Interpersonal Sensitivity
In Organizational Contexts

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DEDICATION

To my family:

My husband and my daughters,

Alexander, Lana and Livia – my love, my light, my life.

My parents and my sister,

Josef and Jelena Usselmann, and Inna Frickel – my strength and inspiration.

For all their unconditional love, guidance, support, and constant encouragement to reach for my goals – making me to believe that anything is possible.

I am forever thankful.

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1 General Introduction

Interpersonal sensitivity, defined as a multifaceted construct that includes both accurate perception of others and appropriate interpersonal behavior (Bernieri, 2001; see also Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009; Hall & Bernieri, 2001), has been of interest in social and organizational research since the early 1930s (e.g., Vernon, 1933). Over the years, theorists have frequently emphasized the importance of interpersonal sensitivity for understanding interpersonal phenomena in work settings (e.g., Riggio, 2001), cultivating growing scholarly attention to investigate correlates of interpersonal sensitivity in organizational contexts (e.g., Molinsky & Margolis, 2005; Schmid Mast et al., 2012; Schmid Mast & Hall, 2018). Outside an organizational setting, meta-analytic results revealed remarkably consistent and coherent relations of interpersonal sensitivity with many psychological and social variables, manifested in both intrapersonal and interpersonal domains (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009), providing evidence that interpersonal sensitivity plays a key role for nearly all kinds of interactions. In organizational settings, in particular, literature suggests that this construct has advantageous effects on communication, collaboration, and coordination between employees (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009; Schmid Mast et al., 2012).

Although the construct promises important implications for the effective functioning of organizational processes, research on relevant antecedents of interpersonal sensitivity in organizations is still in its infancy (Riggio, 2001; Williams & Polman, 2015). Hence, examining such antecedents and boundary conditions of interpersonal sensitivity in organizational settings is essential to provide a clearer picture of when and how interpersonal sensitivity unfolds in organizations. To address this issue, the present dissertation aims to explore specific work relevant aspects as potential predicting variables of interpersonal sensitivity by investigating if and how important personal and situational aspects might influence perceptual (i.e., emotion recognition) and behavioral components (i.e., considerate social behavior) of interpersonal

sensitivity. This chapter continues with a more comprehensive definition of the interpersonal sensitivity construct and its differentiation from related concepts. This is followed by a brief summary of existing knowledge on the consequences and antecedents of interpersonal sensitivity.[1] On this basis, the last section of the Introduction describes the general outline and the specific studies of this dissertation.

1.1 State of the Literature and Open Questions

1.1.1 Defining Interpersonal Sensitivity

Although interpersonal sensitivity is often used to describe interpersonal accuracy (e.g., Hall & Bernieri, 2001), researchers have argued that the term is broader and, in parts, ambiguous. This has led scholars to suggest a more comprehensive definition of interpersonal sensitivity, which encompasses both accurate perception of others as well as interpersonally appropriate behavior (Bernieri, 2001; Riggio, 2001).

Following this broader perspective, the first part of the dissertation focuses on *perception accuracy*. Research on this topic typically aims to identify individual differences in person perception by measuring accuracy in judging others' affective states or personality traits (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009). Sometimes scholars use an even broader conceptualization of interpersonal perception, which also includes accuracy in noticing and recalling another person's nonverbal cues, communication content, or behavior (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009). No matter what definition is used, emotion recognition, defined as the ability to correctly discern discrete emotions of other individuals (Matsumoto et al., 2000), represents a central aspect of interpersonal accuracy, since recognizing and deciphering others' emotion expressions is an essential interpersonal skill that critically shapes social functioning (Carton et

[1] Given the breadth of the respective literature, the aim of the literature review is not to be comprehensive but to provide a representative overview to enable a better understanding of the dissertation's underlying core concepts.

al., 1999; Keltner & Kring, 1998). Generally, emotion recognition accuracy is understood as the correct judgment of non-verbal emotional expressions presented by single individuals. Recent theory suggests, however, that it is often important to grasp not only other individuals' emotional displays but to simultaneously assess the emotions expressed by a group of others (i.e., emotional aperture [EA]; Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009). In organizations, for example, leaders typically face a group of followers and, thus, must comprehend the overall emotional climate present within this group (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). Even though individual emotion recognition and perception of group emotions share underlying similarities regarding decoding processes, research has illustrated that emotional aperture is distinct from individual emotion recognition (Nisbett et al., 2001; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). Thus, both forms of emotion perception – individual-level and group-level emotion recognition – are the dissertation's central objects of study in the domain of perception accuracy.

The second part of the dissertation focuses on *considerate social behavior* – the behavioral component of interpersonal sensitivity. An individual exhibits considerate behavior (also known as other-oriented behavior) by showing attention to another person's interest instead of primarily focusing on own needs and desires. Examples of considerate behavior at the workplace are helping colleagues, sharing resources, cooperating on a task, or caring for others (Mok & DeCremer, 2018). In leadership contexts, considerate interpersonal interactions "reflect two-way open communication, mutual respect and trust, and an emphasis on satisfying employee needs" (Burke et al., 2006, p. 293), such that supervisors strive for harmonious interpersonal relationships. A considerate leadership style, for example, is based on respect for subordinates' ideas, needs and feelings, and thus, often represents a source of emotional support for employees (Fleishman & Peters, 1962; Pratt & Jiambalvo, 1982). Unsurprisingly then, scholars agree that interpersonal sensitivity is a fundamental factor for good leadership (Katz, 1986; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997; Schmid Mast et al., 2012).

1.1.2 Constructs Related to Interpersonal Sensitivity

Since the term interpersonal sensitivity represents an umbrella for many specific prosocial concepts, it partially overlaps with variables related to emotional intelligence, social skills, and empathy (Davis & Kraus, 1997; Hall et al., 2016; Schmid Mast et al., 2012).

Specifically, in social psychology, the term "interpersonal sensitivity" is often used to refer to an individual's ability to decode non-verbal socio-emotional cues (e.g., Hall, 1987), which is a core dimension of *emotional intelligence* (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). In fact, more similarities between the two constructs become apparent when we compare the definition of interpersonal sensitivity by Bernieri (2001) with the definition of emotional intelligence by Mayer and Salovey (1997). For Bernieri, interpersonal sensitivity comprises accurate perception of others as well as interpersonally appropriate behavior. According to Mayer and Salovey's ability-based model, the construct emotional intelligence includes four types of abilities (i.e. perceiving, using, understanding, and managing emotions). It is clear that both definitions are broad. Each concept includes cognitive elements (e.g., understanding and perception) as well as behavioral components (e.g., action, regulation of own and other's emotional states). Notably, however, the cognitive and behavioral components of both definitions comprise diverse as well as overlapping processes. For example, according to the definition of Mayer and Salovey (1997), perceiving can be understood as *decoding* and *interpretation* of social and emotional signs, which is quite close to the understanding of "accuracy in decoding emotions of others" in the sense of interpersonal sensitivity. Nonetheless, both definitions entail aspects that are not included in the other. For example, "emotion regulation" can mean applying specific (behavioral) strategies to control one's emotional experiences and/or expressions (Mayer et al., 2000). However, these strategies do not necessarily have to be based on considerate social behavior, which represents a key part of

interpersonal sensitivity. Hence, although the constructs do not completely overlap, interpersonal sensitivity and emotional intelligence clearly are related to each other.

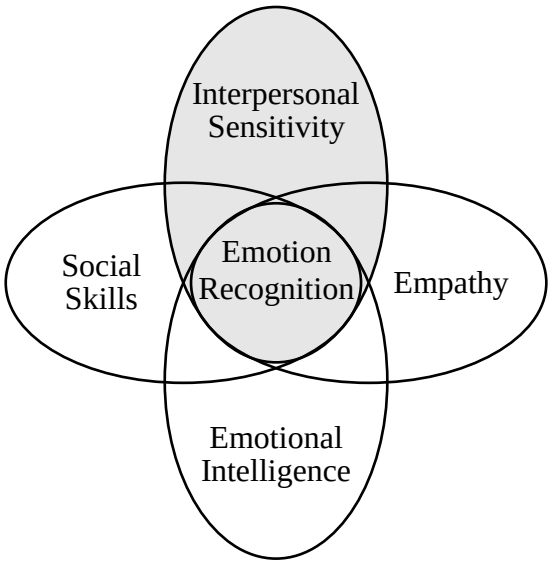
Interpersonal sensitivity also relates to *social skills*. According to Riggio, Tucker, and Coffaro (1989), social skills are defined as a set of abilities involving expressivity (i.e., the ability to interpersonally and emotionally express oneself), sensitivity (i.e., the ability to read and understand the emotions of others), and control (i.e., the ability to control and regulate the communication with other individuals). While the ability to read and understand emotions is prevalent in both constructs, social skills is in some parts broader than interpersonal sensitivity since it includes expressivity and control of emotions during interpersonal communication (Schmid Mast et al., 2012). At the same time, social skills represent a narrower concept because interpersonal sensitivity also includes prosocial behavior (Bernieri, 2001), which is not explicitly included in the definition of social skills.

