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Creating future-oriented organizations:
Exploring the beneficial effects of future-oriented cognition and behavior

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Abstract

The present thesis investigates organizational future orientation from an individual-level perspective, focusing on employees' future-oriented cognition and behavior. It develops and empirically tests theory on the effects of individual dispositions and work design characteristics on future-oriented behavior at work. The first study draws on a theory of self-regulation – regulatory focus theory – to explain how dispositional future orientation affects organizational citizenship behaviors. The results reveal positive effects of dispositional future orientation on different types of organizational citizenship behaviors which are differentially mediated through two regulatory foci: promotion focus and prevention focus. The second study integrates future orientation, regulatory focus, and work design theory to investigate the effect of employees' dispositional future orientation on their engagement in proactive strategic behavior. The results reveal a positive effect of dispositional future orientation on proactive strategic behavior (strategic scanning) which is mediated by promotion focus. This mediated effect is strengthened by a work design feature, namely social support. The third study investigates how employees' fear of negative evaluation affects proactive work behavior. The results demonstrate a negative effect of fear of negative evaluation on proactive work behavior (taking charge), and a buffering effect of promotion and prevention focus on this relationship. Moreover, under conditions of low promotion focus, a compensatory buffering function of social work design was found, whereas task characteristics appear as a precondition for the buffering effect of prevention focus. Finally, the thesis derives implications for current theory and practice on how organizations can foster future-oriented cognition and behavior at work.

Kurzfassung (German Abstract)

Die vorliegende Dissertation untersucht organisationale Zukunftsorientierung aus einer individuumsorientierten Perspektive und fokussiert dabei auf zukunftsorientierte Kognition und zukunftsorientiertes Verhalten von Mitarbeitern. Theoretische Ansätze zur Erklärung der Effekte individueller Dispositionen und der Arbeitsgestaltung auf zukunftsorientiertes Verhalten im Arbeitskontext werden entwickelt und empirisch überprüft. Die erste Studie untersucht die Auswirkung dispositionaler Zukunftsorientierung auf freiwilliges Engagement im Arbeitskontext unter Einbezug einer Theorie der Selbstregulation, der Regulatory Focus Theory. Die Ergebnisse zeigen positive Effekte von dispositionaler Zukunftsorientierung auf verschiedene Arten freiwilligen Engagements, die differentiell durch regulatorischen Fokus (promotion focus und prevention focus) mediiert werden. Eine zweite Studie integriert Theorien zu Zukunftsorientierung, regulatorischem Fokus und Arbeitsgestaltung zur Untersuchung des Effekts von dispositionaler Zukunftsorientierung auf proaktives strategisches Verhalten von Mitarbeitern. Die Ergebnisse zeigen einen positiven Effekt von dispositionaler Zukunftsorientierung auf proaktives strategisches Verhalten (strategic scanning), der durch promotion focus mediiert wird. Dieser mediierte Effekt wird verstärkt durch soziale Unterstützung als Merkmal der Arbeitsgestaltung. Die dritte Studie untersucht, wie sich Furcht vor negativer Bewertung bei Mitarbeitern auf deren proaktives Verhalten auswirkt. Die Ergebnisse zeigen einen negativen Effekt von Furcht vor negativer Bewertung auf proaktives Verhalten (taking charge) sowie einen abschwächenden Effekt beider regulatorischer Orientierungen (promotion und prevention focus) auf diesen Zusammenhang. Bei niedriger Ausprägung von promotion focus zeigt sich ein kompensatorischer Effekt durch soziale Merkmale der Arbeitsgestaltung, wohingegen sich Aufgabenmerkmale der Arbeitsgestaltung als Voraussetzung für den Effekt von prevention focus erweisen. Abschließend werden in der Dissertation Implikationen für Theorie und Praxis zur Förderung zukunftsorientierten Denkens und Verhaltens im Arbeitskontext abgeleitet.

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Contents

1 Introduction[1]

> *"The best way to predict the future is to invent it."*
> (Kay, 1989, p. 1)

1.1 Motivation, central research questions, and main contributions

Future orientation is a pivotal aspect of an organization's strategic orientation (Venkatraman, 1989). Organizational future orientation has been described as a long-term strategic orientation that involves creating distal strategic goals and investing resources in planning for the future (Lee, Hui, Tinsley, & Niu, 2006). While future orientation denotes a general focus on the future and does not necessarily imply a long-term perspective, a long-term oriented view on the future is generally seen as most crucial to organizations. Organizations failing to devote attention to their long-term strategic development do not only jeopardize their own long-term survival and sustainable success, but also compromise economic development because they tend toward underinvestment in important strategic resources (Hayes & Abernathy, 1980; Porter, 1992; Souder & Bromiley, 2012). The importance of creating and sustaining future orientation and particularly long-term orientation in organizations has been acknowledged by researchers and practitioners alike, and has received extensive attention in the management literature (Jacobs, 1991; Laverty, 1996; Johnson & Kaplan, 1987; Marginson & McAulay, 2008; Miller, 2002; Porter, 1992; Stein, 1989). Researchers have criticized organizational "short-termism" or "myopia" (e.g., Laverty, 1996; Marginson & McAulay, 2008; Miller, 2002; Stein, 1989), calling attention to the negative effects of behaviors "that pursue a course of action that is best for the short term but suboptimal over the long run" (Laverty, 1996, p. 826) and investigating causes and remedies of the pervasive tendency of organizations to overvalue immediate outcomes at cost of long-term benefits.

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[1] This introduction is based on Strobel, Tumasjan, Spörrle, and Welpe (2013), Strobel, Tumasjan, and Welpe (2012a), and Strobel, Tumasjan, and Welpe (2012b).

But what makes an organization future-oriented? One important stream of management research has pointed out the importance of individual factors in influencing whether firms adopt a short-term or a long-term strategic orientation (Das, 1987; Laverty, 1996; Lumpkin & Brigham, 2011; Mannix & Loewenstein, 1994; Marginson & McAulay, 2008; economic and organizational causes have also been identified; e.g., Johnson & Kaplan, 1987; Stein, 1989; for an overview, see Laverty, 1996). For example, Das (1987) has shown that corporate decision makers with an extended future time perspective prefer longer planning horizons for their company's strategic endeavors. This explanatory perspective has mainly focused on organizational decision-makers at higher levels in the organizational hierarchy as drivers of organizational future orientation. However, as Marginson and McAulay (2008) suggest, short-termism may be contagious within work groups. Thus, looking beyond managers in researching organizational future orientation is important (Marginson & McAulay, 2008). Moreover, with the emergence of new, increasingly decentralized and modular work structures that bring about a "shifting of decision-making and responsibility from managers to employees" (Picot, Reichwald, & Wigand, 2008, p. 376), the characteristics and behavior of employees at all levels will shape organizations to an increasing extent. Understanding how organizational members at all organizational levels can contribute to organizational future orientation is therefore of crucial importance, yet previous research has largely neglected the potential of employees throughout the organization to shape organizations toward future orientation from the inside out.

