

The Ideal Employee

The influence of work context, personality and
organizational culture on leaders' prototypical implicit
follower theories

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**Meiner Familie gewidmet
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1 Introduction

Every manager can describe the qualities of an Ideal Employee. The image that emerges may be intangible or detailed, voluntary or automatic (Den Hartog et al. 1999; Feldman 1981; Rosch 1978). Whatever its precise nature, the image of ‘what should be’ is always lurking in a manager’s mind, irrefutably present during leadership interactions. There may be as many descriptions of the Ideal Employee as there are managers and at the same time they will all agree on the importance of certain qualities. More important than the content of the Ideal Employee image is the fact that it is a reflection of the person who holds it. For example, Liz Elting who is the president and C.E.O. of TransPerfect, a global business translation services company, described her view on the crucial qualities of employees like this¹:

“I worked from an extremely young age — everything from babysitting to newspaper deliveries to walking a child to school to working in a dry cleaner to telemarketing. And now when we hire, that’s one of the key qualities I look for. I look for people who have a very strong work ethic, and I think a big indicator of that is whether somebody has worked from a very young age, and ideally has never stopped.”

Her expectations for the traits and qualities of ideal co-workers were molded by her own life experiences; learning about the way she describes the Ideal Employee means learning about Liz Elting. This dissertation is built on the idea that an individual’s preferences echo their placement in a certain setting; applied to the realm of leadership, this means that leader’s Ideal Employee image is a reflection of their environment and personal constitution. The current work approached this topic with the firm belief in the inextricable connections between work context, personality and leaders’ Ideal Employee image, and the data produced in two separate empirical studies conducted in the USA and Germany support this hypothesis.

¹ Bryant, A. (2011, May 28). Liz Elting of TransPerfect on Work Ethics That Start Early. The New York Times.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/29/business/29corner.html?emc=eta1>,
retrieved 03/08/2014

Irrespective of the ways they develop, managers' misbelief in the existence of an Ideal Employee can have far-reaching consequences for the organizational practice. Expectations that are based on prototypical traits and behaviors can influence leaders' attitudes and behaviors towards employees and consequently, affect leadership relationships, team dynamics and performance management processes (Whiteley et al. 2012; Sy 2010; Sanders 1999). A high cost may also be paid in the area of personnel selection, where prototypical expectations seem to influence current hiring methods (Rivera 2012; König et al. 2010; Highhouse 2008) and seem to widen, not close, the rift between job candidates and organizations (Gaedt 2014; Cappelli 2012).

This dissertation presents a theoretical and empirical contribution to the topic of managers' implicit follower theories, or their Ideal Employee image. The goal is to expand current knowledge about their content, structure and development, to investigate their potential consequences for the leadership practice and to offer practical guidelines for a constructive management of an organizations' collective Ideal Employee profile. The current chapter opens the discourse and lays the theoretical foundation for subsequent accounts of two empirical studies. First it describes the relevance of implicit follower theories to management research and organizational practice before offering a detailed account of the state of research, and outlining the problem statement, research goal and methodology of this thesis. Chapter two describes the first part of an empirical study which was conducted with US organizations in 2012 and focused on the link between leaders' implicit follower theories in relation to their perceptions of work context. Part two of the same study is covered in chapter three where empirical links between leaders' own personality traits and their preferred employee traits are being presented and discussed. Chapter four describes the second study that was conducted with German companies in spring of 2014 and presents results about the links between organizational culture aspects and leaders' employee prototype. Chapter five outlines the potential consequences of leaders' Ideal Employee image for the organizational practice, especially personnel selection processes, and offers a series of practical recommendations for the management and positive utilization of implicit follower theories. A summary of the contributions and limitations of both studies, as well as concluding remarks finalize this work in chapter six.

1.1 Relevance and outline of current research problem

The presented thesis contributes to existing research about contextual influences on leaders' implicit follower theories by addressing three issues: first, it brings to light the concealed nature of implicit theories and articulates their structure and cognitive emergence in the organizational realm. Second, it applies a contingency view on the development of implicit theories and shows that context and personality factors both affect the content of leaders' employee prototype. Third, it outlines the role of managers' implicit follower theories in leadership processes and discusses their potential consequences for the organizational practice.

Implicit theories about followers are important elements in the leader-follower relationship. In addition to explicit expectations which are most familiar in the form of official role descriptions and skill requirements, leaders also have implicit theories about the typical and desired qualities of employees. The term 'implicit' denotes something that is "*implied though not plainly expressed*"², and "*capable of being understood through knowledge of something else*" (Littrell 2013, p. 568). Implicit theories are usually articulated poorly (Dweck et al. 1995), perhaps because they are constructed by laypersons as opposed to scientists and exist in the form of undefined cognitive concepts rather than having undergone scientific scrutiny (Epitropaki et al. 2013). A lack of clarity around their precise nature and content makes implicit theories elusive to individual's attention during daily interactions and renders them difficult to access and convey. The first known research that addressed ambiguities and perceptual differences between leaders and followers was conducted by Maier and colleagues (1963). They reported that, more often than not, managers and subordinates disagree about the nature, complexity or required abilities for certain job duties. Differences of role requirements between managers and employees are examples for implicit follower (and leadership) theories and play a substantial role for performance outcomes and leadership relationships. While these researchers concluded that serious communication problems were at the core of this phenomenon, they unintentionally addressed leaders' implicit theories about the qualities required for effective followership. At the time, this research represented a fresh approach to management studies because after decades of preoccupation with expected leader traits and behaviors, it was now the follower

² http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/us/definition/american_english/implicit, retrieved 04/08/2014

who was in the spotlight. Questions about the way non-leaders should act (Rost 2008) led to heightened interest in the topic of the role and relevance of followers (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). The current thesis adds to these inquiries about implicit follower theories (Derler & Weibler 2014; Epitropaki et al. 2013; Whiteley et al. 2012; Sy 2010) by offering additional insights about their development and a collective perception of ideal followership (Krummaker & Vogel 2011). One of the arguments pursued here is that leaders' implicit follower theories influence personnel related decisions and can have far-reaching effects on organizational structure and culture (DeRue 2011). Thereby it is crucial to consider the interconnectedness of individual, organization and the economic system as a whole (Molloy et al. 2011) because human behavior is always subject to an 'interactionism' between both person and situational aspects (Meyer et al. 2009). Existing theory about social perceptions of leader- and followership has been covering the role of context extensively (Dinh & Lord 2012; Shondrick & Lord 2010; Lord et al. 2001a) when it became apparent that the value of individual traits to others varies largely with leaders' requirements, as well as the task or goal at hand (Cottrell et al. 2007). Hence, the question about the strength of context in relation to the individual requires careful consideration because "*context does not dictate specific types of action; rather, it creates a supportive environment that inspires an individual to do "whatever it takes" to deliver results.*" (Gibson & Birkinshaw 2004, p. 213). This calls upon researchers to overcome the theoretical divide between a purely economic, situationist view and psychologists' view advocating stable, unaffected personalities to the benefit of studying their *relative* importance to each other (Almlund et al. 2011; Roberts 2009).

Potential consequences of leaders' implicit follower theories are due to perceptual errors and biased decisions on the basis of prototypes. Since implicit follower theories are antecedents of leaders' behaviors toward followers (Sy 2010) they are implicitly omnipresent elements during leader-follower interactions. Similar to occupational roles which can turn into institutionalized, stereotypical representations in their own right (Danielsson 2013), leaders' implicit follower theories can turn into rigid guidelines for the assessment and treatment of followers and lead to destructive consequences on the dyadic, group and organizational level. They can affect personnel decisions (Sanders 1999), liking and LMX relationship

quality (Whiteley et al. 2012) and can have potentially negative consequences for leaders' behaviors towards and decisions about followers. If it is true that "*managers get the performance they expect*" (Eden 1992, p. 279), the question about the content and influencing factors for their expectations becomes important for an understanding of their employee performance management. Hence, the current work sets out to investigate what leaders implicitly expect from employees, but also what role their perceptions of work context, organizational culture and their own personality plays in the formation of these expectations.

1.2 Implicit theories: state of the art

Apart from implicit leadership or followership theories that represent typical images or mental prototypes of leaders or followers, researchers study other related phenomena such as 'implicit attitudes', 'entity or incremental implicit theories', and 'implicit personality theories'. Although these theories embody implicit beliefs and assumptions beyond the realm of leadership they share some important characteristics with implicit leadership theories and render their differentiation and comparison worthwhile. First, *implicit theories* as generally defined in categorization research describe organized patterns of thought that simplify everyday information processing (Lord & Maher 1994); they guide our perceptions and judgments of other people (Hall et al. 1998) and are therefore influential companions of social and professional relationships (Schyns et al. 2011; Heslin & Vande Walle 2008; Whiteley et al. 2012; Sanders 1999). In comparison to implicit theories as cognitive schemata, implicit *attitudes* refer to positive or negative evaluations of others based on feelings or thoughts that cannot be attributed to a specific incident in the past but that are subject to influences by group membership (McConnell et al. 2008). The main difference is their derivation from different sources, however both implicit theories and attitudes can influence a person's judgment about others. *Entity* and *incremental implicit theories*, on the other hand, describe someone's assumptions about the inflexibility or plasticity of a person's attributes; for example, people who hold entity implicit theories (or so-called "fixed mindsets") presume that others will not change much over time, while those with an incremental implicit theory believe in people's ability for change and development (Heslin & Vande Walle, 2008; Dweck et al. 1995). Lastly, *implicit*

personality theories are defined by the inference of certain personality attributes based on the occurrence of another (Heslin & Vande Walle, 2008). In other words, individuals link actually perceived traits and behaviors with assumptions about other commonly linked traits, and basically infer additional traits about another person without having observed them. Despite their differences, these types of implicit processes all have the capacity to influence a person's thoughts, attitudes and judgments about others as they encourage – sometimes irreproducible – assumptions and inferences about other peoples' behaviors and traits. Regardless of the risks associated with implicit cognitive schemas, human information processing would hardly be possible without them. They are necessary aides for individuals' understanding of their surroundings because they help manage the plethora of incoming information by providing cognitive shortcuts (Shondrick & Lord 2010) and by structuring knowledge about other people (Lord & Maher 1994). In comparison to explicit theories that are constructs based on scientific data, implicit theories represent a more subjective reality as they “*reside in the minds of [...] individuals*” (Epitropaki et al. 2013, p. 2). Implicit leader and follower theories can be considered as specific forms of implicit theories as they pertain to the context of organizational leader- and followership. They refer to informal beliefs or assumptions about the traits of typical or proto-typical leaders or followers that develop in reliance on existing knowledge about leaders (or followers) in certain contexts (Lord & Maher 1994). An individual's experiences in different leadership situations enable the formation of impressions about the traits of typical leaders and followers (Epitropaki et al. 2013) and slowly and automatically, ‘mental representations’ of leaders or followers emerge as conceptual images (Lord et al. 2001b). These images inform the person's perceptions of future encounters with potential leaders or followers (Hall et al. 1998) and influence his or her granting of leader or follower identities (DeRue & Ashford 2010). Since these person-schemata contain not only attributes about leader or follower categories but also related feelings and ideas (Goodwin 2000), they become powerful influencing factors in guiding future perceptions and judgments (Dweck et al. 1995).

1.2.1 Follower's Implicit Leadership Theories

Both leaders and followers hold implicit leader and follower theories (Sy 2010), rendering the study of implicit leader and follower theories a complex dynamic of mutual cognitive and perceptual processes. For clarification purposes it shall be noted that the present research follows the single-source design by addressing implicit follower theories held by leaders. The first step in approaching the way leaders think about their ideal follower is to look at the theoretical foundations that have been laid in research about the way followers' imagine the prototypical leader. From early childhood on and quite naturally, humans tend to classify other individuals into 'leaders' and 'followers' (Sy 2010; Engle & Lord 1997; Lord & Maher 1994). Children's first experiences of leader- and followership occur through their interactions with their parents (Keller 1999). Their concept of what constitutes leadership is further shaped through repeated exposure to leaders during social encounters (Lord & Maher 1994; Nye & Forsyth 1991), resulting in explicit and implicit leadership theories (Littrell 2013). The concept of leadership can emerge in two ways: leadership can be *inferred* from events that elicit the attribution of someone's leadership (e.g. success of a group or organization can be attributed to the charisma of their leader), or it can be *recognized* in a stimulus person if he or she matches the existing leader category of 'a leader' (Den Hartog et al. 1999; Lord & Maher 1994). Generally, research concerning the nature of implicit leadership theories deals with the latter type, the recognition and categorization of a target person according to existing leader prototypes (Lord et al. 2001a). Categories are defined as "*cognitive structures that represent knowledge about a stimulus*" (Medvedeff & Lord 2007, p. 21) and enable the extraction of meaning about the world (ibid.). According to Rosch (1978), categories can be applied to a variety of settings, people, situations or objects and are organized into a hierarchy with three levels. Applied to leadership categories, this means that the highest or abstract level differentiates leaders from non-leaders; the basic or lower level is the most inclusive level because it accounts for contextual information in the leadership category by differentiating e.g. between political or religious leader. Lastly, on the basis of a breakdown of specific contextual information, leaders on the lowest or subordinate level would be differentiated into liberal or conservative political leaders, etc. The driving forces behind categories are prototypes. Prototypes are "*abstract sets of*

features that are widely shared by category members” (Medvedeff & Lord 1997, p. 22) and leader prototypes can be seen as a summary of abstract yet most representative generalizations of leader characteristics (Shondrick & Lord 2010). The cognitive process of leader categorization takes place via matching as well as transference processes. On the one hand, a perceiver will try to match a target person with their prototypical leader image (or their implicit leadership theory), and depending on the degree of that match, categorize the person as a leader or non-leader (Medvedeff & Lord 2007; Lord et al. 2001a; Lord & Maher 1994). On the other hand, they may also judge the target person on the basis of their experiences with previous leaders, thereby transferring thoughts, affects and expectations about leadership from the previous to the new leader (Ritter & Lord 2007).

Even though common cognitive categories are often clearly defined (Rosch 1978), more complex categories are more ambiguous or ‘fuzzy’ because they lack a specified set of signs and characteristics that would enable a firm differentiation between category member, and non-member (Den Hartog et al. 1999; Feldman 1981). This ‘fuzziness’ explains one of the difficulties when clearly defining boundaries of what does or does not constitute (any kind of) leadership as the leadership category is subject to a variety of perceptual, contextual and cultural influences both on the side of the perceiver and the stimulus person. For example, the connectionist model of leadership-prototype generation as developed by Lord (Lord et al. 2001a; Lord et al. 2001b) attempts to identify some of the contextual constraints defining leadership. Such constraints can consist of factors within the followers themselves, but they can also stem from organization- and task-related limitations, prevailing cultures, values and affects, or endorsed leadership goals (ibid.). The model explains that leader categories or prototypes are constantly reconstructed as they are not retrieved from long-term memory but generated ‘along the way’, rendering them dynamic and flexible (Sy 2010), idiosyncratic (Den Hartog 1999) and evasive to our consciousness (Schyns et al. 2010). Put differently, individual’s leader images can vary due to the differences in their leadership experiences and contextual setting, turn into personalized prototypes and remain inherent parts of individuals’ cognitive categories. Especially the combination of personalization and ‘implicit-ness’ of leadership categories gives reason to consider their possible risks: their subjectivity can overrule perceptions of actual, observable

leader traits in others (Shondrick & Lord 2010; Lord & Maher 1994) and the lack of beholder's awareness about them can lead to misperceptions and systematic biases whenever actual leadership behavior is being assessed (Nye & Forsyth 1991). Both aspects taken together can lead to perceptual errors and misinformed judgments about actual leaders.

Faced with the fuzzy and malleable nature of implicit leadership theories it seems difficult if not impossible to define a singular leader prototype as has been attempted in early leadership theories such as trait approaches (Van Vugt 2006) or style theories (Von Krogh et al. 2012). Representatives of a constructivist perspective argue that the reality of leadership itself is socially constructed by perceivers versus being a factual process (Van Gils et al. 2010). In other words, this position holds that leadership is "*an idea in the minds of followers*" (Emrich 1999, p. 992) rather than a reality created by the leader him or herself. Nonetheless, several decades worth of research about the content and structure of followers' implicit leader theories have produced a rich body of literature about the commonalities and differences in leader schemas, the influencing factors and the role of followers' selves in the development of leader prototypes. Typical leaders are generally described with embodied aspects such as physical height and body posture, facial structure and tone of voice, and by personality traits such as intelligence, kindness and charisma (Dinh & Lord 2012). In the USA, implicit leader theories contain male rather than female prototypical traits (Hall et al. 1998), they represent the idealization of 'agentic' leadership styles (Sy et al. 2010) displaying Sensitivity, Dedication, Tyranny, Charisma, Attractiveness, Masculinity, Intelligence, and Strength (Offermann et al. 1994), Integrity, Honesty and Fairness (Trocchia & Andrus 2003; Wernimont 1971). Other studies showed that implicit leader theories also contain behavioral expectations such as authentic leadership (Nichols & Erakovich 2013), flexibility in the execution of gender-typed tasks (Hall et al. 1998), the provision of a balance between direction and freedom, support and leadership, the communication of job and performance expectations (Wernimont 1971), and the capability of saying "no" (Trocchia & Andrus 2003). Newer research has meanwhile begun to dismantle the romance of leadership (Uhl-Bien and Pillai 2007; Den Hartog et al. 1999) and pointed out that implicit leadership theories can contain both effective and ineffective attributes (Schyns &

Schilling (2010). Other traits, for example those related to femininity or ethnic group membership are often absent from ideal leadership schemata. Being female is usually not part of leader prototypes (Quaquebeke & Schmerling 2010; Hall et al. 1998; Offermann et al. 1994) so that women are less often recognized in leadership capacities; similarly, members of racial minorities such as Asian Americans are also considered less often for management positions than their Caucasian American counterparts (Sy et al. 2010).

The assumption of generally valid implicit leadership theories is also challenged by research about cultural differences of what is considered a leader. Cultural differences in implicit leader theories were found between the USA and Germany (Schneider & Schröder 2012), Eastern and Western Europe (Konrad 2000) and most prominently, in the GLOBE study (Den Hartog et al 1999). However, the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Study was conducted in over 60 countries (Den Hartog et al. 1999) and supported the coexistence of universal as well as culturally contingent leadership theories. For example, communication skills turned out to be a universally valued leadership quality (universal), but the precise behavioral expression of desirable communication skills in leaders varied significantly amongst different cultures (ibid.). This points at cultural variations on the basic category level of the leader prototype and the existence of universally endorsed qualities on the abstract category level, and presents a notion that will be taken up in form of an entity and functional category level later on in this study.

Variations in leadership prototypes can arise from a variety of factors. Individuals may desire different leadership traits depending on leaders' hierarchical level (Nichols & Cottrell 2014), but preferences can also stem from a person's life and work experiences that allow the development of similar knowledge systems consisting of values, beliefs, norms and consequently, role expectations (Hanges et al. 2000). Different expectations for leaders can also emerge from situational changes as shown by research about prototypical leader images during crises: simulated crisis situations can activate different leadership schemas in followers (Emrich 1999) to the point that followers dismiss formally designated leaders in favor of others who seem better aligned with their personal implicit leader theory

(Graf & Van Quaquebeke (2012). All these studies suggest that the recognition of prototypical leader traits in a stimulus person can neither be detached from perceivers' pre-existing implicit leader theories, nor from the context or situation these perceptual processes emerge from. Therefore, prototypical leadership expectations are flexible constructs that can change based on contextual factors which "*regenerate rather than retrieve schemas or prototypes each time they are used, subject to current constraints*" (Lord & Emrich 2001, p. 560). They are dynamic and malleable in nature (Nichols & Erakovich 2013; Sy 2010) and subject to external and internal constraints (Lord et al. 2001a). Aside from external influences provided by context, culture and goals (ibid.), followers' self-perception or self-schemata can also operate as internal restraint on their leader prototype generation. Followers' idealized leadership prototypes not only reflect their own personality traits (Keller 1999) but their assessment of leadership behavior is also influenced by the degree to which they perceive themselves as displaying such leader traits (Van Quaquebeke et al. 2011). The fact that followers' construction of their prototypical leader is related to their own selves conveys the desire for similarity with those in leadership positions (Keller 1999) and has considerable consequences for management processes such as performance ratings, job satisfaction or leader-follower relationship quality (ibid.). This issue has also shown to touch on the gender issue; as most prototypical leadership theories are male-oriented (Hall et al. 1998; Offerman et al. 1994) male followers with a masculine leadership image may feel a stronger lack of similarity with female leaders with serious consequences: this disconnect can determine the degree of openness and trust towards female managers, influence their leader rating or prevent them from recognizing women in leadership positions in the first place (Van Quaquebeke & Schmerling 2010).

Lastly, the interweavement of followers' implicit leader theories with their self-schema and the aspiration for similarity with leaders might further be complicated by affective reactions, or simply put, their 'liking' of the leader. Whenever followers rate leader behavior, they also rely on their affection in order to make sense of their perceptions (Shondrick & Lord 2010). In other words, followers will combine their current perceptions of leader behavior with already held knowledge structures about them (including their liking or disliking of them) so that their

implicit leader theories merged with affects serve as additional internal constraints to any future perception of leaders (Shondrick & Lord 2010; Lord et al. 2001b). Like with gender-oriented leadership prototypes, affective reactions and liking can lead to biased and distorted perceptions about target persons, and consequently affect LMX relationships. Leader-Member-Exchange-Theory holds that leaders form different relationships with followers as their exchange of contributions such as time, commitment, support etc. varies from individual to individual, and depending on the fulfillment of their mutual expectations, result in higher or lower quality leader-follower relationships (Van Gils et al. 2010; Wilson et al. 2010). Since implicit leadership theories inherently provide the criteria for subsequent judgments about the satisfaction of expectations (Van Gils et al. 2010) they are crucial aspects of social exchanges and leader-follower interactions. Expectations for effective leader- or followership reflect these complex interactions and can therefore be considered as proxies for contextual and personal dispositions.

1.2.2 Leaders' Implicit Follower Theories

As much as leadership is an idea in the minds of followers (Emrich 1999), followership is a concept that exists in the minds of leaders. Leaders' Implicit follower theories or LIFTs (Whiteley et al. 2012) represent the mirror image of implicit leader theories and allow the application of similar principles. First, leaders are influenced by external and internal features, (Dinh & Lord 2012), and identify, categorize and judge followers according to their personal 'follower prototype' (Lord & Maher 1994). Due to the fact that the leadership process is exposed to a multitude of contextual constraints during the mutual investment in common goals (Rost 2008), leaders' prototypical follower image includes universally held as well as individually contingent qualities. Leaders' implicit follower theories are also not produced in a vacuum. They present an indirect response to the complex interdependencies of the work environment and an expression of leaders' and followers' "*quasi equitable mutual influencing processes*" (Krummacker & Vogel 2011, p. 155, own translation). Like leadership theories, implicit theories about followership are also formed from an early age and further develop through subsequent exposure to followers. They summarize assumptions and folk theories about follower characteristics, better described as naïve theories about the way

people imagine a typical follower to be (Sy 2010). They may contain information about a typical follower's physical traits (e.g. appearance, gender, submissiveness of the vocal pitch), their location in space in relation to the leader, or archetypal follower behaviors towards the leader during moments of collaboration (Shondrick & Lord 2010). Implicit follower theories are mental representations that contain information about the way followers "typically are" (central tendency prototype) or how they "should be" (goal-derived prototype, Whitley et al. 2012; Sy 2010). Both are important elements in the leader-follower relationship (Shondrick & Lord 2010; Van Gils et al. 2010) because they can affect leaders' judgment as well as treatment of followers (Sy 2010; Sanders 1999). Recent research found that implicit follower theories influence leaders' performance expectations, liking of, and relationship quality with, followers (Whiteley et al. 2012), and if positive, can give rise to the Pygmalion effect, a type of positive self-fulfilling prophecy with a potentially strong impact factor on follower performance and other desirable organizational outcomes (ibid.; Avolio et al. 2009).

The relevance of managers' implicit follower theories can be attributed to their impact on leaders' perception of real followers because mental categories and perception processes are inextricably linked. Perceptions are cognitive processes that enable individuals to understand the environment by organizing, identifying and interpreting sensory information (Schacter 2011). During these cognitive sense-making processes, incoming information (e.g. target person) is also analyzed and compared with existing categories and schemas (e.g. follower prototype) (Shondrick & Lord 2010). These processes can become problematic as leaders might rely more on their implicit follower theories rather than on actual, observed employee behaviors (Lord & Maher 1994; Shondrick & Lord 2010) when assessing and judging followers. In other words, instead of conducting real-time assessments of follower traits and behaviors, leaders might base their judgment on the success of the matching process between the person and their follower prototype. As incoming perceptions go through a filter of existing prototypes, the "*data are acted upon by the mind*" (Richards, 1976, p. 219), steering perceptions and consequent judgments on the basis of prototypical images and providing opportunity for misperception, bias and erroneous management decisions (Sanders 1999).

Historically, followership has either not received much attention in the leadership literature at all, and as soon as followers seemed relevant to the leadership process they were mainly considered in their role as (inferior) receivers of a (superior) leader's influence (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). By definition, followership involves deference to a leader, because "*once deference is gone, so is leadership (and followership)*" (Uhl-Bien & Pillai 2007). In other words, the submission to a leaders' status, behavior or goals is a key component in the process of role identification between leaders and followers and forms a basic expectation for followership. Perhaps on the basis of negative connotations with the concept of submissiveness, the role of followership was considered predominantly negative in management research. Those who follow were thought to be mentally sluggish (Taylor 1947); they were mostly considered as passive, low status, unimaginative individuals unable of making independent judgment (Agho 2009), and managers were said to have "*serious reservations concerning abilities of those below them*" (Miles 1964, p. 78). Social constructions of followership portrayed followers as largely ineffectual (Uhl-Bien & Pillai 2007) undifferentiated mass or collective (Collinson 2006), practically as low-level actors (Derue & Ashford 2010) who hold less power, authority and influence than their superiors (Kellerman 2009). Most notably, Kelley (2008) categorized individuals into five basic styles of followership behavior and used unflattering terms such as passive 'sheep', conformist 'yes-people', alienated and pragmatist followers, and – the only positive exception - the exemplary 'star' follower. From a constructivist point of view, negative followership schemas were partly shaped by organizational behavioral standards, cultures and leadership styles that underlined the idea that leaders, not followers, hold knowledge and expertise (Carsten et al. 2010). Over time, these negative perceptions of followership became affirmative of existing stereotypes through feedback received by leaders and their subsequent adaptation of leadership style towards them (Goodwin et al. 2000). This led to the emergence of a collective 'follower-identity' (Jackson & Johnson 2012) and the confirmation of negative follower stereotypes.

Only recently has emerging leadership research begun to consider followership as a key component of leadership processes. In due course, two perspectives have been identified: followership can be viewed as social process, or as a role or position

(Uhl-Bien et al. 2014). Followership as a social process defines how individuals are expected to relate to a social group (Roberts 2007) and what roles they play as workmates, co-workers and colleagues in a variety of different individual- and organization-related settings (Danielsson 2013). This view portrays leadership relationships as social processes between individuals (DeRue 2011), emphasizes the dyadic interdependence between leaders and followers and thereby encourages a redefinition of the term followers into ‘associates’, ‘team members’ or ‘collaborators’ who are active, involved, influential, and responsible (Rost 2008). Alternatively, followers have also begun to be recognized as holding crucial roles in the pursuit of organizational objectives (Collinson 2006). As teams and organizations have departed from hierarchical structures towards the enablement of interdependent work units and professional networks, followership now means to “*competently and proactively follow the instructions and support the efforts of [a] superior to achieve organizational goals*” (Agho 2009, p. 159). This role-based view on followership embodied in a position or rank model focuses on the way leaders and followers cooperate in the pursuit of organizational outcomes (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014), and this perspective invariably leads to the question about leaders’ performance expectations and required follower characteristics. While the current study recognizes that the definition of followership encompasses more than just an official role (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014), it emphasizes the role-based model of followership. Consequently, the term follower denotes individuals in the formal position as ‘employee’, ‘subordinate’ or ‘direct reports’ as the Ideal Employee represents those who act in a role within a formal authority arrangement (Crossman & Crossman 2011; Uhl-Bien & Pillai 2007). Specifically, the quest for the traits of Ideal Employees refers to goal-derived follower prototypes (Sy 2010) or prototypical implicit follower theories (pIFT) held by individuals in formal leadership positions.

Up until now, one of most comprehensive studies in the field of prototypical implicit follower theories was conducted by Sy (2010). In a five-phase study Sy and his research team generated a pool of items that people use to describe followers in general, identified and validated the factor structure in its temporal consistency and examined their theoretical relevance. The first phase resulted in a collection of 1030 unique items which were analyzed according to frequency and reduced to a pool of

161 follower traits. The following exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses produced the extraction of an 18-item measure, represented by three items per factor and appearing in a second-order two-factor model. This suggested the existence of two broad views on followers which the author termed the Follower Prototype and Antiprototype (Figure 1).

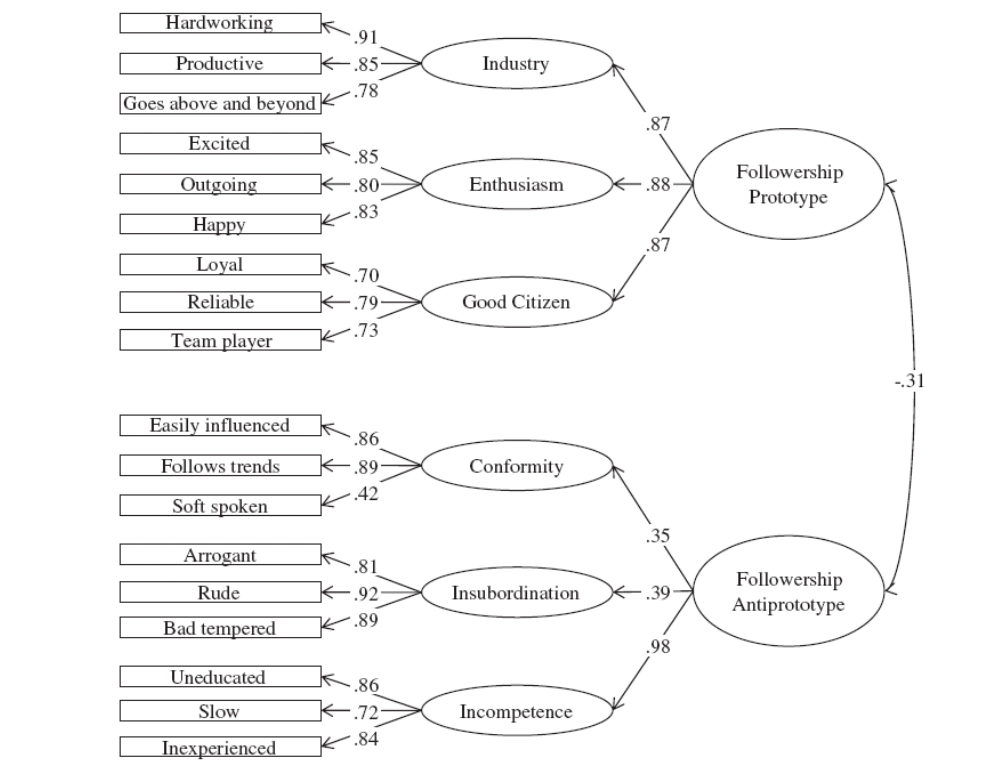


Figure 1: Follower Prototype and Antiprototype (Sy 2010)

Sy's (2010) study provides a comprehensive illustration of positively and negatively valenced implicit follower theories by showing that leaders ascribe 'prototypical' followers with traits relating to Industry, Enthusiasm and Good Citizenship behavior, as well as 'anti-prototypical' qualities such as Conformity, Insubordination and Incompetence. Somewhat problematic is the use of the terminology prototypical and antiprototypical with their reference to positively and negatively valenced follower traits in this study. Since a prototype is the most representative (yet non-valuated) member of a category (Shondrick & Lord 2010), both positively and negatively valenced follower traits are actually 'prototypical'

for followership, while the term ‘anti-prototypical’ should denote qualities that are unrelated to followership. However, this terminology also allows the interpretation of positively valenced follower traits as implicit expressions of ‘desirable’ follower qualities and the collection of anti-prototypical traits as an expression of the ‘undesirable’. It shows that despite sharp theoretical distinctions between central-tendency and goal-derived implicit follower theories (Whiteley 2012; Sy 2010), a clear-cut separation of positive and negative follower aspects, prototypes and anti-prototypes, as well as leaders’ descriptions, expectations and ideals is difficult because leaders’ image of ‘typical’ or ideal’ followership is not always well-defined.

Table 1: Historic ideal follower concepts

INITIATIVE		SUPPORT	
Wernimont (1971)	Loyalty Motivation Industriousness Initiative	Miles (1964)	Common Sense Dependability Pride in performance and efficiency
Borman 1987	Initiative & Hard Work Maturity & Responsibility Technical Proficiency	SCANS Survey (1991) (Hogan 2013)	Social Skills Compliance Obedience Conformism
Kelley (2008) (Star Follower)	Innovative Independent Active Thinker Positive Energy	Agho (2009)	Honesty Competency Dependability Cooperation Loyalty
Chaleff (1998)	Courageous Participative Challenging	Sy (2010)	Hardworking Productive Goes above & beyond Excited Outgoing Happy Loyal Reliable Team Player
Blackshear (2004) (Exemplary Follower)	Team Player Self-Empowered Staying Power Entrepreneurial Problem Fixer Adaptable Optimistic Pursuing Constant (self-) improvement		

Historically, research about leaders' goal-derived implicit follower theories began with the question what manager expected of their subordinates. A close examination of the prescriptive follower typologies (Crossman & Crossman 2011) of the past decades shows two patterns. First, the one follower trait that proved to be universally important for leaders throughout is loyalty (Derler & Weibler 2014; Danielsson 2013; Sy 2010; Wilson et al. 2010; Agho 2009; Kelley 2008; Goodwin et al. 2000; Wofford & Goodwin 1998; Beehr et al. 1994; Wernimont 1971; Miles 1964). Second, the existing ideal follower typologies show a consistent appearance of two dimensions: the tendency to take *initiative*, or the inclination to provide *support* to the leader (Table 1). One of the first known studies that addressed managers' 'ideal subordinate' identified "*common sense, dependability, pride in performance and efficiency*" as important qualities (Miles 1964, p. 83) and thereby highlighted the supportive function of followers. This notion was confirmed in a large-scale study conducted by the U.S Department of Labor which asked entrepreneurs, managers, public and private sector workers as well as union officials about the performance demands for employment at the time and listed social skills, compliance, obedience and conformism as the top employee qualities (SCANS survey 1991, in: Hogan et al. 2013).