Some aspects of interpersonal sensitivity may also be found in the construct of *empathy*. According to Hodges and Meyers (2007), "empathy is often defined as understanding another person's experience by imagining oneself in that other person's situation" (p. 296). In social psychology, the term empathy represents a broad concept composed of cognitive and emotional aspects (Allison et al., 2011; Davis et al., 1987; Davis et al., 1994). The cognitive component refers to the ability to "feel into" the thoughts and feelings of another person, while the resulting emotional response to that inference represents the emotional component of empathy (Baron-Cohen, 2011; Schmid Mast et al., 2012). While the concept of interpersonal sensitivity similarly involves cognitive and emotional processes to understand other individuals, it goes beyond the interest in others by also focusing on the accurate assessment of others' personality traits, states, and social relationships (Schmid Mast et al., 2012). Further, although both constructs share the dimension of being perceptive for other persons' thoughts and feelings, interpersonal sensitivity also refers to personal interest and appropriate social behavior, which consequently make

interpersonal sensitivity a broader construct (Schmid Mast et al., 2012; Bernieri, 2001). Moreover, Williams & Polman (2015) argue that interpersonally sensitive behavior does not necessarily involve feelings of empathy or compassion. Figure 1.1 gives a rough overview of the relationship between interpersonal sensitivity and the related constructs mentioned above.

Figure 1.1:

Interpersonal Sensitivity and Related Constructs



Finally, I note that in organizational leadership contexts, interpersonal sensitivity is also related to leadership styles based on consideration and interest for others. For instance, elements of interpersonal sensitive leader behavior can be found in Bass' (1985) work on transformational leadership, which entails individualized consideration as a type of leader behavior that expresses concern and respect for followers and their individual needs (Avolio & Bass, 1995; Bass, 1990b). Similarly, for Katz (1986), an interpersonally skilled leader considers others' perspectives, is sensitive to others' motives and needs, and allows participation in decision-making processes. In the leadership literature, this kind of leader behavior is also described as relationship-oriented, person-oriented, or employee-oriented leadership (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Burke et al., 2006; Stogdill, 1974). Hence, it is clear that such leadership styles at least partially overlap with the behavioral dimension of

interpersonal sensitivity, although they do not explicitly incorporate this construct's perceptual dimension.

1.1.3 Consequences of Interpersonal Sensitivity in Organizational Contexts

Empirical evidence suggests that interpersonal sensitivity is linked with a variety of work and organizational outcomes (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002; Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009), which has led scholars to repeatedly emphasize the construct's important role in the workplace (Schmid Mast & Hall, 2018). It has been shown, for example, that interpersonal sensitivity is related to intrapersonal factors such as being less depressed (Carton et al., 1999), less shy (Schroeder, 1995), and more socially competent (Barnes & Sternberg, 1989). Thus, it is not surprising that research has found positive relationships of interpersonal sensitivity with important organizational phenomena, such as communication, collaboration, and social relations at work (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009; Schmid Mast et al., 2012). Similarly, other studies have shown that high interpersonal sensitivity benefits conversations and interpersonal communication (Miczo et al., 2001), knowledge sharing (Levin & Cross, 2004), and less vengeful treatment of others (Greenberg, 1990, 1993). These findings are also supported by the notion that interpersonally sensitive individuals tend to be less guided by prejudices (Andrzejewski et al., 2009) and stereotypes (Frauendorfer & Schmid Mast, 2013; Hall & Carter, 1999) when evaluating others. More broadly, emotion recognition has been shown to predict overall career outcomes, such as an employee's annual income (Momm et al., 2015).

Additionally, there is numerous empirical work providing evidence for positive relations between interpersonal sensitivity and favorable outcomes related to leadership, service and sales performance, and negotiation outcomes (e.g., Byron et al., 2007; Elfenbein et al., 2007). Concerning *supervisor performance*, for instance, research has revealed interpersonal sensitivity to be beneficial, particularly for female managers (Byron, 2008). Schmid Mast et al. (2012) published similar findings, arguing that interpersonally sensitive leaders are able to

detect subordinates' feelings more easily and, thus, can meet subordinates' needs more accurately, which often results in more positive leadership evaluations. Moreover, it is widely acknowledged that emotion recognition can be a useful tool when aiming to persuade others (Petty et al., 2003). For instance, DeSteno and colleagues (2004) found that messages were more convincing when their emotional frame matched the emotion of the recipient. In sum, managers who are more responsive to non-verbal expressions were found to be more supportive and persuasive, to have more satisfied subordinates (Byron, 2007), and to exhibit more effective leadership styles (Rubin et al., 2005).

Further, scholars have suggested that interpersonal sensitivity plays a vital role in processes related to informal *leader emergence*. For instance, people with higher levels of emotion recognition accuracy tend to obtain informal leadership roles more easily, particularly when they are also highly extraverted (Walter et al., 2012). Similarly, research has shown that interpersonal sensitive team members who scored higher on empathy were more often selected as informal team leaders than their non-empathic teammates (Wolff et al., 2002). The authors explain that interpersonal sensitive individuals may benefit from their ability to identify and understand team needs to achieve and foster positive interpersonal relationships and trust (see also Kellett et al., 2002, 2006).

With regard to *sales* activities, scholars have found that interpersonally sensitive salespeople are generally more successful in their jobs (Byron et al., 2007; Puccinelli et al., 2013). For instance, customer ratings of service quality tend to be higher for interpersonally sensitive salespeople due to their skill in reading others' non-verbal affective cues, which in turn improves their effectiveness to meet customer needs (Puccinelli et al., 2013). In addition, empirical work reveals strong positive associations between salespersons' interpersonal skills and customer trust as well as satisfaction (Aggarwal et al., 2005). Indeed, skills related to emotional intelligence can serve as a versatile resource for salespeople to develop and improve

relationships with customers (Deeter-Schmelz & Sojka, 2003). Accordingly, researchers have cast interpersonal sensitivity as crucial for work effectiveness, particularly in jobs in sales contexts that require cooperative exchanges with others (Ambady et al., 2006; Witt et al., 2002). More generally, some authors propose that emotional intelligence benefits not only individual performance but also translates into the success of the sales organization as a whole (Ingram et al., 2005; Rojell et al., 2006; Wilderom et al., 2015).

Relatedly, research has shown that interpersonal accuracy is positively associated with *negotiation* outcomes. Elfenbein et al. (2007) found, for example, that emotion recognition is related to higher performance in both cooperative and competitive negotiation situations. Scholars have argued, accordingly, that higher interpersonal sensitivity "renders a person able to predict others' intentions, needs, and future behaviors, which then informs one's own tactical and strategic decisions" (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009, p. 151). Moreover, interpersonal sensitivity promotes behavioral adaptability, so that one's own behavior better corresponds to social interaction partners' expectations (Schmid Mast & Hall, 2018).

1.1.4 Antecedents of Interpersonal Sensitivity

There are so many different kinds of predictor variables with possible connections to interpersonal sensitivity that developing a complete taxonomy is difficult. However, meta-analytic research and review papers provide reasons to categorize such correlates of interpersonal sensitivity into trait-related, affective, cognitive, motivational, and target/context characteristics (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009; Schmid Mast & Hall, 2018).

Individual Traits

Most studies in this realm focus on interpersonal sensitivity as an individual-difference variable (Hall, Blanch et al., 2009), which causes a vast amount of results on trait correlates of this construct (for meta-analytic reviews, see, for example, Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009;

Marsh & Blair, 2008). This research revealed significant relationships of interpersonal sensitivity with various self-rated positive trait categories (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009). For instance, empirical research suggests that extraverted individuals (i.e., people with a high preference for social interaction and lively activity; McCrae & John, 1992) tend to be more interpersonal sensitive when interacting with others (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009). Other personality traits such as conscientiousness and openness have also been shown to positively relate to interpersonal sensitivity (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009). Moreover, research revealed that tolerant people tend to be more interpersonally sensitive (Carter & Hall, 2008). Interestingly, however, the meta-analysis of Hall et al. (2009) did not find the often-assumed relationship between an individual's agreeableness and interpersonal sensitivity.

Another important trait related to interpersonal sensitivity is an individual's *age*. Research from the last decades provides increasing evidence that the ability to recognize emotions diminishes with growing age because cognitive abilities needed for emotion recognition tend to decrease over the lifespan (Salthouse, 1998; Salthouse et al., 2003). Notably, the large majority of this research has focused on the ability to infer *individual-level* emotional states (Williams & Polman, 2015). Until recently, this development pushed into the background that accurate recognition of group-based emotions plays an important role in work environments (e.g., Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016; Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009). Hence, little is known about whether the well-established relationship between age and individual emotion recognition also applies to the area of collective emotion recognition (i.e., emotional aperture [EA]).

Further, Hall and Schmid Mast (2008) consider the role of individuals' *gender* for interpersonal sensitivity. The authors explain the often found female advantage on interpersonal sensitivity tests (Hall, 1984; Hoffmann, 2009; for a meta-analysis, see McClure, 2000) by referring to women's general motivation to be socially interested and caring (Ickes et al., 2000).