Addressing this limitation, the present thesis investigates organizational members' future-oriented cognition and behavior, putting forward the notion that future-oriented organizations can be built from within through organizational members' future-oriented thinking and behavior. This is consistent with Schneider's (1987) dictum that "the people make the place" (p. 437) which contends that organizational members shape organizations through their individual characteristics and behavior. The purpose of this thesis is to develop

and empirically evaluate theory on how dispositional characteristics of organizational members can positively and negatively affect their engagement in future-oriented behavior at work, and how organizations can create a work environment that supports beneficial effects and buffers detrimental effects of dispositional characteristics on future-oriented behavior. Thus, in contrast to prior research that has focused on the organizational level in investigating organizational future orientation (e.g., Laverty, 1996) this thesis takes an individual-level approach to investigating future-oriented cognition and behavior within organizations. In the following paragraphs, I will outline and define the core concepts investigated in this thesis and explicate the gaps in the current literature this thesis aims to address.

Future orientation of organizational members refers to the cognitive processes which enable individuals in organizations to conceptualize events and states that will occur in the future. The extent to which individuals tend to devote their attention to the future and think about future events and goals has been described as a relatively stable dispositional characteristic (Bluedorn, 2002; Shipp, Edwards, & Lambert, 2009). Despite a considerable body of research on future orientation demonstrating its beneficial effects in domains outside the organizational context (e.g., De Bilde, Vansteenkiste, & Lens, 2011; Fried & Slowik, 2004; Holman & Silver, 2005; Joireman, Lasane, Bennett, Richards, & Solaimani, 2001; Orbell, Perugini, & Rakow, 2004; Pulkkinen & Rönkä, 1994; Simons, Vansteenkiste, Lens, & Lacante, 2004; Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999), research on dispositional future orientation within organizations is sparse. While temporal orientation in general has been deemed an important topic to investigate in organizational research (e.g., Ancona, Okhuysen, & Perlow, 2001; Bluedorn & Denhardt, 1988; Bluedorn & Jaussi, 2008; Fried & Slowik, 2004; Huy, 2001; Seijts, 1998; Waller, Conte, Gibson, & Carpenter, 2001), only few studies exist that empirically investigate individual future orientation with regard to its consequences in organizations (see Shipp et al., 2009). In particular, research on temporal orientation in organizations has suffered from a lack of conceptual clarity and resulting measurement issues

(Shipp et al., 2009). To address this problem, Shipp et al. (2009) have recently developed a novel conceptualization and measure of temporal orientation. The studies on individual future orientation in this thesis are among the first to contribute to this novel stream of research (e.g., Foo, Uy, & Baron, 2009; Shipp et al., 2009) and to develop and test theory on the mediating and moderating influences on the expression of individual future orientation in organizations.

Future-oriented behaviors are characterized by being instrumental in achieving desired outcomes in the future even though their effect may not necessarily be evident at the present time. While the term "future-oriented behavior" could also include behaviors that concentrate on the short-term (rather than the long-term) future, the present thesis uses this term to denote behaviors that are effective in the long run. Among the large range of behaviors covered by this definition, the present thesis focuses on discretionary behaviors of organizational members that bear future-oriented properties. Specifically, three types of future-oriented employee behaviors are investigated in this thesis: organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988), proactive strategic behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010), and proactive work behavior (Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Parker & Collins, 2010). Each of these three types of behavior has been theoretically associated with future-oriented or long-term thinking in previous research (organizational citizenship behavior: Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994; proactive strategic behavior and proactive work behavior: Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010). However, the extant research has neglected to build systematic theory and to empirically test models that explicate the processes by which individual future orientation affects these behaviors. In particular, the mechanisms through which individual future-oriented cognition translates into such behaviors, as well as the organizational contexts that can foster the translation of future-oriented cognition into such behavior have remained largely unknown. Moreover, individual dispositions that may hamper engagement in future-oriented behavior have received little attention in the literature. As a consequence, our knowledge on how individual future orientation translates into future-oriented organizational behaviors is limited, and little is

known about what organizations can do to foster individual future-oriented thinking and behavior and to alleviate the adverse effects of dispositions that prevent individuals from engaging in future-oriented behaviors. Three central research questions motivate the present thesis:

Research question #1: How does organizational members' future orientation (i.e., a dispositional inclination to focus on the future) influence their future-oriented behavior in organizations?

Research question #2: How does dispositional fear of negative evaluation impede organizational members' engagement in future-oriented behavior in organizations?

Research question #3: How can organizations foster future-oriented behavior within organizations through supporting the positive and buffering the adverse effects of individual dispositions?

On a general level, the present thesis aims at advancing our understanding of how future-oriented organizations may be created through building and supporting a large basis of organizational members who think and act in a future-oriented manner. This research thus contributes to two major scholarly discourses on organizational future orientation (e.g., Laverty, 1996; Marginson & McAulay, 2008) and emergent corporate strategy (e.g., Burgelman, 1983; Wooldridge, Schmid, & Floyd, 2008) by providing an individual difference perspective on the creation of future-oriented organizations through fostering future-oriented cognition and behavior of organizational members. On a more specific level, taking an individual-level approach, this thesis offers contributions to the literature on temporal orientation in organizations (e.g., Bluedorn & Denhardt, 1988; Shipp et al., 2009), as well as on the literatures on different types of future-oriented organizational behaviors, namely organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988), proactive strategic behavior (Parker &

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Collins, 2010), and proactive work behavior (Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Parker & Collins, 2010) by examining how individual future orientation leads to such behaviors and how organizations can support their member's future orientation and long-term oriented behavior.

1.2 Central concepts and definitions

The following sections define the central theoretical concepts of this thesis, namely dispositional future orientation and the three types of future-oriented behavior in organizations investigated in this thesis.

1.2.1 Future orientation

Future orientation of individuals has been investigated in a sizeable number of different research areas such as developmental psychology (Pulkkinen & Rönkä, 1994), education (De Bilde et al., 2011; Simons et al., 2004), trauma and coping (Holman & Silver, 2005), health behavior (Orbell et al., 2004), proenvironmental behavior (Joireman et al., 2001), entrepreneurship (Bluedorn & Martin, 2008; Foo et al., 2009; Das & Teng, 1997), vocational behavior (Bal, Jansen, van der Velde, de Lange, & Rousseau, 2010), and organizational behavior (Joireman, Kamdar, Daniels, & Duell, 2006; Shipp et al., 2009). Accordingly, different concepts of future orientation coexist with partially overlapping definitions. While an inclination toward cognitive involvement with the future is generally at the core of these concepts, some additionally include affective and behavioral aspects of future orientation (for an overview, see Shipp et al., 2009). Furthermore, the majority of research on future orientation adopts the view that future orientation is a relatively stable individual characteristic and can thus be regarded as a personality disposition (e.g., Bluedorn, 2002; Shipp et al., 2009; Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999). However, future orientation has also been described as situationally variable to some extent (e.g., Foo et al., 2009; Joireman et al., 2006; Staats, Romine, Atha, & Isham, 1994).