Similarly, a study by Agho (2009) articulated the supportive orientation of prototypical followership through leaders' preference for honesty, competency, dependability, cooperation and loyalty as characteristics of effective followership, essentially echoing Sy's (2010) prototypical follower traits hardworking, reliable and loyal. In contrast to ideal followership following the supportive dimension, other studies presented ideal follower typologies that emphasized independent and empowered followers. For example, Wernimont (1971) found that managers expect employees to display loyalty, motivation, industriousness and initiative, similar to Borman's (1987) 'folk theories of performance' that isolated initiative and hard work, maturity and responsibility and technical proficiency as valued employee traits. Also Kelley's prototypical 'star' followers represent the active, initiative-taking dimension as they are innovative, independent, active tinkers with a positive energy (Jaussi et al. 2008), while Blackshear's (2004) 'exemplary follower' displays self-empowerment, an entrepreneurial approach and flexibility. Finally, Chaleff's prescriptive conceptualization of ideal followership outlines preferred

followers as displaying courage, assuming responsibility for themselves and their organization, serving and unburdening their leader, but also giving voice to discomfort, participating fully in change processes and having the courage to leave in the face of destructive leadership (Chaleff 2009; 1998). The Ideal Employee profiles presented in the above typologies portray a combination of active and passive dimensions and provide an informative summary of what has been considered good followership in the past. In short: ideal followers are expected to balance the degree to which they reliably support managerial and organizational goals and are self-empowered, courageous initiators with an entrepreneurial spirit. Despite offering an interesting overview to those qualities that managers have implicitly been expecting from employees, the existing typologies can also be seen through a critical lens. First, neither of them offer new or ambitious problematization attempts (Alvesson & Sandberg 2011) that would expand current knowledge about leaders' implicit follower theories beyond existing trait theories. In other words, by focusing solely on the content of ideal follower theories, they all asked similar questions and produced a variety of ideal follower trait lists without reference to the context from which they emerged. This led to superficial and abstract trait theories that appear limited in their capacity to explain variability. However, as behavior "*depends on incentives created by situations*" (Almlund et al. 2011, p. 15), leaders may develop preferences for employee traits in response to organizational demands, and employees may only display certain behaviors on the condition of their support by the organizational environment. Individual leaders have different preferences and 'zones of acceptance' for leader- and followership (DeRue 2011), hence employee characteristics established as ideal for some leaders cannot be transferred to others (Cottrell 2007). The second vulnerability of existing follower trait theories is that they lead to 'follower blueprints' (Derue 2011) and prescribe conformist behavioral guidelines through objectified categories. Listing certain sets of desirable follower qualities implies their prescription and reduces the complexity of desirable follower behaviors to just a few (Collinson 2006). That way, it reaffirms existing prototypes as it automatically excludes employee qualities outside of the realm of the 'desirable', potentially reducing the opportunity for diversity and multiplicity.

1.2.3 The role of context in the formation of prototypes

The above mentioned drawbacks of trait theories can be counteracted with the inclusion of contextual information in the assessment of leaders' implicit follower theories. The notion of context as important influencing factor on human behavior is not new to the field of organizational science. Forty years ago, Drucker (1974) alluded to the influence of organizational structure as enabling performance and contributions, and Lord (1976) considered task and situational variables as important determinants of behavior and performance. Context describes the "*situational setting in which workplace phenomena occur*" (Joshi & Roh 2009, p. 601) by providing the 'boundary conditions' (Kopelman et al. 2008) through systems, processes and beliefs which restrict the expression of individual differences unrelated to individuals' ability (Meyer et al. 2009). On a meta-level, contextual influences provided by systems can be of varying intensity; for example, 'weak' situations provide few situational restraints and enable individuals to act more upon their own proclivities whereas 'strong' situations can guide behavior more and replace individual discretion (ibid.). On a micro-level, the term context can be materialized and interpreted in a variety of ways, whereby the strength of situational cues can still vary. Context can be defined through certain social settings or task types as it provides "*situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organizational behavior as well as functional relationships between variables*" (Johns 2006, p. 386).

Apart from situational contingency that arises through domain specific circumstances in the external environment, context also encompasses internal aspects such as individuals' perceptions of certain influences or their own interactions with the environment. For example, people's beliefs about the stability or malleability of other individual's traits can be determined by circumstances: the same person may believe that people's moral character is stable and at the same time believe that intelligence is a flexible trait (Hong et al. 1997; Dweck et al. 1995). Individuals can also change their internal stance to certain topics depending on their social group membership at the time (McConnell et al. 2008), for example a person's preference for male or female leadership can depend on their context or difference in situational settings (Dinh & Lord 2012). People simply appreciate

certain traits in different contexts (Carsten et al. 2010; Shondrick & Lord 2010), and consequently form various leader and follower prototypes. These prototypes not only vary between individuals in specific types of organizations (Hogan et al. 2013), they can also change over time. The connectionist model of leader prototypes by Lord and his colleagues is a sophisticated attempt to explain the cognitive processes that underlie this flexibility. Prototypes are described as “*networks of neuron-like processing units*” (Lord et al. 2001b) that continuously pass on and integrate incoming information about context, tasks, people and organizational factors. These networks of traits form a cognitive construct that represent the ‘prototypical leader’ (or follower) but experience constant updates with new information. These updates occur on the basis on newly incoming information about actual target-persons which again are constrained by contextual factors such as tasks, hierarchical levels, national culture, age, tenure, experience and gender factors (Johnson et al. 2008; Epitropaki & Martin 2004; Lord et al. 2001b) as well as context types (e.g. military, education, business, religious etc., Medvedeff & Lord 2007). The enrichment with new information enables the redevelopment of schemata (Smothers et al. 2011; Shondrick & Lord 2010; Medvedeff & Lord 2007; Lord & Emrich 2001) so that prototypes can be said to be “*evoked rather than found*” (Hanges et al. 2000, p. 142).

Following this rationale, leaders’ implicit follower theories are not assumed to appear in form of a few universally valid and desired qualities but as idiosyncratic concepts that depend on contextual factors. Such an approach countervails the essentialist notion of an Ideal Employee but also allows the resolution of those challenges provided by follower trait theories. For one, it offers a way to explain variations in leaders’ preferences for certain employee characteristics and thereby puts the relevance of individual employee qualities in relation to the changing requirements of leaders’ work environment. It also helps explain the deviance from universally valid employee prototypes as observed in the organizational practice and reduces its prescriptive and exclusive character.

1.3 Research questions, goal and methodology of research project

Prior to the definition of the research questions pertaining to contextual influences on leaders' pIFT, certain parameters must be defined. The current study is confined to leaders' goal-derived or prototypical implicit follower theories also referred to as leaders' performance theories or ideal employee images. This excludes IFT as held by individuals other than those in leadership roles, and eliminates the study of leaders' general view of followers, or a central-tendency prototype. The focus clearly lies on the way leaders implicitly build and maintain a mental image of a 'preferred' or 'desired' follower in relation to their work environment and their personality. Surprisingly, despite the plethora of theoretical and empirical research in respect to the link between context and implicit *leadership* theories (Smothers et al. 2011; Epitropaki & Martin 2004; House et al. 2004; Brodbeck et al. 2000; Konrad 2000), no studies have been conducted with regards to contextual links to leaders' implicit *follower* theories. The present work sets out to investigate the question if and to what degree leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories emerge in response to a context that is constituted by a relatively specific configuration of task, cultural and behavioral cues and pressures. The aim is to build on existing ideal follower typologies and to examine the variability in leaders' Ideal Employee image in order to learn about the contextual and personality influences affecting leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories. In particular, the study focuses on context factors in the organizational realm which naturally constitute environmental elements within and outside of their immediate work space. Thereby it investigates leaders' perceptions of organization-external features such as the prevailing market conditions, and organization-internal aspects such as coordination mechanisms and organizational culture. Additionally, it studies internal context factors represented by leaders' own personality or rather their self-perceptions thereof. This approach promises to take the multiplicity of influencing factors into account and to provide a holistic picture of the variability and origin of emerging employee prototypes.

Research questions. The placement in a situational setting will enable the interpretation of variations in leaders' employee prototypes and allow meaningful

conclusions about their impact and potential consequences for the organizational practice. The following research questions can be defined:

Question 1:

What role does leaders' perception of work context play in the development of their prototypical implicit follower theories?

Question 2:

How are leaders' perceptions of factors external and internal to their organizations linked to the content of Ideal Employee schema?

Question 3:

Does leaders' personality play a role in the development of their prototypical implicit follower theories?

Question 4:

Are certain aspects in leaders' organizational culture associated with their preferences for certain employee traits and qualities?

Question 5:

What value will the knowledge about these complex interdependencies of context, leader personality, organizational cultures and employee prototype provide for the improvement of leader- and organizational effectiveness?

Question 6:

How can these insights help leaders to manage, challenge or utilize their Ideal Employee image?

Goal. The goal of this dissertation is to contribute to existing conceptualizations which suggest the influence on contextual and individual factors on the development of leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories (Figure 2). A detailed investigation of aspects constituting leaders' work context such as organization-external market conditions, company-internal coordination mechanisms, factors in the prevailing organizational culture as well as leaders' own personality will shed light on the question if and to what degree leaders' preference

for certain employee traits and behaviors is informed by their work environment and personal constitution. It contributes to emerging dynamic viewpoints on implicit follower theories (Foti et al. 2014) and answers the call in leadership research for a greater consideration of the social and organizational context in which leadership processes are embedded (DeRue 2011; Yukl 2009; Liden & Antonakis 2009; Avolio 2007). Apart from its theoretical value, this study draws conclusions in regards to the far-reaching ramifications of leaders' implicit employee prototype on organizational processes, especially in regards to personnel selection and diversity. The finding that context informs leaders' preferences for employee qualities is consequential for organizations and leads to specific recommendations for the assessment, management and utilization of existing employee prototype. As leaders' evaluation of certain employee qualities is informed by the endorsement of organizational processes and values, work context seems to either encourage - or discourage – diversity, creativity and innovation and subsequent personnel decisions.

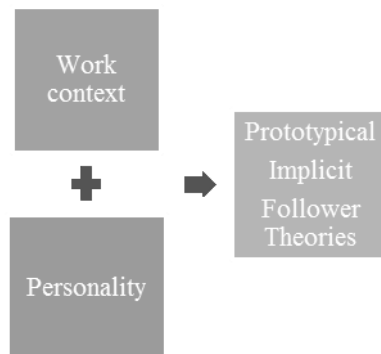


Figure 2: Illustration of research goal

Method. For the investigation of the above research questions, two empirical studies were conducted whereby one took place in the USA and one in Germany. Due to the author's well-established business network in both countries it was possible to recruit leaders and managers in a variety of industries, companies, professions, hierarchical levels and job roles. In many cases, top management of the participating organizations personally invited survey participants to complete the online questionnaires. This method ensured the participation of individuals with active leadership responsibilities who could provide real-time assessments of all

context variables. In both cases, the research design and analysis followed the quantitative approach. Measurement of variables was undertaken via the collection of participants' ratings of items presented in an online survey, followed by the statistical analysis via multiple linear regression models. The choice to conduct quantitative instead of qualitative research was based on the study's objective to search for support for theories expressed in a variety of hypotheses and to provide measurable data that is relatively unbiased, representative for a larger population outside of the used sample, and therefore generalizable (Creswell 2003). Details about individual studies, samples and measurements are outlined in the following section.

1.4 Structure of dissertation

1.4.1 US Study: work context, leader personality and pIFT

The first study took place in the USA in 2012 and looked at associations between factors in leaders' work context as well as their personality with their employee prototype. Variations in contextual strength on leaders' pIFT were tested for links abstract employee traits and specific work behaviors. Based on the concept of organizational ambidexterity, leaders' perception of prevailing explorative or exploitative market conditions and organizational coordination mechanisms (Jansen et al. 2006) were compared with the abstract and specific content of their implicit follower theories; the hypothesis was that contextual effects would be stronger on the specific category level of leaders' employee prototype than on the abstract level. Against some expectations but in line with the main contingency argument of this thesis, results show that leaders' perceptions of contextual factors can be linked to the content of their prototypical implicit follower theories on *both* the abstract and the specific category level. In other words, contextual factors seem to inform leaders' preferences for abstract employee traits as well as specific employee work behaviors. For example, dynamic market conditions lead to a preference for corresponding explorative employee work behaviors, Industriousness and Good Citizenship in employees, and formalized coordination mechanisms are positively associated with Exploitation, Enthusiasm and Good Citizenship in team members, but negatively with their level of Industriousness. The strongest link was found between Formalization and exploitative work

behaviors and Enthusiasm; this suggests that company-internal contextual components have a stronger impact on leaders' prototypical expectations than organization-external factors than those on the macro level.

In addition to observing external factors, leaders' internal constitution was also taken into consideration in this study. Separate models show that leaders' own personality factors (Weller & Matiaske 2009; Saucier 1994) are associated with their preference for corresponding employee qualities on the specific category level, thereby partly confirming the similarity-attraction-paradigm. Accordingly, leaders' Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Openness and Extraversion are not linked to Industriousness, Enthusiasm or Good Citizenship in employees, but Conscientiousness in leaders is related to Exploitation, and Openness is associated with a preference for Exploration. Lastly, the question about differences in impact strength of both external and internal factors on leaders' pIFT is being addressed. The main effects model shows that work context and personality simultaneously inform the content of leaders' prototypical employee image, whereby context factors are stronger related to leaders' preference on the abstract category level, while their personality is linked mainly to specific employee work behaviors.

1.4.2 German Study: organizational culture and pIFT

The focus of the second study which took place in 2014 with leaders in Germany lay on contextual influences derived from leaders' perceptions of organizational culture in their organizations. Research variables represent leaders' perceptions of cultural aspects that define the types Clan, Hierarchy, Adhocracy and Market culture (Cameron & Quinn 2006) and their follower prototype taxonomy according to Sy (2010). Overall, this study provides some evidence for the hypothesis that leaders look for a "fit" between their perceptions of organizational culture and their preferences for certain employee qualities. Managers in Market and Clan cultures show the most complex employee prototypes, and prefer traits related to Industriousness, Enthusiasm, Good Citizenship, Obedience and Competence; leaders in Adhocracy cultures, on the other hand, indicated no preference for employee traits at all. The differences in associations between culture types and managers' preferences for certain employee traits indicate that certain cultural conditions inform leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories more than others.

This allows conclusions in regards to varying cultural preconditions leaders' employee prototype.

Table 2: Individual Study Features

	Sample	Independent Variables	Dependent Variables
US Study (2012)	182 leaders	Market Conditions	Abstract Follower Prototypical Traits
		Coordination Mechanisms	Specific Follower Work Behaviors
		Leader Personality	
GERMAN Study (2014)	138 leaders	Organizational Culture	Abstract Follower Prototypical Traits

A summary of the studies' individual features (Table 2) show that both studies set about the issue of contextual prerequisites of leaders' ideal employee image from a different angle and eventually present a holistic picture about potential influencing factors on prototypical implicit follower theories. The following chapters in this thesis provide a detailed account of the approach, methodology and outcomes before applying the gathered results to those organizational processes that most benefit from a deeper understanding of the interdependencies between leaders' Ideal Employee image and its related factors.

2 US Study part I: Work context and leaders' Ideal Employee

2.1 Introduction

Undeniably, it is valuable to know which qualities leaders consider as typical, prototypical or anti-prototypical in employees; however, most trait concepts consist of rather abstract, universal traits (Sy 2010; Agho 2009; Wernimont 1971) that are not explicit in their meaning, nor are they translatable to specific behavioral expressions. For example, what precisely does it mean for an employee to be productive and, is it always a desirable employee trait? The type of productivity expected from a scientist is not equal to the productivity of an assembly line worker, or productivity may not be an important quality for an orchestra musician at all.

A closer look at most trait theories of followership reveals that the degree to which certain characteristics are relevant parts of employee prototypes depends on their relativity to leaders' situational placement and this symbiosis between context and leader's pIFT will be examined in this chapter. The first step is to organize the theoretical structure of implicit follower theories; the perspective on an entity and a functional level of leaders' mental employee prototype enables a more detailed view on contextual variations of pIFT because the assumption is that leaders' preferences for what a follower *does* depends more on leaders' work context or personality than who or what a follower *is*. Secondly, a detailed investigation of certain factors that constitute 'work context' helps identify those elements that help explain variations in leaders' pIFT. The identification of different types of work contexts is possible with an assessment of its explorative and exploitative aspects as outlined in the framework of organizational ambidexterity. Both Exploration and Exploitation, representing the respective creative and efficiency-oriented facets of innovation efforts are present at many levels of the organizational reality and serve as guidelines of variability. According to the presented theoretical model, explorative and exploitative elements in leader's perception of market conditions and coordination mechanisms affect their preferences for more or less explorative or exploitative employee behaviors on the functional level; their preferences for

abstract follower traits on the entity level are expected to remain relatively unaffected because they are rooted in the superordinate category level of leaders' employee prototype. The following sections describe the nature of cognitive schemata, introduce the dual structure of leader's employee prototype and their different relation to various contextual influences.

2.1.1 Dual structure of prototypical implicit follower theories

The foundation for a deeper understanding of implicit follower theories has been laid in research about human perception and categorization processes. According to categorization theory (Rosch 1978) humans encounter a plethora of impressions about the world every day. In order to extract meaning from this flow of information they create cognitive shortcuts by trying to match impressions with existing cognitive categories that have developed around a mental prototype. Categorization processes are being applied to people, objects or events (Lord & Maher 1994) and have first been used to explain how individuals are perceived and classified as leaders. For example, a perceiver who finds herself in the context of leadership might categorize another individual as "follower" or "leader" whereby the match of perceived traits with the prototypical leader or follower image depends on the similarity between the target person and her leader/follower prototype (Shondrick & Lord 2010). However, categorization processes go beyond a mere classification into leader/non-leader because prototypes have also an internal hierarchical structure that is partly influenced by the context in which the matching process occurs. Every category has several levels: an abstract or superordinate level, a middle or basic level, and the lowest or subordinate category level (Shondrick & Lord 2010; Sy 2010; Lord et al. 2001a; Lord & Maher 1993). Applied to the current example, the perceiver's classification of the target person into 'leader' or 'non-leader' first occurs on the abstract level, becomes richer on the middle level as contextual information is added (e.g. military, religious or political context information), and most specific on the lowest level with the addition of specific data (e.g. gender, rank, task). Simplified versions of categories are also possible; for example the term 'leader' can represent the superordinate level of the leader category, while 'supervisor' denotes a more basic category level that is "*richer in detail and less inclusive than its superordinate 'leader'*" (Offermann et al. 1994).

In any case, lower levels of leadership prototypes are subject to higher contextual accuracy (Lord et al. 2001a) so that a match between the target person with the leader prototype is enabled - or prevented - mainly through additional information retrieved from the basic and subordinate category levels that include contextual information.

The hierarchical structure of cognitive constructs has also been applied to areas other than leader categories such as goals, persons, tasks, roles, organizations, incentives, and aspects of the work setting (Wofford & Goodwin 1998). For example, a leaders' goal schema of transformational leadership contains the abstract vision of an organization's future with the middle level outlining broad, and the lowest level charting the most specified performance outcomes (ibid.). Equally, leaders' categories extend to their schemata of employees and subordinates where notions and expectations about prototypical and antiprototypical followers are represented in their implicit follower theories. The highest category level of leaders' employee prototype corresponds with the most abstract types (e.g. 'follower' versus 'non-follower'), while lower category levels refer to more specific categories (e.g. 'good follower' versus 'bad follower'). Depending on the cascading level of abstraction, context information and prototype are more and more interwoven because the more contextual constraints taken into account, the more specific the prototype becomes (Medvedeff & Lord 2007). On that basis it can be hypothesized that the highest category level describes leaders' most generally desired employee traits, that is, at the abstract or superordinate category level, while the lower category level refers to context-sensitive aspects, or the specific/basic category level. In other words, traits that describe an ideal, prototypical follower are more likely to be abstract and universal as they are desired by leaders in a large variety of contexts, while those on the specific category level will vary substantially because they are placed in the lower category level of leaders' follower prototype. The current model suggests a simplification of the three-level model and poses that leaders' pIFT have an inherently dual structure. Thereby, the abstract level of leaders' pIFT denotes leaders' preference for employee traits that are relatively independent of context and shared by a larger variety of leaders in many different work contexts. Prominent examples would be qualities such as 'hardworking', 'loyal', and 'productive' as found by Sy (2010) and Wernimont (1971). The specific

category level of pIFT, on the other hand, represents employee behaviors that show individual level differences in their relevance to leaders. For instance, depending on work context and task requirements, leaders' employee prototype might consist of work activities related to exploration (creativity and innovation), as opposed to exploitation (efficiency and routine oriented work activities).

The notion of a dual structure of pIFT corresponds to similar concepts in the history of leader's implicit follower theories. If regarded as expectations for the fulfilment of social roles, implicit follower theories can be organized around the two dimensions of affiliation and power, or in Freudian terms: love and work (Roberts 2007). For example, Fiedler's (1964) typology of the least preferred co-worker posits that managers recognize favorable aspects even in 'poor' co-workers (*"Even if I can't work with him, he may still be a very nice and valuable person"*, *ibid*, p. 155), implying a personal and a functional level of managers' thoughts on subordinate qualities. Similarly, Beehr et al. (1994) described an entity aspect (*"liking people for what they are"*; *ibid*; p. 1667) and a functional aspect (*"ways that the subordinate behaves that might be preferred and expected"*; *ibid*, p. 1681) to the leader-follower relationship. Furthermore, Engle & Lord (1997) posed that leaders perceive subordinates in terms of attitudinal similarity and implicit performance aspects, thereby referring to personal and functional aspects of followers and employees, respectively. Most recently, Danielsson (2013) investigated followers' own perspectives on followership in organizations and identified personal and functional follower trait conceptualizations in the form of organization and individual-related followership.

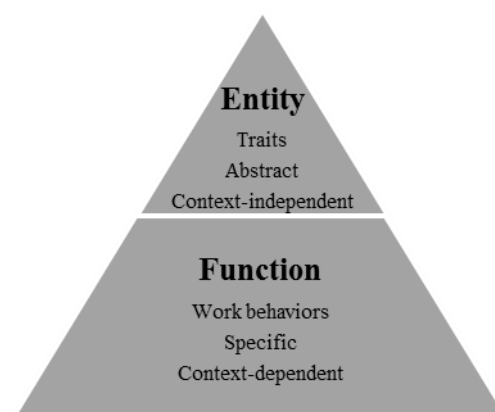


Figure 3: Structure of leaders' employee prototype

As illustrated in Figure 2, the current model of leaders' employee prototype is organized in an entity and a functional level, whereby an employee's characteristics are classified into context-independent traits on the abstract level ("what the ideal employee should be like"), and context-dependent specific work behaviors ("what the ideal employee should do") on the lower level. Generally, traits or qualities are "*relatively enduring and cross-situational consistent sets of behaviors*" (De Vries 2012, p. 809) with *distal* (endemic, stable, not contextually specific) and *proximal* (contextually specific attributes such as knowledge, skills) components. Since leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories are mental representations and configurations of ideal employee traits and behaviors, the same principle can be applied. Variability mainly depends on the context sensitivity of the employee prototype whereby the specific category level will be prone to higher variability than the abstract category level of leaders' pIFT. Contextual differences affecting implicit theories can emerge through factors external and internal to the individual who hold them. Past research tied the development of implicit leadership theories to the needs and requirements of social groups (Cottrell et al. 2007), to leaders' own tolerance levels for more or less ideal employees (Medvedeff & Lord 2007) or person-internal factors such as self-schemata (Lord et al. 2001b; Hanges et al. 2000) and leadership style (Goodwin et al. 2000; Wofford & Goodwin 1998). Yet unknown is the degree to which external factors play a role in the development of leaders' follower theories.

2.2 External influences on leaders' pIFT: the role of work context

Implicit theories are intricate parts of the leadership process and thereby embedded in, and critically affected by, a sociocultural environment (Bligh et al. 2007). In view of the abundance of contextual factors made up of ethnicities, roles, hierarchies, crisis situations, cultural views, group identification or task types (Lord & Emrich 2001), a classification of the leadership context into two levels of analysis is helpful. On the broadest level or the 'omnibus context', environmental factors encompass many features outside of organizations while the 'discrete context' that is nested within the omnibus context may comprise specific organizational characteristics that affect individual members (Johns 2006). For example, the

omnibus context can be represented in the cultural layer defined by country or nationality, and the discrete context can refer to more specific contextual aspects such as civilian or military contexts, or tribal versus urban environments (Kelley 2008). Within organizations, the provision of context occurs through hierarchies and positions, the tasks pursued in various departments (e.g. manufacturing/service, shop floor/non-shop floor, managerial/non-managerial) or certain job types (Epitropaki & Martin (2004).

Prevailing system restraints of a wider market environment and a more specific organizational context affect individuals on the task level as well as the development of their leader- and followership prototypes (Lord et al. 2001a). If and to what degree contextual features inform the content of prototypes might depend on their situational strength or the prevalence of certain characteristics in a person's environment. While 'weak situations' allow a stronger expression of individual behaviors as they provide fewer restraints, 'strong situations' provide cumulative cues that prompt certain homogenous behaviors; they replace individual discretion (Meyer et al. 2009) and lead to coherent perceptions amongst many individuals (Lord et al. 2001b). Applied to the organizational environment, this means that internal processes are at closer proximity to the individual than the external market environment (e.g. direct contact with employees occurs more frequently than with market competitors) and the features of the discrete level provide a 'stronger' situation for individuals than those on the omnibus level. As leaders' personal knowledge of organizational culture, situational context, and task constraints evolves (Lord et al. 2001a), they find themselves in their own 'problem space' (Lord 1976); this problem space affects their leadership style (Goodwin et al. 2000), their perceptions and activities and, as suggested by the current model, prompt expectations and requirements for prototypical employee traits. The investigation of those factors in leaders' work context that might impact their pIFT needs to begin by asking the following question: What measures can be used to gauge a leaders' work context on both the broader omnibus and the closer discrete level which would also explain the variability in their implicit follower theories? In other words, what are some of the working principles that operate in the market place as well as within organizations that have the potential to translate into leaders' work and their expectations for employees? The search for a meaningful way to categorize work

settings to study leaders' pIFT initially led to the consideration of a variety of classifications such as industries, occupations (Joshi & Roh 2009) or branches of trade. However, the multifaceted nature of today's organizations based on industry or occupation carry the risk of intra-industry variations that could be interfering factors in the analysis of associations between context and leaders' pIFT. The meaningful analysis of leaders' work context requires a concept that allows classifications of context variables across industries and occupations, so that it is applicable on the macro as well as the micro level of analysis. One concept that offers working principles fundamental enough to be applied on both levels is the exploration-exploitation continuum.

2.2.1 Exploration and Exploitation in Markets and Organizations

Exploration and exploitation activities emerge as organizations try to adapt to the changing constraints of the environment (Van de Ven et al. 2013). In order to survive, organizations need to utilize both the *"exploration of new possibilities and the exploitation of old certainties"* (March 1991, p.72) in a structural and contextual manner (Gibson & Birkinshaw 2004; Gupta et al. 2006). This drives processes and decision making by organization members to simultaneously pursue a search for new, and a reliance on existing knowledge (Posen & Levinthal 2011). The principle of exploitation and exploration as it is known today (Raisch et al. 2009; Mom et al. 2007; March 1991) can be found in earlier work as a distinction of innovative and operational work, and structured versus unstructured tasks. Innovative work deals with vague, ambiguous and unstructured tasks (Fiedler 1964) by *"creating effectively and purposefully the new and the different"* (Drucker 1974, p. 782). In contrast, operational work refers to structured tasks high in clarity (Fiedler 1964), expressed by *"managing what is already in existence and known, building it, exploiting its potential, taking care of its problems"* (Drucker 1974, p. 524). Similarly, there are two main types of innovation described in the current model: explorative innovation efforts are discontinuous and inherently ambiguous as they change norms and existing working modes; exploitative innovation, on the other hand, is incremental, it doesn't involve fundamental changes and it occurs within existing organizational norms (McKee 1992). Exploration and exploitation have been described as thought patterns that are signified in different strategies,

processes, structures, capabilities and cultures (He & Wong 2004). They describe basic work activities inherent in a large variety of markets, organizations and individual actions (Jansen et al. 2006) and are applicable to many areas from strategic management and organizational design to technological innovation and organizational learning (Raisch & Birkinshaw 2008) across different industries, organizational cultures or task orientations.

Specifically, exploration activities are related to the creation of new knowledge, products, services, markets or customers, and exploitation describes the utilization of existing information, products, services, clients and markets (Jansen et al. 2006). Usually, they pertain to their interrelation as an organization's simultaneous pursuit of both principles - known as ambidexterity – that is considered a crucial factor for success (Raisch & Birkinshaw 2008; March 1991). Essentially, however, they are contradictory processes (Benner & Tushman 2003) as they encourage rather different mental and procedural values:

“The essence of exploitation is the refinement and extension of existing competences, technologies, and paradigms. Its returns are positive, proximate, and predictable. The essence of exploration is experimentation with new alternatives. Its returns are uncertain, distant, and often negative”.
(March 1991, p. 85)

In order to study variability in leaders' work context in relation to their prototypical implicit follower theories, the present research is based on the notion that exploration and exploitation are divergent organizational processes (Hotho & Champion 2010; Gupta et al. 2006; He & Wong 2004; Benner & Tushman 2003). Organizations in the real market place tend to focus their energies on one of them, even though the simultaneous pursuit of exploration and exploitation may offer an ideal model for economic success (Hotho & Champion 2010; Gupta et al. 2006). Consequently, leaders may perceive their work context as emphasizing either explorative or exploitative work principles that express the demands of their specific work environment and influence their image of an ideal employee. As the tension field of renewal and preservation exists in decision-making processes, routine and non-routine activities, as well as managers' collective and creative actions (Mom et al. 2009), there are two context-specific levels of analysis under

investigation: market conditions external to the organization, and firm-internal coordination mechanisms.

Market conditions. All organizations operate under certain market conditions, and contingency theory holds that a firm's performance can be enhanced by a fit between its environment and internal structure, strategy, culture and systems (Van de Ven et al. 2013). Apart from task-related market pressures surrounding a company there are also socioeconomic and institutional forces such as welfare programs or customers' spending capacity in a country that influence the availability and utilization of resources for exploratory or exploitative innovation efforts (Müller et al. 2013). The type of (market) environment surrounding an organization to a large degree directs its internal efforts as organizational configurations (e.g. organic/mechanistic) allow a better adaption to a more or less dynamic environment than others (Short et al. 2008). The present study defines market conditions as informational input that stems from sources outside of the organizational realm, such as customers, suppliers, competitors and regulatory groups (Dill 1958), and depending on the nature of the organization its external market will be either more dynamic or more competitive (Jansen et al. 2006). Characteristics of dynamic market conditions are changing customer needs, technologies and product demands that require the development of new products and services as much as the instability of the environment and the unpredictability of change (Dess & Beard 1984). As the accumulation of knowledge declines in increasingly turbulent environments (March 1991), organization members in dynamic markets are required to pursue explorative activities (Weibler & Keller 2011) such as the reduction of insecurities through the search for new information. Competitive market conditions, on the other hand, feature a number of competitors and areas of competition that create great pressures in respect to efficiency, lower prices and tighter margins, requiring organization members to become experts of existing technologies, products and services in order to increase routine tasks and boost efficiency (ibid.). The emphasis on exploration or exploitation on the market level of analysis are managed at the next level down (Raisch & Birkinshaw 2008) so that organizational structures and managerial activities (Weibler & Keller 2011) are a response to the prevailing market conditions. For example, leaders in highly competitive market environments might structure their own and their team

members' daily work activities in accordance with the tasks evolving from competitors' activities in order to maintain a competitive position. Those in dynamic and fast-changing markets will need to focus on constant renewal of products and services and arrange their daily activities in a different manner. Either way, their perceptions of the nature of market conditions external to their organization will co-determine certain individual actions and reactions on the leadership level.

Coordination mechanisms. Organizational design affects hierarchy levels, tasks and procedures, and it encompasses structures and policies, routines, change programs, and cognitive processes such as sense-making and discovery (Van de Ven et al. 2013). Internal formal structures that serve the organizational (Jansen et al. 2006) as well the individual coordination of work activities (Mom et al. 2009) are also known as coordination mechanisms; they link different parts of a business unit by “*directing attention and grouping together key resources*” (Jansen et al. 2006, p. 1662). Aside from its strategy and culture, an organization's structure is one of its three organizational assets (Zheng et al. 2010). Firms can be structured in ‘organic’ ways by expressing an ability for flexibility and adaptation, or in a ‘mechanistic’ manner, with an increased focus on efficiency and routine (Short et al. 2008). Specifically, decentralized coordination mechanisms reflect the organic, explorative aspect of an organization as decision responsibilities are delegated to subunits, providing leaders with decision-making authority to pursue goals and solve problems more independently (Mom et al. 2009, Dewar et al. 1980). Consequently, increased decentralization has been found to encourage innovation and other explorative activities in organization members because it stimulates the awareness and willingness to pursue a wider array of opportunities to focus on long-term goals (Jansen et al. 2006; Mom et al. 2009). In contrast, the formalization of tasks reveals an organization's mechanic aspect; it emphasizes exploitative activities, rigid decision-making guidelines and the expectation to conform to the rules (Mom et al. 2009). High levels of formalization lessen the pursuit of new opportunities as individuals depend on formal systems; this prompts a focus on short-term goals, inhibits exploration activities (Jansen et al. 2006) and makes “*experimentation [...] less attractive*” (March 1991, p. 72). Of course, both exploration and exploitation are important to organizational innovation but their

simultaneous pursuit seems challenging in the organizational practice. One way organizations choose to resolve the exploration-exploitation dilemma is to divide explorative and exploitative activities into different departments or business units; for example, research & development, organizational development and marketing departments pursue explorative activities whereas production, purchasing and sales execute more exploitative tasks (Weibler & Keller 2011; O'Reilly & Tushman 2004). Regardless of the specific circumstances, a demand for increased explorative activities needs to be implemented through appropriate coordination mechanisms such as the special and/or structural separation of units that pursue creative action; this provides a buffer from commercial pressures and enables the development of 'trust time' that encourages risk, failures and slack necessary for true explorative action (Hotho & Champion 2010).