Ickes et al. (2000) argue that women and men do not necessarily differ in their interpersonal sensitivity skills. What differs is rather their motivation to show empathic behavior, which is higher among female individuals due to early socialization processes.

Affective Factors

Empirical work on the impact of positive and negative *affect* on interpersonal sensitivity revealed that negative affect (e.g., sadness), in contrast to positive affect (e.g., happiness), might reduce interpersonal sensitivity (Chepenik et al., 2007; Forgas & East, 2008; for an overview, see Schmid, 2016). Isen (1987), for instance, postulates a significant relationship between positive affect and social behavior. Relatedly, Motowidlo (1984) argues that individuals with positive affective states at work (or positive job attitudes, such as job satisfaction) are more inclined to express their good feelings through considerate and sensitive interpersonal behavior. Further, some studies have shown that both positive and negative affective states may increase accuracy in decoding emotions, but only if the presented information is mood-congruent (Forgas & Bower, 1987; Schmid & Schmid Mast, 2010). In sum, despite initial evidence, the relatively thin empirical basis does not provide a clear-cut picture about the role one's own emotions play in interpersonal sensitivity (Schmid, 2016).

Cognitive Factors

With regard to the effects of *cognitive* factors on interpersonal sensitivity, research distinguishes between local and global information processing styles (Gasper & Clore, 2002). For instance, Bombari et al. (2009) show that individuals with a rather global processing style (i.e., focusing on the whole rather than on details) could identify other people's feelings better than those using a local processing style (i.e., focusing on details of a specific information). In addition, research on the impact of cognitive load revealed that performing a cognitively demanding task may reduce effort and deliberation in interpersonal sensitivity tasks (Phillips et

al., 2008). Relatedly, scholars suggest that stress, as a cognitively demanding situation, may reduce interpersonal sensitivity (Hänggi, 2004; Tucker et al., 2020).

Motivational Factors

Beyond cognitive processes, research has shown that *motivational* states may influence interpersonal sensitivity (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009). Specifically, scholars found out that induced motivation (e.g., by telling participants that being accurate is important) had a positive influence on interpersonal sensitivity (Biesanz & Human, 2010; Ickes et al., 2000; Klein & Hodges, 2001), whereas reducing motivation had the opposite effects (McLarney-Vesotski et al., 2011). Additionally, scholars found that individuals' regulatory focus (i.e., a general motivational orientation with which people approach their goals) plays an important role for interpersonal sensitivity. Induced promotion focus, in contrast to induced prevention focus, increased emotion recognition accuracy (Sassenrath et al., 2014). Other empirical results, however, found no effects of incentivized performance on interpersonal sensitivity (Hall, Blanch et al., 2009; Nowicki & Richman, 1985), and thus, do not support the motivational approach. Moreover, previous work has shown that a strong need to belong (i.e., a desire for interpersonal attachments; Baumeister & Leary, 1995), high social affiliation (i.e., a desire to interact with others; Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009), as well as fear of social exclusion motivates people to be sensitive to social cues (Pickett et al., 2004; Pickett & Gardner, 2005).

Target/Context Characteristics

Finally, a broad research area deals with the question how target or context features may shape an individual's interpersonal sensitivity. Considering *target characteristics*, for example, studies by Ickes et al. (1990) revealed that interpersonal accuracy varied with the degree of senders' perceived attractiveness. Higher attractiveness increased the level of interest in the target person. Thus, feelings and thoughts of attractive partners were better recognized and understood than of interaction partners who were judged as less attractive. Moreover, the target's gender plays an important role for emotion recognition, such that people tend to

recognize sadness and anger better when women express these emotions (Bijlstra et al., 2010). Adding to this partial list, people's interest to be interpersonally sensitive appears to be determined by the degree of the interaction partner's trustworthiness and commitment to the relationship (Smith et al., 2011).

Moreover, considering broader *contextual characteristics*, an individual's power has received considerable research attention. Decades ago, Snodgrass (1985, 1992) has shown that individuals differing in their position of power, such as supervisors and subordinates, have different levels of interpersonal sensitivity. A more recent theoretical approach supports this view, suggesting that the asymmetrical dependence of high-power vs. low-power individuals may influence their motivation to be interpersonally sensitive, such that low-power individuals depend on others to a greater extent, prompting them to be more accurate during social interactions (Fiske, 1993; Keltner et al., 2003). Even though this view has had a long tradition in socio-psychological research, some scholars suggest that power might have beneficial (rather than detrimental) effects on interpersonal accuracy (Schmid Mast et al., 2009). In sum, regarding individuals' ability to recognize others' emotions, empirical research has produced seemingly contradictory results on the role of power (Hall et al., 2015; Schmid Mast et al., 2009). Moreover, the power literature suggests that the consequences of power may largely depend on the situation (Guinote, 2007a), indicating that the relationship between power and interpersonal sensitivity is more complex than many of the existing studies would suggest. Thus, further research is needed to gain a better understanding of this issue.

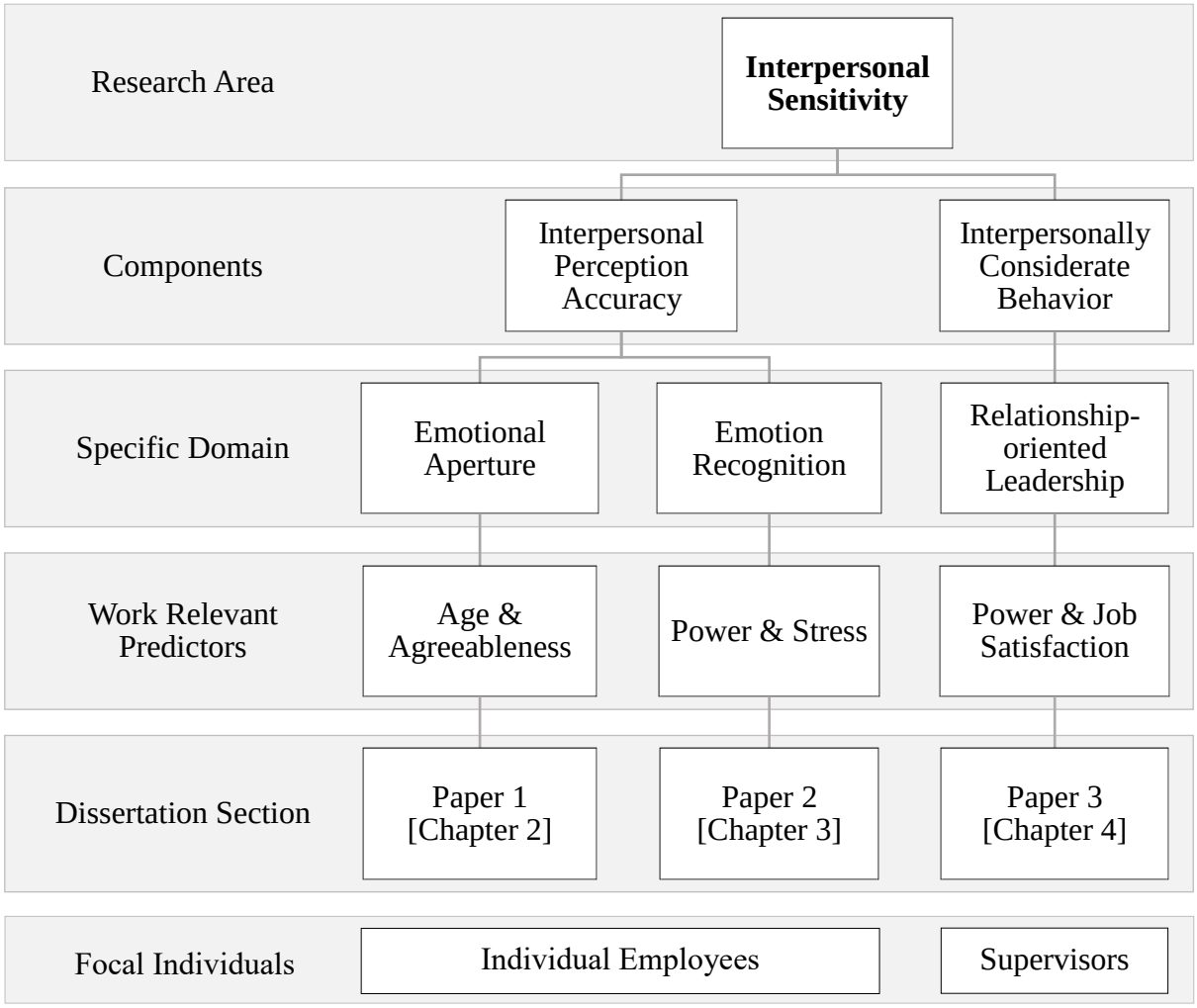
1.2 Overall Approach of the Dissertation

The literature review presented above revealed important factors that might enable people to achieve higher interpersonal sensitivity. Importantly, however, many of the studies on interpersonal sensitivity mentioned above were conducted in psychological or sociological experimental settings, leaving a need to understand when and how interpersonal sensitivity

unfolds in organizational contexts. As depicted in Figure 1.2, the present cumulative dissertation addresses this issue by examining the effects of different predictors on perceptual and behavioral components of interpersonal sensitivity in work environments in three independent papers.