In the present thesis, future orientation is defined as a personality characteristic that predisposes individuals to cognitively engage in the future. This view is in line with Shipp et al.'s definition of future temporal focus as "the attention individuals devote to thinking about the [...] future" (Shipp et al., 2009, p. 1). Future temporal focus is complemented by two other temporal foci, namely present temporal focus and past temporal focus. These three foci are conceptualized as independent dimensions of temporal focus (Shipp et al., 2009) which warrants their investigation separate from each other (see e.g., Foo et al., 2009). While Shipp et al. (2009) use the term temporal focus, the same concept has also been termed future orientation (Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999) which is the term used throughout the present thesis. A related concept is future time perspective which denotes "the length of the future time span which is conceptualized" (Wallace, 1956, p. 240). Other terms used for this concept are future time horizon (Bluedorn, 2000, 2002) and future temporal depth (Bluedorn & Martin, 2008). While future orientation as defined above denotes whether an individual is inclined to focus on the future, future time perspective is concerned with the length of the time span that is considered, i.e., how far an individual thinks ahead. However, a general attention to the future is required in order to be able to consider a particular future time span. Thus, future time perspective can be considered a specification of the more general concept of future orientation regarding the size of the future time span that is considered. More distantly related is the concept of consideration of future consequences (Strathman, Gleicher, Boninger, & Edwards, 1994) which denotes "the extent to which individuals consider the future implications of their current actions" (Toepoel, 2010, p. 951). This concept focuses on the extent to which individuals consider potential future outcomes when performing a particular action in the present. It is thus narrower in scope than the more general concepts of future orientation (i.e., the degree of attention that is generally devoted to the future) and future time perspective (i.e., the time span someone considers when thinking about the future). Because of their relatedness

to future orientation, the literatures on future time perspective and consideration of future consequences also inform the present research.

A central proposition of this thesis rests on the idea that individuals' dispositional future orientation facilitates their engagement in future- and long-term oriented behavior. Being able to envision the future will affect individuals' course of action to the extent that they can link anticipated outcomes to their current behavior and alter their behavior in a way that makes a desired outcome in the future more likely (Fried & Slowik, 2004; Huy, 2001). According to Huy (2001, p. 601), "future goals affect present behavior when there is a temporal integration that makes the future continuous with the present and when people perceive they are able to influence the outcome". This way, a cognitive focus on the future enables individuals to bridge the gap between the present and the future (Karniol & Ross, 1996) and to engage in activities that help them to achieve desirable goals in the long run (Fried & Slowik, 2004). Therefore, future orientation of organizational members is likely to positively affect future- and long-term oriented behaviors in organizations, which is a core idea to be tested in this thesis.

1.2.2 Future-oriented behavior in organizations

The present thesis focuses on three types of future-oriented behaviors within organizations, namely organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988), proactive strategic behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010), and proactive work behavior (Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Parker & Collins, 2010). In the following paragraphs, I will introduce each of the three concepts and explicate how these behaviors can be regarded as future-oriented behaviors.

Organizational citizenship behaviors are discretionary behaviors which are beneficial to organizations (Organ, 1988; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, & Bachrach, 2000). In his seminal work, Organ (1988) has defined five dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior, namely altruism, conscientiousness, civic virtue, courtesy, and sportsmanship (see

Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Organizational citizenship behaviors can be regarded as future-oriented behaviors because they are important to long-term organizational success (Van Dyne et al., 1994) and frequently have little immediate benefit. For example, civic virtue (i.e., actively taking part in organizational life; Organ, 1988) may be costly in the short run as it requires time and energy to engage in organizational life, but pay off at a later point in time both for the individual and the organization as it may carry later benefits such as being able to influence the organization toward a desired end or gaining a reputation as an engaged employee. As citizenship behaviors are not formally rewarded, employees' tendency to exhibit them crucially depends on their individual personality and motivation (cf. Spitzmuller, Van Dyne, & Ilies, 2008). Building on this notion, this thesis develops and tests theory on future orientation as a personality antecedent of organizational citizenship behaviors.

Proactive strategic behavior is self-initiated employee behavior that aims at improving the organization's strategic position. Proactive strategic behavior encompasses strategic scanning (i.e., scanning the environment for opportunities and threats to the organization) and issue selling (i.e., advocating strategic issues to higher management levels; Parker & Collins, 2010; see also Dutton & Ashford, 1993). Proactive strategic behavior is one of three core dimensions of proactive behavior which is defined as self-initiated, future-oriented behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010). Proactive individuals anticipate future states and events and take action to bring about changes in the future (Parker et al., 2010). Individuals engaging in proactive strategic behavior monitor trends and developments in an organization's environment and develop and advocate ideas that might contribute to improving the organization's strategic fit with the environment in the future (see Parker & Collins, 2010). Although proactive strategic behavior may also involve detecting short-term opportunities, such behavior is often concerned with rather long-term developments and issues such as newly emerging markets (Parker & Collins, 2010), technological and demographic

developments or emerging internal organizational problems (Ashford, Rothbard, Piderit, & Dutton, 1998). Moreover, when individuals at lower organizational levels engage in proactive strategic behavior, their ideas and suggestions will often not immediately be heard and implemented by higher management levels. In addition, time may pass for their ideas to eventually bear fruit. Without being able to envision the long-term effects of their strategic initiatives, employees at middle and lower organizational levels are therefore unlikely to engage in proactive strategic behavior. Finally, individuals engaging in proactive strategic behavior need to consider the potential risks and benefits of engaging in such behavior for their own reputation within the organization (Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, Hayes, & Wierba, 1997) which requires being able to think about the long-term consequences of such behavior. Based on this reasoning, the present thesis considers proactive strategic behavior as employees' future-oriented behavior that is positively affected by individual future-oriented cognition.

Proactive work behavior is a second major type of proactive employee behavior in Parker and Collins' (2010) typology of employee proactivity. Proactive work behavior aims at changing the internal organizational environment and includes proactive behaviors such as taking charge, voice, and individual innovation (Parker & Collins, 2010). Like other proactive behaviors, these behaviors have been characterized as future-oriented because they consist of anticipatory actions that aim at future improvements (Parker & Collins, 2010). The present thesis focuses on taking charge behavior (Morrison & Phelps, 1999) because it is a central and frequently investigated type of proactive work behavior. Taking charge "entails voluntary and constructive efforts, by individual employees, to effect organizationally functional change with respect to how work is executed within the contexts of their jobs, work units, or organizations" (Morrison & Phelps, 1999, p. 403). Like other proactive work behaviors, taking charge brings about changes within the organization regarding the ways in which work is executed (Parker & Collins, 2010). Individuals engaging in such behavior undertake efforts

to improve work procedures and methods, and thus actively contribute to long-term organizational development and improvement. However, changes in work procedures and organizational routines induced by proactive work behaviors frequently involve short-term costs (e.g., implementation and training costs), such that the benefit of such behaviors is often evident only in the long run. In this vein, proactive work behaviors (including taking charge) can be considered as future-oriented behavior carrying long-term benefits.

1.3   Structure of the thesis and contributions of each chapter

The three core chapters of this thesis (Chapters 2-4) empirically address the central research questions of this thesis.