Managerial action. The current study adds to existing literature about contextual antecedents of organizational processes and their impact on individual action (Weibler & Keller 2011, Jansen et al. 2006, Zahra & Bogner 1999, Dill 1958). Leaders are also subject to occupation-level restrictions that affect their behavioral and decisional freedom (Meyer et al. 2009; Johns 2006) because "*managerial action forms the movement of the organization, while at the same time being formed by it*" (Uhl-Bien & Pillai 2007, p. 190). They can encourage explorative or exploitative innovation strategies by creating the analytic framework for certain technical skills or mindsets within their teams (McKee 1992) as they decide on their own role as facilitators or controllers, or as boundary-setting brokers versus rule makers (Hotho & Champion 2010). The types of constraints that affect individual managerial action and their choices for supporting explorative or exploitative activities are manifold and stem from sources external and internal to the organization. On a broader level, national culture can drive behavioral tendencies of customers, managers, employees or business owners and eventually affect an individual's willingness to pursue explorative or exploitative innovation; for example, high power distance and low uncertainty avoidance in a culture has been found to encourage exploratory activities while not affecting exploitative innovation (Müller et al. 2013). Explorative or exploitative orientations of prevailing market conditions or inner-organizational coordination mechanisms can direct managerial activities as leaders' perceptions thereof evokes expected

behavioral patterns. This influencing process can be explained with the consideration of personality traits as response to situational cues; depending on the strength of the situation it either allows or negates the expression of a person's unique traits and thereby shapes behavior to a higher or lower degree (Tett & Burnett 2003).

Different coordination mechanisms can have considerable consequences for individual behavior. For example, higher decentralization can lead to individual's increased sense of responsibility for conduct and performance in their tasks, an ability to see a diversity of opportunities and needs and a feeling of self-control and ownership; increased formalization, on the other hand, renders managers less prone to making their own decisions, less open to different opportunities and goals and encourages expertise in a limited area by providing a 'singleness of purpose' (Mom et al. 2009). Contextual influence of explorative or exploitative principles on managerial activities can take place in the form of constraints or encouragement of behaviors. While March (1991) emphasized the inhibitive nature of this dynamic by stating that certain contexts *prevent* individual behaviors and actions, Mom et al. (2007) consider an organizations' top-down, bottom-up and horizontal knowledge flow as one-directional *encouragement* of manager's exploration and exploitation activities. The present work considers the directional influence of context in the latter sense in that situational cues are assumed to inspire and encourage certain managerial activities. As leaders are positioned in a specific task environment or 'problem space' (Lord 1976) their tasks not only evoke certain explorative and/or exploitative work behaviors (Gibson & Birkinshaw 2004; Mom et al. 2007; Gupta et al. 2006) but, as hypothesized in this theses, also influence the development of their implicit theories (Crossman & Crossman 2011; Smothers et al. 2011; Van Gils et al. 2010; Cottrell et al. 2007; Zaccaro et al. 1991; Fiedler 1964). Accordingly, managers in explorative environments (dynamic markets, decentralized coordination mechanisms) will search for and experiment with new approaches, adopt a long-term orientation and reconsider existing beliefs (Mom et al. 2007); consequently, they are expected to define their prototypical implicit follower theories on the explorative side of the continuum. Those in more exploitative work contexts (competitive markets, formalized organizations) are encouraged to create reliability, refine existing knowledge, focus on production and

adopt a short-term view (ibid.) and therefore may have a more exploitative employee prototype. However, leaders' preferences for either explorative or exploitative orientation in followers are likely to be linked only to the functional category level of their pIFT. Employees' personal traits on the abstract category level are assumed to be less context sensitive, more generally valid and relevant to leaders regardless of their task environment. For example, most of the desired follower traits (e.g. 'hardworking', 'productive' or 'honest' as presented by historic follower taxonomies (table I), are assumed to be part of leaders' pIFT in both explorative and exploitative work contexts and therefore not linked with either one specifically. In other words, leaders' perceptions of explorative or exploitative work contexts are not expected to be associated with the abstract category level of their employee prototype (Figure 4).

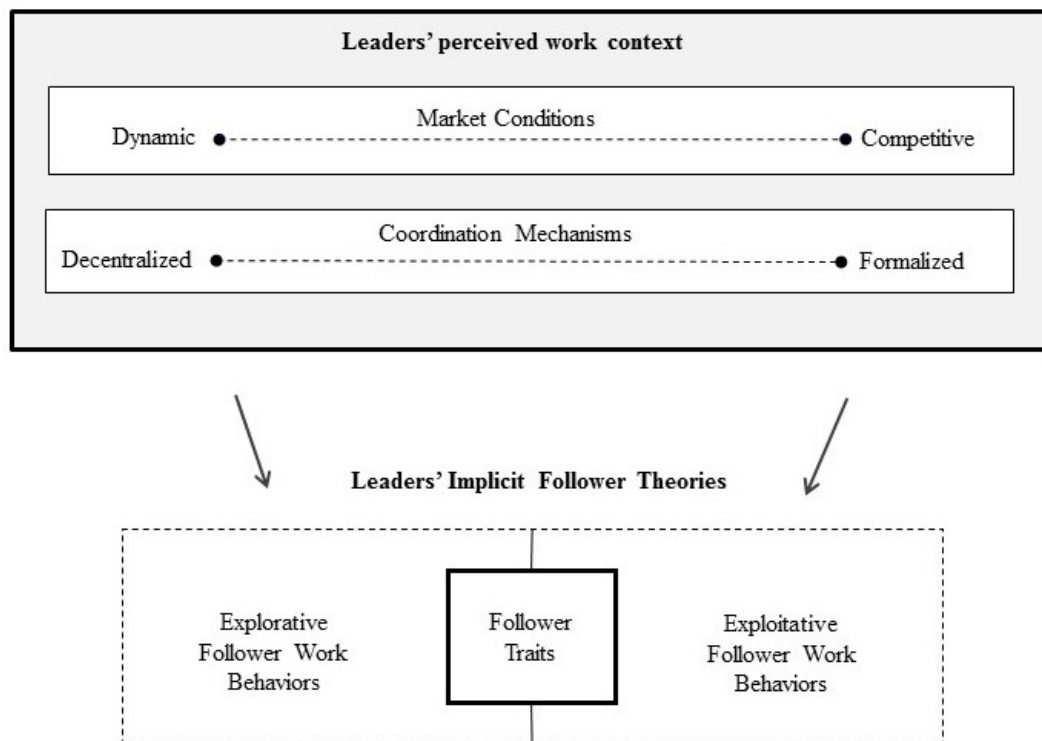


Figure 4: Illustration of hypotheses (work context)

Hypothesis 1:

The abstract level of leaders' pIFT will be unaffected by their perception of explorative or exploitative aspects in market conditions or coordination mechanisms. In other words, there will be no associations between specific context variables and the abstract category level of leaders' employee prototype.

The contents of leaders' pIFT on the specific category level are assumed to be context-sensitive and molded by the tension systems or force fields of situational opportunities and constraints that organizational leaders operate in (Johns 2006). Hence, their perception of explorative (dynamic, decentralized) and exploitative (competitive, formalized) work contexts will elicit corresponding preferences for explorative or exploitative work behaviors in employees.

Hypothesis 2:

The specific level of leaders' pIFT will be affected by their perception of explorative or exploitative aspects in market conditions or coordination mechanisms. In other words, there will be significant associations between context variables and the specific category level of leaders' employee prototype.

More explicitly, the specific category level of their pIFT is assumed to be influenced by their work environment in a way that elicits preferences for explorative employee activities in leaders who operate in explorative work contexts (dynamic markets, decentralized coordination mechanisms), while prompting preferences for exploitative work behaviors in employees in leaders who work in exploitative environments (competitive markets, formalized coordination mechanisms).

Hypothesis 2a:

Leaders who perceive prevailing market conditions as dynamic will describe the specific category level of their prototypical implicit follower theories in explorative terms.

Hypothesis 2b:

Leaders who perceive organizational coordination mechanisms as decentralized will describe the specific category level of their prototypical implicit follower theories in explorative terms.

In contrast, leaders operating in competitive markets and/or formalized coordination mechanisms were expected to emphasize the exploitative aspects of their pIFT. As they rely on their experience and existing knowledge, and pursue activities with a short-term goal (Mom et al. 2009), they will highlight exploitative employee work behaviors such as focusing on routine activities or providing existing clients with existing products and services.

Hypothesis 2c:

Leaders who perceive prevailing market conditions as competitive will describe the specific category level of their prototypical implicit follower theories in exploitative terms.

Hypothesis 2d:

Leaders who perceive organizational coordination mechanisms as formalized will describe the specific category level of their prototypical implicit follower theories in exploitative terms.

In sum, leaders' implicit expectations for employees are a complex conglomerate of influencing factors stemming from factors in their organization's setting in the market place, its internal structure and culture. These factors determine manager's job role and task environment and create the need for employees who are able to support the pursuit of organizational goals. The following sections provide a report of the study which tested if these elements in leaders' work environment indeed co-determine the content of their prototypical implicit follower theories, or their expectations for certain employee traits and behaviors.

2.3 Sample, Methods, Materials and Measures

In cooperation with several US organizations, the author conducted a survey to investigate the link between leaders' pIFT and their perceptions of work context and their own personality. In an organized effort that involved contacting, meeting with and presenting the research idea to leaders of organizations within the author's business network, a variety of organizations agreed to take part in the study. A total of 442 leaders were personally invited to fill in an online survey, whereby 182 individuals completed the survey, providing a response rate of 41, 2%. Participants, 142 men and 40 women, worked in for-profit companies in North America in different business units (Engineering 33%, Finance 12,6%, Human Resources 9,9%, Operations 13,2%, Purchasing 7,7%, other 23,6%). The industries represented in this sample were manufacturing, food services, retail trade, information, professional, scientific and technical services, healthcare, as well as entertainment and recreation. All participants worked in active leadership roles at various levels (C-level 9, 9%, top management 6%; senior management 22%, middle management 43, 4%; associate managers 7, 7%; supervisors 11%); their average age was 45.4 years and the average leadership experience 14.7 years. Data collection occurred over a period of two months whereby the process of survey completion in individual organizations took no longer than 2-3 days. Due to the fact that the project was fully supported by the top management of the participating organizations, leaders were invited and encouraged via personal email by human resource directors, CEO's and other direct superiors. This procedure enabled a swift and efficient obtainment of the data and minimized the occurrence of late responses. The questionnaire itself was administered to participants via email linking to a secure online survey which ensured anonymity and confidentiality of the responses. With only minor semantic adaptations, the used constructs and corresponding instruments stemmed from validated measures and produced satisfying results in regards to internal consistency in the current sample (Cronbach's alpha, table III). The questionnaire (Appendix A) encompassed questions referring to both external and internal factors in the development of leaders' pIFT and participants responded to most questions on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (1) to strongly agree (7). Independent variables omitted from statistical analyses and

regression models are provided in appendix B and results pertaining to internal influencing factors are presented in chapter three of this thesis.

Dependent variables. In order to assess leaders' ideal employee profile, the participants of this study rated two sets of qualities. For the abstract level of their pIFT leaders were asked to rate nine traits of prototypical implicit follower theories as identified by Sy (2010), which were subsequently analysed in their original categories Industriousness (originally termed 'Industry' and encompassing 'hardworking', 'productive', 'goes above and beyond'), Enthusiasm ('excited', 'outgoing', 'happy') and Good Citizenship ('loyal', 'reliable', 'team player'). To evaluate the specific category level of leaders' pIFT an adapted typology by Mom et al. (2009) was used which measures explorative and exploitative work-related activities (App. C).

Independent variables. To capture leaders' perception of the market conditions external to their organizations, a typology of environmental dynamism and environmental competitiveness was used (Jansen et al. 2006), whereby dynamic and competitiveness represent the explorative and exploitative aspect of market conditions, respectively. For example, participants rated the degree of dynamism by the degree of changes in their local market or the frequency of customer requests for new products and services, and competitiveness by the intensity and strength of the (price) competition (App. D). Secondly, coordination mechanisms within organizations were measured by the degree of decentralization and formalization (Mom et al. 2009), whereby decentralization represents the explorative, and formalization the exploitative aspect of coordinating activities. Participants rated the degree of decentralization by their personal decision making authority, and formalization by the degree of procedures, rules and job descriptions in their organizations (App. D).

Control variables. Existing research suggests the inclusion of participants' gender, age and leadership experience as control variables in studies about implicit theories. Gender was found to be associated with expectations for prototypical leaders (Johnson et al. 2008; Epitropaki & Martin 2004), and age as well as leadership experience are regularly included in studies about the emergence of prototypes with mixed results (Whiteley et al. 2012; Sy 2010; Epitropaki & Martin 2004; Sanders

1999; Borman 1987). Lastly, team size was also anticipated to play a role as external influencing factor in leaders' development of pIFT on the basis that differences in managers' handling of coordination mechanisms due to his or her span of control (Kieser & Walgenbach 2010) may not only affect their decision making authority but consequently be associated with different expectations for employees.

2.4 Results

Descriptive statistics. Table 3 shows means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations of all dependent and independent research variables.

Table 3: Means, standard deviations, and correlations (work context)

Table 1	Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations														
	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1Market Dynamism	5.22	0.86	(0.65)												
2 Market Competitiveness	5.44	1.31	.534**	(.91)											
3 Decentralization	5.77	1.21	-.203**	-.027	(0.93)										
4 Formalization	3.95	1.24	.098	-.005	-.024	(0.78)									
5 Exploration	5.17	0.7	.215**	.171*	-.051	.145	(0.74)								
6 Exploitation	5.12	0.75	.166*	.105	-.052	.179*	.306**	(0.81)							
7 Industry	6.18	0.8	.185*	.095	-.046	-.004	.252**	.321**	(0.72)						
8 Enthusiasm	5.43	0.73	.047	.006	-.037	.239**	.320**	.281**	.036	(0.61)					
9 GoodCitizen	6.3	0.66	.263**	.223**	-.017	.191**	.250**	.404**	.414**	.177*	(0.71)				
10 Gender	1.22	0.42	.000	-.129	.110	.128	.033	.093	.135	.068	.179*				
11 Age	45.4	8.72	.006	.199**	.070	-.118	.138	-.013	.078	-.120	.087	-.235**			
12 Leadership Experience	14.66	7.60	.074	.055	.065	-.029	.050	-.128	.053	-.064	-.017	-.099	.612**		
13 Team Size	15.15	11.22	.036	.024	.072	.132	.099	.144	.099	-.034	.092	.161*	-.092	.029	-

Note: n= 182. Numbers in parantheses on the diagonal are Cronbach's alphas of the composite scales.

**p< 0.01, *p< 0.05, 2-tailed

Leaders' work context. Leaders perceive the market conditions surrounding their organizations as slightly more competitive (M= 5.44; SD = 1.31) than dynamic (M= 5.22; SD= 0.86); correlations between market dynamism and market competitiveness ($\rho = 0.534$) refer to the complex interdependencies in the market environment that bring about heightened competitive as well as dynamic pressures for organizational leaders. Wilcoxon tests³ (App.E) were conducted to test if the

³ Due to the skewed distribution of several variables we used the non-parametric Wilcoxon test to look for differences in medians among the variables. Normality test plots (App. F) of residuals

differences in perceptions are meaningfully different from each other. They revealed significant differences ($z=-2.792$; $p<0.01$) between leaders' perception of dynamic and competitive market conditions with the mean of ranks in favour of market competitiveness (96.78); this indicates that the leaders in this sample perceive their market conditions to be more competitive than dynamic. In terms of leaders' perceptions of organization-internal coordination mechanisms, results show that leaders consider them more decentralized ($M= 5.77$; $SD= 1.21$) than formalized ($M= 3.95$; $SD= 1.24$); mean ranks between decentralized and formalized coordination mechanisms ($z=-9.921$; $p<0.01$) favoured decentralization which means that leaders have some degree of freedom in regards to decision-making processes and do not feel overly bound by a formalized and regulated environment.

Follower prototype. The population mean of leaders' ideal employee profile show an emphasis on Good Citizenship ($M= 6.3$; $SD= 0.66$), followed by Industriousness ($M= 6.18$; $SD= 0.8$) and Enthusiasm ($M= 5.43$; $SD= 0.73$). In order to test if these category means are significantly different from each other, more Wilcoxon tests were conducted (App. E); the tests revealed differences ($z = -10.307$; $p < 0.001$) between Good Citizenship and Enthusiasm as well as Good Citizenship and Industriousness ($z = -1.951$; $p = 0.05$) with the mean ranks in favour of Good Citizenship in both cases. In other words, leaders' ratings of abstract traits suggest that employees are first and foremost expected to be reliable, productive team players (Good Citizenship category), and least of all outgoing, happy and excited (Enthusiasm).

Averages pertaining to leaders' ratings of specific work behaviours point at a balanced requirement for Exploration ($\mu = 5.17$; $SD 0.7$) and Exploitation ($\mu = 5.12$; $SD 0.74$), which is also shown in a high correlation between the two categories ($z=-0.859$; $p=0.39$ as shown in app. E). The similarity in leaders' ratings of employees' explorative and exploitative work behaviours means that employees are expected to both search for new ways of satisfying markets and learn new skills, but also to serve existing clients and stay focused on activities that fit existing policies. A mean comparison of specific behaviours and abstract employee traits suggest that traits encompassing Good Citizenship ($\mu = 6.3$), Industriousness ($\mu = 6.18$) and

conducted on all final models showed a normal distribution, allowing us to dismiss the concern about a negative impact of non-parametric data on the results of our regression analyses.

Enthusiasm ($\mu = 5.43$) are more important to leaders than explorative ($\mu = 5.17$) and exploitative ($\mu = 5.12$) work behaviours. Further Wilcoxon tests showed statistical mean differences between abstract and specific employee qualities (app E), favouring mean ranks of all abstract categories over specific work behaviours. In other words, leaders rated abstract traits higher in importance than employee behaviours related to exploration and exploitation. Noteworthy is that even though Enthusiasm, the lowest rated abstract trait category, was rated higher than any of the explorative and exploitative behaviours.

Bivariate correlations are suggestive of associations later found in regression analysis results: Market Dynamism and Exploration are correlated ($p < 0.01$), and so are Formalization and Exploitation ($p < 0.05$); in regards to abstract employee traits, leaders in dynamic markets consider Industriousness and Good Citizenship as important employee traits, while those in formalized organizational contexts ask for Enthusiasm and Good Citizenship behaviours. Bivariate correlations between control and research variables show associations between gender and Good Citizenship ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that female leaders consider loyalty, reliability and team working abilities more relevant in employees than male leaders.

Inferential statistics. Table 4 and Table 5 show the results of statistical models performed via multiple linear regression analysis.

Due to the correlations between the independent variables they were first tested for potential multicollinearity problems that could be problematic for subsequent regression analyses. With values between 1.13 and 3.18 for the variance inflation factor (VIF) they stayed well below the acceptable cut-off of 10 (Neter et al. 1996).

Table 4: Context and abstract pIFT category level

Research Variables	Industriousness			Enthusiasm			Good Citizenship		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β
Market Conditions									
Market Dynamic	0.188*		0.18	0.044		0.012	0.215*		0.195*
Market Competition	-0.025		0.022	0		0.013	0.096		0.104
Coordination Mechanisms									
Decentralization		0.084	-0.46		-0.024	-0.021		-0.048	-0.001
Formalization		0.026	0.041		0.227**	0.225**		0.182*	0.165*
Confounders									
Gender									
Male	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
Female	0.137	0.146	0.146	0.021	0.005	0.007	.0208**	0.18*	0.195*
Age (years)	0.143	0.13	0.14	0.134	-0.105	-0.108	0.208*	0.247*	0.225*
Leadership experience (years)	-0.032	0.006	0.027	0.022	0.013	0.013	-0.145	-0.143	-0.153
Team Size									
Small (1-10)	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
Medium (11-29)	0.063	0.085	0.071	0.033	-0.047	-0.049	0.019	0.032	0.006
Large (30 and more)	0.088	0.107	0.095	0.039	-0.058	-0.06	0.049	0.06	0.032

n=182; β = standardized coefficients; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

R^2	0.067	0.043	0.07	0.018	0.067	0.067	0.133	0.092	0.158
SE	0.78	0.79	0.78	0.73	0.71	0.72	0.63	0.64	0.62

Abstract category level of leaders' pIFT. Table 4 shows associations between the main context variables (market conditions, coordination mechanisms) and leaders' preference for the abstract trait categories Industriousness, Enthusiasm and Good Citizenship behaviour in employees. Models 1, 2 and 3 present the results according to the level of analysis considered in the regression models. Models 1 refer to the links between organization-external aspects (dynamic and competitive market conditions) and leaders' preferences for abstract trait categories Industriousness, Enthusiasm and Good Citizenship. Models 2 show links between organization-internal aspects (decentralized and formalized coordination mechanisms) and these trait categories, while models 3 present the effects of all context variables combined. Since models 3 simultaneously control for leaders' perception of explorative and exploitative aspects of market conditions and coordination mechanisms, they offer the most comprehensive perspective on contextual effects.

Leaders' abstract category level of their employee prototype was assumed to be context-insensitive and hypothesis 1 stated that there will be no significant associations between any of the context variables and leaders' rating of abstract employee traits. This hypothesis was rejected for two reasons. First, Enthusiasm is associated with formalized coordination mechanism ($p = < 0.01$) in models 2 and 3, suggesting that leaders who work in rather rule-oriented environments emphasize employee traits such as happy, excited and outgoing in their pIFT. Second, Good Citizenship is linked to leaders' perceptions of dynamic market conditions as well as formalized organizational settings ($p < 0.05$). However, the rejection of hypothesis 1 is not clear cut because Good Citizenship is associated with leaders' perception of explorative (market dynamic) *and* exploitative (formalized coordination mechanisms) work contexts. This indicates a degree of universality of desired traits encompassed by Good Citizenship so that it cannot be concluded that Good Citizenship is only preferred employee quality in *certain* contexts. Further interesting associations were found between control variables gender and age with Good Citizenship. Accordingly, being a female leader ($p = 0.01$) and a leader of higher age ($p = 0.019$) is strongly related to a preference of Good Citizenship in employees whereas no emphasis on Enthusiasm and Industriousness could be detected. At this point it can be concluded that leaders' perception of work context is associated with the abstract content of their implicit employee prototype and that Good Citizenship stands out as the top desired trait category in both explorative and exploitative contexts.

Specific category level. Following the same approach to the presentation of results, Table 5 shows associations between context variables (market conditions, coordination mechanisms) and leaders' preference for explorative and exploitative employee behaviours. Hypothesis 2 could be confirmed as several associations between leaders' perception of work context and the content of their employee prototype were found.

Table 5: Context and specific pIFT category level

		Exploration			Exploitation		
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
		β	β	β	β	β	β
Research Variables							
Market Conditions	Market Dynamic	0.188*		0.162	0.159		0.129
	Market Competition	0.02		0.03	-0.012		0
Coordination Mechanisms	Decentralization		-0.07	-0.034		-0.068	-0.04
	Formalization		0.152*	0.139		0.169*	0.159*
Confounders							
Gender	male	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
	female	0.034	0.021	0.028	0.065	0.055	0.057
Age	in years	0.212*	0.232*	0.228*	0.18	0.196*	0.199*
Leadership experience	in years	-0.115	-0.106	-0.119	-0.262**	-0.254**	-0.267**
Team Size	small (1-10)	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
	medium (11-29)	-0.008	0.002	-0.015	0.102	0.106	0.094
	large (30 and more)	0.128	0.133	0.116	0.191*	0.188*	0.178*
R ²		0.081	0.07	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.12
SE		0.68	0.68	0.67	0.72	0.72	0.72

n=182; β = standardized coefficients; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01

Models 1 for Exploration and Exploitation, respectively, show results in respect to associations between market conditions and exploration and exploitation in employees. In line with hypothesis 2a positive associations between dynamic market conditions and exploration ($\beta=0.188$; $p=0.034$) were found. Competitive market conditions, however, did not lead to leaders' desire for exploitation in team members, a result that leads to the rejection of hypothesis 2c. Models 2 represent relationships between coordination mechanisms and the dependent variables; decentralization had no effect on leaders' preference for Exploration therefore hypothesis 2b is rejected; formalization on the other hand, was associated with Exploration ($\beta=0.152$, $p=0.044$) and Exploitation ($\beta=0.169$, $p=0.023$). The link between Formalization and Exploration dropped below statistical significance ($\beta=0.139$, $p=0.065$) in model 3, but the hypothesized effect on exploitation was maintained, allowing the confirmation of hypothesis 2d. Models 3 which tested the effects of all context variables on the dependent variables show that some associations did not withstand the influencing factors derived from other variables. First, associations between dynamic market conditions and Exploration dropped below a level of significance ($\beta=0.162$ ($p=0.075$)) and so did the relationship between Formalization and Exploration ($\beta=0.139$; $p=0.065$). Therefore, the most

robust association amongst all research variables appears between Formalization and Exploitation ($\beta = 0.159$; $p=0.033$). This means that even when controlling for all context variables in their combination, leaders' perception of formalized coordination mechanisms links with their preference for exploitative work behaviours in employees.

Looking at the control variables, results suggest that with increasing age leaders simultaneously emphasize both Exploration ($p = 0.022$) and Exploitation ($p < 0.5$) in employees; greater leadership experience, on the other hand, is negatively associated with leaders' interest in exploitative employee work behaviours ($p = 0.005$). Lastly, a significant association between team size and exploitative employee behaviours ($\beta=0.178$; $p = 0.028$) indicates that leaders of larger teams consider exploitation activities in employees as more important than explorative work behaviours.

2.5 Discussion

In sum, the data show support for the notion that certain aspects in leaders' work context seem to be associated with their employee prototype on both the abstract and the specific category level. Leaders' perceptions of prevailing market conditions external to their organization, as well as coordination mechanisms within their organizations can be linked to respective preferences for certain employee traits and behaviours and more importantly, these links are not random but express preferences for employee qualities that in many cases match the prevailing work environment. Looked at in isolation, dynamic market conditions are associated with leader's preference for explorative employee activities, as well as with a desire for Industriousness and Good Citizenship. Formalization, on the other hand, elicits the expectation for exploitative and explorative work behaviours in employees, as well as Enthusiasm and Good Citizenship. The main effects of this part of the study is apparent in models 3: leaders who perceive their work environment as formalized describe their prototypical employee as someone who is excited, outgoing and happy and who is able to pursue efficiency-oriented (exploitative) work activities. This confirms hypotheses in regards to an alignment of certain types of work environments and leaders' preference for corresponding elements in their Ideal

Employee profiles. The finding that effects of coordination mechanisms are eventually stronger and more consistent than those caused by market conditions fall in line with the theory about situational strength (Meyer et al. 2009); this concept holds that constraints on the micro level of analysis can have stronger effects than those on the macro level because they provide stricter guidelines for behaviour. Applied to the current data, this means that increased situational strength caused by company-internal formalization may elicit leaders' requirement for exploitative work activities in employees to a higher degree than more remote dynamic market conditions bring about the desire for creativity and innovation in employees.

Another notable point relates to abstract employee traits encompassed by Good Citizenship and their links to leaders' perceived market dynamism and formalization. Good Citizenship in employees seems desirable for leaders in both explorative (dynamic markets) and exploitative (formalized coordination mechanisms) work contexts as well as for older and female leaders. This indicates that loyalty, reliability and team work are the most universally wanted employee traits of all tested variables. Associations between Formalization and Enthusiasm in leaders' pIFT also provide important insights. Particularly as Enthusiasm received a low mean rating in comparison to Good Citizenship and Industriousness it is interesting that leaders in formalized organizational settings emphasized the traits 'excited', 'happy' and 'outgoing' as important aspects of their pIFT. In an attempt to make sense of this phenomenon it may help to put it into perspective to some of the other findings of this study. For example, in contrast to Industriousness (hardworking, productive, goes above & beyond), and Good Citizenship (loyal, reliable, team player) which are rather work related traits, Enthusiasm describes person-related traits such as happy, excited and outgoing. One explanation for this emphasis in leaders' pIFT could be that managers in rather formalized work settings attempt to balance the strong task-orientation imposed by their work context with an individual emphasis on positive, non-work related personality traits in their employee prototype.

An equally noteworthy point relates to leaders' preference for Industriousness in employees. Industriousness describes a person's task-related orientation and associated with dynamic market conditions in model 1. However, this effect disappears under consideration of other environmental conditions (model 3), a

development that can be interpreted in the light of the varying complexity levels of leaders' task environment. While Industriousness is an important predictor for job performance under normal circumstance it has been found to be insufficient for task performance in more complex jobs (Blickle et al. 2012). Transferred to our findings it is thinkable that leaders generally consider traits referring to Industriousness in employees as somewhat important, but not important enough to withstand the complexity of their work environment that combine influences from dynamic and competitive market conditions as well as decentralized and formalized coordination mechanisms.

The last point relates to effects derived from the control variables. Whereas gender effects on prototype generation have appeared relevant in previous research (Johnson et al. 2008; Epitropaki & Martin 2004), the finding that a leader's age is associated with certain preferences in employees is novel and provides the basis for future research into age effects on prototype generation. Furthermore, interesting effects were found in regards to leadership experience and the related age factor on leaders' preference for specific employee behaviours. Borman (1987) theorized that higher leadership experience may lead to a more differentiated category system about employees because more seasoned leaders have encountered a wider variety of employees in the course of their career than inexperienced leaders. The correlation of age and leadership experience in the current sample supports Borman's argument; older managers might often also be more experienced leaders with a more complex ideal employee image embracing both explorative and exploitative employee behaviours. However, since results also show a negative correlation between leadership experience and exploitation it can be hypothesized that age more than leadership experience is associated with a more complex employee prototype, while increased leadership experience alone might just point at a dislike towards exploitative activities in employees.

In sum, the present results provide moderate support for the hypotheses about interactions between work environment and leader's employee prototype, and explorative and exploitative aspects in market conditions and coordination mechanisms are associated with the emphasis leaders placed in their ratings of abstract and specific employee qualities. One factor that has not yet been discussed pertains to another important aspect in the development of leaders' ideal employee

image: their own personality. The following chapter provides a detailed account of the second step in the US study, the investigation of the question if and how leaders' personality traits may be associated with their prototypical implicit follower theories.

3 US Study part II: Personality and leaders' Ideal Employee

Heterogeneous behavior in management emerges from a complex combination of countless factors and has long been of great interest to economists and psychologists alike (Becker et al. 2012). To accredit variations in managers' employee prototype to the features in their external work environment alone would be erroneous because it would neglect considerations of another potentially crucial element: their own personality. In a second analytical step, the current chapter investigates if and to what degree leaders' own predisposition affect their prototypical implicit follower theories. The inclusion of both internal and external factors at the end of this chapter will provide a more comprehensive perspective about the way leaders form and maintain implicit theories about followers and enable a deeper understanding of the dynamics of these relationships.

3.1 Internal influences on leader's pIFT: the role of leaders' personality

Personal approaches to leadership phenomena are natural consequences of the fact that individuals do not simply adapt to organizational life but also take along their personal and professional history, their experiences and preferences. Extreme situationist perspectives deny the existence of stable personality traits that carry over between different situations (Almlund et al. 2011). Newer research, however, softens the essentialist notion of personalities and considers them as sets of identical behaviors across diverse situations (Ilies et al. 2006), or "*relatively enduring patterns of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that reflect the tendency to respond in certain ways under certain circumstances*" (Roberts 2009, p. 140). Apart from some smaller changes following age-related norms or role expectations, personality encompasses a person's more or less distinctive set of traits or patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviors that affect educational performance, participation and accomplishments in the labor market as well as overall happiness in life (Offerhaus 2013). For example, a person's agreeable nature can be beneficial in team working

situations, or extraversion is indicative for an individual's potential for leadership positions (ibid.) and that way co-determine their management of many life situations. A well-established and widely used description and conceptualization of people's personalities is the five-factor-model of personality. Its origins lie in the lexical hypothesis which states that personality traits are part of and can therefore be encoded through language. Allport & Odbert (1936), the originators of this theory, collected near to 18,000 words which were later reduced and tested with the conclusion that personality traits can be organized into five superordinate factors Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability and Openness for Experience. This led to the so-called five-factor theory which found its most widely accepted taxonomy in the Big Five model of personality (Almlund et al. 2011; Costa & McCrae 1992).

3.2 The Big Five personality dimensions and the Ideal Employee

The Big Five model is a commonly used typology of personality because it captures traits on a broad and abstract level (Becker et al. 2012) and encompasses a variety of facets and variations per trait. Its justifiable multifaceteness, however, also brings a large variety of measurement tools, perspectives and emphases (Table 6) as researchers focus on different aspects of the concept. For example, Conscientiousness encompasses reliability as well as achievement-orientation (Kalshoven et al. 2010), Extraversion consists of a sociable as well as a dominating aspect, and Openness encompasses creativity as well as analytical thinking (Barrick et al. 2001); these different angles evolved into several different concepts that each try to describe the Big Five personality dimensions.

The Big Five concept of personality is also a highly validated construct with a comprehensive yet frugal nature (ibid.) that captures a wide variety of characteristics. It also enables several links between personality and leadership behavior, effectiveness and leadership style and renders it an appropriate measurement tool in the realm of management science.

