless, it is important to note that most leaders are also followers themselves (Hackman/Wageman 2007), which is why leaders are usually also exposed to some of the typical stressors of followers. This was occasionally also reflected in the interviews, for instance when one leader stated that "it depends on the potential power of the leader how stressful the situation [here: e-mail] is or can become for oneself" [L10].

Additionally, although not the focus of our interviews, three leaders, referred to their **stressful position as a "sandwich"** [L18], meaning to either (1) be the leader of their followers while at the same time dealing with other leaders on the same hierarchical level (L19) or (2) to be the leader of their followers while being the follower of the own respective leader (L1, L18). The stressful character resulted from, for instance, having the responsibility not to overload the followers while justifying output and results to other leaders on the same or higher hierarchical level. That these role conflicts, meaning facing opposing expectations, can be stressful has been examined extensively, for instance with reference to managers (e.g., Kahn et al. 1964; Jackson/Schuler 1985; Mohr/Puck 2007; Schmidt et al. 2014). However, as far as we are concerned, the role conflict from the leader's perspective (this is to include follower expectations in potential role conflicts) has rather been omitted. Future research may profit from conceptually aggregating aspects of role conflicts that are likely to be transferable to the leader-follower relationship and from empirically examining specificities of leader role conflicts.

7.7 Limitations

Our results need to be considered against the background of some limitations. We **exclusively relied on the leaders' perspective** since the focus of this study was their subjective perceptions. On the one hand, this allowed for broad and diverse insights into leaders' perceptions of stressful interactions. On the other hand, there are two main shortcomings: First, interactions are usually processes of mutual influence (e.g., Blom/Alvesson 2014). Therefore, the followers' perspective would have offered additional insights and would have also enabled cross-checking leaders' descriptions from a second (although also subjective and prone to biases) perspective. The latter aspect leads to the second main shortcoming: Leaders' descriptions are prone to social desirability considering that the experience of stressful interactions can lead to undesirable behavior such as reacting aggressively (Verona/Kilmer 2007). We tried to mitigate this proneness by not revealing our research focus and embedding our interview questions in a greater context of home office versus on-site working. Nevertheless, although some leaders stated slightly undesirable behavior like being upset (e.g., L11), there was no strikingly undesirable behavior like for instance yelling at followers. Future research may therefore benefit from examining the effects of stressful interactions on leader behavior in a cross-checked or maybe entirely other-assessed (for instance by followers) way.

Moreover, we conducted our interviews during the **COVID-19 pandemic** and also used its impact on the usage of videotelephony to justify our research interest to leaders. As the COVID-19 pandemic is a stressor itself (e.g., Goldfarb 2020), it is likely to have affected leaders' general level of stress. However, the effect is likely to have varied between individuals and can not be isolated in our study. Nevertheless, we led leaders to describe interactions that were not COVID-19 specific, which is why we are confident to have derived interactions that are transferable to the post-pandemic period.

Additionally, regarding our focus on stress, we need to acknowledge that **stressor and appraisal cannot properly be separated**. As the everyday understanding of stress includes a negative connotation, we focused on negative appraisals which is why we also chose the term "undesirable work-life

events" instead of the more neutral "(major) life events", although a stressor itself is neutral in the first place. This problem of unclear distinction is not uncommon in (qualitative) stress research (Kinman/Jones 2005). However, investigating differences in leaders' (positive or negative) reactions to given stressors may be a promising avenue for future research. For that, an experimental design may be particularly fruitful, to be able to separate stressor, appraisal, and stress reaction as accurately as possible.

Lastly, due to the qualitative nature of our study and the chosen sample, our **findings are not generalizable**. The perception of stressors varies between countries (e.g., Mazzola/Schonfeld/Spector 2011). Leader-follower relationships in the German context tend be characterized by a relatively high level of participation (Szabo et al. 2001). This might have implications for our results. For example, the "delegating back" (see Section 5.6) may (almost) not occur in a context of nearly no level of participation. Additionally, due to the small sample size of our interviews, future (especially quantitative) research might investigate the prevalence of certain leader-specific stressors that we identified in this study. Therefore, as a first step, future research may profit from adapting a stress scale to specific leader stressors.

8 Beiträge und Schlussfolgerungen

8.1 Zusammenfassung der Beiträge zur Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung

Geführte sind ein zentraler Bestandteil der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung und werden in der umfangreich bestehenden Führungsforschung (vgl. 2.2.1) sowie in mit der Führungsforschung verwandten Forschungssträngen (vgl. 2.2.2) berücksichtigt. Allerdings fehlt es aktuell an einer Untersuchung spezifischer Geführteneigenschaften sowie dem daraus resultierenden Geführtenverhalten und der Betrachtung der Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende. Diese bestehenden Lücken sollen durch die sich aufbauende und weiter an Umfang gewinnende Followershipforschung (vgl. 2.2.3) geschlossen werden. Die Lücken zu reduzieren ist notwendig, da ansonsten relevante Kenntnisse über Geführte unterbleiben, die für das Verständnis der komplexen Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung unumgänglich sind (vgl. z. B. Lapierre/Carsten 2014b, S. ix). Im Besonderen die Einflussrichtung des Geführtenverhaltens auf den Führenden ist, trotz der wechselseitigen Einflussrichtung zwischen Geführten und Führenden (vgl. z. B. Scherm/Süß 2016, S. 181-183), bisher nahezu unberücksichtigt (vgl. z. B. Oc/Bashshur 2013, S. 919). Auf Basis der genannten Forschungslücken und der daraus folgenden Problematik, wurden in den Kapiteln 4 und 5 geführtenspezifische Eigenschaften und deren Beziehung zum Geführtenverhalten auf Basis quantitativer Verfahren untersucht.

In **Kapitel 4** wird aufgezeigt, dass sich Geführte in ihrer Rollenorientierung, das heißt darin, wie sie ihre eigene Geführtenrolle sehen und ausführen, unterscheiden. Dazu wurde, durch die Adaption einer Impliziten-Geführtentheorien-Skala, die Rollenorientierung von Geführten messbar gemacht und über zwei Messzeitpunkte exploriert. Es zeigt sich, dass sich die Rollenorientierung in die drei Dimensionen Enthusiasmus, Fleiß und „Good citizen“ (erfasst, inwieweit ein Geführter loyal und ein Teamplayer ist) einteilen lässt. Basierend auf diesen Dimensionen wurden drei Profile von Geführten identifiziert. (1) Das Profil des „Anti-Prototype“ besteht aus Geführten, die über die signifikant niedrigsten Werte in als positiv gesehenen, arbeitsrelevanten

Verhaltensweisen (u. a. Hilfsbereitschaft gegenüber Kollegen) und Persönlichkeitseigenschaften (u. a. Gewissenhaftigkeit) verfügen. (2) Geführte, die dem Profil des „Moderate Anti-Prototype“ angehören, unterscheiden sich in ihren Persönlichkeitseigenschaften zwar nicht von Geführten des „Anti-Prototype“-Profils, weisen jedoch signifikant höhere Werte in den arbeitsrelevanten Verhaltensweisen auf. (3) Geführte, die zum Profil des „Moderate Prototype“ gehören, weisen die signifikant höchsten Werte in als positiv gesehenen, arbeitsrelevanten Verhaltensweisen und Persönlichkeitseigenschaften auf. Für drei Viertel der befragten Geführten zeigt sich die Rollenorientierung über einen Zeitraum von vier bis sechs Wochen zudem als konstant.

Die Studie verringert verschiedene bestehende Forschungslücken: Erstens wird die Rollenorientierung von Geführten quantitativ messbar gemacht. Damit unterstützt die Studie die Etablierung neuer beziehungsweise adaptierter Messinstrumente, um spezifische Geführteneigenschaften in der quantitativen Followershipforschung zu etablieren (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 749). Zweitens wird die Heterogenität der Rollenorientierung von Geführten belegt. Dies unterstreicht bestehende qualitative Erkenntnisse und trägt zu einem differenzierteren Verständnis von Geführten bei (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 558). Drittens wird die Verbindung der Rollenorientierung zu arbeitsbezogenen Eigenschaften (vgl. z. B. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 558; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 750) und Verhaltensweisen (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 98) aufgezeigt. Hiermit wird zudem die Bedeutung der Eigenschaft der Rollenorientierung für das Verhalten von Geführten belegt. Viertens werden erste Erkenntnisse zur zeitlichen Konstanz von Rollenorientierung geliefert (vgl. Carsten et al. 2010, S. 557). Fünftens werden auf Basis konzeptioneller Argumente und statistischer Belege Hinweise und Empfehlungen für die Notwendigkeit einer stärkeren konzeptionellen sowie empirischen Trennung von Impliziten Geführtentheorien und Rollenorientierungen von Geführten gegeben.

In **Kapitel 5** werden Motive von Geführten für das Äußern von Voice gegenüber den jeweiligen Führenden adressiert. Die Ergebnisse der Studie in Kapitel 5 zeigen auf, welche Motive Geführte haben, wenn Sie Voice gegenüber ihren Führenden äußern. Es lassen sich sechs verschiedene Motive identifizieren: kollegiale Hilfsbereitschaft, Reziprozität, organisationale Fürsorge,

Selbstschutz, das Bedürfnis hervorzustechen und das Bedürfnis nach Belohnung. Basierend auf diesen sechs Motiven wurden vier Profile identifiziert, die unterschiedliche Voice-Motiv-Typen darstellen: der vorsichtige Selbstdarsteller, der facettenreiche Voicer, der (organisational)-desinteressierte Voicer und der fürsorglich-selbstlose Voicer. Diese Voice-Motiv-Typen unterscheiden sich nicht nur in Bezug auf voice-relevante Eigenschaften (z. B. Extraversion), sondern auch hinsichtlich relevanter Verhaltensweisen (z. B. Wahrscheinlichkeit, Voice zu äußern). Die Unterschiede zeigen sich zwischen jeweils mindestens zwei Voice-Motiv-Typen. Die Ergebnisse der Studie reduzieren die bestehenden Forschungslücken, das bisher Motive für das Äußern von Voice fast ausschließlich konzeptionell (vgl. z. B. van Dyne/Ang/Botero 2003) und wenn empirisch, dann nur einzeln untersucht worden sind (vgl. Kim et al. 2013). Letzteres spiegelt nicht die vielfältigen, parallelen Motive wider, die Geführte haben, wenn sie Voice äußern (vgl. z. B. Klaas/Olson-Buchanan/Ward 2012, S. 328-329).