Chapter 2 investigates the mechanisms through which dispositional future orientation influences future-oriented organizational behaviors (research question #1), focusing on organizational citizenship behaviors (Organ, 1988) as future-oriented behaviors. Specifically, this paper contributes to our understanding of how dispositional future orientation translates into future-oriented behavior by integrating the literatures on individual future orientation (e.g., Shipp et al., 2009), regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997), and organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Organ, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 1990) to examine future orientation as a dispositional predictor of organizational citizenship behaviors. Building on earlier theorizing (Dewett & Denisi, 2007), a mediation model is developed which explicates promotion and prevention regulatory foci (Higgins, 1997) as two distinct psychological mechanisms that translate future orientation into different organizational citizenship behaviors. This chapter thus advances future orientation research (e.g., Shipp et al., 2009) by differentiating the psychological mechanisms that translate future-oriented cognition into different behavioral outcomes, and by revealing its relationship with organizational citizenship behaviors. Moreover, this paper extends the organizational citizenship behavior literature (e.g., Organ, 1988; Podsakoff et al., 1990) by introducing future orientation as a dispositional predictor of

citizenship behaviors, concurrently answering a recent call (Spitzmuller et al., 2008) for investigating mediators of the personality dispositions that predict organizational citizenship behavior. Finally, this research contributes to the literature on regulatory focus in organizations by empirically testing the theoretical distinction between promotion-focused and prevention-focused citizenship behaviors (e.g., Dewett & Denisi, 2007).

Chapter 3 investigates how dispositional future orientation affects proactive strategic behavior (i.e., initiatives intended to improve an organization's strategy; Parker & Collins, 2010), thereby addressing research question #1 with regard to another type of future-oriented behavior. Moreover, this study also addresses research question #3 by investigating work design features as boundary conditions of the effect of dispositional future orientation on future-oriented behavior. This study contributes to the literature on future orientation by extending our knowledge on the effect of future orientation in two ways. First, this study sheds light on the effect that individual future orientation has on future-oriented behavior that may eventually alter an organization's strategic direction. Second, this study reveals insight into how employees' work design features (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) constitute contextual conditions that can foster the expression of individual future orientation in organizations. This study is one of the first studies to empirically investigate the only recently defined construct of proactive strategic scanning (Parker & Collins, 2010). Individual future orientation is examined as a predictor of proactive strategic behavior that exerts its influence through enhancing promotion regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997). Moreover, work design features (i.e., social support and decision-making autonomy; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) are examined as boundary conditions of this mediated relationship. By developing and testing a theoretical model on how proactive strategic scanning arises from both individual and contextual preconditions, this study also contributes to existing proactivity research (e.g., Parker & Collins, 2010; Parker et al., 2010).

Chapter 4 investigates the consequences of fear of negative evaluation for employee engagement in proactive work behavior. This study addresses research question #2 by shedding light on the potentially detrimental effects of fear of negative evaluation on future-oriented behavior (i.e., proactive work behavior). Moreover, this study addresses research question #3 by investigating the individual and organizational self-regulatory resources that may buffer this negative influence. This chapter contributes to both fear of negative evaluation (Leary, 1995) and proactivity (Parker & Collins, 2010) research by establishing a link between these two concepts. Complementing extant proactivity research that has primarily focused on positive predictors of proactivity (e.g., Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006), the present study proposes and tests a negative influence of fear of negative evaluation on proactive work behavior (i.e., taking charge). Moreover, combining and contributing to the literatures on regulatory focus (e.g., Higgins, 1997; Wallace & Chen, 2006) and work design (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006), this study conceptualizes and investigates these concepts as internal (i.e., regulatory focus) and external (i.e. work design) sources of employee self-regulation that may buffer the adverse effect of fear of negative evaluation. Thus, this study contributes to our understanding of how individual dispositions can impede future-oriented behavior in organizations, and what organizations can do to overcome this adverse effect.

Chapter 5 summarizes the central findings and contributions of the present thesis, and portrays its implications for practice and further research.

1.4   Methodology

Quantitative survey methodology was employed in all three studies of the present thesis which is consistent with the dominant paradigm in organizational behavior research. While studies in organizational behavior also have used other methods of data collection (e.g., archival data, qualitative interviews, case studies), the scientific discourse has established the survey method as the method of choice for investigating the core constructs of this thesis (see

e.g., Parker & Collins, 2010; Podsakoff et al., 1990; Shipp et al., 2009). To examine the hypothesized effects, survey methodology (collection of primary data in the field) in a correlational design was chosen for all three studies. Two major reasons motivated this choice. First, the field survey design offers the advantage of a high external validity, that is, the results are more likely to generalize to realistic settings than results from experimental (laboratory) studies (Scandura & Williams, 2000), which was important as the main interest of both studies was to assess the effects of individual future orientation on actual behavior in organizations. Second, experimental manipulation of personality characteristics is difficult which makes correlational design the usual method in research on personality variables (Funder, 2009).

Individual future orientation and future-oriented behaviors are assessed through quantitative self-report scales that are established in the literature. For personality and attitudinal variables (such as future orientation), the use of self-report measures is common as these constructs are generally not measurable through evaluation by others (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). However, using self-report measures bears the risk of eliciting socially desirable responses or systematic response tendencies (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). On the other hand, behavioral ratings through others have the disadvantage that they may be less realistic as not all behaviors are observed by others, and that they similarly may be affected by biases such as halo effects (Dalal, 2005). The use of self-report measures for assessing individual future orientation and future-oriented organizational behaviors is in line with previous literature (e.g., Bolino, Turnley, Gilstrap, & Suazo, 2010; Ilies, Scott, & Judge, 2006; Parker & Collins, 2010; Shao, Resick, & Hargis, 2011; Shipp et al., 2009).

In order to minimize issues of common method variance which are a potential pitfall of survey designs in which both the independent and dependent variables are assessed through self-reports (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986), all three studies employ a multiple administration survey design with two points of measurement

in order to minimize the risk of obtaining artificial relationships due to common method variance (see Podsakoff & Organ, 1986).

The studies of the present thesis are based on two samples. The first sample ($N = 845$) which is used in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4 stems from a large representative study on work arrangements and work-life balance in a large German federated state[2]. For the purpose of the studies of this dissertation, only employed individuals who completed the survey at both times of measurement were retained in the sample. The second sample ($N = 388$) which was used in Chapter 3 was collected as part of a graduate course project. In order to maximize generalizability of the study results across a wide range of working contexts, both samples consisted of individuals working in different domains and industries.

Methods for data analysis were chosen in accordance with the respective research design and hypotheses to be tested. The results of Chapters 2, 3, and 4 were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis. Multiple mediation analyses (Chapter 2) and moderated mediation analyses (Chapter 3) were conducted using a regression-based bootstrapping approach (Preacher & Hayes, 2008; Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). The results of Chapter 4 were analyzed by means of regression-based moderation analyses including simple slopes analyses (Aiken & West, 1991) and Dawson and Richter's (2006) procedure to probe three-way interaction effects.

Finally, it needs to be noted that particular issues could not be addressed through the research designs chosen in the present thesis and therefore remain for further investigation. For example, while the multiple administration design chosen in Chapters 2, 3, and 4 has the advantage of investigating actual behavior of organizational members at work, this research does not address questions of causality. Moreover, the studies in the present thesis focus on individual-level effects and do not investigate future orientation or long-term orientation at the organizational level.