TABLE 6: BIG FIVE TAXONOMIES

	Saucier 1994	Barrick et al. 2001	Gosling et al. 2003	Offerhaus 2013
EXTRAVERSION	Talkative Extroverted Bold Energetic (shy) (quiet) (bashful) (withdrawn)	Sociability Dominance Ambition Positive Emotionality Excitement-seeking	extroverted enthusiastic (reserved)[1] (quiet)	Active Action- and excitement seeking Sociable Dominant Assertive
AGREEABLENESS	Sympathetic Warm Kind Cooperative (cold) (unsympathetic) (rude) (harsh)	Cooperation Trustfulness Compliance Affability	sympathetic warm (critical) (quarrelsome)	Tolerant Helpful Cooperative Altruistic Prefer compromise over conflict
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS	Organized Efficient Systematic Practical (disorganized) (sloppy) (inefficient) (careless)	Dependability Achievement Striving Planfulness	dependable self-disciplined (disorganized) (careless)	Reliability Self-discipline Perseverance Achievement-orientation Responsibility Purposeful Strong-willed Deliberate
EMOTIONAL STABILITY	Unenvious Relaxed (moody) (jealous) (envious) (touchy) (temperamental) (fretful)	Lack of anxiety Lack of hostility Lack of depression Lack of personal insecurity	calm emotionally stable (anxious) (easily upset)	Vulnerability to stress Level of anxiety Level of self-esteem Level of anxiety Level of insecurity Emotional reactivity Self-consciousness
OPENNESS FOR	Creative Imaginative Philosophical Intellectual Complex Deep (uncreative) (unintellectual)	Intellectance Creativity Unconventionality Broad-mindedness	open to new experiences complex (conventional) (uncreative)	Intellect Culture Sense of creativity Artistic-aesthetic appreciation open-mindedness imagination Curiosity Adaptability

[1] Parentheses indicate reverse-scored items

For example, it has been consistently established that Extraversion is a reliable indicator for leadership emergence as well as an important trait for effective leadership (Offerhaus 2013; Judge et al. 2002), while Agreeableness as a rather passive trait is usually not linked with leader emergence (ibid.). On the other hand, other research found that Agreeableness as well as Conscientiousness are associated with ethical leadership as well as charismatic and transactional leadership qualities; individuals displaying these traits have the ability for fairness, power sharing and role clarification (Kalshoven et al. 2010), particularly in stable environments that are defined by routine and structure (De Hoogh et al. 2005).

Since an individual's personality can be a relevant factor for leadership processes, the question if it could also be related to the development of their Ideal Employee image emerges. In particular, the current study asked if certain leader characteristics lead to a preference for similar, as opposed to dissimilar employee traits in the content of their prototypical implicit follower theories. While the connectionist framework mentions self-schemata (Lord et al. 2001b; Hanges et al. 2000) or leadership style (Goodwin et al. 2000; Wofford & Goodwin 1998) in connection with the generation of prototypes in general, specific associations between personality measures and preferences are still largely unexplored (Almlund et al. 2011). The current study attempts to investigate how leaders' personality is related to the content of their prototypical implicit follower theories by answering the following questions: Are preferences for employee traits defined by their similarity to leaders' own personality, or do opposites attract so that managers look for complementing skills, traits and qualities in team members?

Apart from describing a specific set of an individual's personal traits, personality also encompasses values, norms, motivations and goals (Jackson & Johnson 2012; Lord et al. 2001b). For leaders, the pursuit of goals often occurs with and through the support of subordinates who are – desirably - committed to similar values and norms. This phenomenon is described as similarity-attraction paradigm and it suggests that individuals' schemata about social relationships and work performance are based on their own favorable self-images, images which they want to reinforce by seeking out co-workers with similar (Jackson & Johnson 2012) rather than dissimilar (Liao et al. 2004) traits, values and norms. Likeness between leaders and followers has long occupied organizational scholars studying leader

effectiveness (Fiedler 1964), social identity theory (Cooper & Thatcher 2010), human resource decisions (Guillèn & Karelaia 2012; Barrick et al. 2010; Beehr et al. 1994), hiring outcomes (Horverak et al. 2011), leader-member-exchange theory (Jackson & Johnson 2012), and implicit leader theories (Engle & Lord 1997). Keller (1999) found relationships between follower's personality traits and their implicit leadership theories; specifically, results showed that agreeable, open, self-monitoring and neurotic individuals preferred sensitive leaders, while conscientious followers valued conscientious leaders, and extroversion was positively related with leaders' charisma.

Similarity between leaders and followers is considered a significant factor in the quality of leader-follower relationships (Fiedler 1964), either on the basis of similar attitudes and values (Engle & Lord 1997; Beehr et al. 1994), a shared ambition for getting-ahead in leaders and their followers (Guillèn & Karelaia 2012), or in respect to an individual's identification with organizations in general (Cooper & Thatcher 2010). The notion that individuals' implicit theories express a desire to work with others who are similar, as opposed to complementing or different, is investigated in the current study by asking to what degree leader personality as described by the Big Five Model may be related to the content of their prototypical implicit follower theories (Figure 5).

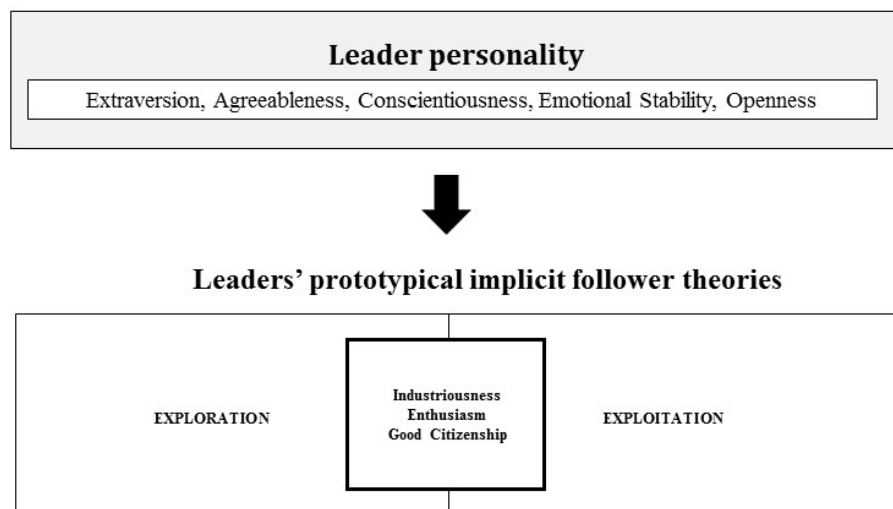


FIGURE 5: ILLUSTRATION OF HYPOTHESES (PERSONALITY)

In comparison to contextual effects on leaders' pIFT which varied in strength in their impact on the abstract and the specific category level of leaders' follower prototype, individual personality traits are not assumed to inform leaders' abstract and specific pIFT-content in different ways. In this case, the frame of reference lies within the leader him-or herself as opposed to explorative or exploitative factors in the external environment and hypotheses rest on the assumption that leaders will prefer to work with employees similar to themselves:

Hypothesis 3:

Leaders will describe the abstract level of their implicit prototypical follower category in terms similar to their own personality traits.

Based on previous studies looking at the relationship between personality and leadership (Kalshoven et al. 2010; De Hoogh et al. 2005; Judge et al. 2002) as well as their strong theoretical linkages to the prototypical follower trait categories as established by Sy (2010) the current hypotheses draw on the factors Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Extraversion while controlling for Emotional Stability and Openness. First, leaders high in Agreeableness are described as prone to engaging in cooperation (Offerhaus 2013; Barrick et al. 2001; Saucier 1994), being trustful and affable (Barrick et al. 2001), helpful and altruistic (Offerhaus 2013), sympathetic and warm (Gosling et al. 2003). These traits express the way individuals care for and work with others and place an emphasis on reliance and trust; based on the similarity-attraction paradigm, leaders are expected to prefer employees with similar attitudes expressed in the category Good Citizenship (Sy 2010), encompassing the traits loyal, reliable and team player:

Hypotheses 3a:

Leaders high in Agreeableness will describe the abstract category level of their pIFT in terms of Good Citizenship, expressing a preference for loyal, reliable team players.

Furthermore, leaders high in Conscientiousness who show perseverance and purpose (Offerhaus 2013), who emphasize achievement and striving (Barrick et al. 2001), are self-disciplined (Goslin et al. 2003), efficient and organized (Saucier 1994) may also define their employee prototype in similar terms and prefer hardworking, productive employees who go above and beyond in the pursuit of duty (Industriousness, Sy 2010).

Hypothesis 3b:

Leaders high in Conscientiousness will describe the abstract category level of their pIFT in terms of Industriousness, expressing a preference for employees who are hardworking, productive and go above & beyond.

Extraversion contains aspects that refer to interpersonal behaviors (DeYoung et al. 2013) and may be linked to a preference for Enthusiasm in employees (Sy 2010). Extraverted individuals are sociable and emotionally positive (Barrick et al. 2001), energetic and talkative (Saucier 1994), active and excitement seeking (Offerhaus 2013) as well as enthusiastic (Gosling et al. 2013). Hence, leaders with highly extraverted personalities may prefer employees who are equally excited, outgoing and happy:

Hypotheses 3c:

Leaders high in Extraversion will describe the abstract category level of their pIFT in terms of Enthusiasm, expressing a preference for employees who are excited, outgoing and happy.

Leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories may not only be expressed in preferences for similar employee traits on the abstract category level but also in the form of more specific behavioral tendencies they seek in employees. As outlined in the earlier discussion about exploration and exploitation, individuals may be prone to either work in an explorative manner as they have a natural inclination to search

for new processes, adopt a long-term orientation and reconsider existing beliefs, or they tend to pursue exploitative activities such as the refinement of existing processes, the creation of reliability and a focus on production (Mom et al. 2007). In other words, leaders' degree of Conscientiousness, Extraversion or Openness for Experience may affect their preference for either Exploration or Exploitation in their pIFT.

Hypothesis 4:

Leaders will describe the specific level of their implicit prototypical follower category in similarity to their own personality traits.

Specifically, since the Big Five personality model is sketched on a circumplex that contains several sub-traits (DeYoung 2013) it is possible to derive detailed similarities between some of the trait categories and managers' potential preferences for explorative or exploitative work behaviors. First, conscientious individuals are efficient and systematic (Saucier 1994), dependable (Barrick et al 2001), reliable fulfillers of tasks (Offerhaus 2013). Used to emphasizing efficiency and reliability (Weibler and Keller 2014) highly conscientious managers may find the process of continuously questioning the status quo and looking for new alternatives (exploration) an unsettling process. Hence, on the basis of the similarity-attraction-paradigm it can be hypothesized that conscientious leaders may prefer employees who, like themselves, rely on existing knowledge and experience when conducting routine tasks that clearly fit into existing company policies, and thereby express exploitative work behaviors (Mom et al. 2009).

Hypothesis 4a:

Leaders high in Conscientiousness will describe the specific category level of their pIFT in exploitative terms.

Extraverted leaders, on the other hand, are not only described as talkative and sociable but also as bold and energetic (Saucier 1994), assertive (DeYoung 2013), and ambitious (Offerhaus 2013). The search for and the experimentation with new possibilities, customers and markets requires a high degree of ambition and confidence; therefore, in the joint pursuit of these goals, extraverted leaders might seek out like-minded individuals who enjoy explorative activities and therefore define their pIFT in explorative terms.

Hypothesis 4b:

Leaders high in Extraversion will describe the specific category level of their pIFT in explorative terms.

Third, Openness for Experience in leaders might inform their pIFT in regards to a preference for exploration in employees. Open individuals are creative and imaginative (Saucier 1994), as well as curious and deliberately seek opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills (Offerhaus 2013). This suggests a preference for similar employee behaviors expressing exploration by creating the new, experimenting with ideas, preferring innovation and taking a long-term perspective, rather than exploitation through maintaining the status quo, emphasizing efficiency and refinement of what already exists (Mom et al. 2009).

Hypothesis 4c:

Leaders high in Openness will describe the specific category level of their pIFT in explorative terms.

In sum, when defining internal sources for leaders' prototypical implicit theories the similarity-attraction paradigm allows a plethora of theoretical linkages between leader personality and employee qualities that would enable agreement and mutual consent in regards to shared values, goals and work attitudes. The following section describes the second part of the US study which in addition to contextual effects on

pIFT also investigated the congruence between leader's level of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion and Openness with employee traits on the abstract and specific category level of their employee prototype.

3.2.1 Sample, Materials and Measures

The following data was obtained from the same data set as described in the previous chapter, hence the sample and assessment method is identical. Participants who completed the online survey (Appendix A) not only rated their work context and pIFT traits but were also asked for a self-assessment about their own Agreeableness (e.g. sympathetic, warm), Conscientiousness (e.g. organized, efficient), Extraversion (e.g. talkative, energetic), Openness (e.g. imaginative, complex) and Emotional Stability (e.g. unenvious, relaxed). Scores were obtained with the Big Five personality inventory by Saucier (1994), which is a 40-item measurement tool also known as the Big Five 'mini-markers' (App. G). This measure is a validated personality assessment that meets reliability standards (Weller & Matiaske 2009) and enables an economic and efficient approach that is needed when working with busy organizational leaders.

Dependent variables in the statistical analyses remained the same as in the previously described chapter; accordingly, Sy's (2010) prototypical follower traits assessed the abstract category level of leaders' pIFT, while explorative and exploitative work behaviors (Mom et al. 2009) represented the specific category level (Appendix C). Since the focus of this analysis was to investigate internal effects on leaders' pIFT, all context variables were omitted from the statistical analyses. Remaining control variables were gender, age and leadership experience as they refer to personal data about the leaders.

3.2.2 Results

Descriptive statistics. Table 7 shows means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations of all dependent and independent research variables in regards to leaders' self-ratings on a Big Five measure and their Ideal Employee image. Results show the highest mean for Agreeableness ($\mu = 5.73$), followed by Conscientiousness ($\mu = 5.65$), Openness ($\mu = 5.42$), Emotional Stability ($\mu = 4.98$) and Extraversion ($\mu = 4.92$), suggesting that on average, leaders in this sample assessed their own personality as mainly agreeable, followed by conscientious, open to experience etc. Correlations between the Big Five variables in the correlation matrix are striking but point at a well-known phenomenon in the assessment of personality measures. It has been established that survey participants may feel inclined to assign socially desirable characteristics to themselves, resulting in an evaluative bias in self-ratings (Anusic et al. 2009).

Table 7: Means, standard deviations, and correlations (personality)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Extraversion	4.92	0.99	-0.83												
2 Agreeableness	5.73	0.81	.234**	-0.81											
3 Conscientiousness	5.65	0.84	0.072	.230**	-0.81										
4 Emotional Stability	4.98	0.93	0.042	.338**	.165*	-0.78									
5 Openness	5.42	0.77	0.113	.236**	.229**	0.112	-0.71								
6 Industriousness	6.18	0.78	0.077	0.036	0.039	0.026	.159*	-0.72							
7 Enthusiasm	5.43	0.72	0.063	0.134	.151*	0.024	.154*	0.036	-0.61						
8 Good Citizenship	6.3	0.66	0.071	.207**	.193**	0.061	0.069	.414**	.177*	-0.71					
9 Exploration	5.16	0.7	0.047	.188*	.147*	0.13	.322**	.252**	.320**	.250**	-0.74				
10 Exploitation	5.11	0.74	0.107	0.077	.247**	0.111	.167*	.321**	.281**	.404**	.306**	-0.81			
11 Gender	1.22	0.41	.150*	.180*	.293**	-0.06	.169*	0.135	0.068	.179*	0.033	0.093	-		
12 Age	45.4	8.72	0	0.073	-0.025	0.032	0.034	0.078	-0.12	0.087	0.138	-0.013	-.235**	-	
13 LS Experience	14.66	7.59	0.037	-0.054	0.002	-0.038	0.017	0.053	-0.064	-0.017	0.05	-0.128	-0.099	.612**	-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In order to test if these self-ratings sufficiently differentiated between individual personality traits, paired samples t-tests were conducted. The results allowed the rejection of the null hypothesis assuming an equally high rating on all five

personality dimensions (Appendix H); they suggest that the differences between leaders' personality traits were statistically significant in most cases with the exception of Extraversion with Emotional Stability, and Agreeableness with Conscientiousness, a result that indicates that these two trait pairs co-occurred in the current sample.

Furthermore, due to the high correlation between the independent variables, multicollinearity tests were conducted; this analysis produced satisfactory values between 1.06 and 1.14 for the variance inflation factor (VIF) in all cases, values that are well below the acceptable cut-off of 10 (Neter et al. 1996) and avert the concern about statistical problems due to multicollinearity of the Big Five data. Some of the bivariate correlations between independent and dependent variables are indicative for associations later confirmed in regression analyses; for example, both Agreeableness and Conscientiousness are correlated with Good Citizenship, leaders' Openness is associated with Exploration in employees ($\rho = 0.32$; $p = 0.01$), and Conscientiousness is related to Exploitation ($\rho = 0.24$; $p = 0.01$). Other bivariate associations such as links between leaders' Conscientiousness and Openness with Enthusiasm in employees, or Openness with Industriousness turn out not to be maintained in subsequent regression models.

Inferential statistics. Results in regards to multivariate associations between leaders' personality and their Ideal Employee image were obtained via multiple linear regression analysis. According to the dual category level of leader's pIFT, the independent personality trait variables were regressed with abstract employee traits and specific employee work behaviors in separate models.

Abstract category level. Regression analyses of the abstract category level of leaders' pIFT required several steps, because preliminary analyses featuring the three trait categories Industriousness, Enthusiasm and Good Citizenship showed very few significant associations with leader's personality (Table 8).

Table 8: Personality and abstract pIFT categories

	Industriousness	Enthusiasm	Good Citizenship
	β	β	β
Research Variables			
Agreeableness	-0.034	0.13	0.159*
Conscientiousness	-0.032	0.125	0.132
Extraversion	0.058	0.039	0.027
Emotional Stability	0.037	-0.041	-0.002
Openness	0.134	0.105	-0.035
Confounders			
Gender			
Male	ref	ref	ref
Female	0.133	-0.085	0.117
Age			
in years	0.109	-0.17	0.17
Leadership Experience			
in years	-0.005	0.041	-0.102
R ²	0.048	0.07	0.098
SE	0.786	0.715	0.644

n=182; β = standardized coefficients; * p <0.05, ** p<0.01

Hypotheses 3 that assumed leaders' rating of abstract employee traits to be similar to their own personality ratings was partly supported. Agreeableness in leaders is marginally ($p = 0.058$) associated with their preference for Good Citizenship, however support for hypotheses 3b that assumed a link between Conscientiousness and Industriousness, and 3c (Extraversion and Enthusiasm) is lacking, as are effects from all control variables.

Considering the low number of associations between leaders' personality traits and their preferences for abstract trait categories, further analyses were conducted. This time, regression analyses investigated the Big Five dimensions on individual employee traits encompassed by Industriousness, Enthusiasm and Good Citizenship (Table 9). Overall, results paint a similar picture with few significant associations between leader's personality and their preferences for abstract employee traits. First, leaders' Agreeableness is positively related with the trait 'loyal' ($\beta = 0.254$; $p = 0.002$) but negatively associated with the trait 'productive' ($\beta = -0.186$, $p = 0.027$), and leader' Openness for experience was positively linked with happiness in employees ($\beta = 0.188$; $p = 0.014$).

Table 9: Personality and abstract pIFT traits

Research Variables	Industriousness			Enthusiasm			Good Citizenship		
	hardworking ß	productive ß	less above & beyond ß	excited ß	outgoing ß	happy ß	loyal ß	reliable ß	team player ß
Agreeableness	0.018	-0.186*	0.064	0.077	0.063	0.158	0.254**	0.007	0.09
Conscientiousness	-0.056	0.122	-0.123	0.051	0.093	0.143	0.125	0.061	0.119
Extraversion	0.047	0.051	0.043	0.082	0.095	-0.103	0.013	-0.037	0.074
Emotional Stability	-0.024	0.016	0.096	-0.116	-0.024	0.06	-0.11	-0.081	0.066
Openness	0.143	0.066	0.107	0.065	-0.009	0.188*	-0.028	0.058	-0.091
Confounders									
Gender									
Male	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
Female	0.96	0.156*	0.075	-0.088	-0.068	-0.031	0.059	0.108	0.118
Age									
in years	-0.047	0.282**	0.056	-0.2*	-0.136	-0.041	0.146	0.261**	0.035
Leadership Experience									
in years	-0.03	-0.053	0.064	0.05	-0.013	0.057	-0.045	-0.187*	-0.04
R ²	0.044	0.105	0.055	0.054	0.039	0.126	0.122	0.063	0.071
SE	1.049	0.857	1.007	1.024	0.984	0.863	0.869	0.66	0.9

n=182; ß = standardized coefficients; * p <0.05, ** p<0.01

Interesting results were found in regards to the control variables. Female and older leaders favor productiveness in employees, while age is also positively associated with reliability but negatively with 'excited' employees, while higher leadership experience is negatively associated with 'reliability' in employees. Even though these results do not support most of the initial hypotheses about associations between leaders' personality traits and the abstract level of their pIFT they contain valuable information that finds its interpretation in the discussion of this chapter.

Specific category level of leaders' pIFT. Table 10 shows results of regression analyses pertaining to the specific category level of leaders' pIFT, confirming two out of three hypotheses. Hypotheses 4 which assumed leaders would indicate a preference for similar employee work behaviors relating to efficiency or creative-oriented activities was supported.

Table 10: Personality and specific pIFT category level

		EXPLORATION	EXPLOITATION
		β	β
Research Variables			
	Agreeableness	0.135	-0.025
	Conscientiousness	0.064	0.212**
	Extraversion	0.019	0.117
	Emotional Stability	0.064	0.079
	Openness	0.265**	0.096
Confounders			
Gender			
	Male	ref	ref
	Female	-0.067	-0.011
Age			
	in years	0.126	0.123
Leadership Experience			
	in years	-0.037	-0.223*
R ²		0.152	0.12
SE		0.653	0.71

n=182; β = standardized coefficients; * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01

In support of hypothesis 4a, leaders' Conscientiousness is associated with their preferences for Exploitation in employees ($\beta = 0.212$; $p = 0.007$), and Openness is linked with a desire to work with explorative team members ($\beta = 0.265$; $p = 0$), confirming hypothesis 4c. The exception is hypothesis 4b, because contrary to expectations, leaders' Extraversion was not related to Exploration in employees.

3.3 Discussion

The overall results of this study offer several insights in the investigation of leader personality and the emergence of their prototypical implicit follower theories. Even though fewer than expected associations could be found the notion of a similarity-attraction paradigm cannot be rejected especially in the face of leaders' preferences for employee work behaviors on the specific category level of their employee prototype. Accordingly, conscientious managers' Ideal Employee displays exploitative work behaviors, while leaders open for experience prefer employees with a tendency to pursue explorative activities. In other words, leaders who are

organized, efficient and achievement-oriented describe their Ideal Employee as relying on similar values: serving existing clients, operating within known boundaries, utilizing existing knowledge and experience – in fact, increasing efficiency as opposed to innovation. In their quest to get the job done, these leaders focus on the here and now, they rely on existing methods and consequently require team members with similar work modes. On the other hand, managers who are open for experience, creative, curious and unconventional may more look ahead into the future and hence have a desire to work with like-minded individuals who embrace the unknown, who can work with ambiguity and express an interest in renewal and change. These results offer new perspectives in regards to the correlation between certain aspects in leaders' personality and their preferences for employees prone to work in an explorative or exploitative manner. At the very least they show that the similarity-attraction paradigm promises to be a helpful theoretical bridge to enable a deeper understanding of leaders' pIFT.

Noteworthy are also results pertaining to links between Agreeableness and loyalty (Good Citizenship) and productiveness (Industriousness). The finding that agreeable leaders emphasize loyalty but dismiss productiveness in employees is interesting considering other research that presents links to leader-performance related criteria. On the one hand, agreeable individuals are warm, kind and cooperative (Saucier 1964). This highlights the social aspects of their personality (Offerhaus 2013; Becker et al. 2012; Barrick et al. 2001; Keller 1999), an aspect that has linked these personality traits to leadership style, as well as the ascription of ethical and fair leadership (Kalshoven et al. 2010). On the other hand, agreeableness can also mean being "*passive and compliant*" (Judge et al. 2002, p. 774), traits that lead to negative correlations with work-related performance criteria (Barrick et al. 2001) and a low likelihood for leader emergence (Judge et al. 2002). The finding that agreeable leaders tend to pursue cooperation and positive relationships with others more than focus on production and performance is a neat endorsement of the notion that leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories may reflect certain aspects in their own personality.

Other remarkable findings pertain to lacking associations between leaders' personality traits and abstract employee traits. First, leader Conscientiousness is unrelated to a preference for employee Industriousness, which is an unexpected

outcome. Based on the notion that Conscientiousness involves a person's tendency for achievement orientation, discipline and efficiency, it has consistently proven to be a strong indicator for high job performance (Barrick & Mount 1991; Barrick et al 2001) and leadership skills (Kalshoven et al. 2010; De Hoogh et al. 2005; Judge et al. 2002) and leads to the assumption that such leaders would seek out productive, hardworking employees. One possible explanation for the lack of association could lie in a less prevalent aspect of Conscientiousness, the desire to work independently. According to one study conscientious individuals pursue accomplishment through personal effort and maintain control over their own position and success, rather than through delegation and shared success (Kalshoven et al. 2010). If conscientious leaders prefer to accomplish tasks autonomously, the lack of emphasis on employee's Industriousness may emerge from lower standards or a lack of interest in regards to production and achievement through employees. This interpretation, however, is also problematic in the current theoretical framework because it counteracts the similarity-attraction paradigm, and secondly it is misaligned with research about dissimilarity in Conscientiousness which has proven to cause interpersonal deviance (Liao et al. 2004). Equally noteworthy as well as unexpected are lacking associations between leaders' Extraversion and all tested employee qualities. A possible explanation for the fact that extraverted leaders did not indicate any preferences for employee qualities may lie within the Extraversion dimension itself: as extraverted individuals are sociable, talkative, and excitement-seeking (Offerhaus 2013; Barrick et al 2001), they consider others as "*opportunities for social engagement*" (Roberts 2009, p. 11) and may be willing to take higher social risks (Becker et al. 2012). On that basis it can be argued that the ability to approach others more freely and disregarding of the social risks associated with it might render extraverted leaders receptive for a wider variety of people and at the same time less demanding of specific qualities.

The current results provide some evidence for the hypothesis that managers' pIFT contains traits similar to their own personality and allow the conclusion that individual temperament can play a role in leaders' expectations for employees. However, the fact that the US study showed that both external and internal aspects could be theoretically and empirically linked to leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories raises new questions about their strength. Which of the tested

aspects affects the content of leaders' employee prototypical expectations most? Do external factors defined by market conditions and coordination mechanisms, or internal factors rooted in leaders' own personality have a bigger impact on leaders' pIFT? In an attempt to find answers to these questions, the third step in the analysis includes all research variables for associations with leaders' preferences for abstract and specific employee qualities, results of which are presented in the next section.

3.4 Work context or leaders' personality? Main results

The goal of the last step in the regression analysis was to find out which of context and personality variables would show the strongest associations with leaders' Ideal Employee image. Table 11 provides an overview of the model that incorporates all context variables investigated in part I of the USA study, as well as the personality variables outlined in the current chapter, with their links to all abstract and specific employee qualities (DV).

This model considers the influences of dynamic and competitive market conditions, decentralized and formalized coordination mechanisms, leaders' personality aspects and all control variables (gender, age, leadership experience and team size) on leaders' preferences for abstract employee traits as well as desired explorative and exploitative work behaviors. The main effects showed that leader's Conscientiousness remains positively linked to Exploitation ($\beta = 0.172$; $p < 0.05$), and Openness to Exploration ($\beta = 0.286$; $p < 0.01$). Both dynamic market conditions ($\beta = 0.207$; $p < 0.05$) and formalized coordination mechanisms ($\beta = 0.148$; $p < 0.05$) remain associated with leaders' emphasis on Good Citizenship, and Formalization in leaders' work environment is associated with Enthusiasm ($\beta = 0.201$; $p < 0.05$). This indicates that leaders' expectations for explorative or exploitative work behaviors in employees rely primarily on their personality, while their emphasis for Good Citizenship and Enthusiasm is driven mainly by their work context. In other words, a leader's preference for team members who work in a more creative or a more efficiency-oriented manner is not linked with their work context but with their own Openness or Conscientiousness, respectively; on the other hand, aspects in their work context seem to determine an emphasis on abstract employee traits such

as loyalty, reliability and team work, providing a possible indicator for the growing emphasis on social skills in modern organizations.

Table 11: Context, personality and pIFT

	Industriousness	Enthusiasm	Good Citizenship	Exploration	Exploitation
	β	β	β	β	β
Research Variables					
<i>External factors</i>					
Market Dynamic	0.16	0.01	0.207*	0.156	0.11
Market Competitiveness	0.009	0.019	0.097	0.077	0.011
Dezentralization	-0.053	-0.008	0.015	-0.016	-0.05
Formalization	-0.031	0.201*	0.148*	0.139	0.122
<i>Internal factors</i>					
Agreeableness	-0.031	0.119	0.161*	0.128	-0.028
Conscientiousness	-0.04	0.066	0.059	0.001	0.172*
Extraversion	0.039	0.026	-0.02	-0.022	0.083
Emotional Stability	0.042	-0.003	0.039	0.097	0.095
Openness	0.14	0.112	-0.01	0.286**	0.109
Confounders					
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
Female	0.139	-0.07	0.141	-0.047	-0.016
<i>Age</i>					
in years	0.126	-0.155	0.182	0.153	0.17
<i>Leadership Experience</i>					
in years	-0.023	0.037	-0.121	-0.076	-0.257**
<i>Team size</i>					
small (1-10)	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
medium (11-29)	0.067	-0.034	0.019	-0.004	0.102
large (more than 30)	0.088	-0.06	0.028	0.107	0.173
R ²	0.091	0.108	0.193	0.23	0.185
SE	0.782	0.713	0.62	0.633	0.698

n=182; β = standardized coefficients; * p <0.05, ** p<0.01

The main effects model presents a summary of the strongest associations between context, personality and leaders' pIFT. Study results are somewhat conclusive in regards to the question which of context or personality factors have a stronger impact on the development of leaders' pIFT. Judging by the regression coefficient and p-value that specifies the change in leaders' preference for certain employee qualities as a function of context and/or personality it can be argued that personality

is stronger associated with leaders' pIFT than work context. Openness and Exploration showed the highest associations with a p-value of $p < 0.01$; this information together with a comparably high R-squared of the model confirms that personality seems to be an important informant of leaders' pIFT content.

3.5 Contribution and Limitations of the US Study

The objective of the current research was to investigate the nature of leader's employee prototype, and to establish possible links between aspects in their work context as well as their personality with the content of their pIFT. It revealed a plethora of information about leaders' prototypical employee, and it produces some empirical evidence for the notion that both context and personality factors can affect leaders' emphasis on certain follower qualities. It demonstrates that there is no straightforward answer to the question about the origin of differences in leaders' pIFT. Person-situation interactions are highly complex because "*individual behavior is always a function of both the personality of an individual and the situation itself*" (Shaffer & Postlethwaite 2012, p. 448). Whereas situations that express organizational and social demands can affect a person's state (Roberts 2009) as well as their actions in a non-linear fashion (Almlund et al. 2011), individuals can also affect and transform their environment. The mutual nature of this dynamic is particularly prevalent in leadership contexts and renders the search for the origin of certain influences on leader behavior and preferences theoretically and empirically challenging. Still, as the issue of person-environment fit may be the implicit key to understanding behavior (Schneider 2001), the current study is a first step towards meeting these challenges by crossing the boundaries of one-sided person- or environment-based views by looking at leaders' employee prototype through a holistic lens.

The following theoretical and practical contributions of the presented work can be identified. First, it expands existing research about categorization theory and the formation of prototypes. The notion that leaders' employee prototype consists of an abstract entity level, as well as a specific functional level enables a more precise understanding of the different types of traits and behaviors leaders might be expecting from employees and how they relate to their work environment. Second,

this investigation led to the emergence of an Ideal Employee profile for 182 US leaders. Throughout several analyses it became obvious that leaders value Good Citizenship in employees and expect the simultaneous pursuit of explorative and exploitative work activities. However, as argued at the beginning of this thesis, the sheer identification of qualities that make up managers' pIFT is of limited value because it does not explain variations depending on contextual or personal preferences. This leads to the main contribution of this study, the empirical investigation of leaders' perception of work context factors, their own personality and their relationship to the content of their pIFT. Exploration and Exploitation served as valuable principles in the study of these relationships and allow a realistic and theoretically sound approach to variations in Ideal Employee images based on context. The Big Five measure, on the other hand, is an equally valid method to control for variations in leaders' pIFT that are caused by idiosyncrasies and personal preferences other than context. Overall, this research study offers some evidence for the argument that implicit follower theories held by leaders are sensitive to external and internal influences on both the abstract and the specific level of their ideal employee category.

The results of this study concerning the link between leaders' perception of the organizational reality and their Ideal Employee image may also have important practical implications for organizations and public policy. First, implicit theories about leaders and followers are practically present in all leader-follower interactions, and even before individuals join an organization they hold "*varying assumptions and beliefs [...] about what leaders and followers 'look like'*" (DeRue & Ashford 2010, p. 637). These images and beliefs not only influence behaviors but are difficult to overcome even if confronted with adversary information via real-time behaviors (Dunning & Sherman 1997; Lord & Maher 1994). The current findings add to the literature about the relevance of implicit theories in organizations by providing new data about what it actually is that leaders in certain environments would like to see in their employees. This can help organizations learn about the underlying, implicit dynamics that guide their managers' personnel related decisions in regards to their expectations towards new and existing employees. If it is true that situational factors provide counteracting "force fields" (Johns 2006), organizational leaders are invited to understand personnel choices by

their management as expression of their implicit follower theories - expressions that are formed by their perceptions of their work environment provided by the organization itself. For example, formalized environments can lead to a more exploitative employee prototype, and this fact allows the speculation that personnel-related decisions such as hiring, firing, or performance reviews by leaders in such contexts will encourage exploitative activities in employees. Most importantly, however, is the insight that their preference didn't necessarily just grow out of their personal choice, but represent a by-product of organizational processes directing their perceptions and consequently their efforts towards exploitation.

Second, knowledge about the way employers' perception of their environment can shape expectations for potential job candidates can be used in occupational research advising public policy makers. Hogan et al. (2013) challenge researchers to be more cognizant about what employers really want from employees and the present study is a first step into accommodating this request. By taking a holistic approach, the suggestion is to study the conditions under which individual managers make employment related decisions. For example, it can be useful to have a thorough understanding of leaders' perception of the degree of formalization in an organization and the way it relates to the prevalent employee prototype, before moving on to investigating criteria for hiring and firing or performance evaluation processes. Since many personnel decisions are accompanied by implicit follower theories, leaders' awareness and knowledge of their own prototypical expectations and their potential impact on performance management and leadership relationships can enable a better understanding of some of the underlying dynamics of these processes. Additionally, in an effort to increase diversity or reduce homogeneity in organizations it can be valuable to be aware of the majority of personality-types amongst leadership personnel and the existence of a similarity-attraction paradigm in personnel decisions.