Figure 1.2:

Domains of Interpersonal Sensitivity and the Dissertation's General Research Focus



Chapter 2 of this dissertation, in particular, focuses on the first component of interpersonal sensitivity (interpersonal perception accuracy; i.e., Paper 1). As noted before, most prior research on this issue has examined the ability to correctly decipher other individual's emotion expressions. Recent research has shown, however, that the ability to accurately perceive shared group emotions (i.e., emotional aperture) is highly important in

organizations as well (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). Little is known, however, about the antecedents of such emotional aperture (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). In the context of an aging population and workforce (Hedge et al., 2006), it is particularly interesting to examine the role of employees' age in this respect. As stated above, a broad literature has demonstrated age-related differences in individual emotion recognition, providing robust evidence for negative age effects (e.g., Mill et al., 2009; Ruffman et al., 2008). Chapter 2 draws from these insights to empirically examine how age might affect individuals' ability to read group emotions. To more fully understand associated age-related developments, it examines individuals' age in conjunction with a key personality characteristic, namely agreeableness. I argue that age and agreeableness will jointly shape an individual's emotional aperture. Hence, beyond highlighting the degree to which the age-emotion perception linkage generalizes toward collective emotions, this study may shed light on the ambiguous role of agreeableness for interpersonal sensitivity, as illustrated in prior research (e.g., Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009; Joseph & Newman, 2010).

Chapters 3 and 4 comprise the second part of the dissertation, which provides insights into the question how power (as a key contextual antecedent) might influence interpersonal sensitivity (i.e., Papers 2 and 3). As stated in the above literature overview, the link between power and interpersonal sensitivity is ambiguous, suggesting that moderating variables might be at play (Schmid Mast et al., 2009). Hence, this part of the dissertation focuses on specific personal and situational factors that may critically shape the linkage between power and different aspects of interpersonal sensitivity within organizational contexts (i.e., accuracy and interpersonal behavior). Chapter 3, in particular, empirically examines how and when employees' power may shape their individual emotion recognition accuracy. Building on insights from the stress literature (Kahneman, 1973) and past findings that stressful situations

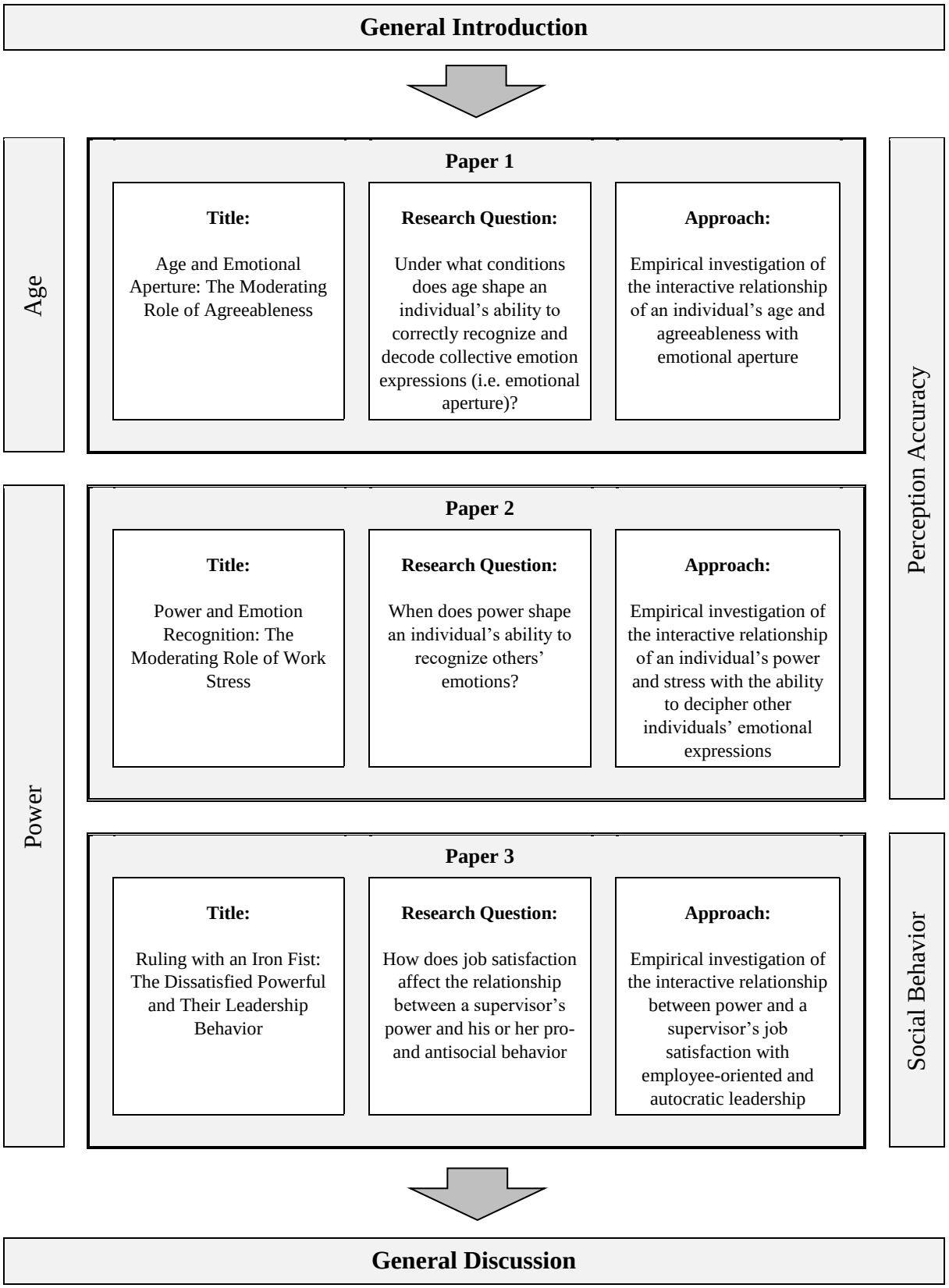
can impair emotion recognition (Gard et al., 1982; Keeley-Dyreson et al., 1991), Chapter 3 casts an individual's stress at work as a key moderating factor.

Chapter 4, by contrast, focuses on the consequences of power for behavioral aspects of interpersonal sensitivity. More precisely, this chapter turns toward a leadership context to examine the linkage between supervisors' power and considerate as well as autocratic (i.e., relatively inconsiderate) leadership behavior. Again, I aim to explicate the potentially ambiguous role of power prior research has emphasized (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2006; Schmid Mast et al., 2009). Drawing from research on the behavioral consequences of individuals' job satisfaction (e.g., Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Spector, 1997), Chapter 4, casts a supervisor's job satisfaction as a key moderating factor for the power-leadership behavior link.

In sum, the overall goal of the present dissertation is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the antecedents of interpersonal sensitivity in organizations, enabling scholars and researchers to get a more complete picture of key predictors and boundary conditions in this regard. Figure 1.3 presents the overall design of this dissertation and an overview of its three empirical papers.

Figure 1.3:

Overall Design of the Dissertation



2 Paper 1: Age and Emotional Aperture – The Moderating Role of Agreeableness[2]

Anna Faber and Frank Walter

Abstract

The capability to correctly recognize and decode collective emotion expressions (i.e., emotional aperture) is crucial for effective social and work-related interactions. Yet, little remains known about the antecedents of this ability. The present study represents one of the first empirical investigations into key aspects that may promote or diminish an individual's emotional aperture, examining the role of age in this regard. Our results illustrate a negative linkage between age and emotional aperture that is qualified by a curvilinear pattern, such that emotional aperture remained at a relatively high level until individuals reached their mid-30s and declined afterwards. Moreover, we found agreeableness to moderate this curvilinear association. Individuals with higher agreeableness exhibited relatively strong emotional aperture that remained largely unchanged with increasing age. Among less agreeable individuals, however, the age-emotional aperture linkage exhibited an inverted U-shape. For these individuals, emotional aperture was relatively low even at younger age, peaked around their early 40s, and sharply declined afterwards. Together, these findings offer new insights for the emerging literature on emotional aperture, illustrating that demographic and motivational factors may jointly shape such collective emotion recognition.

Keywords: age, emotional aperture, emotion recognition, group emotions, agreeableness

[2] Paper published in: Faber, A., & Walter, F. (2017). The curvilinear relationship between age and emotional aperture: The moderating role of agreeableness. *Frontiers in Psychology (Section Organizational Psychology), 8*, 1200.

