

---

# The impact of leaders' character on subordinates' attitudes and behavior towards their work and leader

---

Approved Inaugural-Dissertation  
in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor Rerum Naturalium (Dr. rer. nat.)  
Fachbereich Humanwissenschaften  
Technische Universität Darmstadt



**By Patrick Liborius, M. Sc.**

Born 30<sup>th</sup> December 1984 in Bad Soden-Salmünster

Date of Submission: April 07, 2017

Date of disputation: June 20, 2017

First Reviewer: **Prof. Dr. Nina Keith** (Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany)

Second Reviewer: **Prof. Dr. Bernhard Schmitz** (Technische Universität Darmstadt, Germany)

D17: Darmstadt 2017

---

*In gratitude for those who gave me life*

---

# Acknowledgments

I want to express my gratitude to all who contributed in an active or passive way to my doctoral thesis. To name only a few I have to begin with Prof. Dr. Bernhard Schmitz. Without him I would probably never have begun to start my doctoral thesis. I want to thank him for granting me the chance to choose the field of research myself according to my interest, and providing me all the freedom and time I needed to unfold my thoughts, develop and conduct studies, and publish the results in international journals. Thank you too for always reminding me on my strength and encourage me to work on my weaknesses. I am grateful for all that.

I want to thank Prof. Dr. Nina Keith who offered me to accompany my doctoral thesis to the finish line and agreed to review my doctoral thesis together with Prof. Dr. Bernhard Schmitz.

I want to thank all my colleagues along the way, for their help and encouragement. To Dr. Henrik Bellhäuser for his input and feedback on my work.

Especially, I want to thank my family and friends who always encouraged me and believed in me. Most of all, I want to thank my wonderful wife Amy, who never doubts me and always has my back. Lastly, I would like to thank my son Levi, who has motivated me within the last month to get through this doctoral thesis as quickly as possible.

I could never forget to give my deepest gratitude to the one, who provided air, sun, and water—I could not even live without it.

---

# Abstract

The concept of character found its way into the study and discussion of leadership several years ago. Reasons for this emergence mentioned in the leadership literature ranged from corporate leadership scandals, such as the Enron, WorldCom, and Tyco debacles, the failures of many U.S. financial institutions, as well as ongoing concerns about the ethics of political leaders (Riggio, Zhu, Reina, & Maroosis, 2010). And there are other reasons, why character in leadership should not be neglected, neither in leadership research nor in practice. It co-determines the way leaders use their power (Bennis, 2007), their decision and actions while confronted with many ambiguous stimuli (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), the culture they create within their group of people they lead, serves as a role-model (not only) for ethical contexts, and may even affects the quality of the daily life of leaders' subordinates (Bennis, 2007). A view aspects of character can be found in different leadership concepts, amongst which are: Ethical Leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006), Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), Authentic Leadership (George, 2003; Avolio & Gardner, 2005), Authentic Transformational Leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999), Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), and Worthy Leadership (Thompson et al., 2008). However, until 2012 the systematic study of certain aspects of character—irrespective of any specific leadership concept—was still very rare. An exception was a study by Palanski and Yammarino (2011), which examined the effect of behavioral integrity on follower job performance. Given the wide-ranging gaps in this field of research, the present doctoral thesis addresses (1) the impact of various aspects of leaders' character on followers' attitudes and behavior towards their leader and work, (2) the moderating role of subordinates' personality regarding these relationships, (3) the incremental impact of these aspects above and beyond well-known leadership concepts, and (4) the distinction of different aspects of character regarding their relation to various outcome variables, especially one of the most important in leadership—followers' trust.

In Study 1, 626 participants took part in a scenario experiment, in which the impact of three aspects of leaders' character (integrity, humility/forgiveness, and interest/gratitude) on followers' perceptions of the leader's worthiness of being followed (WBF), followers' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and followers' voice behavior has been examined. In addition, the moderating effects of followers' personality traits (agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism) were explored. Data from 626 participants of a scenario experiment supported the impact of leaders' character as well as the moderating impact of followers' personalities. Results showed that integrity, humility/forgiveness, and also leaders' interest/gratitude have a large impact on WBF, and a moderate to large impact on voice behavior, as well a small to moderate effect on OCB. In addition, the impact of integrity on WBF was moderated by participants' conscientiousness, humility/forgiveness on WBF was moderated by

---

subordinates' agreeableness and neuroticism, and the impact of interest/gratitude on OCB was moderated by subordinates' neuroticism.

In Study 2, the additional impact of leaders' integrity and humility/forgiveness above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership was under examination. Therefore, first a scenario experiment (N = 347) was performed. The results showed that integrity, as well as humility/forgiveness explained additional variance in WBF and participants anticipated stress, above and beyond transformational leadership. In a second sample an online survey study with 110 participants was conducted, in which the additional impact of integrity and humility/forgiveness on WBF and employees' perceived stress above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership could again be found. Regarding employees' perception of stress, only humility/forgiveness could explain variance, neither transformational leadership nor leaders' integrity did. Relative importance analyses showed that integrity and transformational leadership were equally important as predictors for WBF, whereas humility/forgiveness in comparison, was only half as important.

In Study 3, the distinct impact of integrity and humility on subordinates' cognitive and affective trust was examined. The first sample (N = 254) showed by means of structural equation modeling, that integrity was primarily related to cognitive trust, and humility on affective trust. The second sample (N = 196) were conducted in order to replicate the findings from the first study with some methodical improvements. Again, integrity was found to be primarily related to cognitive trust, and humility to affective trust, whereas cognitive trust mediated the relation between integrity and affective trust.

In conclusion, this doctoral thesis makes an important contribution to research on the impact of leaders' character on followers' attitudes and behavior towards their leader and work. Moreover, the gained insights permit several implications, reminding us that leaders' character cannot be left out of the equation, neither in leadership research nor in practice.

---

# Zusammenfassung

## (Abstract in German)

Das Konzept des Charakters fand vor einigen Jahren Eingang in die Führungsforschung. Die Gründe dafür, die in der Literatur erwähnt werden reichen von Skandalen innerhalb der Unternehmensführung, wie dem Enron-, WorldCom- und Tyco-Debakel in den USA, dem Versagen vieler US-Finanzinstitute, sowie der anhaltenden Besorgnis über die Ethik von führenden Politikern (Riggio, Zhu, Reina & Maroese, 2010). Und es gibt weitere Gründe, warum Charakter als Thema innerhalb der Führungsforschung und -praxis nicht außer Acht gelassen werden sollte. Der Charakter der Führungskraft beeinflusst die Art und Weise, wie sie ihre Macht nutzt (Bennis, 2007), ihre Entscheidungen und Handlungen, während sie mit vielen undeutlichen Reizen konfrontiert wird (Hambrick & Mason, 1984), und die Kultur die sie schafft, innerhalb der Gruppe, die sie führt. Nicht zuletzt dient die Führungskraft auch als Vorbild für ethische Fragen und kann sogar die tägliche Lebensqualität ihrer Mitarbeitenden beeinflussen (Bennis, 2007).

In diversen Führungskonzepten lassen sich Aspekte des Charakters der Führungskraft finden, wie beispielsweise innerhalb der Ethischen Führung (Brown & Treviño, 2006), der dienenden Führung (Greenleaf, 1977), Authentischen Führung (George, 2003, Avolio & Gardner, 2005), Authentisch Transformationalen Führung (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999), der spirituellen Führung (Fry, 2003) und der von Thomson et al. (2008) bezeichneten Würdigen Führung. Doch bis 2012 war die systematische Untersuchung bestimmter Charakteraspekte der Führungskraft—unabhängig von einem bestimmten Führungskonzept— fast nicht vorzufinden. Als Ausnahme galt die bereits 2011 von Palanski und Yammarino publizierte Studie, die die Wirkung der Integrität der Führungskraft auf die Leistung der Mitarbeitenden untersuchte. Angesichts der bis dato weitreichenden Lücken in diesem Forschungsgebiet befasst sich die vorliegende Doktorarbeit mit (1) den Auswirkungen verschiedener Charakteraspekte von Führungskräften auf die Einstellung und das Verhalten der Mitarbeitenden gegenüber ihrer Führungskraft und Arbeit, (2) den auf diese Beziehung moderierend einwirkende Persönlichkeit der Mitarbeitenden, (3) dem Grad des zusätzlichen Einflusses dieser Charakteraspekte über den von weitreichend erforschten Führungskonzepten hinaus und (4) der Unterscheidung von diversen Charakteraspekten hinsichtlich unterschiedlicher Auswirkung auf verschiedene Arten des Vertrauens der Mitarbeitenden.

In Studie 1 nahmen 626 Probanden an einem Szenario-Experiment teil, bei dem die Auswirkungen von drei Aspekten des Charakters (Integrität, Demut/Vergebung und Interesse/Dankbarkeit) auf die Wahrnehmung der Mitarbeitenden von deren Führungskraft als würdig ihr zu folgen (WBF), das individuelle Hilfeverhalten der Mitarbeitenden im Unternehmen (OCB) und das Sprachverhalten der

---

Mitarbeitenden bezüglich des Einbringens von Vorschlägen und Ideen (voice behavior), untersucht wurden. Darüber hinaus wurde der, diese Beziehungen moderierende, Einfluss dreier Persönlichkeitsmerkmale der Mitarbeitenden (Verträglichkeit, Gewissenhaftigkeit und Neurotizismus) untersucht. Daten von 626 Probanden eines Szenario-Experiments unterstützten die Annahme bezüglich des Einflusses des Charakters der Führungskraft, sowie des moderierenden Einflusses der Persönlichkeit der Mitarbeitenden. Die Ergebnisse zeigten, dass Integrität, Demut/Vergebung und Interesse/Dankbarkeit der Führungskräfte einen großen Einfluss auf WBF haben und eine mittlere bis große Auswirkung auf das Sprachverhalten, sowie eine kleine bis mittlere Wirkung auf OCB. Darüber hinaus wurde festgestellt, dass die Auswirkung der Integrität der Führungskraft auf WBF durch die Gewissenhaftigkeit der Probanden moderiert wird. Ebenso wurde die Auswirkung von Demut/Vergebung auf WBF durch Verträglichkeit und Neurotizismus der Probanden moderiert. Die Auswirkung von Interesse/Dankbarkeit auf OCB wurde durch Neurotizismus der Probanden moderiert. In Studie 2 wurde der inkrementelle Einfluss untersucht, den die Integrität, sowie Demut/Vergebung der Führungskraft, über dem Einfluss von transformationaler Führung hinaus, hat. Zu diesem Zweck wurde zunächst ein Szenario-Experiment (N = 347) durchgeführt. Hier zeigten die Ergebnisse, dass sowohl die Integrität, als auch Demut/Vergebung der Führungskraft, zusätzliche zur transformationalen Führung, Varianz in WBF und antizipiertem Stress der Probanden aufklären konnte. In einer zweiten Stichprobe wurde eine Online-Studie mit 110 Probanden, die alle unter einer festen Führungskraft arbeiteten, durchgeführt, in der die Ergebnisse des Szenario-Experiments im Feld bestätigt werden sollten. Die Ergebnisse bezüglich der Auswirkung auf WBF waren ähnlich zu den Ergebnissen des Szenario-Experiments. Abweichende Ergebnisse ergaben sich im Hinblick auf die Auswirkung auf das allgemeine Stressempfinden der Mitarbeitenden. Hier konnte weder die Transformationale Führung, noch die Integrität der Führungskraft Varianz aufklären. Lediglich Demut/Vergebung der Führungskraft erklärte Varianz bezüglich des Stressempfindens der Mitarbeitenden. Analysen bezüglich der relativen Wichtigkeit der drei Prädiktoren zeigten, dass Integrität und Transformationale Führung gleich starke Prädiktoren sind im Hinblick auf WBF, während Demut/Vergebung im Vergleich zu den beiden anderen, nur halb so wichtig war.

In Studie 3 wurde die unterschiedliche Auswirkung von Integrität und Demut der Führungskraft auf das kognitive und affektive Vertrauen der Mitarbeitenden untersucht. Die Ergebnisse des Strukturgleichungsmodells, basierend auf der ersten Stichprobe (N = 254), zeigten, dass die Integrität der Führungskraft in erster Linie mit dem kognitiven Vertrauen und die Demut mit dem affektiven Vertrauen der Mitarbeitenden zusammenhängt. Die zweite Stichprobe (N = 196) wurde durchgeführt, um die Ergebnisse aus der ersten Stichprobe mit einigen methodischen Verbesserungen zu replizieren. Wiederum hing die Integrität primär mit dem kognitiven Vertrauen und die Demut mit dem affektiven Vertrauen zusammen, während das kognitive Vertrauen den Zusammenhang zwischen Integrität und affektivem Vertrauen medierte.

---

Zusammenfassend ist die vorliegende Dissertation ein wichtiger Beitrag zur Erforschung des Einflusses des Charakters der Führungskraft auf die Einstellung und das Verhalten der Mitarbeitenden gegenüber ihrer Führungskraft und Arbeit. Darüber hinaus erlauben die gewonnenen Einsichten Implikationen für die Praxis von Führungskräften und erinnern uns daran, dass der Charakter der Führungskraft nicht zu ignorieren ist, weder in der Führungsforschung noch in der -praxis.

---

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgments</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Zusammenfassung</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of Tables</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>List of Figures</b>	<b>xvi</b>
<b>List of Original Manuscripts</b>	<b>xvii</b>
<b>I Synopsis</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.....Theoretical Background</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Relevance of leaders' character in leadership research and practice	2
1.2 Leadership concepts with certain aspects of character in mind	3
1.3 Definition of leaders' character	4
1.3.1 Integrity	4
1.3.2 Humility and forgiveness	5
1.3.3 Interest and gratitude	5
1.4 Followers personality	5
1.5 Transformational leadership	6
1.6 Outcomes of leadership practice	6
1.6.1 Worthiness of being followed (WBF)	7
1.6.2 Voice Behavior	7
1.6.3 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	7
1.6.4 Followers' perceived Stress	8

1.6.5	Trust	8
1.7	Purpose of the Present Thesis	9
<b>2.....</b>	<b>Thesis Overview</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1	Study 1	11
2.1.1	Purpose	11
2.1.2	Method	11
2.1.3	Results	12
2.1.4	Conclusion	13
2.2	Study 2	14
2.2.1	Purpose	14
2.2.2	Method	15
2.2.3	Results	15
2.2.4	Conclusion	16
2.3	Study 3	17
2.3.1	Purpose	17
2.3.2	Method	18
2.3.3	Results	19
2.3.4	Conclusion	19
<b>3.....</b>	<b>General Discussion</b>	<b>21</b>
3.1.1	Effects of Leaders' Integrity	21
3.1.2	Effects of Leaders' Humility and Forgiveness	22
3.1.3	Effects of Leaders' Interest and Gratitude	23
3.1.4	The moderating effect of subordinates' personality	23
3.2	Limitations and Future Perspectives	23
3.3	Implications for Leadership Practice	26
<b>II –</b>	<b>Original Manuscripts</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>4.....</b>	<b>Study 1: Who is Worthy of Being Followed? The Impact of Leaders' Character and the Moderating Role of Followers' Personality</b>	<b>28</b>

---

4.1	Abstract	28
4.2	Introduction	28
4.2.1	A Brief Framework for this Article	29
4.3	Theory	30
4.3.1	Worthiness of Being Followed	30
4.3.2	Voice Behavior	32
4.3.3	Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)	32
4.3.4	Leader’s Character	33
4.3.5	Follower’s Personality	35
4.4	Method	38
4.4.1	Procedure	38
4.4.2	Measures	39
4.4.3	Study sample	40
4.5	Results	41
4.5.1	Confirmatory Factor Analysis – Examining the Adequacy of the WBF Construct	41
4.5.2	Descriptive Statistics	41
4.5.3	Manipulation checks	43
4.5.4	Main effects	43
4.5.5	Moderation effects	43
4.6	Discussion	45
4.6.1	Theoretical Implications	47
4.6.2	Practical Implications	49
4.6.3	Limitations	49
4.6.4	Future Research	50
4.7	Conclusion	51
<b>5.....Study 2: What does leaders’ character add to transformational leadership?</b>		<b>52</b>
5.1	Abstract	52
5.2	Introduction	52
5.3	Transformational Leadership	53
5.3.1	Transformational leadership and integrity	54

5.3.2	Transformational leadership and humility	54
5.4	Worthiness of being followed	55
5.5	Followers' perceived stress level	56
5.6	Study 1 Method	58
5.6.1	Participants and Procedures	58
5.6.2	Measures	59
5.7	Results Study 1	60
5.7.1	Confirmatory factor analysis	60
5.7.2	Descriptive statistics	61
5.7.3	Manipulation checks	61
5.7.4	Hypothesis Testing	61
5.8	Study 2 Method	64
5.8.1	Participants and Procedures	64
5.8.2	Measures	64
5.9	Study 2 Results	64
5.9.1	Descriptive statistics	64
5.9.2	Confirmatory factor analysis	65
5.9.3	Hypothesis testing	65
5.10	Discussion	66
5.10.1	Theoretical implications	67
5.10.2	Practical Implications	69
5.10.3	Limitations	70
5.10.4	Future research directions	71
5.11	Conclusion	72
<b>6.....</b>	<b>Study 3: I know your integrity, I feel your humility – The distinguished impact on followers' cognitive and affective trust</b>	<b>73</b>
6.1	Abstract	73
6.2	Introduction	73
6.3	Literature review	74
6.4	Theoretical framework and hypotheses	75

---

6.4.1	Integrity and cognitive trust	75
6.4.2	Humility and affective trust	76
6.5	Study 1 – Method	77
6.5.1	Participants and Procedures	77
6.5.2	Measures	77
6.6	Study 1 – Results	78
6.6.1	Descriptive statistics	78
6.6.2	Confirmatory factor analysis	78
6.6.3	Test of hypotheses	79
6.7	Study 2 – Method	79
6.7.1	Participants and Procedures	79
6.7.2	Measures	80
6.8	Study 2 – Results	80
6.8.1	Descriptive statistics	80
6.8.2	Testing for Common Method Variance	80
6.8.3	Hypotheses Testing	81
6.9	Discussion	83
6.9.1	Theoretical Implications	83
6.9.2	Practical Implications	83
6.9.3	Limitations & future research	84
<b>References</b>		<b>86</b>
<b>Appendices</b>		<b>100</b>
<b>7.....Appendix A: Scenario scripts for the character manipulation in Study 1</b>		<b>101</b>
7.1	Script for the integrity manipulation	101
7.2	Script for the humility and forgiveness manipulation	103
7.3	Script for the interest and gratitude manipulation	104
<b>8.....Appendix B: Scenario scripts for the transformational leadership and character manipulation in Study 2</b>		<b>106</b>

---

8.1	Script for the transformational leadership manipulation	106
8.2	Script for the integrity manipulation (continuation of TL scenario)	107
8.3	Script for the humility/forgiveness manipulation (continuation of TL scenario)	108
	<b>Scientific CV</b>	<b>109</b>
	<b>Obligatory Declaration</b>	<b>110</b>

---

# List of Tables

## Study 1:

Table 4.1. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 1 (Integrity). .....	42
Table 4.2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 2 (Humility and Forgiveness). .....	42
Table 4.3. Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 3 (Interest and Gratitude).....	42
Table 4.4. MANOVA Examining the Effects of Three Aspects of Character (Integrity, Humility and Forgiveness, and Interest and Gratitude) on Followers. ....	43
Table 4.5. Simple Slope Analyses for the Moderation Effect of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism on the Relation between Character and Followers' Outcome in each of the Three Studies (Regression t values). ....	44
Table 4.6. Overview of the moderation hypothesis (confirmation and rejection).....	44

## Study 2:

Table 5.1. Correlations and Reliabilities from the Transformational Leadership + Integrity and Transformational Leadership + Humility/Forgiveness scenarios .....	61
Table 5.2. Means for WBF and stress within each experimental condition .....	62
Table 5.3. Study 1 - Overview of tested hypotheses and statistics .....	63
Table 5.4. Correlations and Reliabilities for Study 2. ....	65
Table 5.5. Study 2 - Overview of tested hypotheses and statistics. ....	67

## Study 3:

Table 6.1. Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities (Study 1).....	78
Table 6.2. Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities (Study 2).....	80

---

# List of Figures

## Synopsis:

Figure 1.1. Overview of the research subjects and relations of the studies included in the current doctoral thesis. .... 10

## Study 1:

Figure 4.1. Interaction between leader’s character (humility and forgiveness) and follower’s agreeableness on WBF. .... 45

Figure 4.2. Interaction between leader’s character (interest and gratitude) and follower’s neuroticism on OCB. .... 45

## Study 3:

Figure 6.1. Structural equation model with standardized estimates for regression paths and explanation rates of the endogenous variables. .... 79

Figure 6.2. Structural equation model with standardized estimates for regression paths and explanation rates of the endogenous variables. The marker latent variable as well as the indicators and the paths to the five substantive latent variables are not displayed for the sake of clarity. . 82

Figure 6.3. Structural equation model with standardized estimates for regression paths and explanation rates of the endogenous variables, with cognitive trust as a mediator between integrity and affective trust. The marker latent variable as well as the indicators and the paths to the five substantive latent variables are not displayed for the sake of clarity. .... 82

---

# List of Original Manuscripts

## **Manuscript A:**

Liborius, P. (2014). Who is Worthy of Being Followed? The Impact of Leaders' Character and the Moderating Role of Followers' Personality. *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied*, 148(3), 347-385. doi: 10.1080/00223980.2013.801335

## **Manuscript B:**

Liborius, P. (2017). What does leaders' character add to transformational leadership? *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied*, 151(3), 299-320. DOI: 10.1080/00223980.2016.1270889

## **Manuscript C:**

Liborius, P. (submitted). I know your integrity, I feel your humility – The distinguished impact on followers' cognitive and affective trust. *Leadership & Organizational Development Journal*.

---

# I Synopsis

---

# 1 Theoretical Background

This section should introduce readers to the subject of the present doctoral thesis and aims for an understanding, what is under examination and why. First, the relevance of leaders' character in leadership research and practice is demonstrated (section 1.1). Then, it is shown how certain aspects of leaders' character has been considered within various leadership concepts examined in the last years and decades (section 1.2). These aspects which have already occurred in leadership research, even so not examined independently of any leadership concept, were taken under examination in the present doctoral thesis, for which reason they were all defined in section 1.3. Next, two aspects, which have been examined, additionally to the sole impact of leaders' character, are explained. The moderating role of followers' personality in section 1.4, and the transformational leadership concept in section 1.5, because it should be tested if certain aspects of leaders' character matter concerning the explanation of variance in various outcome variables. Lastly, before explaining the purpose of the present doctoral thesis (section 1.7), reasons for the choice of the outcome variables on which the impact of leaders' character has been examined, are given based on their importance for leadership research and practice (section 1.6).

## 1.1 Relevance of leaders' character in leadership research and practice

The concept of character found its way into the study and discussion of leadership several years ago. Reasons for this emergence mentioned in the leadership literature ranged from corporate leadership scandals, such as the Enron, WorldCom, and Tyco debacles, the failures of many U.S. financial institutions, as well as ongoing concerns about the ethics of political leaders (Riggio et al., 2010). Five reasons why character matters in leadership practice and thus should not be neglected within leadership research, are next exemplified. All forms of leadership must make use of power and the question isn't 'will it be used?' but rather 'will it be used wisely and well?' (Gini, 2004) or in other words: "In talking about leadership, we must ask ourselves, 'Leadership for what?'" (Bennis, 2007, p. 3). Power leads people to become disinhibited and to act on the basis of their own preferences and goals, to objectify others, and to become narcissistic, we have to put character into the leadership equation (Maner & Mead, 2010). Second, senior executives confront so many ambiguous stimuli that their personalities, values, and experiences greatly impact their interpretations of events, decisions, and actions (Hambrick & Mason, 1984). Thus, as long as leadership includes decision-making processes, the presumption that character could be left out of the equation has to be proven to be "false". Third, leaders' behaviors and decisions are symbolic expressions of their values, motives, and worldviews, and that these create a climate (Kaiser, Hogan, and Craig, 2008). Confirmation of this fact comes from Schein (2004), who said that deliberate role modeling is one of the primary embedding mechanisms by which leaders create, maintain, and sometimes change their group culture. Fourth, human behavior is learned from

---

observation (Bandura, 1977). Weiss (1977) provided an example for the organizational context. He found that the amount of similarity in leadership style between superiors and subordinates was a function of subordinates' perceptions of supervisors' success and competence. Followers learn about ethical contexts by observing and emulating the behavior of leaders and others in their work environments (Brown & Treviño, 2006). Finally, the behavior of leaders communicates powerfully what is important and how subordinates should behave (Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, & Roberts, 2008). For example, if leaders communicate with their speech and behavior that it is important and all right to be egocentric and to fight for one's own goals, it is more likely that subordinates will think and behave in a similar way. Thus, we have to put into our minds the idea that character matters, not only because it determines the behavior of leaders, but also, sooner or later, the behavior of their subordinates, too. Learning by observing leaders' behavior plays a key role in shaping followers' conduct and misconduct (Manz & Sims, 1981). For the fifth reason for why character cannot be left out of the leadership equation, two statements made by Bennis (2007)—although they sound a bit lofty—are worth citing: “Leadership affects the quality of our lives as much as our in-laws or our blood pressure” (p. 2) and “Corporate leaders have almost as much power to shape our lives, for good or ill” (p. 2). These five reasons show respectively that leadership scholars would do well to study the impact and development of leaders' characters.

## 1.2 Leadership concepts with certain aspects of character in mind

Before speaking directly of leader's character, different leadership concepts have one or more aspect of character taken into account, amongst which are: Ethical Leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006), Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), Authentic Leadership (George, 2003; Avolio & Gardner, 2005), Authentic Transformational Leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999), Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), and Worthy Leadership (Thompson et al., 2008). Although they describe their concepts with different key aspects, we can find some similarities in the way they put character into their concepts. Russell & Stone (2002) identify honesty, trust and appreciation amongst others as the cornerstones of servant leadership. When talking about authentic leaders, Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang (2005) speak also about reliability and trustworthiness. Shamir & Eilam (2005) emphasize that “what they say is consistent with that they believe, and their actions are consistent with both their talk and their beliefs” (p. 397). Ethical leadership includes the concern for others (Peus, Kerschreiter, Frey, & Traut-Mattausch, 2010) and also spiritual leadership is about the concern and appreciation of others and emphasis on integrity (Fry & Cohen, 2009). Peterson & Seligman's (2004) review resulted in 24 characteristics, among them also caring and sharing for others, consistency between thoughts, words, and deeds, gratitude, and appreciation. The worthy leadership model (Thompson et al., 2008) includes also – amongst others – integrity, gratitude, humility and forgiveness. The present doctoral thesis aims to fill the still existing gap of examining the

---

impact of these aspects of leaders' character separately. The focus lies, based on the above-mentioned leadership concepts and therein mentioned aspects, on: (a) integrity, (b) humility and forgiveness, and (c) interest and gratitude for followers.

### 1.3 Definition of leaders' character

Thompson, Grahek, Phillips, and Fay (2008) found the character aspect to be the least addressed in current leadership research, although central in explaining enormous failures of leadership. Leadership character involves leaders' ethical and moral beliefs, intentions and behaviors (Bass, 2008). Thus, character can be good or bad, whereas 'good character' is constituted by virtues (Palanski & Yammarino, 2007). These virtues are reflected in measurable and observable trait-like attributes and psychological processes (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Concerning leaders' character, it can be distinguished between locus, transmission, and reception of character (Hannah & Avolio, 2011). They defined the locus of leader character as internal aspects of a leader such as his or her personality, values, moral reasoning and identity. Transmission is called the behavior the leader employs in any situation, i.e., the actions exhibited by the leader. Reception, concerns how those transmissions are received by the targets of leadership (i.e., subordinates). Reception includes what is perceived, interpreted, as well as the attributions that observers make as to the locus of those behaviors. This is what is typically measured by asking subordinates about their leader's character. Within the present doctoral thesis, the focus lies on integrity and humility, as well as the combination of humility and forgiveness in the first and second article, as well as the combination of gratitude and interest in and for subordinates in the first article. Thus, those five aspects are next briefly defined in the context of leadership.

#### 1.3.1 Integrity

Clawson (1999) maintains that the moral foundation of effective leadership incorporates integrity, which results from four essential values: truth-telling, promise-keeping, fairness, and respect for the individual. Palanski and Yammarino (2007) concluded, after reviewing the integrity literature, that integrity means many things, including word/action consistency and being honest. Grahek, Thompson, and Toliver (2010) emphasize, when referring to leaders who have integrity, that they maintain consistency in their words and behavior across situations and that they candidly and openly share information.

Moorman, Darnold, and Priesemuth (2013) three-dimensional model of integrity contains leaders' moral behavior, leaders' behavioral integrity, and consistency. According to their definition, leaders' acting with integrity can be briefly described as morally practicing what they preach, even when its unpopular. This definition harmonizes mainly with the previous definitions and is applied in the present doctoral thesis.

---

### 1.3.2 Humility and forgiveness

The origin of the word humility is based on the Latin word *humilis*, which literally means “on the ground”. This grounded view has nothing to do with inferiority. Rather, it enables individuals to see their selves and others more accurately in terms of their respective strengths and weaknesses (Owens, Rowatt, & Wilkins, 2011; Weick, 2001). Thus, humble leaders hold neither inappropriately grandiose nor self-deprecating views of themselves. Instead, they possess a realistic vision of who they are as well as which abilities they do and do not possess (Nielsen, Marrone, & Slay, 2010). Humility, knowing oneself to be imperfect and being aware of one’s weaknesses and failures, is mandatory to practice forgiveness. Grenberg (2005, in Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2015) suggests that humility is a kind of meta-virtue that forms the foundation of other virtues such as forgiveness. Peterson and Seligman (2004) described forgiveness as granting pardon to those who have harmed or wronged us. Forgiveness means engaging in constructive responses following an interpersonal offense instead of allowing destructive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Owens & Hekman, 2012). Humility and forgiveness are both seen as a fundamental orientation to leadership and life that includes effectively handling oneself in a nonego-centric, positive, and offence-resistant manner (Grahek et al., 2010; Thompson et al., 2008). Thus, humility and forgiveness were grouped together as one aspect in the first and second study, for people who think and behave in a humbling manner, it is evident that practicing forgiveness is easier for them.

### 1.3.3 Interest and gratitude

Interest and gratitude encompass a genuine caring attitude toward the follower and being grateful for more than just successful results at work. Caring involves a genuine concern for others’ pain, and kindness—seen as similar to caring—means to be generous, to nurture, and to care for others and show compassion (Sosik & Cameron, 2010). Autry (2001) makes it plain that “leadership is not about controlling people; it’s about caring for people and being a useful resource for people” (p. 29). Another aspect related to interest and gratitude is benevolence. Leaders who are perceived to genuinely care about their followers and convey authentic concern in relationships are called benevolent (Caldwell & Hayes, 2007).

## 1.4 Followers personality

One other keen call for research on leadership regards the psychology of the follower. To provide a fuller picture, research should also examine the psychology of followers (Maner & Mead, 2010). Leaders do not exist without followers (De Cremer, Mayer, van Dijke, Schouten, & Bardes, 2009). Therefore, it is important to understand how characteristics of the follower influence the effects of leaders. This call has existed for more than a decade and was already mentioned by Lord, Brown, and Freiberg (1999), who

---

stated that the follower remains an underexplored source of variance in understanding leadership processes.

## 1.5 Transformational leadership

In order to understand the role of leader character we have to examine the incremental validity of these character aspects above and beyond the impact of already well-studied leadership concepts. The transformational leadership concept is most suitable to answer this research question, because it has dominated current thinking about leadership as indicated by the fact that more studies on transformational leadership were published in the last three decades than on all other popular theories of leadership combined (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Kovjanic, Schuh, Jonas, van Quaquebeke, & Dick, 2012; Zhu, Newman, Miao, & Hooke, 2013). Another reason is that positive effects of transformational leadership on both followers and organizations have been demonstrated in numerous studies worldwide (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011).

Transformational leadership consists of four components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass, 1998). Idealized influence refers to leaders who serve as role models by acting in a manner that is admired by many people. Inspirational motivation implies communicating a clear vision, obtaining commitment to this vision from subordinates, and generating optimism that this vision can be achieved (Avolio, 1999). Intellectual stimulation involves encouraging followers to look at problems in a new and different way. Individualized consideration includes the attention to followers' needs as well as acting as a mentor. Leaders show a genuine concern for their followers' well-being (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transformational leadership by original definition (Bass, 1985) did not include integrity. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) stated that authentic transformational leaders differ from pseudo transformational leaders, in that they have virtues of integrity, truthfulness, and credibility. Some researchers have found positive relations between transformational leadership and perceived leader integrity (Engelbrecht, van Aswegen, & Theron, 2005; Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002; Tracey & Hinkin, 1994). MLQ items (which have also been used in the present doctoral thesis) also relate positively to integrity (Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002). Still, although perceptions of leaders' integrity are closely related to transformational leadership, transformational leaders do not necessarily display the full range of integrity.

## 1.6 Outcomes of leadership practice

Speaking about impact, the outcome variables that are most important in leadership practice must be identified; thus, they will be most important in research on leaders' character as well.