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2 The future starts today, not tomorrow: How future focus promotes organizational citizenship behaviors

Abstract

Future orientation has been shown to be an important driver of several functional behaviors. In the present study, we build and empirically test theory on the influence of dispositional future orientation on organizational citizenship behavior. We integrate future orientation research with regulatory focus theory to examine the two regulatory foci (i.e., prevention and promotion focus) as mediating mechanisms through which future orientation influences five distinct organizational citizenship behaviors (altruism, conscientiousness, courtesy, sportsmanship, and civic virtue). In line with our hypotheses, results from a study of 845 employees show that future orientation has a positive influence on altruism, courtesy, and civic virtue over and above important predictors of organizational citizenship behaviors identified in previous research. Mediation analyses support our theoretical model showing that different organizational citizenship behaviors are influenced by future orientation through either prevention or promotion focus at work.

3 Promoting proactive strategic behavior through future orientation, regulatory focus, and work design

Abstract

Proactive strategic behavior (i.e., strategic scanning and issue selling) is an important aspect of employee proactivity, yet little is known about its individual difference and work context antecedents. Addressing this research gap and extending the limited existing literature on proactive strategic behavior, we focus on proactive strategic scanning by developing and testing a model that explains how employees' future orientation promotes such behavior. We propose that promotion regulatory focus at work as a self-regulatory process links individual future orientation to proactive strategic scanning. Furthermore, we investigate work design features (i.e., social support and decision-making autonomy) as boundary conditions of this mediated relationship. Supporting our hypotheses, the results of a multiple administration survey ($N = 388$) indicate that individuals with higher levels of future orientation are more likely to exhibit proactive strategic scanning as a result of their higher promotion focus at work. This relationship was strengthened under conditions of high levels of social support but was not influenced by the level of decision-making autonomy. We discuss the implications of our results for existing models of proactive strategic behavior and conclude with opportunities for enhancing proactive strategic scanning in organizations.

4 Afraid of taking charge? Leveraging internal and external sources of self-regulation for proactive work behavior

Abstract

Proactive behavior in organizations is important, but employees may refrain from proactivity when they fear negative consequences for themselves. Building on this notion, we introduce the concept of fear of negative evaluation to the proactivity literature, focusing on taking charge behavior which is an important aspect of proactive work behavior. We develop and test theory to explain how the adverse effect of fear of negative evaluation on taking charge behavior may be mitigated by internal (i.e., regulatory focus) and external (i.e., work design) sources of self-regulation. In particular, we theorize that high levels of regulatory focus may mitigate the negative effect of fear of negative evaluation and that a lack of regulatory focus may be compensated for by work design features (i.e., social characteristics and task characteristics). Our empirical results ($N = 845$) support the buffering effect of regulatory focus and the compensating role of social work design characteristics. However, contrary to our prediction, task characteristics of work design appear to constitute a precondition rather than a compensation for regulatory focus. We derive theoretical and practical implications of our findings.

5 Conclusion[3]

5.1 Summary of main findings and contributions

The present thesis set out to address three general research questions. Research question #1, "*How does organizational members' future orientation (i.e., a dispositional inclination to focus on the future) influence their future-oriented behavior in organizations?*" was addressed in Chapters 2 and 3 showing that individual future orientation positively affects organizational citizenship behaviors and proactive strategic behaviors through enhancing regulatory foci. Research question #2, "*How does dispositional fear of negative evaluation impede organizational members' engagement in future-oriented behavior in organizations?*" was addressed in Chapter 4 whose results suggest that fear of negative evaluation can prevent individuals from engaging in long-term oriented behavior within organizations (i.e., proactive work behavior). Research question #3: "*How can organizations foster future-oriented behavior within organizations through supporting the positive and buffering the adverse effects of individual dispositions?*" was addressed in Chapter 3 which indicated that work design (i.e., social support) constitutes an external condition that can promote the expression of individual future orientation in organizations and in Chapter 4 which indicated that the adverse effect of fear of negative evaluation on future-oriented behavior can be buffered through internal (i.e., regulatory focus) and external (i.e., work design) sources of employee self-regulation.

Overall, this research contributes to our understanding of future-oriented cognition and behavior in organizations. Specifically, the results of the present thesis contribute to the following major streams in the management literature.

First, the present thesis contributes to research on time and temporality in organizations (e.g., Ancona, Okhuysen, & Perlow, 2001). Despite repeated calls from

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[3] This conclusion is based on Strobel, Tumasjan, Spörrle, and Welpe (2013), Strobel, Tumasjan, and Welpe (2012a), and Strobel, Tumasjan, and Welpe (2012b).

organizational research to investigate temporal issues in organizations (e.g., Ancona et al., 2001; Bluedorn & Denhardt, 1988), "the concept of temporal focus has not been fully situated within the context of relevant organizational behavior research" (Shipp, Edwards, and Lambert, 2009, p. 2). The present thesis contributes to addressing this issue by investigating how individual temporal focus (i.e., future orientation) affects future-oriented organizational behaviors. Moreover, this thesis also calls attention to the role of organizational surroundings in fostering the expression of future-oriented individual dispositions and behaviors, highlighting the role of organizational circumstances in influencing the behavioral manifestation of temporality in organizations.

Second, by building and testing theory on the influence of personality dispositions that positively (i.e., future orientation) and negatively (i.e., fear of negative evaluation) affect engagement in organizational citizenship behavior (Organ, 1988) and proactive behavior (Parker & Collins, 2010), this thesis contributes to the literature on discretionary work behavior and extra-role performance. This research thus adds to prior research on personality predictors of discretionary work behavior (e.g., Bateman & Crant, 1993; Chiaburu, Oh, Berry, Li, & Gardner, 2011; Organ & Ryan, 1995) by investigating two important personality predictors that have been neglected in previous research. Moreover, highlighting the self-regulatory processes through which these personality dispositions are translated into behavior, and systematically testing interactive effects of work design features in this process, the present research contributes to systematic and integrative theorizing on the individual and contextual origins of discretionary work behavior that has been called for by several researchers (e.g., Spitzmuller, Van Dyne, & Ilies, 2008; Parker, Bindl, & Strauss, 2010).

Third, the present thesis contributes to the literature on "strategizing throughout the organization" (Floyd & Lane, 2000, p. 154; see also Floyd & Wooldridge, 1997; Wooldridge, Schmid, & Floyd, 2008) by introducing the concept of individual future orientation into this literature. This thesis illuminates the process that incites organizational members to actively

contribute to the process of strategy creation, showing that individual proactive strategic behavior depends on particular individual characteristics (i.e., future orientation and regulatory focus) and organizational context features (i.e., social support). Additionally, the present research complements research on individual causes of organizational short-termism which has focused on strategic decisions of higher-level organizational members (e.g., Laverty, 1996; Marginson & McAulay, 2008) by examining future orientation and proactive strategic behavior among employees at multiple organizational levels.