2.1 Introduction

Correctly recognizing and deciphering others' emotion expressions is an important interpersonal skill that critically shapes social functioning (Carstensen et al., 1997; Carton et al., 1999; Keltner & Kring, 1998). With emotional cues providing information about individuals' feelings, opinions, and intentions (van Kleef, 2009), the ability to correctly assess and interpret others' emotions helps to create effective and harmonious social interactions and, thus, is vital for success in interpersonal communication (Byron, 2007; Byron et al., 2007; Isaacowitz et al., 2007).

Recent theory suggests that it is often important to grasp not only other individuals' emotion displays, but to simultaneously assess the emotions expressed by a group of others (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009). Such "emotional aperture" (EA) reflects the ability to recognize a group's overall emotional composition by focusing on the global picture of diverse emotion expressions within a collective (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009; see also Navon, 1977). With group and team structures permeating many modern organizations (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006) and groups' emotional setup shaping important processes and outcomes (Barsade et al., 2000; George, 1996a; Walter et al., 2013; Walter & Bruch, 2008), the capacity to accurately decipher collective emotionality is likely to be critical for employees' functioning. Research has, accordingly, illustrated EA as a unique capability (distinct from individual emotion recognition) that positively relates with leaders' transformational behavior toward their followers (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016).

Logically, then, it would appear highly important to understand why some individuals may be better at recognizing collective emotion expressions than others. Research has only started to focus on EA's antecedents, however, with initial results linking this ability with an individual's tendency toward global (rather than local) information processing (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). We are not aware of other empirical studies that have examined EA's origins to

date. The present study sets out to address this issue, thus representing one of the first empirical investigations into key factors that may promote or diminish an individual's EA.

In the context of individual emotion recognition, a broad literature has demonstrated (curvilinear) patterns of age-related decline (e.g., Mill et al., 2009; Ruffman et al., 2008). This research has shown that the ability to correctly decipher other individuals' emotion expressions starts to deteriorate around middle adulthood, with this negative trend accelerating at an older age (Doerwald et al., 2016). With increasing life expectancies and later retirement ages across most industrialized nations, scholars have identified aging populations and workforces as being among the most prevalent demographic developments in recent decades (Burger et al., 2012; Hedge et al., 2006). Hence, it is important to examine whether age-related declines in individual emotion recognition may generalize toward EA as well. Consistent with cognitive accounts of human development across the life-span (Salthouse, 1998) as well as recent theory and research on individual emotion recognition (Ruffman et al., 2008; Sze et al., 2012), we anticipate EA to diminish with individuals' age. More specifically, we expect this negative trend to exhibit a curvilinear pattern, such that age-related declines should commence around middle adulthood and intensify at higher ages.

Importantly, however, scholars have noted that age-related changes in individual emotion recognition may critically hinge on motivational factors (Stanley & Isaacowitz, 2015; Zhang et al., 2013). To more fully understand the age-EA linkage, we therefore believe it is important to take into account individuals' personality characteristics as key motivational aspects that may influence their willingness to attend to others' emotion expressions (cf. Gomez et al., 2002; Knyazev et al., 2008; Matsumoto et al., 2000). Agreeableness, in particular, delineates the extent to which individuals are interested in others and motivated to empathize with others' feelings (Costa et al., 1991), and meta-analytic evidence has illustrated a positive relationship between agreeableness and individual emotion recognition (Joseph & Newman,

2010; Mayer et al., 2004). Hence, we cast agreeableness as a key moderator of the curvilinear age-EA link. Compared with highly agreeable persons, we expect individuals with lower agreeableness to be less motivated to correctly decipher the feelings expressed in their social surrounding (Graziano et al., 2007). Consequently, we anticipate that EA may remain limited among individuals with relatively low agreeableness even at younger ages.

Taken together, this study proposes a curvilinear interaction pattern for the age-EA linkage (with agreeableness as a crucial contingency factor), and it empirically examines this model in an age-diverse sample of 181 individuals, using a performance-based test of EA (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). In doing so, we strive to advance the nascent literature on collective emotion recognition, offering new insights into the antecedent conditions that may shape an individual's respective ability. By examining the roles of age and agreeableness, in particular, our goal is to promote a better understanding of key individual predictors associated with EA as a novel, relatively under-examined construct. We aim to illustrate that age does not equally affect each individual's EA, with agreeableness altering age-related developments in this capability. As such, the present study also contributes to the broader literature on general emotion recognition, reiterating the notion that a full understanding of age-related changes in this regard requires careful consideration of individuals' motivations and/or personality characteristics as important boundary conditions (cf. Zhang et al., 2013).

2.2 Theory and Hypotheses Development

2.2.1 Age and Emotional Aperture

The ability to recognize and correctly identify others' emotional states is an important skill across all stages of human life (Elfenbein et al., 2002; Gray & Tickle-Degnen, 2010). Nevertheless, theory and research suggest that emotion recognition capacities may decline with increasing age (Calder et al., 2003; Phillips et al., 2002; Suzuki et al., 2007). Although life-span

scholars have put forward diverse theoretical explanations for such age-related changes (including physiological developments; Adolphs, 2002b), a particularly prominent explanation has focused on patterns of cognitive growth and decline as individuals get older (Salthouse, 2012; for reviews, see Doerwald et al., 2016; Isaacowitz & Stanley, 2011; Scheibe & Zacher, 2013). This latter perspective appears particularly relevant for the present considerations regarding the age-EA linkage.

Cognitive accounts of age-related deterioration in the ability to recognize other individuals' emotions cast this development as a specific symptom of general degeneration in important perceptual and mental competencies (Schneider & Pichora-Fuller, 2000). Although certain ("crystallized") cognitive abilities may follow a growth trajectory as individuals age (e.g., due to accumulated knowledge and experience; Baltes et al., 2006; Horn & Cattell, 1967), there is solid empirical evidence that has shown other ("fluid") cognitive competencies to decline with age (Salthouse, 2010). These fluid competencies include, for example, an individual's cognitive processing speed and working memory capacity (Bäckman et al., 2001; Birren & Fisher, 1995; Salthouse, 1996). There are good theoretical reasons to believe that such competencies are particularly important for the accurate perception of other individuals' emotion displays (Suzuki & Akiyama, 2013).

Deciphering other individuals' emotions is a complex process that simultaneously requires a range of fluid cognitive functions, including quick and accurate recognition and discrimination of audio-visual details, identification of characteristic patterns, and comparison of these patterns with prototypes stored in memory (Adolphs, 2006). More specifically, emotion recognition entails realizing and encoding other individuals' facial, vocal, and bodily cues that often occur in fleeting and subtle ways (Ekman, 2007) and categorizing these cues as belonging to a specific emotion (Adolphs, 2002a, 2002b). Clearly, fluid cognitive abilities such as fast, flexible information processing and adequate working memory are central in this respect

(Suzuki & Akiyama, 2013). It is no surprise, then, that despite some diversity in the existing empirical knowledge base (depending, for example, on the type and relevance of the emotion stimuli examined), scholars broadly agree that the recognition of individual emotions suffers with increasing age (Charles & Campos, 2011; Doerwald et al., 2016; Ruffman et al., 2008).

Although previous theory and research have not considered the role of age for EA as the ability to perceive and identify collective (rather than individual) emotions, we believe the above argumentation can be generalized toward this specific capacity. In fact, EA may pose even greater demands on an actor's fluid cognitive competencies, such that age-related decline may be particularly pronounced in this regard. After all, EA requires individuals to simultaneously perceive and encode multiple group members' emotion cues and to integrate these – potentially diverse or even contradictory – stimuli into appropriate emotion categories in real time (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009). Hence, the cognitive challenges outlined for individual emotion recognition may multiply for collective EA.

Additionally, it is important to note that EA is more than a simple extension of individual emotion recognition (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009). EA entails focusing on the emotionality expressed within a collective (e.g., a group) as a whole, rather than consecutively focusing on each individual member, and it therefore requires "a global or holistic processing style for encoding collective affective cues" (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016, p. 119). In fact, the quick, fleeting, and diverse occurrence of emotional cues within a collective may make it difficult, if not impossible, to sequentially consider each individual member's specific expressions, such that global perceptual processing (i.e., seeing the forest rather than the trees; Förster, 2012; Navon, 1977) appears vital for EA (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016).

Despite some inconsistent and contradictory findings (Bruyer et al., 2003; Georgiou-Karistianis et al., 2006; Roux & Ceccaldi, 2001), a substantial body of research has illustrated cognitive impairments among older (as compared with younger) individuals when processing

global rather than local stimuli (e.g., Lithfous et al., 2016; Slavin et al., 2002; Staudinger et al., 2011), potentially resulting from older individuals' more restricted scope of visual attention (Kosslyn et al., 1999; Oken et al., 1999). Some scholars have gone so far as to conclude that there may be a general shift from global toward local processing precedence with increasing age (Lux et al., 2008; Oken et al., 1999). Hence, beyond general detriments in fluid cognitive capacity, older individuals' decreased focus on global (rather than local) stimuli may further diminish their EA, as compared with younger individuals. Taken together, we build on this theoretical and empirical backdrop to suggest:

Hypothesis 1: Age is negatively related with individuals' emotional aperture.