Zusätzlich werden in **Kapitel 5** auch die **Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende** adressiert. Mittels eines vignettenbasierten Quasi-Experiments wurde untersucht, wie Führende Voice wahrnehmen, wenn es von den zuvor ermittelten, unterschiedlichen Voice-Motiv-Typen geäußert wird. Dazu wurden vier ausgewählte Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen manipuliert, um die unterschiedlichen Voice-Motiv-Typen darzustellen. Es zeigt sich, dass Voice am wenigsten befürwortet wird, wenn es von einem Geführten mit überdurchschnittlicher Extraversion, unterdurchschnittlicher Verträglichkeit, überdurchschnittlicher Verantwortung für konstruktiven Wandel und überdurchschnittlicher Wahrscheinlichkeit, Voice zu äußern, geäußert wird. Da bei der Wahrnehmung von Voice durch Führende bisher nur singuläre Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen von Geführten betrachtet wurden (vgl. z. B. Grant 2013; Fuller et al. 2015), trägt die Studie zur Verringerung einer relevanten Forschungslücke bei. Denn obwohl Geführte parallele für Führende wahrnehmbare Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen haben (vgl. z. B. Dulebohn et al. 2012, S. 1717), wurde dies bisher vernachlässigt. Die vorliegende Studie deutet hierzu darauf hin, dass es besonders bei einer Kombination aus überdurchschnittlicher Extraversion mit unterdurchschnittlicher Verträglichkeit zu einer Unterstellung eigennütziger Motive durch den

Führenden kommen kann sowie dass einige Führende Geführte mit einer Kombination dieser Eigenschaften als unfreundlich wahrnehmen können.

Kapitel 6 widmet sich ebenso wie **Kapitel 7** in stärkerer Detailtiefe den wahrgenommenen Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende, indem jeweils auf ein **qualitatives Vorgehen mittels halbstrukturierter Interviews** zurückgegriffen wurde.

In der Studie in **Kapitel 6** wird untersucht, wie sich Geführtenverhalten auf Führende in extrem positiven und extrem negativen Interaktionen auswirkt. Dieser Fokus wurde gewählt, da Extremsituation meistens die stärksten Auswirkungen aufweisen, weil sie üblicherweise mit den stärksten Konsequenzen einhergehen (vgl. Taylor 1991). Es zeigen sich insgesamt sieben verschiedene Anlässe dafür, dass eine Interaktion als besonders positiv (z. B. Eigeninitiative des Geführten) beziehungsweise als besonders negativ (z. B. (wiederholt) schlechte Leistung des Geführten) wahrgenommen wird. Hinsichtlich der Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende lassen sich Auswirkungen auf vier unterschiedlichen Ebenen (emotionale Ebene, Einstellungsebene, Verhaltensebene, organisationale Aufwandsebene) mit unterschiedlicher Intensität von niedrig (z. B. individuelle Einstellungsbestätigung) bis hoch (z. B. globale Einstellungsänderung) identifizieren. Zudem zeigt sich, dass extrem positive Interaktionen (Eigeninitiative oder erfolgreiche, selbstständige Aufgabenerledigung des Geführten) ein Muster aufweisen, welches primär auf einem sich stückweise aufbauenden Vertrauen des Führenden in den Geführten basiert. Ebenso folgen negative Interaktionen (Eskalations-/Stressgespräche) einem Muster, welches entweder in einer konstant höheren Kontrolle des Geführten durch den Führenden resultiert oder darin, dass der Geführte die Organisation verlässt oder zeitnah verlassen soll.

Überdies unterscheiden sich die befragten Führenden systematisch darin, wie sehr sie versuchen, das Geführtenverhalten zu verstehen (niedrig, mittel, hoch), und in ihrer primär betrachteten Perspektive (eigene, organisationale oder Geführtenperspektive). Dabei lassen sich zwei Extremtypen identifizieren: der selbstzentrierte Führende (geringes Ausmaß des Versuchs das Geführtenverhalten zu verstehen, primäre Berücksichtigung seiner Perspektive)

und der empathische Führende (hohes Ausmaß des Versuchs das Geführtenverhalten zu verstehen, primäre Berücksichtigung der Geführtenperspektive). Zudem zeigt sich, dass Führende in Interaktionen, in denen sie keine Hierarchieunterschiede zwischen sich und ihrem Geführten wahrnehmen, die stärksten Auswirkungen wahrnehmen (u. a. globale Einstellungsänderung).

Die Studie in Kapitel 6 liefert umfangreiche Erkenntnisse zu Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende, über die bisher nur sehr wenig bekannt ist (vgl. z. B. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 732). Die meisten Studien lassen spezifische Aspekte des Führenden wie dessen Emotionen oder Einstellungen außen vor (vgl. z. B. Greene 1975; Wayne/Shore/Liden 1997). Die wenigen Studien, die solche führendenspezifischen Aspekte berücksichtigen, betrachten das Geführtenverhalten entweder lediglich eindimensional (harte Einflusstaktiken, vgl. Deluga 1991) oder dichotomisiert (aktive/passive Geführte; vgl. z. B. Schneider et al. 2014; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Die Studie adressiert diese fehlende Komplexität, durch detaillierte Einblicke in das Geführtenverhalten und dessen Auswirkungen auf Führende.

Kapitel 7 widmet sich spezifischen Auswirkungen und zwar den wahrgenommenen Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf das Stressempfinden von Führenden. Um die vielfältigen Formen, in denen Geführte und Führende interagieren, zu berücksichtigen, wurden Führende zu als besonders belastend empfundenen Face-to-face-Interaktionen, Videotelefonie-Interaktionen und E-Mail-Interaktionen interviewt. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass sich Stressoren, die Führende durch das Geführtenverhalten empfinden können, in drei Kategorien einteilen lassen: (1) einen Kontrollverlust des Führenden, (2) einen (potentiellen) Verlust wertvoller Ressourcen des Führenden und (3) eine Bedrohung der Führendenrolle. (1) Ein Kontrollverlust des Führenden äußert sich beispielsweise darin, dass der Führende den Geführten nicht einschätzen kann, weil der Geführte sich reserviert verhält. (2) Wertvolle Ressourcen, die der Führende (potentiell) verlieren kann, umfassen organisationale Ressourcen, wie Geld, oder auch private Ressourcen, wie einen Freund. (3) Eine Bedrohung der Führendenrolle kann beispielsweise ein persönlicher Angriff auf den Führenden sein. Zudem gibt es Stressoren, die allen drei Kategorien parallel angehören, wie eine langfristig schlechte Leistung von Geführten.

In Bezug auf Unterschiede in der Art der Interaktion (Face-to-face, Videotelefonie, E-Mail) zeigt sich, dass einige Stressoren nur im virtuellen Videotelefonie-Kontext auftreten, wie beispielsweise ein durch die Virtualität verursachtes unfreundliches Missverständnis. Zudem werden stressmildernde und stressfördernde Faktoren in Videotelefonie-Interaktionen identifiziert, wobei Führende überwiegend Videotelefonie-Interaktionen ähnlich wie persönliche Face-to-face-Interaktionen wahrnehmen. E-Mail-Konversationen nehmen Führende hingegen nur in sehr seltenen Fällen (z. B., wenn ein persönlicher Angriff in der Mail steht) als belastend wahr.

Darüber hinaus werden nicht-erstrebenswerte Erlebnisse im Arbeitsleben (undesirable work-life events) identifiziert. Diese thematisieren die Kündigung eines sehr leistungsschwachen Geführten und sind dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass mehrere Stressoren parallel auftreten.

Zudem wird ein prototypischer, resilienter Führender identifiziert. Dieser Führende hat sich, bedingt durch Lebens-, Arbeits- und Führungserfahrung, Maßnahmen zugelegt, um passend und schnell auf potentiell stressige Situationen reagieren zu können. Entsprechend nimmt der Führende Stressoren nur kurz war und kann nach empfundenem Stress sehr schnell wieder in einen nicht-gestressten Zustand zurück gelangen. Die Maßnahmen beinhalten unter anderem ein zeitnahes, direktes Eingreifen bei potentiellen Problemen.

Die Studie liefert Erkenntnisse zum Stressempfinden von Führenden durch Geführtenverhalten, über welches bisher nur sehr wenig bekannt ist (Ausnahme: Deluga 1991). Beiträge der Studie bestehen in der Identifikation spezifischer Stressoren aus der Perspektive von Führenden sowie im Aufzeigen der Entstehung dieser Stressoren und des Umgangs von Führenden mit selbigen. Zudem belegt die Studie prototypische Verläufe stressiger Interaktionen.

8.2 Übergreifende Beiträge zur wissenschaftlichen Diskussion über die Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung

8.2.1 Beiträge zur Erforschung der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung

Ziel der vorliegenden Arbeit war es, Erkenntnisse zur Rolle von Geführten in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung zu generieren. Die Arbeit setzt damit an den Forderungen der Followership-Forschung an, den Geführten als aktiven Teil der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung zu untersuchen (vgl. 1.1). Durch

diese Betrachtung konnten Erkenntnisse zu den Eigenschaften und dem Verhalten von Geführten sowie den Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende gewonnen werden. Darüber hinaus lassen sich weitere, **(studien-)übergreifende Beiträge** ableiten. Diese beziehen sich vor allem auf Führende, spezifischer auf ihre Wahrnehmung von Geführten (vgl. 8.2.3, 8.2.4) sowie auf Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf ihr Führungsverhalten (vgl. 8.2.2). Somit adressieren die übergreifenden Beiträge insbesondere den vor dem Hintergrund des rollenbasierten Ansatzes geforderten Perspektivwechsel, Führende als auf Geführte Reagierende zu betrachten (vgl. 2.2.4).