There are also several limitations of the current research. First, the study was cross-sectional and therefore provides a snapshot of participant's working conditions, personality and pIFT at the time of the survey; this implies that the results do not accommodate possible changes in leaders' work context and the consequences altering conditions may have on their employee prototype. Second, the study was conducted with for-profit organizations in the USA; this renders the present

findings non-transferrable to other types of organizations (e.g. for-profit) outside of the studied geographical and cultural boundaries (e.g. other countries). In line with the main argument made throughout this work it should be expected that the Ideal Employee profile will differ from country to country, culture to culture or sample to sample. Hence, the current results are only representative for the tested group of participants. Third, it could be argued that the inflation potential of Common Method Variance (CMV) caused by single-source bias is problematic because it relies on data collected by leaders only (Podsakoff 2003). Despite a series of ex-ante strategies that were pursued to minimize this risk, for example counterbalancing the order of questions, using a complex model and omitting questions that prompt socially desirable answers (Reio 2010; Chang et al. 2010), it is not always ideal to gather information from a single source.

Fourth, measuring the phenomenon of implicit theories via an explicit questionnaire has also been questioned by researchers who argue that certain aspects of an individual's implicit theories may lie in part outside of their awareness, so that their content might not be readily retrievable (Uhlmann et al. 2012; Medvedeff & Lord 2007). However, a more recent study considers the strict dichotomy between explicit and implicit processing as outdated and argues that schemas (including leaders' employee prototype) can be processed both implicitly and explicitly (Epitropaki et al. 2013). Put differently, while leaders can be unaware of their pIFT during everyday leadership interactions, they are still able to access their contents when prompted in a timely manner, for example by answering the questions in a survey. Fifth, the operationalization of the research study did not allow gathering data of non-replies and this provides a potential for systematic bias due to non-respondents. Systematic bias can be problematic when participants are unwilling to share sensitive data, fear reprimand for taking part in a study or feel pressed for socially desirable answers. However, since anonymity of the responses could be guaranteed, participation in the study was fully encouraged by the leadership of the cooperating companies, and the questions did not address sensitive topics or prompt social desirability. These factors allow to abandon concerns with regards to systematic bias. To the extent possible, these limitations were controlled through the use of statistical methods and are not assumed to pose problems severe enough to counteract the contribution of this study. Lastly, the low R^2 values in the

regression models should also be mentioned because they suggest that the models fail to explain a substantial proportion of response variability. The R^2 is a measure for the amount of variability explained in a data set and as such not directly indicative for its predictive power. For example, one of the presented models had a R^2 value of 0.193, indicating that only 19% of the model can be explained, leaving 81% of the variance in the data set unexplained, rendering solid predictions difficult. However, since the current studies investigate a social phenomenon, the current data sets include a high number of contextual and individual variables that naturally create a substantial degree of variability and statistical noise. Despite the fact that the low R^2 values allow less precise predictions, the models are still informative about the trends indicated by the predictor variable in the regression line and interesting insights could still be gained.

Since limitations also provide opportunities for future studies, new research directions can be defined on the back of the existing boundaries. First, similar to the GLOBE study that investigated cultural differences in leadership prototypes (Brodbeck et al. 2000) it may be valuable to ask for variations in leaders' follower prototype across different countries and cultures. Knowledge gained in such a comparative study could not only be of interests for academics but also for professional personnel and headhunting services operating in the widening global market; specific preferences in leaders' employee prototypes based on cultural aspects play an increasingly important role in selection and hiring processes (Horverak et al. 2013), so that cultural Ideal Employee profiles could help refine selection criteria. Second, leaders' age differences in their implicit follower theories also require further investigation especially as they are partly inconsistent with previous studies. Usually, research looks at ageism from the perspective of the employee or job applicant in that employee age appears to be an important factor as they are evaluated and assessed (Ahmed et al. 2012); reversing the lens by focusing on the decision maker him or herself can extend existing research about personnel decisions such as succession planning strategies to multigenerational workplaces (Crumpacker & Crumpacker 2007). Lastly, in order to circumvent problems with single-source bias, future studies could assess work context with both leaders and their followers. Instead of relying on leaders' perceptions of explorative and exploitative markets and coordination mechanisms, follower's

assessment of the same environment could provide an additional source of information about the features of their work context and provide a more objective assessment of different work context types.

Overall, the present work is a novel approach to the study of leader's prototypical implicit follower theories and presents a series of empirical evidence about the way managers' work context and their personality relate to their personal Ideal Employee image. The next chapter describes a second study that was conducted in the quest to learn more about another possible influencing factor in the development of leaders' pIFT: their perceptions of organizational culture.

4 German Study: Organizational culture and leaders' Ideal Employee

4.1 Introduction

The consideration of leaders' perception of the prevailing organizational culture at their work place and its relation to their employee prototype will widen the current understanding of contextual influences on leaders' pIFT beyond market conditions and coordination mechanisms. Organizational culture is defined as a set of "*basic assumptions, values, and beliefs that characterize a setting and are taught to newcomers as the proper way to think and feel*" (Schneider et al. 2013, p. 362). It is thereby distinct from organizational climate which refers to shared perceptions of policies, procedures and practices (ibid.) or national culture defined by country (Hofstede et al. 2010).

The topic of organizational culture became the subject of public interest in the 1980s when its social characteristics were recognized as potential influencing factor on individual, group and organizational behavior (Hartnell et al. 2011). While academics tried to figure out how to define, measure and describe its complexities, the concept of organizational culture was quickly embraced by the management consulting world and popular science (Schneider et al. 2013), mainly as a new approach to define measures of performance (Cameron & Quinn 2011; Quinn 1991). In the past decades, the concept has undergone substantial theoretical and empirical scrutiny and remains a widely used subject in organizational research (Büschgens et al. 2013; Bryan et al. 2013; Ferreira 2013; Gimenez-Espina et al. 2013). One of the most important theoretical foundations for the current understanding of organizational culture was set by Edgar Schein (2010). Schein identified three layers of culture: the outer, most visible layer of a corporate culture is represented by an organization's artifacts such as its buildings, space and surroundings, the language spoken by organizational members, their rituals and dress codes; however, as these artifacts seem most accessible to outsiders they are also most ambiguous in their possible meanings and interpretations. The second layer represents the core values as espoused openly by management; interestingly

though, despite the fact that certain values may be communicated freely, they may not necessarily represent the values actually lived upon in the organizational reality. The third and least tangible layer of organizational culture in this conceptualization lies in people's underlying norms and assumptions; while these values and attitudes are not usually articulated, they are deeply ingrained in people's minds and would constitute an invisible guideline to what is accepted and what is not. This layer of organizational culture emerges as a result of values and behaviors that are considered successful in the organization's adaptation to its external environment (Schneider et al. 2013; Schein 2010) and implicitly symbolize what is 'good' and 'bad' within a certain culture.

The third layer of cultural norms provides a base line for people's expectations and preferences and, as assumed in the current study informs the development of implicit follower theories. As individuals undergo the process of organizational socialization (Bauer et al. 2007) they adopt prevailing values, principles and rules and in due process form their future expectations for peers, superiors and employees. Hence, the hypothesis of the current study is guided by the notion that certain aspects of an organization's culture or rather, leaders' perception thereof, inform their implicit follower theories, so that their Ideal Employee image may be a reflection of their perceived prevailing culture. In other words, leaders who operate within certain organizational culture types are expected to express their preferences for specific prototypical employee traits as they unconsciously look for a cultural fit between employee and cultural norms.

4.2 Organizational Culture: The Competing Values Framework

A framework that allows a thorough and meaningful investigation of organizational culture and potential links to leaders' employee prototype is the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn 2011). Materialized during a search for indicators of organizational effectiveness (Campbell et al. 1974) the framework describes certain aspects of culture:

“These indicators of organizational effectiveness represent what people value about an organization’s performance. They define what is seen as good and right and appropriate.... They define the core values on which judgments about organizations are made.” (Cameron & Quinn 2011, p. 35).

The term competing or contrasting values framework is used to describe two apparently opposite and overlapping dimensions of any organization’s culture: Flexibility versus Stability, and Internal versus External Focus (Figure 6).

Clan culture. Clan cultures find themselves along the dimensions of flexibility and internal focus. Also referred to as the “Human Relations Model” due to their emphasis on human resources, training and commitment to people, Clan cultures are defined by a strong sense of “we” that emphasizes cohesion, participation, team work and employee involvement. They provide human work environments in which customers are thought of as partners, where success is defined through the quality of the internal climate and a concern for people, and where leaders are parent figures and mentors. Clan cultures facilitate employee empowerment and emphasize commitment, loyalty and consensus.

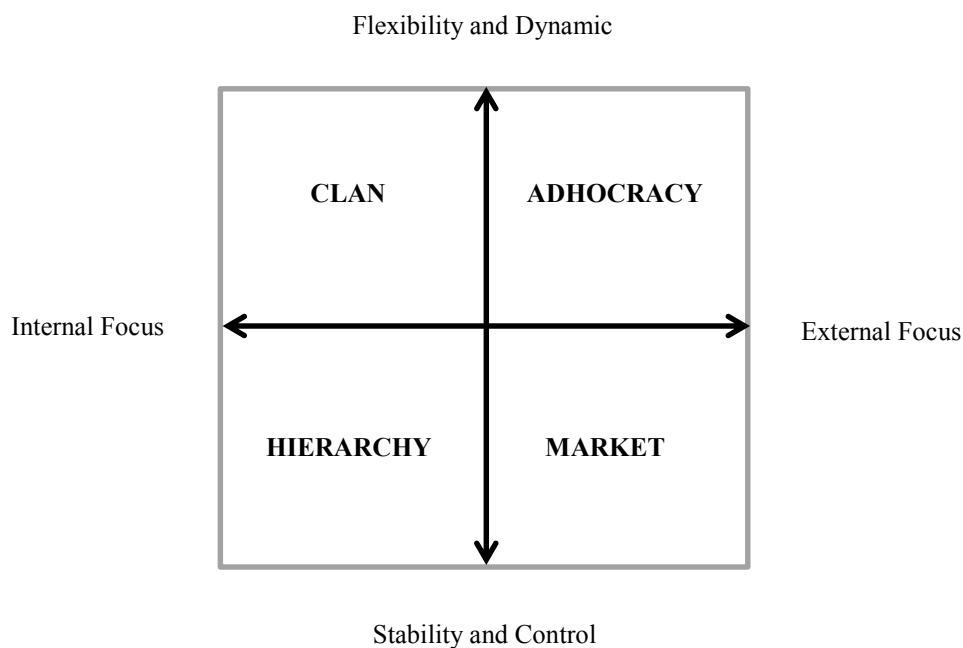


Figure 6: Competing Values Framework

Adhocracy culture. Flexible yet with a more external focus, Adhocracies are defined by change, adaptation and a lack of stability as they pursue innovation, creativity and activity through adaption and pioneering. Embracing uncertainty and ambiguity they can be imagined as “tents” rather than “palaces” as they can quickly reconfigure and provide a dynamic and entrepreneurial atmosphere. Leaders in Adhocracies are innovative, risk-oriented visionaries who foster creative pursuits and define success according to the production of unique and original products and services.

Hierarchy culture. Stability and internal focus shape the Hierarchy culture and provide a formalized and structured work place that stresses procedures, formal rules and policies and enjoy a smooth running operation. Also referred to as the “Internal Process Model”, Hierarchies emphasize communication, predictability and efficiency, and leaders have the task of coordinating, monitoring and organizing.

Market culture. Minted by stability and an external focus, Market cultures are focused on transactions with external parties as they try to remain competitive and productive. The combination of a strong external customer focus and a controlled position in the market leads to the definition of success by market share and penetration. Also called the “Rational Goal Model” due to their emphasis on the maximization of output, Market cultures pursue competitive action, the achievement and stretching of goals and results. Leaders are expected to be hard-driving, demanding producers who emphasize winning and the return on assets.

The Competing Values Framework does not represent an attempt to simplify the inherent paradoxes of organizations by providing a rigid categorization system. It acknowledges the fact that organizational culture “*comprises a complex, interrelated, comprehensive, and ambiguous set of factors*” (Cameron & Quinn 2011, p. 32) whose different clusters are not necessarily contrasting but complementary to each other. First, the dimensions of flexibility and control as well as external and internal focus can coexist in one and the same organization as it changes and evolves. Culture shifts can occur as companies go through a series of phases, one prominent example being Apple Inc. (Figure 7), that started off as dynamic and flexible Adhocracy (Profile 1), then evolved into a highly cohesive

Clan (the “Apple Family”; profile 2) before their subsequent success demanded policies and regulations leading to a Hierarchy culture (Profile 3) before it finally settled as a mature organization that displays a Market culture with an emphasis on effectiveness and production (Profile 4) (ibid. p. 55).

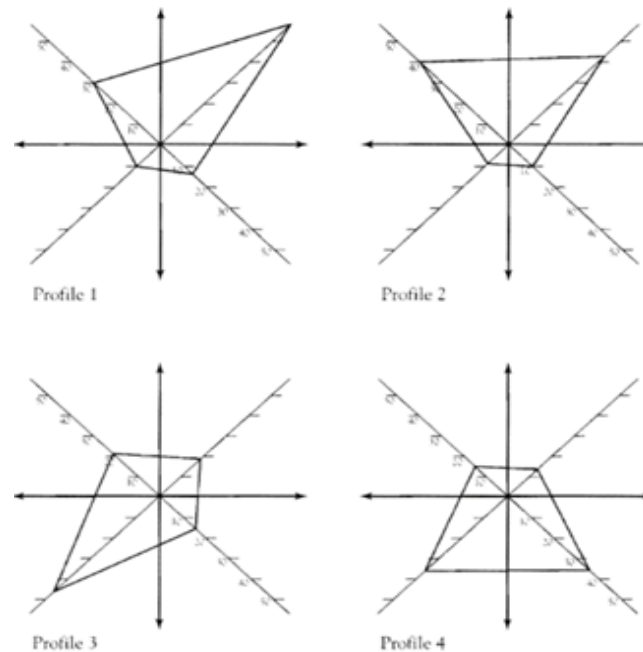


Figure 7: Culture change at Apple Inc.

Second, the consolidation of seemingly opposing values represented by the four clusters may sometimes be desirable because it allows a higher degree of flexibility and adaptation to the changes in an organizations' external environment. A recent study found that organizations with higher scores on all four culture clusters showed higher performance in several effectiveness criteria (Hartnell et al. 2011) than those that are strong in any one. This finding supports Cameron & Quinn (2011) who consistently argued that leaders who are able to succeed in all four culture quadrants receive the best effectiveness ratings from superiors, peers and subordinates. Still, as organizations find themselves operating in varying market environments, their objectives and processes are often idiosyncratic which, in most cases, leads to the emergence of deliberate cultural variables that are linked together and steer life and

work within a certain way (Schneider et al. 2013). In other words, most companies develop a culture that emphasizes one or two of the main clusters and expect their work force to adapt to the prevailing values expressed in these clusters. As culture is expressed through structure, processes, values and attitudes, it also defines the requirements for leadership roles. For example, Clan cultures encourage leaders to act as facilitators and mentors that are primarily concerned with discussion and worker morale; Market cultures, on the other hand, incite producers and directors who drive profits and clarify goals. Leaders in Hierarchies are asked to step into the role of coordinators and monitors who are responsible for documentation and stability, and those in Adhocracies act as innovators and brokers providing insight and resources (König et al. 2013; Cameron & Quinn 2011; Quinn 1991). In short, organizational cultures influence the nature of leaders' roles, tasks and performance indicators, and create expectations for their actions, values and behavioral standards. The question that emerges from this dynamic of contingencies is: are these expectations also reflected in leaders' implicit theories about followers? Specifically, do leaders have implicit preferences for certain employee traits that can be linked to the values endorsed in their prevailing culture? To what degree and intensity do the four culture clusters in the Competing Values Framework associate with the content of leaders' pIFT?

4.2.1 Person-Organization-Fit and leaders' pIFT

The current investigation was undertaken to shed light on the link between organizational culture and leaders' implicit follower theories, an issue which to date has escaped the radar of academic research. The main hypothesis is that leaders form their employee prototype in accordance with the prevailing cultural tendency in their organization; in other words, the content of their prototypical implicit follower theories is expected to be a reflection of the values, attitudes and behavioral expectations within their organizational culture. Underlying this assumption is the notion that leaders will prefer to work with employees who fit the prevailing context as opposed to complement it or differ from it, and the content of their pIFT will represent a wish to align employees with the expectations emerging from their corporate work culture. In short, they are expected to look for a cultural fit. 'Person-Organization Fit' (P-O-Fit) denotes the search for similarities between

individuals and organizations and refers to a matching process defined by a congruence of beliefs, norms, values and goals (Zhu et al. 2014). Numerous studies show that a successful P-O-fit leads to positive outcomes: individuals feel more motivated when their own characteristics fit with their work environment (De Cooman et al. 2009) and the similarities in values can lead to increased organizational commitment by employees (Meyer et al, 2010), higher job satisfaction, work performance and prosocial behavior (Zhu et al. 2014; Gutierrez et al. 2012). As organizations strive to encourage behaviors that fit their culture, leaders are assumed to express their preferences for certain employee qualities in accordance to the prevailing organizational culture.

Hypothesis 5:

The content of leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories will be congruent with their assessment of the prevailing culture in their organization.

Figure 8 illustrates hypotheses pertaining to links between the four culture types Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy and Market, and those traits that are assumed to constitute leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories.

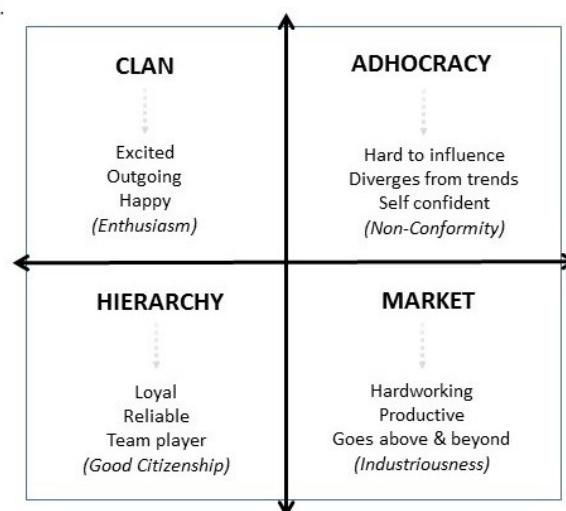


Figure 8: Illustration of hypotheses (organizational culture)

Specifically, leaders in Clan cultures that value attachment, affiliation and collaboration and expect behaviors related to teamwork and participation, involvement and open communication (Hartnell et al. 2011), are expected to express a preference for the traits *excited*, *outgoing* and *happy* in their pIFT. This preference is likely to emerge from the general enthusiasm for the workplace and its people in Clan cultures, an emphasis on employee commitment as well as an interest in cooperation and teamwork:

Hypothesis 5a:

Leaders who perceive their organizational environment predominantly as a Clan culture will express a preference for Enthusiasm in employees. Specifically, their prototypical implicit follower theories will be defined by the traits 'excited', 'outgoing' and 'happy'.

Adhocracies, on the other hand, are defined by growth, variety, autonomy and change; the level of effectiveness in organizations is assessed by the degree of innovation achieved, creating an atmosphere that encourages individuals to take risks, to be creative and adaptive (ibid.). The strong emphasis on creativity and change within Adhocracy cultures allows to go beyond current limitations and depart from the status quo. Confidence in dealing with ambiguity, self-reliance when taking unknown paths and a certain individuality and originality can be assumed to be valued, and leaders will appreciate employees who are *hard to influence*, *diverge from trends* and are *self-confident*.

Hypothesis 5b:

Leaders who perceive their organizational environment predominantly as an Adhocracy culture will express a preference for Non-Conformity in employees. Specifically, their prototypical implicit follower theories will be defined by the traits 'hard to influence', 'diverging from trends' and 'self-confident'.

Individuals in the third culture type in this model, the Hierarchy culture, values smooth functioning through formalized processes, good communication and routine; effectiveness is measured by efficiency and timeliness, and behavioral expectations are set by the degree to which clear roles are defined and procedures are followed (Cameron & Quinn 2011). Leaders in Hierarchy cultures may appreciate predictability and stability, a fact that could lead them to value employees who are *loyal* and *reliable*; additionally, the emphasis on conformity with systems and procedures may elicit them to prefer the ability for *team work*.

Hypothesis 5c:

Leaders who perceive their organizational environment predominantly as a Hierarchy culture will express a preference for Good Citizenship in employees. Specifically, their prototypical implicit follower theories will be defined by the traits 'loyal', 'reliable' and 'team player'.

Lastly, Market cultures are defined by communication, competition and competence. Effectiveness is recognized by market share, profitability, product quality and productivity, and individual success is rewarded on the basis of reaching clear goals and objectives. Market cultures stimulate thorough planning and strong task focus, but also driven and aggressive behaviors (ibid.).

Hypothesis 5d:

Leaders who perceive their organizational environment predominantly as a Market culture will express a preference for Industriousness in employees. Specifically, their prototypical implicit follower theories will be defined by the traits 'hardworking', 'productive', and 'goes above and beyond'.

Since achievement and production are key objectives, the consistent and explicit focus on productivity and outcomes may guide leader's pIFT towards an emphasis on Industriousness in employees. In other words, leaders in Market cultures may

describe their Ideal Employee as *hardworking* and *productive* and expect them to *go above and beyond* in the pursuit of business goals.

4.3 Sample, Method, Materials and Measures

The German magazine *Der Spiegel* sported an article⁴ about Vera Calasan, then CEO of Manpower Germany, a major personnel service operating in 80 countries. In her interview, Calasan argued that the perceived lack of skilled workers in German companies would not be due to an actual deficiency of a qualified workforce but to German employers' lack of flexibility in considering a wider pool of job applicants. Calasan declared narrow expectations and the demand for a 100% alignment between job profile and candidate skills a uniquely German phenomenon, one that verifiably leads to costly and time-consuming recruitment processes. By taking this position Ms. Calasan unwittingly referred to employers' expectation for finding Ideal Employees and pointed at some of the consequences and limitations prototypical implicit follower theories can pose for organizations. The content of this interview provided the link between organizational reality and research about pIFT and led the author to contact Ms. Calasan to offer a joint research project. Fourteen months later, the research study was conducted with two major personnel service groups, ManpowerGroup Germany and Excellence AG. The methodology, methods, results and insights of this study are described in the following sections.

Participants. In spring 2014 both ManpowerGroup Germany and two of their subsidiaries Bankpower and Experis Germany and Austria, as well as Excellence AG Germany and Austria invited their clients to partake in a survey titled *My Ideal Employee*. The addressees were leaders, managers and hiring decision makers in Germany and Austria who worked for for-profit companies in various industries and the questionnaire was administered via email linking to a secure online survey (Appendix I) that ensured anonymity and confidentiality. Overall, 138 questionnaires were completed, whereby 100 participants stemmed from Germany (72.5%), 27 from Austria (19.6%) and 11 from neighboring countries (8%).

⁴ Manpower-Chefin Calasan "Deutsche Firmen sind selbst schuld, wenn Fachkräfte fehlen." *Der Spiegel*, December 26th 2012. Retrieved 24/07/2014

Participants were mainly male (66.7%) with a mean age of 42 years and an average leadership experience of 11 years, they worked at various levels of the organizational hierarchy: top management (13.8%), middle management (52.9) and lower management (33.2%). The organizations of participating leaders represented in this sample are large, medium-sized and small companies (≥ 2000 employees: 39.1%; 200-2000 employees: 31.9%; 1-200 employees: 29%) in the services industry (31.2%), automotive industry (14.5%), engineering (12.3%), information technology (5.8%) and a large variety of other industries (36.2%).

Independent variables. Hypotheses tests was conducted on the basis of two validated concepts, the Competing Values Framework (Cameron & Quinn 2011), and the taxonomy of follower prototypes according to Sy (2010). The measure used to capture leaders' perception of the current organizational culture in their organizations (IV) was a German translation of the *Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument* (Ferreira 2013) (Appendix J). Participants evaluated the intensity of Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy and Market culture aspects in their organizations by rating their agreement with six statements, respectively, describing the type of climate, the values endorsed, the role of staff members, their definition of success and type of management style. In order to avoid Common Method Bias (CMB) that could arise from self-reports using perceptual measures, the order of the questions relating to the four culture types was mixed in order not to provide a cognitive map for respondents (Chang et al. 2010).

Dependent variables. The content of leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories (DV) was assessed via a German translation of Sy's (2010) taxonomy of the follower prototype and anti-prototype (Appendix K). The 9 prototypical traits were complemented with antonyms of the originally anti-prototypical traits in order to offer a wider variety of positively valenced employee qualities so that overall, participants were asked to rate the degree of their appreciation of 18 traits when displayed by employees in every day work life.

Control variables. Similar to the previous study, this survey also controlled for leaders' perception of market conditions with an abbreviated version of the measure (Weibler & Keller 2011; Jansen et al. 2006) as well as gender (Johnson et al. 2008; Epitropaki & Martin 2004), age (Sy 2010), leadership experience (Whiteley et al.

2012; Shondrick & Lord 2010; Keller 1999; Sanders 1999; Borman 1987), tenure and hierarchical position, and for organization size by number of employees (Naranjo-Valencia et al. 2011).

4.4 Results

The first step in the statistical analysis was the consideration of the variability of responses between the two samples provided by Excellence AG and the ManpowerGroup Germany. Since the questionnaire was administered to two different client portfolios, it was imperative to investigate potential inconsistencies in the two data sets that could arise from respondents operating in various industries, organizations or job roles. Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare the four culture types Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy and Market, as well as the 18 employee traits for both participants recruited by Excellence AG and the ManpowerGroup Germany (IV). The null hypothesis assuming an equal variability in both samples was confirmed in most cases pertaining to leaders' perception of organizational culture as well as their ratings of employee traits. No significant differences in regards to the means of Clan, Adhocracy and Hierarchy culture between Excellence AG and ManpowerGroup Germany leaders were found (Appendix L). However, their assessment of Market culture varied with higher means in the ManpowerGroup ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 0.86$) than in the Excellence AG sample ($M = 3.3$, $SD = 0.09$); $t(136) = 2.72$, $p < 0.05$, pointing at the fact that participants recruited by Manpower assessed the Market aspects of their organizations higher than those employed by the Excellence AG.

The same tests were conducted in regards to leaders' ratings of employee traits in the two samples (Appendix L); they also showed variability in only 3 out of 18 traits, with consistently higher means in the Manpower sample for the traits *happy* ("fröhlich": $t = 2.96$; $p < 0.01$), *confident* ("selbstbewußt": $t = 6.68$; $p < 0.01$) and *quick* ("schnell": $t = 2.98$; $p < 0.01$). The comparably low number of variability as well as the one-directional nature of these differences led to the decision to analyze the data sets together.

Table 12: Means, standard deviations, and correlations (prototypical)

	Mean	SD	?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1 Clan	3.39	0.78	0.81																				
2 Adhocracy	3.26	0.72	0.79	.699**																			
3 Hierarchy	3.29	0.77	0.79	.250**	.087																		
4 Market	3.55	0.78	0.84	0.095	.199*	.540**																	
5 hard working	4.28	0.78	-	.262**	.237**	.380**	.464**																
6 productive	4.57	0.7	-	.235**	.217*	.369**	.475**	.551**															
7 goes above & beyond	4.08	0.8	-	.361**	.309**	0.161	0.163	.349**	.398**														
8 excited	4.33	0.83	-	.349**	.214*	.201*	.229**	.469**	.444**	.388**													
9 outgoing	3.7	0.87	-	.239**	.194*	.288**	.227**	.308**	.260**	.402**	.443**												
10 happy	3.63	0.9	-	.264**	.196*	.256**	.257**	.259**	.284**	.242**	.463**	.404**											
11 loyal	4.43	0.75	-	.296**	.301**	.395**	.417**	.527**	.469**	.280**	.332**	.360**	.398**										
12 reliable	4.72	0.64	-	.341**	.356**	.321**	.371**	.508**	.585**	.301**	.409**	.291**	.348**	.605**									
13 team player	4.22	0.93	-	.283**	.185*	.348**	.332**	.438**	.430**	.172*	.340**	.294**	.343**	.381**	.575**								
14 Organization size	-	101	-	-0.058	0.082	0.116	.240**	0.076	0.103	0.054	-0.022	0.144	0.157	0.106	0.124	.204*							
15 Middle Mngmnt	-	0.5	-	0.148	0.11	0.052	-0.035	-0.039	-0.026	.221**	0.144	0.138	0.096	.179*	.174*	0.104	.194*						
16 Lower Mngmnt	-	0.47	-	-.215*	-0.091	0.015	0.115	0.046	0.044	-.205*	-.205*	-0.071	0	-0.102	-0.048	-0.006	0.159	-.749**					
17 Team size	13.76	15.45	-	0.154	0.008	0.055	-0.069	0.033	-0.016	-0.012	0.027	0.015	0.016	0.056	0.048	.244**	.194*	0.152	-.189*				
18 Tenure	8.77	6.53	-	.261**	.268**	0.153	0.135	0.119	0.068	-0.016	0.055	-0.051	-0.043	.219**	0.107	0.063	-0.019	0.062	-0.159	0.151			
19 Age	41.67	9.23	-	.226**	0.14	0.153	0.04	0.04	0.157	.244**	0.13	0.066	-0.051	.194*	0.117	0.045	-0.079	0.042	-.191*	.168*	.502**		
20 Gender	-	0.47	-	-0.09	0.012	-0.063	0.131	0.105	0.044	-0.167	0.074	0.107	0.119	0.123	0.048	0.044	-0.023	-0.164	.217*	-0.127	-0.145	-.283**	-

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 13: Means, standard deviations, and correlations (reversed antiprototypical)

	Mean	SD	?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1 Clan	3.39	0.7	0.81																				
2 Adhocracy	3.26	0.72	0.79	.699**																			
3 Hierarchy	3.35	0.77	0.79	.250**	0.087																		
4 Market	3.56	0.78	0.84	0.095	.199*	.540**																	
5 hard to influence	2.66	0.92	-	0.135	0.084	0.123	0.132																
6 diverges from trends	2.8	0.93	-	0.087	0.064	0	0.087	.216*															
7 confident	3.46	0.95	-	.232**	0.165	.254**	.275**	.261**	.353**														
8 selfless	2.57	0.9	-	.179*	0.133	0.112	.191*	.302**	0.033	.275**													
9 polite	3.97	0.85	-	0.155	.203*	.245**	.306**	.249**	0.104	.379**	.260**												
10 good-humored	3.72	0.86	-	.236**	.215*	.288**	.280**	.208*	0.137	.469**	.337**	.619**											
11 educated	3.81	0.82	-	.232**	.184*	.244**	.282**	.282**	.354**	.450**	.294**	.447**	.494**										
12 quick	3.7	0.92	-	.287**	.302**	0.071	.281**	.216*	.263**	.450**	.249**	.291**	.429**	.482**									
13 experienced	3.72	0.91	-	.229**	.207*	.277**	.313**	0.058	0.164	.259**	.310**	.207*	.426**	.330**	.275**								
14 Organization size	-	1.1	-	-0.058	0.082	0.116	.240**	0.119	0.111	0.154	.183*	0.147	0.1	0.152	0.108	.203*							
15 Middle Mngmnt	-	0.5	-	0.148	0.11	0.052	-0.035	0.155	0.028	0.117	0.012	0.054	0.044	0.049	0.106	0.058	.194*						
16 Lower Mngmnt	-	0.47	-	-.215*	-0.091	0.015	0.115	-0.106	0.072	-0.146	0.068	0.006	0	0.069	-0.022	0.034	0.159	-.749**					
17 Team size	13.67	15.44	-	0.154	0.008	0.055	-0.069	0.117	-0.037	0.115	.229**	-0.017	0.001	-0.051	0.056	0.101	.194*	0.152	-.189*				
18 Tenure	8.77	6.53	-	.261**	.268**	0.153	0.135	0.068	-0.003	0.098	0.133	-0.111	0.031	-0.044	0.046	0.159	-0.019	0.062	-0.159	0.151			
19 Age	41.67	9.22	-	.226**	0.14	0.153	0.04	-0.029	-0.053	-0.009	0.024	-0.082	0.115	-0.063	-0.057	.229**	-0.079	0.042	-.191*	.168*	.502**		
20 Gender	-	0.5	-	-0.09	0.012	-0.063	0.131	-0.039	0.072	-0.032	-0.119	0.116	0.036	0.032	0.095	0	-0.023	-0.164	.217*	-0.127	-0.145	-.283**	-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Descriptive statistics. Table 12 and Table 13 show means, standard deviations, Cronbach's Alphas as well as bivariate correlations between all independent and dependent variables relevant to the analysis.

Organizational culture. The leaders in this sample perceive their work environments predominantly as a Market culture, followed by Clan and Hierarchy aspects and least of all, Adhocracy culture aspects. Due to the correlations between the four cultures, multicollinearity tests and paired-samples t-tests were conducted to ensure the results reflect a clear distinction of the four culture aspects, an issue that is particularly important for subsequent regression analyses.

First, multicollinearity tests showed values between 1.042 and 2.103 for the variance inflation factor (VIF) and hence stayed well below the acceptable cut-off of 10 (Neter et al. 1996), excluding the potential problems with multicollinearity. Second, paired-samples t-tests allowed the rejection of the null hypothesis assuming equal variability between the culture conditions in the sample (Appendix M). Significant were the differences in scores for Market culture compared to Clan ($t = -1.99$; $p < 0.05$), Adhocracy ($t = -3.63$; $p < 0.01$) and Hierarchy culture ($t = -4.15$; $p < 0.01$) and the equal variability in their respective means. This indicates that survey participants differentiated between the various cultural aspects and indicated a strong Market orientation in comparison to the three other culture forms.