Fourth, the results of this thesis are relevant on a more general level to the discourse on organizational sustainability. Organizational scholars have posed the question of how sustainability can be embedded in organizations (e.g., Haugh & Talwar, 2010). As organizational sustainability has frequently been associated with long-term orientation (Jennings & Zandbergen, 1995; Picot, 2011), the present research contributes to answering this question by identifying individual future orientation as a precursor of future- and long-term oriented behavior within organizations, and by identifying fear of negative evaluation as a potential impediment which can be overcome through self-regulatory processes that organizations can foster through implementing particular work design features. Thus, fostering future-oriented cognition and behavior among employees may contribute to organizational sustainability by promoting behavior that is long-term oriented and considers future consequences of current actions. The following paragraphs highlight the specific contributions of each of the five chapters of the present thesis.

Chapter 1 provides the theoretical background for the study of future orientation in organizations in the present thesis. After introducing the conceptualizations of future orientation and future-oriented behavior used in this thesis, existing definitions of future orientation are reviewed and an overview is provided of the three types of future-oriented organizational behaviors that are investigated in the present thesis (i.e., organizational citizenship behavior, proactive strategic behavior, and proactive work behavior).

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Chapter 2 examines how future orientation influences different types of organizational citizenship behaviors though distinct self-regulatory pathways. A theoretical model is tested and empirically supported that explicates promotion regulatory focus as a self-regulatory mechanism which translates future orientation into change-related citizenship behaviors and prevention regulatory focus as a self-regulatory mechanism that translates future orientation into maintenance citizenship behaviors. This model constitutes a step toward understanding the psychological mechanisms that translate dispositional future orientation into behavior in organizational contexts. Although researchers have underscored the importance of identifying mediators of future orientation (Holman & Silver, 2005), there is only very little research that has empirically investigated mediators of future orientation (for exceptions, see Samuels, 1997, as cited in Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999; Van Calster, Lens, & Nuttin, 1987). The present study addresses this gap, shedding light on the link between future orientation and organizational citizenship behaviors by explicating regulatory foci as differential underlying mechanisms of this relationship. The study puts forward the differentiation of organizational citizenship behaviors into maintenance/protective and change-related/promotive citizenship behaviors (Dewett & Denisi, 2007; Moon, Van Dyne, & Wrobel, 2004). Moreover, this research contributes to the scholarly discourse on personality antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior. Specifically, future orientation is introduced as a narrow personality trait that predicts citizenship behaviors, thus complementing extant research on organizational citizenship behavior that has investigated other personality predictors of organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2011). However, no significant relationship of future orientation was found with the citizenship behaviors of conscientiousness and sportsmanship. This finding underscores the importance of differentially examining different types of citizenship behaviors (e.g., Chiaburu et al., 2011; Dewett & Denisi, 2007; Karriker & Williams, 2009; Williams & Anderson, 1991) and points to the potential role of future orientation in differentiating organizational citizenship behaviors.

Chapter 3 focuses on proactive strategic scanning as future-oriented behavior within organizations. A theoretical model is developed which proposes individual future orientation as a predictor of proactive strategic scanning behavior that exerts its influence through enhancing promotion focus at work. Moreover, work design features (i.e., social support and decision-making autonomy; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) are implemented in the model as boundary conditions for the translation of future orientation into proactive strategic scanning behavior. The model thus introduces external conditions that can facilitate the expression of individual future orientation in organizations. This reasoning builds on trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) which suggests that personality characteristics can be activated or suppressed in particular environments. The present research thus integrates future orientation theory (Shipp et al., 2009), regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997), and trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003) to extend and systematize the nomological network of future orientation in organizations. Moreover, being one of the first studies to systematically investigate antecedents of proactive strategic scanning behavior, this study contributes to the proactivity literature (see Parker & Collins, 2010) by advancing theory and adding empirical evidence to this newly defined construct. The findings of the present study support a mediated effect of future orientation on proactive strategic scanning through promotion focus at work which is enhanced by high levels of social support as a moderator of the mediated relationship. However, no such moderating effect was found for decision-making autonomy. While constituting a first step into the investigation of work design features that may promote the expression of individual future orientation in organizations, the mixed results of this study underscore the necessity to further investigate the role of work design features in fostering such behavior. To this end, the model presented in this study could be extended in order to include other forms of proactive strategic behavior (e.g., issue selling, see Parker & Collins, 2010), and to specify the work design features that are conducive to each of these behaviors.

Chapter 4 offers a perspective on the potentially detrimental effects of individual characteristics on future-oriented behavior in organizations. This chapter contributes to the understanding of how future-oriented behaviors within organizations may be hampered by individual dispositions, and offers insights into how this adverse effect can be overcome. Specifically, fear of negative evaluation is proposed as a personality disposition that may prevent employees from engaging in future-oriented organizational behavior (i.e., proactive work behavior). A theoretical model is developed and tested that conceptualizes internal (i.e., regulatory focus) and external (i.e., work design features) sources of self-regulation as buffers of the negative relationship between fear of negative evaluation and proactive work behavior. This study introduces the concept of fear of negative evaluation (Leary, 1995) into the proactivity literature (Parker et al., 2010; Parker & Collins, 2010), calling attention to the largely disregarded negative effects of particular personality dispositions and attitudes on proactivity. Moreover, the study offers a novel conceptualization of internal and external sources of self-regulation interacting in a compensatory manner, thereby integrating and contributing to the literatures on regulatory focus in organizations (e.g., Neubert et al., 2008) and work design (e.g., Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006). Results of a survey including two temporally lagged measurement points support a buffering effect of both promotion and prevention regulatory focus on the negative effect of fear of negative evaluation on proactive work behavior (i.e., taking charge; Morrison & Phelps, 1999). Regarding work design features as external sources of self-regulation in the absence of promotion regulatory focus, the results also speak in favor of a compensatory effect of feedback from others but not of social support. Moreover, the buffering effect of prevention regulatory focus appears to be contingent upon work scheduling autonomy, such that prevention regulatory focus exerts its buffering function only under conditions of low work scheduling autonomy. The results of this study thus underscore the importance of regulatory focus as an internal source of self-regulation fostering long-term oriented behavior in organizations. By introducing the concept

of external sources of self-regulation that may compensate for a lack of internal self-regulation, this study opens up an interesting avenue for further research to examine how organizational environments interact with individual dispositions in supporting employees' self-regulation at work.

Chapter 5 summarizes the key results and contributions. Subsequently, based on the findings of this thesis, recommendations for organizational and managerial practice are derived and directions for future research are developed.

5.2 Implications for practice

In order to meet present and future challenges, the ability of organizations and their employees to recognize future opportunities and to nurture skills that possess longevity in times of rapidly changing environments is of crucial importance (see Picot, Reichwald, & Wigand, 2008). Based on the results of the present thesis, organizational practitioners can undertake a number of measures to address such challenges by increasing future orientation and promoting long-term oriented behavior within organizations.