Zunächst werden übergreifende Beiträge bezogen auf die Erforschung der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung dargelegt. Diese Beiträge beziehen sich dabei auf Erkenntnisse über die **Macht(a)symmetrie** zwischen Geführten und Führenden sowie auf Erkenntnisse bezogen auf das **Vertrauen** von Führenden in ihre Geführten.

Die Beziehung zwischen Geführten und Führenden ist von einer Machtasymmetrie geprägt, in der Form, dass Führende hierarchisch höhergestellt sind als Geführte (vgl. 2.1). Diese Arbeit liefert Aufschluss darüber, was Führende empfinden können, wenn sie (temporär) **keine Machtasymmetrie** zwischen sich und dem Geführten wahrnehmen. Kapitel 6 zeigt, dass einige Führende (L1, L2, L10) Interaktionen mit Geführten als besonders positiv empfanden, wenn sie „nicht ein[en] Unterschied in der Hierarchie“ (L2) wahrnahmen und als Team ein hochwertiges Ergebnis erzielten. Dabei schilderten die Führenden starke Auswirkungen dieser Interaktion, indem sie unter anderem den Geführten in einigen Charakteristika als Vorbild für sich selbst sahen (z. B. „Er kommuniziert sehr klar, da kann ich mir eine Scheibe von ihm abschneiden.“, L2). Im Kontrast dazu verdeutlichen Erkenntnisse aus Kapitel 7, dass eine nicht wahrgenommene Machtasymmetrie zwischen Geführtem und Führendem auch eine stark negative Auswirkung auf Führende haben kann. Eine Interaktion in der ein Geführter eine Aufgabe „zurück delegiert“ (L13) hatte, wobei die Delegation von Aufgaben üblicherweise Führenden vorbehalten ist (vgl. z. B. Sloof/von Siemens 2021, S. 1), empfand der Führende als besonders belastend.

Insgesamt deutet dies darauf hin, dass ein freiwilliges Nichtausüben der eigenen Machtposition (sehr) positive Auswirkungen für Führende haben kann. Die Freiwilligkeit impliziert dabei, dass die Führenden jederzeit wieder ihre formale Rolle hätten einnehmen können, falls sie dies gewollt oder als notwendig erachtet hätten. Im Gegensatz dazu kann ein aus Perspektive der Führenden wahrgenommenes „erzwungenes“ Missachten der Machtposition Stress verursachen.

Da beides konträre Extremsituationen sind und Extremsituationen, wie auch diese Arbeit zeigt (vgl. Kapitel 6, 7), im Regelfall sehr starke Auswirkungen auf die Individuen, die diese Extremsituationen erleben, aufweisen, ist es von besonderer Bedeutung, ihre Implikationen für Führende (und Geführte) weiter zu untersuchen. Darüber hinaus zeigen die Erkenntnisse eine Forschungslücke in der bestehenden Followership- und Führungsforschung auf. Das (im positiven Fall) genannte Arbeiten auf Augenhöhe entspricht am ehesten dem Konzept der geteilten Führung (Shared Leadership). Geteilte Führung kann als ein Gruppenphänomen verstanden werden, bei dem mehrere Individuen gemeinsam eine Führungsposition innerhalb einer Gruppe ausführen (vgl. z. B. D’Innocenzo/Mathieu/Kukenberger 2016, S. 1967; Zhu et al. 2018; für verwandte Verständnisse, die beispielsweise die Teilung von Führung unter zwei Führenden verstehen, siehe Strategic Shared Leadership, vgl. z. B. Pitelis/Wagner 2019, S. 234). Ab welcher Anzahl von Individuen eine Gruppe vorliegt und (mindestens) wie viele Individuen eine Führungsposition übernehmen, wird meist nicht benannt (vgl. z. B. Pearce/Conger/Locke 2008; D’Innocenzo/Mathieu/Kukenberger 2016; Zhu et al. 2018, S. 836; Cook/Zill/Meyer 2020). Das heißt, theoretisch könnte auch eine geteilte Führung in einer Gruppe aus zwei Individuen (Geführter und Führender) beinhaltet sein. Allerdings wird bisher nicht betrachtet, welche formale Rolle Individuen vor der Übernahme der geteilten Führungsposition hatten. Die geschilderte Beziehung zwischen einem Führenden und einem Geführten wird also nicht (ausreichend) abgedeckt.

In ähnlicher Weise beschäftigt sich Forschung zur Emergenz von Führenden damit, wie ein Individuum, dass über keine formale Führungsposition verfügt, formalen Einfluss auf andere Individuen ausübt (vgl. z. B. Schneier 1978, S. 222-223; 2.1.2). Dabei werden ebenfalls Gruppen betrachtet und zusätzlich

außer Acht gelassen, dass das Individuum, das zum Führenden emergiert, auch formal Führende beeinflussen könnte (vgl. Acton et al. 2019). Letzterer Aspekt überrascht besonders, da Emergenz von Führenden üblicherweise im Kontext formaler organisationaler Strukturen stattfindet (vgl. Kozlowski et al. 2013, S. 585-586; Acton et al. 2019, S. 147). Damit eignet sich Forschung zur Emergenz von Führenden aktuell nicht dazu, die als besonders belastend wahrgenommene Interaktion zu erklären.

Insgesamt verdeutlichen die Erkenntnisse aus Kapitel 6 und 7 die Relevanz, die vorherige oder aktuelle formale Position (Geführter oder Führender) mit in die Forschung zu geteilter Führung und zur Führendenemergenz zu inkludieren. Eine solche Inkludierung kann dazu beitragen, differenziertere Erkenntnisse zu Veränderungen in der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung zu generieren. Auf diese Weise kann das für formale Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen untypische Phänomen, dass trotz formaler Machtasymmetrie (vgl. 2.1) keine Machtasymmetrie wahrgenommen wird, genauer erforscht werden.

Zudem zeigen die Studien in Kapitel 5, 6 und 7 die Relevanz des **Vertrauens** von Führenden in ihre Geführten auf. Die Studien in Kapitel 6 und 7 unterstreichen die Erkenntnisse von Hakimi, van Knippenberg und Giessner (2010), dass Führende (un)wahrscheinlicher Aufgaben an Geführte delegieren, wenn sie diesen (nicht) vertrauen. Darüber hinaus belegt die Studie in Kapitel 6, dass sich, nach wiederkehrenden positiven Interaktionen, das Vertrauen eines Führenden in einen Geführten sehr steigern und dadurch vielfältige positive Auswirkungen auf den Führenden haben kann (z. B. in Form einer geringeren Arbeitsbelastung). Die Studie in Kapitel 5 deutet zudem darauf hin, dass Vertrauen auch relevant dafür sein kann, ob Führende den Vorschlag eines Geführten wertschätzen (z. B. „[kein] 100%iges Vertrauen“; „Vertrauen auf Erfahrung des Mitarbeiters“).

Dass das Vertrauen der Geführten in Führende eine Auswirkung auf die Leistung der Geführten hat, ist bekannt (vgl. z. B. Burke et al. 2007; Zhu et al. 2013). Die im Rahmen dieser Arbeit generierten Erkenntnisse deuten auf eine identische Wirkung aus Perspektive der Führenden hin. Diese wird allerdings bisher in der Forschung nicht betrachtet. Zwar wird vereinzelt

gegenseitiges Vertrauen untersucht. Hierbei liegt der Fokus aber auf dem Geführten und wie dieser durch den Führenden wahrgenommen wird (vgl. z. B. Kim/Wang/Cheng 2018). Die vorliegenden Erkenntnisse dieser Arbeit verdeutlichen somit die Bedeutung einer Untersuchung der (leistungsrelevanten) Auswirkungen des Vertrauens von Führenden in Geführte auf die Führenden selbst.

8.2.2 Beiträge zu Auswirkungen von Geführtenverhalten auf das Führungsverhalten von Führenden

Forschung zur **Entwicklung von Führenden** (leader development) beschäftigt sich primär mit dem Erwerb individueller Kompetenzen, die zu einer besseren Ausführung der Führungstätigkeit beitragen (vgl. Day/Dragoni 2015, S. 135). Dabei ist bereits belegt, dass Erkenntnisse, die aus beruflichen Erfahrungen gewonnen werden können (vgl. z. B. McCall/Lombardo/Morrison 1988), einen Anteil an diesen Entwicklungen haben (vgl. z. B. Arvey et al. 2007). In diesen erkenntnisgenerierenden beruflichen Erfahrungen wird allerdings bisher der Einfluss des Geführtenverhalten auf die Entwicklung von Führenden ausgeklammert (vgl. McCall 2010, S. 4; Day et al. 2014, S. 79-80; Day/Dragoni 2015, S. 145-146; Fischer/Dietz/Antonakis 2017, S. 1734). Dies zeigt sich exemplarisch am Überblicksartikel von McCall (2010), der als Einflussfaktoren auf die Entwicklung von Führenden zwar auf Personen („people“, S. 4) verweist, diese aber nahezu immer („almost always“, S. 4) als „bosses or superiors“ (S. 4) benennt.