Importantly, we further anticipate a curvilinear pattern that should qualify this negative trend of the age-EA linkage. This notion follows previous theory and research on age-related developments in fluid cognition that have emphasized the curvilinear form of the decline patterns typically observed (Hartshorne & Germine, 2015). Scholars have noted, in particular, that it is "very unlikely that any major changes in cognitive ability would occur" at relatively young and middle ages (Ng & Feldman, 2008, p. 407). Accordingly, research has shown that many cognitive capabilities remain relatively stable (or even increase) until about middle adulthood and diminish more steeply afterwards (Hedden & Gabrieli, 2004; Myerson et al., 2003; Ng & Feldman, 2008). Similarly, although the literature on age and global processing has rarely examined curvilinear relationships, a study by Schwarzer, Kretzer, Wimmer, and Jovanovic (2010) points toward the possibility of such a pattern. These scholars have shown the holistic processing of facial stimuli to increase from childhood to young adulthood, but to decrease toward older adulthood.

With fluid cognitive abilities representing a key foundation for individual emotion recognition (Horning et al., 2012; Suzuki & Akiyama, 2013), it therefore seems plausible to expect a curvilinear age pattern in this regard. Indeed, a handful of studies have found

curvilinear relationships between age and other emotional abilities (e.g., understanding one's own emotions; Fantini-Hauwel & Mikolajczak, 2014; Labouvie-Vief et al., 1989; see also Lachman et al., 2015). Unfortunately, research on age and individual emotion recognition has often used extreme-group designs (i.e., comparing younger vs. older individuals as distinct experimental groups) that do not enable the assessment of curvilinear trends (Doerwald et al., 2016). The few studies including middle-aged adults, however, support the notion that age-related declines may be most pronounced among older adults (Demenescu et al., 2014) and are less likely to commence before one's mid-age (Hur et al., 2014; Mayer et al., 2003), with some findings even illustrating a peak in individual emotion recognition around midlife (Hartshorne & Germine, 2015; Williams et al., 2009). Taken together, we therefore concur with Doerwald et al.'s (2016, p., 166) conclusion that the existing studies "call into question whether negative age trends in emotion perception are linear." Such age-related deficiencies are most likely to emerge only among older individuals, rather than among younger or middle-aged adults.

Extrapolating from these notions, we similarly expect a curvilinear relationship between age and EA. As noted above, our rationale for a negative age-EA linkage is based on age-related developments in fluid cognition and global processing (i.e., Hypothesis 1). Considering the theory and research on curvilinear age effects for both of these aspects, as discussed in this section, we see no reason to believe that deficits in EA should pronouncedly materialize already among relatively young or middle aged adults. Rather, we would anticipate an inverted J-shaped pattern for this association that mirrors the likely relationship between age and individual emotion recognition (see Doerwald et al., 2016, p. 170, Figure 1). EA should remain relatively stable until about middle adulthood, with a steeper decline at higher ages.

Hypothesis 2: The relationship between age and emotional aperture is curvilinear (with an inverted J-shape), such this negative association is more pronounced among older (rather than younger and middle-aged) adults.

2.2.2 The Moderating Role of Agreeableness

Beyond relevant cognitive abilities, scholars have noted that individuals' emotion recognition also hinges on motivational aspects (Sassenrath et al., 2014; Stanley & Isaacowitz, 2015). For example, research has shown benefits for empathic accuracy among individuals with higher prosocial orientation and agreeableness, as these people may be particularly motivated to attend to others' emotions (Batson & Shaw, 1991; Goetz et al., 2010). Agreeableness, in particular, is a broad personality trait that entails the tendency to be altruistic, nurturing, caring, and emotionally supportive, whereas individuals lower on agreeableness have a tendency toward self-centeredness and indifference toward others (Digman, 1990; McCrae & John, 1992). Not surprisingly, then, meta-analytic evidence has established positive (albeit moderate) relationships between agreeableness and individual emotion recognition (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Mayer et al., 2004).

Building on this backdrop, we believe a more complete understanding of the linkage between age and EA requires taking into account individuals' agreeableness as a key boundary condition. On the one hand, because relatively agreeable people value harmonious interpersonal relations, they should be motivated to not only attend to other individuals' emotions (Côté et al., 2011; Graziano & Tobin, 2009) but also to grasp the overall emotionality within relevant groups, potentially enabling them to more smoothly navigate social interactions (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). Consequently, individuals with relatively high agreeableness may be willing to devote their available cognitive capacities toward deciphering collective emotion expressions in their social surrounding. With age shaping key cognitive capabilities and processing types relevant for EA (Salthouse, 1985; 2004; Schwarzer et al., 2010), the curvilinear (i.e., inverted J-shaped) age-EA linkage described before may therefore be particularly pronounced among highly agreeable persons. During young and middle adulthood, these individuals should possess both the motivation and the cognitive

capacity for collective emotion recognition, such that their EA should be relatively strong. Despite their continued motivation, however, even highly agreeable individuals' EA should decrease at higher age, with a lack of important cognitive capacities hindering their accurate 'reading' of group emotions.

On the other hand, individuals with relatively low agreeableness exhibit little motivation to closely attend to others' emotions (Côté et al., 2011; Digman, 1990). Hence, although younger individuals with lower agreeableness may have the cognitive capacity to correctly decipher group emotions, they are less likely to deliberately utilize this potential (as compared with more agreeable persons). Similarly, during older adulthood, low-agreeable individuals' EA should remain limited due to a simultaneous lack of motivation and cognitive capacity. Rather than the inverted J-shaped pattern described before, one might therefore anticipate little EA among low-agreeableness persons across the adult life-span.

Drawing from recent theory and research on age and emotional competencies, however, we believe that the age-EA relation among less agreeable individuals is more complex. This literature has argued that emotional competencies may benefit from learning effects and experiences that accrue over time (e.g., Carstensen et al., 2000; Magai, 2001). Individuals' knowledge about emotions may become more differentiated as they get older (Labouvie-Vief, 2003), for example, enabling them to deal with emotional issues in a more efficient and automatized manner that requires less conscious effort – at least until age-related deficits in fluid cognition outweigh these benefits (Labouvie-Vief, 2003; Morgan & Scheibe, 2014; Suzuki & Akiyama, 2013). Consequently, a handful of studies have illustrated an inverted U-shaped relationship between age and individual emotion recognition, with this ability peaking around middle adulthood (Horning et al., 2012; Williams et al., 2009).

We expect this inverted-U pattern to be particularly relevant for the age-EA linkage among individuals with lower agreeableness. At younger age, these individuals have limited

experiences with emotional situations (Charles, 2010), and they lack the motivation to invest their fluid cognitive capacities for effectively reading others' emotions. Hence, their EA should remain relatively low. With increasing age, however, even less agreeable persons may benefit from cumulative experiences with others' emotion expressions, because social life inevitably entails many emotion-laden encounters (Carstensen et al., 2000). Hence, even without strong motivation, less agreeable individuals' EA may increase as they approach middle adulthood, for example due to a more effective recall of learned emotional schemas (cf. Adolphs, 2002a; Aviezer et al., 2012; Stanley & Isaacowitz, 2015). Finally, at an older age, we expect less agreeable persons' EA to markedly drop. Despite extensive experience, declines in fluid cognition (Salthouse, 1996, 2010) and global processing (Oken et al., 1999; Schwarzer et al., 2010) should make it difficult, then, to effectively decipher collective emotion expressions.

Taken together, we predict a curvilinear interaction model for the age-EA linkage, with agreeableness representing a key contingency factor. For individuals with higher agreeableness, we expect higher EA among younger and middle-aged than among older adults (i.e., an inverted J-shape). For individuals with lower agreeableness, in contrast, we assume lower EA among both younger and older than among middle-aged individuals (i.e., an inverted U-shape). Hence, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 3: Agreeableness moderates the curvilinear relationship between age and emotional aperture. This relationship exhibits an inverted J-shape among individuals with higher agreeableness, but it exhibits an inverted U-shape among individuals with lower agreeableness.

2.3 Method

2.3.1 Sample and Data Collection

We aimed to recruit a heterogeneous sample of individuals for the present study to ensure sufficient variability in participants' age, personality, and EA. Working with a group of students, we approached personal and university contacts (located in Germany) via email and social media channels with the request to participate in an on-line study on interpersonal interactions in the workplace (for similar procedures, see Bledow et al., 2013; Bunderson et al., 2016). These individuals received general information about the study (without disclosing the specific hypotheses), along with a link to a secured online survey platform. Beyond demographic variables (including age), this survey included a performance-based test of emotional aperture (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016) as well as self-report measures of personality. We translated all measures to German using common back-translation procedures (Brislin, 1980). Participation was voluntary and anonymity guaranteed.