---

### 1.6.1 Worthiness of being followed (WBF)

When discussing leadership, one must necessarily be referring to people who have followers; that is, not only subordinates, but indeed followers. Thus, the outcome of the willingness to follow the leader is fundamental. Bennis (2007) illustrates the importance to us: “When speaking on the subject, I often show a slide that includes dozens of names, from Sitting Bull and Susan B. Anthony to Kofi Annan and Carly Fiorina, and I ask the audience what these leaders have in common. In fact, the single commonality among these men and women is that all of them have or had willing followers” (p. 3).

### 1.6.2 Voice Behavior

“In fact, most of the answers can come from people who know the business, trust each other, and have the opportunity to exchange their ideas openly” (quoted in Kilburg & Donohue, 2011, p. 18). When speaking on the impact of leadership, this statement indicates another important outcome variable of leadership. VanDyne and LePine (1998) define followers’ voice behavior as “promotive behavior that emphasizes expression of constructive challenge intended to improve rather than merely criticize” (p. 109). In today’s rapidly changing work environment and newly established approaches to remain capable of competing, every employee is asked to be part of the innovation process. Therefore, it is a crucial point with respect to a company’s success. Hence, leadership should create a climate in which voice behavior increases instead of cutting off all sources of information. Communication from subordinates is important, because leaders can gain an understanding of what is working, what is not, and are able to make needed adjustments (Burke, Sims, Lazzara, & Salas, 2007). In addition, they can gain insight from those who are performing the task and are able to identify new approaches for future performance. Consequently, followers’ voice behavior was chosen to be an important outcome for measuring the impact of leadership, especially of a leader’s character.

### 1.6.3 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is seen as voluntary behavior that transcends an employee’s specified role requirement and as a matter of personal choice, which is not formally rewarded by the organization (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Although none of these things are formally required by the organization or job description, all of these behaviors will assist in removing barriers to performance and will thereby indirectly or directly benefit the organization (Burke et al., 2007). These definitions describe a work behavior that is utterly important for a well-functioning work process in every working team or company. In addition, theory and cumulative research suggest that group-level OCB contributes to organizational performance (Nielsen, Hrivnak, & Shaw, 2009; Podsakoff, Blume, Whiting, & Podsakoff, 2009), which is a component that researchers must not forget when discussing the impact and effectiveness of leadership and its stimulating component. Therefore, OCB is

---

another outcome variable on which the impact of leaders' character will be examined in the present doctoral thesis.

#### 1.6.4 Followers' perceived Stress

Perceived stress can be viewed as an outcome variable measuring the experienced level of stress as a function of objective stressful events, coping processes, and personality factors (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983). Cohen et al.'s perceived stress scale items were designed to assess the degree to which individuals perceive their lives to be unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloading. These aspects represent central components of individuals' stress experience (Cohen et al., 1983). In the present doctoral thesis, this definition and operationalization were adopted. Reducing employees' stress level is crucial for companies which want to reduce health problems and their associated costs. Gill et al. (2006) showed that job stress is significantly related to burnout, which is always associated with high costs for the affected companies. Thus, there is a keen interest in the health of their employees—at the very least because they are required to pay for every sick day. Thus, strategies to reduce employees' level of stress are in great demand.

#### 1.6.5 Trust

Martin (1998) says "Trust is at the root of all great leadership" (p. 41). Indeed, trust is a very crucial foundation in working environments, not least because employees must trust each other to work together effectively (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Kramer, 1999). At the very least, leaders must have subordinates who trust them to fulfill their task of 'leading' (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Therefore, trust is a well examined outcome variable within leadership research. However, Dirks & Ferrin (2002) found that, with few exceptions, almost all studies used a one-dimensional definition to measure trust. Thus, they especially called for research to distinguish between different kinds of trust and their antecedents. Although more than a decade has passed since then, and even more since McAllister (1995) call for more research regarding the factors that influence the development of affective and cognitive trust, research distinguishing both antecedents, is still scarce (Yang & Mossholder, 2010; Zhu, Newman, Miao, & Hooke, 2013). Chua, Ingram, and Morris (2008) suggested that a distinction between these two types of trust requires two distinct systems of social-psychological processes. They argued that cognitive based trust involves a calculative and instrumental assessment, whereas affective trust involves empathy and a general emphasis on the relationship between trustor and trustee. Bedi, Alpaslan, and Green (2015) and Chua et al. (2008) named the cognitive form of trust 'trust from the head', which is based on leaders' capabilities such as competence, integrity, and reliability (McAllister, 1995). They called the affective part of trust 'trust from the heart', which refers to leaders' consideration, care, and concern (McAllister,

---

1995). One can look for rational reasons (i.e., when the trustee acts according to his/her words) or for emotional reasons (i.e., when the trustor perceives the trustee's care and concern).

## 1.7 Purpose of the Present Thesis

Although, certain aspects of character can be found in several leadership concepts, some of them well examined, it is not clear, which role these aspects play in leadership. The empirical investigation concerning the impact of certain aspects of leaders' character was very scarce, in the beginning of the present doctoral thesis (for an exception see, Palanski & Yammarino, 2011). Thus, the sole impact of certain aspects of leaders' character on their subordinates should be examined. Therefore, some prominent outcome variables were chosen, on which the impact of leaders' character were examined. Nevertheless, the present doctoral thesis acknowledges the fact that there are leadership concepts, which impact on many outcome variables has been confirmed again and again, throughout several decades, as it is with the transformational leadership concept. Thus, the impact of character has also to be proven against such concepts, in order to show, that further investigation is justified based on empirical evidence, which was another purpose of the present doctoral thesis. Recognizing that leadership does not work without followers, the role leaders' subordinates play, was also chosen to be examined and another goal of this study. Moreover, to get a closer look on the impact of various aspects on different outcome variables, the distinct impact of certain aspects on various outcome variables should be examined. Leadership research did not aim at these goals before, though they are worth studying, as already discussed.

In conclusion, the three studies conducted within the framework of this doctoral thesis pursued the following objectives. An overview of the research subjects of the three studies as well as their relations is depicted in Figure 1.1.

Study 1:

- (a) Examination of the impact of three aspects of leaders' character (integrity, humility/forgiveness, and interest/gratitude) on followers' perceptions of the leader's worthiness of being followed, followers' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and followers' voice behavior.
- (b) Identifying moderating effects of followers' personality traits (agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism).
- (c) Providing leadership research and practice with empirical facts, why not to lose sight of leaders' character.

Study 2:

- (d) Examining the impact of integrity and humility/forgiveness above and beyond the impact of a well-known and examined leadership concept (i.e., transformational leadership).
- (e) Showing empirically that the impact of leaders' character reaches much further than attitudes towards their leader and are also health-related and thus directly associated with costs for the organization.
- (f) Analyzing the relative importance of various aspects of leaders' character and transformational leadership on two important outcome variables (i.e, WBF & stress).

Study 3:

- (g) Examining the distinct impact of leaders' integrity and humility on two distinct aspects of subordinates' trust towards their leader.
- (h) Contribute to the research on antecedents on followers' trust in the leader, taking the two-dimensionality of followers' trust into account.

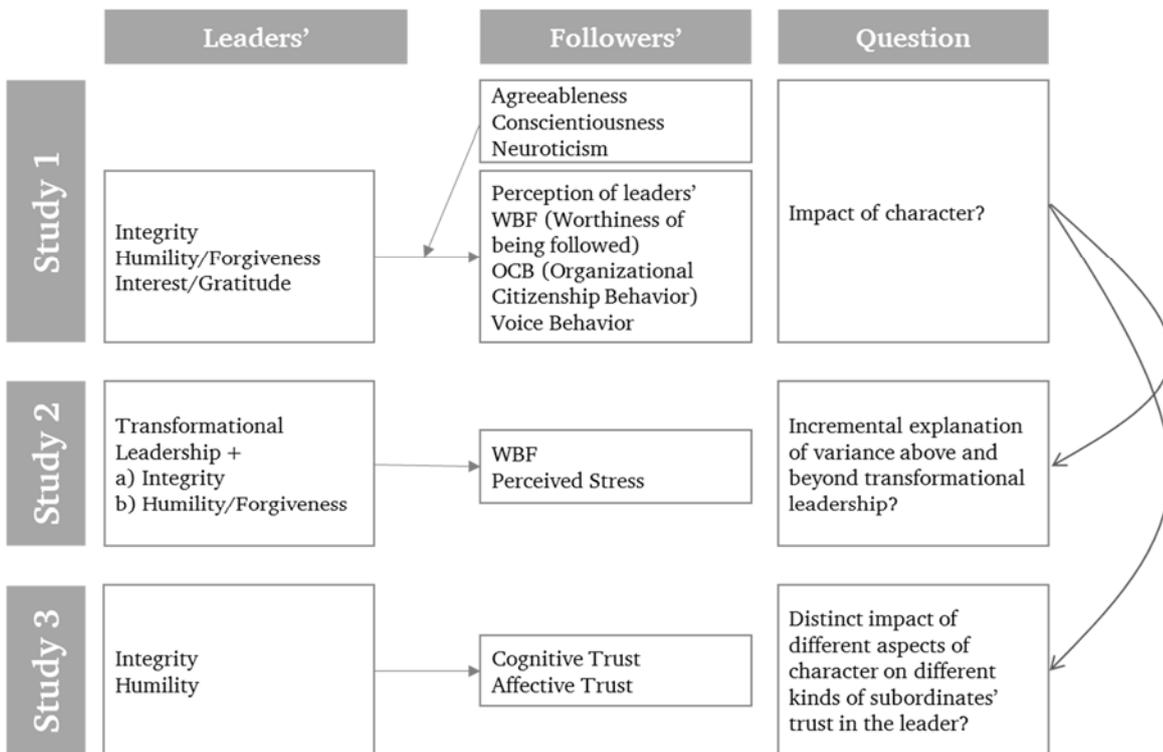


Figure 1.1. Overview of the research subjects and relations of the studies included in the current doctoral thesis.

---

## 2 Thesis Overview

### 2.1 Study 1

#### 2.1.1 Purpose

The aims of Study 1 were to examine (1) what does it mean to perceive a leader worthy of being followed (WBF), (2) the impact of certain aspects of leaders' character on this perception (WBF), as well as on their helping behavior (OCB) and voice behavior, and (3) if and how the personality of leaders' subordinates moderate the impact of leaders' character aspects.

Concerning the first aim, Bennis (2007) emphasized that leaders have to have followers, who will willingly follow. Therefore, a concept called 'worthy of being followed' (WBF) was hypothesized to contain subordinates' loyalty to their leader, perceiving their leader as a role-model, as competent, and trust in them. These four aspects were hypothesized to cover the WBF concept. In other words, it was hypothesized, to say that a leader is worthy of being followed means that this leader is perceived as competent and as a worthy role model, as well as subordinates have a feeling of trust and loyalty toward him/her.

Regarding the second aim, the impact of the most pressing aspects of character in leadership research within the last years, should be examined. Several leadership concepts have one or more aspects of character in mind, when defining leadership. Ethical Leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006) contains integrity, Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) a kind of humility, Authentic Leadership (George, 2003; Avolio & Gardner, 2005) and Authentic Transformational Leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999) contain also integrity, Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003) a kind of humility and forgiveness, and Worthy Leadership (Thompson, Grahek, Phillips, & Fay, 2008) also contains interest and gratitude in/for subordinates. Although, these concepts contain one or more aspects of character, the impact of certain character aspects on followers were not or only barely examined. Thus, the impact of integrity, humility/forgiveness, as well as interest/gratitude on WBF, OCB, and voice behavior were examined.

Considering the third aim, the idea of Cullen and Sackett (2003), as well as Kamdar and Van Dyne (2007), were taken under examination. They demonstrated that personality is an important predictor of how an individual reacts to certain work perceptions. To bring followers' personality into the picture of the impact of leaders' character on subordinates, three out of the big five (i.e., agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism) were considered to be promising moderators of these relationships.

#### 2.1.2 Method

One study for each character aspect was conducted. Thus, this study encompasses three scenario studies, each of them using a 2 (bad vs. good) x 1 (character) between-subjects design. In the first study, the leader's integrity was manipulated; in the second study, humility/forgiveness; and in the third study, the

---

leader's interest/gratitude for his/her subordinates. This study was conducted entirely online. Initial contacts were asked to participate in the study via e-mail and social network platforms. In addition, they were asked to forward the link to several of their contacts, creating a snowball effect. Participants were first asked to read the scenario and to put themselves in the presented situation, where the respective character aspect was manipulated. After reading the scenario, participants completed a number of manipulation checks to evaluate the effectiveness of the leader's character manipulation. Participants were then asked to complete the rest of the questionnaire which encompasses the items for the dependent variables, moderating variables, and some demographical information items.

The manipulation check items were created based on the description of each character aspect by Thompson et al. (2008) and Grahek et al. (2010). WBF was assessed with nine items. Two items from Mayer and Gavin's (2005) trust measure, two from Rich's (1997) loyalty measure, two from Mayer and Davis' (1999) competence measure, and three items from Rich to measure role modeling. Helping behavior was assessed with three items of the OCB measure from Podsakoff et al. (1990), and voice behavior with three items from Botero and Van Dyne's (2009) measure of employees' voice behavior.

To test the WBF concept, confirmatory factor analyses were conducted. The impact of each character aspect was examined by means of MANOVA. The moderating role of followers' personality on this impact was tested by means of simple slope analyses.

### 2.1.3 Results

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) showed that the proposed three-factor model (i.e., WBF, OCB, and voice behavior) did not provide an acceptable fit to the data. After analyzing item loadings on the WBF factor, it was suggested that the source of the poor model fit came from the two trust items. Hence, another model with the two trust items taken out of the WBF factor and placed as their own factor was conducted, which resulted in an acceptable model fit. Thus, the hypotheses were tested on four (WBF, OCB, voice behavior, and trust), instead of on three dependent variables.

Several MANOVAs were used to test the three character manipulations. All character manipulations were successful. To test the effect of leaders' character on followers' WBF, OCB, voice behavior, and trust, a MANOVA for each character aspect was conducted, respectively. Results showed that each of the three aspects impacted the four dependent variables significantly, with the exception of interest and gratitude which did not significantly impact trust toward the leader. Nevertheless, the degree of the impact varied. Integrity had the greatest impact based on the explained variance of the dependent variables, followed by humility/forgiveness, and interest/gratitude. Even the dependent variables were differently impacted by each aspect of leader's character. WBF was impacted most, followers' voice behavior less, and OCB and trust even less.

---

The results concerning the moderating role of followers' personality were mixed. Most clearly was the moderating role of followers' conscientiousness on the impact of integrity, and followers' agreeableness and neuroticism on the impact of humility/forgiveness.

#### 2.1.4 Conclusion

Based on the reviewed theory, four constructs—trust, loyalty, role model, and competence—were suggested to build the concept of WBF. In other words, these four were suggested to constitute the state of subordinates, where they perceive their leader as worthy of being followed. Based on the confirmatory factor analysis, trust had to be excluded from this construct. Concerning trust, a myriad of definitions have arisen (Burke et al., 2007). The trust items of Mayer and Davis (1999) used in this study suggest that a key component of trust is the willingness to be vulnerable. This is close to the concept of affective trust (McAllister, 1995). McAllister proposed that cognition based trust is a necessary precursor to the development of affect-based trust. The question if cognitive-trust belongs to the WBF concept cannot be answered at this point of time. Nevertheless, a leader who is worthy of being followed is not mistrusted, and certain forms of trust (e.g., affective trust) may be built based upon that absence of mistrust because it leads toward further interactions with the leader, which then build trust over a period of time (Burke et al., 2007).

Three aspects of leaders' character, two of them basically unstudied, were examined regarding their impact on fundamental outcome variables, such as a followers' willingness to follow the leader (WBF) and followers' intention to contribute to organizational success beyond their job description (i.e., OCB and voice behavior).

Followers' personalities affect their preferences for different types of leaders, which ought to moderate the impact of certain leadership characteristics (Ehrhart & Klein, 2001). The study showed that the impact of leaders' integrity on OCB was greatly moderated by followers' neuroticism, as well as the impact of leaders' interest/gratitude. Thus, results indicate how the impact of leadership (i.e., leadership character) is moderated, based on the knowledge of the different preferences that followers with different levels of the three personality traits have and their different dispositions to value certain aspects of character manifested in leaders' behavior.

According to the findings based on the scenario experiment leaders with "character" seem to be those of whom Maxwell (1998) speaks when he talks about the true measure of leadership: influence. Character—not only the aspect of integrity, but also humility, forgiveness, interest, and gratitude—matters, and leaders have to keep this in mind. In addition, followers who are high on agreeableness (i.e., those who contribute to a pleasant culture) are the ones who are affected the most. Also, conscientious people, those who are willing to perform and persevere and those who have a high level of the personality trait that relates to performance the most out of the Big Five, are the ones who are

---

most affected by the leader's integrity. Leaders would be well-advised to follow this guideline: "Be honest, do not say one thing and behave the other way, be reliable, be truthful, be humble and forgiving, be interested in those who follow you and give your gratitude to them, not only when they achieve something special, but just for their faithful work."

## 2.2 Study 2

### 2.2.1 Purpose

The aims of Study 2 were to (1) examine the impact of integrity and humility/forgiveness on WBF again as a partial replication of the results of the first study, as well as their impact on a health relevant variable (i.e., followers' perception of stress), (2) to examine the incremental impact leaders' integrity and humility/forgiveness have beyond the impact of a well-known and extensively examined leadership concept (i.e., transformational leadership), and (3) to investigate the relative importance of transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness regarding their impact on WBF and stress.

Concerning the first aim, within the last few years, researchers (e.g., Palanski & Yammarino, 2011) have begun to focus on specific character aspects and their impact on various outcome variables (e.g., trust and performance). In empirical leadership research, the aspect of integrity is the one most frequently addressed, but still rare. Therefore this study extends on previous findings, by examining the impact of two promising aspects of leader's character (i.e., integrity & humility/forgiveness) on WBF, which has been examined in the first study within a scenario experiment, but now also in the field, and on followers' perceived stress, which is not only new to the study of variables impacted by leader's character, but also very important because of its health relevance.

In regard to the second aim, the question seems plausible to ask, whether those character aspects are worth studying within leadership scholars, and worth noting within leadership practice, when they were not able to explain variance in important outcome variables above and beyond well-known and also well-studied leadership concepts, like the concept of transformational leadership, which is seen to be ethical, too, in its authentic form (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Thus the study examines the impact of integrity, and humility/forgiveness above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership on WBF and stress.

Concerning the third aim, the second part of the study (i.e., field study) allows not only to test the incremental variance explanation in the field, but also to additionally test for the relative importance of each aspect (i.e., transformational leadership, integrity, humility/forgiveness) regarding WBF and stress.

---

### 2.2.2 Method

All hypotheses were tested in two studies—the first using an experimental design in two scenario studies to test for causality (Study 2a); the second using a field study (Study 2b) to provide external validity. For the first study, an e-mail was distributed with an invitation to take part in a leadership study to various contacts through personal, professional, and online networks. Participants were asked to read a scenario and complete the target survey and had the chance to win one of six 50-Euro gift certificates for a well-known online retailer. A sample of 347 German participants took part in the online survey. After following the link in the invitation e-mail, participants were randomly assigned to one of eight different experimental conditions. The appropriateness of the transformational leadership manipulation was checked using 12 items of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass & Avolio, 1990; German translation by Geyer & Steyrer, 1998). Integrity, as well as humility/forgiveness were assessed by the same items as in Study 1: Four items for integrity, and four for humility/forgiveness, respectively. Worthiness of being followed (WBF) were assessed by the items used in Liborius (2014). Three items from the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen & Williamson, 1988) were taken to measure followers' perception of stress. The factorial structure was tested using confirmatory factor analyses. Hypotheses were tested by means of two separated MANOVAs (i.e., one for transformational leadership combined with integrity, and another for transformational leadership combined with humility/forgiveness).

In Study 2b an online survey was conducted in which initial contacts and their social networks were invited to participate in an online survey on leadership. The initial contacts included in this sample did not participate in Study 1. In order to participate in the study, participants had to be at least 18 years of age, working with their current supervisor for at least 3 months and have at least a 16-hour work week. One hundred ten employees working from diverse companies and supervisors took part in this study. To assess the variables of interest, the same measures were used as in Study 2a. Again, confirmatory factor analyses were used to test the appropriateness of the measurement model and to test against the common method bias. Hypotheses were tested by means of hierarchical regression analyses. The relative importance of the three predictor variables were tested using relative weight analysis (Johnson, 2000).

### 2.2.3 Results

First, confirmatory factor analyses were conducted, where the hypothesized model outperformed several alternative models. Second, several analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted which showed that the transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness manipulations were successful. In addition, discriminant and convergent validity of the manipulation for character and transformational leadership were checked. Results show high correlations between the manipulation and the associated manipulation-check items ( $r = .72-.74$ ) and only low correlations between the manipulation and the

---

manipulation-check items of the other manipulated aspects ( $r = .25-.38$ ). Two two-steps MANOVAs showed, that integrity ( $\Delta\eta^2 = .05-.18$ ) in the first, and humility/forgiveness ( $\Delta\eta^2 = .09-.19$ ) in the second, explained an additional amount of variance in WBF ( $\Delta\eta^2 = .18-.19$ ) and stress ( $\Delta\eta^2 = .05-.09$ ), as hypothesized.

In Study 2b, again the hypothesized model was tested against alternative models by means of confirmatory factor analyses, which confirmed the hypothesized model. Hypotheses were tested using hierarchical regression analyses on WBF and stress. Neuroticism was controlled within the regression model on stress. Regarding WBF, transformational leadership explained a certain amount of variance, whereas integrity and humility/forgiveness, both explained variance above and beyond transformational leadership. Regarding employees' perception of stress, only humility/forgiveness explained variance, neither transformational leadership nor integrity did. Relative weight analysis revealed that regarding WBF transformational leadership and integrity has the same importance as predictors, and twice as high than humility/forgiveness. In regard to employees' perception of stress, only humility/forgiveness explained variance above and beyond the control variable neuroticism.

#### 2.2.4 Conclusion

Study 2 examined the impact of transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness on two important outcome variables (WBF & stress), as well as the incremental impact of integrity and humility/forgiveness above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership. Whereas all hypotheses were supported within the scenario study, in the field study, neither transformational leadership, nor integrity could explain variance in employees' perceived stress, but only humility did. In comparison to the relation between transformational leadership and stress in the study from Gill et al. (2006), which found a  $R^2$  of .13 to .18, the relation found in the current study is much smaller. This difference may be caused by a different operationalization of stress. Both integrity and humility/forgiveness had a great impact on WBF and a moderate impact on followers' perceived stress in the scenario study. In the field study, only humility/forgiveness has found to be moderately related to employees' stress level.

When examining the incremental validity of integrity and humility/forgiveness, both variables had an additional high impact on WBF and a small to moderate impact on stress in the scenario study. The additional explained variance of the two character aspects in the field study, however, was much lower. Integrity yielded moderate incremental validity for WBF, whereas the relation of humility/forgiveness was only small, though significant. Nevertheless, this is an important contribution to the literature. In comparison, Judge and Piccolo (2004) found in their meta-analysis an incremental validity of  $R^2 = .14$  on follower satisfaction with the leader beyond the impact of transformational leadership for all three aspects of transactional and laissez-faire leadership combined. Thus, integrity and humility/forgiveness

---

both lead to greater incremental validity in a very similar outcome variable than transactional leadership and laissez faire combined. Furthermore, followers' health and well-being (i.e., followers' perception of stress) is a relatively under-examined outcome variable within transformational leadership and leadership character research. No study could be found in the literature comparing the incremental effect on stress above and beyond that of transformational leadership.

The second study revealed that in order to explain variance in WBF, integrity and transformational leadership are equally important. Humility/forgiveness has been found to be only half as important as integrity and transformational leadership. Though, in terms of explaining stress variance between individuals; humility/forgiveness dominated over one well-known positive leadership concept (i.e., transformational leadership) as well as another positive character aspect (i.e., integrity).

The study results emphasize the importance of leaders' integrity and humility/forgiveness, for leaders to have subordinates who willingly follow and, thus, work for them. Second, reduced stress is at least equally important for companies that want to reduce health problems and their associated costs. Job stress is significantly related to burnout (Gill et al., 2006), which is always associated with high costs for the affected companies. Not only researchers, but also companies should have a keen interest in the health of their employees—at the very least because they are required to pay for every sick day. Hence, leaders' character does not only influence subordinates' attitudes toward their leader, but also effects the whole organization.

## 2.3 Study 3

### 2.3.1 Purpose

The aims of Study 3 were (1) to examine the impact of two distinct aspects of leaders' character (i.e., integrity & humility) on two distinct types of trust (i.e., cognitive trust & affective trust), (2) to provide evidence that integrity is primarily related to cognitive trust, whereas humility is primarily related to affective trust, (3) to replicate the results in a second sample, where common method variance is controlled.

Regarding the first aim, trust is a very crucial foundation in working environments, not least because employees must trust each other to work together effectively (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Kramer, 1999). At the very least, leaders must have subordinates who trust them to fulfill their task of 'leading' (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Therefore, trust is a well examined outcome variable within leadership research. However, Dirks and Ferrin (2002) found that, with few exceptions, almost all studies used a one-dimensional definition to measure trust, and research distinguishing both antecedents, is still scarce (Yang & Mossholder, 2010; Zhu, Newman, Miao, & Hooke, 2013). Brown and Treviño (2006) have suggested that ethical leadership is linked to both, cognitive and affective trust, which could be shown years later (Lu, 2014; Newman, Kiazad, Miao, & Cooper, 2014). Even, single aspects of leaders have been shown

---

to be positively related to followers' trust in the leader. Whereas leaders' integrity has already been examined concerning trust, resulting in positive effects (Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2012; Liborius, 2014; Palanski, Kahai, & Yammarino, 2011; Palanski & Yammarino, 2011), almost nothing can be found about leaders' humility relation to subordinates' trust (for an exception, see Liborius, 2014). Concerning the second aim, the distinction between cognitive and affective trust has received empirical support (Holste & Fields, 2005; Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; McAllister, 1995; Webber & Klimoski, 2004). The distinction between these two types of trust requires two distinct systems of social-psychological processes (Chua, Ingram, & Morris, 2008). Chua et al. (2008) argued that cognitive based trust involves a calculative and instrumental assessment, whereas affective trust involves empathy and a general emphasis on the relationship between trustor and trustee. Bedi, Alpaslan, and Green (2015) and Chua et al. (2008) named the cognitive form of trust 'trust from the head', which is based on leaders' capabilities such as competence, integrity, and reliability (McAllister, 1995). They called the affective part of trust 'trust from the heart', which refers to leaders' consideration, care, and concern (McAllister, 1995). Thus, this represents a distinction between an intellectual and emotional dimension of trust (Kennedy & Schweitzer, 2015). This distinction builds the foundation for the hypotheses that integrity is primarily related to cognitive trust, and humility is primarily related to affective trust.

In regard to the third aim, the hypotheses were again tested with a second sample with two methodological adjustments. As some of the variables are highly correlated among each other, the variables in the second sample were assessed within two measurement times with a one month interval. In addition, marker variable technique was applied in order to test and control for common method variance.

### 2.3.2 Method

In the first sample (Study 3a) 252 employees who work at least 16 hours per week and have been with their current supervisor for at least three months, took part in the online survey. One part (N=152) was invited by a German service provider ([www.umfrageteilnehmer.de](http://www.umfrageteilnehmer.de)) similar to mechanical turk (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). The other part (N=102) was invited by several initial contacts. Integrity was measured using Moorman et al. (2013) measure of perceived leader integrity. Humility was measured using Owens, Johnson, and Mitchell's (2013) measure of expressed humility. Cognitive- and affective trust were measured using items from McAllister (1995). In addition, neuroticism was included as a control variable, which was measured using items from Rammstedt and John (2005).

In the second sample (Study 3b) participants were invited through flyers and initial contacts which have not been participants in the first study. The measures were the same as in the first sample. In addition, bureaucracy was assessed as a marker variable in order to control for common method variance. Another

---

adjustment was that integrity and humility and the marker variable was assessed at one measurement time and cognitive- and affective trust one month later at the second measurement time.

Hypotheses were tested simultaneously by means of structural equation modeling, in both studies. In Study 3b the marker variable was additionally introduced to the model to control for common method variance.

### 2.3.3 Results

In the first study, confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the proposed measurement model has an acceptable fit, and was superior when tested against alternative models, including Harmon's one-factor test. Thus, the results support the measurement model and the distinctiveness between the two leader aspects and the two types of trust. Structural equation modeling supported the hypotheses, that integrity is primarily related to cognitive trust ( $\beta = .73$  vs.  $\beta = .25$ ), and humility is primarily related to affective trust ( $\beta = .66$  vs.  $\beta = .21$ ).

In the second study, common method variance was tested and controlled following the latent marker variable approach presented by Williams, Hartman, and Cavazotte (2010). Results indicate, that common method variance was present and therefore controlled in subsequent analyses. First, results of the structural equation model were a bit different compared to the results in Study 3a. Whereas integrity still was primarily related to cognitive trust, integrity and humility were equally related to affective trust. Thus, a second model was tested where cognitive trust was tested as a mediator between integrity and affective trust. Results showed that cognitive trust fully mediated the relation of integrity to affective trust, which in turn led to the result that humility (and not integrity) was again primarily related to affective trust.

### 2.3.4 Conclusion

Previous research on the relation of leadership and trust is large, but not so for the distinction between cognitive and affective trust. Even looking at previous research, which take the distinction between cognitive and affective trust into account, no differences of diverse leadership aspects were reported. However, the present study has brought us new insights in showing us a strong relation of leaders' integrity and followers' cognitive trust, as well as between leaders' humility and followers' affective trust, which was shown by the results based on two distinct samples. Thus, the relation of both leaders' integrity and humility on followers' trust were distinct, as hypothesized. The results show that leaders' integrity directly relate to followers' cognitive trust, and leaders' humility directly relates to followers' affective trust as hypothesized. In Study 3b, integrity relates also to affective trust, not directly, but through cognitive trust as a mediator. This latter finding is in line with the argumentation of McAllister (1995), who suggested that some level of cognitive trust maybe necessary to further develop affective

---

trust. As baseline expectations like integrity (i.e., reliability, dependability) are met, followers invest further in relationships, where attributes of affective trust may emerge.

In order to enhance the relation with their subordinates, leaders should pay attention to those results. In past research, it has been repeatedly argued that the deeper types of trust (i.e., affective trust) are more stable over time even when minor trust violations occur (Lewick & Bunker, 1996; McAllister, 1995; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). In addition, affective trust has been shown to reduce emotional problems (Williams, 2001) and allow any behavioral problems to be forgiven (Jones & George, 1998; McAllister, 1995). Affective trust also relates more strongly to positive outcome variables (e.g., OCB, extra-role behavior, commitment, performance), than cognitive trust (Webber, 2008; Yang & Mossholder, 2010; Zhu et al., 2013). Based on the fact that leaders' humility is the aspect that most closely relates to this form of trust, the role of humility in leadership should not be underestimated.

---

## 3 General Discussion

### 3.1 Summary of Results

The central aim of the present work was to examine the impact of leaders' character on subordinates' attitudes and behavior towards their leader and work. This impact was examined in three studies. In Study 1 the impact of three aspects—integrity, humility/forgiveness, and interest/gratitude—were examined on WBF, voice behavior, OCB, and trust, whereas additionally three personality traits of participants were taken into account as moderators. Study 2 concentrated on leaders' integrity and humility/forgiveness and their additional impact above and beyond the impact of a well-known leadership concept (transformational leadership) on WBF and employees' stress. Study 3 further concentrated on the impact of integrity and humility (not combined with forgiveness) on cognitive and affective trust. Note, that integrity and humility in the third study was measured differently as in Study 1 and 2.

In general, the impact of leaders' character was confirmed in every study. The greatest impact could be observed on followers' perception of their leader as worthy of being followed (WBF), but also moderate to large effects could be observed on OCB and voice behavior, and even on employees' perception of stress, especially regarding the impact of leaders' humility. Moreover, the last study brought a closer look to the distinct impact of integrity and humility on two distinct forms of trust. The next sub-sections provide a summary and discussion of the impact of each of the three aspects of leaders' character explored in the present thesis.

#### 3.1.1 Effects of Leaders' Integrity

The impact of leaders' integrity has been tested in all three studies. In the first and second study a large positive impact on WBF could be observed. Both, in the scenario experiments (Study 1 & 2) and in the online survey in Study 2. Thus, WBF is keenly dependent on leaders' integrity. A great impact of leader's integrity was also observed on followers' voice behavior in Study 1. Less impact, although still present, was shown on followers' OCB and trust toward the leader in Study 1. Integrity also showed to have an impact on followers' perceived stress in the scenario experiment in Study 2. In the field study, integrity failed to explain variance in employees' stress levels. This might be due to the conceptualization of stress within this study. However, it is also possible that integrity truly does not have an impact on employees' stress perception in natural environments.

When examining the incremental validity of integrity above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership, Study 2 showed us, that integrity had an additional high impact on WBF and a small to moderate impact on stress in the scenario study. The additional explained variance of the two character aspects in the field study, however, was much lower. Integrity yielded moderate incremental validity on

---

WBF. Study 2 was additionally used to test the relative importance of three predictors (transformational leadership and the two character aspects), which lead to the result, that concerning the explanation of variance in WBF, transformational leadership and integrity are equally important predictors. With Study 3 additional insights could be gained concerning the relation of leaders' integrity on followers' trust by the application of the two-dimensional conceptualization of trust as suggested by Dirks and Ferrin (2002). Results indicate that integrity is primarily and directly related to cognitive trust, and also indirectly to affective trust, through its relation to followers' cognitive trust.