Die Studien aus den Kapiteln 6 und 7 liefern dahingehend Beiträge: In Kapitel 6 zeigt sich, dass Führende sowohl aus extrem positiven als auch aus extrem negativen Interaktionen mit Geführten Erkenntnisse generieren, die sich auf ihr Verhalten als Führende auswirken. Diese Auswirkungen variieren, und können dabei eine Veränderung des Führungsverhaltens gegenüber einem einzelnen Geführten („individual change“, z. B. einen einzelnen Geführten stärker kontrollieren) oder die Veränderungen des Verhaltens gegenüber Geführten als Gruppe zur Folge haben („occupational collective change“, z. B. in der Probezeit bei neuen Geführten kritischer sein). Kapitel 7 verdeutlicht, dass einige Führende auf Basis ihrer beruflichen Erfahrungen Maßnahmen entwickeln, um mit potentiell als belastend wahrgenommenen Faktoren

am Arbeitsplatz umgehen zu können. Diese Maßnahmen beziehen sich unter anderem auch auf Geführtenverhalten. So kann eine Maßnahme darin bestehen, problematisches Geführtenverhalten zeitnah und in einem persönlichen, nicht virtuellen Gespräch, zu thematisieren. Im Extremfall können Führende durch ihre im Arbeitskontext gesammelten Erfahrungen eine weitreichende Resilienz gegenüber als belastend wahrgenommenen Faktoren am Arbeitsplatz aufbauen. Insgesamt verdeutlichen beide Studien die Relevanz von (Erkenntnissen aus) beruflichen Erfahrungen mit unterschiedlichem Geführtenverhalten für die Entwicklung von Führenden. Damit geben die Studien erste Impulse für weitere Forschung im insgesamt noch jungen und wenig erforschten Feld der Entwicklung von Führenden (vgl. Day et al. 2014, S. 80; Day/Dragoni 2015, S. 134).

Zudem liefert diese Arbeit einen Beitrag zum Verständnis des Führendenverhaltens in Form der **Intensität der Kontrolle** (closeness of supervision) und des Ausmaßes des **Aufzeigens von Strukturen** (initiating structure; besteht unter anderem darin, dass Führende Aufgaben einschränken und präzisieren; vgl. Greene 1975, S. 188). Die Studien in Kapitel 6 und 7 dieser Arbeit zeigen, dass (wiederholt) schlechte Leistung von Geführten zu erhöhter Kontrolle und vermehrtem Aufzeigen von Strukturen führen kann. Damit bestätigen sie bereits bestehende Erkenntnisse (vgl. Lowin/Craig 1968; Farris/Lim 1969; Greene 1975). Darüber hinaus zeigen die Studien allerdings auch, dass, je nach Kontext, bei schlechter Leistung von Geführten die Intensität der Kontrolle und das Aufzeigen von Strukturen nicht zwangsläufig zunehmen müssen. Stattdessen kann (wiederholt) schlechte Leistung von Geführten auch dazu führen, dass Führende die Intensität der Kontrolle und das Aufzeigen von Strukturen gegenüber diesen Geführten (1) temporär verringern bis (2) dauerhaft (nahezu) einstellen.

(1) Kapitel 7 zeigt, dass Führende, die zeitnah auf die Erledigung einer Aufgabe angewiesen waren oder die (erneute) Erklärung der Aufgabe als aufwändiger einschätzten als sie zu erledigen, die Aufgabe selbst übernahmen (vgl. 7.5.3). Damit entfielen für diese entsprechende Aufgabe die Kontrolle und das Aufzeigen von Strukturen. Beides reduzierte sich also temporär. Die

Erfahrung der schlechten Leistung des Geführten führte allerdings längerfristig üblicherweise dazu, dass Führende den Geführten insgesamt mehr kontrollierten und stärkere Strukturen aufzeigten.

(2) Kapitel 6 zeigt, dass sich, wenn Geführte immer wieder und ohne Aussicht auf Besserung schlechte Leistung zeigten, Führende dazu entschlossen, den Geführten zu entlassen oder zu versetzen. Im Anschluss an diese Entscheidung stellten sie sowohl die Kontrolle als auch das Aufzeigen von Strukturen dauerhaft (nahezu) ein, indem sie dem Geführten bestmöglich aus dem Weg gingen, bis dieser die Organisation verließ.

Erklären lassen sich beide Erkenntnisse damit, dass Führende auf die (qualitativ angemessene) Erledigung von Aufgaben durch Geführte angewiesen sind, wodurch eine Abhängigkeit der Führenden von Geführten besteht (vgl. z. B. Sloof/von Siemens 2021, S. 1; Tripathi 2021). Das Übernehmen einer zuvor an den Geführten delegierten Aufgabe hebt für diese spezifische Aufgabe die Abhängigkeit wieder auf. Kündigt oder versetzt ein Führender einen Geführten, wird die Abhängigkeit ebenfalls (zeitnah) aufgehoben. Bis dahin besteht zwar insgesamt noch eine Abhängigkeit, diese ist aber gering. Zur Erklärung lassen sich Argumente von Oc und Bahshur (2013) zum sozialen Einfluss Geführter auf Führende auf das Abhängigkeitsverhältnis übertragen. Erstens verfügt der Geführte über keine für den Führenden zukünftig wertvollen Ressourcen mehr, sowohl durch seine geringe Leistung als auch den baldigen Weggang. Zweitens steht er nicht länger in engem Kontakt mit dem Führenden, da dieser ihn meidet. Dies verringert die Abhängigkeit des Führenden vom Geführten erheblich (vgl. Oc/Bashshur 2013, S. 924-926). Einschränkend ist jedoch anzumerken, dass Oc und Bashshurs (2013) Argumente nicht auf alle Erkenntnisse aus Kapitel 6 zutreffen, da Geführte, die die Organisation verlassen, einen (hohen) einstellungsbezogenen Einfluss auf Führende haben können (vgl. 6.5.3, 6.5.4; L6, L9, L11, L19; L20). Ein Beispiel für diesen hohen einstellungsbezogenen Einfluss ist, dass ein Führender (L11) vor der Erfahrung mit einem schlussendlich gekündigten Geführten der Ansicht war, es läge an seinem Umgang mit den Geführten, ob die Organisation erfolgreich ist. Nach der Erfahrung hat er nun die Einstellung, es läge nicht nur an ihm, sondern auch an den Geführten.

Insgesamt liefern beide Studien Erkenntnisse zur Abhängigkeit der Führenden von Geführten sowie zu potentiellen Maßnahmen, die Führende ergreifen, um die Abhängigkeit zu verringern (Aufgabe selbst übernehmen, Geführten entlassen/versetzen, Geführtem aus dem Weg gehen). Diese Maßnahmen haben Auswirkungen auf das Führendenverhalten, bezogen auf die Intensität der Kontrolle und das Ausmaß des Aufzeigens von Strukturen. Zudem unterstreichen die Erkenntnisse beider Studien die Bedeutung einer kontextspezifischen Betrachtung des Führendenverhaltens (z. B. hinsichtlich der Leistung des Geführten, der Dauer der (geringen) Leistung oder der Dringlichkeit einer Aufgabe). Verhaltensweisen von Geführten (z. B. ihre Leistung) werden in der kontextspezifischen Führungsforschung („contextual leadership“) allerdings bisher mehrheitlich übersehen (vgl. Oc 2018, S. 220; 231). Die generierten Erkenntnisse unterstreichen die Bedeutung ihrer Berücksichtigung.

8.2.3 Beiträge zur Beurteilung der Eigeninitiative von Geführten aus Sicht von Führenden

Eigeninitiative gilt auf Basis konzeptionell-theoretischer Überlegungen als eine primär positive Geführteneigenschaft (vgl. z. B. Kelley 2008, S. 8). Allerdings fehlen bislang empirische Untersuchungen, die **Eigeninitiative von Geführten aus Sicht von Führenden** beurteilt. Die qualitative Studie in Kapitel 6 stützt die dominierenden konzeptionell-theoretischen Überlegungen und zeigt, dass Eigeninitiative der Geführten von Führenden als positiv empfunden werden kann. So schilderten einige Führende besonders positiv wahrgenommene Interaktionen, in denen ein Geführter Eigeninitiative gezeigt hatte. Dabei wertschätzten die Führenden die Eigeninitiative, beispielsweise in Form der eigenständigen Ausarbeitung einer Idee, selbst wenn die Ausarbeitung qualitativ noch verbesserungsfähig war. Beispielsweise, wenn ein eigeninitiativ entwickeltes Konzept inhaltlich noch angepasst und detaillierter ausgearbeitet werden musste (L4).

Gleichzeitig zeigt die quantitative Studie in Kapitel 5, dass Eigeninitiative, in Form eines geäußerten Vorschlags, von Führenden nicht immer positiv wahrgenommen wird. Wenn ein Vorschlag von einem Geführten geäußert wurde, der eine unterdurchschnittliche Verträglichkeit in Verbindung mit einem energetischen und mitteilungsbedürftigen Charakter (überdurchschnittliche

Extraversion und überdurchschnittliche Wahrscheinlichkeit, Voice zu äußern) aufwies, maßen einige Führende dem Vorschlag wenig Wert bei. Die geringe Wertschätzung resultierte dabei unter anderem aus Wahrnehmungen, dass der Geführte „unfreundlich", „[zu] forsch" und ein „Besserwisser" sei. Zwei Führende gaben direkt an, den Geführten nicht zu mögen („Ich mag ihn nicht."; „Ich mag keine Streber."). Die Studie zeigt allerdings ebenfalls, dass nur verhältnismäßig geringer Teil der befragten Führenden (15,8 %) den geäußerten Vorschlag dieses Geführten signifikant weniger wertschätze. Andere Führende nahmen also aufgrund der Eigenschaften bzw. der Verhaltensweise des Geführten dessen Eigeninitiative nicht automatisch negativ war.

Hinsichtlich der als durchgängig positiv wahrgenommenen Eigeninitiative in der Interviewstudie (vgl. Kapitel 6) bietet die Zusatzerhebung eine Woche nach den Interviews weiteren Erklärungsgehalt. Darin bewerteten die Führenden die in den Interviews geschilderten Geführten hinsichtlich Leistung und empfundener Sympathie. Es zeigte sich, dass die Geführten, die in den Schilderungen der Führenden Eigeninitiative gezeigt hatten, den Führenden mindestens nicht unsympathisch, in den meisten Fällen sogar sympathisch, waren. Aufgrund der qualitativen Natur der Studie und der dadurch bedingten geringen Stichprobengröße, lässt sich daraus keine Gesetzmäßigkeit ableiten. Allerdings ist es in Kombination mit den Erkenntnissen aus Kapitel 5 plausibel, anzunehmen, dass die Führenden andere Situationen, in denen ihnen unsympathische Geführte Eigeninitiative zeigten, nicht als so positiv wahrnahmen und entsprechend im Rahmen der Interviews auch nicht schilderten.