A graphical representation of participant's assessment is shown below (Figure 9) in the form of a culture plot. Culture plots are a common way of illustrating culture assessments, for example when organizational change and developmental efforts are being pursued. Individual ratings of current and desired culture features are represented in way that shows the main emphasis of an organization's cultural aspects. Overall, the leaders in this sample assess the culture in their organizations primarily as a Market culture that incorporates the human aspects of a Clan and has a low emphasis on Hierarchy and Adhocracy orientations. This is based on the mean rating of each culture form as leaders rated the Market culture aspects in their organizations the highest, and the Hierarchy and Adhocracy aspects the lowest.

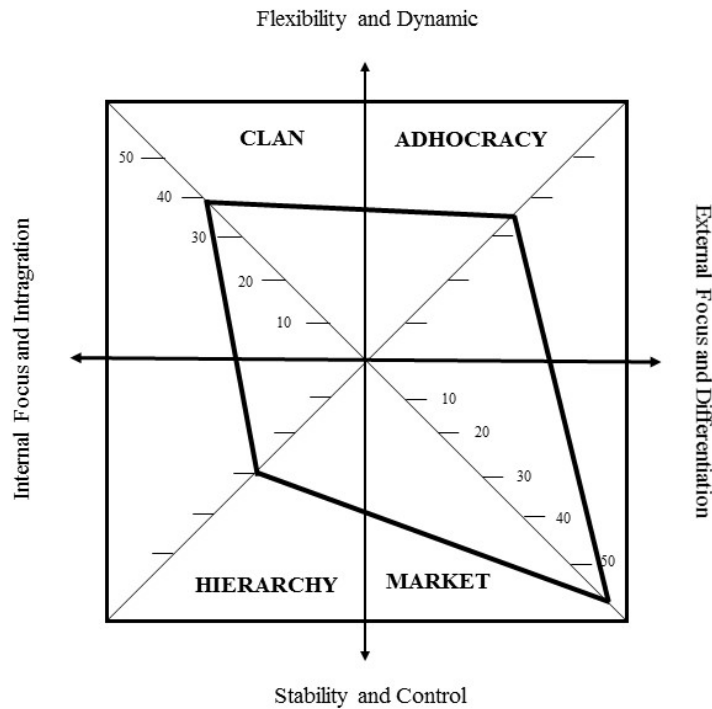


Figure 9: Organizational Culture plot for participant sample

Employee traits. Leaders' mean ratings of employee qualities showed that employees are mostly expected to be *reliable* ("verlässlich": $M = 7.72$; $SD = 0.64$), *productive* ("produktiv": $M = 4.57$; $SD = 0.7$) and *loyal* ("loyal": $M = 4.43$; $SD = 0.75$), and least of all *selfless* ("selbstlos": $M = 2.57$; $SD = 0.9$), *hard to influence* ("schwer beeinflussbar": $M = 2.66$; $SD = 0.92$) and *deviating from the trend* ("weicht vom Trend ab": $M = 2.8$; $SD = 0.93$). Unlike in the US study, the 18 single employee traits were not categorized and instead analyzed individually. The rationale behind this approach is that tests of internal consistencies between items (e.g. hardworking, productive, goes above & beyond) show comparably low Cronbach's alpha scores ($\alpha = 0.535$ to $\alpha = 0.742$), indicating substantial variations that do not encourage high enough reliability of higher level categories for the analysis.

Bivariate associations. Correlations and bivariate associations are statistically significant between most independent and dependent variables. This is not surprising as leaders would have recognized aspects of all four culture types in their organizations to some degree, and also rated most employee traits in a favorable

manner. As shown in subsequent regression analyses, the strongest and most significant associations suggest links between Clan culture and the traits *goes above & beyond*, and *excited*, as well as between Market culture and *hardworking*, *productive* and *loyal*. Noteworthy are some associations in regards to the control variables: first, organization size and Market culture correlate, highlighting the fact that with increasing size, organizations are perceived as adopting a stronger culture of goal-orientation and production. Second, team size and the trait *team player* are positively correlated, while lower management correlated negatively with the traits *goes above and beyond* and *excited* ($p = -0.21$; $p < 0.05$). Remarkable is the lack of correlations between all four cultures and the traits *hard to influence* and *diverges from trends* as well as the higher emphasis on the trait *selfless* in larger teams and the correlation between age and the trait *experienced*. This clearly suggests that leaders' do not value employees who are non-conforming and difficult to influence, while they expect them to be unselfish and altruistic, especially when cooperation with many people is required.

Inferential statistics. Table 14 and Table 15 show the results of statistical models performed via multiple linear regression analysis.

Table 14: Organizational culture and leaders' pIFT (prototypical)

	Industriousness			Enthusiasm			Good Citizenship		
	hardworking	productive	goes above and beyond	excited	outgoing	happy	loyal	reliable	team player
Research Variables									
Clan	0.17	0.156	0.253*	0.37**	0.165	0.289*	0.081	0.153	0.253*
Adhocracy	0.041	0.032	0.12	-0.093	0.059	-0.027	0.127	0.181	-0.046
Hierarchy	0.155	0.114	-0.008	0.013	0.213*	0.12	0.2	0.111	0.152
Market	0.352**	0.388**	0.157	0.217	0.063	0.144	0.247*	0.259**	0.225*
Confounders									
Organization size	-0.013	0.027	0.036	0.008	0.119	0.099	-0.025	-0.048	0.062
Position									
Middle Management	-0.071	-0.042	0.137	-0.023	0.075	0.104	0.222	0.302*	0.132
Lower Management	-0.019	-0.002	-0.048	-0.21	-0.051	0.052	0.065	0.206	0.124
Team size	0.045	-0.024	-0.095	-0.038	-0.035	-0.014	0.024	0.038	0.22**
Tenure (in years)	0.017	-0.12	-0.295**	-0.111	-0.2*	-0.11	0.048	-0.066	-0.052
Age (in years)	-0.039	0.161	0.287**	0.11	0.132	-0.034	0.141	0.095	-0.008
Gender	0.073	0.033	-0.106	0.133	0.156	0.115	0.18*	0.059	0.062

n = 138; β = standardized coefficients; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

R ²	0.287	0.293	0.289	0.218	0.193	0.184	0.337	0.294	0.269
SE	0.687	0.617	0.705	0.765	0.813	0.852	0.64	0.56	0.827

Several hypotheses could be confirmed and additional insights into the associations between leaders' perceived organizational culture and their preferred employee traits could be gained. Overall, hypothesis 5 that assumed leaders' pIFT to be congruent with aspects in their organizational culture could be supported. As assumed, perceptions of a Clan culture are associated with traits encompassed by Enthusiasm and perceived Market culture is linked to Industriousness in employees.

In support of hypothesis 5a, Clan cultures elicit a preference for the traits *excited* ($\beta = 0.37$; $p < 0.003$) and *happy* ($\beta = 0.29$; $p = 0.023$) but they also foster a leader preference for the traits *goes above and beyond* ($\beta = 0.25$; $p = 0.032$), *team player* ($\beta = 0.25$; $p = 0.037$), *educated* ($\beta = 0.28$; $p < 0.05$) and *quick* ($\beta = 0.26$; $p < 0.05$). Hypothesis 5d found support with positive associations between Market culture and the traits *hardworking* ($\beta = 0.35$; $p < 0.01$) and *productive* ($\beta = 0.39$; $p < 0.01$). Additionally, Market culture is also associated with the traits *loyal* ($\beta = 0.25$; $p = 0.01$), *reliable* ($\beta = 0.26$; $p < 0.01$) and *team player* ($\beta = 0.23$; $p < 0.05$), as well as *selfless* ($\beta = 0.22$; $p < 0.05$), *quick* ($\beta = 0.34$; $p = 0.001$) and *experienced* ($\beta = 0.2$; $p = 0.05$).

Table 15: Organizational culture and leaders' pIFT (reversed antiprototypical)

	Non-conformity			Obedience			Competence		
	hard to influence	diverges from trend	confident	selbstlos	polite	good-humored	educated	quick	experienced
Research Variables									
Clan	0.136	0.208	0.194	0.2	0.038	0.139	0.28*	0.263*	0.151
Adhocracy	-0.054	-0.101	-0.033	-0.051	0.17	0.083	-0.032	0.075	0.019
Hierarchy	0.021	-0.112	0.105	-0.089	0.148	0.158	0.075	-0.178	0.075
Market	0.115	0.103	0.2	0.221*	0.195	0.154	0.204	0.337**	0.204*
Confounders									
Organization size	0.06	0.07	0.163	0.054	0.083	0.049	0.068	-0.019	0.112
Position									
Middle Management	0.103	0.155	-0.155	0.088	-0.017	0.037	0.135	0.181	0.125
Lower Management	-0.018	0.18	-0.28	0.211	-0.076	0.026	0.157	0.127	0.158
Team size	0.079	-0.051	0.047	0.217*	-0.002	-0.026	-0.066	0.071	0.048
Tenure (in years)	0.062	0.022	0.042	0.102	-0.198*	-0.123	-0.093	-0.01	-0.015
Age (in years)	-0.117	-0.028	-0.142	-0.099	-0.03	0.13	-0.058	-0.092	0.219*
Gender	-0.032	0.048	-0.023	-0.151	0.079	0.054	-0.014	0.046	0.046

n = 138; β = standardized coefficients; * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

R ²	0.075	0.053	0.18	0.166	0.18	0.159	0.174	0.208	0.211
SE	0.926	0.943	0.899	0.86	0.797	0.825	0.773	0.849	0.844

Not confirmed were hypotheses 5c that assumed a link between Hierarchy cultures and Good Citizenship, and hypothesis 5b that expected to find associations between Adhocracy culture and non-conformism. Against expectations, leaders' perception of the hierarchy aspects in their organizations did not lead to associations with reliability and loyalty in employees, but with the trait *outgoing* ($\beta = 0.21$; $p = 0.05$). Last but not least, results did not show any associations between leaders' perception of Adhocracy culture and any of the offered employee traits. Other noteworthy findings can be reported in regards to the control variables. Results show that managers in middle management emphasize *reliable* employees more than top leaders ($\beta = 0.3$; $p < 0.05$), those who manage larger teams tend to emphasize the traits *team player* ($\beta = 0.22$; $p = 0.009$) and *selfless* ($\beta = 0.215$; $p = 0.02$), while tenure was negatively associated with the traits *goes above & beyond* ($\beta = -0.295$; $p < 0.01$), *outgoing* ($\beta = -0.2$; $p = 0.04$) and *polite* ($\beta = -0.198$; $p = 0.043$). Leader age, on the other hand, was positively associated with *goes above and beyond* ($\beta = 0.287$; $p = 0.002$) and *experienced* ($\beta = 0.219$; $p = 0.025$), and being a female manager was linked with a preference for *loyal* employees ($\beta = 0.185$; $p = 0.018$).

4.5 Discussion

As the sample's culture profile (Figure 9) resembles the culture plot of thousands of other companies in Western societies (Cameron & Quinn 2011) the current results can be considered representative for a large number of organizations. The 'average' - not necessarily 'ideal' - cultural orientation in many companies in this sample shows an emphasis on Market culture with a strong customer orientation and drive for output and production; equally, it marks a low presence of Adhocracy culture aspects denoting creativity, flexibility and independence. The results suggest that the main hypothesis (5) which assumed a qualitative congruence between values inherent in certain culture types and the content of leaders' pIFT could be confirmed. Even though some of the specific hypotheses could not be supported, the outcomes provide some key insights into the degree and intensity of leaders' follower prototype development and their links to organizational culture forms.

Beginning with the Market culture, the trait combination as uncovered in leaders' pIFT reflects the cultural dimensions as outlined by Cameron & Quinn (2011). The preference for *hardworking* and *productive* employees expresses the external cultural orientation with its straightforward pursuit of competition and achievement; the focus on Stability and Control, on the other hand, is shown in leaders' desire for *loyal*, *reliable*, and *experienced* team members. Also, since the Market culture known as the 'Rational Goal Model', stresses the maximization of output (Quinn 1991), leaders in these cultures may require organization members to put company results above all, which would explain their liking of employees who are *selfless* and *team workers* in the dedicated pursuit of the common goal. Finally, leaders who perceive their organizations as Markets rated eight employee traits as particularly valuable, in comparison to six in Clans, one in Hierarchies and none in Adhocracies. This indicates that leaders in Markets have the most elaborate, complex pIFT of all culture clusters, an important insight in respect to prototype generation in different organizational cultures. Perceived Hierarchy and Adhocracy cultures, on the other hand, did not show a large number of desired employee traits. As formalized processes and regulations are strong structural preconditions for the smooth operation within Hierarchy cultures, leading to clearly defined roles (Hartnell et al. 2011) and conformism to prevailing values (Ferreira 2013), leaders may not be inspired to emphasize qualities outside the realm of these defined structures. The only expressed preference in Hierarchy cultures appeared for *outgoing* staff members; this can be attributed to the emphasis on communication, coordination and the management of information required by Hierarchy cultures, an aspect that requires individuals to be extroverted and communicative as they need to reach out to and connect with a wide variety of stakeholders.

The absence of a link between perceptions of Adhocracy culture aspects and leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories is also noteworthy. Adverse to initial assumptions about associations between the focus on autonomy, creativity and pioneering (Hartnell et al. 2011) that drives Adhocracies and a presumed desire for employees' ability to *diverge from trends*, to be *confident* and *hard to influence* (Non-Conformity), leaders' pIFT did not yield a preference for these traits – nor for any other of the 18 employee traits rated by leaders. A closer look at the elements guiding Adhocracy cultures may enable an understanding of this finding;

Adhocracies embrace uncertainty, ambiguity and rapid growth (Cameron & Quinn 2011) and their exposure to external changes (Ferreira 2013) defines their own lack of stability as well as a constant state of transition and change (Quinn 1991). Adhocracies require a strong understanding of the task itself, its importance and its impact (Schneider et al. 2013; Hartnell et al 2011), but they also recognize that the pursuit of the task occurs within a fast changing external environment which requires adaptability and innovation from everyone. Any commitment to a set of specific skills, traits or qualities may be counterproductive in an environment that is defined by constant change, so that the lack of leaders' preference for certain employee traits may be an expression of their ever-shifting conditions. Also, the distribution of power within Adhocracies is decentralized as power flows between individuals and work groups depending on the issue at the time (Cameron & Quinn 2011), so that individuals' work relationships are in constant movement, diffusing opportunities for a fixation on certain employee traits.

The main outcome of the current study is that leaders' employee prototype is in qualitative alignment with their perceived organizational culture. The fact that leaders value employee traits that support the current culture confirms the notion that cultural 'fit', rather than the display of complementing or even different traits is what leaders really value. In one instance, this phenomenon is directly reflected in the data: traits expressing Non-conformity (*hard to influence, diverges from trends, and confident*) not only received the lowest mean ratings, they were also the only traits without associations with the four culture forms. In other words, none of the leaders in the current sample value Non-Conformity in employees. Even though leaders' desire to work with similar and conforming employees may be a reasonable claim, this finding somewhat alarming. It raises doubts about the appreciation of ethnic, social and intellectual diversity in today's organizations, and questions manager's ability to inspire followership even in those that may want to maintain a stance of their own. On the other hand, the rejection of Non-Conformity fits in with a prevalent rigid employee prototype as found in the data: leaders in Market cultures have the most comprehensive employee prototype, while those in Adhocracies did not indicate any preferences for employee traits at all. In other words: managers in Market cultures have well-defined preferences for employees and a well-defined idea about 'cultural fit' than leaders in Adhocracies who did not indicate that they

value any particular qualities in followers at all. These differences should not be dismissed as a mere side effect of under-representation of Adhocracy cultures in the sample (both mean scores for Market and Adhocracy cultures were higher than average) but considered as being both significant and thought-provoking. They suggest that in comparison with leaders in Market cultures, leaders in Adhocracies do not have any specific prototypical expectations as they may be focused on different qualities, or allow a higher degree of diversity within their organizations.

One well-known example for an Adhocracy culture is Google (Cameron & Quinn 2011) with its still entrepreneurial spirit and constantly adaptive business model; in a recent interview⁵, Laszlo Bock, senior vice president of people operations for Google, defined the no. 1 trait of team members at Google as 'the ability to learn and process on the fly'. Since learning and adapting to change are not bound to any other particular trait but it is a skill that can be acquired and requires constant updating, the present results indicate that leaders in Adhocracies may not even want to define an employee prototype as they look for qualities related to constant change, while those in Market cultures have precise prototypical expectations towards staff members as they operate in an environment of stability and control. This solidifies the differences in leaders' employee prototypes in Market and Adhocracy cultures and points to the notion that complex Ideal Employee profiles may be the norm, rather the exception in the studied economic environments of Market cultures but not in the less frequently represented Adhocracy cultures.

4.6 Contribution, limitations and future outlook

The main contribution of the German study lies in the provision of empirical data supporting the notion that leaders' Ideal Employee image is related to their perception of organizational culture. On the basis of an existing framework the results offer evidence for the hypothesis that leaders look for an alignment between employee qualities and organizational values because their ratings reveal a significant degree of similarity or congruence. From that it can be concluded that leaders seem to look for a 'cultural fit' in the definition of their employee prototype,

⁵ http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/23/opinion/sunday/friedman-how-to-get-a-job-at-google.html?_r=0, 6/7/2014

as opposed to a set of complementing or different set of qualities. This is a remarkable finding which further strengthens the argument that context plays a role in the development of leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories (Derler & Weibler 2014). Additionally, it shows that amongst other processes, organizational culture norms are also maintained and reinforced via leaders' employee prototypes, a fact that may prove to have far-reaching practical consequences for leadership processes, work relationships, and personnel related decisions.

With its focus on associations between perceptions of organizational culture and leaders' prototypical implicit follower theories the present study is the first of its kind. It provides new and relevant insights into the topic of organizational culture itself but is also bound by certain limitations. First, conducted as an individual study with a specific sample the results may be potentially subject to sampling error effects that can lead to inaccurate conclusions (Hartnell et al. 2011). Ratings of culture as well as employee prototype may well be very different with a much larger sample in a different industry or organizational type. Second, it was cross-sectional with all participants working in for-profit companies in certain European countries. Therefore, the results may not be predictive for other leaders, types of organizations or cultures and should be considered as momentary snapshot of this group's work culture and employee prototype. Third, the Competing Values Framework which served as conceptualization for the determination of context in this model lacks a strong theoretical foundation that other frameworks such as the ambidexterity concept can provide. Used mainly in the organizational practice, it is a well-known yet little studied conceptualization, a fact that further emphasizes the explorative nature of this study. Lastly, the use of multiple t-tests to determine differences between leaders' perceptions of culture forms would benefit from the Bonferroni correction in order to control for potential problems with multiple comparisons.

Ideally, future research endeavors to this effect can widen this approach and add to the current work by investigating greater samples with different culture profiles and organization types. Third, due to the operationalization of the survey the results rely on individual leaders' perceptions and responses, a method that can inflate the results due to Common Method Variance (Podsakoff 2003). Despite the application of several ex-ante strategies such as reordering the questions and omitting socially desirable responses (Reio 2010; Chang et al. 2010), using a single source in surveys

remains a concern. In order to counteract this challenge, upcoming studies could, for example, elicit organizational culture assessments from a different participant group which would reduce problems related to single source bias. Fourth, the heterogeneity of the sample did not allow an industry-specific typology of the four culture clusters, an outcome that would have been interesting especially for the organizational practice. In other words, the question to what degree certain industries typically develop a Hierarchy, Clan, Market or Adhocracy culture could not be answered due to the sample being widely spread over many industries. Perhaps forthcoming studies with larger samples can find ways to determine if industry, organizational culture and leaders' employee prototype are linked; such knowledge could deepen current understanding of organization-external conditions that lead to the development of certain cultures and inform leaders' employee prototypes.

Preceding the definition of new research problems, however, should be the consideration of their purpose in regards to advancements for the organizational practice. In other words, while future research might overcome some of the limitations as outlined above it should also scrutinize the applicability of the topic of leaders' pIFT to the leadership practice. The presented studies ask new questions and deliver a variety of answers in regards to leaders' Ideal Employee image. However, due to the fact that research results emerged from the realm of leader-and followership, a social phenomenon in the midst of organizational life, they invariably lead to the question about their functionality: Why do leaders need to know about their Ideal Employee image in the first place? What leadership problems does a deeper understanding of the nature, content and development of leaders' Ideal Employee image solve? And, how can this knowledge be utilized? The last step in the current investigation is therefore the application of the subject to the context of organizations. Previous studies argued that implicit theories influence leaders' behaviors towards employees (Sy 2010) and consequently affect leadership relationships (Whiteley et al. 2012) and possibly personnel related decisions in general (Sanders 1999). The results of the present studies add to this notion and suggest that managers' Ideal Employee image may be a preventing factor for organizational diversity as leaders' assess, treat and possibly hire candidates in accordance with their employee prototype that conforms, rather than

differs with the prevailing environment. The next chapter provides a short overview of observed inconsistencies in personnel selection processes and argues that leaders' Ideal Employee image could be at the core of employers' resistance to prescribed recruitment methods, leading to a lack of social, intellectual and ethnic diversity in organizations. Recommendations for the constructive management of leaders' prototypical employee image conclude this chapter and offer practical guidelines for organizations that strive to maintain or develop diversity and variability in their workforce.

5 The Ideal Employee: an obstacle for organizational diversity

“It should also be realized that there is a practical upper limit to the validity (considered as both freedom from bias and accuracy) of any rating form. This limit is set by the reliability of human behavior itself” (Feldman 1981)

Implicit theories about leaders and followers are ever present companions of organizational life. Leaders develop prototypical expectations for employees on the basis of prior experiences with followers which in turn inform their anticipation for future employee behaviors (Wofford & Goodwin 1998). The evidence presented by both the US and the German study supports the notion that context helps inform these expectations. For example, managers whose prototypical employee is an efficient team player may have developed this image on the basis of their work experience in a setting that encouraged and rewarded team work and efficiency. The more consistent their experiences in this work context, the more pronounced will their implicit follower theories be (Lord et al. 2001a; Wofford & Goodwin 1998) and their behaviors towards current and future employees are guided by these values. While implicit schemas are undisputable parts of human nature they may also lead to erroneous performance expectations, employee ratings and evaluations (Sy 2010; Sanders 1999). Leaders who encounter individuals who do not seem to comply with their existing Ideal Employee image will categorize them as clashing with their prototype and base their ratings on this judgment. Due to the way humans process and categorize information (Shondrick & Lord 2010), the potential for error in subsequent evaluations can be substantial. Problems arise when evaluations are based on the memory of certain events instead of new data, because memories can be biased towards existing prototypes instead of the real person (Dinh & Lord 2012; Feldman 1981). Rather than assessing actual observations, individuals rate traits about another person in comparison with their mental prototype (Eden & Leviatan 1975) even when faced with conflicting information about them (Shondrick & Lord 2010). In other words, managers may be prone to misperceptions or fail to recognize

desired behaviors altogether simply because they were displayed by non-prototypical employees. That way, internalized implicit follower theories may not only influence leaders' reactions towards followers (Carsten et al. 2010) and predispose them to certain judgments (Whiteley et al. 2012), but also encourage biased evaluations, lead to self-fulfilling prophecies and spoil LMX relationships (Whiteley et al. 2012; Schyns & Schilling 2010; Eden 1992).

5.1 The impact of implicit follower theories on leadership processes

Existing knowledge about the potential impact of implicit theories (Whiteley et al. 2012; Sy 2010) calls for a critical perspective about the reliability of leaders' employee ratings and evaluations because, though objective and rational evaluations are the goal, they cannot be automatically assumed (Lord & Maher 1994). Leaders' experiences with certain employee types can inform their perspective on current employees and even if their implicit follower theories may be flexible to some degree (Medvedeff & Lord 2007), once formed they are stored in long-term memory (Shondrick & Lord 2010) and metamorphose into "*firmly crystallized expectations [that] are hard to change*" (Eden 1992, p. 275). Whereas employee prototypes can lead to biased evaluations this may pose human and ethical challenges on the individual level, but leaders' misjudgment of employee ability and performance can present economic, legal and social challenges on an organizational level, too (Uhlmann & Cohen 2007). Individual employee prototypes can become a stumbling block for an organization's cultural, social and intellectual diversity because they guide leadership interactions on a daily basis. If only those who appear to fit leader's implicit follower theories are accepted as valuable team members and experience favorable treatment and performance assessments, only certain values and qualities are endorsed, making change and diversity difficult.

Diversity, however, is becoming more important as modern organizations operate within global networks, serve international clients and encounter a diverse pool of job applicants. Social, ethnic and intellectual workplace diversity has also long been recognized as an important economic factor in the generation of higher earnings,

net profits and customer service (Chen et al. 2012). According to a recent report⁶ by Roland Berger, a global strategy consulting firm headquartered in Germany, diversity makes economic sense: the systematic investment in so-called Diversity & Inclusion programs helps German organizations to reduce costs by about 21 billion Euro. Due to the fact that 74% of the DAX-30 companies' gross income stems from overseas, their motivation for diversity in the workforce is internationality and competence in global markets that can only be achieved with highly diverse teams. Organizational diversity begins with the establishment of expectations for employees, whereby such expectations need to be aligned with the overall organization's strategy on the macro level as they play out in leaders' Ideal Employee image on the micro level. The constructive management of prototypes will become an even more relevant topic for organizations handling diverse workforces as socio-economic diversity increases, but prior to that they need to be recognized as powerful companions of leadership processes. For example, the present study showed that managers' preference for exploitative employee behaviors is linked to their perception of formalized organizational coordination mechanisms. Stimulated by rule-guided work environments, these leaders can be expected to judge present and future employees based on their preference for exploitation and preserve an exploitative – rather than an explorative - mindset in their departments or organizations. As they rely on their pIFT for the definition of behavioral and performance expectations, they promote certain standards during staff interactions, and perpetuate existing principles.

Apart from the endorsement of certain qualities, leaders' pIFT can encourage positive and negative outcomes as shown by research about self-fulfilling prophecies. For example, managers' expressed positive expectations for team members' performance can lead to the Pygmalion effect as they actually influence follower performance in a favorable manner (Whiteley et al. 2012; Eden 1992; Livingston 1969); Golem effects, on the other hand, are negative performance outcomes caused by leaders' low expectations (Eden 1992). Both types of self-fulfilling prophecies originate in leader's behavior that is based on their expectations for employees: *“The prophecy does not fulfill itself. Rather, it is the*

⁶ Roland Berger. (2012). *Diversity and Inclusion. Eine betriebswirtschaftliche Investition* (p. 25). Hamburg.

prophet who, due to his expectations, acts unwittingly to bring about the expected event.” (ibid., p. 272). In other words, leaders’ pIFT not only represent certain expectations but as they guide attitudes and behaviors towards team members they can enable or disable performance outcomes. Differences between team members’ performance may therefore also be due to the emergence of ‘in-groups’ (favored team members) and ‘out-groups’ (less favored team members) as described in Leader-Member-Exchange theory (Wilson et al. 2010). Managers’ expectations and their fulfilment by certain team members determines their relationship quality and, depending on their status as in- or out group members, team members experience a higher or lower investment of leaders’ resources and perpetuate the dynamic of self-fulfilling prophecies (Sy 2010; Eden 1992).

The potential consequences of leaders’ implicit follower theories for task performance and leader-follower relationship quality are far-reaching. One aspect that has not yet been considered is the way leaders’ Ideal Employee image may affect their decisions in respect to hiring and personnel selection of new staff members. If implicit follower theories influence leaders’ behaviors towards existing employees, they may also be a factor in decision-making processes regarding new employees. And if implicit theories in fact may be relevant in hiring processes, organizations will need to manage their leaders’ prototypical expectations in order to avoid the traps presented by prototypical expectations.

In the following sections it will be argued that the image of an Ideal Employee could be one reason for the observed resistance to formal assessment methods in organizations, and encourage suboptimal hiring phenomena such as a) the myth of ‘selection expertise’, b) decisions based on first impressions, and c) an over-emphasis on candidate’s social rather than work-related skills. It is thinkable that leaders’ image of a prototypical employee leads to ineffective hiring decisions and hinders diversity in the workforce by perpetuating a certain mindset. After describing some problematic occurrences in personnel selection that may be due to prototypical or unrealistic expectations, the following sections outline a variety of strategies for the constructive utilization of leaders’ prototypical employee profile with the goal of improving current decision making, reduce bias and increase diversity in selection processes.

5.2 Personnel selection

The workforce in an organization is its “*primary agent of productivity*” (Blackshear 2004, p. 2). In order to secure an organization’s position in the market place, a firm’s recruitment and selection of quality personnel is one of the most important organizational tasks, and companies spend millions of dollars on it (Alsabbah & Ibrahim 2013). The hiring process encompasses two interrelated sets of activities and begins with the recruitment of applicants and ends with the selection of the right candidates (ibid.). Thereby, employers’ primary goal during the selection process is to predict a candidate’s future work behavior (Derous & De Witte 2001). At the outset, the task of choosing the right candidate for a job seems straightforward; the definition of job roles according to the required skills, qualifications and attitudes leads to the choice for a candidate based on the degree of their match with the defined requirements. However, current research shows that in practice, this process is not at all straightforward, and wide variations of all steps in the selection process have been observed. For example, there is no common terminology amongst organizations in regards to the types of sought-after qualities in candidates. According to its definition, the term ‘competency’ encompasses an individual’s “*behavioral prerequisites for job performance and organizational results*” (Alsabbah & Ibrahim 2013, p. 84) and encompasses a multiplicity of characteristics such as skills, attributes, abilities, qualities, traits, capacities, and capabilities. Regardless of their different connotations these terms are currently used synonymously and interchangeably (ibid.), providing little guideline for human resource managers or job candidates.

The fact that job candidates’ competencies can describe such a large variety of qualities gives room to different interpretations of each one and leads to individualized competency models used amongst organizations (König et al 2010). Wide variations exist also in the way organizations select candidates. Depending on the type of organization, its industry or prevailing culture, different parameters of selection are being applied. For example, public and voluntary organizations use more formalized hiring methods than for-profit organizations (Zibarras & Woods 2010) or the emphasis on “hard” or “soft” selection criteria fluctuates depending on the industry, organizational culture or hierarchy level of the hiring organization (Ayçan 2005). Probably the most problematic phenomenon concerns the use of

auxiliary aides. Occupational researchers unanimously recommend the use of formal selection methods such as structured interviews or assessment centers during selection processes because they are reliable predictors of job performance (Jansen et al. 2013), and organizations can access a plethora of cost-effective and validated personnel decision aids (Diab et al. 2011; König et al. 2010). Still, most organizations - regardless of size – prefer to use informal methods such as resumes, (unstructured) interviews and references when selecting new staff members (König et al. 2010; Zibarras & Woods 2010; Highhouse 2008). The wide-spread neglect of validated, scientifically sound selection procedures in many organizations points at a considerable gap between science and practice (Hogan et al. 2013; Diab et al. 2011; Highhouse 2008), and poses “*a major issue in industrial, work, and organizational psychology, human resource management, and related fields*” (König et al. 2010, p.17).

The literature suggests that organizations who could hire new staff members quickly, efficiently and with as little aggravation as possible (Klimoski & Jones 2008) intentionally ignore or misuse validated selection procedures (Sackett & Lievens 2008) and scientific recommendations (Hogan et al. 2013). Instead, they increase ambivalence and uncertainty by developing opaque competency models, over-emphasizing candidates’ social skills over cognition or personality (Hogan et al. 2013), or by making ‘holistic’ judgments about individuals that go far beyond relevant skills and qualifications (Diab et al. 2011). Particularly the frequency of informal, unstructured employment interviews are a discouraging reality in the eyes of organizational psychologists (ibid.; Highhouse 2008; Sackett & Lievens 2008). Since every manager evaluates information in different ways (Melchers et al. 2011) informal interviews have lower criterion-related validity but even so, hiring managers prefer to “*read between the lines*” during unstructured interviews (Highhouse 2008, p. 334). Overall, hiring strategies appear to be highly modified to organizational preferences, devoid of a consistent systematic approach, and lacking of validated procedures altogether (König et al. 2010). This renders scientific knowledge about employer hiring incomplete and full of unexplained variances (Rivera 2012) so that surprisingly “*little is known about how selection decision making actually takes place*” (Bolander & Sandberg 2013, p. 286). The attempt to shed light on the opaque process of personnel selection leads to a

scattered image of idiosyncratic methods and approaches used by organizations and hiring managers. First, it appears that employers hold strong convictions about their own ability to successfully predict a candidate's future work behaviors. The "*myth of selection expertise*" Highhouse (2008, p. 337) is the claim that correct intuitive judgments about an individual's future performance are possible. Even though research suggests otherwise (ibid.), employers consistently overestimate the value of experience, intuition and expertise in hiring situations (Diab et al. 2011; Fisher 2008) as they trust their own know-how more than validated resources (Philips & Gully 2008). Second, hiring managers often make their decision about the fit of a candidate very early on in the hiring process as they base their judgments on first impressions (Rivera 2012) or fast and frugal judgments (Barrick et al. 2010). In line with the principles of categorization theory, once the first impression about a candidate has been made, all subsequently added data is constructed in alignment with this categorization instead of the real persona (Dingh & Lord 2012; Feldman 1981). In order to confirm their own impression over the course of the interview (Feldman (1981), decision-makers "*produce versions [...] that make the candidates into individuals with certain definite attributes*" (Bolander & Sandberg 2013, p.305), neglect other information conveyed by the candidate and form a distorted impression about them.

In addition to the social construction of a candidate's persona, employers also tend to over- emphasize non-work related skills to the detriment of work-related abilities and cognitive skills (Hogan et al. 2013). While an individuals' personal and social skills are undeniably crucial aspects of performance and success in an organization (Tett & Burnett 2003), recent research found bizarre developments in regards to employers' selection criteria in this domain. Despite the fact that personal interests are unreliable performance predictors (Schmidt & Hunter 1998) employers have begun to consider candidates' extracurricular activities or leisure pursuits to find the best cultural fit (Rivera 2012). In her qualitative study involving 120 interviews with hiring firms, Rivera (ibid.) discovered that employers expect job candidates to be more than just work colleagues: they are looking for potential new friends or playmates (ibid. p. 1007):

“For example, “white-shoe” investment bank HR manager Kelly (white, female), dressed in a buttoned, pastel cardigan and pearls, asserted, “I’d have to pick Blake and Sarah. With his lacrosse and her squash, they’d really get along . . . on the trading floor.”