The finding is line with the argumentation of McAllister (1995), who suggested that some level of cognitive trust maybe necessary to further develop affective trust. As baseline expectations like integrity (i.e., reliability, dependability) are met, followers invest further in relationships, where attributes of affective trust may emerge.

### 3.1.2 Effects of Leaders' Humility and Forgiveness

Results of the first scenario experiment (Study 1) showed evidence for the fact that WBF is affected to a great extent by the manifested humility/forgiveness of their leaders. The impact on OCB and trust revealed only a small effect size, but voice behavior was again much influenced by leaders' humility/forgiveness. The findings concerning WBF could be replicated in the second scenario experiment (Study 2), where humility/forgiveness had a great impact on WBF. In addition, results of Study 2 showed a moderate impact on followers' perceived stress in the scenario study, and an at least small, though significant impact in the online survey study. Leaders' humility/forgiveness explained additional three percent of variance above the influence of employees' neuroticism. This observed effect size is small, but still worth noting because of their clear contribution to the leadership literature regarding the impact of leaders' humility/forgiveness. The additionally performed relative importance analysis showed that humility/forgiveness is half as important as integrity or transformational leadership concerning the impact on WBF. Thus, the different aspects of leadership differ significantly concerning their contribution in explaining variance in WBF. Still, humility/forgiveness dominated over one well-known positive leadership concept (i.e., transformational leadership) as well as another positive character aspect (i.e., integrity) in terms of predicting employees' perceived stress. What appears clear however, is that the incremental effect of integrity and humility/forgiveness vary on diverse outcome variables. These varying effects of different aspects of leaders' character are also shown in Study 3, where humility has been shown to be directly related to affective trust, but not to cognitive trust, whereas integrity only had an indirect relation to affective trust, through cognitive trust.

---

### 3.1.3 Effects of Leaders' Interest and Gratitude

With this third examined aspect—interest/gratitude—the first study also responds to McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons, and Larson's (2001) complaint, that the aspect of gratitude has been largely neglected. The impact of interest/gratitude was only examined within the first scenario experiment (Study 1). Whereas interest/gratitude did not affect followers' trust in their leader, it did affect their organizational citizenship behavior and their voice behavior to a medium extent. Again, followers' perception of their leader as worthy of being followed (WBF) was affected most, in this case, by leaders' interest in and gratitude for their subordinates.

### 3.1.4 The moderating effect of subordinates' personality

The results of the first scenario experiment complement the findings concerning the impact of the three aspects of leaders' character by pointing to the fact, that this impact is moderated through three personality traits. Followers high on agreeableness were more affected by their leader's integrity and humility/forgiveness, as well as the leader's interest/gratitude. Agreeableness did not moderate all relations significantly, but the descriptive comparisons of the two regression *t* values for followers low versus high on agreeableness pointed mostly to that fact. The greatest observed difference between followers low and high on agreeableness was observed for the impact of a leader's humility/forgiveness on leader's perceived worthiness of being followed. Thus, for highly agreeable people, this is a crucial aspect that their leader must have in order to be perceived as worthy of being followed.

The impact of a leader's integrity on the four outcome variables was (marginally) statistically significantly moderated by followers' conscientiousness, with the exception of OCB, for which the interaction was statistically non-significant. The largest moderation effect was again observed for leaders' WBF. With regard to followers' neuroticism, moderation effects were found for the impact of all three aspects of leaders' character. The impact of leaders' integrity on OCB was greatly moderated by this personality trait, as well as the impact of leaders' interest/gratitude. Thus, the present doctoral thesis also adds to the literature by addressing moderating effects of leadership impact due to subordinates' personality.

## 3.2 Limitations and Future Perspectives

Although this research makes several contributions to research regarding leaders' character and its impact on important outcome variables, several limitations should be noted. The strength of the studies presented above lies in the combination of experimental and field data, although both research methods alone are subject to various weaknesses. The scenario experiments, which used vignettes in which participants assumed the role of the subordinate, may not have provided sufficient information for participants to obtain a clear idea of how it is to be in the described situation. As a result, their answers

---

might be too hypothetical. Nevertheless, the scenario experiment allows for causality interpretations, which is an important contribution to this relatively new area of research. The weakness lies in the external validity of the study results. Followers' short interaction with their leader presented in this scenario is not typical of reality. Thus, the results presented as well as their implications are to some extent limited to what participants think they would do or how they would react in the hypothetical situation. One may criticize rightly that a relationship emerges over a period of time with many different experienced encounters with the leader and that we cannot project these results simply to the field. Without a doubt, a field study with real leaders and real followers is the design of preference. Nevertheless, these manipulations showed that leaders' character influence leadership perceptions, at least first impressions. In addition, it was initially important to have the opportunity to clearly manipulate and examine certain aspects of character, without any disturbing or confounding variables. Moreover, previous research on leadership has shown that scenario experiments can yield similar results as laboratory and field studies (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002, 2004; De Cremer, van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Mullenders, & and Stinglhamber, 2005; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005; Dipboye, 1990). And there are many more examples of using scenario studies in leadership research (De Cremer, 2006; Connelly and Ruark, 2010; Giessner, van Knippenberg, & Sleebos, 2009; Trichas and Schyns, 2012). Furthermore, Study 2b and Study 3a and Study 3b were online survey studies with real leaders' and subordinates within a cross-sectional study design, respectively. In Study 2b findings from Study 1 and Study 2a could partially be replicated. However, the cross-sectional design of the later studies does not allow for interpretations of causality. For example, in regard of Study 3, it is possible that subordinates who trust their leader perceive him or her to have more integrity and humility as a result. Thus, causal inferences should be made with caution. In future research, longitudinal designs should be applied to study the direction of the observed relations.

Another clear limitation in all studies is the use of self-report data only. Otherwise, in the Study 1 and Study 2b, experimental manipulation was used to assess leaders' attributes (i.e., leaders' character aspects in both studies, and transformational leadership in Study 2a). Moreover, the majority of the examined outcome variables (i.e., WBF, stress, cognitive- and affective trust) are accurately measured by self-report. OCB and voice behavior could have also been measured by colleagues or their supervisor. As for integrity, Palanski and Yammarino (2011) remind us that leaders' integrity is typically in the eye of the beholder. The same can be applied regarding leaders' humility. Nevertheless, for the measurement of integrity in the field study, data may have been more accurate if the leaders have been rated by their superiors instead of being rated by their respective followers – at the very least to avoid common source bias. However, leadership character is only influential in the sense that it is perceived by followers. Thus, it is a valid method to allow followers rate their perceptions of their leaders' integrity and humility/forgiveness. Another issue is the use of non-validated measures for integrity and humility/forgiveness, in Study 1 and 2. Although, the items were obviously orientated on the definitions

---

given above, both constructs were measured by only a few items. Therefore, Study 3 made use of more established measurement methods – Moorman et al.'s (2013) integrity measure and Owens et al.'s (2013) humility measure.

A further issue is related to the high correlation of the leadership variables in Study 2b and Study 3. This high correlation could be seen as indicating common-method variance. Yet, there are two reasons that speak against it. First, there are other studies in which similar leadership aspects were also highly correlated (e.g., Basford et al., 2014; Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2015). Second, Harmon's single factor test was utilized, which revealed that no single or general factor emerged to account for all the variance. In addition, also other possible alternative measurement models were tested, whereas the hypothesized model remained superior. Concerning Study 3b, the study yield similar results as Study 3a, with a study design with two measurement points to prevent common method bias, by assessing the predictor and outcome variables with a one month gap. The still may existing common method variance was controlled in the second study using structural equation modeling. Though, this research artifact cannot be completely ruled out.

I would like to encourage researchers through the publication of the articles, which combine to my doctoral thesis, to examine the discovered impact of leaders' character and followers' personality in real organizations. Furthermore, this study examined the effects of only a few forms of manifestations of the three character aspects. There are many other forms and situations in which such character aspects matter and manifest themselves. In addition, it may be interesting to look for a combination of several aspects of character. The interplay of some good aspects of character and some bad ones seems also worth studying. Moreover, further outcomes that character has on followers (stress, affliction, and absenteeism) and organizational outcomes (performance, goal commitment, and efficiency) should be examined. In addition, a highly interesting approach would be to develop and conduct longitudinal studies to observe how leaders' character can change the attitudes, beliefs, and organizational behavior of their followers over a period of time.

Moreover, little is known about the factors that may foster or hinder the occurrence of the examined aspects of leaders' character. Thus, the antecedents of certain character aspects remain unclear. As they are highly correlated with each other (i.e., integrity, humility, and transformational leadership), it is quite possible that these aspects may have similar antecedents. Another possibility is that integrity and humility act as antecedents of certain leadership styles. Peus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun, and Frey (2012), for example, showed that self-knowledge and self-consistency are antecedents of authentic leadership, which are both close to integrity (i.e., self-consistency) and humility (i.e., self-knowledge).

Finally, Owens et al. (2011) raise the question whether humble leaders might not be assertive enough in their groups to excel. Research on the possibly negative effects of humility will be able to answer these questions and gain the bigger picture.

---

### 3.3 Implications for Leadership Practice

The findings of the three studies have clear implications for leadership practice. Based on the positive impact of integrity, humility/forgiveness, and interest/gratitude on WBF, leaders are well advised to ensure to transmit these aspects, because first and foremost, it is important for leaders to have subordinates who willingly follow and, thus, work with them. In regard of the results in Study 2 also companies should keep an eye on these results, because integrity, as well as humility/forgiveness relate to followers' perceived stress. To reduce stress is at least equally important for companies that want to reduce health problems and their associated costs. Gill et al. (2006) showed that job-stress is significantly related to burnout, which is always associated with high costs for the affected companies. Therefore, not only researchers, but also companies should have a keen interest in the health of their employees – at the very least because they are required to pay for every sick day. Sarros, Cooper, and Hartigan (2006) measured seven character aspects in a sample of 238 Australian managers – humility was associated with the lowest value among the seven aspects, especially for managers in the upper echelon. This indicates that the aspect of humility is in most need of development. Beyond the positive impact examined in Study 1-3, humility and forgiveness have the potential to give birth to an organization with a courteous, self-reflecting, understanding and harmonious culture (Chiu et al., 2012). Thus, it may be necessary to change the way in which today's leaders are educated. Crossan, Mazutis, and Seijts (2013) discussed the question of humility's trainability. Vera and Rodriguez-Lopez (2004) argued that humility can be learned just like any other virtues, although it is a long process. The same applies for integrity. Study results have point to the importance of leaders' integrity and humility. Followers' perception of these aspects within their leader, seem to enhance their cognitive and affective trust. Referring to Martin (1998), trust is the root of all great leadership. Whereas integrity may relate to affective trust mediated by cognitive trust, humility has shown to be directly related to affective trust, which gives humility an important role within leadership behavior. In order to enhance the relation with their subordinates, leaders should pay attention to those results. Moreover, in past research, it has been repeatedly argued that the deeper types of trust (i.e., affective trust) are more stable over time even when minor trust violations occur (Lewick & Bunker, 1996; McAllister, 1995; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). In addition, affective trust has been shown to reduce emotional problems (Williams, 2001) and allow any behavioral problems to be forgiven (Jones & George, 1998; McAllister, 1995). Affective trust also relates more strongly to positive outcome variables (e.g., OCB, extra-role behavior, commitment, performance), than cognitive trust (Webber, 2008; Yang & Mossholder, 2010; Zhu et al., 2013). Based on the fact that leaders' humility is the aspect that most closely relates to this form of trust, the role of humility in leadership should not be underestimated.

---

## II – Original Manuscripts

---

## 4 Study 1: Who is Worthy of Being Followed? The Impact of Leaders' Character and the Moderating Role of Followers' Personality

### 4.1 Abstract

The study of character found its way into leadership research through different kinds of leadership concepts. And indeed, there are some significant reasons for why character is worth studying and cannot be left out of the leadership equation. However, the explicit study of certain aspects of character is rare. Therefore, this study examined the impact of three aspects of leaders' character (integrity, humility and forgiveness, and interest and gratitude) on followers' perceptions of the leader's worthiness of being followed, followers' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and followers' voice behavior. In addition, the moderating effects of followers' personality traits (agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism) were examined. Data from 626 participants of a scenario experiment supported the impact of leaders' character as well as the moderating impact of followers' personalities. Theoretical implications for what it means to truly follow and practical implications for what it means to truly lead are given.

### 4.2 Introduction

Several years ago, the concept of *character* found its way into the study and discussion of leadership. Research on this issue came from different leadership concepts, amongst which are: Ethical Leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006), Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), Authentic Leadership (George, 2003; Avolio & Gardner, 2005), Authentic Transformational Leadership (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999), Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), and Worthy Leadership (Thompson, Grahek, Phillips, & Fay, 2008). Reasons for this emergence mentioned in the leadership literature ranged from corporate leadership scandals, such as the Enron, WorldCom, and Tyco debacles, the failures of many U.S. financial institutions, as well as ongoing concerns about the ethics of political leaders (Riggio et al., 2010). Grahek, Thompson, and Toliver (2010) propose that there are at least two different types of failure: Those caused by leaders' weakness in capacity and those caused by leaders' weakness in character. Several years earlier, McKenna (1989) and later Grahek et al. (2010) as well as Thompson et al. (2008) argued that leaders should have several essential attributes, amongst those, competence as a necessary but not sufficient characteristic for explaining leadership success, and that there is growing evidence that character complements the equation of leadership success (Grahek et al., 2010). Indeed, there are several reasons for why this subject should not be neglected, neither by researchers nor by practitioners.

---

First, Gini (2004) as well as Bennis (2007) emphasizes that all forms of leadership must make use of power and that the question is not “will it be used?” but rather “will it be used wisely?” As Maner and Mead (2010) remind us that power leads people to become disinhibited and to act on the basis of their own preferences and goals, to objectify others, and to become narcissistic, we have to put character into the leadership equation. Second, Upper Echelons Theory (UET; Hambrick & Mason, 1984) argues that senior executives confront so many ambiguous stimuli that their personalities, values, and experiences greatly affect their interpretations of events, decisions, and actions. Third, Kaiser, Hogan, and Craig (2008) remind us—referring to earlier publications—that leaders’ behaviors and decisions are symbolic expressions of their values, motives, and worldviews, and that these create a climate. Confirmation of this fact comes from Schein (2004), who says that deliberate role modeling is one of the primary embedding mechanism by which leaders create, maintain, and sometimes change their group culture. Bandura’s social learning theory (1977) posits that most human behavior is learned from observation. Weiss (1977) provided an example for the organizational context. He found that the amount of similarity in leadership style between superiors and subordinates was a function of subordinates’ perceptions of supervisors’ success and competence. Brown and Treviño (2006) found that followers learn about ethical contexts by observing and emulating the behavior of leaders and others in their work environments. Thus, we have to put into our minds the idea that character matters, not only because it determines the behavior of leaders, but also, sooner or later, the behavior of their subordinates, too. The study described in this article contributes to the present research in several ways, which will now be described to provide an overview of the aim of this study.

#### 4.2.1 A Brief Framework for this Article

First, this study is an answer to the call for research from Sperry (1999) to study the components of character systematically. Sauer (2011) is interested in how leaders’ behaviors influence subordinates’ perceptions of trust, their willingness to accept influence, and their desire to contribute to a team process. The systematic study of certain aspects of character is still rare. An exception is the most recently published article by Palanski and Yammarino (2011), which examined the effect of behavioral integrity on follower job performance.

The present study aims to fill the still existing gap. Three aspects of character should be examined separately: (a) integrity, (b) humility and forgiveness, and (c) interest and gratitude for followers. The selection of these characteristics was the result of the above-mentioned leadership concepts and the therein mentioned aspects that belong to leadership character. Integrity is part of servant leadership (Russel & Stone, 2002) and authentic leadership (Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005; Shamir & Eilam, 2005). Leaders’ genuine interest in followers is part of ethical leadership (Peus, Kerschreiter, Frey, & Traut-Mattausch, 2010) as well as of spiritual leadership (Fry & Cohen, 2009). In addition, Peterson and

---

Seligman's (2004) review resulted in 24 characteristics, among them also caring for others and gratitude and appreciation. Humility and Forgiveness are explicitly mentioned in the worthy leadership model (Thompson et al., 2008), and Sosik and Cameron (2010) call specifically for studying the effects of forgiveness/mercy. In the survey by Grahek et al. (2010), 25.7% of the participants selected a lack of Humility, Gratitude, and Forgiveness (HGF) as contributing to leadership failure.

Hence, these three aspects of character (integrity, humility & forgiveness, interest & gratitude) were chosen to be examined in this study with regard to their impact on certain relevant outcome variables whose selection will be explained below. Preceding, one further call for research, which has been addressed in this study, will be illustrated.

One other keen call for research on leadership is about the psychology of the follower. Maner and Mead (2010) suggest that, to provide a fuller picture, research should also examine the psychology of followers. De Cremer, Mayer, van Dijke, Schouten, and Bardes (2009) emphasize that leaders do not exist without followers. Therefore, it is important to understand how characteristics of the follower influence the effects of leaders. This call has existed for more than a decade and was already mentioned by Lord, Brown, and Freiberg (1999), who stated that the follower remains an underexplored source of variance in understanding leadership processes. Bringing the two aims together, the aim of this study is to analyze the impact of certain aspects of leaders' character while simultaneously taking into account the personality of the follower. Now, speaking of impact, we must identify the outcome variables that are most important in leadership practice; thus, they will be most important in research as well.

## 4.3 Theory

### 4.3.1 Worthiness of Being Followed

In studying the impact of leadership behavior at all, we have to ask the question of what the most important outcomes in leadership are. Thus, the same question applies when we study the impact of leadership character. When talking about leadership, we are talking about people who have followers; that is, not only subordinates, but indeed followers. Thus, the outcome of the willingness to follow the leader is fundamental. Bennis (2007) illustrates the importance to us: "When speaking on the subject, I often show a slide that includes dozens of names, from Sitting Bull and Susan B. Anthony to Kofi Annan and Carly Fiorina, and I ask the audience what these leaders have in common. In fact, the single commonality among these men and women is that all of them have or had willing followers" (p. 3). Especially in times of crisis and instability, such as when fast changes occur in the work place or environment, leaders need willing followers, and followers need those leaders who are worthy of being followed. Simons (2002) summarizes in his review that the extent to which employees are willing to be influenced is critical for effective management and change implementation. Consequently, we have to ask the question of what it means to be willing to follow a leader, and respectively, how followers see

---

and behave toward their leader when they perceive him/her as worthy of being followed. With respect to willingness, four variables will be discussed. Proposing that these are essential aspects of the concept worthiness of being followed (WBF): Trust and loyalty toward the leader, perceived competence of the leader, and the perception of the leader as a worthy role model. At this point I want to make the meaning of the WBF concept plain to the reader. It's not about aggregating several relatively clear constructs into a larger, fuzzier construct. In fact, the interest aims to get to know what it's like to say, my leader, in my eyes, is worthy of being followed“. Thus, I suggest that subordinates who have a feeling of loyalty and trust toward their leader as well as they perceive their leader as competent and as a worthy role model, they will state, My leader is worthy of being followed. In other words, to say that a leader is worthy of being followed means, that this leader is perceived as competent and as a worthy role model, as well as subordinates have a feeling of trust and loyalty towards him/ her.

*Trust.* Norman, Avolio, and Luthans (2010) bring together a definition of trust, based on several research literatures, which define trust in terms of a willingness to be vulnerable in one's relationship with another person based on positive expectations regarding that person's behavior, involving a willingness to be exposed to and take risks with that individual. The importance of gaining trust is shown by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990) by revealing that the success of transformational leadership depends on whether followers trust the leader or not. To summarize the importance of trust in leadership and to argue that it belongs under WBF, Martin (1998) says “Trust is at the root of all great leadership” (p. 41). These facts speak of trust as an essential aspect of the WBF concept.

*Loyalty.* Researchers handle loyalty as a form of commitment the follower makes to his/her leader (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2002; Chen, Tsui, & Farh, 2002). This form of commitment, as a form of identification with and willingness to follow the leader, is another component one must perceive of one's leader in order to judge the leader as worth following. Corresponding to this, Simon (2006) suggests that when organizational members feel disconnected from their leadership, a decrease in employees' loyalty is also likely. On this account, Rich (1997) and Podsakoff et al. (1990) view trust and loyalty as going hand in hand. Therefore, loyalty is treated as a part of the WBF concept in this study.

*Role model.* Covey (1990) believed that role modeling is the foundation for leader influence, and Maxwell (1998) said “the true measure of leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less” (p. 11). Thus, a leader has to be a worthy role model if he/she wants to be seen as worth following. For this reason, being a role model is proposed to be part of the WBF concept.

*Competence.* The fourth aspect that I suggest belongs to the concept of WBF is competence, more precisely, the follower's perception of the leader's competence. For Mishra (1996), competence belongs to one of four bases, upon which trust and therefore a willingness to follow are built. Gabriel (1997) argued that when followers work closely with an omnipotent, unafraid, and capable leader, they often develop a sense of loyalty, supposing that loyalty and competence go hand in hand. Another connection

---

is evident with the leader role-modeling function. Weiss (1977) found that subordinates' perceptions of their supervisors' success and competence lead to similarity between supervisors' and subordinates' leadership styles. Linking competence with role model and loyalty and hence with the willingness to follow the leader, competence is treated as the fourth part of the WBF concept.

#### 4.3.2 Voice Behavior

Mary Hawthorne said "If you encourage your colleagues, leadership can come from anywhere. And you don't need to have all the answers yourself. In fact, most of the answers can come from people who know the business, trust each other, and have the opportunity to exchange their ideas openly" (Kilburg & Donohue, 2011, p. 18). When speaking of the impact of leadership, this statement indicates a second important outcome variable. Van Dyne and LePine (1998) define followers' voice behavior as "promotive behavior that emphasizes expression of constructive challenge intended to improve rather than merely criticize" (p. 109). In today's rapidly changing work environment and newly established approaches to remain capable of competing, every employee is asked to be part of the innovation process. Therefore, it is a crucial point with respect to a company's success. Hence, leadership creates a better climate in which voice behavior increases instead of cutting off all sources of information. Concerning this matter, Burke, Sims, Lazzara, and Salas (2007) point to several aspects that show why communication from subordinates is important: Leaders can gain an understanding of what is working, what is not, and are able to make needed adjustments. In addition, they can gain insight from those who are performing the task and are able to identify new approaches for future performance. Consequently, followers' voice behavior was chosen to be an important outcome for measuring the impact of leadership, especially of a leader's character.

#### 4.3.3 Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) is seen as voluntary behavior that transcends an employee's specified role requirement and as a matter of personal choice, which is not formally rewarded by the organization (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). Although none of these things are formally required by the organization or job description, all of these behaviors will assist in removing barriers to performance and will thereby indirectly or directly benefit the organization (Burke et al., 2007). These definitions describe a work behavior that is utterly important for a well-functioning work process in every working team or company. In addition, theory and cumulative research suggest that group-level OCB contributes to organizational performance (Nielsen, Hrivnak, & Shaw, 2009; Podsakoff, Blume, Whiting, & Podsakoff, 2009), which is a component that researchers must not forget when discussing the impact and effectiveness of leadership and its stimulating component. Therefore, OCB is the third outcome variable on which the impact of the leader's character will be examined in this article.

---

#### 4.3.4 Leader's Character

One important issue was to analyze the impact of leaders' character independently of any certain leadership concept. The three aspects of leadership character will now be introduced in more detail, as well as their expected effects on these described outcome variables. Therefore, one aspect after the other, including their connections with the outcome variables will be explained, and hypotheses will be developed. In examining the connection between the following aspects of leaders' character and their worthiness of being followed (WBF), we must keep in mind that WBF includes loyalty, trust, the perception of competence, and the perception that the leader is a worthy role model. Thus, theories from former research regarding the connection between each character aspect and the four variables included in WBF were consulted in order to develop hypotheses on Character-WBF.

*Integrity.* Clawson (1999) maintains that the moral foundation of effective leadership incorporates integrity, which results from four essential values: truth-telling, promise-keeping, fairness, and respect for the individual. Palanski and Yammarino (2007) concluded, after reviewing the integrity literature, that integrity means many things, including word/action consistency and being honest. Grahek et al. (2010) emphasize, when referring to leaders who have integrity, that they maintain consistency in their words and behavior across situations and that they candidly and openly share information.

Kernis (2003) argued that a key outcome of openness and truthfulness is a high level of trust. Schminke, Ambrose, and Neubaum (2005), for example, showed that consistency between the words and behaviors of leaders has been helpful in setting up a sense of trust among followers within a group. Furthermore, Kouzes and Posner (1993) argue that managers' credibility is necessary for the development of employee loyalty and commitment. Last, Kouzes and Posner (2004) surveyed people about character attributes they look for in leaders whose direction they would willingly follow; nearly 90% indicated honesty. Therefore, it was expected that a leader's integrity would have a positive influence on followers' perception of their leader as worthy of being followed (WBF).

Based on the impact that integrity has on WBF, we can derive from the literature the impact it would have on OCB. It has been suggested that when trust is established, employees are more willing to go above and beyond the required tasks because a relationship has been developed (Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993). Research by Mayer and Gavin (2005) showed that those who experience more honest and trusting relationships with their supervisors present higher levels of OCB.

Similar to the relation between integrity and OCB that was derived from the impact that integrity has on WBF, there is also evidence for an impact of integrity on followers' voice behavior. Trust has been shown to have influences on communication, cooperation, and information sharing (Ferrin, Dirks, & Shah, 2003). Burke et al. (2007) state that if trust is lacking, people may even withhold information.

---

Thus, hindering the flow of information, but if trust is established, communication lines will be opened up to transmit needed information, which can lead to innovation and error remediation/prevention. Taken together, the following hypotheses were developed.

Hypothesis 1: Leaders' integrity has a positive impact on a) leaders' WBF, b) followers' OCB, and c) on followers' voice behavior.

*Humility and Forgiveness.* Peterson and Seligman (2004) describe forgiveness as granting pardon to those who have harmed or wronged us. For Thompson et al. (2008) and Grahek et al. (2010) Humility and Forgiveness are both seen as a fundamental orientation to leadership and life that includes effectively handling oneself in a nonegocentric, positive, and offence-resistant manner. Humility and Forgiveness were grouped together as one aspect in this research because, for people who think and behave in a humbling manner, it is evident that practicing forgiveness is easier for them. Thus, they are treated as going hand in hand.

The model proposed by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) examined benevolence as one of the antecedents of trust. Claiming that through humility and forgiveness, benevolence is practiced, it would also be expected that humility and forgiveness would have a positive impact on WBF. Peterson and Seligmann (2004) warn that excessive pride, hubris, and narcissism cause other people to react negatively. Thus, pointing to the fact that the opposite—namely, humility and forgiveness—should lead people to think and behave positively toward their leader and therefore increase leaders' WBF. In addition, Sosik and Cameron (2010), referring to Bass (1985), remind us that “when leaders sacrifice self-gain for the good of others, they set a very positive example and are seen as role models by their followers” (p. 256). Given that being a role model belongs to the WBF factor, this self-sacrificing or humbling behavior should affect leaders' WBF as well as followers' OCB and voice behavior. More evidence for the impact of humility and forgiveness on OCB comes from De Cremer and van Knippenberg (2004). They showed that leaders' self-sacrifice is positively related to important outcomes such as follower cooperation and collective identification. Thus, leaders' humble and forgiving behavior should have a positive impact on followers' OCB. Given that a leader behaves in a humble and forgiving manner, followers' should have the opportunity to transmit information to their leader freely because he/she will handle this type of pro-work behavior in a manner that gladly receives the information rather than all-knowingly rejects it. Putting all of this information together, the following hypotheses were developed.

Hypothesis 2: Leaders' humility and forgiveness has a positive impact a) on leaders' WBF, b) on followers' OCB, and c) on followers' voice behavior.

*Interest and Gratitude.* Interest and gratitude encompass a genuine caring attitude toward the follower and being grateful for more than just successful results at work. Caring involves a genuine concern for

---

others' pain, and kindness—seen as similar to caring—means to be generous, to nurture, and to care for others and show compassion (Sosik & Cameron, 2010). Autry (2001) makes it plain that “leadership is not about controlling people; it’s about caring for people and being a useful resource for people” (p. 29). Another aspect related to interest and gratitude is benevolence. Leaders who are perceived to genuinely care about their followers and convey authentic concern in relationships are called benevolent (Caldwell & Hayes, 2007).

Liden, Wayne, Zhao, and Henderson (2008), for example, showed that servant leaders gained team members' trust by showing concern for them. Benevolence—as already mentioned above—is one of the antecedents of trust, proposed by Mayer et al. (1995). Showing concern for followers is one way for transformational leaders to increase their followers' trust levels (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Further evidence for the impact of leaders' concern for their followers on being viewed as trustworthy has been shown by several researchers (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000; Gillespie & Mann, 2004). Taken together, there seems to be enough evidence for the impact of interest and gratitude on leaders' WBF. Zhu, Avolio, Riggio, and Sosik (2011) proposed that if followers perceive a caring and ethical climate, they are more likely to adopt the same kind of caring behavior, such as sacrificing their own interests and looking at the fundamental interests of the members inside and outside the group, which should boost organizational citizenship behavior. In addition, Burke et al. (2007) stated that those subordinates who perceive their leaders to be benevolent—keep in mind that interest and gratitude express benevolence—are also more likely to reciprocate this care and concern by being motivated to work harder, persist longer, and engage in extra-role behaviors (i.e., OCB). In the same way, it seems likely that followers who perceive an interested and grateful leader and followers who see their leader as a worthy role model will show interest in their work and its improvement. Thus, an increase in follower voice behavior is likely to happen. Putting all of this information together, the following hypotheses were developed.

Hypothesis 3: Leaders' interest and gratitude has a positive impact a) on leaders' WBF, b) on followers' OCB, and c) on followers' voice behavior.

#### 4.3.5 Follower's Personality

Hannah and Avolio (2011) distinguish between locus, transmission, and reception of character: “Originating from the activation of those loci, transmission entails the ensuing behaviors the leader employs in any particular situation whereby they ‘transmit’ their leadership to others (i.e., the actions exhibited by the leader). Reception concerns how those transmissions are received by the targets of leadership. Reception includes what is perceived and interpreted and the attributions that observers make as to the locus of those behaviors; for example, ‘does this leader care about me’ or ‘are they authentic or trustworthy’” (p. 980). Thus, as the target of leadership is crucial for the way leadership

---

behavior is perceived and judged, followers' personality will likely moderate the impact of leaders' character on followers' reactions/behavior and their evaluation of their leader. Cullen and Sackett (2003) and Kamdar and Van Dyne (2007), demonstrated that personality is an important predictor of how an individual reacts to unfavorable work perceptions. To bring followers' personality into the greater picture, it seems plausible to begin with the Big Five factors. I expected that levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism of followers would have moderating effects on the relation between the leader's behavior—which reflects his/her character—and the follower's reaction and perception. In the following three sections, hypotheses for each of the three follower personality traits as moderators of the impact of character on followers' behavior and perceptions will be drawn.

*Agreeableness.* Costa and McCrae (1992) refer to agreeableness as a tendency to be accommodative, cooperative, pleasant, trusting, altruistic, compliant, and good natured. Barrick and Mount (1991) mentioned that other traits associated with agreeableness are forgiveness and soft-heartedness. An agreeable person, according to Rothmann and Coetzer (2003) “is fundamentally altruistic, sympathetic to others and eager to help them, and in return believes that others will be equally helpful” (p. 69). To derive moderating hypotheses for agreeableness, theories from psychological contract breach and value congruence were consulted. Both were applied to the characteristics of a person low and accordingly high on agreeableness. Values have been defined as internalized attitudes about what is appropriate and inappropriate, ethical and unethical, important or unimportant (Rokeach, 1979). Value congruence refers to the fit or similarity in terms of personal values between the leader and follower. The experience of value congruence increases interpersonal trust and personal attachment among followers (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Jung and Avolio (2000) found that value congruence was positively related to trust in leadership. In addition Jung, Yammarino, and Lee (2009) found strong relations between value congruence and loyalty as well as with trust, both of which belong to the WBF construct. In order to arrive at a decision to trust, followers must compare the trust target (i.e., leader) against some referent (i.e., themselves; Burke et al., 2007). The point of reference in this case stems from followers' own valuing of agreeableness. As people high on agreeableness value altruistic, compliant, cooperative, forgiving, and soft-heartedness behavior, they look for these properties in their leaders more than people low on this trait do. Likewise, psychological contract breaches will function as a transmitter of the moderating effect of agreeableness. The term psychological contract refers to an individual's beliefs regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that person and another party, which can be both explicit or implicit (Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993). As mentioned above, people high on agreeableness not only value certain attitudes, they also expect that others will behave in a manner congruent with their own. Here, the psychological contract arises out of an implicit promise—followers high on agreeableness in this case make themselves up. Rousseau and McLean Parks

---

(1993) propose that contract violation erodes trust and yields lower employee contributions. Robinson (1996) empirically explored the consequences of contract breach and found that a breach reduced trust and subsequently reduced employee performance, intentions to remain with the organization, and civic virtue behavior. In addition, Orvis, Dudley, and Cortina (2008) summarized some results indicating that breaches result in a decrease in trust, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. Thus, there might be a psychological contract based on the agreeableness of someone, which might lead to a breach more quickly if this contract is of a high standard. This results in a more positive or negative effect, accordingly to the leader's bad versus good character. Summarizing the effects of value congruence and psychological contract breach, there is much evidence for the suggestion that followers high on agreeableness see behaviors that are sympathetic to agreeableness as more important than other followers who are low on agreeableness. Therefore, the influence of the leader's behavior, a reflection of his/her character, on followers' perceptions and behavior should be stronger when agreeableness is high.