Dass Sympathie beziehungsweise das verwandte Mögen („liking") die Wahrnehmung von Führenden beeinflussen kann, ist bekannt. So ist beispielsweise belegt, dass Führende die Leistung von Geführten positiver bewerten, wenn sie diese mögen (vgl. Wayne/Ferris 1990). Dass Antipathie aber auch zu einer geringeren Wertschätzung der Eigeninitiative führen kann ist eine neue Erkenntnis. Bisher ist lediglich bekannt, dass Führende Eigeninitiative als negativ wahrnehmen können, wenn sie sich dadurch in ihrer Position bedroht fühlen (vgl. Urbach/Fay 2018) oder wenn sie ihr Image vor einer Gruppe Geführter als bedroht ansehen (vgl. Isaakyan et al. 2021). Die letztgenannte Option entfällt, da in dem in Kapitel 5 verwendeten Szenario eine Situation dargestellt wurde, in der keine weiteren Geführten waren. Weder das Szenario

noch die Anmerkungen der befragten Führenden lassen zudem darauf schließen, dass eine potentielle Bedrohung der Position zu der geringeren Wertschätzung der Eigeninitiative führte.

In Summe zeigen die Erkenntnisse aus den Studien der Kapitel 5 und 6 somit, dass Antipathie die Wahrnehmung von Eigeninitiative negativ beeinflussen kann. Hinter dieser negativen Beeinflussung können mehrere potentielle Wahrnehmungsverzerrungen stehen, speziell die Bestätigungsverzerrung („confirmation bias“) oder auch der Teufelshörner-Effekt („horns effect“). Die Bestätigungsverzerrung ist eine Verzerrung, die dazu führt, dass sich originär bestehende Annahmen, beispielsweise über einen Geführten, bestätigen (vgl. z. B. Behrendt/Matz/Göritz 2017, S. 232). Der Teufelshörner-Effekt ist eine negative Verzerrung aufgrund einer überstrahlenden negativen Eigenschaft, beispielsweise einer Persönlichkeitseigenschaft (vgl. z. B. Bligh et al. 2007, S. 536). Bezüglich zweitem ist allerdings einschränkend anzumerken, dass die hier generierten Erkenntnisse auf eine (negativ wahrgenommene) Kombination von Eigenschaften und keine einzelne Eigenschaft hindeuten. Abgesehen von diesen Wahrnehmungsverzerrungen ist es auch möglich, dass Führende den Vorschlag aus Antipathie heraus absichtlich schlechter bewerten. Auf letzteres deuten Erkenntnisse aus Kapitel 5 hin. Eine absichtlich schlechte Bewertung aus Antipathie könnte dazu dienen, den Geführten für seine unsympathische(n) Eigenschaft(en) indirekt zu bestrafen beziehungsweise um zu signalisieren, dass der Vorschlag des Geführten aus Sicht des jeweiligen Führenden unerwünscht ist (vgl. z. B. Podsakoff et al. 2006, S. 135).

8.2.4 Beiträge zu destruktivem Geführtenverhalten aus Sicht von Führenden

Destruktive Führung ist dadurch charakterisiert, dass Führende systematisch und wiederholt ein Verhalten zeigen, welches gegen legitime Organisationsinteressen verstößt, diese untergräbt und/oder behindert, indem unter anderem Ziele, Ressourcen und/oder Motivation, Wohlbefinden oder Arbeitszufriedenheit von Geführten untergraben oder behindert werden (vgl. Einarsen/Aasland/Skogstad 2007, S. 208). Destruktive Führung ist ein etabliertes Forschungsfeld in der Führungsliteratur (vgl. z. B. Schyns/Schilling 2013),

welches insgesamt stark Führende und ihr Verhalten fokussiert. Deshalb wird eine ganzheitlichere Betrachtung von destruktiver Führung gefordert, die zum Beispiel auch für destruktive Führung empfängliche Geführte berücksichtigt (vgl. Thoroughgood et al. 2018). Empfängliche Geführte meint, dass destruktive Führung nur langfristig bestehen und sich negativ auswirken kann, wenn Geführte die destruktive Führung billigen oder diese sogar aktiv unterstützen (vgl. Thoroughgood et al. 2018, S. 636). Ein Aspekt der dabei allerdings ausgeklammert wird ist, dass **destruktives Verhalten** auch **von Geführten** ausgeben kann. Selbst in konzeptionellen Arbeiten aus der Followershipliteratur, die ihren Fokus auf Geführte legen, wird in Bezug auf destruktives Verhalten üblicherweise ausschließlich vom Führenden gesprochen (vgl. z. B. Kelley 2008, S. 12; Crossman/Crossman 2011, S. 489).

Dies ist insbesondere vor dem Hintergrund überraschend, dass es einen umfangreichen Literaturstrang zu kontraproduktivem Arbeitsverhalten gibt, welcher vor allem geführte Mitarbeiter fokussiert (vgl. z. B. Yang/Diefendorff 2009; Holtz/Harold 2013; Schyns/Schilling 2013; Ford et al. 2018). Kontraproduktives Arbeitsverhalten kann allgemein als Verhalten bezeichnet werden, welches der Organisation oder den Organisationsmitgliedern schadet (vgl. Fox/Spector/Miles 2001, S. 292). Die Organisationsmitglieder werden allerdings üblicherweise allgemein als Mitarbeiter, ohne Spezifikation ihrer organisationalen Rolle, betrachtet (vgl. Dalal 2005). Somit bleibt destruktives Geführtenverhalten, also destruktive Verhaltensweisen von Geführten gegenüber ihren Führenden, bisher in der Forschung außen vor. Und dies, obwohl kontraproduktives Arbeitsverhalten auch das Nichtbefolgen von Anweisungen des Führenden beinhalten kann (vgl. Bennett/Robinson 2000, S. 360).

Wenn man die eingangs genannte Definition destruktiver Führung nach Einarsen, Aasland und Skogstad (2007, vgl. S. 208) auf destruktives Geführtenverhalten überträgt, müssen folgende Aspekte gegeben sein: Das Verhalten muss (1) systematisch und (2) wiederholt sein, (3) gegen legitime Organisationsinteressen verstoßen, diese untergraben oder behindern, indem (4) unter anderem Ziele, Ressourcen und/oder Motivation, Wohlbefinden oder Arbeitszufriedenheit von Führenden untergraben oder behindert werden. Diesbezüglich liefern die beiden Studien in Kapitel 6 und 7 Erkenntnisse.

In Kapitel 6 zeigt sich, dass die wiederholt schlechte Leistung von Geführten, die zu sogenannten Eskalations- beziehungsweise Stressgesprächen führte (vgl. 6.5.4) einem solchen destruktiven Geführtenverhalten entspricht. Der Geführte zeigte (1) systematisch schlechtes Verhalten, da er entweder mehrfach Besserung versprochen hatte, diese jedoch ausblieb, oder er sich mehrfach uneinsichtig ob seiner schlechten Leistung zeigte, so dass es schlussendlich zu dem Eskalationsgespräch kam. Zudem geschah die schlechte Leistung bzw. das sich nicht bessernde Verhalten (2) mehrfach wiederholend. Das Verhalten des Geführten behinderte (3) das legitime Organisationsinteresse auf Basis der Leistung des Mitarbeiters einen organisationsrelevanten Output zu generieren. Die Behinderung des legitimen Organisationsinteresses geschah dabei, indem (4) Ziele der Organisation, dadurch dass die eingeplante Arbeitsleistung nicht erbracht wurde, behindert wurden. Zusätzlich wurden die Motivation, durch unter anderem Resignation, und Wohlbefinden sowie Arbeitszufriedenheit, zum Beispiel durch Frust, Verzweiflung und beruflichen Mehraufwand, der jeweiligen Führenden behindert.

In Kapitel 7 wird ebenfalls destruktives Geführtenverhalten in zweien der nicht-erstrebenswerten Erlebnisse im Arbeitsleben von Führenden (vgl. 7.5.5) deutlich. Entsprechend werden in diesen geschilderten Erlebnissen erneut die vier Aspekte der auf destruktives Geführtenverhalten übertragenen Definition destruktiver Führung nach Einarsen, Aasland und Skogstad (2007, vgl. S. 208) deutlich: In einer der Situationen zeigt ein Geführter (1) systematisch, das heißt dauerhaft eine schlechte Leistung bzw. keine Einsicht, wenn er auf diese angesprochen wird. Dies geschieht (2) wiederholt. Dadurch behindert der Geführte (3) das legitime Organisationsinteresse, ein produktives Miteinander zu schaffen, (4) indem unter anderem ein Verlust finanzieller Ressourcen stattgefunden hat. Der Verlust finanzieller Ressourcen resultiert daraus, dass Prozesse für den Geführten angepasst worden sind, damit dieser eine bessere Arbeitsleistung erbringt. Diese Prozessanpassungen waren jedoch ohne Erfolg, so dass die Investition in die Prozessanpassungen ohne Gegenwert geblieben ist. Zudem ist für Kollegen des Geführten Mehraufwand entstanden, unter anderem indem diese sich auf die neuen Prozesse einstellen mussten. Der Führende des Geführten hatte ebenfalls aus mehreren Gründen

einen Mehraufwand, unter anderem durch die Veranlassung der Prozessänderungen und die Dokumentationspflichten im Rahmen der letztlich erfolgten Kündigung des Geführten.

In der zweiten Situation zeigt ein Geführter (1) systematisch, das heißt in allen Angelegenheiten, die seine Kündigung betreffen, ein unkooperatives Verhalten. Dieses unkooperative Verhalten geschieht (2) wiederholt. Durch dieses Verhalten behindert der Geführte (3) das legitime Organisationsinteresse, den Geführten ohne vermeidbaren Mehraufwand zu entlassen, (4) indem Ressourcen, in dem Falle Geld, gefährdet werden und zusätzlich für den Führenden zusätzlicher, nicht eingeplanter Arbeitsaufwand anfällt.