The resistance to using validated recruitment methods is expressed in various ways, most prominently in the belief in one’s selection expertise, managers’ judgments based on first impressions or an over-reliance on non-work-related interests. In combination, these factors may lead to biased hiring decisions, inefficient selection processes and considerable opacity in personnel selection. Since implicit expectations and hopes for new staff members are known to influence hiring decisions (O’Brien 2008) the current thesis argues that above phenomena in the hiring process may partly be explained with managers’ search for the Ideal Employee. It is thinkable that the criteria used for formal assessments methods are not perceived as representative for a person’s employee prototype, and lead to the rejection of structured approaches in favor of individualized judgments.

The hiring decision-making process in organizations appears like a highly individualized and irreproducible process which due to its imperviousness endorses the myth about managers’ ‘selection expertise’ and the randomness of hiring successes. Hence, as managers insist on using their personalized version of the decision process, their prototypical implicit follower theories may be at the core of their resistance to formalized personnel selection methods. However, as work context clearly matters during hiring decisions (Klimoski & Jones 2008) and similarity between decision-makers and job applicants has been shown to be one of the top selection criteria at the interview stage (Rivera 2012), it appears that managers may ultimately describe their Ideal Employee as similar to certain features in their work context, organizational culture, or their own personality. The data in the current studies shows that leaders’ perceptions of formalized (=exploitative) work contexts are linked to their preferences for exploitation in employees, that conscientious leaders prefer exploitative followers and those in “Market” environments emphasize productivity and hard work in their implicit follower theories. This implies that managers prefer candidates whose qualities

align with the status quo, so they may choose candidates in accordance with their employee prototype as endorsed by the features in their environment.

The implicit resistance to heterogeneity that is expressed in a search for the contextual, personal and cultural ‘fit’ (Rivera 2012) may render hiring managers’ implicit follower theories an obstacle for diversity in organizations. Firms that actively want to pursue diversity efforts need to carefully manage their leadership personnel’s implicit follower theories as well as their selection methods. Organizations that want to learn more about their leaders’ implicit follower theories and how they may affect leadership relationships, performance management and hiring decisions can take several steps to avoid the traps presented by the combination of Ideal Employee images and non-formalized hiring processes. They can assess their leadership force’s Ideal Employee Profile (IEP) and the way it might relate to their perception of work context, culture and personality. Based on the IEP they can enforce or redefine employee prototypes to create a solid foundation for formal performance standards and hiring methods. Additionally, they can raise awareness about the existence of implicit follower theories, their development and impact on leadership effectiveness. Combined, these steps will make implicit employee prototypes explicit, enable more objective hiring process and support potential diversity efforts.

5.3 How to manage leaders’ Ideal Employee image

Subjectivity during hiring processes can encourage prejudice and bias in personnel selection decisions. Systematic and repeated violations of the principles of economic rationality (Uhlmann & Silberzahn 2014) like those apparent in personnel selection procedures are problematic and if not recognized by organizations may have negative consequences on organizations (Uhlmann & Cohen 2007) as well as individual workers (Freyd 1926). In the face of a global changing workforce demographic (Connell & Stanton 2014), organizations are advised to considering personnel selection only as a matter between individual leaders and their employees, but look at the ‘management whole’ by studying the conditions of hiring processes as they are directly related to organizational performance (Molloy et al. 2011). In order to adapt to these new dynamics by widening the applicant pool and

increasing diversity beyond the existing boundaries, organizations can begin with the recognition of the importance of leaders' pIFT in the daily organizational practice.

5.3.1 The Ideal Employee profile: assessment and management

The first step in the management of leaders' employee prototype is to recognize that decision-makers' behaviors may be restrictive factors in personnel selection processes as they maintain rigid Ideal Employee images and pursue inconsistent selection methods. In response to these facts, organizations are called on to assess, manage and develop their decision-makers' Ideal Employee Profile. The current work offers a comprehensive set of tools for organizations who recognize that unproductive employee prototypes may be affecting performance management and hiring problems. By conducting the presented surveys, organizational leaders can establish their managers' Ideal Employee profile and draw comparisons to perceptions of external conditions (market perceptions, coordination mechanisms, organizational culture) and internal factors (managers' personality). If the IEP reveals substantial similarities between context, personality and IEP it is possible that personnel selection processes are determined by a search for similarity and cultural fit and present obstacles for an organization's diversity efforts. For example, the leaders in the US sample defined Good Citizenship behaviors and exploitative work behaviors as most valuable in employees. As shown in the present studies, these preferences may have evolved in response to the demands in their work environment, in this case highly formalized coordination mechanisms in the participating organizations. Since it has been established that leaders base their behaviors towards followers on their prototypical expectations it is likely that also personnel decisions are guided by their mental employee prototype. Knowledge about leaders' pIFT offers HR professionals two choices: they can either encourage the maintenance of the existing employee prototype or possibly drive workforce development efforts for existing employees to accommodate these expectations (Graf & Van Quaquebeke 2012) with the knowledge that this will reinforce the status quo. Alternatively, they can try to divert their leaders' standards and expectations if a change of course is required. For example, change geared towards explorative innovation would need to combine structural and cultural efforts

towards increased creativity and exploration with corrections of decision-maker's implicit employee prototypes; dismantling existing stereotypes will enable the selection and development of employees who embrace explorative innovation by managers with such prototypical expectations.

Also the comparison of leaders' pIFT with their personality profiles could help diversify implicit employee prototypes and eventually, enable organizational change towards diversity. Organizations could proactively mix and match leaders and followers adverse to their preferences and different work modes and thereby encourage the cooperation between explorative followers with conscientious leaders, and exploitative employees with leaders who are open for new experiences. Such an effort would not only enable collaborative learning and support social and intellectual diversity but it will help diffuse mental prototypes through the exposure to 'the other'. Prolonged stimuli with counter-stereotypes have shown to help change existing stereotypes (Quaquebeke & Schmerling 2010), hence organizations truly looking for increased diversity can utilize their leadership personnel's implicit follower theories to create new expectations and standards. Due to the fact that managers hire, train, develop, track, praise and reward certain behaviors on the basis of their employee prototype, their involvement in the process is critical and may either be enabling or preventing factors in creating the desired climate (Shalley & Gilson 2004).

5.3.2 Formalizing selection processes

Organizations willing to review their current hiring strategies have recognized personnel selection methods as *"the most powerful ways to shape the characteristics of an organization."* (Wilk & Cappelli 2003, p. 116). By formalizing selection procedures, organizations can enable decision-makers to momentarily suppress their mental employee prototypes and instead focus on the job requirements and the candidate. This strategy is already exemplified by organizations that use more sophisticated selection methods as their work task complexities and skill requirements increase (ibid.). The formalization of selection procedures can be implemented through several different means: even before the first encounter with the candidate, decision-makers' categorization processes can

be delayed by blending out candidates' job-irrelevant data (e.g. gender, age, name, hobbies etc.) from the resume in the screening process. Further, increasing the structure of interviews through a consistent list of questions as well as question-and-response scoring and interviewer training (O'Brien 2008; Sackett & Lievens 2008) is another strategy. Equally, using event-level methodologies (Dinh & Lord 2012) whereby a candidate's performance is assessed on the basis of their performance in a variety of reported settings would be another. All of these steps will naturally counteract the ramifications that are caused by informal methods and the challenges provided by implicit follower theories: instead on a fuzzy Ideal Employee image, a manager's selection expertise will be based on valid criteria and make it possible to analyze and reproduce hiring decisions. The reliance on first impressions during interviews and non-work related interests will be replaced by an objective assessment of candidates' qualities; this reduces bias and stereotypical thinking and counteracts disruptive and counterproductive consequences of managers' pIFT in the hiring process.

5.3.3 Raising awareness with leadership development

Finally, also leadership development training that makes the implicit explicit (Schyns et al. 2011) can enable leaders to understand the relevance of pIFT and help overcome some of the biases that can emerge (Uhlmann & Cohen 2007). For example, Schyns and colleagues (2011) suggested a drawing exercise in which participants think about, discuss and draw their images of a certain target schema (e.g. leader or follower). This awareness-raising exercise enables individuals to become conscious of their own implicit theories, but also to put them in context to other people's implicit theories, and to analyze their implications for leadership situations (ibid.). Additionally, it may be particularly important for leaders to call attention to the fact that hierarchical position and power can lead to a false sense of objectivity. High level executives can be misled by the belief in their special abilities to make valid judgments, yet ironically, feeling objective can make *more subjective* (Uhlmann & Cohen 2007, p. 219). Rigid employee prototypes combined with the belief in one's objectivity may render leaders more prone to misperceptions and erroneous judgments during employee evaluations or hiring decisions;

therefore as information about Ideal Employee profiles are brought to their attention they can be analyzed and redefined.

Lastly, the assessment of leaders' Ideal Employee Profile cannot just be used to combat bias but also strengthen positive schemas by creating strong norms for leader-follower interactions (Whiteley et al. 2012). Organizations that learn what their leaders implicitly expect from employees can open up the debate about the desired qualities and traits, and possibly direct personnel development efforts towards these expectations. This may encourage the discourse about implicitly held preferences, enable a more effective communication of positive expectations and achievable goals (Livingston 1969) and eventually lead to the fulfilment of optimistic self-fulfilling prophecies (Eden 1992). Both existing and emerging leader-follower relationship may be affected by leaders' implicit follower theories as various daily interactions provide opportunity for perceptual error, bias and stereotypical thinking. Recent research explored the impact of employee prototypes on existing leader-follower-dyads (Whiteley et al. 2012; Sy 2010), however their potential consequences for personnel selection have not yet received attention from organizational researchers.

To sum up previous deliberations, the current work makes two assumptions about the possible link between leaders' Ideal Employee image and hiring decisions. First, leaders' prototypical expectations for new hires may cause the perseverance of informal selection methods in organizations, methods that continue even in the face of scientific evidence showing their lack of usefulness. Second, due to the fact that leaders define their prototypical employee in similarity to their work context, culture and personality, related hiring decisions may encourage conformity and provide a possible stumbling block for diversity. To counteract these potentially destructive effects of Ideal Employee images on workforce diversity and change efforts, organizations are advised to take several steps: the assessment of their leadership team's Ideal Employee Profile paired with the use of formalized selection aides and awareness training for leaders. A combination of these strategies can enable more efficient and less biased hiring processes and a constructive utilization and management of leader's implicit follower theories.

6 Conclusion

“Is there an ideal mix of followership styles, or is the search for such a mix a quixotic quest?”

Kelley (2008, p. 13)

A leader's Ideal Employee image is a complex and highly individualized conglomerate of qualities that reflects his or her own contextual and personal constitution. As the idea of an Ideal Employee represents a mental prototype that evolved over time and in connection with external and internal aspects in their own life, isolated trait ratings of employee qualities are bound to be unhelpful (Feldman 1981). Implicit follower theories can be thought of as proxies for leaders' situational placement that is defined by work context, organizational culture and self-image.

The goal of this research was to gain a deeper understanding of the structure, content and development of leader's prototypical implicit follower theories. The investigation of potential influencing factors affecting employee prototypes began with leaders' work context and personality and continued with the search for aspects in their organizations' culture. Generally, context introduces additional information about leaders' concepts, schemas and prototypes about followers or employees. Context restricts range, changes causal direction, reverses signs and prompts curvilinear effects (Johns 2006); last but not least, it can trigger a person's behavioral responses (Bargh et al. 1996). Even though contextual factors do not dictate action, they can create a supportive and inspiring environment (Gibson & Birkinshaw 2004) and as the conducted studies clearly show, inform the content of leaders' prototypical employee image. The discovered links were not arbitrary but consistently pointed at a correspondence with external and internal context factors. In other words, leaders defined their Ideal Employee in similarity with their work context and their own personality. This outcome has considerable consequences for organizations trying to diversify their workforce. If the prototypical employee is aligned with the current working culture as well as personal attributes, and leaders base their personnel related decisions on the degree of a match with their prototype, non-conforming or dissimilar team members may receive less favorable treatment. This can have negative consequences for the social and intellectual diversity in

organizations, encourage conformity in employee behaviors, create a biased and stereotypical mindset in the workforce, and challenge organizational change efforts. The realization that leaders' implicit follower theories are powerful and underestimated companions of organizational life is relevant for companies wishing to counteract their potentially unproductive consequences. Suitable management of leaders' prototypical expectations can lead to a positive utilization of leaders' prototypical image of an Ideal Employee, facilitate change and diversity efforts and enable better personnel related decision making amongst leadership personnel.

6.1 Summary of results

A summarizing perspective of both studies provides an overview over the main outcomes of this research project (Table 16: Overview of Main Results) and enables to see its contribution and limitations, as well as a future outlook.

Table 16: Overview of Main Results

RESEARCH		VARIABLES	THE IDEAL EMPLOYEE	
Study		Independent Variables	Traits	Behaviors
US Study (2012)	Part I	Market Conditions	Good Citizenship	
		Coordination Mechanisms	Good Citizenship	Exploitation
	Part II	Leader personality <i>Conscientiousness</i> <i>Openness</i>	Good Citizenship	Exploitation Exploration
GERMAN Study (2014)		Organizational Culture <i>Clan</i> <i>Market</i>	Traits Enthusiasm Competence Good Citizenship Industriousness Competence	Behaviors (n/a)

One of the main strengths of the current work is the heterogeneous nature of the samples so that the results represent assessments from participants in different countries but also in a large variety of industries, business units and hierarchical positions. Results suggest that leader's prototypical employee displays Good Citizenship (*loyal, reliable team player*) and this trait category that was linked to all types of context and personality variables. Generally, Good Citizenship is an important employee quality for leaders both in the USA and in Germany, it is valued in explorative and exploitative work contexts, and linked to aspects in leaders' personality and organizational culture. In regards to individual abstract traits, the top desired employee traits for leaders in the USA and Germany are *reliable* and *productive*. Interesting differences appeared in the next lower rank: US managers rated *team player*, and German managers *loyal* as third most important employee trait. This shows a high desirability of interpersonal qualities, however an emphasis on collaboration by American managers, and the appreciation of dependability by German leaders.

Second, if pressed for a decision on whether Exploration or Exploitation are more important employee work behaviors, conscientious leaders and those working in formalized work contexts are in favor of Exploitation; only leaders who are Open for experience included explorative work behaviors in their Ideal Employee profiles. Third, certain traits encompassed by categories Industriousness, Enthusiasm and Competence were also relevant to leaders, especially in Clan and Market cultures that elicited comprehensive prototypical employee images. In sum, the average employee prototype is mostly reliable and productive, dependable and competent, perhaps reminiscent of Kelley's 'conformist' follower who is "*always on the leader's side, but still looking to the leader for the thinking, the direction, the vision*" (Kelley 2008, p. 7).

Considerable and manifold variations between work context and personality-related variables make the clear-cut presentation of an Ideal Employee Profile unfeasible. The quest to finding explanations for the idiosyncratic nature of leaders' employee prototype began with the investigation of their environment. Research question 1 which was raised at the beginning of this work asked what role leaders' perception of work context plays in the emergence of their Ideal Employee schema. Both studies unanimously showed that work context is linked with the way leaders come

to form their Ideal Employee image. Noteworthy is that in the USA study, the effect of inner-organizational coordination mechanisms is stronger or more significant than leaders' perception of external market conditions. This fact supports the notion of situational strength (Meyer et al. 2009); rules or behavioral guidelines that are reinforced regularly during every-day interactions leave stronger impressions on individuals than remote market dynamics and therefore provide stronger links to the content of leaders' implicit follower theories. This also leads to a partial affirmation of research question 2 pertaining to the link between organization-extern and -intern work context variables: in the simpler models, US-leaders' perception of explorative market conditions led to a preference for explorative employee behaviors; however, they did not withstand the influence of organization-internal aspects in the full models and therefore formalized coordination mechanisms on leaders' preference for exploitation showed the strongest effects. Nevertheless, these results point at the desire for alignment between aspects of leaders' work context type with their pIFT; in theory, leaders in exploitative contexts could have valued explorative employees, for example as they are looking to complement existing skill sets. However, the outcomes are consistent in conveying the message that explorative contexts elicit leaders' preference for explorative employee traits and exploitative contexts encourage leaders' desire for exploitative employee behaviors.

Question 3 addressed possible links between leaders' personality traits and their Ideal Employee image on the basis of the similarity-attraction paradigm. According to the results gained in the USA study, this question could also be answered in the affirmative. According to the results, leaders' Agreeableness elicits a preference for *loyal* employees as well as a dismissal of *productiveness*, while Openness for experience leads to an emphasis on *happiness*. Striking are also the links between leader's personality and their preference for work behavior dimensions: Conscientiousness is related to Exploitation in employees and Openness to Exploration; this confirms a match between leaders' personality traits and their preference for similar qualities. In all these cases it becomes apparent that aspects in a leader's personality and their prototypical employee traits are similar, rather than dissimilar from each other, so that it can be concluded that leaders like to work with employees who share certain values and attitudes. These results firm up

corresponding insights gained in a study about similarities between followers' personality and their implicit leader theories (Keller 1999), and confirm that most individuals prefer to work with others that are not only similar to themselves (Guillèn & Karelaia 2012) but who can be expected to maintain prevailing contextual characteristics within their organizations.

An additional question that evolved from the US study's analysis relates to the effect strength of context and personality; in other words, does context or leader personality have a stronger impact on their pIFT? Statistical models indicate a potential answer in favor of personality traits as the strongest overall link in terms of coefficient and significance was found between leaders' Openness and Exploration in employees. However, a more holistic perspective shows a rich and complex dynamic between context and personality and allows the conclusion that both context and personality are strongly and meaningfully associated with the content of leader's implicit follower theories. Overall it seems that leaders' personality has a stronger effect on a preference for explorative or exploitative employee behaviors, whereas context factors guide the preference for abstract trait categories such as Good Citizenship or Enthusiasm. This leads to the question about the way leaders incorporate all these varying influences in their Ideal Employee profile and what role leadership experience plays in the evolution of implicit theories. Most studies argue that implicit theories develop over time when individuals work with a variety of role occupants (e.g. leader or employee), rendering experience a crucial aspect in the formation of schemata and prototypes (Schyns & Schilling 2010; Shondrick et al. 2010). However, while older research held that increased exposure to followers would lead to a richer and more complex employee prototype (Sanders 1999; Wofford & Goodwin 1998; Borman 1987), newer research argues that implicit theories develop around prototypes and become more refined and defined across contexts (Shondrick & Lord 2010). Current results in this regard are inconclusive: leaders higher in age indicated a more balanced preference for both exploration and exploitation in employees, but leadership experience led to a rejection of exploitative work behaviors.

Future research could look at the impact of leader age and their leadership experience in isolation to find out to what degree age and leadership experience might relate to a person's pIFT.

Question 4 asked if leaders' perception of the prevailing organizational culture could play a role in the development of their pIFT. This topic was addressed in the German study and confirmed hypotheses about the congruence between context and attributes of leaders' Ideal Employee image. Leaders in Market and Clan cultures indicated strong preferences for a large variety of traits; employees in Market cultures are expected to be *hardworking, productive, loyal, reliable, experienced, selfless team workers* while those in Clan cultures should be *excited, happy, educated and quick team workers*. On the other hand, leaders who perceive their corporate culture to be a Hierarchy only emphasized the trait *outgoing*, however more strikingly, those in Adhocracy cultures indicated no preference for any trait. Quite notably, none of the culture clusters elicited a preference for traits related to Non-Conformity (*hard to influence, diverges from trend, confident*), representing a profound insight: leaders do not value followers who display insubordination or Non-Conformism. What may seem a rather palpable insight, still confirms old stereotypes about followership and highlights the importance of followers' subordinate position to those in leadership roles.

Furthermore, the contrast between leader's pIFT in Market and Adhocracy cultures is equally remarkable: managers in Market cultures – which represent the majority of organizations in this sample - expect a lot: employees are supposed to work hard and deliver results, but at the same time they must be reliable team workers who put the organization's success before their own (*selfless*). In contrast, Adhocracy cultures don't prompt leaders to define certain preferred traits; this could indicate that the requirements for special employee traits change as often as the nature of these businesses, so that well-defined Ideal Employee profiles quickly become redundant. If organizational culture operates like an inner compass that guides life in organizations (Schneider et al. 2013) and leaders form their employee prototypes on the basis of organizationally endorsed values, it is possible that they treat those who fit the organizational prototype more favorably than others who do not. In comparison to cultures that do not endorse very specific prototypical employee such as Adhocracies, cultures that do (e.g. Market or Clan cultures) could create a circular dynamic which phases out dissimilar traits and behaviors through the endorsement of specific values and behaviors. The possible consequences of these cultural norms in regards to employee prototypes are discussed next.

6.2 Practical Implications

The condensed summary of the research results enable the meta-perspective necessary to identify the practical implications of this research as outlined in question 5: What value will the knowledge about these complex interdependencies of context, leader personality, organizational cultures and employee prototype provide for the improvement of leader- and organizational effectiveness? Ultimately, research in management science should be scrutinized about its impact on results and performance improvement. Knowing what leaders implicitly expect from employees can enable organizations to tackle several challenges that may have their underlying cause in the prototypical expectations for staff members. Some of these challenges may be the ineffective performance management by organizational leaders, infertile yet expensive hiring processes, destructive team dynamics, and possibly lethargic innovation efforts due to a lack of ethnic, social and intellectual diversity. All these aspects of the organizational reality can in part be linked to the way leaders and managers expect their employees to be and behave which is why the awareness and management of leaders' Ideal Employee image can be a trend-setting strategy for organizations.

Recent studies clearly show that pIFT affect leadership outcomes because managers' performance expectations shape followers' performance outcomes (Sy 2010) as well as LMX relationship in team settings (Jackson & Johnson 2012; Eden 1992). However, apart from the impact of leaders' employee prototype on the dyadic and group level, there may be effects on the organizational level. One interpretation of the main results is that leaders' employee prototype may express an implicit desire for homogeneity and conformism, a possibility that would provide significant challenges for organizations facing a new global economy. Unsurprisingly, in order to reduce uncertainty (Bauer et al. 2007) organizations want to attract and maintain a work force that provides a good 'fit' with the prevailing values and processes. But even though some see advantages in an increasingly homogenous population within organizations (De Cooman et al. 2009), others have pointed at the difficulties that come with this desire for similarity, especially in times of change (Schneider 1987), and diversity (Horverak et al. 2011). Like the present data shows, leaders describe their employee prototype as conforming with the formalized environment of their organizations, similar to their

perceived organizational culture and in alignment with their own personal traits, and they even indicate their denunciation of Non-Conformity in their ratings of the associated traits. Particularly, companies with strong Market cultures – which is the majority of businesses that were investigated here - elicit precise and comprehensive standards and expectations for employees. This expresses a desire for homogeneity in values and stands in contrast with research about organizational and managerial effectiveness which is inherently diverse and paradoxical; really successful organizations and leaders embrace contrasting, contradicting and manifold values, traits and behaviors (Cameron & Quinn 2006). Therefore, organizations wanting to survive in the new economy defined by constant changes in market conditions (Bezuijen et al. 2009) are advised to manage their leadership team's implicit follower theories as they may inwardly be in the way of change efforts, workforce diversification and innovation.

However, competence-based innovation in organization relies on heterogeneity on all levels of the organizational hierarchy. Differences between collaborators offer diverse problem solving approaches and lead to more successful outcomes (Page 2007), and the cognitive diversity of top management (Hülsmann et al. 2014) as well as cultural, ethnic, educational and demographic diversity in regular workers (Ozgen et al. 2013; Parrotta et al. 2012) will remain a crucial determinant of a firm's success. The current research project helps explain some of the underlying processes and attitudes that facilitate constant innovation. As outlined in chapter four, results of the German study showed no associations between Adhocracy cultures and leaders' preference for any of the 18 tested employee traits. Since Adhocracy cultures have been found to be clear determinants of innovation (Naranjo-Valencia et al. 2011), this missing link can be interpreted as follows: Adhocracies change and evolve in their quick response to the changing external market environment, therefore the requirement of employees' skills and traits may also change constantly. Consequently, leaders may not want to define a specific set of desirable employee traits because it would not do justice to the constantly changing environment. In contrast, perceived Market cultures in the German study led to the most comprehensive and detailed employee profile, an image that conveys the message of narrow expectations, limitation and control, aspects that may hinder diversity and innovation efforts. In the absence of other historical data about these

links, the current results are open for interpretation. Observations offered by the two studies suggest that a mindset of dynamic and change (Adhocracy cultures) is linked with a non-restrictive employee profile, while control and stability (Market cultures) lead to the definition of specific expectations for employees and complex pIFT.

Organizations are invited to look at the contextual and cultural preconditions that might determine their leaders' employee prototype, conditions that affect many personnel related decisions and, consequently, organizational and managerial performance. Mental prototypes represented by silent expectations on the side of managers can either deter or foster creativity and innovation (Carmeli & Schaubroeck 2007; Tierney & Farmer 2004); however, instead of attributing problems related to restrictive Ideal Employee images to individuals, companies are advised to recognize that context provides the basis for behavioral change:

"Innovation is not a technical term. It is an economical and social term. Its criterion is not science or technology, but a change in the economic or social environment, a change in the behavior of people ..." (Drucker 1974, p. 785).

One specific example for the way organizations can begin to increase innovation through diversifying their workforce is by challenging existing personnel selection processes. Specifically, questions should be raised about the ways organizations truly provide an environment that allows managers to embrace change and diversity and to make their hiring decisions accordingly. In recent years, companies on both sides of the Atlantic began to raise concerns about a lack of skilled workers, when at the same time thousands of willing candidates are looking for work (Gaedt 2014; Cappelli 2012). This gives rise to the question whether organizations fail to see that their managers may be bound by narrowly defined prototypical expectations and a desire for homogeneity, or whether conformism in the workforce is part of their strategy. Have they not yet realized that the face of globalization has forever changed the economic landscape as well as employee selection practices (Viswesvaran & Ones 2010) and that individual hiring decisions may be linked to outdated Ideal Employee profiles that evolved from the prevailing work context and

organizational culture? Judging from some of the peculiarities in hiring processes as identified in chapter five it seems they have not; taking themselves as good standards for success (Horverak et al. 2011), hiring managers still are on a quest for ‘fitting’, rather than different job candidates so they can maintain the baseline of cultural similarity (Rivera 2012). That nips diversity efforts in the bud even before potential candidates had a chance to prove the value of complementing skills or behaviors to the success of an organization.

In sum, the practical implications derived from the current research range from the call for a heightened awareness of the existence and potential effects of leaders’ prototypical employee images on the individual, group and organizational level, to specific recommendations in the case of personnel selection in chapter five. Understanding managers’ Ideal Employee image can help and improve existing performance management as well as hiring processes because only the detailed knowledge about managers’ implicit hopes and expectations can enable its constructive management. Organizations are called upon to question prevailing prototypical expectations for existing and new employees and the degree to which they may be lead to undesired levels of homogeneity and conformity.

6.3 Contributions, limitations and future outlook

This research project made several relevant contributions to theory and organizational practice. Primarily, it calls into question the essentialist trait theory of followership and provides some empirical evidence for the notion that leader’s prototypical employee is a reflection of their work context and personality. Past inquiries have mainly focused on the content of leaders’ Ideal Employee image; the current work was able to illustrate its idiosyncratic nature and show that a universal ‘Ideal Employee’ cannot exist. Built on existing theoretical frameworks of categorization theory and validated employee trait taxonomies, as well as the concepts of organizational ambidexterity, corporate culture and the Big Five construct, a well-rounded picture of the complex interrelations between environment, individual and the development of prototypes has emerged.

To the author’s knowledge, no other research to date has interpreted implicit follower theories as expression of leaders’ professional and personal constitution

and provided evidence for the way their pIFT may be linked to factors in their work context and personality. Thereby it is important to note that the discovered associations between variables are not random but symbolize leader's yearning for resemblance, stability and control. Both studies showed that employee prototypes are described as similar, not dissimilar, to leader's perception of context and personality; this insight has far-reaching consequences for further research about cultural 'fit', diversity and innovation. This issue also leads to the specific practical contributions and recommendations emerging from the studies initiated in research question 6 and how the present insights can help leaders manage, challenge or utilize Ideal Employee images in the organizational practice on several levels. (Eden 1992) described manager as 'prophets' and pointed out that leaders' IFT can affect their leadership behaviors and attitudes and subsequently, influence employees' performance outcomes. Therefore, leaders may fulfil their own prophecies as they unwittingly act upon their expectations for team members, possibly without an awareness of their effects on them.

However, the present thesis also argues that leaders' work context and personality can inspire or encourage their expectations and preferences; backed by the results in terms of desired congruence and similarity, leaders and organizations are made aware that they may be prone to work with a limited variety of staff members and thereby negate positive effects of work force diversity. For example, the knowledge that certain personality traits can affect preferences for employee traits and behaviors can be utilized for managers to deliberately seek out employees with complementing qualities and to become more open-minded towards a larger variety of staff members. Organizations, on the other hand, are provided with a practical tool for the assessment of their corporate Ideal Employee profile, work context and organizational culture; insights gained in the assessment can be used to gauge the degree of alignment with prevailing structures and values and consider if leaders' implicit employee expectations could impact personnel management processes. Thereby it is crucial to remember that organizational context might have a one-directional effect on leader's implicit theories so that change programs on the leadership level alone will be ineffectual. This has been shown by Eden and her colleagues (2000) who conducted seven field experiments trying to encourage leaders to induce Pygmalion effects in their followers by conveying high

expectations and consequently, improve follower performance. The results of all experiments consistently showed no effects: the interventions in form of workshops and training events did not influence leader's behaviors, nor did it affect follower and business performance (Eden et al 2000). In the face of the overwhelming evidence of contextual links and leader's pIFT this is unsurprising: if leaders' work environment remains stable and provides the same situational cues as before the intervention, changing attitudes and behaviors is sheer impossible. Hence, the current study reaffirms the impact of contextual influences on individual behavior and argues that change efforts need to address both the individual and the organizational level. Environmental changes that sufficiently foster desired values through the provision of appropriate structures, rules and processes may be able to motivate individuals to change their prototypes (Bargh et al. 1996).

In addition to its theoretical and practical consequences the current research project has also certain limitations. Previous chapters already outlined concerns caused by common method bias, cross-sectional studies, single source bias and low R^2 , and how some of them were met with statistical and methodological means. Like it was mentioned before, the results are based on regression analyses testing for statistical correlations and the models have relatively low R^2 values; this indicates that the presented results allow no precise predictions or even conclusions in regards to what directly *causes* leader's implicit follower theories, just which variables correlate with each other. Equally, the current results cannot be inferred to organizations in non-Western cultures, other companies or individuals because they strictly represent the tested samples and may be unreliable predictors for phenomena in different circumstances. Another possible limitation of the current studies is the slightly male-biased nature of the results because 200 participants - or 62,5 % - of the 320 American and German leaders in the studies were male. In the face of previous findings which reported differences in leader prototype ratings between men and women (Johnson et al 2008; Epitropaki & Martin 2004), and gender differences in regards to handling of prototypes Quaquebeke & Schmerling 2010; Nye & Forsyth 1991) the current gender-based differences in leaders' pIFT can serve as basis for further studies that should consider sex differences in selected samples.

Another limitation is possibly presented by leaders' self-ratings of personality factors as they are related to single-source bias and may be prone to social desirability problems. The fact that the majority of survey participants rated themselves high in Agreeableness may be a true representation of personalities, but it may also be the result of a self-serving bias based on a favorable self-portrayal of the friendly, warm and cooperating character. Future studies addressing external or internal links to pIFT could use a multi-source approach with additional ratings of context, culture or leaders' personality provided by third parties; this method would not only counter above-mentioned problems with single-source ratings but also deliver stabilized assessments of environmental realities.

Future research is also encouraged to explore the results of the current study to further the understanding of the causal impact of work context factors onto leaders' employee prototype and the subsequent effects on leadership behaviors and decision-making processes. For example, what do the results really mean for diversity efforts? If leaders naturally tend to prefer followers who conform to prevailing organizational contexts, values and their own personality, are all efforts to facilitate an ethnically, intellectually or socially diverse work force in vain, or is there still a need to address the source of conformism and stability in organizations? In case of the latter, what else can be done to facilitate less rigid employee prototypes and thereby increase diversity and complexity in the workforce? What can be learned from the lack of an employee prototype in Adhocracy cultures and could such insights be utilized for a smarter recruitment and development of employees in other corporate cultures? And last but not least, how do leaders' implicit follower theories indirectly influence employee reactions and behaviors, their sense of individuality and strive to conform? Especially the last question has not received any attention in the research community yet and will open up other thought-provoking discourses about the impact of leaders' pIFT on followers. Given the complexity of these issues any review of future research questions regarding the existence, content and potential impact of leaders' prototypical follower theories will be incomplete. The material gathered in the current studies delivers plentiful insights and provides sufficient material for future research on the implicit nature and effects of leader expectations for employees.

6.4 Concluding remarks

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"It says on your résumé that you were created in God's image. Very impressive."

As much as leadership is in the eyes of followers, ideal followership is in the eyes of leaders. In the face of an ideal, reality loses on importance and perceptions, judgments and decisions become fallible. Prototypes emerge over time and in reference to a large conglomerate of influences; this renders their identification and classification difficult. Apart from the scientific and practical contributions of the present research study it is also an appeal to all who find themselves in leadership roles. It is an appeal to be aware of and manage their implicit theories about followers and to realize the impact of prototypical expectations on their decisions and relationships.

Mental images of the Ideal Employee will always be an underlying element in leaders' reasoning and judgment, and the goal cannot be to deny its existence; in the absence of the 'Ideal Employee', leaders are urged to be in control of, and not controlled by its reflection. Letting go of certain expectations and instead becoming part of creating the desirable is the expression of true leadership.

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Appendix A: US Survey

Welcome to the survey about Your Ideal Employee!

The aim of this study is to learn more about the things you value most in employees, and the way your preferences relate to your work context and personality.

When completing the following questions, please try to clearly express your personal preferences on all given items as best as you can.

If you feel that a question does not exactly fit your individual work context, please answer it in relation to your job.

Your contribution to this study is very valuable. Thank you for your time and effort!