Hypothesis 4: The impact of a) leaders' integrity, b) leaders' humility and forgiveness, and c) leaders' interest and gratitude on the outcome variables is moderated by the agreeableness of the followers in such a way that the influence is stronger when followers' agreeableness is high.

*Conscientiousness.* People with high levels of conscientiousness are those who “experience a high degree of moral obligation; they value truth and honesty, are less corrupted by others, and maintain a high regard for duties and responsibilities” (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009, p. 1278). Moreover, they exercise self-control, plan carefully, are well-organized and reliable, and are responsible and dependable, qualities that are consistent with credibility (Brown & Treviño, 2006). We need to keep these characteristics in mind when applying both value congruence and psychological contract breach for the development of the moderating hypothesis for conscientiousness. As described above, truthfulness, word and deed consistency, and reliability emerge from integrity. Thus, whether or not to exercise integrity is highly important for people high on conscientiousness, more so than for those who score low on that trait. Therefore, value congruence as well as psychological contract is affected when perceiving the leader in the appropriate or inappropriate manner. Thus, for these reasons mentioned above, it could be reasoned that followers who are high on conscientiousness, which means that they value truth and honesty and think carefully about the behavior and actions of their leaders' before they react accordingly, attach more importance to leaders' manifested integrity than those who are low on conscientiousness. This leads to the suggestion that the influence of leaders' integrity on followers' perceptions and behavior should be stronger when conscientiousness is high. Note that based on the above-mentioned theory and the properties of a conscientious person, it is possible to derive a hypothesis only for the effect of integrity, but not for humility and forgiveness or interest and gratitude, on followers' outcome variables.

---

Hypothesis 5: The impact of leaders' integrity on the outcome variables is moderated by the conscientiousness of the followers in such a way that the influence is stronger when followers' conscientiousness is high.

*Neuroticism.* The personality trait of neuroticism “refers to the tendency to have a negative cognitive style and to focus on self-perceptions that are unfavorable.” (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009, p. 1278). In addition, Smillie, Yeo, Furnham, and Jackson (2006) summarized that “it has been widely observed that highly neurotic individuals are disposed toward negative cognitions, intrusive thoughts, and a pessimistic interpretation of stimuli and events” (p. 140). Simons (2002) says that people who are chronically attuned to a dimension are especially sensitive to it. For this reason, people with a negative cognitive style will interpret behavior (in the case of the current study: leadership behavior) in a negative way, even when it was meant positively and seen as such by others, too. For this reason of negative priming, it seems likely that good behavior is not perceived as that good: Therefore, it does not have the impact on followers high on neuroticism like it has on followers low on this trait. Thus, for individuals who score high on neuroticism, it might not make such a huge difference to them how they react and respond to their leader's behavior because they interpret their leader's deeds in a more pessimistic way. Hence, I suggest that the influence of the leader's behavior, which reflects his/her character, on followers' perceptions and behavior, should be stronger when neuroticism is low.

Hypothesis 6: The impact of a) leaders' integrity, b) leaders' humility and forgiveness, and c) leaders' interest and gratitude on the outcome variables is moderated by the neuroticism of the followers in such a way that the influence is stronger when followers' neuroticism is low.

## 4.4 Method

To analyze the hypotheses stated above, one study for each character aspect was conducted. Each study examined the effects of one of the three core constructs of leaders' character. Each of the three studies also took into account the three employee/participant personality traits, which were examined as moderator effects. Thus, this study encompasses three scenario studies, each of them using a 2 (bad vs. good) x 1 (character) between-subjects design. In the first study, the leader's integrity was manipulated; in the second study, humility and forgiveness; and in the third study, the leader's interest and gratitude for the employees.

### 4.4.1 Procedure

This study was conducted entirely online. Initial contacts were asked to participate in the study via e-mail and social network platforms. In addition, they were asked to forward the link to several of their contacts, creating a snowball effect. Included in the e-mail to the contacts was a short description of the

---

facts of this study: time duration for participation, possibility of winning one of seven 15€ Amazon vouchers mentioned, and the link to the website, which was previously developed for this study. To decrease evaluation apprehension, participants were assured that there were no right or wrong answers to the items on the survey, but only those that applied appropriately to the participant. Thereafter, participants were randomly assigned to one of the 6 experimental conditions (i.e., bad vs. good x three character aspects). Participants were first asked to read the scenario and to put themselves in the presented situation (see Appendix A), where the respective character aspect was manipulated. This procedure and introduction differs a bit from that of Palanski and Yammarino (2011). The authors asked their participants in their study to read about a typical week in the life of a manager and were asked to imagine that they worked for this person, but were not directly involved in the ongoing scene, whereas in the present study, participants were directly involved in the behavior of their leader.

After reading the scenario, participants completed a number of manipulation checks (see below) to evaluate the effectiveness of the leader's character manipulation. Participants were then asked to complete the measures described below. Last, they were asked to give some demographic information about themselves.

#### 4.4.2 Measures

**Manipulation checks.** After the scenario, the success of the manipulation was checked with two to four items, respectively, regarding which character aspect was manipulated in the study the participant took part in.

**Integrity:** "I can rely on my supervisor," "My supervisor does what he says," "My supervisor is honest," and "The words and actions of my supervisor fit together."

**Humility and forgiveness:** "My supervisor presents himself as forgiving" and "My supervisor presents himself as humble."

**Interest and gratitude:** "My supervisor shows his appreciation of his employees" and "My supervisor is interested in his employees."

**Dependent variables.** After the manipulation checks, the participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with the following statements, based on occasion from the previous scenario. All items were rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 6 (totally agree). The WBF construct was measured with nine items, and voice behavior and OCB with three items, respectively. This small selection of items was chosen for practical reasons. The entire survey had to be as short as possible to ensure that participation in the survey would not last more than 10 min (cf. Meierhans, Rietmann, & Jonas, 2008).

**WBF.** To measure leaders' perceived worthiness of being followed, items from the included constructs (trust, loyalty, competence, and role model) were selected from various measurements. Two items from

---

Mayer and Gavin's (2005) trust measure (e.g., "If my supervisor asked why a problem happened, I would speak freely even if I were partly to blame"), two from Rich's (1997) loyalty measure (e.g., "I feel a strong loyalty to my supervisor"), two from Mayer and Davis' (1999) competence measure (e.g., "My supervisor is very capable of performing his job"), and three items from Rich (1997) to measure role modeling (e.g., "My supervisor provides a good model for me to follow"). All items were translated into German. The reliability for this scale for the whole sample was  $\alpha = .92$ . To test whether the scale effectively measures the leaders' perceived worthiness of being followed, the following control item was created: "I would willingly and gladly follow this supervisor." Results on this are described below.

*OCB.* To measure OCB, three items from Podsakoff et al. (1990) were chosen and complemented with "Under the leadership of this supervisor" to fit with the present scenario experiment. To give an example: "Under the leadership of this supervisor, I am willing to help others who have heavy workloads." The items were translated into German. The reliability for this scale was  $\alpha = .69$ .

*Voice behavior.* Three out of six items from Botero and Van Dyne's (2009) measure of employees' voice behavior were selected and complemented with "Under the leadership of this supervisor, I am/feel free to" to fit with the present scenario experiment. To give an example: "Under the leadership of this supervisor, I am free to develop and make recommendations to my supervisor concerning issues that affect my work." The items were translated into German. The reliability for this scale was  $\alpha = .83$ .

*Measures of Moderating Variables.* To measure the personality traits of the participants (agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism), for each of the three traits, three items were selected: five from John, Donahue, and Kentle's (1991) BFI (items were translated into German) and four from Rammstedt and John's (2007) BFI-10 (German version). To give an example item for measuring conscientiousness: "I am someone who tends to be disorganized" (R), for agreeableness: "I am someone who can be cold and aloof" (R), and for neuroticism: "I'm emotionally stable, not easily upset" (R). The reliability for the agreeableness scale was  $\alpha = .64$ , for the conscientiousness scale,  $\alpha = .64$ , and for the neuroticism scale,  $\alpha = .71$ . According to the fact that only for agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism hypotheses were conducted, openness and extraversion were not measured.

*Demographics.* In addition to the dependent and moderating variables, the following demographics were collected: age, sex, nationality, whether the participant is a student, profession, years of work experience, whether the participant holds a leadership position over staff, and if yes: how many years.

#### 4.4.3 Study sample

Six hundred twenty-six participants took part in the online survey: 210 participants in the first study on integrity, 209 in the second study on humility and forgiveness, and 207 in the third study on interest and gratitude. Females comprised 58.5% of the participants, 589 identified themselves as Germans. Participants had an average age of 29.58 (SD = 10.37) and an average work experience of 8.08 (SD =

---

9.73) years. A total of 356 participants were students, and 198 participants of those who had worked already had leadership responsibilities over staff. The average leadership experience of those was 7.05 years (SD = 7.36), ranging from 1 to 35 years of leadership experience.

## 4.5 Results

First, a confirmatory analysis was conducted to examine the adequacy of the WBF construct. After explaining some changes in the measurement model below, descriptive statistics will be provided for each of the three studies. Thereafter, the results for each study will be described: namely, the success of the manipulation in the form of the manipulation checks, the main effect of character, and the moderation effects of the three personality traits.

### 4.5.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis – Examining the Adequacy of the WBF Construct

It was suggested and shown by means of theory that trust and loyalty toward the leader, perceptions of the leader as a worthy role model, and perceptions of the leader's competence for his/her job belong to a concept named worthiness of being followed (WBF). To analyze whether this model fit, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted with the nine items loading on the WBF factor and three items loading on the OCB and voice behavior factors, respectively. The CFA showed that the proposed three-factor model did not provide an acceptable fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 1108.19$ ;  $df = 87$ ;  $TLI = .82$ ;  $CFI = .85$ ;  $RMSEA = .14$ ). After analyzing item loadings on the WBF factor, it was suggested that the source of the poor model fit came from the two trust items. Hence, another model with the two trust items taken out of the WBF factor and placed as their own factor was conducted, which resulted in an acceptable model fit ( $\chi^2 = 272.52$ ;  $df = 82$ ;  $TLI = .96$ ;  $CFI = .97$ ;  $RMSEA = .06$ ). Due to these results, the two trust items were excluded from the WBF factor. To check the modified WBF construct for validity (i.e., "Does the WBF scale effectively measure the leader's perceived worthiness of being followed?"), the scale value was correlated with the control item from above. The correlation of  $r = .86$  gave confirmation to the construct validity of the modified WBF factor. Analyzing the correlation between the excluded trust construct and the control item resulted in a much smaller coefficient ( $r = .29$ ), affirming the exclusion. Thus, the hypotheses were tested on four (WBF, OCB, voice behavior, and trust), instead of on three dependent variables. Note that examining the impact on trust remains a bit exploratory because no hypotheses were derived for trust, even though trust was expected to be included in the WBF factor, and theory related to trust was used to develop the hypotheses. Possible explanations for the enforced exclusion of trust from the WBF concept will be examined in the discussion below.

### 4.5.2 Descriptive Statistics

Tables 4.1 to 4.3 show descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and correlations between all variables, one table for each study.

Table 4.1

*Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 1 (Integrity)*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Character	-	-	-							
2. Worthiness of being followed	3.69	1.41	.68**	(.97)						
3. Trust in the leader	4.30	1.03	.23**	.44**	(.63)					
4. OCB	4.20	0.90	.27**	.44**	.45**	(.70)				
5. Voice Behavior	4.47	1.02	.45**	.57**	.55**	.62**	(.81)			
6. Agreeableness	4.46	0.90	-.10	.00	.06	.07	.05	(.64)		
7. Conscientiousness	4.71	0.91	-.20**	-.15*	-.06	-.03	-.09	.29**	(.62)	
8. Neuroticism	2.70	0.89	.00	.02	-.15*	-.07	-.11	-.06	-.27**	(.69)

Note. *N* = 210. Internal consistency reliabilities appear in parentheses along the diagonal. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

\*  $p \leq .05$ . \*\*  $p \leq .01$ .

Table 4.2

*Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 2 (Humility and Forgiveness)*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Character	-	-	-							
2. Worthiness of being followed	4.07	1.06	.39**	(.94)						
3. Trust in the leader	4.50	0.99	.19**	.42**	(.51)					
4. OCB	4.41	0.85	.14*	.43**	.40**	(.68)				
5. Voice Behavior	4.67	0.96	.38**	.51**	.58**	.56**	(.85)			
6. Agreeableness	4.45	0.83	-.10	.05	.04	.15*	.11	(.62)		
7. Conscientiousness	4.66	0.89	-.06	.06	.07	.15*	.08	.28**	(.65)	
8. Neuroticism	2.67	0.88	.04	-.08	-.31**	-.16*	-.18**	-.38**	-.21**	(.74)

Note. *N* = 209. Internal consistency reliabilities appear in parentheses along the diagonal. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

\*  $p \leq .05$ . \*\*  $p \leq .01$ .

Table 4.3

*Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 3 (Interest and Gratitude)*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Character	-	-	-							
2. Worthiness of being followed	3.90	1.03	.40**	(.92)						
3. Trust in the leader	4.24	0.96	.06	0.19**	(.42)					
4. OCB	4.16	0.86	.24**	0.42**	.28**	(.68)				
5. Voice behavior	4.45	0.96	.25**	0.48**	.36**	.61**	(.82)			
6. Agreeableness	4.45	0.91	.10	0.06	.06	.08	.04	(.67)		
7. Conscientiousness	4.71	0.91	.08	-0.03	.04	-.02	.00	.21**	(.66)	
8. Neuroticism	2.70	0.90	-.04	-0.07	-.14*	-.04	-.21**	-.10	-.18**	(.71)

Note. *N* = 207. Internal consistency reliabilities appear in parentheses along the diagonal. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

\*  $p \leq .05$ . \*\*  $p \leq .01$ .

### 4.5.3 Manipulation checks

Note that, due to the fact that in each study more than one item was used to check the manipulation of character, a MANOVA was used to test these manipulations. All character manipulations were successful. Integrity:  $F(4, 207) = 111.39, \eta^2 = .69, p = .000$ . Humility and Forgiveness:  $F(2, 207), \eta^2 = .59, p = .000$ . Interest and Gratitude:  $F(2, 205) = 96.05, \eta^2 = .48, p = .000$ .

### 4.5.4 Main effects

To test the effect of leaders' character on followers' WBF, OCB, voice behavior, and trust, a MANOVA for each character aspect was conducted, respectively (see Table 4.4). The multivariate test for the main effect of integrity remained highly significant,  $F(4, 203) = 48.75, \eta^2 = .49, p = .000$ , supporting Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 1c completely. Likewise, the main effect of humility and forgiveness remained highly significant,  $F(4, 203) = 14.70, \eta^2 = .22, p = .000$ , supporting Hypotheses 2a, 2b, and 2c completely. Last, interest and gratitude yielded also significant results for their hypothesized effects,  $F(4, 200) = 10.09, \eta^2 = .17, p = .000$ , supporting Hypotheses 3a, 3b, and 3c completely. However, the impact of interest and gratitude on trust did not find support from the examined data.

### 4.5.5 Moderation effects

To analyze the moderation effects of the personality variables of followers/participants, 12 (3 personality traits x 4 dependent variables) simple-slope analyses (Aiken & West, 1991) were conducted. Results are displayed in Table 4.5, which includes the results for all three studies. The results of the analyses provide only partial support for these hypotheses. For means of saving paper, the confirmation and rejection, respectively, of the hypotheses 4a to 6c are displayed in Table 4.6, whereas, in the text, only a few examples will be described. The impact of the two character aspects on WBF was moderated by each of the three personality traits of the followers. Humility and forgiveness was moderated by agreeableness (figure 4.1) and neuroticism, and integrity by conscientiousness. The impact of leader's interest and gratitude was only significantly moderated by neuroticism for the effect on followers OCB (figure 4.2) and trust towards the leader.

Table 4.4  
MANOVA Examining the Effects of Three Aspects of Character (Integrity, Humility and Forgiveness, and Interest and Gratitude) on Followers

Dependent variables	Integrity		Humility and Forgiveness		Interest and Gratitude	
	<i>F</i>	$\eta^2$	<i>F</i>	$\eta^2$	<i>F</i>	$\eta^2$
Worthiness of being followed	180.48***	.47	37.86***	.16	37.87***	.16
OCB	17.34***	.08	3.90*	.02	12.65***	.06
Voice behavior	53.08***	.21	34.79***	.15	13.90***	.06
Trust	11.50***	.05	7.70**	.04	0.67	.00

Note.  $N = 210$  for Integrity;  $N = 209$  for Humility and Forgiveness;  $N = 207$  for Interest and Gratitude. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

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

Table 4.5

*Simple Slope Analyses for the Moderation Effect of Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism on the Relation between Character and Followers' Outcome in each of the Three Studies (Regression *t* values)*

IV (character)	DV	Agreeableness			Conscientiousness			Neuroticism		
		-1SD	+1SD	Diff.	-1SD	+1SD	Diff.	-1SD	+1SD	Diff.
Integrity	Worthiness of being followed	9.16	10.10	0.70	8.02	10.67	1.80*	9.86	9.15	-0.50
	OCB	2.21	3.93	1.23	2.35	3.62	0.87	4.46	1.43	-2.14**
	Voice behavior	5.02	5.45	0.31	3.99	6.08	1.42†	5.95	4.39	-1.10
	Trust	1.55	3.44	1.34†	1.29	3.38	1.46†	3.49	1.42	-1.46†
Humility and Forgiveness	Worthiness of being followed	2.94	6.16	2.28**	4.66	4.24	-0.32	6.31	2.72	-2.54**
	OCB	1.28	1.89	0.44	0.83	2.18	0.95	1.98	0.97	-0.72
	Voice behavior	4.54	4.21	-0.23	4.74	3.79	-0.68	4.88	3.85	-0.73
	Trust	1.82	2.14	0.22	2.07	1.88	-0.14	3.26	1.10	-1.53†
Interest and Gratitude	Worthiness of being follow	3.53	5.18	1.18	4.77	4.05	-0.55	4.30	4.39	0.08
	OCB	1.49	3.45	1.39†	2.61	2.43	-0.14	4.73	0.36	-3.07***
	Voice Behavior	1.75	3.45	1.21	2.78	2.47	-0.24	3.55	1.65	-1.33†
	Trust	0.54	1.52	1.45†	0.30	0.70	0.28	1.95	-0.97	-2.05*

*Note.* Diff. = Difference between the simple slopes of participants low versus high in each personality trait (*t* value for interaction effect). OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

†  $p \leq .10$ , one-tailed. \*  $p \leq .05$ , one-tailed. \*\*  $p \leq .01$ , one-tailed. \*\*\*  $p \leq .001$ , one-tailed.

Table 4.6

*Overview of the moderation hypothesis (confirmation and rejection)*

Nr.	Hypothesis	WBF	OCB	Voice behavior	Trust
4a	Stronger influence of integrity when followers agreeableness is high	n. s. (but right direction)	n. s. (but right direction)	n. s. (but right direction)	marginally significant
4b	Stronger influence of humility and forgiveness when followers agreeableness is high	significant	n. s. (but right direction)	no support	n. s. (but right direction)
4c	Stronger influence of interest and gratitude when followers agreeableness is high	n. s. (but right direction)	marginally significant	n. s. (but right direction)	marginally significant
5	Stronger influence of integrity when followers conscientiousness is high	significant	n. s. (but right direction)	marginally significant	marginally significant
6a	Stronger influence of integrity when followers neuroticism is low	n. s. (but right direction)	significant	n. s. (but right direction)	marginally significant
6b	Stronger influence of humility and forgiveness when followers neuroticism is low	significant	n. s. (but right direction)	n. s. (but right direction)	marginally significant
6c	Stronger influence of interest and gratitude when followers neuroticism is low	no support	significant	marginally significant	significant

*Note.* n.s. = not significant. significant =  $p < .05$ . marginally significant =  $p < .10$ .

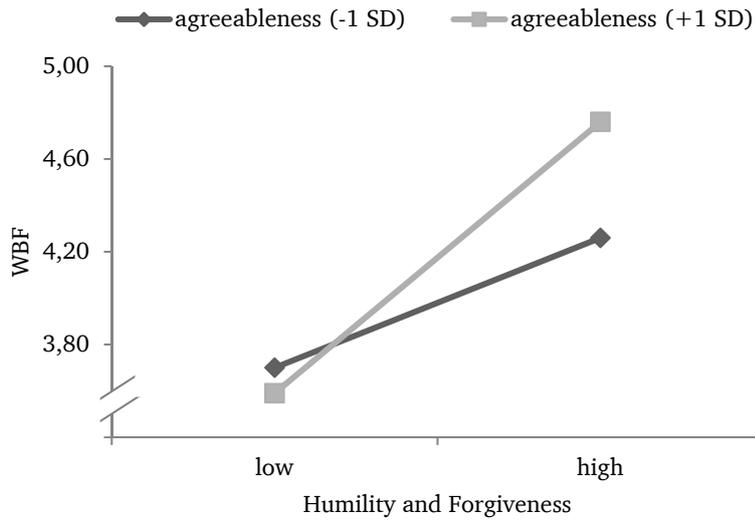


Figure 4.1. Interaction between leader's character (humility and forgiveness) and follower's agreeableness on WBF.

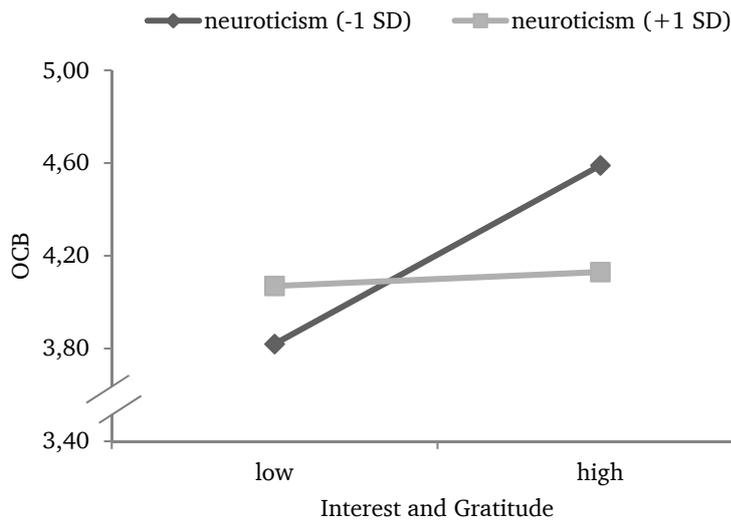


Figure 4.2. Interaction between leader's character (interest and gratitude) and follower's neuroticism on OCB.

## 4.6 Discussion

In today's leadership research and its literature, character has become more and more important. The reasons mentioned in the introduction of this article are crucial and should not be neglected in leadership research. Several leadership concepts that have been developed and studied in the last few decades are indicative of certain aspects of character, but until today, researchers have largely neglected the study of certain aspects of character in leadership and its detailed impact (for an exception, see Palanski &

---

Yammarino, 2011). Therefore, concrete data-based answers to questions like “what important outcomes might be related to character in Leadership?” (Grahek et al., 2010, p. 274), independently of any leadership concept, are rare. Thus, the present study was conducted with two objectives in mind. First, three aspects, two of them basically unstudied, of a leader’s character should be examined regarding their impact on the most fundamental outcome variables, such as a leader’s perceived worthiness and thus followers’ willingness to follow the leader and followers’ willingness to contribute to organizational success beyond their job description (OCB and voice behavior). Second, followers’ personality (agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism) was examined and proposed to moderate the impact of the leader’s character on followers based on the characteristics of individuals low and accordingly high on these traits. To systematically study the three aspects of character and not to mix up the diverse aspects, the present study was divided into three parts, each examining the effects of one aspect of character, and the moderating effects of followers’ personality.

Note that the following review of the results will be presented with regard to the impact of the results on four variables because of the determination that trust did not belong to the WBF construct, which will be discussed below. Integrity had a positive impact on all observed variables, especially on the WBF construct. Thus, a leader’s perceived worthiness of being followed is keenly dependent on the leader’s integrity. A great impact of leader’s integrity was also observed on followers’ voice behavior. Less impact, although still present, was shown on followers’ OCB and trust toward the leader. The results of this study also showed evidence for the fact that followers’ willingness to follow their leader is affected to a great extent by the manifested humility and forgiveness of their leaders. The impact on OCB and trust revealed only a small effect size, but voice behavior was again much influenced by the leader’s character. Whereas interest and gratitude did not affect the followers’ trust in their leader, it did affect their organizational citizenship behavior and their voice behavior to a medium extent. Again, followers’ willingness to follow their leader was affected most by the leader’s character, in this case, by a leader’s interest in and gratitude for his follower. With this third examined aspect—interest and gratitude—this study also responds to McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons, and Larson’s (2001) complaint that the aspect of gratitude has been largely neglected. Summarizing the effects of character, it can be said that not only integrity, but also humility and forgiveness, as well as interest and gratitude affect an essential outcome: followers’ willingness to follow their leader and leaders’ perceived worthiness of being followed, respectively. Not only this, but each of the three aspects of character was shown to affect the engagement of the followers for the good of the organization (OCB and voice behavior).

The moderation of the impact of character on the four outcome variables was analyzed by means of simple slope analyses. Results indicate that the personality of followers really matters when examining the impact of character on certain outcome variables. Followers high on agreeableness were more affected by their leader’s integrity and humility and forgiveness, as well as the leader’s interest and gratitude. Not all outcome variables yielded statistical significance, but the descriptive comparisons of

---

the two regression t values for followers low versus high on agreeableness point mostly to that fact. The greatest observed difference between followers low and high on agreeableness was observed for the impact of a leader's humility and forgiveness on his perceived worthiness of being followed. Thus, for highly agreeable people, this is a crucial aspect that their leader must have in order to be perceived as worthy of being followed.

The impact of a leader's integrity on the four outcome variables was (marginally) statistically significantly moderated by followers' conscientiousness, with the exception of OCB, for which the interaction was statistically non-significant. The largest moderation effect was again observed for leaders' WBF.

With regard to followers' neuroticism, moderation effects were found for the impact of all three aspects of leaders' character. The impact of leaders' integrity on OCB was greatly moderated by this personality trait, as well as the impact of leaders' interest and gratitude. Both stemming from the fact that t values for followers high on neuroticism, describing the impact of humility and forgiveness, and interest and gratitude, respectively, indicate that they were not significantly affected by these leader's aspects with respect to their OCB (at a 95% level of significance).

All in all, one can say that the manipulation of character in the scenario experiments affected followers' intended willingness to follow their leader, and, though a bit less, their willingness to contribute to the organization in a positive way. In addition, the personalities of followers matter, regarding the intensity of the impact of character on followers' perception and intended behavior. Conclusions based on the findings of these scenario experiments will be drawn below.

#### 4.6.1 Theoretical Implications

Based on the reviewed theory, four constructs—trust, loyalty, role model, and competence—were suggested to build the concept of WBF (worthiness of being followed), in other words these four were suggested to constitute the state of subordinates, where they follow their leader willingly. Based on the confirmatory factor analysis, trust had to be excluded from this construct. This is an interesting finding and reasons for this will be examined with regard to former research literature. A myriad of definitions for trust have arisen (Burke et al., 2007). A brief review of diverse definitions followed by a discrimination of various views resulting in a developmental perspective are likely to clear up this issue. For Mayer and Davis (1999), a key component of trust is the willingness to be vulnerable. Other definitions of trust focus less on willingness and more on the aspect of expectation or belief (Simons, 2002; Robinson, 1996). The trust items used in the experiment belong to the affective trust construct. McAllister (1995) proposes that cognition-based trust is a necessary precursor to the development of affect-based trust. Burt and Knez (1996) also state that trust is built incrementally, that is, across a longer period of interactions. Relating to the issue of the development of trust, Sitkin and Roth (1993)

---

distinguish trust and mistrust as distinct constructs. To wit, a leader who is worthy of being followed is not mistrusted, and trust may be built based upon that absence of mistrust because it leads toward further interactions with the leader, which then build trust over a period of time (Burke et al., 2007). Hence, this absence of mistrust is more likely to belong to the WBF concept. The question if cognitive-trust belongs to the WBF concept cannot be answered at this point of time. Concluding this issue and referring to Martin's (1998) statement that trust is the root of all great leadership, it can be proposed that a leader's worthiness of being followed is the foundation for trust, and it is affected to a great extent by his or her character. Nevertheless, researchers are encouraged to rethink the concept of WBF and to further develop this concept in future research, beginning by examining which constructs may also be included in this new concept in leadership research. To my knowledge it has never been discussed in the literature of leadership research what it means to willingly follow a leader. What emotions and/or perception are implicit with such a statement? This is it what makes this concept new and unique. Not a new construct, but a concept which has the potential to answer this question. Again, researchers are reminded, that the goal of examining the WBF concept is to discover what it means to follow the leader willingly. That means not to follow because of fear of sanctions, but really willingly. Thus, without leaving subordinates with cognitive dissonance in their role as followers. The fact that affective trust does not belong to the concept should arouse researchers' interest. As we can see, the correlation between affective trust and followers' willingness to follow is significant, but not as large as first expected. The above given discussion shouldn't be understand as an exhaustive answer; rather it should stimulate researchers to rethink the importance of affective-trust and likewise the importance to follow willingly and how these two belong and/or depend on each other. Last, reminded by Zhu, Newman, Miao, and Hooke (2013) that "we are unable to fully understand the dynamic and complex roles played by different types of trust on follower responses to leadership behavior" (p. 95).

Ehrhart and Klein (2001) pointed to the fact that followers' personalities affect their preferences for different types of leaders, which ought to moderate the impact of certain leadership characteristics. For the impact of transformational leadership, some research articles have already been published. Whereas Judge and Bono (2000) hypothesized several moderation effects (e.g., cynicism, cognitive ability, and self-esteem) and did not find much empirical confirmation. Zhu, Avolio, and Walumbwa (2009) showed that the relationship between transformational leadership and follower work engagement is moderated by several follower characteristics. Results drawn from this study indicate how the impact of leadership (i.e., leadership character) is moderated, based on the knowledge of the different preferences that followers with different levels of the three personality traits have and their different dispositions to value certain aspects of character manifested in leaders' behavior. Thus, the present article adds to the literature which addresses the concern of moderating effects of leadership impact due to subordinates' personality. Hence, these results affirm that the personalities of followers have to be taken into consideration when examining the impact of leaders on them and for explaining variance.

---

#### 4.6.2 Practical Implications

According to the findings based on the scenario experiment leaders with “character” seem to be those of whom Maxwell (1998) speaks when he talks about the true measure of leadership: influence. They are worthy of being followed according to their followers. Role modeling, which is included in the WBF construct, is seen as a major way in which transformational and charismatic leaders transform followers’ values, goals, and aspirations (Yaffe & Kark, 2011), indicating that character cannot be left out of the equation, not even for transformational and charismatic leaders. Consciously, this study was developed to examine the impact of character, independently of a certain leadership concept, with the objective to not mix up with other aspects and just asks, does character in leadership matter? And the answer is yes, character—not only the aspect of integrity, but also humility, forgiveness, interest, and gratitude—matters, and leaders have to keep this in mind. In addition, followers who are high on agreeableness (i.e., those who contribute to a pleasant culture) are the ones who are affected the most. Also, conscientious people, those who are willing to perform and persevere and those who have a high level of the personality trait that relates to performance the most out of the Big Five, are the ones who are most affected by the leader’s integrity. Thus, if leaders want to participate in the relation between conscientiousness and performance, as well as between agreeableness and a pleasant culture, they should attend to this result. Leaders would be well-advised to follow this guideline: “Be honest, do not say one thing and behave the other way, be reliable, be truthful, be humble and forgiving, be interested in those who follow you and give your gratitude to them, not only when they achieve something special, but just for their faithful work.” This sounds logical, because of the social agreeability of these conclusions, but leaders’ practice will be more likely reconsidered due to the empirical endorsement. Thus, this is the suggestion in summary for leaders who want to be seen as worthy of being followed and having true followers who engage in the good of their organization. Limitations for the generalization of these implications will be drawn below.