First, based on the finding that individual future orientation positively affects beneficial future-oriented organizational behaviors, organizations should focus on future orientation in personnel recruitment and selection. The results of this thesis suggest that staffing an organization with future-oriented individuals will not only contribute to an enhanced level of future-oriented cognition within organizations, but also will bring future-oriented behaviors about (e.g., organizational citizenship behavior) that are beneficial to organizations in multiple ways (for review, see Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff, & Blume, 2009). While standardized scales (e.g., Shipp et al., 2009) are available for assessing individual future orientation, more informal questions may be useful as well to gauge the extent to which a candidate routinely engages in future-oriented thinking. For example, Thoms (2004) suggests a number of questions and exercises to explore individual temporal

orientations and lists a number of behaviors (e.g., continuous education) that are indicative of dispositional future orientation. The advantage of such more indirect procedures is that they can be included in assessment interviews without making their intention explicit, thus reducing the risk of socially desirable responding which is common when personality tests are used in assessment procedures (see Morgeson et al., 2007). Selection of future-oriented individuals may not only be important in the hiring process, but also for staffing ongoing and project teams with current organizational members. Given that future orientation may disseminate within teams (Marginson & McAulay, 2008), organizational leaders should try to ensure that teams contain at least some future-oriented members who can encourage others to engage in future-oriented thinking and behavior.

Second, organizations should include future orientation in employee training and create interventions in order to enhance future-oriented thinking and behavior of organizational members. Thoms (2004) suggests several techniques for managers to develop their own future orientation, such as deliberately devoting time to thinking about the future by using a set of questions that direct attention toward the future (e.g., "in what direction is the organization moving?", Thoms, 2004, p. 62), and seeking the company of future-oriented people. The extent to which such interventions can actually enhance future orientation, particularly in the long run, remains to be tested in future research. However, there is evidence that priming future orientation can activate future-related thoughts for at least short periods of time (Miles, Karpinska, Lumsden, & Macrae, 2010). At the very least, this effect can be utilized in planning and idea generation activities such as brainstorming sessions to enhance employees' future focus during such tasks.

Third, organizations should aim at creating work environments that encourage employees to think and act in a future-oriented manner. This suggestion refers to several areas of organizational and managerial practice. According to the results of the present thesis, employers willing to enhance future-oriented behavior within an organization should provide

work designs (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) that activate individual future-oriented tendencies. Specifically, managers should ensure that a high level of social support is available to future-oriented individuals in order to foster their engagement in future-oriented behavior. Because leaders are an important source of support for work behaviors (Amabile, Schatzel, Moneta, & Kramer, 2004), leaders may foster future-oriented thinking and behavior of their subordinates through supporting and encouraging their future-oriented endeavors. Transformational leaders in particular could also serve as role models for future orientation as this leadership style entails creating a vision and sharing it with subordinates (Bass, 1990). Additionally, in light of the finding that future orientation translates into future-oriented behaviors through different regulatory foci, organizations might channel individual future orientation toward particular types of future-oriented behavior through fostering the regulatory focus which is most conducive to the desired future-oriented behaviors. For example, if organizations aim at encouraging individual organizational members' contribution to strategy creation, a promotion-focused regulatory orientation should be emphasized. As employee regulatory orientation has been shown to be influenced by environmental conditions at work such as leader behavior (Neubert et al., 2008) or task demands (Dimotakis, Davison, & Hollenbeck, 2012), organizations should pay attention to the regulatory orientation that is prevalent in a particular work environment in order to properly harness future orientation of individual organizational members.

Finally, organizations may aim at creating a future-oriented organizational image and emphasize on future orientation in crafting their employer brand. The potential advantages of such an endeavor are manifold. In line with the person-organization fit literature (e.g., Judge & Cable, 1997) a future-oriented employer brand may be particularly attractive to future-oriented applicants, thus providing an enhanced opportunity to hire applicants with this beneficial personality characteristic. Moreover, as Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) note, an employer brand not only signals specific organizational values to the outside, but also

contributes to shaping the internal organizational climate and culture. Thus, creating a future-oriented employer brand may not only attract future-oriented applicants, but also help to foster and encourage future-oriented cognition and behavior inside organizations.

5.3 Future research opportunities

While the present thesis addresses the issue of creating future-oriented organizations from the inside out from different perspectives, this research also has its limitations and leaves a number of questions open for further investigation. The following sections offer suggestions for future research building on the theorizing and findings of the present thesis.

First, the present thesis focuses on future-oriented cognition and behavior of individuals within organizations and does not investigate future orientation at an organizational level. Further research should investigate whether and how future-oriented cognition and behavior within organizations affects future orientation at the organizational level. For example, organizations in which employees are encouraged to think and act in a future-oriented manner may gradually develop a future-oriented organizational culture and organizational image. This may in turn attract future-oriented applicants and thus perpetuate the positive effects of future orientation in organizations by attracting a future-oriented workforce. Research on organizational attractiveness has revealed that applicants are particularly attracted to organizations whose organizational culture and values fit their personal characteristics and values (Cable & Judge, 1996). Thus, a future-oriented organizational culture can be expected to be particularly attractive for future-oriented applicants. In line with the notion that an organization's strategic orientation is not necessarily developed solely at the top management level, but may also be influenced by emergent bottom-up processes (Mintzberg, 1987), cultivating future orientation at all organizational levels may also contribute to shaping corporate strategy toward future- and long-term

orientation. Further studies should thus investigate future orientation at both the individual and the organizational level, including the interactive effects between the two levels.

Second, based on the results of the present thesis, an integrative model of the influence of future orientation on both organizational citizenship behavior and proactive behavior could be developed. For example, Chiaburu et al. (2011) suggest a theoretical integration of proactive and citizenship behaviors through classifying citizenship behaviors as either prosocial (i.e., directed toward the individual or the organization) or proactive (i.e., change-oriented) citizenship behaviors and meta-analytically show that each of these types of citizenship behavior is preceded by specific personality predictors. In a similar vein, building on and combining the theoretical approaches by Chiaburu et al. (2011) and by Dewett and Denisi (2007), the theoretical models developed in Chapters 2 and 3 could be integrated to build a comprehensive model of the influence of future orientation on prosocial citizenship behaviors, maintenance citizenship behaviors, and change-related citizenship behaviors, respectively. Through introducing a distinction between prosocial (e.g., altruism), maintenance (e.g., courtesy), and change-related/proactive (e.g., civic virtue) citizenship behaviors, such a model could also accommodate the result of Chapter 2 which indicates that the influence of future orientation on altruism is mediated by promotion focus.

Third, more research is needed to clarify the relationships of future orientation with proactive strategic behaviors other than strategic scanning (which is investigated in Chapter 3). In Parker and Collins' (2010) seminal article, proactive strategic behavior is defined as one of three core types of proactive behavior which comprises strategic scanning and issue selling (i.e., calling managerial attention to particular strategic issues, see also Dutton & Ashford, 1993). As all proactive strategic behaviors aim at future strategic improvements (i.e., improving the organization's strategic fit with the environment), the positive effect of future orientation on strategic scanning behavior found in Chapter 3 may also generalize to issue selling behavior. However, whereas strategic scanning entails looking out for strategic

opportunities and threats to the company, issue selling is concerned with advocating strategic suggestions to higher levels of management. As the advocating aspect of issue selling goes beyond merely attending to and collecting information about the future, the extent to which future orientation alone will predict issue selling is not clear. Future orientation may predict issue selling only in conjunction with other personality characteristics that are important for the active promotion of an issue. Further studies should thus investigate the effect of future orientation on issue selling to achieve a more complete picture of the effects of future orientation on proactive strategic behavior. Moreover, integrating issue selling into the investigation of future orientation and proactive strategic behavior could also contribute to solving the puzzle of why no significant moderating effect of decision-making autonomy was found in Chapter 3. Strategic scanning activities can theoretically also be undertaken by individuals who do not possess the autonomy to actually suggest a strategic initiative resulting from their analysis. Contrastingly, issue selling behavior may require a greater degree of decision-making autonomy. Thus, future orientation may more readily translate into issue selling behavior for individuals with high (rather than low) decision-making autonomy, while decision-making autonomy has no effect on the translation of future orientation into strategic scanning.