Of the targeted participants (approximately 700 individuals), 350 persons opened the survey, of which 184 provided usable information. Three of these participants were excluded due to excessive missing data on the emotional aperture test. Therefore, our final sample comprised 181 participants. These individuals were, on average, 38 years old (*SD* = 13.77) and, as intended, our sample covered a relatively wide age range (from 18 to 72 years). The majority of the participants were female (53%), and they were employed across a wide variety of organizations and industries (e.g., in manufacturing, construction, insurance, trade, and health care). Their average tenure with their current employer was 8 years (*SD* = 8.48).

2.3.2 Measures

Emotional aperture (EA). We assessed EA using Sanchez-Burks and colleagues' (2016) performance-based instrument. This measure consists of 17 two-frame video clips

displaying emotional reactions within four-person groups of mixed gender and ethnicities (based on the Montreal Set of Facial Displays of Emotion; cf. Beaupré & Hess, 2005). These two-second clips initially depict a group with neutral or baseline facial expressions, followed by a second frame in which some group members exhibit an emotional reaction (i.e., changing to a different, positive or negative emotional expression) while others may retain their initial expression. After each clip, participants indicate the percentage (answer options: 0%, 25%, 50%, or 100%) of group members that have exhibited a positive or negative emotional reaction, respectively. Due to the clips' brevity, it is virtually impossible to focus on each individual's expressions, and participants are therefore required to gauge a quick assessment of the global emotionality expressed within the group as a whole (Navon, 1977). A participant's overall EA score is calculated based on the accuracy of his or her responses, representing the percentage of correct answers to all 34 items (i.e., 17 video clips, each with two responses for positive and negative emotional reactions). Hence, individual EA scores can range from 0 (all responses incorrect) to 100 (all responses correct). Further details on the emotional aperture measure and its administration, along with evidence for its reliability, discriminant validity from individual emotion recognition, and predictive validity, is available in Sanchez-Burks et al. (2016).

Age. Participants indicated their age (in years), along with other demographic variables, toward the end of the survey.

Agreeableness. Before implementing the emotional aperture measure, we captured participants' agreeableness using a five-item measure based on (Goldberg, 1999). Sample items included, "I am interested in people" and, "I feel others' emotions". Cronbach's α was .82.

Control variables. We considered extraversion and openness to experience as possible controls because (a) these personality traits are directly related to individuals' interpersonal behavior and social attention (Batson & Shaw, 1991; Goetz et al., 2010) and (b) research has shown these personality characteristics to associate with the ability to recognize individuals'

emotions (Elfenbein et al., 2002; Matsumoto et al., 2000). We assessed extraversion with four items (α = .74; sample item: "I start conversations") and openness to experience with five items (α = .78; sample item: "I am full of ideas"), based on Goldberg (1999). Further, we included gender as a possible covariate (1 = male; 2 = female) because research has shown that women generally exhibit higher individual emotion recognition ability than men (Hall & Matsumoto, 2004). Finally, we included the industry sector (1 = service; 2 = non-service) of an individual participant's employing organization as a covariate to account for potential biases related to higher emotional engagement, distinct emotion norms, and more frequent interpersonal interactions in the service industry (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Schmid Mast & Darioly, 2014).

2.4 Results

2.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2.1 presents means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for all study variables. As expected, we found age to negatively relate with individuals' EA (r = -.29, p < .01). Agreeableness, however, was not significantly correlated with EA (r = .07, ns), and EA was not significantly associated with the control variables. Examining the hypotheses both with and without the control variables (cf. Becker, 2005) did not alter the significance or interpretation of our findings. To illustrate the unique roles of age and agreeableness for EA, we therefore report the results including the controls in the following.[3]

[3] To further illustrate the unique role of agreeableness (rather than other personality traits) as a moderator in the age-EA linkage, we also explored extraversion and openness to experience as possible moderating variables. None of the respective interaction coefficients were significant, however.

Table 2.1:

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations (Paper 1)

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Industry sector	1.36	.48						
2. Gender	1.52	.50	-.33**					
3. Extraversion	3.42	.91	-.09	-.00				
4. Openness	3.82	.68	-.20**	-.07	.41**			
5. Agreeableness	3.96	.72	-.16*	.26**	.39**	.31**		
6. Age	38.17	13.77	.36**	-.14	-.08	-.28**	-.15*	
7. Emotional Aperture	62.12	12.75	-.07	.07	-.05	.05	.07	-.29**

Note. $N = 181$. Industry sector: 1 = service; 2 = non-service. Gender: 1 = male, 2 = female.
$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$.

2.4.2 Hypotheses Testing

We used curvilinear moderated hierarchical regression analyses (after standardizing all continuous predictors) for hypotheses testing, entering the control variables in Step 1, the main effects for age and agreeableness in Step 2, the squared age term (age^2) in Step 3, and the interaction terms for agreeableness with both age and age^2 in Step 4 (Cohen et al., 2003; see Table 2.2). Hypothesis 1 predicted EA to be lower among older rather than younger individuals. As shown in Table 2.2 (Model 2), we indeed found a negative linear relationship between age and EA (B = -3.86, SE = 1.03, $p < .001$), even after considering control variables. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Importantly, this linear relationship was qualified by a curvilinear interaction (B = -2.29, SE = 1.00, $p < .05$; see Table 2.2, Model 3). Figure 2.1 depicts the pattern of this curvilinear association between age and EA. As predicted in Hypothesis 2, EA remained relatively stable (with a slight increase) among younger individuals until they reached their mid-30s, with a relatively steep decline commencing afterwards.

Table 2.2:

Curvilinear Moderated Hierarchical Regression Analysis (Paper 1)

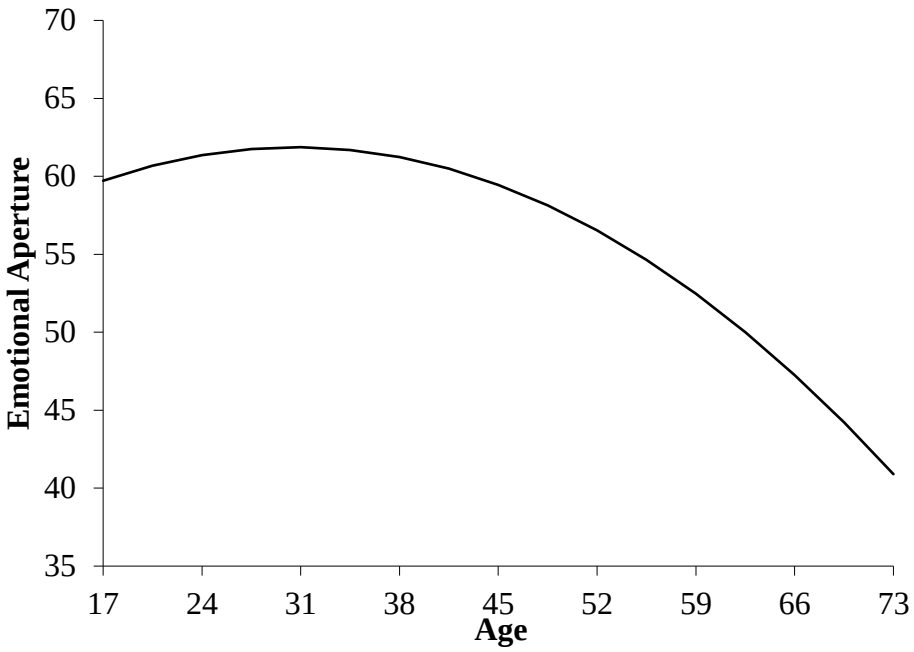
	Emotional Aperture			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Constant	61.34*** (5.10)	59.57*** (5.04)	61.24*** (5.03)	62.08*** (4.96)
Control Variables				
Industry sector	-1.12 (2.11)	1.24 (2.20)	1.75 (2.18)	1.30 (2.15)
Gender	1.40 (2.00)	.53 (2.08)	.51 (2.05)	.07 (2.02)
Extraversion	-1.26 (1.03)	-1.18 (1.08)	-1.65 (1.08)	-1.83 (1.07)
Openness	1.32 (1.10)	-.07 (1.10)	.09 (1.09)	-.10 (1.09)
Main Effects				
Agreeableness		.80 (1.08)	.73 (1.07)	-1.57 (1.35)
Age		-3.86*** (1.03)	-2.41* (1.20)	-2.46* (1.17)
Squared term				
Age²			-2.29* (1.00)	-1.64 (1.01)
Interactions				
Age x Agreeableness				-1.40 (1.17)
Age² x Agreeableness				2.09** (.78)
R^2	.02	.09**	.12**	.16***
Adjusted R^2	-.00	.05	.08	.10
ΔR^2	.02	.07**	.03*	.04*

Note. Unstandardized regression weights are shown. Standard errors in parentheses.