#### 4.6.3 Limitations

This study is an important step into the research of certain aspects of character and their impact on followers, and its strength is due to the experimental design and its internal validity. As Brutus and Duniewicz (2012) reviewed, internal validity is one of the most limitations reported in leadership research articles and that this fact should translate to more experimental designs. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Part of the given generalization is due to the fact that participants came from different types of industries, were of different ages, and were students and non-students and leaders and non-leaders. The weakness lies in the external validity of the study results. First, followers’ short interaction with their leader presented in this study, is not typical of reality. Thus, the results presented as well as the implications are to some extent limited to what participants think

---

they would do or how they would react in the hypothetical situation. One may criticize rightly that a relationship emerges over a period of time with many different experienced encounters with the leader and that we cannot project these results simply to the field. Without a doubt, a field study with real leaders and real followers is the design of preference. Nevertheless, these manipulations showed that leaders' character influence leadership perceptions, at least first impressions. However, first of all, it was important to have the opportunity to clearly manipulate and examine certain aspects of character, without any disturbing or confounding variables. Hence, the results of the current research can be used as a foundation to further investigation of certain aspects of leaders' character and its impact on followers. In addition, previous research on leadership has shown that scenario experiments can yield similar results as laboratory and field studies (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002, 2004; De Cremer, van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Mullenders, & and Stinglhamber, 2005; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005; Dipboye, 1990). And there are many more examples of using scenario studies in leadership research (De Cremer, 2006; Connelly and Ruark, 2010; Giessner, van Knippenberg, & Sleebos, 2009; Trichas and Schyns, 2012). Whereas cross-sectional studies do not allow conclusions about causality, scenario experiments do. Especially in that case of leaders' character there is at least one more advantage in beginning to study the impact by manipulation. The keyword is socialization. First, people are attracted to organizations that have cultural characteristics, which are similar to the employee personality (Judge and Cable, 1997). Since leaders are those who influence climate (Kaiser, Hogan, & Craig, 2008; Schein, 2004) and the culture of the organization or workgroup, they may attract people who are similar to themselves. Therefore, gathering data in such a context results in biased information. Second, even if the employees are not as similar as in the beginning of the work relationship, a process of socialization is likely to accommodate employees' values and personality to their leaders' personality and values. Again, this results in biased information. Especially for the moderation effect of followers' personality, this may end of a reduction of that effect because of less variance among the employees in certain personality traits that is less variance in values or the occurrence of psychological contracts. Hence, the advantages predominate the disadvantages resulting from the use of scenario experiments as the research design for the present study.

#### 4.6.4 Future Research

First, I would like to encourage researchers through the publication of this article to go into the field to examine the discovered impact of leaders' character and followers' personality in real organizations. Furthermore, this study examined the effects of only a few forms of manifestations of the three character aspects. There are many other forms and situations in which such character aspects matter and manifest themselves. In addition, it may be interesting to look for a combination of several aspects of character. The interplay of some good aspects of character and some bad ones seems also worth studying.

---

Moreover, further outcomes that character has on followers (stress, affliction, and absenteeism) and organizational outcomes (performance, goal commitment, and efficiency) should be examined. A highly interesting approach would be to develop and conduct longitudinal studies to observe how leaders' character can change the attitudes, beliefs, and organizational behavior of their followers over a period of time. Last, in looking at the importance of character for practical purposes, the GLOBE study (Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Ruiz-Quintanilla, & Dorfman, 1999) found that the aspects of integrity are highly valued amongst all cultures. As integrity is seen as an attitude this is valued across all cultures, one may ask how humility and forgiveness, as well as interest and gratitude, are seen. Certain cultures may see such attitudes as weaknesses and not necessarily as strengths of character, and followers' perception and reactions to them may differ. Den Hartog et al. (1999) list being sincere and self-sacrificial as attitudes that vary in their value across cultures and being egocentric as an undesired attitude in all cultures. Hence, these are other issues for researchers to investigate.

## 4.7 Conclusion

This study of the impact of character, with observance of the influence of followers' personality, has laid an experimental foundation for researchers to build on and has given suggestions to leaders, and those who want to be such, and those who are responsible for developing them, providing a number of profound reasons not to lose track of character. This is especially true if these leaders want to have willing followers who contribute to the good of the organization.

---

## 5 Study 2: What does leaders' character add to transformational leadership?

### 5.1 Abstract

The impact of leaders' character (e.g., integrity, humility/forgiveness) has rarely been examined in leadership research. The current investigation focused on the impact of integrity and humility/forgiveness on both followers' perceptions of leaders' worthiness of being followed (WBF) and stress. Results from a scenario experiment ( $n = 347$ ) and a field study ( $n = 110$ ) indicated that these aspects incrementally predict WBF above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership. Similar results were found concerning followers' stress with the exception of leader integrity in the field study. According to relative importance analyses integrity and transformational leadership predict WBF equally well. The results have conceivable implications for human resources (personnel selection and development). Future research should examine additional outcome variables that are impacted by certain leader characteristics as well as potential negative effects of the examined character aspects.

### 5.2 Introduction

Prior to investigating any individual aspect of leadership character and virtue (e.g., integrity, humility/forgiveness), several leadership constructs that contain one or more such aspects, have been shown to be positively related to desired outcome variables (e.g., performance, trust, satisfaction). These leadership constructs include Ethical Leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006), Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), Authentic Leadership (George, 2003; Avolio & Gardner, 2005), Spiritual Leadership (Fry, 2003), and Worthy Leadership (Thompson, Grahek, Phillips, & Fay, 2008). In recent years have researchers (e.g., Palanski & Yammarino, 2011) begun to focus more on specific character aspects as well as the empirical examination of their specific impact on certain outcome variables. In empirical leadership research, the aspect of integrity is the one most frequently addressed. Still, Moorman, Darnold, and Priesemuth (2013) found it fair to question whether this amount of research is enough to support the idea that integrity is an axiomatic characteristic of effective leadership. Humility is another aspect of leadership character that has received some attention in the research literature. However, the first empirical examination of the effect of humility on followers was not conducted until 2013 (Owens, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2013). Today, the importance of humility has been captured by several scholars (e.g., Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2015) and calls to further examine this aspect are made, for example by Owens et al. (2013) who call for research examining the relationship between leader humility and followers' psychological and physical health.

---

Simons, Palanski, and Treviño (2013) posed the question whether integrity is able to predict outcomes above and beyond existing constructs (i.e., transformational leadership). The aim of the present study is to begin to answer this question, for two aspects of character – integrity and humility/forgiveness – on two important outcomes (i.e., followers’ perception of their leader as worthy of being followed, and stress). In order to understand the role of leader character we have to examine the incremental validity of these character aspects above and beyond the impact of already well-studied leadership concepts (i.e., transformational leadership). If leadership character does not have an additional positive influence on outcome variables, future research may not be worthwhile. The transformational leadership concept is most suitable to answer this research question, because it has dominated current thinking about leadership as indicated by the fact that more studies on transformational leadership were published in the last three decades than on all other popular theories of leadership combined (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Kovjanic, Schuh, Jonas, van Quaquebeke, & Dick, 2012; Zhu, Newman, Miao, & Hooke, 2013). Another reason is that positive effects of transformational leadership on both followers and organizations have been demonstrated in numerous studies worldwide (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Wang, Oh, Courtright, & Colbert, 2011).

The purpose of the current study was to provide new information concerning the impact of leadership character (i.e., integrity, humility/forgiveness) above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership (measured by a German translation of the 4 Is of the MLQ; Bass & Avolio, 1990; Geyer & Steyrer, 1998) on two important outcomes: leaders’ worthiness of being followed (WBF) and followers’ perceived stress. These variables were chosen based on past empirical research of transformational leadership, integrity, and humility, and the call for research presented above.

### 5.3 Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership consists of four components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass, 1998). Idealized influence refers to leaders who serve as role models by acting in a manner that is admired by many people. These leaders communicate a sense of purpose for all employees and articulate high expectations regarding company or group goals. They are able and willing to pursue these goals with self-sacrificing behavior (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Inspirational motivation implies communicating a clear vision, obtaining commitment to this vision from subordinates, and generating optimism that this vision can be achieved (Avolio, 1999). Intellectual stimulation involves encouraging followers to look at problems in a new and different way. It also stimulates creativity in followers by encouraging them to think innovatively and independently. Leaders ask their followers to question common ways of working and develop even better ways. In addition, they view their subordinates as a source of work-related ideas (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

---

Individualized consideration includes the attention to followers' needs as well as acting as a mentor. Leaders show a genuine concern for their followers' well-being (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

### 5.3.1 Transformational leadership and integrity

Transformational leadership by original definition (Bass, 1985) did not include integrity. Subsequently, Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) revised the concept with the supposition that authentic transformational leaders are by definition ethical, whereas pseudo-transformational leaders lack integrity. They aimed to create a moral version of transformational leadership, knowing that transformational leadership can be used in an egoistic manner, which they called pseudo-transformational leadership. Bass and Steidlmeier stated that authentic transformational leaders differ in that they have virtues of integrity, truthfulness, and credibility. Based on the definitions of George (2003) and Palanski and Yammarino (2007), leaders' integrity refers to the consistency of an acting leader's words and actions, which includes reliable, honest, and promise-keeping behavior. Still, leaders with transformational attributes described above can lack integrity, although their impact on followers may be questionable as a result. Nevertheless, transformational leadership is conceptually related to integrity although empirical evidence is modest. Some researchers have found positive relations between transformational leadership and perceived leader integrity (Engelbrecht, van Aswegen, & Theron, 2005; Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002; Tracey & Hinkin, 1994). MLQ items (which have also been used in the present study) also relate positively to integrity (Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2002). Still, although perceptions of leaders' integrity are closely related to transformational leadership, transformational leaders do not necessarily display the full range of integrity. In addition, measures of transformational leadership do not capture the concept in its entirety. Likewise, Palanski and Yammarino (2007), as well as Leroy, Palanski, and Simons (2012) stated that despite similarities and high correlations between authentic leadership and behavioral integrity, they are not the same. In other words, transformational leadership and integrity are distinct concepts with both shared and unique aspects. Thus, integrity is suggested to explain leadership outcomes above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership.

### 5.3.2 Transformational leadership and humility

Giampetro-Meyer, Brown, Browne, and Kubasek (1998) suggested that transformational leaders may be overly narcissistic and self-centered, attributes which are both opponents of humility. The origin of the word humility is based on the Latin word *humilis*, which literally means "on the ground". This grounded view has nothing to do with inferiority. Rather, it enables individuals to see their selves and others more accurately in terms of their respective strengths and weaknesses (Owens, Rowatt, & Wilkins, 2011; Weick, 2011). Thus, humble leaders hold neither inappropriately grandiose nor self-deprecating views of themselves. Instead, they possess a realistic vision of who they are as well as which abilities they do

---

and do not possess (Nielsen, Marrone, & Slay, 2010). Some empirical evidence comes from Khoo and Burch (2008), who found moderately large correlations between attributed idealized influence and the Hogan Development survey (HDS; Hogan, 1997) theme 'bold', which includes feelings of grandiosity and overestimation of one's abilities – i.e., the opposite of humility. On the other hand, humility most closely resembles the transformational leadership concept of individualized consideration – i.e., non-egocentric behavior towards one's subordinates in the form of individualized guiding and coaching. Basford, Offermann, and Behrend (2014) argued that a leader who does not communicate humility does not demonstrate individualized consideration and is instead self-focused, caring only little about followers' well-being. However, humility is more than merely caring for someone. Rather, it also includes a passive component of being open, supportive, and encouraging, by receiving everything gratefully and not placing oneself at the center of attention, in addition to knowing one's own limitations. Empirical evidence came from a study by Owens et al. (2011) in which 1,500 employee ratings of their leaders indicated that humility is conceptually distinct from transformational leadership.

Humility, knowing oneself to be imperfect and being aware of one's weaknesses and failures, is mandatory to practice forgiveness. Grenberg (2005, in Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2015) suggests that humility is a kind of meta-virtue that forms the foundation of other virtues such as forgiveness. Thus, humility and forgiveness will merge in practice, both will be treated as a single combined construct – humility/forgiveness – in the current study. Forgiveness means engaging in constructive responses following an interpersonal offense instead of allowing destructive thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Owens & Hekman, 2012). For Peterson and Seligman (2004), forgiveness is a behavior that is manifested in granting pardon to those who mistreated us. Based on these attributes, the definition of leaders' humility and forgiveness from Grahek, Thompson, and Toliver (2010) is applied. They combined humility and forgiveness as effectively handling oneself in a non-egocentric, positive, and offense-resistant manner. Thus, it is suggested that leaders' humility/forgiveness is more than described and measured within the "4 Is" of transformational leadership and therefore explains leadership outcomes above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership.

#### 5.4 Worthiness of being followed

Chiu, Huang, and Hung (2012) stated that "leaders should allow subordinates to be willing to follow leaders" (p. 132). In addition, Jenkins (2011) argued that researchers should examine whom followers will follow. This is exactly what the WBF concept does. It measures followers' willingness to follow a leader (i.e., followers' perception of their leader as worthy of being followed). The concept of WBF is defined as employees' perception of their leader as worthy of being followed and is based on subordinates' feelings of loyalty towards their leader as well as their perception of their leader as a competent leader and role model (Liborius, 2014). Basford et al. (2014) found a positive relation

---

between transformational leadership and subordinate loyalty. Transformational leaders inspire their followers and are viewed as a role model because they communicate sense-giving missions and encourage commitment to those missions in their followers. Thus, it is hypothesized that transformational leaders will be perceived as worthy of being followed.

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership is positively related to WBF.

Integrity has been shown to be one of the most important aspects to engender followers' respect (Reave, 2005), which leaders receive from their subordinates when they are viewed as worthy of being followed. Honesty, another sub-construct of integrity, is a character attribute that nearly 90% of survey participants (Kouzes & Posner, 2004) look for in leaders whom they will willingly follow. Thus, followers perceive leaders with integrity as worthy of being followed.

Hypothesis 2a: Leaders' integrity is positively related to WBF.

Dotlich and Cairo (2003) showed that many of the complaints subordinates have about their leaders concern arrogant behavior – i.e., the opposite of humility. Thus, arrogant leaders will not be seen as being worthy of being followed by their employees. Instead, subordinates distrust such leaders and are not motivated to behave loyally. Sousa and van Dierendonck (2015) and Nielsen et al. (2010) argued that employees' perception of leaders' humility is related to perceived leader competence and subordinate loyalty towards their leader. In addition, Exline and Geyer (2004, in Nielsen et al., 2010) found a positive association between humility and leadership ability. Consequently, the following is suggested:

Hypothesis 2b: Leaders' humility/forgiveness is positively related to WBF.

As stated above, integrity, and humility/forgiveness, are suggested to have an impact on WBF above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership. Thus, the following hypotheses were derived:

Hypothesis 3a: Leaders' integrity is positively related to WBF above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 3b: Leaders' humility/forgiveness is positively related to WBF above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.

## 5.5 Followers' perceived stress level

Perceived stress can be viewed as an outcome variable measuring the experienced level of stress as a function of objective stressful events, coping processes, and personality factors (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983). Cohen et al.'s perceived stress scale items were designed to assess the degree to which individuals perceive their lives to be unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloading. These aspects represent central components of individuals' stress experience (Cohen et al., 1983). In the present study,

---

this definition and operationalization was adopted. It is assumed that transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness each have the potential to reduce (the emergence of) subordinates' stress level. Transformational leaders have the potential to encourage their followers through individual consideration. Moreover, transformational leaders' intellectual stimulation can change negative thoughts into constructive ones and, as a result, reduce subordinates' stress levels. In addition, leaders' intellectual stimulation may help followers solve problems that may have otherwise acted as stressors. Through inspirational motivation and idealized influence, transformational leaders help their subordinates to transcend their self-interests and work in the interest of the group or company. As a result, subordinates perceive greater meaning in their work, which is an aspect that may increase satisfaction and thus lower stress levels (Bass, 1999). Gill, Flaschner, and Shachar (2006) found a significant negative relationship between job stress and transformational leadership. Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, and McKee (2007) showed that transformational leadership was positively related to affective well-being and mental health, which can both be considered at the opposite end of the spectrum as compared to perceived stress. Thus, the following is hypothesized.

Hypothesis 4: Transformational leadership is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.

High behavioral integrity on the part of a leader is a strong indicator that the leader's word can be trusted. This provides a sense of certainty and enables followers to make sense of situations (Simons, Friedman, Liu, & McLean Parks, 2007). Leaders with behavioral integrity provide their followers with a kind of control concerning their work. Control is a major theme in the literature on stress (Ganster & Murphy, 2000). Moreover, leader integrity should lead to lower perceived stress and uncertainty in the workplace, as it provides a sense of safety, in that it is perceived as trustworthiness, morality, and consistency between the leader's words and actions. Finally, by reducing uncertainty, stress will also be reduced (Greco & Roger, 2003). The study of Andrews, Kacmar, and Kacmar (2015) revealed a negative relation between behavioral integrity and job tension after controlling for other variables (i.e., hours of work, organizational tenure, and gender). Thus, the following is hypothesized.

Hypothesis 5a: Leaders' integrity is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.

Leaders' lack of appreciation and unfairly behavior causes followers to experience stress. Leaders with humility understand the need to respect others (Chiu et al., 2012). Leaders' correct understanding of their followers is also important for them to be able to correctly assess how much their followers can successfully bear. Moreover, humble leaders are proposed to be supportive (Morris, Brotheridge, & Urbanski, 2005), which is one potential aspect to reduce stress. Other aspects include an interest in, understanding of, and caring for employees, which leaders acting with humility will display. Owens and Hekman (2012) further proposed that a leader's humble behaviors can increase the sense of personal

---

freedom and engagement among followers by legitimizing their developmental journey, which takes pressure away from the followers and, thus, reduces their stress levels. In addition, leaders who are aware of their own shortcomings show followers that they can understand their own mistakes (Owens & Hekman, 2012). This means that making mistakes in front of the leader is not necessarily stress inducing. In contrast, when non-humble leaders appear to have all the answers themselves (Owens & Hekman, 2012), followers easily feel like they cannot do anything well enough to please their leader, which can also result in an increased stress level. In addition, forgiveness is a great way to handle interpersonal conflict, which has been shown to be significantly linked to health problems within a longitudinal study of several thousands of Finnish and Swedish employees (Hyde, Jappinen, Theorell, & Oxenstierna, 2006). Consequently, the following is hypothesized.

Hypothesis 5b: Leaders' humility/forgiveness is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.

As stated above, integrity and humility/forgiveness are suggested to have an impact on followers' perceived stress above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership. Thus, the following hypotheses were derived:

Hypothesis 6a: Leaders' integrity is negatively related to followers' perception of stress above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.

Hypothesis 6b: Leaders' humility/forgiveness is negatively related to followers' perception of stress above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.

All hypotheses were tested in two studies – the first using an experimental design in two scenario studies to test for causality (Study 1); the second using a field study (Study 2) to provide external validity. The concepts of both studies and their results are described in the following sections.

## 5.6 Study 1 Method

### 5.6.1 Participants and Procedures

Prior to conducting field research, the effects of transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness must first be examined by means of scenario experiments (cf. Avolio, Mahtre, Norman, & Lester, 2009a; Liborius 2014; Palanski & Yammarino, 2011) to provide evidence of causal effects on followers' perceived stress and perceptions of WBF. Neither effect has been previously tested in this manner.

Therefore, an e-mail was distributed with an invitation to take part in a leadership study to various contacts through personal, professional, and online networks. Participants were asked to read a scenario and complete the target survey and had the chance to win one of six 50-Euro gift certificates for a well-known online retailer. A sample of 347 German participants took part in the online survey. After following the link in the invitation e-mail, participants were randomly assigned to one of eight different

---

experimental conditions (transformational leadership high vs. low combined with integrity high vs. low, and transformational leadership high vs. low combined with humility/forgiveness high vs. low). At the first page, they read the explanation of the purpose of the study and it was emphasized that participation is voluntary and confidentially and that the completion will take about 10 minutes. They then read a scenario involving a fictitious supervisor who showed behavior either related to transformational leadership and integrity or transformational leadership and humility/forgiveness, depending on condition. Each scenario (see Appendix B) was written in a manner so that participants were directly confronted with the behavior of their supervisor. After reading the scenario, participants responded to manipulation check items as well as items assessing the dependent variables and demographic information. Participants were assured that there are no right or wrong answers, rather only answers that fit their true impressions and anticipated reactions.

A total of 347 people completed the survey (61.8% female). On average, participants were 27.74 ( $SD = 9.87$ ) years old and had an average work experience of 5.95 years ( $SD = 8.49$ ). Twenty-five percent of participants currently held leadership positions.

### 5.6.2 Measures

For purposes of brevity, only a small number of items were selected to measure each variable (cf. Meierhans, Rietmann, & Jonas, 2008). All items were answered on a six-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate higher levels of the respective variable. *Transformational leadership.* The appropriateness of the transformational leadership manipulation was checked using three items for each of the four aspects (12 items) of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ; Bass & Avolio, 1990; German translation by Geyer & Steyrer, 1998). As in previous studies (e.g., Gilmore, Wei, Tetrick, & Zaccaro, 2013), the four dimensions of transformational leadership, although conceptually distinct, were viewed as parts of a higher order construct.

*Integrity.* The items for the integrity manipulation check were orientated on the above-given definition (“My supervisor does what he says.”, “My supervisor’s words and deeds fit together.”, “My supervisor is honest.”, “I can rely on my supervisor.”) and were already used by Liborius (2014).

*Humility/forgiveness.* The successful manipulation of humility/forgiveness was tested with four items – two concerning humility (“My supervisor is humble” & “My supervisor considers himself as something better (inverted)”) and two concerning forgiveness (“My supervisor tends to hold grudges (inverted)”, “My supervisor shows himself as indulgent”) and were also already used by Liborius (2014).

*Worthiness of being followed (WBF).* Based on the concept of WBF (Liborius, 2014), the scale combines items measuring loyalty (Rich, 1997, e.g., “I feel a strong loyalty towards my supervisor.”), competence (Mayer & Davis, 1999, e.g., “My supervisor is very capable of performing his/her job.”), role-modeling

---

(Rich, 1997, e.g., “My supervisor provides a good model for me to follow.”). WBF was operationalized as the mean of these three constructs, which were measured with two items each.

*Stress.* Three items from the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen & Williamson, 1988) were used to measure job specific stress as well as stress that participants perceive in their everyday lives as a result of leaders’ behavior (e.g., “In the last month, I have often felt nervous and stressed.”).

*Adaptation of item formulation to fit the scenario.* The items of the dependent variables (i.e., WBF and stress) were formulated with an additional conditional clause to fit the experiment scenario. For example, the item “In the last month, I have often felt nervous and stressed.” was rephrased to “Based on the situations that I experienced with my supervisor in the scenario, I can imagine that I often felt nervous or stressed within the last month.”

*Neuroticism.* Followers’ perceived stress has been shown to correlate with their neuroticism (Denney & Frisch, 1981), which is defined as a predisposition to experience negative affect (McCrae, 1990). For this reason, neuroticism was included as a control variable when analyzing stress in this study. Neuroticism was measured using three items from the BFI-K (Rammstedt & John, 2005) – e. g., “I feel depressed and dejected easily.”).

*Demographics.* Participants gender (female/male), age (in years), work experience (in years), if participants are subordinated to a leader now (yes/no), and if yes for how long (in years), were also assessed. Finally, participants were asked if they are in a leadership position themselves (yes/no), and if yes for how long (in years).

## 5.7 Results Study 1

### 5.7.1 Confirmatory factor analysis

The validity of the measurement model of the dependent variables was tested by means of confirmatory factor analysis. Kelloway (1998) noted that the quality of a measurement model is based on two aspects. First, it provides a good fit to the data. Second, it fits the data better than alternative models. The results demonstrated that the hypothesized 2-factor model of WBF and stress fit the model well ( $\chi^2=44.70$ ;  $df=24$ ;  $RMSEA=.05$ ,  $CFI=.99$ ,  $TLI=.99$ ,  $SRMR=.02$ ). Within this model, two loyalty items from the WBF scale as well as two competence items were allowed to covary due to their similar wording (see Moorman et al., 2013). The model was compared against two alternative models: one combining all items in a single factor; and one containing four separate constructs, three of which represented each of the WBF sub-scales. The hypothesized model demonstrates superior fit to both alternative models, indicating the validity of the measurement model of the dependent variables.

### 5.7.2 Descriptive statistics

Table 5.1 presents the means, standard deviations, internal consistency, and intercorrelations of all variables in the study for the transformational leadership plus integrity manipulation (N = 175) and the transformational plus humility/forgiveness manipulation (N = 172).

Table 5.1

*Correlations and Reliabilities from the Transformational Leadership + Integrity and Transformational Leadership + Humility/Forgiveness scenarios*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1 Transformational leadership	-	-	-	-	.67	-.23	.10
2 Integrity / Humility/Forgiveness	-	-	-	-	.43	-.31	.10
3 Worthiness of being followed (WBF)	3.03 / 3.04	1.51 / 1.46	.59	.43	(.96 / .96)	-.45	.03
4 Stress	3.62 / 3.69	1.01 / 1.13	-.36	-.23	-.53	(.70 / .83)	.14
5 Neuroticism	3.21 / 3.22	0.97 / 1.04	-.08	.07	-.01	.20	(.77 / .81)

*Note.* Correlations in study 1 (N=175) are presented below the diagonal, correlations in study 2 (N=172) are presented above the diagonal. Reliabilities are presented in the diagonal, whereas the first number belongs to study 1 and the second to study 2, the same is true for means and standard deviations of the dependent variables. Transformational Leadership, Integrity, and Humility/Forgiveness have been manipulated (and therefore coded 0/1), so mean and standard deviation have been omitted.

### 5.7.3 Manipulation checks

Several ANOVAs were conducted to demonstrate that the transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness manipulations were successful. Results indicated the manipulations for transformational leadership ( $F(1, 172)=211.5$ ,  $\eta^2=.55$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $M_{low}=2.16$ ,  $M_{high}=4.13$ ;  $F(1, 170)=192.4$ ,  $\eta^2=.53$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $M_{low}=2.14$ ,  $M_{high}=4.08$ ), integrity ( $F(1, 172)=181.7$ ,  $\eta^2=.51$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $M_{low}=1.95$ ,  $M_{high}=4.24$ ), and humility/forgiveness ( $F(1, 170)=206.8$ ,  $\eta^2=.55$ ,  $p=.00$ ,  $M_{low}=2.86$ ,  $M_{high}=4.00$ ) were successful.

In addition, discriminant and convergent validity of the manipulation for character and transformational leadership were checked; whether the character manipulations were each influencing the intended aspect of the leader in the scenario and not the perception of transformational leadership, and vice versa. Results show high correlations between the manipulation and the associated manipulation-check items ( $r=.72-.74$ ) and low correlations only between the manipulation and the manipulation-check items of the other manipulated aspect ( $r=.25-.38$ ).

### 5.7.4 Hypothesis Testing

The hypotheses were first tested separately for each of the two scenarios using one-way multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA): 1) transformational leadership + integrity, 2) transformational

leadership + humility/forgiveness on WBF and stress, respectively. For each scenario, a 2x2 MANOVA was performed to help protect against inflating the Type 1 error rate in the follow-up ANOVAs.

First, all hypotheses were tested by means of multivariate MANOVA, whereby the transformational leadership (high vs. low) and the leadership character (high vs. low) manipulation were used as the two factor variables and WBF and stress were set as the dependent variables. Multivariate statistics indicated that in the first scenario both, transformational leadership ( $F(2, 171) = 63.85, p=.00$ ; Wilk's  $\lambda = .57$ ) and integrity ( $F(2, 171) = 32.18, p=.00$ ; Wilk's  $\lambda = .73$ ), impacted participants' WBF and stress, and that in the second scenario both, transformational leadership ( $F(2, 168) = 101.25, p=.00$ ; Wilk's  $\lambda = .45$ ) and humility/forgiveness ( $F(2, 168) = 44.37, p=.00$ ; Wilk's  $\lambda = .65$ ), impacted participants' WBF and stress. Means for WBF and stress within each experimental combination of transformational leadership and character are displayed in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

*Means for WBF and stress within each experimental condition*

group means in the TL+Int scenario		
	WBF	stress
TL low / Int low	1.67	4.12
TL low / Int high	2.61	3.85
TL high / Int low	3.12	3.57
TL high / Int high	4.72	2.94
group means in the TL+H&F scenario		
TL low / H&F low	1.56	4.30
TL low / H&F high	2.59	3.59
TL high / H&F low	3.26	3.76
TL high / H&F high	4.76	3.10

*Note.* TL = transformational leadership manipulation.

Int = integrity manipulation. H&F =

humility/forgiveness manipulation.

Next, univariate statistics were considered to test each hypothesis separately, in order to gain insights on the impact on each of the two dependent variables and on the amount of incremental impact the character aspects have above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership on WBF and stress. Please refer to Table 5.3 for an overview of tested hypotheses and related statistics.

Table 5.3

*Study 1 - Overview of tested hypotheses and statistics*

Hypothesis	statistic	p
1 Transformational leadership is positively related to WBF.	1) $\eta^2 = .34$ 2) $\eta^2 = .44$	.00
2a Leaders' integrity is positively related to WBF.	$\eta^2 = .18$	.00
2b Leaders' humility/forgiveness is positively related to WBF.	$\eta^2 = .19$	.00
3a Leaders' integrity is positively related to WBF above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.	$\Delta\eta^2 = .18$	.00
3b Leaders' humility/forgiveness is positively related to WBF above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.	$\Delta\eta^2 = .19$	.00
4 Transformational leadership is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.	1) $\eta^2 = .13$ 2) $\eta^2 = .05$	.00
5a Leaders' integrity is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.	$\eta^2 = .05$	.00
5b Leaders' humility/forgiveness is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.	$\eta^2 = .09$	.00
6a Leaders' integrity is negatively related to followers' perception of stress above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.	$\Delta\eta^2 = .05$	.00
6b Leaders' humility/forgiveness is negatively related to followers' perception of stress above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.	$\Delta\eta^2 = .09$	.00

*Note.* Hypotheses 1, 2, 4, 5 were examined by means of ANOVA. Since both factors (transformational leadership and integrity or humility/forgiveness) are uncorrelated, the statistics of hypothesis 2 ( $\eta^2$ ) and 3 ( $\Delta\eta^2$ ), as well as for hypothesis 5 ( $\eta^2$ ) and 6 ( $\Delta\eta^2$ ) are identically. For hypothesis 1 and 4 two samples were available: 1) Transformational leadership + integrity, 2) transformational leadership + humility/forgiveness.

In summary, all hypotheses were supported. Thus, it appears that transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness, on their own, influence WBF and followers' perceived stress level, such that WBF is higher when transformational leadership, leaders' integrity, and leaders' humility/forgiveness is high rather than low. In addition, integrity and humility/forgiveness also had an effect on both WBF and followers' perceived stress level above and beyond that of transformational leadership alone. Transformational leadership impacts the perception of followers' perceived stress level, such that employees having a leader high in transformational leadership, anticipate less stress than employees' with a leader low in transformational leadership. Both integrity and humility/forgiveness had an additional impact on followers' perception of stress, such that employees with leaders high in integrity and humility/forgiveness, anticipate less stress than employees' with a leader low in integrity and humility/forgiveness, respectively.

---

## 5.8 Study 2 Method

### 5.8.1 Participants and Procedures

Study 2 was utilized to validate the effects observed in study 1 using field data. To do so, an online survey was conducted in which initial contacts and their social networks were invited to participate in an online survey on leadership. The initial contacts included in this sample did not participate in study 1. In order to participate in the study, participants had to be at least 18 years of age, working with their current supervisor for at least three months, and have at least a 16-hour work week. Once they followed the invitation link, participants read the explanation of the purpose of the study first and it was emphasized that participation is voluntary and confidentially and that the completion will take about 10 minutes. Participants were then asked to think about their current supervisor and their work under his or her supervision while completing the online questionnaire.

One hundred and ten employees (60.9% female) ranging in age from 18 to 60 years ( $M = 29.13$ ,  $SD = 10.24$ ) participated in the study after receiving an invitation e-mail with a link to the questionnaire. Participants were employees from a wide range of organizations in Germany from different sectors. Time at current job ranged from 3 months to 18 years ( $M = 3.32$  years,  $SD = 3.04$  years). All participants had at least some secondary education. Fifty-nine participants worked full time. Twenty-nine participants held leadership positions.

The described method of data collection is similar to recruiting participants via e-mail, newspaper, and flyer (Dalal, Baysinger, Brummel, & LeBreton, 2012). It results in an independent sample including participants working for diverse companies and supervisors.

### 5.8.2 Measures

To ensure consistency across both studies, participants' perceptions of their supervisors' transformational leadership, integrity, humility/forgiveness, and WBF as well as participants' perceived stress levels were measured using the same items as in Study 1. All items were measured on a six-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Demographic questions such as gender, age, work-, and leader experience, as well as the question for how long participants have worked under their current supervisor, were included at the end of the survey.

## 5.9 Study 2 Results

### 5.9.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 5.4 displays the means, standard deviations, internal consistencies, and intercorrelations of all variables in the study.

### 5.9.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

As displayed in Table 5.4, relatively high correlations were found between transformational leadership, integrity, humility/forgiveness, and WBF, which may indicate the presence of common method bias. Thus, the hypothesized measurement model was tested against alternative models in which items from these constructs loaded on to the same factor. First, Harmon's single factor test (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986) was used, which checks whether variance can be largely attributed to a single factor. The hypothesized model was superior to the alternative model. The hypothesized model was also tested against a two-factor model (one factor for all predictors and one factor for all dependent variables) and a three-factor model (a predictor factor and two dependent variables factors). Lastly, it was tested whether a six-factor model (humility and forgiveness separated) may fit the data better, which was also not the case. Thus, the hypothesized five-factor model adequately fit the data ( $\chi^2=282.92$ ;  $df=178$ ;  $RMSEA=.08$ ,  $CFI=.94$ ,  $TLI=.93$ ,  $SRMR=.05$ ).