Insgesamt zeigen beide Studien, das destruktives Geführtenverhalten (vgl. z. B. Marcus et al. 2016) darin bestehen kann, eine wiederholt schlechte Arbeitsleitung zu erbringen. Dies führt dazu, dass eine Person (der Geführte), die im Rahmen der organisationalen Abläufe eingeplant ist, nicht die erwartete Leistung erbringt. Entsprechend entsteht ein Mehraufwand für den Führenden und die Kollegen des Geführten, was zudem einem mittelbaren monetären Verlust für die Organisation entspricht, da zusätzliche Arbeit von anderen aufgefangen werden muss. Gleichzeitig kann es aber auch zu unmittelbaren monetären Verlusten kommen, beispielsweise durch nicht-erfolgreiche Investitionen in Prozessänderungen. Darüber hinaus ist es ebenfalls plausibel, wenn auch nicht in den obigen Situationen geschildert, dass schlechte Arbeitsleistung auch monetäre Verluste für eine Organisation verursachen kann, indem ein Geführter durch seine schlechte Arbeitsleistung Werkzeuge oder Büromaterialen beschädigt oder Fehler in Abrechnungen oder Budgetallokationen verursacht.

Darüber hinaus zeigen beide Studien, dass uneinsichtiges (Verhalten gegenüber der eigenen, schlechten Leistung) bzw. unkooperatives Verhalten (im Falle einer Kündigung) als destruktives Geführtenverhalten angesehen werden kann. Diese Verhaltensweisen können auch als kontraproduktives Arbeitsverhalten interpretiert werden, da es dem Nichtbefolgen von Anweisungen des Führenden entspricht (vgl. Bennett/Robinson 2000). Dies deutet ins-

gesamt auf eine fehlende Trennschärfe zwischen kontraproduktivem „Arbeitsverhalten“ und kontraproduktivem „Geführtenverhalten“/destruktivem Geführtenverhalten hin.

Zur Etablierung einer klareren Trennschärfe zwischen kontraproduktivem Arbeitsverhalten und destruktivem Geführtenverhalten liefert die vorliegende Arbeit einen ersten Hinweis. Die vorherig aufgezeigten Erkenntnisse erfüllen die vier Charakteristika der eingangs von destruktiver Führung übertragenen Definition auf destruktives Geführtenverhalten (vgl. Einarsen/Aasland/Skogstad 2007, S. 208). Diese Definition berücksichtigt explizit die Auswirkungen auf den Führenden. In Abgrenzung dazu könnte kontraproduktives Arbeitsverhalten losgelöst von Führenden betrachtet werden. Letzteres wird auch dadurch unterstützt, dass sich in einer vielverwendeten Skala (u. a. Jahanzeb/Bouckenooghe/Baig 2022) von Bennett und Robinson (2000) zu kontraproduktivem Arbeitsverhalten, nur eines von 19 Items auf das Verhalten des Geführten gegenüber dem jeweiligen Führenden bezieht („neglected to follow your boss’s instructions“, S. 360). Die anderen 18 Items thematisieren allgemeine arbeitsrelevante Verhaltensweisen, was sich an allgemeinen Formulierungen wie Verhalten gegenüber „someone at work“ (S. 360) oder allgemeinen Bezügen zur Arbeit wie „worked slower“ (S. 360) oder „put little effort into your work“ (S. 360) zeigt. Dies unterstreicht, dass kontraproduktives Arbeitsverhalten primär nicht das Verhalten von Geführten gegenüber Führenden fokussiert beziehungsweise zum Zwecke einer klareren Abgrenzung nicht fokussieren sollte.

Dahingehend sollte destruktives Geführtenverhalten einen klaren Bezug zum Geführten aufweisen und die vier Charakteristika der Definition von Einarsen, Aasland und Skogstad (2007, vgl. S. 208) aufweisen. Dies würde zusätzlich dabei helfen, destruktives Geführtenverhalten detailliert zu erfassen. Eine solche detaillierte Erfassung ist zudem vor dem Hintergrund relevant, dass die Studien in den Kapiteln 6 und 7 zeigen, dass auch eher alltägliches Geführtenverhalten (bspw. eine einmalig schlechte Leistung des Geführten) einen möglichen Stressor darstellen kann. Dies legt eine potenziell noch stärkere belastende Wirkung für destruktives Geführtenverhalten nahe, da dieses entsprechend der Definition systematisch und wiederholend sein muss.

8.2.5 Beiträge zur Methodik in der empirischen Followershipforschung

Aktuell wird in der empirischen Followershipforschung bemängelt, dass nur wenige validierte **Messinstrumente** vorliegen, um Eigenschaften, Verhalten und Verhaltensauswirkungen der Geführten zu messen (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 749). Abhilfe können für eine Studie eigens entwickelte (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 740) oder adaptierte (vgl. Leroy et al. 2015, S. 1686) Messinstrumente liefern. Allerdings finden sich in solchen Fällen selten genaue Informationen zur inhaltlichen Generierung oder Adaption der Messinstrumente (vgl. Leroy et al. 2015; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018). Ebenso werden solche Messinstrumente teilweise nur zu einem Zeitpunkt mittels Datenanalyse statistisch überprüft (vgl. Leroy et al. 2015). Es ist plausibel anzunehmen, dass, durch diese verhältnismäßig geringe Überprüfbarkeit der Messinstrumente, eine weitere Verwendung und Etablierung der Messinstrumente in der Followershipforschung erschwert wird. Diese Arbeit liefert dahingehend einen Beitrag, indem in Kapitel 4 eine Skala zur Messung Impliziter Geführtentheorien inhaltlich und statistisch (über zwei Zeitpunkte) analysiert und für die Messung von Rollenorientierungen von Geführten adaptiert wird. Die Adaption beinhaltet einen modifizierten Einleitungstext sowie die Berücksichtigung ausgewählter Items. Insgesamt ergibt sich eine Faktorstruktur aus acht Items, die sich auf drei (bereits bekannte) Dimensionen (Enthusiasmus, Fleiß, Good citizen) verteilen. Zudem werden auf Basis der Analysen Empfehlungen für eine potentielle weitere Adaption beziehungsweise einen Ausbau des Messinstruments gegeben. In Kapitel 5 wird überdies eine Skala zur Messung von Organizational-Citizenship-Motiven auf Voice-Motive von Geführten übertragen. Dabei wird eine Auswahl relevanter Items in eine voice-spezifische Faktorstruktur mit neuen Dimensionen gebracht und statistisch über zwei Zeitpunkte überprüft. Dabei ergeben sich insgesamt fünf Dimensionen (kollegiale Hilfsbereitschaft, Reziprozität, organisationale Fürsorge, Selbstschutz, Bedürfnis hervorzustechen, Bedürfnis nach Belohnung), die aus je zwei bis drei Items bestehen. Insgesamt unterstützt diese Arbeit damit zukünftige Followershipforschung, indem Rollenorientierungen und Voice-Motive von Geführten quantitativ messbar gemacht wurden.

Gleichzeitig tragen die in Kapitel 4 und 5 dargestellten Studien zur Einführung der personenzentrierten Methode der **Latenten Profilanalyse** in der Followershipforschung bei. Obwohl verschiedene Forschungsrichtungen des organisationalen Verhaltens bereits auf diese Methode zurückgreifen (vgl. z. B. Crocetti et al. 2014; Meyer/Morin 2016; Mäkikangas 2018), hat sie bisher noch keine breite Anwendung in der Followershipforschung gefunden (Ausnahme: Coyle/Foti 2022). Dies kann auch an dem beschriebenen Mangel an Messinstrumenten liegen. Jedoch ist eine Nutzung der Latenten Profilanalyse in der Followershipforschung aus zwei Gründen vielversprechend: Erstens macht die Analyse verschiedener Eigenschaften von Geführten einen wesentlichen Teil der (empirischen) Followershipforschung aus (vgl. z. B. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 89). Eine möglichst realistische Betrachtung von Geführteneigenschaften erfordert eine simultane Berücksichtigung verschiedener Eigenschaften (vgl. z. B. Dulebohn et al. 2012, S. 1717). Dafür ist die Latente Profilanalyse prädestiniert, da sie es ermöglicht, simultan verschiedene Variablen personenzentriert zu erfassen (vgl. Oberski 2016; Spurk et al. 2020). Zweitens ist die Latente Profilanalyse anderen Analysemethoden wie der Clusteranalyse, die ebenfalls simultan mehrere Variablen personenzentriert erfassen, überlegen. So werden Profilzugehörigkeiten unter anderem auf Basis von Wahrscheinlichkeiten und somit differenzierter als bei Clusteranalysen ermittelt (vgl. Spurk et al. 2020). Durch die Anwendung der Latenten Profilanalyse in den Kapiteln 4 und 5 werden potentielle Anwendungsmöglichkeiten ebenso wie das statistische Vorgehen über einen (Kapitel 5) beziehungsweise zwei Zeitpunkte (Kapitel 4) im Feld der Followershipforschung aufgezeigt.

Darüber hinaus wird in der Followershipforschung eine Untersuchung von weiteren **Kontrollvariablen** gefordert, die Einfluss auf die Rollenorientierung und das Verhalten von Geführten haben können (vgl. Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 750). Diese Arbeit liefert diesbezüglich einen Beitrag, indem in Kapitel 4 ermittelt wird, dass Geführte unterschiedlicher Rollenorientierung sich über beide Zeitpunkte mindestens zwischen je zwei Profilen signifikant in den erhobenen Eigenschaften (u. a. Gewissenhaftigkeit) und Verhaltensweisen (u. a. Hilfsbereitschaft gegenüber Kollegen) unterscheiden. Somit bieten die erhobenen Variablen einen zusätzlichen Erklärungsgehalt,

so dass sie als Kontrollvariablen für weitere Forschung von Relevanz sind. Einzig ausgenommen sind die ebenfalls erhobene Verträglichkeit und das Voice Behavior, welches nur zu einem Zeitpunkt Signifikanz aufweist. Kapitel 5 zeigt in sehr ähnlicher Weise, dass sich Geführte mit unterschiedlichen Voice-Motiv-Strukturen in allen berücksichtigten Eigenschaften und Verhaltensweisen mindestens zwischen je zwei Profilen signifikant unterscheiden (u. a. Offenheit für Erfahrung, Häufigkeit von Voiceäußerungen).