Fourth, as the present thesis focuses on extra-role performance (i.e., organizational citizenship behavior and proactive behavior) as outcome of individual future orientation, further research is needed to investigate whether future orientation has also beneficial effects on task performance and on performance at the organizational level. For example, future-oriented individuals may be better able than less future-oriented individuals to regard their current work performance as a step toward reaching a particular career goal in the future (Fried & Slowik, 2004) and therefore perform better on tasks in the present. Moreover, as research on construal level theory (Trope & Liberman, 2003; Liberman & Trope, 2008) indicates, viewing things from a higher temporal distance facilitates perceiving the "big

picture" instead of focusing on small and less important details. Thus, future-oriented individuals may be better able to prioritize current tasks and to decide which tasks are worth pursuing in order to achieve desired (and rewarded) results. For performance at unit level and at firm level, context conditions are likely to influence whether individual future orientation is beneficial or not. For example, in highly dynamic environments, future orientation may exert different effects than in relatively stable environments. Barringer and Bluedorn (1999, p. 425) have suggested that "the adoption of a relatively long planning horizon is not tenable for entrepreneurial firms" as these frequently need to adapt to short-term changes in the environment. Thus, if future orientation leads individuals to adhere to a particular vision they might have for the future despite changing circumstances, future orientation could be dysfunctional in rapidly changing environments. Whether individual future orientation is beneficial in such contexts or not may also be contingent upon other individual characteristics. For example, if future orientation is paired with cognitive rigidity (i.e., reluctance to change one's mind; Oreg, 2003), it may have adverse effects in dynamic contexts as the combination of a high future orientation and high cognitive rigidity may cause individuals to stick to future-oriented plans which are not realistic any more due to changes in the environment. On the contrary, high future orientation in combination with low cognitive rigidity may be functional in dynamic environments as these individuals are likely to react to changes in the environment and adapt their future-oriented vision accordingly. As adaptability has also been defined as one core dimension of work role performance (Griffin, Neal, & Parker, 2007), investigating the interactive effects of future orientation and other personality dispositions in dynamic versus stable contexts constitutes an interesting and important avenue for future research.

Fifth, the present thesis investigates regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997) as a self-regulatory mechanism that translates future orientation into different outcomes. Further theory building and research is needed to advance our understanding of the psychological

mechanisms that make future orientation functional in the work context. For example, while work attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) are known mediators of the personality-performance relationship (e.g., Ilies, Fulmer, Spitzmuller, & Johnson, 2009), it is difficult to predict whether they also mediate the influence of future orientation on performance. This is because the association of future orientation with work attitudes is less clear than for other personality variables (e.g., the big five personality dimensions). While Shipp et al. (2009) found no direct effect of future orientation on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, Moyle (1995) found a positive association between future orientation at the firm level and job satisfaction. Therefore, it is not clear to what extent future orientation affects job attitudes at all and, thus, whether job attitudes may constitute relevant mediators of future orientation. Rather than affecting work attitudes, future orientation may be beneficial through its effects on self-regulation. The present thesis demonstrates stable effects of future orientation on self-regulation (i.e., promotion and prevention focus) across two time-lagged studies. Moreover, future orientation has been found to be associated with self-efficacy (Luszczynska, Gutierrez-Doña, & Schwarzer, 2005) which is another important self-regulatory mechanism (Bandura, 1997). Future orientation has also been theoretically linked to psychological capital, particularly optimism and resilience (Youssef & Luthans, 2007) which also have important self-regulatory functions (Armor & Taylor, 1998). Thus, future orientation could be conceptualized as influencing different facets of self-regulation (e.g., regulatory focus, self-efficacy, and optimism) which, in turn, affect specific outcomes. Future research could theoretically develop and empirically test a comprehensive model of the influence of future orientation on different self-regulatory mechanisms that, in turn, influence distinct work behaviors.

Sixth, the present thesis is only a first step in investigating organizational contexts that may foster future orientation and its behavioral expression in organizations. A major area of possible future research thus concerns the question of how organizations can offer an

environment in which future orientation can prosper. First, in addition to the work design features investigated in Chapter 3 and 4, other work design facets should be investigated as boundary conditions of the relationship between individual dispositions and future-oriented behavior. For example, the social work design feature of interdependence (i.e., the degree to which one's work affects others and is affected by others; Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006) may constitute a boundary condition of the effect of future orientation on prosocial citizenship behaviors (e.g., altruism) at work. Future orientation can be predicted to be more strongly related to altruism for individuals whose work is highly (vs. less) dependent on others' work. Second, organizational climate has been identified in previous research as an important contextual condition that can facilitate or hinder the expression of personal characteristics and attitudes at work (e.g., Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008). Third, leadership behaviors should be investigated that foster the expression of individual future orientation. Transformational leadership, for example, includes a future-oriented perspective as it encompasses creating a vision and encouraging employees to share it (Bass, 1990). Thus, transformational leaders may also encourage future oriented followers to translate their future orientation into action. In summary, work design features, organizational climate, and leadership style are three contextual conditions that may be fruitfully investigated as boundary conditions of the relationship between individual future orientation and work behavior.

Seventh, the question whether individual future orientation can be trained in organizations is important from both a theoretical and practical point of view. Although most existing research has treated future orientation as a personality disposition (e.g., Shipp et al., 2009; Zimbardo & Boyd, 1999), there is also research that conceptualizes future orientation as a situationally variable psychological state. For example, a laboratory study (Miles et al., 2010) has shown that future-oriented thoughts can be experimentally induced through looking at an animated display that elicits the illusion of moving forward. Moreover, in an experience sampling study, Foo, Uy, and Baron (2009) found that state positive affect positively

predicted state future orientation over and above trait future orientation. Hence, there is reason to believe that future orientation varies across situations at least to some extent and that it could be influenced through external conditions. Thus, further research should examine the extent to which future orientation can be enhanced through trainings and assess the extent to which such trainings have enduring effects on individual future orientation and whether these effects translate to future-oriented behavior.

In conclusion, the present thesis builds on and extends prior research on the antecedents and effects of future-oriented cognition and behavior. A set of empirical studies demonstrates that individual future orientation is functional within organizations in fostering future-oriented behavior and that work design features can enhance positive and buffer adverse effects of personality dispositions on future-oriented behavior. The present thesis thus contributes to the understanding of future orientation in organizations and opens up avenues for future research to explore how future-oriented organizations can be created on the basis of individual future-oriented cognition and behavior.

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Appendix

Appendix A *(Reference for Chapter 2)*

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Appendix B *(Reference for Chapter 3)*

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Appendix C *(Reference for Chapter 4)*

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