Table 5.4

*Correlations and Reliabilities for Study 2*

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Transformational leadership	4.02	1.08	(.92)					
2 Integrity	4.57	1.12	.82	(.89)				
3 Humility/Forgiveness	4.15	1.05	.64	.58	(.70)			
4 Worthiness of being followed	4.24	1.37	.87	.86	.65	(.95)		
5 Stress	3.05	1.28	-.13	-.15	-.27	-.16	(.75)	
6 Neuroticism	3.21	1.13	-.25	-.25	-.25	-.24	.47	(.79)

*Note.* N = 110.

### 5.9.3 Hypothesis testing

Regression analyses were applied to test hypothesis 1-2 and 4-5. For hypotheses 3 and 6, the incremental effects of integrity and humility/forgiveness were analyzed by means of hierarchical regression analyses. Therefore, first transformational leadership was entered as the predictor variable and subsequently integrity and humility/forgiveness was added, respectively, to the regression model. Whether the explanation of variance in the depended variable increases was tested by adding integrity and humility/forgiveness, respectively. Please refer to Table 5.5 for an overview of tested hypotheses and related statistics. In summary, except for hypothesis 4, 5a and 6a, all other hypotheses yielded statistical support. Transformational leadership and leaders' integrity did not relate to employees' perception of stress.

Because of the strong correlations between the independent and dependent variables, variance inflation factor (VIF; O'Brien, 2007) was calculated for the regression models testing hypothesis 3 and 6. VIF values were all under four, indicating that collinearity was not a serious problem.

---

In addition, relative importance of each predictor has been assessed on each of the two outcome variables using relative weight analysis (Johnson, 2000), which has been shown to be the preferred method over the more common analysis of multiple regression weights (Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2011). Even so, the analysis of relative importance is theory driven it lacks specific hypotheses. Instead, the goal is to obtain a general idea of the degree to which the character aspects contribute to the regression on WBF and followers' perceived stress as compared to transformational leadership. Based on the analysis, integrity had the same strong relation on WBF as transformational leadership. Both integrity and transformational leadership had a stronger relation to WBF than humility/forgiveness. The only predictor that had a relation to followers' perceived stress – in addition to neuroticism – was humility/forgiveness. Even though the relation on stress was statistical significant in the hypothesized direction, the relation of followers' neuroticism was almost four times greater.

## 5.10 Discussion

The present study examined the impact of transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness on two important outcome variables (WBF & stress), as well as the incremental impact of integrity and humility/forgiveness above and beyond the impact of transformational leadership. Whereas all hypotheses were supported by the data in the first study, in the second study hypothesis 4 (transformational leadership relates to followers' perceived stress) and hypothesis 5a (leaders' integrity relates to followers' perceived stress), as well as hypothesis 6a (leaders' integrity relates to followers' perceived stress above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership) could not yield support. Reasons therefore are discussed below.

Table 5.5

*Study 2 - Overview of tested hypotheses and statistics*

	Hypothesis	statistic	p
1	Transformational leadership is positively related to WBF.	$\beta = .88$	.00
2a	Leaders' integrity is positively related to WBF.	$\beta = .86$	.00
2b	Leaders' humility/forgiveness is positively related to WBF.	$\beta = .64$	.00
3a	Leaders' integrity is positively related to WBF above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.	$\Delta R^2 = .06$	.00
3b	Leaders' humility/forgiveness is positively related to WBF above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.	$\Delta R^2 = .01$	.03
4	Transformational leadership is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.	$\beta = -.13$	.19
5a	Leaders' integrity is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.	$\beta = -.15$	.11
5b	Leaders' humility/forgiveness is negatively related to followers' perception of stress.	$\beta = -.26$	.01
6a	Leaders' integrity is negatively related to followers' perception of stress above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.	$\Delta R^2 = .00$	.54
6b	Leaders' humility/forgiveness is negatively related to followers' perception of stress above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership.	$\Delta R^2 = .03$	.02

*Note.* N = 110. WBF = Worthiness of being followed. Hypotheses 1, 2, 4, 5 were examined by means of regression analyses. Hypotheses 3 and 6 by means of hierarchical regression analyses. The statistics in the rows of Hypothesis 3 and 6 are the increased explanation of variance by adding integrity, and humility/forgiveness, respectively.

### 5.10.1 Theoretical implications

In the scenario study, transformational leadership had a strong impact on WBF and a small to moderate impact on followers' perceived stress. In the field study, transformational leadership explained even more variance in WBF but none in terms of followers' perceived stress. In comparison to the relation between transformational leadership and stress in the study from Gill et al. (2006), which found a  $R^2$  of .13 to .18, the relation found in the current study is much smaller. This difference may be caused by a different operationalization of stress. While Gill et al. (2006) examined job-specific stress, the present study examined stress in general, i.e., stress experienced by employees in their daily lives, which is much farther reaching than job-specific stress. Therefore, it is obvious that the influence beyond the job environment is weaker. The difference between the relation of transformational leadership and stress in the scenario study compared to the non-significant relation in the field study may be due to different types of mindsets when answering the measurement items. In the first study, participants had to

---

anticipate their stress as a result of the leader's hypothetical action, whereas in the second study – where no relation could be found – more general stress was measured.

Both integrity and humility/forgiveness had a great impact on WBF and a moderate impact on followers' perceived stress in the scenario study. In the field study, integrity failed to explain variance in employees' stress levels. This might also be due to the conceptualization of stress within this study. It is also possible that integrity truly does not have an impact on employees' stress perception in natural environments. This question should be addressed in future research examining job-specific stress. However, humility/forgiveness have found to be moderately related to employees' stress level.

The three predictor variables transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness were all highly correlated with both each other and WBF. This is in line with previous research. For example, in the study of Basford et al. (2014), the correlation between humility and satisfaction (which is related to the WBF concept) was  $r = .75$ , whereas the correlation between humility and transformational leadership was  $r = .86$ . However, in the study of Parry and Proctor-Thomson (2002), the correlation between integrity and transformational leadership was only moderate ( $r = .44$ ). Thus, high correlations were also observed in past research among these variables. This raises the question whether the three variables (i.e., transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness) may have similar antecedents.

When examining the incremental validity of integrity and humility/forgiveness, both variables had an additional high impact on WBF and a small to moderate impact on stress in the scenario study. The additional explained variance of the two character aspects in the field study, however, was much lower. Integrity yielded moderate incremental validity for WBF, whereas the relation of humility/forgiveness was only small, though significant. Nevertheless, this is an important contribution to the literature. In comparison, Judge and Piccolo (2004) found in their meta-analysis an incremental validity of  $R^2 = .14$  on follower satisfaction with the leader beyond the impact of transformational leadership for all three aspects of transactional and laissez-faire leadership combined. Thus, integrity and humility/forgiveness both lead to greater incremental validity in a very similar outcome variable than transactional leadership and laissez faire combined.

Furthermore, followers' health and well-being (i.e., followers' perception of stress) is a relatively under-examined outcome variable within transformational leadership and leadership character research. There could not be found any study in the literature comparing the incremental effect on stress above and beyond that of transformational leadership. Leaders' humility/forgiveness explained an additional three percent of variance above the influence of employees' neuroticism. Again, some of the observed effect sizes are small but still worth noting because of their clear contribution to the leadership literature regarding the impact of leaders' character.

---

Finally, the second study was additionally used to test the relative importance of the predictors (transformational leadership and the two character aspects), which lead to additional insights. In order to explain variance in WBF, integrity and transformational leadership are equally important. Humility/forgiveness has been found to be only half as important as integrity and transformational leadership. Thus, the different aspects of leadership differ significantly concerning their contribution in explaining variance in WBF. Furthermore, in terms of explaining stress variance between individuals, neuroticism is more than three times more important than the only other significant predictor – humility/forgiveness. Still, humility/forgiveness dominated over one well-known positive leadership concept (i.e., transformational leadership) as well as another positive character aspect (i.e., integrity) in terms of predicting employees' perceived stress.

The fact that integrity and humility/forgiveness had only small to moderate incremental effects above transformational leadership in the field study contrasts with the high incremental effects observed in the scenario study. This contrast may be since all variables (i.e., transformational leadership, integrity, humility/forgiveness) were clearly manipulated in the scenario study and non-related to each other. Other in the field, where variables are related to each other and therefore the incremental effect of another variable much smaller. To generalize the effects found in the present study to actual work behavior one might be cautious to make a judgment about the real incremental effect of humility/forgiveness to early. What appears clear however is that the incremental effect of integrity and humility/forgiveness varies on diverse outcome variables.

### 5.10.2 Practical Implications

The findings of the two studies have clear implications for leadership practice. Based on the positive impact of integrity and humility/forgiveness on WBF and followers' perceived stress, both leaders and companies are well advised to ensure that leadership behavior displays integrity and humility/forgiveness above and beyond the well-known impact of transformational leadership. First and foremost, it is important for leaders to have subordinates who willingly follow and, thus, work for them. Second, reduced stress is at least equally important for companies that want to reduce health problems and their associated costs. Gill et al. (2006) showed that job-stress is significantly related to burnout, which is always associated with high costs for the affected companies. Therefore, not only researchers, but also companies should have a keen interest in the health of their employees – at the very least because they are required to pay for every sick day. Thus, strategies to reduce employees' level of stress are in great demand. Zellars, Perrewé, and Brees (2003), for example, discussed a loss of billions of dollars due to stress-related absenteeism and depression. Integrity has become more popular in recent years and found its way into leadership practice. However, humility/forgiveness, although already addressed in leadership research, have not yet reached the attention of the working society. This is likely

---

due to the perception that such characteristics are not competitively advantageous. The results of this study, together with the results of previous research, indicate that this perception may be false. Beyond the positive impact on WBF and stress, humility/forgiveness have the potential to give birth to an organization with a courteous, self-reflecting, understanding and harmonious culture (Chiu et al., 2012). Thus, it may be necessary to change the way in which today's leaders are educated. Sarros, Cooper, and Hartigan (2006) measured seven character aspects in a sample of 238 Australian managers – humility was associated with the lowest value among the seven aspects, especially for managers in the upper echelon. This indicates that the aspect of humility is in most need of development. Research has shown that transformational leadership is trainable; but is this also the case for integrity and humility/forgiveness? Humility has not only been seen as a character aspect (Thompson et al., 2008) but also as a trait, orientation, and meta-attitude (Owens et al., 2011). Regardless of the way in which it is categorized, humility is supposed to be something that can be developed (Owens et al., 2011). Crossan, Mazutis, and Seijts (2013) discussed the question of humility's trainability. Vera and Rodriguez-Lopez (2004) argued that humility can be learned just like any other virtues, although it is a long process. The same applies for integrity. Further investigations are needed to develop effective trainings based on the current body of research regarding integrity and humility/forgiveness. Gentry et al. (2013) suggest that character can be developed through interventions using mentors or coaches who demonstrate when and how integrity and humility/forgiveness affect their work and the work of others as well as how they as leaders are perceived by their subordinates (e.g., reality-based feedback). Brown & Treviño (2006) described an intervention to enhance transformational leadership (Barling, Weber, & Kelloway, 1996). The training consisted of a one-day group session and four individual sessions in which participants received coaching and were taught about the basic elements of transformational leadership and how to apply them in the workplace. Similar interventions are possible for integrity as well as humility/forgiveness. Another possibility to develop these aspects is through role modeling (i.e., top-down process within the company). The opportunity to learn from role-models can also be implemented within training interventions (Owens et al., 2011). Because the development of these aspects is a long process, companies are well advised to include such criteria in their selection processes – for example, by including personality tests covering important characteristics such as integrity and humility/forgiveness in their recruitment processes (Nichols & Cottrell, 2014).

### 5.10.3 Limitations

Although this research makes several contributions to research regarding leaders' character and its impact on important outcome variables, several limitations should be noted. The strength of this study lies in the combination of experimental and field data, although both research methods alone are subject to various weaknesses. The scenario experiment, which used a vignette in which participants assumed

---

the role of the subordinate, may not have provided sufficient information for participants to obtain a clear idea of how it is to be in the described situation. As a result, their answers might be too hypothetical. Nevertheless, the scenario experiment allows for causality interpretations, which is an important contribution to this relatively new area of research.

Another clear limitation in both studies is the use of self-report data only. Otherwise, in the first study, experimental manipulation was used to assess transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness. Moreover, the two outcome variables in both studies are most accurately measured by self-report. Because both studies are interested in followers' subjective perceptions, self-report measures in this specific research context are appropriate. As for integrity, Palanski & Yammarino (2011) remind us that integrity is typically in the eye of the beholder. Nevertheless, for the measurement of integrity in the field study, data may have been more accurate if the leaders have been rated by their superiors instead of being rated by their respective followers – at the very least to avoid common source bias. However, leadership character is only influential in the sense that it is perceived by followers. Thus, it is a valid method to allow followers rate their perceptions of their leaders' integrity and humility/forgiveness. Another issue is the use of non-validated measures for integrity and humility/forgiveness, respectively. The measures were only used once in the study of Liborius (2014). Thus, we cannot clearly assume what these items really measure. Although, the items were obviously orientated on the definitions given above, both constructs were measured by only a few items. Thus, future research may use more established measurement methods – e.g., Moorman et al.'s (2013) integrity measure and Owens et al.'s (2013) humility measure.

A further issue is related to the high correlation of the leadership variables. This high correlation could be seen as indicating common-method variance. Yet, there are two reasons that speak against it. First, there are other studies in which similar leadership aspects were also highly correlated (e.g., Basford et al., 2014; Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2015). Second, Harmon's single factor test was utilized, which revealed that no single or general factor emerged to account for all the variance. In addition, also other possible alternative measurement models were tested, whereas the hypothesized model remained superior. Still, the presence of common-method variance cannot completely be ruled out.

#### 5.10.4 Future research directions

This specific field of research is in its infancy. So, there are many directions for future research – two of them will be briefly presented. First, little is known about the factors that may foster or hinder the occurrence of integrity and humility/forgiveness as well as other character aspects. Thus, the antecedents of certain character aspects remain unclear. As they are highly correlated with each other, it is quite possible that transformational leadership, integrity, and humility/forgiveness may have similar antecedents. Another possibility is that humility/forgiveness and integrity act as antecedents of certain

---

leadership styles. Peus, Wesche, Streicher, Braun, and Frey (2012), for example, showed that self-knowledge and self-consistency are antecedents of authentic leadership, which are both close to integrity (i.e., self-consistency) and humility (i.e., self-knowledge). Second, leadership scholars have not yet examined the conditions under which the aspects of leadership character that are now known to be positively related to desired outcome variables might become obstacles for leaders. Nielsen et al. (2010) posited that humility might have a negative impact for transactional leaders, as they use power to influence their followers, meaning that demonstrated weakness could be detrimental. In addition, Owens et al. (2011) raise the question whether humble leaders might not be assertive enough in their groups to excel. Research on the negative effects of humility will be able to answer these questions and gain the bigger picture.

The current study aims to arouse interest and invite researchers to investigate in these and further related research questions.

## 5.11 Conclusion

In the last decade, a keen interest has developed in examining the impact of leadership character on followers' attitudes and behavior. The present research explored the impact of leadership character (i.e., integrity and humility/forgiveness) on two important outcome variables (i.e., WBF and stress) based on two complementary studies (a scenario experiment and an open field study). This study contributes to leadership studies by being the first to examine the effects of integrity and humility/forgiveness on these two important outcome variables above and beyond the effect of transformational leadership. Finally, this research revealed the relative importance of the two character aspects in predicting WBF and stress as compared to transformational leadership.

---

## 6 Study 3: I know your integrity, I feel your humility – The distinguished impact on followers’ cognitive and affective trust

### 6.1 Abstract

Prior research indicates that subordinates’ trust in their leader is related to certain leadership concepts and aspects. Nevertheless, trust has seldom been conceptualized two-dimensional. Even so, some studies did consider the distinct forms of trust, results have mostly shown no differences in the strength of the relation of leadership on cognitive and affective trust. In the present study, it is argued that although leaders’ integrity and humility both affect subordinates’ trust, integrity is primarily related to subordinates’ cognitive trust, whereas humility relates with affective trust. Two studies draw on survey data ( $N_1 = 254$ ,  $N_2 = 196$ ) from German employees working in different organizations under different supervisors in diverse industries, whereas the second study uses two measurement points and the marker variable technique to reduce and control for common method variance. Results fully support the proposed model in the first study, which tested the hypotheses simultaneously by means of structural equation modeling. Integrity is primarily related to cognitive and less to affective trust, whereas humility is primarily related to affective trust and less to cognitive trust. In the second study, cognitive trust shows to mediate the relation from integrity to affective trust. The present study shows clear evidence for the distinct effects of leaders’ integrity and humility concerning their relation to cognitive and affective trust. The study therefore, contributes strongly to leadership research and provides practical implications, as well as suggestions for further research in this area.

### 6.2 Introduction

Trust is a very crucial foundation in working environments, not least because employees must trust each other to work together effectively (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Kramer, 1999). At the very least, leaders must have subordinates who trust them to fulfill their task of ‘leading’ (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Therefore, trust is a well examined outcome variable within leadership research. However, Dirks & Ferrin (2002) found that, with few exceptions, almost all studies used a one-dimensional definition to measure trust. Thus, they especially called for research to distinguish between different kinds of trust and their antecedents. Although fifteen years has passed since then, and even more since McAllister (1995) call for more research regarding the factors that influence the development of affective and cognitive trust, research

---

distinguishing both antecedents, is still scarce (Yang & Mossholder, 2010; Zhu, Newman, Miao, & Hooke, 2013).

However, some exceptions should be mentioned. Zhu et al. (2013) found transformational leadership equally related to cognitive and affective trust. But also, leadership concepts with moral, ethical, or other value-based aspects have emerged in leadership research within the past decades. Brown and Treviño (2006) have suggested that ethical leadership is linked to both, cognitive and affective trust, which could be shown years later (Lu, 2014; Newman, Kiazad, Miao, & Cooper, 2014). Even, single aspects of leaders have been shown to be positively related to followers' trust in the leader. Whereas leaders' integrity has already been examined concerning trust, resulting in positive effects (Kannan-Narasimhan & Lawrence, 2012; Liborius, 2014; Palanski, Kahai, & Yammarino, 2011; Palanski & Yammarino, 2011), almost nothing can be found about leaders' humility relation to subordinates' trust (for an exception, see Liborius, 2014).

Though, these studies did not distinct between different types of trust, but rather use an uni-dimensional measure as most studies have done in the past. The present study draws attention to the distinct impact of two aspects of leadership highlighted in the last years (i.e., integrity, humility) on two distinctive types of trust (i.e., cognitive trust, affective trust). Thus, the present investigation contributes mainly to the integrity, humility, and trust literature.

### 6.3 Literature review

Mishra (1996) defined trust as “one party's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the belief that the latter party is competent, open, concerned and reliable” (p. 265). Whereas Mishra (1996) did not distinguish between different types of trust, several other researchers, beginning from McAllister (1995), and others (Johnson & Grayson, 2005; Webber & Klimoski, 2004) have. This distinction between cognitive and affective trust has received empirical support (Holste & Fields, 2005; Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; McAllister, 1995; Webber & Klimoski, 2004). Chua, Ingram, and Morris (2008) suggested that a distinction between these two types of trust requires two distinct systems of social-psychological processes. They argued that cognitive based trust involves a calculative and instrumental assessment, whereas affective trust involves empathy and a general emphasis on the relationship between trustor and trustee. Bedi, Alpaslan, and Green (2015) and Chua et al. (2008) named the cognitive form of trust ‘trust from the head’, which is based on leaders' capabilities such as competence, integrity, and reliability (McAllister, 1995). They called the affective part of trust ‘trust from the heart’, which refers to leaders' consideration, care, and concern (McAllister, 1995). Thus, this represents a distinction between an intellectual and emotional dimension of trust (Kennedy & Schweitzer, 2015). Similarly, Erdem and Ozen (2003) acknowledged that the trust can be distinguished whether it is rooted in rationality or emotion. One can look for rational reasons (i.e., when the trustee acts according to his/her words) or for emotional

---

reasons (i.e., when the trustor perceives the trustee's care and concern). This distinction builds the foundation for developing the following hypotheses. As leaders' perceived integrity and humility are both forms of building subordinates' trust, but based on different types of social processes these aspects initiate, a distinct relation between these two aspects and cognitive and affective trust is hypothesized. Hold in mind that previous research has neither addressed this issue, nor shown differently relations of diverse aspects of leadership on different types of trust.

## 6.4 Theoretical framework and hypotheses

### 6.4.1 Integrity and cognitive trust

Moorman, Darnold, and Priesemuth (2013) three-dimensional model of integrity contains leaders' moral behavior, leaders' behavioral integrity, and consistency. According to their definition, leaders' acting with integrity can be briefly described as morally practicing what they preach, even when its unpopular. McAllister (1995) reasoned that cognitive trust is caused by decisions of the trustor if there are 'good reasons' to trust the trustee. In the case of leadership, subordinates consider reasons why they can trust their leader and evaluate certain aspects of him or her. The existing behavior of leaders with or without integrity are potentially highly relevant attributes for this kind of evaluation. Why trust someone who says one thing and behaves completely differently? Why trust someone who is unreliable? Why trust someone who promises something but does not follow through? Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) and Schaubroeck, Lam, and Peng (2011) propose that predictability, reliability, and dependability are very important aspects assessed by the trustor. This predictability of leaders' acting with integrity enables followers to understand and comprehend the intentions of their supervisor and let them know that their leader is capable of doing his or her job. Because leaders with integrity are honest in their relationships, followers are ensured that when their leader promises something, he or she will surely carry it out, which will engender high levels of cognitive trust. Leaders' integrity also leads followers to a sense of security, also in times of uncertainty, which normally occur in changing work environments (Engelbrecht, Heine, & Mahembe, 2015).

Furthermore, Webber (2008) proposed that demonstrations of reliable performance are positively related to cognitive but not affective trust. Since cognitive and affective trust are related to one another, we do not claim that integrity is not related to affective trust. Rather, we suggest that integrity is primarily related to cognitive trust, and significantly less to affective trust.

Hypothesis 1: Leaders' integrity will a) positively relate to followers' cognitive trust, and b) significantly less to affective trust.

---

#### 6.4.2 Humility and affective trust

Humility stems from the latin word ‘humilis’, which literally means “on the ground”. Individuals with humility understand their own strengths and weaknesses (Owens, Rowatt, & Wilkins, 2011; Weick, 2001) and appreciate and value others and their achievements (Owens and Hekman, 2012; Tangney, 2000). In the current study, leaders’ humility is defined in line with Morris, Brotheridge, and Urbanski (2005), who identified the following three aspects of leaders acting with humility: 1) self-awareness (i.e., understanding one’ own strengths and weaknesses; 2) openness (i.e., being open to new ideas and ways of knowing); and 3) transcendence (i.e., understanding the small role one plays in the large universe, appreciating others, and recognizing their positive worth).

Whereas cognitive trust is based primarily on cognitive evaluations of leaders’ behavior in terms of reliability and consistency, affective trust centers around followers’ feelings of care and concern on the part of their leaders (McAllister, 1995; Williams, 2001). Interpersonal care and concern rather than ego-centric behavior are critical for the development of affective trust (McAllister, 1995). Leaders’ humility is marked by a non-egocentric behavior as well as concern for and appreciation of others. This in turn enables followers to build emotional bonds with their leaders, which in turn fosters affective trust. Followers’ beliefs that their leader will continually act in a supportive and benevolent manner gives them a feeling of emotional security (Dunn, Ruedy, & Schweitzer, 2012). On the other hand, Levine and Schweitzer (2015) showed that affect based trust is diminished by a perceived lack of benevolence. Gillespie and Mann (2004) showed that passive-corrective and laissez faire leadership – which are both non-caring types of leader behavior – were negatively related to trust in the leader. Leaders’ humility helps to build positive relationships when fairness is constantly demonstrated, which helps to foster a bond between leaders and followers (Bedi et al., 2015). This bond is strengthened through the fact that leaders with humility will not exhibit self-exalting behavior and instead encourage others’ success (Morris et al., 2005). Whenever possible, such leaders will value the accomplishments of others, which will result in affective trust towards the leader. These leadership behaviors primarily concern the relational aspects of leader-follower interactions, which is typical for the origin of affective trust (Yang, Mossholder, & Peng, 2009).

In the current study, we expect both types of trust to correlate. However, given the present focus of each origin of trust, we suggest that humility will relate primarily to affective and significantly less to cognitive trust.

Hypothesis 2: Leaders’ humility will a) positively relate to followers’ affective trust, and b) significantly less to followers’ cognitive trust.

Note, that hypotheses have been tested in two studies. First, to replicate the results found in the first study, and second to take advantage of a more suitable research design and data analysis.

---

## 6.5 Study 1 – Method

### 6.5.1 Participants and Procedures

In the first study participants were drawn from two sources. One part was invited to an online survey study by a German service provider ([www.umfrageteilnehmer.de](http://www.umfrageteilnehmer.de)) similar to mechanical turk (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). Only current employees who work at least 16 hours per week and have been with their current supervisor for at least three months (Gillespie & Mann, 2004) were invited to participate in this study (N=152). The other part was invited by several initial contacts (N=102).

A total of 254 participants (38.58 % female) from various business organizations completed the online questionnaire. On average, participants were 35.04 years old ( $SD = 10.56$ ) and had been working an average of 2.87 years ( $SD = 3.64$ ) for their current supervisor. Seventy-four (29.13%) participants had leadership experience, which averaged 4.71 years ( $SD = 6.38$ ).

### 6.5.2 Measures

All items were measured on a six-point scale ranging from 1 (totally disagree) to 6 (totally agree).

*Integrity.* We measured integrity using Moorman et al. (2013) measure of perceived leader integrity. This scale consists of three subscales with three items each: moral behavior (e.g., “My supervisor is honest.”), behavioral integrity (e.g., “My supervisor practices what he/she preaches.”), consistency (e.g., “Does right even when unpopular.”). The reliability of the overall scale was Cronbach’s alpha = .92. For the confirmatory factor analysis (see below), we used the means of each of the three subscales.

*Humility.* We measured humility using Owens, Johnson, and Mitchell’s (2013) measure of expressed humility. This scale consists of three subscales with three items each: willingness to see the self accurately (e.g., “This person actively seeks feedback even if it is critical.”), appreciation of others’ strengths and contributions (e.g., “This person often compliments others on their strengths.”), and teachability (e.g., “This person is willing to learn from others.”). The reliability of the overall scale was Cronbach’s alpha = .94. For the confirmatory factor analysis (see below), we used the means of each of the three subscales.

*Cognitive trust.* We measured cognitive trust using five items from McAllister (1995) – e.g., “Given this person’s track record, I see no reason to doubt his/her competence and preparation for the job.” The reliability of the scale was Cronbach’s alpha = .92.

*Affective trust.* We measured affective trust using five items from McAllister (1995) – e.g., “We have a sharing relationship. We can both freely share our ideas, feelings, and hopes.” The reliability of the scale was Cronbach’s alpha = .90.

*Control variable.* In line with previous research, neuroticism was included as a control variable, as it has an effect on mood, which in turn affects followers’ evaluation of their leaders’ trustworthiness (Williams, 2001). We measured participants’ neuroticism using four items from the BFI-K (Rammstedt & John,

2005) – e.g., “I easily feel depressed and dejected.” The reliability of the scale was Cronbach’s alpha = .82.

## 6.6 Study 1 – Results

### 6.6.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 6.1 displays the means, standard deviations, internal consistencies, and intercorrelations of all variables in the study.

Table 6.1  
Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities (Study 1).

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1 Integrity	4.32	1.08	(.92)				
2 Humility	3.93	1.28	.75	(.94)			
3 Affective trust	3.67	1.36	.68	.78	(.90)		
4 Cognitive trust	4.23	1.30	.81	.76	.73	(.92)	
5 Neuroticism	2.91	1.15	-.09	-.03	-.13	-.11	(.82)

Note. N = 254. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients in parentheses.

### 6.6.2 Confirmatory factor analysis

Both hypotheses were tested in a single, combined structural equation model (SEM). Prior to this, the appropriateness of the measurement model was tested through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The full measurement model specified five factors (one for each of the five variables used in the final hypothesis-testing analysis) and resulted in an acceptable fit ( $\chi^2=376.02$ ,  $df=160$ ; RMSEA=.07, CFI=.95, TLI=.94, SRMR=.04). Due to high observed correlations between several variables (see Table 6.1), the hypothesized measurement model was tested against several alternative models. To test for common method variance, we used Harman’s one-factor test. The manifest variables of all five factors (i.e., integrity, humility, cognitive trust, affective trust, neuroticism) were thus combined into a single factor and compared with the hypothesized five-factor model, which outperformed the alternative one-factor model ( $\chi^2=1148.22$ ,  $df=170$ ; RMSEA=.15, CFI=.77, TLI=.74, SRMR=.10). In addition, two additional alternative four-factor models were tested against the hypothesized model – one in which both trust factors were combined to a single factor ( $\chi^2=550.64$ ,  $df=164$ ; RMSEA=.10, CFI=.91, TLI=.89, SRMR=.05) and one in which integrity and humility were combined to a single factor ( $\chi^2=569.73$ ,  $df=164$ ; RMSEA=.10, CFI=.90, TLI=.89, SRMR=.05). The fit of the hypothesized model was superior to that of all alternative models. These results support the measurement model and the distinctiveness between the two leader aspects and the two types of trust.

### 6.6.3 Test of hypotheses

We applied structural equation modeling to test all hypothesized relationships simultaneously in a single model using the R-package lavaan (Rosseel, 2012). As in the measurement model above, we regressed integrity, humility, and neuroticism (as a control variable) on cognitive and affective trust. The fit of the hypothesized model was acceptable ( $\chi^2=376.02$ ,  $df=160$ ; RMSEA=.07, CFI=.95, TLI=.94, SRMR=.04). On the basis of the results and the path coefficients, hypotheses are supported. Integrity was primarily related, compared to humility. Looking at affective trust as the criterion, humility was primarily related, compared to integrity (see Figure 6.1). Thus, we found support for both hypotheses.

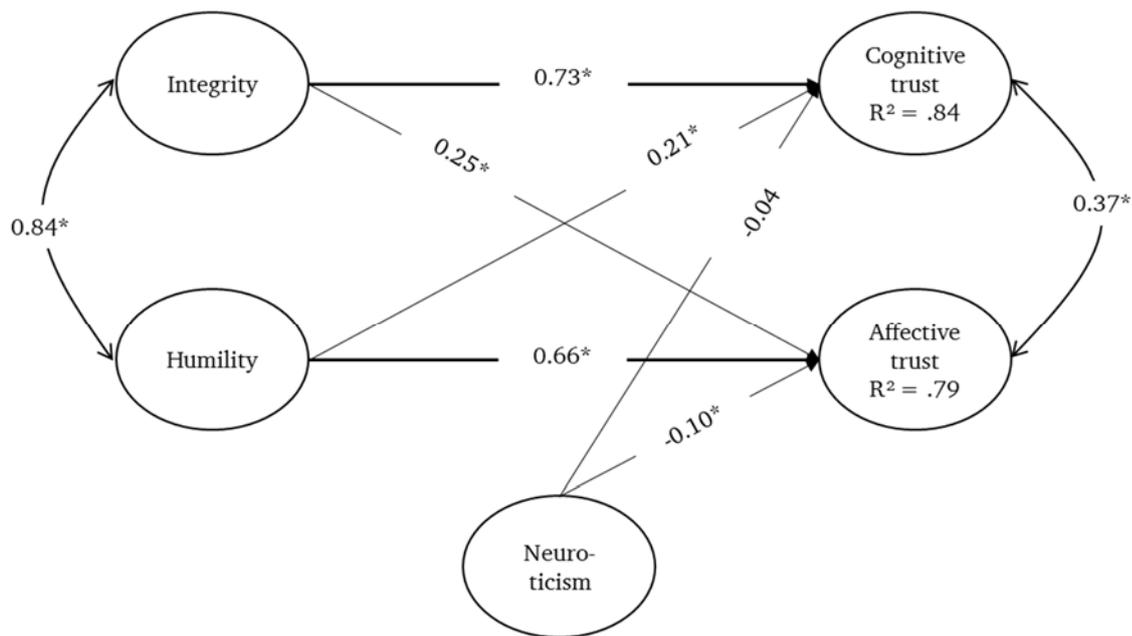


Figure 6.1. Structural equation model with standardized estimates for regression paths and explanation rates of the endogenous variables.

Notes: \*  $p < .05$

## 6.7 Study 2 – Method

### 6.7.1 Participants and Procedures

In the second study, participants were invited through flyers and initial contacts which have not been participants in the first study. Only current employees who work at least 16 hours per week and have been with their current supervisor for at least three months (Gillespie & Mann, 2004) could participate in this study. Participants has been informed that once they took part in the first online questionnaire they will be invited to a second questionnaire one month later. We assessed followers' perception of their leaders' integrity and humility, as well as demographic of the participants at the first measurement time (T1) and participants cognitive and affective trust in the leader, as well as their degree of neuroticism

at the second measurement time (T2). This was done to reduce the occurrence of common method bias (Chang, van Witteloostuijn, & Eden, 2010).