Insgesamt unterstreichen damit beide Studien die Relevanz der Berücksichtigung allgemeiner Persönlichkeitseigenschaften, hier in Form der Big Five und der Core Self-Evaluation Traits. Dies bestätigt die Annahme von Carsten, Uhl-Bien und Huang (2018), dass insbesondere Persönlichkeitseigenschaften als (Kontroll-)variablen geeignet sein können (vgl. S. 750).

Darüber hinaus zeigen beide Studien, dass forschungsthemenspezifische Verhaltensvariablen (z. B. Häufigkeit von Voiceäußerungen bei der Analyse von Voice-Motiv-Strukturen) üblicherweise ebenfalls einen zusätzlichen Erklärungsgehalt liefern. Mögliche, kontextuelle Variablen sollten daher im Vorfeld systematisch durchdacht und nach Auswahl entsprechend der Relevanz berücksichtigt werden.

Im Einklang mit den Erkenntnissen von Carsten, Uhl-Bien und Huang (2018) bieten zudem die erhobenen demographischen Variablen in beiden Studien (u. a. Alter und Geschlecht) keinen zusätzlichen Erklärungsgehalt. Zwar zeigt sich eine Ausnahme in der Studie in Kapitel 4, in der zu einem Zeitpunkt ein Profil das signifikant beruflich unerfahrenste ist. Jedoch zeigt sich diese Signifikanz nur zu einem der zwei Erhebungszeitpunkte, weshalb hieraus keine Systematik abgeleitet werden kann. Die (so gut wie ausschließlich) nicht signifikanten demographischen Variablen können auf eine insgesamt vorliegende Tendenz in der Leader- und Followershipforschung zurückzuführen sein, demographische Variablen zu unbegründet und zu wenig selektiv in Studien einzubinden (vgl. Bernerth et al. 2018, S. 151). So stellen beispielsweise Alter, Geschlecht und Beschäftigungsdauer in der Followership- und Führungsforschung häufig verwendete Kontrollvariablen dar, obwohl diese nur in vereinzelten Fällen einen (signifikanten) Erklärungsgehalt liefern (vgl. Bernerth et al. 2018, S. 149-151; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018,

S. 750). Dies kann bei Regressionsanalysen, wie bei Carsten, Uhl-Bien und Huang (2018), zu schlechter spezifizierten Messmodellen führen (vgl. z. B. Backhaus et al. 2018, S. 94). Allerdings werden Gruppenvergleiche auf Basis signifikanter Mittelwertunterschiede (Kapitel 4, 5) nicht durch die Berücksichtigung einer höheren oder niedrigeren Anzahl an Variablen beeinflusst. Trotzdem unterstreichen die vorliegenden Erkenntnisse die Forderung von Bernerth und Kollegen (2018), Kontrollvariablen begründeter und damit auch üblicherweise in begrenzterem Umfang einzusetzen.

8.3 Schlussfolgerungen

8.3.1 Grenzen der Arbeit

Die vorliegende Arbeit weist verschiedene studienübergreifende Grenzen auf, die bei der Beurteilung der Ergebnisse berücksichtigt werden sollten.

Eine studienübergreifende Grenze ergibt sich aus dem, den vier Studien zugrunde liegenden, **rollenbasierten Followership-Ansatz** (vgl. 2.2.4). Dieser Ansatz betrachtet die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung bewusst **einseitig** und klammert somit die dyadische Natur der Beziehung aus. Während so zwar ein stärkerer Fokus auf Geführte, ihre Eigenschaften, ihr Verhalten sowie die Auswirkungen ihres Verhaltens auf Führende möglich ist, wird die komplexe Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung vereinfacht betrachtet. Verschiedene Forschende aus dem Bereich der Followershipforschung betonen daher die Bedeutung von dyadischen Untersuchungen (vgl. z. B. Shamir 2007). Dabei wird auch darauf verwiesen, dass die Followershipforschung es vermeiden sollte, einen bekannten Fehler der Anfänge der Führungsforschung zu wiederholen (vgl. 2.2.1): Stellt man eine Partei (den Führenden beziehungsweise den Geführten) zu stark in den Fokus, lässt man die andere Partei (den Geführten beziehungsweise den Führenden) außen vor und vernachlässigt dadurch die dyadische Natur der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 100; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 748; Ford/Harding 2018, S. 8). Dem wirkt die vorliegende Arbeit zwar stellenweise entgegen, indem in drei Kapiteln die Führendenwahrnehmung betrachtet wird (vgl. Kapitel 5), beziehungsweise sogar im Fokus steht (vgl. Kapitel 6, 7). Nichtsdestotrotz fokussiert die vorliegende Arbeit keine dyadische Geführ-

ten-Führenden-Beziehung. Somit trägt diese Arbeit nicht dazu bei, die Forschungslücke zu schließen, so dass Dyaden weiterhin als eine der am meisten vernachlässigten und am wenigsten verstandenen Analyseebenen der Führungs- und Followershipforschung gesehen werden (vgl. Yammarino/Gooty 2017, S. 229; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 748).

Zudem liegt eine Grenze dieser Arbeit in der **eingeschränkten Generalisierbarkeit** der Erkenntnisse. Diese ergibt sich vor allem daraus, dass für alle Stichproben **deutschsprachige Probanden** befragt wurden. Diese arbeiten oder von denen ist auszugehen, dass sie in deutschen Organisationen arbeiten, da Probanden lediglich über deutsche Kontakte und deutsche soziale Medien rekrutiert wurden. Nicht ausgeschlossen werden kann, dass vereinzelt auch österreichische oder schweizerische Probanden teilgenommen haben, wobei dies als nicht problematisch gesehen werden kann, da deutsche Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen als besonders ähnlich zu österreichischen und schweizerischen Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen gelten (vgl. z. B. Brodbeck et al. 2000; Szabo et al. 2001, S. 229-231; 235; 241; Szabo et al. 2002). Eine Ähnlichkeit zeigt sich beispielsweise in einem ähnlichen Ausmaß, in dem Führende Partizipation (beispielsweise bei Entscheidungen) von ihren Geführten zulassen und erwarten (vgl. Szabo et al. 2001, S. 229-231).

Die ansonsten vorliegende eingeschränkte Generalisierbarkeit zeigt sich dabei an zwei Aspekten. Erstens gibt es in deutschen Organisationen bestimmte Rahmenbedingungen, die sich auf Geführte, Führende und ihre Beziehung auswirken können, wie auch die Erkenntnisse der Kapitel 6 und 7 zeigen. In diesen Kapiteln wird stellenweise die (sehr) aufwändige und dadurch auch als stressig empfundene Kündigung von Geführten thematisiert. Der geschilderte Aufwand und der unter anderem dadurch generierte Stress resultieren teilweise zum einen aus besonderen Dokumentations- und Nachweispflichten (vgl. 7.5.5). Teilweise resultieren sie zum anderen aus den Mitbestimmungsrechten des Betriebsrats, welche schlussendlich sogar die Kündigung eines aus Perspektive des Führenden sehr leistungsschwachen Geführten verhindern können (vgl. 6.5.4). Bei den geschilderten Dokumentations- und Nachweispflichten sowie der verhinderten Kündigung durch den Betriebsrat kommt zum Tragen, dass Deutschland in Relation zu anderen Ländern (z. B.

Australien, Dänemark, Griechenland oder Neuseeland) über einen umfangreicheren Kündigungsschutz für Arbeitnehmer verfügt (vgl. Adams et al. 2019, S. 11-13). Entsprechend sind insbesondere diese Erkenntnisse aus den Kapiteln 6 und 7 nicht ohne weiteres generalisierbar.

Zweitens können sich sowohl Eigenschaften und Verhalten von Geführten und Führenden als auch die Wahrnehmung von Eigenschaften und Verhalten (durch Führende) je nach Nation oder auch Sprachraum unterscheiden (vgl. z. B. Chen/Francesco 2000; Martin et al. 2013). Hinsichtlich der in dieser Arbeit generierten Erkenntnisse zur Geführteneigenschaft der Rollenorientierung gibt es allerdings Hinweise auf eine gewisse Übertragbarkeit. So sind einige Erkenntnisse der diesbezüglichen quantitativen Studie in Kapitel 4 im Einklang mit qualitativen Erkenntnissen von Carsten und Kollegen (2010), die in ihrer Studie in Amerika und Kanada arbeitende Geführte befragt haben (vgl. S. 547). Die Studie in Kapitel 4 zeigt, konsistent zur Studie von Carsten und Kollegen (2010), dass sich die Rollenorientierung von Geführten vor allem in verschiedenen Nuancen von (Pro)Aktivität beziehungsweise Passivität unterscheidet (vgl. 4.5.1). Ebenso belegt die Studie, in Einklang mit den Erkenntnissen von Carsten und Kollegen (2010), dass Geführte, die eine eher proaktive Rollenorientierung haben, auch höhere Werte in Eigeninitiative und Voice-Verhalten aufzeigen (vgl. 4.4.2, 4.4.3).

Zusammenfassend ist davon auszugehen, dass sich die Erkenntnisse dieser Arbeit insbesondere auf Studien mit Probanden aus Österreich und der Schweiz, sowie Studien mit amerikanischen und kanadischen Probanden (siehe die Erkenntnisse zur Rollenorientierung) übertragen lassen. Die Ermittlung eines genaueren Ausmaßes der Übertragbarkeit ist allerdings die Aufgabe zukünftiger Forschung (vgl. 8.3.3).