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1. Which of the following employee characteristics do you consider most important? ⁷

- Hardworking
- Productive
- Goes above & Beyond
- Excited
- Outgoing
- Happy
- Loyal
- Reliable
- Team Player

2. Which of the following employee activities do you consider most important?⁸

- Searching for new possibilities with respect to products/services, processes, or markets
- Activities which clearly fit into existing company policy
- Activities requiring him/her to learn new skills or knowledge
- Activities of which it is clear to him/her how to conduct them

⁷ Prototypical Follower Traits according to Sy (2010). All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = rather disagree, 4 = partly agree, 5 = mostly agree and 7 = strongly agree.

⁸ Exploration and Exploitation Activities according to Mom et al. (2009)

- Activities of which the associated yields or costs are currently unclear
- Evaluating diverse options with respect to products/services, processes, or markets
- Activities which he/she can properly conduct by using his/her present knowledge
- Focusing on strong renewal of products/services or processes
- Activities primarily focused on achieving short-term goals
- Activities requiring quite some adaptability of him/her
- Activities that are not (yet) clearly existing company policy
- Activities which serve existing (internal) customers with existing services/products
- Activities of which a lot of experience has been accumulated by him/herself

<p>Next, please tell us more about your work context.</p>
--

- Activities which he/she carries out as if it were routine
- 3. How would you describe the typical market conditions surrounding your work unit?⁹**
- Environmental changes in our local market are intense
 - Price competition is a hallmark of our local market
 - Our clients regularly ask for new products and services
 - In our local market, changes are taking place continuously
 - Our organizational unit has relatively strong competitors
 - Competition in our local market is extremely high
 - Competition in our local market is intense
 - In a year, nothing has changed in our market
 - In our market, the volumes of products and services to be delivered change fast and often
- 4. Organizational systems encourage leaders at your level to pursue the following activities¹⁰:**
- Setting challenging/aggressive goals
 - Devoting considerable effort to developing their subordinates
 - Issuing creative challenges to their employees, instead of narrowly defining tasks
 - Giving everyone sufficient authority to do their jobs well
 - Being more focused on getting the job done well than on getting promoted
 - Pushing decisions down to the lowest appropriate level
 - Making a point of stretching their employees
 - Setting realistic goals
 - Giving ready access to information that others need
 - Rewarding or punishing based on rigorous measurement of business performance against goals
 - Working hard to develop the capabilities needed to execute our overall strategy/vision

⁹ Market Conditions according to Jansen et al. (2006)

All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = rather disagree, 4 = partly agree, 5 = mostly agree and 7 = strongly agree.

¹⁰ Management Context according to Gibson & Birkinshaw (2004). Later omitted from analyses.

- Holding people accountable for their performance
 - Basing decisions on facts and analysis, not politics
 - Using their appraisal feedback to improve their performance
 - Treating failure (in a good effort) as a learning opportunity, not something to be ashamed of
 - Being willing and able to take prudent risks
5. **How would you assess the degree of your decision-making authority in the performance of your tasks and your ability to set goals¹¹?**
- I can undertake little action until my supervisor approves a decision
 - If I want to make my own decisions, I will be quickly discouraged
 - I have to ask my supervisor before I do almost everything
 - Any decision I make has to have my supervisor's approval
6. **To what extent are your tasks defined by rules, procedures, or regulations¹²?**
- Whatever situation arises, I have procedures to follow in dealing with it
 - I have to follow strict operational procedures at all times
 - Rules occupy a central place in my work related activities
 - There is a written job description for going about my tasks

You are doing good! Now, please tell us more about *you*.

7. **Please rate yourself on each of the following phrases as honestly and accurately as possible, in relation to other people¹³:**
- Bashful
 - Bold
 - Careless
 - Cold
 - Complex
 - Cooperative
 - Creative
 - Deep
 - Disorganized
 - Efficient
 - Energetic
 - Envious
 - Extraverted
 - Fretful
 - Harsh

¹¹ Decentralization according to Mom et al. (2009)

All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = rather disagree, 4 = partly agree, 5 = mostly agree and 7 = strongly agree.

¹² Formalization according to Mom et al. (2009)

All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = mostly disagree, 3 = rather disagree, 4 = partly agree, 5 = mostly agree and 7 = strongly agree.

¹³ Big Five Mini-Markers according to Saucier (1994). All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by

1 = Does not apply at all, 3 = Neutral, 7 = Fully Applies

- Imaginative
- Inefficient
- Intellectual
- Jealous
- Kind
- Moody
- Organized
- Philosophical
- Practical
- Quiet
- Relaxed
- Rude
- Shy
- Sloppy
- Sympathetic
- Systematic
- Talkative
- Temperamental
- Touchy
- Uncreative
- Unenvious
- Unintellectual
- Unsympathetic
- Warm
- Withdrawn

8. How would you describe the nature of employees in general¹⁴?

Please note: this doesn't necessarily refer to your current employees, or to employees within your current organization.

- Most employees can't be trusted
- Most employees will not exercise self-control and self-motivation – managers must do this for them
- Most people are lazy and don't want to work
- Most employees have little ambition

9. For how many years have you worked in a role that involved supervising the work of others?

- 1 years
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 years
- 6 years
- 7 years
- 8 years
- 9 years
- 10 years

¹⁴ Leaders' Theory X and Y (McGregor) according to Kopelman et al. (2008). Later omitted from analyses.

All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by 1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = partly agree, 4 = don't agree, 5 = strongly disagree.

- 11 years
- 12 years
- 13 years
- 14 years
- 15 years
- 16 years
- 17 years
- 18 years
- 19 years
- 20 years
- 21 years
- 22 years
- 23 years
- 24 years
- ≥ 25 years

10. What position do you currently hold within your organization?

- Please choose
- CEO/C-level officer
- Owner/partner
- Top management
- Senior management
- Middle management
- Associate manager/supervisor
- Analyst/specialist/engineer/coordinator
- Other supervisory role
- Prefer not to answer

11. What is the size of the team you are currently leading, counting full- and part-time employees?

- Please choose
- 1 employee
- 2 employees
- 3 employees
- 4 employees
- 5 employees
- 6 employees
- 7 employees
- 8 employees
- 9 employees
- 10 employees
- 11 employees
- 12 employees
- 13 employees
- 14 employees
- 15 employees
- 16 employees
- 17 employees
- 18 employees
- 19 employees
- 20 employees

- 21 employees
- 22 employees
- 23 employees
- 24 employees
- 25 employees
- 26 employees
- 27 employees
- 28 employees
- 29 employees
- ≥ 30 employees

12. You are...

- Please choose
- Male
- Female

13. What is your age?

- Please choose
- ≤ 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44
- 45
- 46
- 47
- 48
- 49
- 50

- 51
- 52
- 53
- 54
- 55
- 56
- 57
- 58
- 59
- 60
- 61
- 62
- 63
- 64
- ≥ 65

14. What is the highest level of education you completed?

- Please choose
- High school
- Some college, technical or associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate degree or higher
- Other

Finally, we'd like to learn more about your and your team's performance situation.

15. Your team:

How many years ago was your current team founded?

- ≤ 1 year
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 years
- 6 years
- 7 years
- 8 years
- 9 years
- 10 years
- 11 years
- 12 years
- 13 years
- 14 years
- 15 years
- 16 years
- 17 years
- 18 years
- 19 years
- ≥ 20 years

16. Your team:

Please think back at the past year in your role as team leader: in percentage, how much of the annual goals & objectives has your team achieved?

- $\leq 30\%$
- 40%
- 50%
- 60%
- 70%
- 80%
- 90%
- $\geq 100\%$

17. Your team:

Thinking back to the past two years, what was the annual personnel turnover rate in your team?

- Please choose
- $\leq 30\%$
- 40%
- 50%
- $\geq 60\%$

18. Assessing your own performance:

Thinking of the various things which you do for your job, how much are you producing?

- My production is very low
- It is fairly low
- It is neither high nor low
- It is fairly high
- It is very high

19. Assessing your own performance, continued:

How good would you say is the quality of your performance?

- My quality is poor
- My quality is not good
- Fair quality
- Good quality
- Excellent quality

20. Assessing your own performance, continued:

How efficiently do you do your work?

- I do not work efficiently at all
- Not too efficient
- Fairly efficient
- I am very efficient

- I am extremely efficient

You are finished!

**Thank you very much for your participation; your time and effort is very much
annreciated!**

Appendix B: Overview of excluded items

The following items and construct were omitted from further statistical analyses. Since correlations with the dependent variables were insignificant, an inclusion of these variables would have caused statistical noise and led to reduced main effects and less efficient and interpretable models.

Management Context (Performance or Social Context) according to Gibson & Birkinshaw (2004)

Setting challenging/aggressive goals
 Devoting considerable effort to developing their subordinates
 Issuing creative challenges to their employees, instead of narrowly defining tasks
 Giving everyone sufficient authority to do their jobs well
 Being more focused on getting the job done well than on getting promoted
 Pushing decisions down to the lowest appropriate level
 Making a point of stretching their employees
 Setting realistic goals
 Giving ready access to information that others need
 Rewarding or punishing based on rigorous measurement of business performance against goals
 Working hard to develop the capabilities needed to execute our overall strategy/vision
 Holding people accountable for their performance
 Basing decisions on facts and analysis, not politics
 Using their appraisal feedback to improve their performance
 Treating failure (in a good effort) as a learning opportunity, not something to be ashamed of
 Being willing and able to take prudent risks

Leaders' Theory X and Y (McGregor) according to Kopelman et al. (2008)

Most employees can't be trusted
 Most employees will not exercise self-control and self-motivation – managers must do this for them
 Most people are lazy and don't want to work
 Most employees have little ambition

Appendix C: Prototypical follower traits and behaviors¹⁵

Abstract category level (based on Sy, 2010)

Question: "Which of the following employee characteristics do you consider most important?"

Hardworking, Productive, Goes above and beyond (category: Industriousness)

Excited, Outgoing, Happy (category: Enthusiasm)

Loyal, Reliable, Team Player (category: Good Citizen)

Specific category level (based on Mom et al., 2009)

Question: "Which of the following employee activities do you consider most important?"

Exploration activities:

Searching for new possibilities with respect to products/services, processes, or markets

Evaluating diverse options with respect to products/services, processes, or markets

Focusing on strong renewal of products/services or processes

Activities in which the associated yields or costs are currently unclear

Activities requiring quite some adaptability of him/her

Activities requiring him/her to learn new skills or knowledge

Activities that are not (yet) clearly existing company policy

Exploitation activities:

Activities of which a lot of experience has been accumulated by him/herself

Activities which he/she carries out as if it were routine

Activities which serve existing (internal) customers with existing products/services

Activities in which it is clear to him/her how to conduct them

Activities primarily focused on achieving short-term goals

Activities which he/she can properly conduct by using his/her present knowledge

Activities which clearly fit into existing company policy

¹⁵ All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.

Appendix D: Work context¹⁶

Market conditions (Jansen et al., 2006)

Question: “How would you describe the typical market conditions surrounding your work unit?”

Environmental dynamism (based on Dill, 1958; Volberda and Van Brugen, 1997):

Environmental changes in our local market are intense.

Our clients regularly ask for new products and services.

In our local market, changes are taking place continuously.

In a year, nothing has changed in our market.*

In our market, the volumes of products and services to be delivered change fast and often.

*reverse item

Environmental competitiveness (based on Birkinshaw et al., 1998; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993)

Competition in our local market is intense.

Our organizational unit has relatively strong competitors.

Competition in our local market is extremely high.

Price competition is a hallmark of our local market.

Coordination mechanisms (Mom et al., 2009)

Decentralization/Managers' decision-making authority (based on Dewar et al., 1980)

Question: “How would you assess the degree of your decision-making authority in the performance of your tasks and your ability to set goals?”

¹⁶ All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.

I can undertake little action until my supervisor approves a decision.

If I want to make my own decisions, I will be quickly discouraged.

I have to ask my supervisor before I do almost anything.

Any decision I make has to have my supervisor's approval.

Formalization of a manager's tasks (based on Desphande and Zaltman, 1982)

Question: "To what extent are your tasks defined by rules, procedures, or regulations?"

Whatever situation arises, I have procedures to deal with it.

I have to follow strict operational procedures at all times.

Rules occupy a central place in my work related activities.

There is a written job description for going about my tasks.

Appendix E: Wilcoxon Test results

Market Conditions

	Mean rank	z	p
Market Dynamic	77.61	-2.792	0.005
Market Competitiveness	96.78		

Coordination Mechanisms

Decentralization	93.28	-9.921	0
Formalization	55.38		

Ideal Employee Qualities

Abstract category level

Industriousness	81.3	-9.484	0
Enthusiasm	52.2		

Industriousness	59.43	-1.951	0.051
Good Citizenship	67.49		

Specific category level

Enthusiasm	38.23	-10.307	0
Good Citizenship	83.62		

Abstract and Specific category levels

Exploration	90.16	-0.859	0.391
Exploitation	90.89		

Exploration	64.6	-10.478	0
Industriousness	88.9		

Exploration	72.37	-4.085	0
Enthusiasm	89.08		

Exploration	25.11	-10.958	0
Good Citizenship	93.47		

Exploitation	60.56	-10.741	0
Industriousness	90.52		

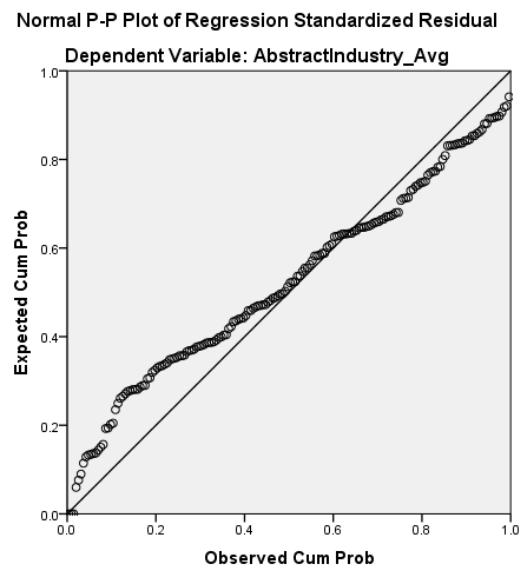
Exploitation	87.63	-4.735	0
Enthusiasm	89.58		

Exploitation	34.25	-11.308	0
Good Citizenship	91.93		

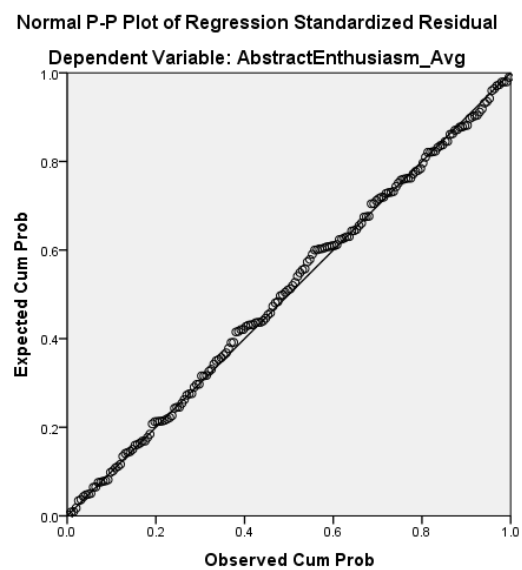
Appendix F: Normality Tests

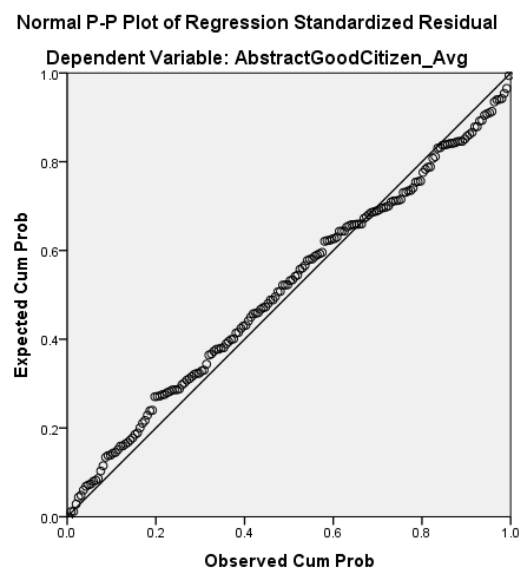
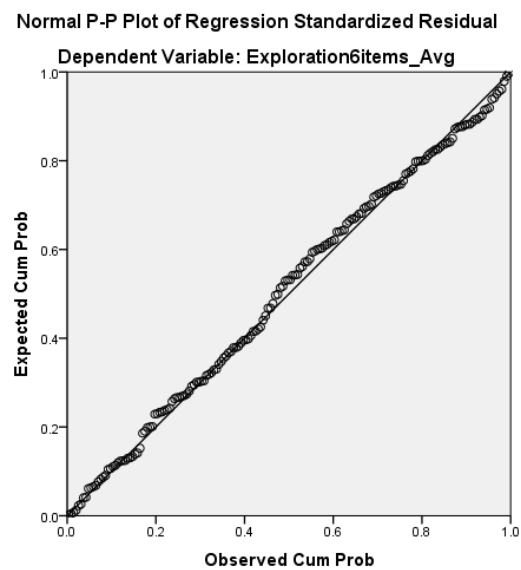
Abstract Category Level:

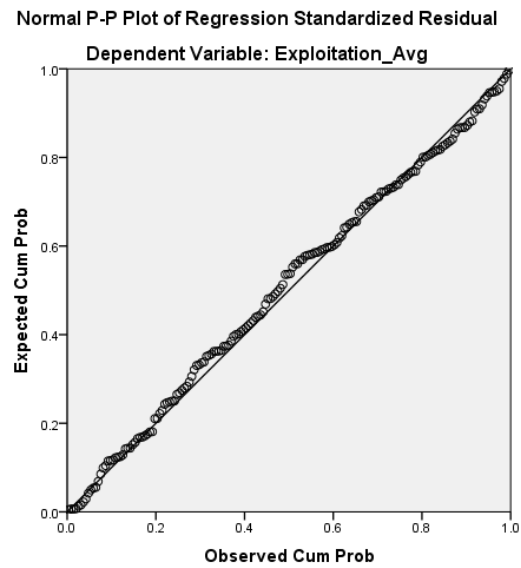
Industriousness, Model 3:



Enthusiasm, Model 3:



Good Citizenship, Model 3:**Specific category level:****Exploration Model 3:**

Exploitation Model 3:

Appendix G: Big Five Personality Measure¹⁷

Question: “Please rate yourself on each of the following phrases as honestly and accurately as possible, in relation to other people.”

Dimension	Item
Extraversion	Talkative Extroverted Bold Energetic Shy* Quiet* Bashful* Withdrawn*
Agreeableness	Sympathetic Warm Kind Cooperative Cold* Unsympathetic* Rude* Harsh*
Conscientious	Organized Efficient Systematic Practical Disorganized* Sloppy* Inefficient* Careless*
Emotional Stability	Unenvious Relaxed Moody* Jealous* Temperamental* Envious* Touchy* Fretful*
Openness for Experience	Creative Imaginative Philosophical Intellectual Complex Deep Uncreative* Unintellectual*

(*reverse item)

¹⁷ All items were measured on a seven-point scale, anchored by 1 = does not apply at all, 3 = neutral, 7 = fully applies

Appendix H: Paired samples t-test personality

Big Five		Mean	SD	t	p
Big Five	Extraversion	4.92	0.99	-9.6	0
	Agreeableness	5.73	0.81		
	Extraversion	4.92	0.99	-7.79	0
	Conscientiousness	5.65	0.84		
	Extraversion	4.92	0.99	5.68	0
	Openness	5.42	0.77		
	Extraversion	4.92	0.99	-0.588	0.557
	Emotional Stability	4.98	0.93		
	Agreeableness	5.73	0.81	4.2	0
	Openness	5.42	0.77		
	Agreeableness	5.73	0.81	1.03	0.3
	Conscientiousness	5.65	0.84		
	Agreeableness	5.73	0.81	9.95	0
	Emotional Stability	4.98	0.93		
	Openness	5.42	0.77	-3.03	0
	Conscientiousness	5.65	0.84		
	Conscientiousness	5.65	0.84	7.8	0
	Emotional Stability	4.98	0.93		
	Openness	5.42	0.77	5.2	0
	Emotional Stability	4.98	0.93		

Appendix I: German survey

Herzlich Willkommen zur Umfrage zum Thema:

„Mein Idealer Mitarbeiter - aus der Perspektive der Personalentscheider“

Wie stellen sich Führungskräfte ihre idealen Mitarbeiter vor?

Welche Qualitäten potenzieller Jobkandidaten werden jenseits der fachlichen Qualifikationen von Personalentscheidern wirklich erwartet?

In Zusammenarbeit mit der FernUniversität in Hagen (Univ.-Prof. Dr. Jürgen Weibler, Mag. Andrea Derler) und MANPOWER Deutschland wird beleuchtet, welche Präferenzen Personalentscheider in deutschen Unternehmen hinsichtlich ihrer Mitarbeiter haben.

Selbstverständlich sind alle Angaben anonym und werden streng vertraulich behandelt. Wenn Sie an einer Zusammenfassung der wichtigsten Ergebnisse dieser Studie interessiert sind, senden Sie bitte eine E-Mail mit diesem Wunsch separat an andrea.derler@fernuni-hagen.de mit Verweis auf diese Studie (Betreff: MA2014).

1. Welche der folgenden Merkmale schätzen Sie besonders an Mitarbeitern im Arbeitsalltag?¹⁸

- Fleißig
- Produktiv
- Geht über die Pflicht hinaus
- Begeistert
- Kontaktfreudig
- Fröhlich
- Loyal
- Verlässlich
- Teamfähig

- Schwer beeinflussbar

¹⁸ Prototypical and reversed Anti-prototypical Follower Traits according to Sy (2010), own translation. All Items were measured on a five-point scale, anchored by 1 = gar nicht, 2 = wenig, 3 = mittelmäßig, 4 = ziemlich, 5 = sehr

- Weicht vom Trend ab
- Triff bestimmend auf
- Selbstlos
- Höflich
- Gut gelaunt
- Gebildet
- Flott
- Erfahren

Als nächstes möchten wir gerne mehr über Ihre Organisation erfahren.

2. Ihr Unternehmen...¹⁹

- ...hat persönlichen Charakter - Mitarbeiter sprechen über Probleme.
- ...ist dynamisch und neigt dazu, Risiken einzugehen.
- ...ist sehr strukturiert und formal.
- ...konzentriert sich hauptsächlich auf Resultate und Kundenzahlen.

3. Die Mitarbeiter in Ihrem Unternehmen...²⁰

- ...fungieren als Mentoren und Unterstützer.
- ...sind innovativ und nehmen neue Herausforderungen an.
- ...sind ernannte Organisatoren, Koordinatoren oder effiziente Fachleute.
- ...sind konkurrenzbetonte Manager, deren Anliegen es ist, Resultate zu erzielen.

4. Die Leitprinzipien in Ihrem Unternehmen...²¹

- ...sind gekennzeichnet durch Gruppenzusammenhalt und Teamarbeit.
- ...konzentrieren sich auf Entwicklung und Innovation.
- ...sind formale, detaillierte Regeln und Prozeduren.
- ...befassen sich mit Produktivität und dem Erreichen von Zielen.

5. Die Arbeitsumgebung in Ihrem Unternehmen ist...²²

¹⁹ Organizational Culture according to the *Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument* (OCAI: Cameron & Quinn 2011). All Items were measured on a five-point scale, anchored by 1 = trifft nicht zu, 2 = trifft eher nicht zu, 3 = unentschieden, 4 = trifft eher zu, 5 = trifft voll zu

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

- ...partizipativ, offen und vertrauensvoll.
- ...gekennzeichnet durch Veränderung, der Begegnung mit neuen Herausforderungen und Kreativität.
- ...gekennzeichnet durch gründliche und klare Verfahren.
- ...wettbewerbsbetont und hebt erreichte Ergebnisse hervor.

6. Erfolg in Ihrem Unternehmen wird definiert...²³

- ...im Sinne der persönlichen Weiterentwicklung.
- ...durch Fähigkeiten und dem Vermögen, einzigartige Verfahren zu entwickeln.
- ...im Sinne des Erhalts der täglichen Aktivität und dem Vermeiden von Überraschungen.
- ...durch Kundenzahlen und Kennziffern.

7. Der Führungsstil in Ihrem Unternehmen ist geprägt von...²⁴

- ...Partizipation und Konsensentscheidungen.
- ...individueller Initiative, Freiheit und Originalität.
- ...der Befolgung von Routinen, die Berechenbarkeit garantieren.
- ...starkem Konkurrenzdenken, Produktivität und resultat-orientierten Aktivitäten.

**Nun möchten wir noch wissen, wie Sie das Marktgeschehen Ihrer
Branche im Allgemeinen empfinden**

8. Wie würden Sie am ehesten die typischen Marktbedingungen beschreiben, innerhalb derer Ihr Unternehmen operiert?²⁵

- In unserem Marktumfeld vollziehen sich kontinuierlich Veränderungen.
- Die Konkurrenz ist in unserem Markt sehr stark.

Als letztes interessieren uns noch ein paar Daten zu Ihrem

Unternehmen und Ihren Daten

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Market Conditions according to Jansen et al. (2006). All Items were measured on a five-point scale, anchored by 1 = trifft nicht zu, 2 = trifft eher nicht zu, 3 = unentschieden, 4 = trifft eher zu, 5 = trifft voll zu

9. Unser Unternehmen ist vorwiegend der folgenden Industrie zuzuordnen:

- Bitte wählen Sie aus
- Anlagenbau
- Automotive
- Bankwesen
- Bauwesen
- Beratung
- Bildung
- Biotechnologie
- Chemieindustrie
- Dienstleistung
- Einzelhandel
- Elektrotechnik
- Energie
- Entertainment
- Fabrikation
- Fahrzeugtechnik
- Finanzbranche
- Food & Beverage
- Gesundheitswesen
- Government
- Hospitality
- Informationstechnologie
- Kaufmännischer Bereich
- Kommunikation
- Kraftwerkstechnik
- Landwirtschaft
- Luft-und Raumfahrttechnik
- Maschinenbau
- Mechanik
- Medien
- Nonprofit
- Recreation
- Schienenverkehrstechnik
- Schiffbau
- Technik
- Technologie
- Telekommunikation
- Textil
- Transport
- Umwelt
- Utilities
- Versicherung
- Vertrieb
- Verwaltung
- Sonstige

10. Unser Unternehmen beschäftigt ungefähr die folgende Anzahl von Mitarbeitern:

- < 5
- 5-50
- 51-200
- 201-2000
- > 2000

11. In welcher Position befinden Sie sich momentan?

- CEO/Geschäftsführung
- Top Management
- Mittleres Management
- Unteres Management
- Sonstige

12. Übernehmen Sie vor allem Verantwortung im Bereich...

- Einkauf
- Forschung & Entwicklung
- Produktion
- Logistik
- Marketing
- Vertrieb
- Personal (ohne Recht)
- Personal & Recht
- EDV
- Recht
- Sonstiges

13. Wie viele Jahre Führungserfahrung haben Sie?

- < 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14

- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- > 25

14. Wie alt sind Sie?

- ≤ 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 9
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
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- 45
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- 49
- 50

- 51
- 52
- 53
- 54
- 55
- 56
- 57
- 58
- 59
- 60
- 61
- 62
- 63
- 64
- 65
- ≥ 65

15. Wie viele Mitarbeiter führen Sie unmittelbar?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30

- > 30

16. Sie sind...

- Weiblich
- Männlich

Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme an dieser Studie!

Für mehr Informationen zur Studie oder zum Erhalt einer Kurzzusammenfassung der wichtigsten Ergebnisse nach Abschluss der Auswertung senden Sie bitte ein E-Mail an Andrea.Derler@fernuni-hagen.de (Betreff MA2013).

Appendix J: Measures of organizational culture²⁶

(Ferreira 2013; *Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument* OCAI based on Cameron & Quinn 2011)

Variable	Items
Clan culture	<p>The organization is personal with staff sharing problems</p> <p>Staff act as mentors and facilitators</p> <p>The organization is characterized by personal cohesiveness and team-work</p> <p>The environment of the organization is participative, open and trusting</p> <p>Success is defined in terms of human development</p> <p>Management style is one of participation and consensus</p>
Adhocracy culture	<p>The organization is dynamic and inclined towards risk-taking</p> <p>Staff are innovative and accept new challenges</p> <p>The organization focuses on development and innovation</p> <p>The environment is characterized by change, facing new challenges and creativity</p> <p>Success is defined by competences and capacities to develop unique actions</p> <p>Management style is one of individual initiative, freedom and originality</p>
Hierarchy culture	<p>The organization is very structured and formal</p> <p>Staff are designated as organizers, coordinators or efficient professionals</p> <p>The principles governing the organization are formal, detailed, rules and procedures</p> <p>The environment is characterized by rigorous and clear procedures</p> <p>Success is defined in terms of maintaining daily activity and avoiding surprises</p> <p>Management style is one of adherence to routines that assure predictability</p>
Market culture	<p>The organization is mainly focused on results and number of customers</p> <p>Managerial staff are considered as competitive managers concerned to attain results</p> <p>The governing principles are concerned with productivity and attainment of objectives</p> <p>The environment is competitive and emphasizes results obtained</p> <p>Success is based on the number of courses running and number of customers</p> <p>Management style is one of strong competitiveness, productivity and actions focused on results</p>

²⁶ All Items were measured on a five-point scale, anchored by 1 = trifft nicht zu, 2 = trifft eher nicht zu, 3 = unentschieden, 4 = trifft eher zu, 5 = trifft voll zu

Appendix K: Prototypical follower traits²⁷

Followership Prototype (Sy 2010)

Hardworking, Productive, Goes above and beyond (category: Industriousness)

Excited, Outgoing, Happy (category: Enthusiasm)

Loyal, Reliable, Team Player (category: Good Citizen)

*Followership Antiprototype** (Sy 2010)

Easily influenced, Follows trends, soft spoken (category: Conformity)

Arrogant, Rude, Bad tempered (category: Insubordination)

Uneducated, Slow, Inexperienced (category: Incompetence)

* reversed to positive

²⁷All Items were measured on a five-point scale, anchored by 1 = gar nicht, 2 = wenig, 3= mittelmäßig, 4 = ziemlich, 5 = sehr

Appendix L: Independent samples t-test

APPENDIX L:

Independent-samples t-test Excellence AG and ManpowerGroup Germany

	EXCELLENCE AG		MANPOWER		t-test		
	mean	SD	mean	SD	df	t	p-value
CULTURE							
Clan	3.51	0.63	3.33	0.72	136	-1.47	0.141
Adhocracy	3.38	0.6	3.21	0.77	136	-1.3	0.197
Hierarchy	3.16	0.72	3.36	0.78	136	1.51	0.135
Market	3.3	0.61	3.68	0.83	136	2.72	0.007
	EXCELLENCE AG		MANPOWER		t-test		
	mean	SD	mean	SD	df	t	p-value
EMPLOYEE PROTOTYPE							
Fleißig	4.22	0.7	4.3	0.82	136	0.56	0.58
Produktiv	4.6	0.54	4.55	0.8	136	-0.402	0.67
Geht über die Pflicht hinaus	4.13	0.7	4.05	0.85	136	-0.545	0.58
Begeistert	4.29	0.78	4.34	0.85	136	0.365	0.72
Kontaktfreudig	3.78	0.79	3.66	0.9	136	-0.772	0.441
Fröhlich	3.31	0.73	3.78	0.94	136	2.965	0.004
Loyal	4.44	0.659	4.43	0.799	136	-0.104	0.917
Verlässlich	4.8	0.405	4.68	0.725	136	-1.056	0.293
Teamfähig	4.29	0.695	4.19	1.024	136	-0.564	0.574
Schwer beeinflussbar	2.64	0.957	2.67	0.913	136	0.132	0.895
Weicht vom Trend ab	2.73	0.837	2.83	0.974	136	0.559	0.577
Selbstbewußt	2.78	0.927	3.78	0.778	136	6.69	0.001
Selbstlos	2.51	0.843	2.59	0.935	136	0.488	0.626
Höflich	3.96	0.796	3.98	0.872	136	0.149	0.882
Gut gelaunt	3.6	0.78	3.77	0.898	136	1.113	0.268
Gebildet	3.73	0.688	3.85	0.872	136	0.783	0.435
Schnell	3.38	0.886	3.86	0.892	136	2.985	0.003
Erfahren	3.87	0.894	3.65	0.917	136	-1.341	0.182

Appendix M: Paired samples t-tests

Paired-samples t-tests for Culture Assessment

	MEAN	SD	df	t	p-value
Clan	3.39	0.69	137	2.671	0.008
Adhocracy	3.26	0.72			
Clan	3.39	0.69	137	1.22	0.226
Hierarchy	3.3	0.76			
Clan	3.39	0.698	137	-1.991	0.048
Market	3.56	0.782			
Adhocracy	3.26	0.724	137	-0.38	0.704
Hierarchy	3.3	0.765			
Adhocracy	3.26	0.724	137	-3.628	0
Market	3.56	0.782			
Hierarchy	3.3	0.765	137	-4.146	0
Market	3.56	0.782			

Appendix M

Paired-samples t-tests for Culture Variables

	MEAN	SD	df	t	p-value
Clan	3.39	0.69	137	2.671	0.008
Adhocracy	3.26	0.72			
Clan	3.39	0.69	137	1.22	0.226
Hierarchy	3.3	0.76			
Clan	3.39	0.698	137	-1.991	0.048
Market	3.56	0.782			

Adhocracy	3.26	0.724	137	-0.38	0.704
Hierarchy	3.3	0.765			
Adhocracy	3.26	0.724	137	-3.628	0
Market	3.56	0.782			
Hierarchy	3.3	0.765	137	-4.146	0
Market	3.56	0.782			

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Erklärung

Hiermit versichere ich an Eides statt, dass ich die Dissertation selbständig und ohne Inanspruchnahme fremder Hilfe angefertigt habe. Ich habe dabei nur die angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel verwendet und die aus diesen wörtlich oder inhaltlich entnommenen Stellen als solche kenntlich gemacht. Die Hilfe einer Promotionsberaterin/eines Promotionsberaters habe ich nicht in Anspruch genommen. Die Arbeit hat in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form noch keiner anderen Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegen. Ich erkläre mich damit einverstanden, dass die Arbeit mit Hilfe eines Plagiatserkennungsdienstes auf enthaltene Plagiate überprüft wird.

Raleigh, am 3. September 2014

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