A total of 253 participants from various business organizations took part in the first questionnaire (T1), from which 196 (77.47 %) participants took also part in the second questionnaire (T2) and thus completed the online questionnaire. Of these (N = 196) ninety-two were female (46.94 %), 33.39 years old ( $SD = 9.14$ ) and had been working an average of 3.04 years ( $SD = 3.30$ ) for their current supervisor. Forty-seven (23.98 %) participants had leadership experience, which averaged 10.93 years ( $SD = 12.55$ ).

### 6.7.2 Measures

The same measures as in study 1 were applied. In addition, we assessed bureaucracy with three items (e.g., “There can be little action taken here until a supervisor approves a decision”, Hage & Aiken, 1967) as a marker variable in T2 (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004), to have an indicator for common method variance and the possibility to control for (Williams, Hartman, & Cavazotte, 2010).

## 6.8 Study 2 – Results

### 6.8.1 Descriptive statistics

Table 6.2 displays the means, standard deviations, internal consistencies, and intercorrelations of all variables in the study.

Table 6.2  
Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities (Study 2).

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1 Integrity	4.32	1.10	(.91)				
2 Humility	4.01	1.21	.73	(.94)			
3 Affective trust	3.85	1.17	.66	.65	(.86)		
4 Cognitive trust	4.39	1.30	.65	.52	.60	(.87)	
5 Neuroticism	3.06	1.08	-.02	-.10	-.10	.00	(.82)
6 Bureaucracy	3.13	1.32	-.28	-.29	-.15	-.09	.14

Note. N = 196. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients in parentheses.

### 6.8.2 Testing for Common Method Variance

To assess and control for common method variance we followed the latent marker variable approach presented by Williams et al. (2010), which has some advantages over the alternative partial correlation approach.

First, a CFA model is computed, which allows for a complete set of correlation between the five substantive latent variables (i.e., integrity, humility, cognitive trust, affective trust, and neuroticism) and

---

the marker latent variable (i.e., bureaucracy). This model was computed to obtain the factor loading estimates for the three marker variable indicators for use in subsequent analyses.

The second model evaluated, the Baseline Model, allows the substantive latent variables to correlate, but has an orthogonal marker latent variable, with the unstandardized loadings for the three marker variable indicators fixed to 1.00, 0.892, and 1.078 (obtained from the first model). The use of the fixed values is necessary to establish the assumed orthogonality of the marker variable.

The third model is similar to the Baseline Model, but has additional factor loadings from the latent marker variable to each of the indicators of the model. This results in 20 method factor loadings, as integrity and humility have each three indicators, cognitive and affective trust each five indicators, and neuroticism has four indicators. The 20 loadings have been fixed to be equal. This third model is compared to the Baseline Model to test for the presence of method variance associated with the marker variable ( $\chi^2(1)=10.67, p=.00$ ). Finally, to test whether the assumption of equal method effects is given, a fourth model, in which the sixteen loadings were allowed to have different estimates, is estimated and compared with the third model. Results show, that the assumption of equal method effects was given ( $\chi^2(19)=27.01, p=.11$ ). Thus, the third model is used for subsequent analyses (hypotheses testing) to control for the presence of common method variance.

### 6.8.3 Hypotheses Testing

Based on the model described above, we now regressed integrity, humility, and neuroticism (as a control variable) on cognitive and affective trust. The fit of the hypothesized model was acceptable ( $\chi^2=336.62, df=220; RMSEA=.05, CFI=.96, TLI=.95, SRMR=.06$ ). On the basis of the results and the path coefficients, hypotheses are not fully supported. Integrity was primarily related, compared to humility, which was not significantly related (see Figure 6.2), supporting hypothesis 1. Looking at affective trust as the criterion, humility and integrity are both similar related to affective trust. Thus, a model in which estimates for integrity and humility on affective trust have been fixed to be equal, was tested against the previous model. As the model with these parameters freed has no better fit than the model with fixed parameters ( $\chi^2(1)=0.27, p=.60$ ), integrity and humility seem to relate similar to affective trust, which does not support hypothesis 2. Thus, an alternative model was tested, in which cognitive trust mediates the relationship of integrity and affective trust (see Figure 6.3), which is in line with the findings of McAllister (1995), who hypothesized and found a relationship between cognitive and affective trust. The fit of the alternative model was acceptable ( $\chi^2=336.57, df=218; RMSEA=.05, CFI=.96, TLI=.95, SRMR=.06$ ). As the alternative model shows, the coefficients from integrity to affective trust is not significant anymore, instead cognitive trust fully mediates the relationship of integrity to affective trust, such that integrity has no direct effect on affective trust, which in turn is in line with the second hypothesis.

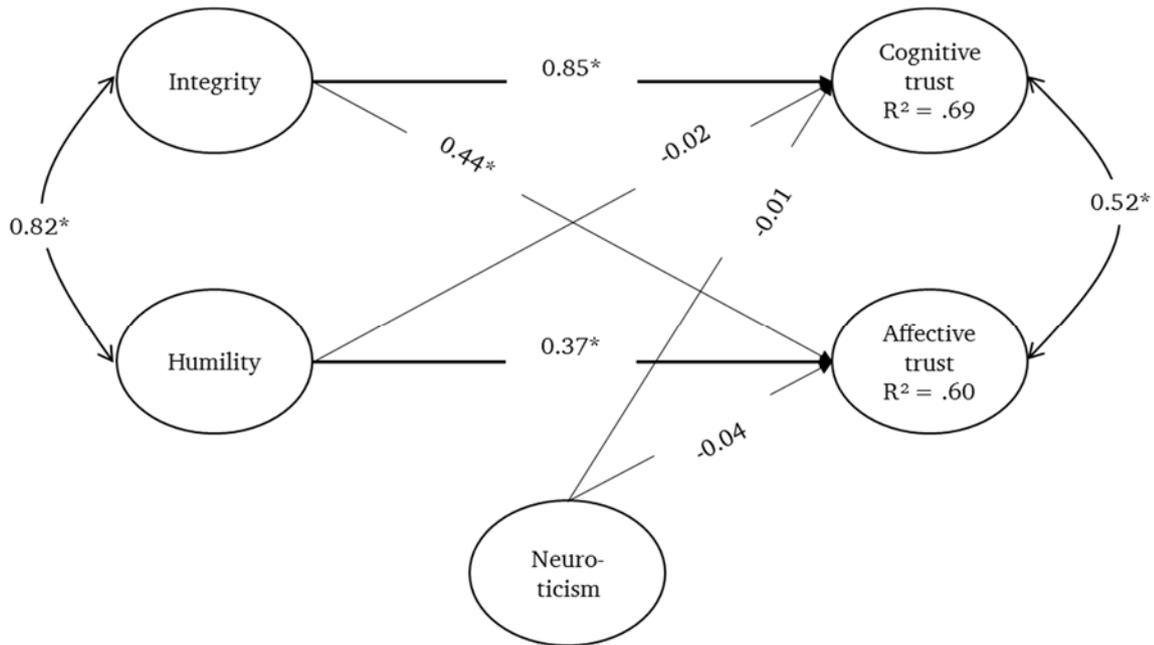


Figure 6.2. Structural equation model with standardized estimates for regression paths and explanation rates of the endogenous variables. The marker latent variable as well as the indicators and the paths to the five substantive latent variables are not displayed for the sake of clarity.

Notes: \*  $p < .05$

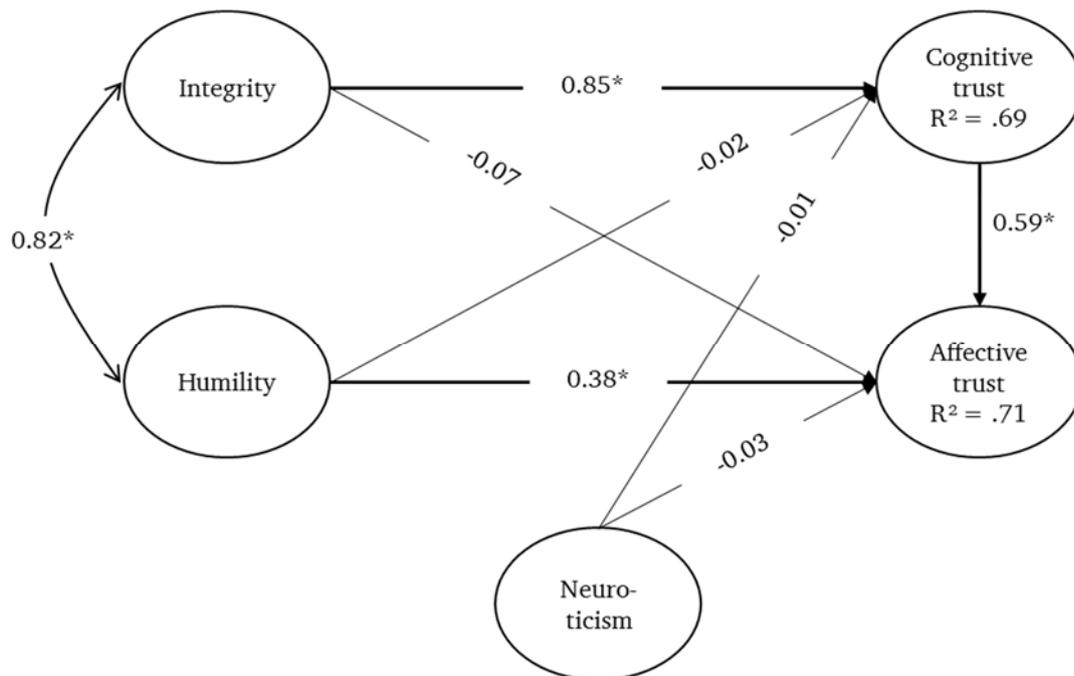


Figure 6.3. Structural equation model with standardized estimates for regression paths and explanation rates of the endogenous variables, with cognitive trust as a mediator between integrity and affective trust. The marker latent variable as well as the indicators and the paths to the five substantive latent variables are not displayed for the sake of clarity.

Notes: \*  $p < .05$

---

## 6.9 Discussion

The present study examined the relation between two important leadership aspects (i.e., integrity and humility) and two different types of trust, and thus contributes to the literature on leaders' integrity, and humility, but also on the distinction between cognitive trust and affective trust, as well as their distinct antecedents. The findings yield a more nuanced understanding as to the relation of different leaders' aspects on different types of followers' trust, which is done through the application of the two-dimensional conceptualization of trust as suggested by Dirks and Ferrin (2002).

### 6.9.1 Theoretical Implications

Previous research on the relation of leadership and trust is large, but not so for the distinction between cognitive and affective trust. Even looking at previous research, which took the distinction between cognitive and affective trust into account, no differences of diverse leadership aspects were reported. For example, a meta-analysis of Bedi et al. (2015) showed that ethical leadership relates to cognitive ( $r = .52$ ) and affective trust ( $r = .59$ ). Wong, Spence-Laschinger, and Cummings (2010) also found a positive relation between authentic leadership and trust ( $r = .43$ ). Finally, transformational leadership has also been shown to relate to cognitive ( $r = .77$ ) and affective trust ( $r = .75$ ) (Zhu et al., 2013). Thus, affective and cognitive trust has always shown to be similar related to the examined leadership concepts or aspects. However, the present study has brought us new insights in showing us a strong relation of leaders' integrity and followers' cognitive trust, as well as between leaders' humility and followers' affective trust. Thus, the relation of both leaders' integrity and humility on followers' trust were distinct, as hypothesized. Whereas the first study fully supported the hypotheses, the second study showed a more nuanced picture of how those leaders' aspects may relate to cognitive and affective trust. The results show that leaders' integrity directly relate to followers' cognitive trust, and leaders' humility directly relates to followers' affective trust (as hypothesized). Moreover, integrity relates also to affective trust, not directly, but through cognitive trust as a mediator. This latter finding is in line with the argumentation of McAllister (1995), who suggested that some level of cognitive trust maybe necessary to further develop affective trust. As baseline expectations like integrity (i.e., reliability, dependability) are met, followers invest further in relationships, where attributes of affective trust may emerge.

### 6.9.2 Practical Implications

Study results demonstrate the importance of leaders' integrity and humility. Followers' perception of these aspects within their leader, seem to enhance their cognitive and affective trust. Whereas integrity may relate to affective trust mediated by cognitive trust, humility has shown to be directly related to affective trust, which gives humility an important role within leadership behavior. In order to enhance the relation with their subordinates, leaders should pay attention to those results. In past research, it has

---

been repeatedly argued that the deeper types of trust (i.e., affective trust) are more stable over time even when minor trust violations occur (Lewick & Bunker, 1996; McAllister, 1995; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). In addition, affective trust has been shown to reduce emotional problems (Williams, 2001) and allow any behavioral problems to be forgiven (Jones & George, 1998; McAllister, 1995). Affective trust also relates more strongly to positive outcome variables (e.g., OCB, extra-role behavior, commitment, performance), than cognitive trust (Webber, 2008; Yang & Mossholder, 2010; Zhu et al., 2013). Based on the fact that leaders' humility is the aspect that most closely relates to this form of trust, the role of humility in leadership should not be underestimated.

The trainability of these aspects is discussed by Crossan, Mazutis, and Seijts (2013) and Owens et al. (2011) and is possible, although it may be a long process (Vera & Rodriguez-Lopez, 2004). At least, leaders are well advised to always stay willing to learn and show this willingness to others, seek feedback and advice, take it graciously and acknowledge the strength of others, as well as showing that they know their own strength and weaknesses. Furthermore, in order to be perceived as a leader with integrity, they should 'walk the talk', even when it seems unpopular or comes with costs.

### 6.9.3 Limitations & future research

Although the current study contributes theoretical and practical implications to leadership research, several limitations of this research should be mentioned. First, the cross-sectional design of the present study does not allow for interpretations of causality. For instance, it is possible that subordinates who trust their leader perceive him or her to have more integrity and humility as a result. Thus, causal inferences should be made with caution. In future research, longitudinal designs should be applied to study the direction of the observed relations.

Another issue is the self-rating of the predictor and outcome variables. Whereas employees' cognitive and affective trust towards their leaders are both clearly best measured with employees' self-reports, third-party ratings (e.g., from the leader's supervisor) of humility and integrity could potentially yield more insights. This idea should be applied in future research. Another potential issue is a possible common method bias due to obtaining both predictor and outcome variables from a single source. This did not appear to affect our results, as indicated by both Harmon's single factor test and the test against potential alternative models, which demonstrated the distinctiveness of the variables in the first study. Moreover, the second study yield similar results as the first study, with a study design with two measurement points to prevent common method bias, by assessing the predictor and outcome variables with a one month gap. The still may existing common method variance was controlled in the second study using structural equation modeling and a marker variable. Though, we cannot completely rule out this research artifact.

---

It is of great interest to examine whether the findings in the present study are replicable in future studies. However, it is also possible that there are situations in which the perception of leaders' integrity or humility would not benefit the relation between leaders' and subordinates or –not yet addressed in this study – the organization in general, which may lower the practical implications given above. Moreover, future research should continue examining the distinct impact of leadership aspects on different kinds of outcomes and their underlying processes.

---

# References

- Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple Regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Andrews, M. C., Kacmar, K. M., & Kacmar, C. (2015). The Interactive Effects of Behavioral Integrity and Procedural Justice on Employee Job Tension. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 126(3), 371-379. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1951-4
- Arnold, K. A., Turner, N., Barling, J., Kelloway, E. K., & McKee, M. C. (2007). Transformational leadership and psychological well-being: the mediating role of meaningful work. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 12(3), 193. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.12.3.193
- Autry, J. A. (2001). *The Servant Leader: How to Build a Creative Team, Develop Great Morale, and Improve Bottom-line Performance*. Roseville, CA: Prima Publishing.
- Avolio, B. J. (1999). *Full leadership development: Building the vital forces in organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), 315–338.
- Avolio, B. J., Mahtre, K., Norman, S. M., & Lester, P. (2009). The moderating effect of gender on leadership intervention impact. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 15, 325–341. doi:10.1177/1548051809333194
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Barling, J., Weber, T., & Kelloway, E. K. (1996). Effects of transformational leadership training on attitudinal and financial outcomes: A field experiment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81, 827–832. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.81.6.827
- Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1991). The Big Five personality dimensions and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, 44, 1–26.
- Basford, T. E., Offermann, L. R., & Behrend, T. S. (2014). Please accept my sincerest apologies: Examining follower reactions to leader apology. *Journal of business ethics*, 119(1), 99-117. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1613-y
- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Bass, B. M. (1998). *Transformational Leadership: Industrial, Military, and Educational Impact*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bass, B. M. (1999). Two decades of research and development in transformational leadership. *European journal of work and organizational psychology*, 8(1), 9-32. doi:10.1080/135943299398410

- 
- Bass, B. M. (2008). *The Bass handbook of leadership*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Bass, B. M. & Avolio, B. J. (1990): Transformational leadership development: Manual for the multifactor leadership questionnaire. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (1994). Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bass, B. M., & Steidlmeier, P. (1999). Ethics, character, and authentic transformational leadership behavior. *Leadership Quarterly*, 10, 181–217.
- Bedi, A., Alpaslan, C. M., & Green, S. (2015). A meta-analytic review of ethical leadership outcomes and moderators. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-20.
- Bennis, W. (2007). The Challenges of Leadership in the Modern World. Introduction to the Special Issue. *American Psychologist*, 62(1), 2–5.
- Botero, I. C., & Van Dyne, L. (2009). Employee Voice Behavior Interactive Effects of LMX and Power Distance in the United States and Colombia. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 23(1), 84–104.
- Brown, M. E., & Treviño, L. K. (2006). Ethical leadership: A review and future directions. *The leadership quarterly*, 17(6), 595-616.
- Brutus, S., & Duniewicz, K. (2012). The many heels of Achilles: An analysis of self-reported limitations in leadership research. *Leadership Quarterly*, 23, 202-212.
- Buhrmester, M., Kwang, T., & Gosling, S. D. (2011). Amazon's Mechanical Turk a new source of inexpensive, yet high-quality, data?. *Perspectives on psychological science*, 6(1), 3-5.
- Burke, C. S., Sims, D. E., Lazzara, E. H., & Salas, E. (2007). Trust in leadership: A multi-level review and integration. *Leadership Quarterly*, 18, 606–632.
- Burt, R. S., & Knez, M. (1996). Trust and third-party gossip. R. M. Kramer, T. R. Tyler, Eds. *Trust In Organizations: Frontiers of Theory and Research*. Sage Publications, Inc., Thousand Oaks, CA 68–89.
- Caldwell, C., & Hayes, L. A. (2007). Leadership, trustworthiness, and the mediating lens. *Journal of Management Development*, 26(3), 261–281.
- Chang, S. J., Van Witteloostuijn, A., & Eden, L. (2010). From the editors: Common method variance in international business research. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 41(2), 178-184.
- Chen, Z. X., Tsui, A. S., & Farh, J. L. (2002). Loyalty to Supervisor vs. Organizational Commitment: Relationships to Employee Performance in China. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 75, 339–356.
- Chiu, T. C. S., Huang, H. J., & Hung, Y. (2012). The Influence of Humility on Leadership: A Chinese and Western Review. *International Proceedings of Economics Development & Research*, 29.

- 
- Chua, R. Y. J., Ingram, P., & Morris, M. W. (2008). From the head and the heart: Locating cognition-and affect-based trust in managers' professional networks. *Academy of Management Journal*, *51*(3), 436-452.
- Clawson, J. G. (1999). *Level Three Leadership: Getting Below the Surface*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., & Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of health and social behavior*, *4*, 385-396. doi:10.2307/2136404
- Cohen, S. & Williamson, G. (1988). Perceived stress in a probability sample of the United States. In S. Cohen & S. L. Syme (Eds.). *Social support and health* (pp. 3-22). San Francisco: Academic Press.
- Conger, J. A., Kanungo, R. N., & Menon, S. T. (2000). Charismatic leadership and follower effects. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *21*(7), 747–767.
- Connelly, S., & Ruark, G. (2010). Leadership style and activating potential moderators of the relationships among leader emotional displays and outcomes. *Leadership Quarterly*, *21*, 745–764.
- Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1992). *Revised NEO Personality Inventory professional manual*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Covey, S. R. (1990). *Principle-Centered Leadership*. New York, NY: Fireside Books-Simon and Schuster.
- Crossan, M., Mazutis, D., & Seijts, G. (2013). In search of virtue: The role of virtues, values and character strengths in ethical decision making. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *113*(4), 567-581. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1680-8
- Cullen, M. J., & Sackett, P. R. (2003). Personality and counterproductive workplace behavior. In M. R. Barrick & A. M. Ryan (Eds.), *Personality and work* (pp. 150–182). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Dalal, R. S., Baysinger, M., Brummel, B. J., & LeBreton, J. M. (2012). The relative importance of employee engagement, other job attitudes, and trait affect as predictors of job performance. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *42*, 295-325. doi: 10.1111/j.15591816.2012.01017.x
- De Cremer, D. (2006). Affective and motivational consequences of leader self-sacrifice: The moderating effect of autocratic leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, *17*, 79–93.
- De Cremer, D., & van Knippenberg, D. (2002). How do leaders promote cooperation: The effects of charisma and procedural fairness. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *87*, 858–866.
- De Cremer, D., & van Knippenberg, D. (2004). Leader self-sacrifice and leadership effectiveness: The moderating role of leader self-confidence. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *95*, 140–156.
- De Cremer, D., Mayer, D.M., van Dijke, M., Schouten, B.C., & Bardes, M. (2009). When Does Self-Sacrificial Leadership Motivate Prosocial Behavior? It Depends on Followers' Prevention Focus. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *94*(4), 887–899.

- 
- De Cremer, D., van Knippenberg, B., van Knippenberg, D., Mullenders, D. & Sting-Ihamber, F. (2005). Rewarding Leadership and Fair Procedures as Determinants of Self-Esteem. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 90*, 3–12.
- Den Hartog, D. N., House, R. J., Hanges, P. J., Ruiz-Quintanilla, S. A., & Dorfman, P. W. (1999). Culture specific and cross-culturally generalizable implicit leadership theories: Are attributes of charismatic/transformational leadership universally endorsed? *Leadership Quarterly, 10*(2), 219–256.
- Denney, D. R., & Frisch, M. B. (1981). The role of neuroticism in relation to life stress and illness. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 25*(4), 303-307. doi:10.1016/0022-3999(81)90007-6
- Dotlich, D. L., Cairo, P. C. (2003). *Why CEOs Fail: The 11 Behaviors That Can Derail Your Climb to the Top—And How to Manage Them*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Dipboye, R. L. (1990). Laboratory vs. field research in industrial and organizational psychology. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 5*, 1–34.
- Dirks, K. T., & Ferrin, D. L. (2002). Trust in leadership: Meta-analytic findings and implications for research and practice. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 611–628.
- Dunn, J., Ruedy, N. E., & Schweitzer, M. E. (2012). It hurts both ways: How social comparisons harm affective and cognitive trust. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 117*, 2-14.
- Ehrhart, M. G., & Klein, K. J. (2001). Predicting followers' preferences for charismatic leadership: The influence of follower values and personality. *Leadership Quarterly, 12*, 153–179.
- Engelbrecht, A. S., Heine, G., & Mahembe, B. (2015). The influence of integrity and ethical leadership on trust in the leader. *Management Dynamics, 24*(1), 2-10.
- Engelbrecht, A. S., Van Aswegen, A. S., & Theron, C. C. (2005). The effect of ethical values on transformational leadership and ethical climate in organisations. *South African Journal of Business Management, 36*(2).
- Erdem, F., & Ozen, J. (2003). Cognitive and affective dimensions of trust in developing team performance. *Team Performance Management: An International Journal, 9*(5/6), 131-135.
- Exline, J. J., & Geyer, A. L. (2004). Perceptions of humility: A preliminary study. *Self and Identity, 3*(2), 95-114. doi:10.1080/13576500342000077
- Ferrin, D. L., Dirks, K. T., & Shah, P. P. (2003). Many routes toward trust: a social network analysis of the determinants of interpersonal trust. *Academy of Management Best Conference Paper (OB. C1–C6)*.
- Fry, L. W. (2003). Toward a theory of spiritual leadership. *Leadership Quarterly, 14*, 693–727.
- Fry, L. W., & Cohen, M. P. (2009). Spiritual leadership as a paradigm for organizational transformation and recovery from extended work hours cultures. *Journal of Business Ethics, 84*, 265–278.

- 
- Gabriel, Y. (1997). Meeting god: When organizational members come face to face with the supreme leader. *Human Relations*, 50, 315–342.
- Ganster, D. C., & Murphy, L. (2000). Workplace interventions to prevent stress-related illness: Lessons from research and practice. *Industrial and organizational psychology: Linking theory with practice*, 34-51.
- Gentry, W. A., Cullen, K. L., Sosik, J. J., Chun, J. U., Leupold, C. R., & Tonidandel, S. (2013). Integrity's place among the character strengths of middle-level managers and top-level executives. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(3), 395-404. doi: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2012.11.009
- George, W. (2003). *Authentic leadership: Rediscovering the secrets to creating lasting value*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Geyer, A., & Steyrer, J. (1998). Messung und Erfolgswirksamkeit transformationaler Führung. *German Journal of Human Resource Management: Zeitschrift für Personalforschung*, 12(4), 377-401. doi: 10.1177/239700229801200401
- Giampetro-Meyer, A., Brown, S. T., Browne, M. N., & Kubasek, N. (1998). Do we really want more leaders in business?. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 17(15), 1727-1736. DOI: 10.1023/A:1006092107644
- Giessner, S. R., van Knippenberg, D., & Sleebos, E. (2009). License to fail? How leader group prototypicality moderates the effects of leader performance on perceptions of leadership effectiveness. *Leadership Quarterly*, 20, 434–451.
- Gill, A. S., Flaschner, A. B., & Shachar, M. (2006). Mitigating stress and burnout by implementing transformational-leadership. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 18(40), pp. 469-481. doi:10.1108/09596110610681511
- Gillespie, N. A., & Mann, L. (2004). Transformational leadership and shared values: the building blocks of trust. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 19, 588–607.
- Gilmore, P. L., Hu, X., Wei, F., Tetrick, L. E., & Zaccaro, S. J. (2013). Positive affectivity neutralizes transformational leadership's influence on creative performance and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34(8), 1061-1075. doi: 10.1002/job.1833
- Gini, A. (2004). Moral leadership and business ethics. In J. Ciulla (Ed.). *Ethics: The heart of leadership* (pp. 25–44). Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Grahek, S. G., Thompson, A. D., & Toliver, A. (2010). The Character to Lead: A closer Look at the Character in Leadership. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 62, 270–290.
- Greco, V., & Roger, D. (2003). *Uncertainty, stress, and health*. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 34(6), 1057-1068. doi:10.1016/S0191-8869(02)00091-0
- Greenleaf, R. K. (1977). *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. New York, NY: Paulist Press.

- 
- Grenberg, J. (2005). *Kant and the ethics of humility: A story of dependence, corruption and virtue*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hage, J., & Aiken, M. (1967). Relationship of centralization to other structural properties. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 72-92.
- Hambrick, D. C., & Mason, P. A. (1984). Upper echelons: The organization as a reflection of its top managers. *Academy of Management Review*, 9, 193–206.
- Hannah, S. T., & Avolio, B. J. (2011). The locus of leader character. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22, 979–983.
- Hogan, R. (1997). *Hogan development survey manual*. Tulsa, OK: Hogan Assessment Systems.
- Holste, J. S., & Fields, D. (2005). The relationship of affect and cognition based trust with sharing and use of tacit knowledge. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 1, B1-B6.
- Hyde, M., Jappinen, P., Theorell, T., & Oxenstierna, G. (2006). Workplace conflict resolution and the health of employees in the Swedish and Finnish units of an industrial company. *Social Science & Medicine*, 63(8), 2218-2227. doi:10.1016/j.socscimed.2006.05.002
- Ilies, R., Morgeson, F.P., & Nahrgang, J.D. (2005). Authentic leadership and eudaemonic well-being: Understanding leader-follower outcomes. *Leadership Quarterly*, 16, 373–394.
- Jenkins, S. (2011). *Tim Tebow shows that in sports, there's no faking leadership (and Bruce Boudreau and Randy Edsall could take note)*. The Washington Post (pp. A1) (December 1).
- John, O. P., Donahue, E. M., & Kentle, R. L. (1991). *The Big Five Inventory--Versions 4a and 54*. Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley, Institute of Personality and Social Research.
- Johnson, J. W. (2000). A heuristic method for estimating the relative weight of predictor variables in multiple regression. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 35(1), 1-19. doi:10.1207/S15327906MBR3501\_1
- Johnson, D., & Grayson, K. (2005). Cognitive and affective trust in service relationships. *Journal of Business research*, 58(4), 500-507.
- Jones, G. R., & George, J. M. (1998). The experience and evolution of trust: Implications for cooperation and teamwork. *Academy of Management Review*, 23, 531-546.
- Judge, T. A., & Bono, J. E. (2000). Five-factor model of personality and transformational leadership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85, 751–765.
- Judge, T. A., & Cable, D. M. (1997). Applicant personality, organizational culture, and organization attraction. *Personnel Psychology*, 50, 359–395.
- Judge, T. A., & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: a meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Journal of applied psychology*, 89(5), 755. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.89.5.755

- 
- Jung, D., & Avolio, B. (2000). Opening the black box: An experimental investigation of the mediating effects of trust and value congruence on transformational and transactional leadership. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *21*, 949–964.
- Jung, D., Yammarino, F. J., & Lee, J. K. (2009). Moderating role of subordinates' attitudes on transformational leadership and effectiveness: A multi-cultural and multi-level perspective. *Leadership Quarterly*, *20*, 586–603.
- Kaiser, R. B., Hogan, R., & Craig, S. B. (2008). Leadership and the Fate of Organizations. *American Psychologist*, *63*(2), 96–110.
- Kamdar, D., & Van Dyne, L. (2007). The joint effects of personality and workplace social exchange relationships in predicting task performance and citizenship performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *92*, 1286–1298.
- Kannan-Narasimhan, R., & Lawrence, B. S. (2012). Behavioral integrity: How leader referents and trust matter to workplace outcomes. *Journal of business ethics*, *111*(2), 165-178.
- Kelloway, E. K. (1998). *Using LISREL for structural equation modeling: A researcher's guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Kennedy, J., & Schweitzer, M. E. (2015). Holding People Responsible for Ethical Violations: The Surprising Benefits of Accusing Others. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, *1*, 11258.
- Kernis, M. H. (2003). Toward a conceptualization of optimal self-esteem. *Psychological Inquiry*, *14*, 1–26.
- Khoo, H. S., & Burch, G. S. J. (2008). The 'dark side' of leadership personality and transformational leadership: An exploratory study. *personality and individual differences*, *44*(1), 86-97. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2007.07.018
- Kilburg, R. R., & Donohue, M. D. (2011). Towards a "Grand Unifying Theory" of Leadership: Implications for Consulting Psychology. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, *63*(1), 6–25.
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (1993). *Credibility: How Leaders Gain and Lose It, Why People Demand It*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2004). Follower-oriented leadership. In J. M. Burns, G. R. Goethals, & G. J. Sorenson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of leadership* (pp. 494–499). Thousand Oaks, CA: Berkshire Publishing Group.
- Kovjanic, S., Schuh, S. C., Jonas, K., van Quaquebeke, N., & Dick, R. (2012). How do transformational leaders foster positive employee outcomes? A self-determination-based analysis of employees' needs as mediating links. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *33*(8), 1031-1052. doi:10.1002/job.1771
- Kramer, R. M. (1999). Trust and distrust in organizations: Emerging perspectives, enduring questions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *50*, 569-598.

- 
- Leroy, H., Palanski, M. E., & Simons, T. (2012). Authentic leadership and behavioral integrity as drivers of follower commitment and performance. *Journal of Business Ethics, 107*(3), 255-264. doi:10.1007/s10551-011-1036-1
- Levine, E. E., & Schweitzer, M. E. (2015). Prosocial lies: When deception breeds trust. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 126*, 88-106.
- Lewick, R., & Bunker, B. (1996). Developing and maintaining trust in work relationships. *Trust in organizations: Frontiers of theory and research*, 114–139. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Liborius, P. (2014). Who Is Worthy of Being Followed? The Impact of Leaders' Character and the Moderating Role of Followers' Personality. *The Journal of Psychology, 148*(3), 347-385. doi:10.1080/00223980.2013.801335
- Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Zhao, H., & Henderson, D. (2008). Servant leadership: Development of a multidimensional measure and multilevel assessment. *Leadership Quarterly, 19*, 161–177.
- Lord, R. G., Brown, D. J., & Freiberg, S. J. (1999). Understanding the dynamics of leadership: The role of follower self-concepts in the leader/follower relationship. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 78*, 167–203.
- Lu, X. (2014). Ethical leadership and organizational citizenship behavior: The mediating roles of cognitive and affective trust. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal, 42*(3), 379-389.
- Maner, J. K., & Mead, N. C. (2010). The Essential Tension between Leadership and Power: When Leaders sacrifice Group Goals for the Sake of Self-Interest. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 99*(3), 482–497.
- Manz, C. C., & Sims, H. P. (1981). Vicarious learning: The influence of modeling on organizational behavior. *Academy of Management Review, 6*(1), 105-113.
- Martin, M. M. (1998). "Trust leadership". *Journal of Leadership Studies, 5*(3), 41.
- Maxwell, J. C. (1998). *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.
- Mayer, C. G., & Davis, J. H. (1999). The Effect of the Performance Appraisal System on Trust for Management: A Field Quasi-Experiment. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 84*(1), 123–136.
- Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). An integrative model of organizational trust. *Academy of Management Review, 20*(3), 709–734.
- Mayer, R. C., & Gavin, M. B. (2005). Trust in management and performance: who minds the shop while the employees watch the boss? *Academy of Management Journal, 48*, 874–888.
- McAllister, D. J. (1995). Affect-and cognition-based trust as foundations for interpersonal cooperation in organizations. *Academy of Management Journal, 38*, 24–59.