Eine weitere studienübergreifende Limitation dieser Arbeit stellt der sogenannte **Single Source Bias** dar. Dieser beschreibt Antwortverzerrungen, die daraus resultieren, dass jeweils nur eine einzelne Quelle befragt worden ist (Geführte: vgl. 4; 5.2; Führende: vgl. 5.4; 6; 7). Im Extremfall kann eine solche Verzerrung dazu führen, dass ein Zusammenhang zwischen zwei Variablen identifiziert wird, obwohl dieser inhaltlich gar nicht vorliegt, sondern auf das verzerrte Antwortverhalten in der einzelnen Quelle zurückzuführen ist

(vgl. Podsakoff/Organ 1986, S. 533-535). In den Studien dieser Arbeit wird dem Single Source Bias entgegengewirkt, indem in den Studien in den Kapiteln 4 und 5 jeweils eine Skala zur Überprüfung sozial erwünschter Antworttendenzen verwendet wurde. In ähnlicher Weise wurde in den qualitativen Studien in den Kapiteln 6 und 7 Maßnahmen ergriffen, um sozial erwünschtes Antwortverhalten zu verringern beziehungsweise das von den Interviewten Geschilderte kritisch zu reflektieren (vgl. 6.7; 7.7). Eine systematische Überprüfung sozialer Erwünschtheit in den Interviews war aber nicht möglich.

Insgesamt kann dem Single Source Bias nur bestmöglich entgegengewirkt werden, wenn verschiedene Quellen für die Erfassung des gleichen Sachverhalts herangezogen werden. Dies gilt sowohl für quantitative als auch für qualitative Forschung (vgl. z. B. Podsakoff et al. 2003, S. 898; Schaefer/Alvesson 2020, S. 41-42). So könnte beispielsweise die Eigeninitiative eines Geführten sowohl vom Geführten selbst als auch vom Führenden und gegebenenfalls noch durch eine unbeteiligte Beobachtung einer dritten Person eingeschätzt werden (vgl. z. B. 4.3) oder das Stressempfinden und das Verhalten von Führenden in Stresssituationen sowohl durch den Führenden selbst als auch durch einen oder mehrere Geführte geschildert werden (vgl. z. B. 6.4).

Darüber hinaus sind auf Basis der Studien dieser Arbeit fast **keine Aussagen über Kausalzusammenhänge** möglich (Ausnahme: vgl. 5.4). Insbesondere die Erkenntnisse zum Zusammenhang von Voice-Motive-Strukturen mit Eigenschaften und Verhalten (vgl. 5.2) basieren lediglich auf einer Datenerhebung zu einem Zeitpunkt, weshalb keine Aussagen über die Kausalität möglich sind (vgl. Antonakis et al. 2010). Die Studie in Kapitel 4 zeigt über zwei Zeitpunkte einen konstanten Zusammenhang zwischen der Rollenorientierung von Geführten und Eigenschaften und Verhalten auf (vgl. 4.4.2, 4.4.3; Ausnahme: Voice-Verhalten). Ein kausaler Zusammenhang ist aus diesem Grund wahrscheinlich, hätte aber nur mittels eines dritten Messzeitpunkts getestet werden können. Darüber hinaus liefern die qualitativen Studien in den Kapiteln 6 und 7 Anhaltspunkte für kausale Zusammenhänge. Diese zeigen sich insbesondere in den geschilderten Interaktionsverläufen (vgl. 6.5.4; 7.5.4). Ob in den Verläufen aber tatsächlich Kausalzusammenhänge abgebildet sind, kann nur mittels eines quantitativen Experimentaldesigns belegt werden.

8.3.2 Weiterer Forschungsbedarf

Weiterer studienübergreifender Forschungsbedarf setzt sowohl an den übergreifenden Beiträgen der Studien (vgl. 8.2) als auch an den aufgezeigten Grenzen der Arbeit (vgl. 8.3.2) an.

Insbesondere **dyadische Untersuchungen**, die sowohl Geführte als auch Führende parallel untersuchen, sind eine vielversprechende Richtung für zukünftige Forschung (vgl. Uhl-Bien et al. 2014, S. 100; Yammarino/Gooty 2017, S. 229; Carsten/Uhl-Bien/Huang 2018, S. 748). Dyadische Untersuchungen würden auch gleich zwei Limitationen dieser Arbeit entgegenwirken: Erstens würde die Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung dadurch nicht mehr einseitig betrachtet. Zweitens könnte so ein potentieller Single Source Bias abgemildert werden. Möglichkeiten für weitere Forschung wären beispielsweise Interaktionsverläufe zwischen Geführten und Führenden aus der Perspektive beider Beteiligter zu untersuchen. So wäre eine parallele Erfassung des wahrgenommenen Eigen- und Fremdverhaltens von Geführtem und Führendem möglich. Dabei ist anzumerken, dass insbesondere qualitative dyadische (beziehungsweise mehrere Quellen berücksichtigende) Forschung, die Interaktionsverläufe untersucht, sehr anspruchsvoll und zeitaufwändig ist, gleichzeitig aber einen besonders großen Mehrwert liefern kann (vgl. Cronin/Weingart/Todorova 2011, S. 600; Einola/Alvesson 2021, S. 860-861). Mit solchen Untersuchungen könnte auch eine weitere Lücke in der Followership- und Führungsforschung verringert werden, indem Interaktionsverläufe über einen längeren Zeitraum mit möglichst genauer Zeiterfassung untersucht werden könnten (vgl. Shamir 2011, S. 312-313). Für eine solche Untersuchung könnten unter anderem Tagebuchstudien geeignet sein (vgl. Gunthert/Wenze 2012).

Weitere Forschung könnte zudem Untersuchungen mit **nicht-deutschsprachigen Probanden** anstreben, um die Übertragbarkeit der Erkenntnisse der Studien dieser Arbeit zu überprüfen. Dabei könnte es besonders aufschlussreich sein, vor allem Probanden zu befragen, die sich in Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen befinden, die sich verhältnismäßig stark von deutsch(sprachig)en Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen unterscheiden. Hinweise für umfangreichere Unterschiede hinsichtlich der Geführten-Führenden-Beziehung

liegen beispielsweise für georgische Probanden vor, da dort die wahrgenommene Distanz zwischen Geführten und Führenden als höher als im deutschsprachigen Raum (Deutschland, Österreich und die Schweiz) wahrgenommen wird (vgl. Brodbeck et al. 2000, S. 18) Eine weitere Möglichkeit wäre, Geführten-Führenden-Beziehungen unter Rahmenbedingungen zu untersuchen, die sich besonders von denen in Deutschland unterscheiden. Da sich der in Deutschland verhältnismäßig umfangreiche Kündigungsschutz von Arbeitnehmern (Geführten) als Bestandteil der von Führenden als negativ oder stressig wahrgenommenen Interaktionen gezeigt hat (vgl. 6.5.4; 7.5.5), würden sich beispielsweise Untersuchungen unter Rahmenbedingungen mit weniger umfangreichen Kündigungsschutz anbieten. Eine Möglichkeit wären beispielsweise Erhebungen mit in Brasilien arbeitenden Geführten und Führenden. In Brasilien ist der Kündigungsschutz bedeutend geringer als in Deutschland (vgl. Adams et al. 2019, S. 12-13). Entsprechend ist daher dort mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit auch der (stressige) Aufwand für Führende in Bezug auf Kündigungen geringer.

Darüber hinaus wäre die Untersuchung kausaler Zusammenhänge wünschenswert. Dafür wären **(Quasi-)Experimente** geeignet (vgl. z. B. Aguinis/Bradley 2014; Thau/Pitesa/Pillutla 2014). Je nach Design des Experiments bedürfe dies auch neu entwickelter Messinstrumente, um spezifische Geführteneigenschaften und Wahrnehmung des Geführtenverhaltens durch Führende, beziehungsweise die Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende, zu erfassen (vgl. 8.2.5).

Insbesondere **Messinstrumente**, die den letztgenannten Aspekt erfassen, stellen ein sehr großes Potenzial für zukünftige Forschung dar. So hat diese Arbeit gezeigt, dass in verschiedenen Bereichen der Führungsforschung, in denen eine (empirische) Betrachtung der Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führende plausibel ist, diese Betrachtung aktuell noch unterbleibt. Bereiche, die von dieser Lücke betroffen sind, sind beispielsweise Auswirkungen des Vertrauens in Geführte auf Führende (vgl. 8.2.1) und wie die Entwicklung von Führenden durch Geführtenverhalten beeinflusst werden kann (vgl. 8.2.2). Zusätzlich liefern die beiden qualitativen Studien in den Kapiteln 6 und 7 diverse Erkenntnisse zu (stressbezogenen) Auswirkungen des Geführtenverhaltens auf Führenden. Somit bieten beide Studien Anhaltspunkte

für eine auf den Studien aufbauende Skalengenerierung, indem unter anderem führendenspezifische Stressoren unter Berücksichtigung des Geführtenverhaltens aufgezeigt werden (vgl. 7.6).

Darüber hinaus liefert diese Arbeit Hinweise darauf, dass **eine stärkere Betrachtung der organisationalen Rolle** in der Forschung zu geteilter Führung und der Forschung zur Emergenz von Führenden vielversprechend sein kann (vgl. 8.2.1). Aus diesem Grund könnte zukünftige Forschung geteilte Führung vor dem Hintergrund der vorherig eingenommenen organisationalen Rolle untersuchen. Ebenso könnte betrachtet werden, welche organisationale Rolle Mitarbeiter haben, die durch informell Führende (Emergenz von Führenden) geführt werden. Somit würde dem Aspekt Rechnung getragen werden, das (ehemals) Führende mit (ehemals) Geführten auf Augenhöhe agieren können (geteilte Führung), beziehungsweise, dass informell Führende (Emergenz von Führenden) auch formal Führende führen können.

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