- 
- McCrae, R. R. (1990). Controlling neuroticism in the measurement of stress. *Stress Medicine*, 6(3), 237-241. doi:10.1002/smi.2460060309
- McCullough, M. E., Kilpatrick, S. D., Emmons, R. A., & Larson, D. B. (2001). Is Gratitude a Moral Affect?. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127(2), 249–266.
- McKenna, D. L. (1989). *Power to Follow Grace to Lead: Strategy for the Future of Christian Leadership*. Dallas, TX: Word Publishing.
- Meierhans, D., Rietmann, B., & Jonas, K. (2008). Influence of Fair and Supportive Leadership Behavior on Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior. *Swiss Journal of Psychology*, 67(3), 131–141.
- Mishra, K. (1996). Organizational responses to crisis: the centrality of trust. In R. Kramer & T. Tyler (Eds.), *Trust in organizations: Frontiers of theory and research* (pp. 261–287). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Moorman, R. H., Darnold, T. C., & Priesemuth, M. (2013). Perceived leader integrity: Supporting the construct validity and utility of a multi-dimensional measure in two samples. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(3), 427-444. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.02.003
- Morris, J. A., Brotheridge, C. M., & Urbanski, J. C. (2005). Bringing humility to leadership: Antecedents and consequences of leader humility. *Human Relations*, 58, 1323-1350. doi:10.1177/0018726705059929
- Morrison, E. W., & Robinson, S. L. (1997). When employees feel betrayed: A model of how psychological contract violation develops. *Academy of management Review*, 22(1), 226-256.
- Neubert, M. J., Kacmar, K. M., Carlson, D. S., Chonko, L. B., & Roberts, J. A. (2008). Regulatory focus as a mediator of the influence of initiating structure and servant leadership on employee behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93(6), 1220.
- Newman, A., Kiazad, K., Miao, Q., & Cooper, B. (2014). Examining the cognitive and affective trust-based mechanisms underlying the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational citizenship: a case of the head leading the heart?. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 123(1), 113-123.
- Nichols, A. L., & Cottrell, C. A. (2014). What do people desire in their leaders? The role of leadership level on trait desirability. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(4), 711-729. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.04.001
- Nielsen, T. M., Hrivnak, G. A., & Shaw, M. (2009). Organizational citizenship behavior and performance: A meta-analysis of group-level research. *Small Group Research*, 40, 555–577.
- Nielsen, R., Marrone, J. A., & Slay, H. S. (2010). A new look at humility: Exploring the humility concept and its role in socialized charismatic leadership. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 17(1), 33-43. doi:10.1177/1548051809350892

- 
- Norman, S. M., Avolio, B. J., & Luthans, F. (2010). The impact of positivity and transparency on trust in leaders and their perceived effectiveness. *Leadership Quarterly*, *21*, 350–364.
- O'Brien, R. M. (2007). A Caution Regarding Rules of Thumb for Variance Inflation Factors. *Quality & Quantity*, *41*, 673–690. doi:10.1007/s11135-006-9018-6
- Olson-Buchanan, J. B., & Boswell, W. R. (2002). The role of employee loyalty and formality in voicing discontent. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *87*, 1167–1174.
- Orvis, K. A., Dudley, N. M., & Cortina, J. M. (2008). Conscientiousness and Reactions to Psychological Contract Breach: A Longitudinal Field Study. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *93*(5), 1183–1193.
- Owens, B., & Hekman, D. (2012). Modeling how to grow: An inductive examination of humble leader behaviors, contingencies, and outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, *55*(4), 787–817. doi:10.5465/amj.2010.0441
- Owens, B. P., Johnson, M. D., & Mitchell, T. R. (2013). Expressed humility in organizations: Implications for performance, teams, and leadership. *Organization Science*, *24*(5), 1517–1538. doi:10.1287/orsc.1120.0795
- Owens, B. P., Rowatt, W. C., & Wilkins, A. L. (2011). Exploring the relevance and implications of humility in organizations. *Handbook of positive organizational scholarship*, 260–272.
- Palanski, M. E., Kahai, S. S., & Yammarino, F. J. (2011). Team virtues and performance: An examination of transparency, behavioral integrity, and trust. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *99*(2), 201–216.
- Palanski, M. E., & Yammarino, F. J. (2007). Integrity and leadership: Clearing up the conceptual confusion. *European Management Journal*, *25*(3), 171–184.
- Palanski, M. E., & Yammarino, F. J. (2011). Impact of behavioral integrity on follower job performance: A three-study examination. *Leadership Quarterly*, *22*, 765–786.
- Parry, K. W., & Proctor-Thomson, S. B. (2002). Perceived integrity of transformational leaders in organisational settings. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *35*(2), 75–96. doi: 10.1023/A:1013077109223
- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford/American Psychological Association.
- Peus, C., Kerschreiter, R., Frey, D., & Traut-Mattausch, E. (2010). What is the Value? Economic Effects of Ethically-Oriented Leadership. *Journal of Psychology*, *218*(4), 198–212.
- Peus, C., Wesche, J. S., Streicher, B., Braun, S., & Frey, D. (2012). Authentic leadership: An empirical test of its antecedents, consequences, and mediating mechanisms. *Journal of business ethics*, *107*(3), 331–348. doi:10.1007/s10551-011-1042-3
- Podsakoff, N. P., Blume, B., Whiting, S., & Podsakoff, P. (2009). Individual- and organizational-level consequences of organizational citizenship behaviors: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *94*, 122–141.

- 
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Moorman, R. H., & Fetter, R. (1990). Transformational leader behaviors and their effects on followers' trust in leader, satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors. *Leadership Quarterly*, *1*, 107–142.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Paine, J. B., & Bachrach, D. G. (2000). Organizational citizenship behaviors: A critical review of the theoretical and empirical literature and suggestions for future research. *Journal of Management*, *26*(3), 513–563.
- Podsakoff, P. M., & Organ, D. W. (1986). Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of management*, *12*(4), 531-544. doi:10.1177/014920638601200408
- Rafferty, A. E., & Griffin, M. A. (2004). Dimensions of transformational leadership: Conceptual and empirical extensions. *The leadership quarterly*, *15*(3), 329-354.
- Rammstedt, B., & John, O. P. (2005). Kurzversion des Big Five Inventory (BFI-K). *Diagnostica*, *51*(4), 195-206. doi:10.1026/0012-1924.51.4.195
- Rammstedt, B., & John, O. P. (2007). Measuring personality in one minute or less: A 10-item short version of the Big Five Inventory in English and German. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *41*, 203–212.
- Reave, L. (2005). Spiritual values and practices related to leadership effectiveness. *The leadership quarterly*, *16*(5), 655-687. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.07.003
- Rich, G. A. (1997). The Sales Manager as a Role Model: Effects on Trust, Job Satisfaction, and Performance of Salespeople. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *25*(4), 319–328.
- Riggio, R. E., Zhu, W., Reina, C., & Maroosis, J. A. (2010). Virtue-Based Measurement of Ethical Leadership: The Leadership Virtues Questionnaire. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, *62*(4), 235–250.
- Robinson, S. L. (1996). Trust and breach of the psychological contract. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *41*, 574–599.
- Rokeach, M. (1979). Some unresolved issues in theories of beliefs, attitudes and values. In H. E. Howe, Jr., & M. M. Page (Eds.), *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (Vol. 27, pp. 261-304). Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Rosseel, Y. (2012). lavaan: An R package for structural equation modeling. *Journal of Statistical Software*, *48*(2), 1-36.
- Rothmann, S., & Coetzer, E. P. (2003). The Big Five Personality Dimensions and Job Performance. *Journal of Industrial Psychology*, *29*(1), 68–74.
- Rousseau, D. M., & McLean Parks, J. (1993). The contracts of individuals and organizations. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *15*, 1–43.
- Russell, R. F., & Gregory Stone, A. (2002). A review of servant leadership attributes: Developing a practical model. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *23*(3), 145-157.

- 
- Sarros, J. C., Cooper, B. K., & Hartigan, A. M. (2006). Leadership and character. *Leadership & organization development journal*, 27(8), 682-699. doi:10.1108/01437730610709291
- Sauer, S. J. (2011, February 14). Taking the Reins: The Effects of New Leader Status and Leadership Style on Team Performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/a0022741
- Schaubroeck, J., Lam, S. S., & Peng, A. C. (2011). Cognition-based and affect-based trust as mediators of leader behavior influences on team performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(4), 863.
- Schein, E. H. (2004). *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Schminke, M., Ambrose, M. L., & Neubaum, D. O. (2005). The effect of leader moral development on ethical climate and employee attitudes. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 97(2), 135–151.
- Shamir, B., & Eilam, G. (2005). "What's your story?" A life-stories approach to authentic leadership development. *Leadership Quarterly*, 16, 395–417.
- Simon, A. F. (2006). Leadership and Managing Ambivalence. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 58(2), 91–105.
- Simons, T. (2002). Behavioral Integrity: The Perceived Alignment Between Managers' Words and Deeds as a Research Focus. *Organization Science*, 13(1), 18–35.
- Simons, T., Friedman, R., Liu, L. A., & McLean Parks, J. (2007). Racial differences in sensitivity to behavioral integrity: attitudinal consequences, in-group effects, and "trickle down" among Black and non-Black employees. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(3), 650. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.92.3.650
- Simons, T., Palanski, M., & Treviño, L. (2013). Toward a broader—but still rigorous—definition of leader integrity: Commentary. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 24(3), 391-394. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.03.002
- Sitkin, S. B., & Roth, N. L. (1993). Explaining the limited effectiveness of legalistic "remedies" for trust/distrust. *Organizational Science*, 4(3), 367–392.
- Smillie, L. D., Yeo, G. B., Furnham, A. F., & Jackson, C. J. (2006). Benefits of All Work and No Play: The Relationship Between Neuroticism and Performance as a Function of Resource Allocation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(1), 139–155.
- Sosik, J. J., & Cameron, J. C. (2010). Character and Authentic Transformational Leadership Behavior: Expanding the Ascetic Self towards Others. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 62(4), 251–269.
- Sousa, M., & van Dierendonck, D. (2015). Servant Leadership and the Effect of the Interaction Between Humility, Action, and Hierarchical Power on Follower Engagement. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-13. doi:10.1007/s10551-015-2725-y

- 
- Sperry, L. (1999). The 1999 Harry Levinson Lecture: Character assessment in the executive selection process. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 57, 211–217.
- Tangney, J. P. (2000). Humility: Theoretical perspectives, empirical findings and directions for future research. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 19(1), 70.
- Thompson, A. D., Grahek, M., Phillips, R. E., & Fay, C. L. (2008). The search for worthy leadership. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*, 60, 366–382.
- Tonidandel, S., & LeBreton, J. M. (2011). Relative importance analysis: A useful supplement to regression analysis. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 26(1), 1-9. doi:10.1007/s10869-010-9204-3
- Tracey, J. B., & Hinkin, T. R. (1994). Transformational leaders in the hospitality industry. *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant and Administration Quarterly*, 35, 18–24. doi:10.1016/0010-8804(94)90014-0
- Trichas, S., & Schyns, B. (2012). The face of leadership: Perceiving leaders from facial expression. *Leadership Quarterly*, 23, 545–566.
- Van Dyne, L., & LePine, J. A. (1998). Helping and voice extra-role behavior: Evidence of construct and predictive validity. *Academy of Management Journal*, 41, 108–119.
- Van Knippenberg, D., & Van Knippenberg, B. (2005). Leader self-sacrifice and leadership effectiveness: The moderating role of leader prototypicality. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90, 25–37.
- Vera, D., & Rodriguez-Lopez, A. 2004. Humility as a source of competitive advantage. *Organizational Dynamics*, 33, 393-408.
- Walumbwa, F. O., & Schaubroeck, J. (2009). Leader Personality Traits and Employee Voice Behavior: Mediating Roles of Ethical Leadership and Work Group Psychological Safety. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94(5), 1275–1286.
- Wang, G., Oh, I. S., Courtright, S. H., & Colbert, A. E. (2011). Transformational leadership and performance across criteria and levels: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of research. *Group & Organization Management*, 36(2), 223-270. doi:10.1177/1059601111401017
- Webber, S. S. (2008). Development of cognitive and affective trust in teams a longitudinal study. *Small group research*, 39(6), 746-769.
- Webber, S. S., & Klimoski, R. J. (2004). Client–project manager engagements, trust, and loyalty. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25(8), 997-1013.
- Weick, K. E. 2001. Leadership as the legitimization of doubt. In W. Bennis, G. M. Spreitzer, & T. G. Cummings (Eds.), *The future of leadership: Today's top leadership thinkers speak to tomorrow's leaders*, 91-102. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Weiss, H. M. (1977). Subordinate imitation of supervisor behavior: The role of modeling in organizational socialization. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 19, 89–105.

- 
- Williams, M. (2001). In whom we trust: Group membership as an affective context for trust development. *Academy of management review*, 26(3), 377-396.
- Williams, L. J., Hartman, N., & Cavazotte, F. (2010). Method variance and marker variables: A review and comprehensive CFA marker technique. *Organizational Research Methods*, 13(3), 477-514.
- Wong, C. A., Spence Laschinger, H. K., & Cummings, G. G. (2010). Authentic leadership and nurses' voice behavior and perceptions of care quality. *Journal of Nursing Management*, 18(8), 889-900.
- Yaffe, T., & Kark, R. (2011, March 28). Leading by Example: The Case of Leader OCB. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/a002246
- Yang, J., & Mossholder, K. W. (2010). Examining the effects of trust in leaders: A bases-and-foci approach. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(1), 50-63.
- Yang, J., Mossholder, K. W., & Peng, T. K. (2009). Supervisory procedural justice effects: The mediating role of cognitive and affective trust. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20, 143-154. doi:10.1016/j.leaqua.2009.01.009
- Zellars, K. L., Perrewé, P. L., & Brees, J. R. (2003). The multiple roles of spirituality in occupational stress and well-being. *The handbook of workplace spirituality and organizational performance*, 300-313.
- Zhu, W., Avolio, B. J., Riggio, R. E., & Sosik, J. J. (2011). The effect of authentic transformational leadership on follower and group ethics. *Leadership Quarterly*, 22, 801-817.
- Zhu, W., Avolio, B. J., & Walumbwa, F. O. (2009). Moderating role of follower characteristics with transformational leadership and follower work engagement. *Group & Organization Management*, 34(5), 590-619.
- Zhu, W., Newman, A., Miao, Q., & Hooke, A. (2013). Revisiting the mediating role of trust in transformational leadership effects: Do different types of trust make a difference?. *Leadership Quarterly*, 24, 94-105.

---

# Appendices

---

## 7 Appendix A: Scenario scripts for the character manipulation in Study 1

### 7.1 Script for the integrity manipulation

#### Low integrity condition

Please put yourself in the following situation. You have worked for two years as a clerk in an, up to now, growing service company named "good service". The management has appointed a task force, which shall analysis both opportunities and risks of alternative market segments. Below you will read situations that you experience with your supervisor. Please try as best as possible to empathize with the situations described. Together with Mark and the rest of the project team you work your way into the topic using already existing analysis. At one point in the analysis a problem occurs. Your supervisor has assured you his full support. Therefore you kindly ask your supervisor to attend the next meeting. Your supervisor seems to have much to do, but assures you 100% of his presence tomorrow. The next morning you gather with the entire team in the agreed work space for the meeting with your supervisor. But there is no sign of your supervisor. After a quarter of an hour of waiting, you decide to call him, but without success. You leave the office. On the way back to your desk, you meet your supervisor, who shortly apologizes for the non-appearance, but he would have a great deal to do.

Two weeks later...

After two weeks of intensive work your first interim report to the senior management of the company is being prepared. All information needed for the interim report is already available. Two days before the release, you notice, however, that you cannot submit in time the interim report to its desired level of complexity.

Once you have communicated this to your supervisor, he calls the top management and apologizes that his team cannot do it in time because reliant information needed by his team for completion is still missing.

Several weeks later...

On Monday morning you and Mark come together to work. Mark is worried about something. When passing your supervisor, he notices that and asks Mark what's wrong. Mark then explains to your supervisor that he has great concerns regarding the timely and successful completion of the project. Whereupon your supervisor encourages him with the words "Never let your head hang, we have a good team and you belong to it. We will manage it, no doubt."

Several hours later, you have an appointment with your supervisor. Waiting before his office, you hear him speaking to a supervisor from another department on the phone saying, "Ms. Smith, we won't need the money for our project. I will not take the trouble to spend too much effort here, because I don't believe that the project will come to a successful outcome."

---

### High integrity condition

Please put yourself in the following situation. You have worked for two years as a clerk in an, up to now, growing service company named "good service". The management has appointed a task force, which shall analysis both opportunities and risks of alternative market segments. Below you will read situations that you experience with your supervisor. Please try as best as possible to empathize with the situations described. Together with Mark and the rest of the project team you work your way into the topic using already existing analysis. At one point in the analysis a problem occurs. Your supervisor has assured you his full support. Therefore you kindly ask your supervisor to attend the next meeting. Your supervisor seems to have much to do, but assures you 100% of his presence tomorrow. The next morning you gather with the entire team in the agreed work space for a meeting with your supervisor, on time, at 8am. When you open the door, the supervisor is already there, welcoming you in a friendly manner with the words "I've already prepared something, after you approached me yesterday on the issue. Let us therefore begin immediately."

Two weeks later...

After two weeks of intensive work your first interim report to the senior management of the company is being prepared. All information needed for the interim report is already available. Two days before the release, you notice, however, that you cannot submit in time the interim report to its desired level of complexity.

Once you have informed your supervisor on this issue, he calls the top management and apologizes that his team will not make it in time, unfortunately, because the overhead is larger for this level of complexity than initially calculated. He makes a proposal to provide a less complex report on time and if desired, one to a higher level of complexity one week later.

Several weeks later...

On Monday morning you and Mark come together to work. Mark is worried about something. When passing your supervisor, he notices that and asks Mark what's wrong. Mark then explains to your supervisor that he has great concerns regarding the timely and successful completion of the project. Whereupon your supervisor encourages him with the words "Never let your head hang, we have a good team and you belong to it. We will manage it, no doubt."

Several hours later, you have an appointment with your supervisor. Waiting before his office, you hear him speaking to a supervisor from another department on the phone saying "Ms. Smith, we need more funding for our project. I'm sure it will be successful and all the investments put into it will not be in vain."

---

## 7.2 Script for the humility and forgiveness manipulation

### Low humility and forgiveness condition

Please put yourself in the following situation. You have worked for two years as a clerk in an, up to now, growing service company named "good service". The management has appointed a task force, which shall analysis both opportunities and risks of alternative market segments. Below you will read situations that you experience with your supervisor. Please try as best as possible to empathize with the situations described. After several months of intensive work within the project team, you, together with Mark, are on the way to the interim presentation of the project to the top management. When you ask Mark for the updated presentation, which he should have revised (correcting errors and adding information), ready this morning for your supervisor, who will hold the presentation, he reacts in shock. Yesterday he had been working all day on something else and had completely forgotten to rework the presentation. Now there is no time left. Upon entering the meeting room, your supervisor and the top management have already been waiting for the presentation to start. Mark no longer sees the opportunity to report the issue to your supervisor. Your supervisor begins the presentation and notices at the outset that errors and missing information have not been corrected or supplemented. Undeterred your supervisor continues presenting until one of the top management team leaves the room with the words "If you do not even correct your spelling mistakes I won't listen to anything. This is ridiculous."

Reluctantly and with a serious look at your friend Mark, your supervisor aborts the presentation and questions in front of the rest of the management the over-reaction of this manager. Visibly agitated, and ignoring Mark for the moment, your supervisor leaves the boardroom to go to the office of the disgruntled manager. When passing, you hear your supervisor asking the manager for a new appointment. Then the manager replies that he will only send him an appointment by e-mail. When leaving the room, the manager mentions to your supervisor that he can now forget his promotion because of the failure of this important presentation. Your supervisor assures the manager that it was not his fault but that of his employee Mark, who had been commissioned to work on the presentation. The manager does not react further. Your supervisor meets you and Mark in the hallway and asks Mark into his office. Mark later reports to you about the conversation with your supervisor, who says this gross error from Mark is unforgivable and he should consider whether it is the right job for him and that from now on he would get other tasks.

### High humility and forgiveness condition

Please put yourself in the following situation. You have worked for two years as a clerk in an, up to now, growing service company named "good service". The management has appointed a task force, which shall analysis both opportunities and risks of alternative market segments. Below you will read situations that you experience with your supervisor. Please try as best as possible to empathize with the situations

---

described. After several months of intensive work within the project team, you, together with Mark, are on the way to the interim presentation of the project to the top management. When you ask Mark for the updated presentation, which he should have revised (correcting errors and adding information), ready this morning for your supervisor, who will hold the presentation, he reacts in shock. Yesterday he had been working all day on something else and had completely forgotten to rework the presentation. Now there is no time left. Upon entering the meeting room, your supervisor and the top management have already been waiting for the presentation to start. Mark no longer sees the opportunity to report the issue to your supervisor. Your supervisor begins the presentation and notices at the outset that errors and missing information have not been corrected or supplemented. Undeterred your supervisor continues presenting until one of the top management team leaves the room with the words "If you do not even correct your spelling mistakes I won't listen to anything. This is ridiculous."

Your supervisor apologizes to the remaining three managers for the errors in the presentation and shoulders the errors, without even mentioning a word that it was the role of Mark to correct it. Then he apologizes to you and Mark that he would have to leave quickly. Two minutes later you hear how your supervisor has also apologized to the manager, whereupon the manager said that he would have considered excusing such a thing before, but now your supervisor could forget his promotion. Your supervisor appears sympathetic to this statement and apologizes again for having wasted the manager's time. Once your supervisor leaves the room and meets you and Mark, he asks Mark into his office. Later, Mark tells you what he said: "He (your supervisor) said that this can happen to anyone, however it should not happen again, but that I shouldn't worry about it anymore. It would be his responsibility to check these things in advance and he encouraged me not to think further about the incident, but to continue to focus on the project."

### 7.3 Script for the interest and gratitude manipulation

#### Low interest and gratitude condition

Please put yourself in the following situation. You have worked for two years as a clerk in an, up to now, growing service company named "good service". The management has appointed a task force, which shall analysis both opportunities and risks of alternative market segments. Below you will read situations that you experience with your supervisor. Please try as best as possible to empathize with the situations described. You stand together with the other employees of the project team only a few weeks before the project deadline. Until now things have proceeded well, and yet time is very short. Today you have been working for 12 hours on pending analysis scenarios. Just when your supervisor comes in and wants to leave, the final calculation is completed. Unfortunately, you realize that all calculations have been in vain, because errors have occurred in entering the data.

---

Telling that to your supervisor, he asks how this could happen again. If the work continues like that, we would never get anywhere. Before your supervisor turns around and goes out the door he says, "That must be put in order as fast as possible. Tomorrow at lunch we will discuss further."

The next day you go to lunch with your supervisor. He asks immediately whether the scenarios are now working. To which you reply that you had to go home yesterday evening, because of your sick son and wife. Your supervisor wishes your son a speedy recovery and asks when he could expect the results of the analysis, which he needs urgently.

#### High interest and gratitude condition

Please put yourself in the following situation. You have worked for two years as a clerk in an, up to now, growing service company named "good service". The management has appointed a task force, which shall analysis both opportunities and risks of alternative market segments. Below you will read situations that you experience with your supervisor. Please try as best as possible to empathize with the situations described. You stand together with the other employees of the project team only a few weeks before the project deadline. Until now things have proceeded well, and yet time is very short. Today you have been working for 12 hours on pending analysis scenarios. Just when your supervisor comes in and wants to leave, the final calculation is completed. Unfortunately, you realize that all calculations have been in vain, because errors have occurred in entering the data.

You tell this to your supervisor. He once again takes off his jacket and puts down his bag and sits down to talk with you. In the past your supervisor has given you props a number of times, because of your effort for the project team and because he is thankful to have you in his team and insists that he very much appreciates your efforts. He asks how you and your family are doing. You tell him that your twelve year old son is sick and sad that he cannot go as planned at the weekend to a basketball game. Your supervisor wishes you all the best and your son a speedy recovery. The next day you are meeting with your supervisor at lunch and expect that it will cover important details of the project shortly before completion. On your arrival your supervisor hands you a DVD called "Michael Jordan - The best of ten years" with the statement "if you cannot even go to basketball, you can get it at home now." After you have thanked your supervisor, he begins telling you about his last outing with his family. After an hour eating and talking about both of your families and your interests you both leave. Your manager says goodbye to you, with an indication that he still has a few questions that he would like you to answer by e-mail later, and thanks you for your time at lunch.

---

## 8 Appendix B: Scenario scripts for the transformational leadership and character manipulation in Study 2

### 8.1 Script for the transformational leadership manipulation

General (all scenarios): After graduation, you found the right job for you in the production company "Propon" in the human research section. You are qualified for the job through your studies but do not have many years of professional experience. After completing all formalities, you had an orientation meeting with your supervisor, Mr. Meier. Below, you can read about situations you have experienced with Mr. Meier. Please try to empathize as much as possible with the described situations. In the first interview, you talk with your supervisor about your future prospects within the company.

TL positive: Mr. Meier explains: "I want our product to be beneficial to every household in Germany.

The company has strong workers and I'm sure that we can achieve this goal together. You, with your fresh theoretical knowledge and youthful energy, can make an essential contribution."

TL negative: "For many years, the market share of our products has been in the middle in comparison to the products of competing companies. With a little luck, nothing will change. That would be quite satisfactory for us."

General (all scenarios): Later in the conversation, you share your fears with Mr. Meier regarding your lack of experience.

TL positive: Mr. Meier agrees to act as your mentor by providing advice and practical help. He asks you about your fear and how he could best help you. Mr. Meier emphasizes that he cares about your individual needs, so that nothing will stand in the way of your professional development.

TL negative: Since he does not respond to your fears, you ask him to support you in the first few weeks. Mr. Meier emphasized that he has a busy schedule and cannot help because you are, after all, not the only employee in the company.

General (all scenarios): A few hours later, you get to know your new team. The team tells you about past crises.

TL positive: Based on the stories they tell, you recognize that the team admires Mr. Meier. The team tells you about various risk situations and how Mr. Meier has mastered them. The team is confident that, when problems will arise, he will make the right decision. One team member adds: "I wish that one day I will be like Mr. Meier, who has the expertise and experience to be able to overcome any critical situation."

TL negative: Based on the stories they tell, you notice that the team's admiration for Mr. Meier leaves a lot to be desired. The team tells you about various risk situations that Mr. Meier could not master. The team is concerned that emerging problems due to poor decisions will have a negative impact

---

on the employees and the company. One team member noted: "Unfortunately, the expertise and experience of Mr. Meier is not enough to overcome such critical situations".

General (all scenarios): You and your team start talking about your predecessor. The team tells you that your predecessor left you with an excess of work. He also failed to talk to the team about remaining tasks, which has been detrimental to the working climate. You do not know how to work under such conditions. You try to talk to Mr. Meier.

TL positive: Mr. Meier tells you that you should not see the current situation as a problem but rather as a challenge for you. Mr. Meier stressed that taking care of older tasks will help you better understand the content of your current work. In addition, you should think about what your predecessor may have done wrong and how you could improve the working atmosphere in the team again. Mr. Meier encourages you to be open about ideas that could bring the team closer together.

TL negative: Mr. Meier tells you that this situation is a problem. He suggests that you try to solve the problem that your predecessor made, because it is too late to change the work climate. Mr. Meier also emphasizes that he does not like changes to existing working methods.

General (all scenarios): A few months later, after your trial period...

## 8.2 Script for the integrity manipulation (continuation of TL scenario)

General (all scenarios): ... Mr. Meier asks you to find a suitable candidate for the "production design" area. After the application phase, you invite the candidates for an interview. Mr. Meier wants to support you with this and tells you that he saw it as his absolute duty to support you by observing the course of the conversation. Still, he lets you lead the interview.

Integrity positive: A few days later, when the appointment is due to take place, you hear that Mr. Meier's wife invited him to an important appointment that she could attend alone but clearly would like her husband (your supervisor) to attend, as well. You notice that Mr. Meier tells his wife that he cannot come, with the argument that he has promised a subordinate (you) that he would assist with several interviews. Mr. Meier takes part in the interviews, as he promised. As agreed upon, you lead the interviews independently. The next day, you notice by chance that Mr. Meier talked with top management. He reports that he was present at the candidate interviews a day earlier, but that you conducted the interviews with the applicants.

Integrity negative: A few days later, when the appointment is due to take place, Mr. Meier does not show up. When you encounter Mr. Meier in the late afternoon, he tells you he could not come because Christmas shopping took longer than planned. The next day, you notice by chance that Mr. Meier talked with top management. He reports that he was present at the candidate interviews a day earlier – after all, he sees it as his duty to support a new employee.

---

### 8.3 Script for the humility/forgiveness manipulation (continuation of TL scenario)

General (all scenarios): Mr. Meier gives you the task to measure employees' satisfaction. You go to work and think about possible questions with which to evaluate employee satisfaction. You want to discuss your final questionnaire with your supervisor.

Humility & forgiveness positive: Mr. Meier tells you: "I have done research in this area for a long time, but I would not like to make this decision alone. It would be useful to seek another opinion. Mrs. Müller from top management is also very experienced in this area, so we should make an appointment with her for tomorrow. If your questionnaire has any weaknesses, you can learn from Mrs. Müller and my suggestions for improvement." The next day, after the meeting with Mrs. Müller and Mr. Meier, you revise the questionnaire and fix any errors. You send the questionnaire by means of an online survey to every employee. After sending, you notice that you mistakenly sent to first version rather than the revised one. You go to your supervisor and report your mishap. Mr. Meier tells you that it's an unfortunate situation, but that you shouldn't beat yourself up about it. Such an error happens easily, but should not happen again in the future. Mr. Meier asks you to inform the staff and send the revised questionnaire.

Humility & forgiveness negative: You want to discuss your final questionnaire with your supervisor, because you know that Mr. Meier worked intensively for several years on employee surveys. Mr. Meier tells you the following: "At first glance, your questions seem to be quite ok to me, but the staff expects a higher level from me. However, I don't have the time to concern myself with this. I also do not know who I could propose as an alternative contact person, but ask Mrs. Müller from top management. She has already worked on this issue." The next day, after meeting with Mrs. Müller, you revise the questionnaire and fix any errors. The questionnaire is sent in the form of an online survey to all employees. After sending, you notice that you mistakenly sent the first questionnaire rather than the revised one. The next day, you go to your supervisor and report your mishap. Mr. Meier tells you that such an error from an educated person is shameful and inexcusable. Mr. Meier then asked your work colleagues to inform employees that they will design a new questionnaire and then send it to all employees.

---

# Scientific CV

## Patrick Liborius, M. Sc.

Date of Birth: 1984/12/30

Place of Birth: Bad Soden-Salmünster, Germany

Nationality: Germany

Since 2016/04	Teacher for special tasks, Technische Universität Darmstadt
2012/06 – 2016/03	Research Assistant, Educational Psychology, Technische Universität Darmstadt
2013/04 – 2014/03	Research Assistant, Psychology, RWTH Aachen
2008/10 – 2012/05	Student Assistant, Educational Psychology, Technische Universität Darmstadt
2009/10 – 2011/09	M. Sc. Psychology, Technische Universität Darmstadt Focus: Economic- and personnel psychology
2006/10 – 2009/09	B. Sc. Psychology, Technische Universität Darmstadt Focus: Educational- and organizational psychology

## Publications

Liborius, P. & Neudel, P. (2010). Ein Training für Mentoren zur Hausaufgabenbetreuung. *Praxis Schule 5-10, 4*, 36-39.

Liborius, P. (2014). Who is Worthy of Being Followed? The Impact of Leaders' Character and the Moderating Role of Followers' Personality. *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied, 148*(3), 347-385. doi: 10.1080/00223980.2013.801335

Liborius, P. (2017). What does leaders' character add to transformational leadership? *Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied, 151*(3), 229-320. DOI: 10.1080/00223980.2016.1270889

Liborius, P., Bellhäuser, H., Schmitz, B. (minor revision under review). What makes a good study day? An intraindividual study on university students' time investment by means of time-series analyses. *Learning & Instruction*.

Liborius, P. (submitted). I know your integrity, I feel your humility – The distinguished impact on followers' cognitive and affective trust. *Leadership & Organizational Development Journal*.

---

# Obligatory Declaration

I declare that I have developed and written the enclosed doctoral thesis entitled “*The impact of leaders’ character on subordinates’ attitudes and behavior towards their work and leader*” completely by myself, and have not used sources or means without declaration in the text. Any thoughts from others or literal quotations are clearly marked. This thesis was not used in the same or in a similar version to achieve an academic grading or is being published elsewhere.

Darmstadt, 2017/04/07

.....

Patrick Liborius, M. Sc.