*p< .05, **p< .01, ***p< .001

Figure 2.1:

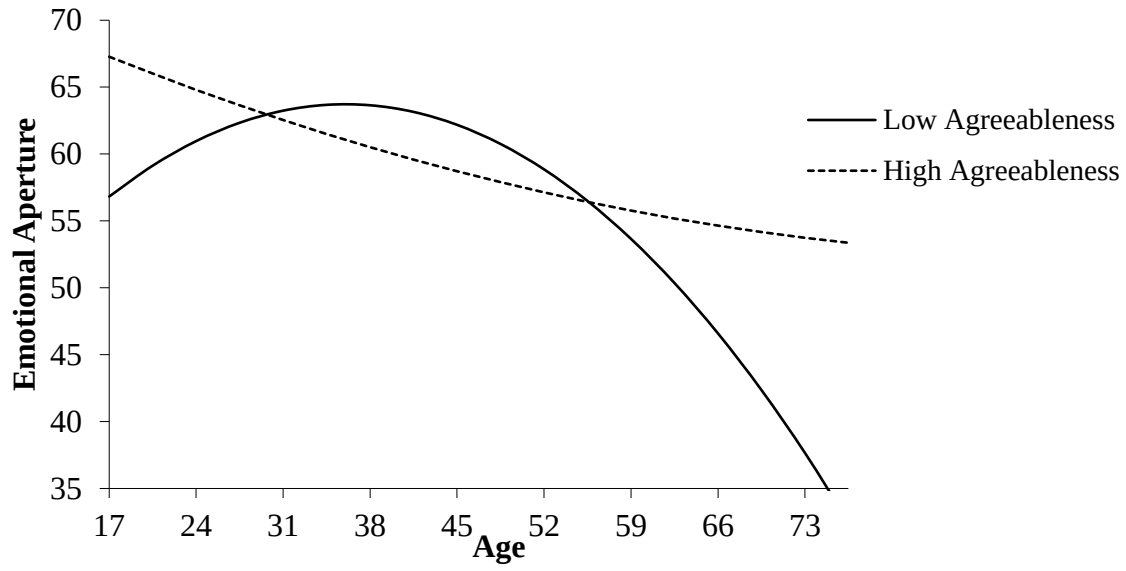
Curvilinear Relationship between Age and Emotional Aperture



Finally, Model 4 in Table 2.2 examines the moderating role of agreeableness for the curvilinear association between age and EA (Hypothesis 3). As predicted, agreeableness indeed moderated this curvilinear association (B = 2.09, SE = .78, p < .01). Figure 2.2 illustrates the pattern of this curvilinear interaction. As shown, individuals with higher agreeableness (+1 *SD*) exhibited relatively strong EA at younger age, with only a slight declining trend over time. Simple slopes analyses revealed non-significant linear (B = -2.60; SE = 1.41, p = .07) and curvilinear relationships (B = .45; SE = 1.38, p = .75) between age and EA for this group. For less agreeable individuals (-1 *SD*), in contrast, simple slopes analyses confirmed the inverted U-shape predicted in Hypothesis 3 (simple slope for the curvilinear term: B = -3.74; SE = 1.16, p < .01). EA remained limited even at lower age for less agreeable individuals, peaked around their early 40s, and dropped below the levels maintained among more agreeable persons at higher age.

Figure 2.2:

Quadratic Two-way Interaction of Age and Agreeableness on Emotional Aperture



2.5 Discussion

This study examined the relationship between an individual's age and his or her ability to identify collective emotion expressions (i.e., emotional aperture; EA). As expected, our results revealed a negative association between age and EA that was qualified by a curvilinear (inverted J-shaped) pattern. EA was similarly pronounced among relatively young and middle-aged adults, but it declined sharply among older individuals. Moreover, we found agreeableness to moderate this curvilinear linkage. For more agreeable persons, EA remained at relatively high levels across the age span covered in our investigation (i.e., 18-72 years), with little indication for age-related changes. Less agreeable individuals, by contrast, exhibited relatively low EA at both younger and older age, with a momentary peak around their early 40s (i.e., an inverted U-shape).

2.5.1 Theoretical Implications

These findings make several contributions to the literature on age and (collective) emotion recognition. First, we note that the research on EA is in a nascent state. Scholars have only recently identified and operationalized this construct, illustrating its distinctiveness from individual emotion recognition and its relationships with important behavioral outcomes (Sanchez-Burks & Huy, 2009; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). It is not surprising, then, that research on EA's antecedents has been virtually non-existent to date (for one exception, see Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). Hence, the present study is among the first to widen the nomological net surrounding EA, demonstrating the relevance of individuals' demographic and personality characteristics. By highlighting the joint roles of age and agreeableness, in particular, we promote a new understanding of why some persons may be better able than others to correctly recognize and decipher group emotions. As such, this study offers fresh insights into the origins of EA as a novel, as yet under-examined form of emotion recognition. Our findings seem particularly timely in the context of an aging population and an increasingly age-diverse workforce (Hedge et al., 2006; Kunze et al., 2011).

Second, we believe the curvilinear age pattern uncovered in our research constitutes an important conceptual contribution. These findings illustrate that one should not expect age-related developments in EA to similarly occur across the adult life-span, with relevant declines unlikely to commence before middle adulthood. As such, the present study offers a differentiated picture of the age-EA linkage, and we believe these insights can also advance the broader literature on general emotion recognition. Based on a comprehensive review of the respective research, Doerwald et al. (2016, p. 166) have recently concluded that, despite rather consistent evidence for age-related deficits among older (as compared with younger) adults, "the evidence is less conclusive regarding levels of emotion perception at middle-age." Hence, the present study provides new evidence on emotion recognition (albeit collective rather than

individual) among middle-aged adults as a relatively under-studied age group. In doing so, it corroborates Doerwald et al.'s (2016) preliminary suggestion that substantive age-related declines in emotion recognition may remain limited to older rather than middle adulthood.

Finally, our findings on agreeableness are noteworthy, illustrating a critical boundary condition for the role of individuals' age. It appears that stable personality traits and associated motivations have the potential to outweigh age-related developments in collective emotion recognition. In fact, the relevance of agreeableness as a contingency factor appears even more pronounced that our initial theorizing would suggest. Although the inverted U-shaped association between age and EA, as uncovered among less agreeable individuals, is consistent with our expectations, we would have anticipated an inverted J-shaped relation among more agreeable persons, with EA diminishing at older age despite these individuals' strong interest in others' emotions. Our results show, however, that EA remains relatively pronounced among highly agreeable individuals, largely irrespective of their age. Hence, it appears that mere demographic accounts would provide an incomplete and inaccurate picture of EA's development across the adult life span. With sufficient motivation, older individuals may be able to counteract age-related declines in collective emotion recognition, retaining this capability at a level comparable to younger adults.

2.5.2 Practical Implications

Although the EA literature is still in its infancy, initial research has linked this construct with important behavioral outcomes (e.g., transformational leadership; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). Moreover, the present study has started to examine potential predictors of EA. Despite a trend toward age-related decline, our results show that organizations are well-advised to look beyond this demographic aspect when considering risks and potentials regarding employees' respective capability. More agreeable employees, in particular, may enjoy an EA advantage, largely irrelevant of their age, whereas less agreeable employees may exhibit problematic EA

levels both at relatively young and relatively old (rather than middle) age. It appears, therefore, that an agreeable personality may induce younger employees to utilize their cognitive potentials for collective emotion recognition and enable older employees to compensate for associated deficits. Hence, organizations may contribute to EA among both younger and older employees within their workforce by incorporating agreeableness into personnel selection procedures, fostering and communicating an agreeable organizational climate (Hofmann & Jones, 2005), and consistently emphasizing the relevance of emotional issues and emotion expressions at work toward their employees (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002). Importantly, however, we offer these considerations with due caution. Given the limited literature on EA, we believe additional research is urgently needed before strong practical recommendations are warranted.

2.5.3 Strengths and Limitations

A key strength of the present research is its use of a validated, performance-based instrument to capture EA (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). Scholars have noted that such performance-based measurement is crucial for a valid assessment of emotional abilities, avoiding problems with distorted perception or socially desirable responding (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Mayer, Salovey et al., 2008). Moreover, our focal measures combine direct accounts of demographic information (age) with self-reported personality assessments (agreeableness) and performance-based approaches (EA), thus ameliorating common method concerns (De Vries et al., 2014; Spector, 2006). And finally, our relatively age-diverse sample and inclusion of middle-aged participants allows for an assessment of age-related developments in EA across a relatively long and continuous part of the adult life span, enabling us to identify curvilinear patterns that would not be discernible using extreme group designs (i.e., comparing only younger vs. older individuals) or more age-restricted samples (cf. Doerwald et al., 2016).

At the same time, we acknowledge that the present investigation has several limitations. Like most of the previous studies on individual emotion recognition, we used a convenience sample, rather than randomly selecting from a general population, and we therefore cannot rule out potential selection bias. Moreover, our results' generalizability is limited due the fact that all data were collected within one country, Germany. On the one hand, most previous empirical work on EA has been conducted in the US (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016, Studies 1 and 2 [Study 3 combined data from the US, France, and Brazil]) and, as such, the present research extends the EA literature toward a new cultural context. On the other hand, scholars have noted that cultural familiarity can benefit emotion recognition accuracy (Elfenbein et al., 2002). The present EA measure's use of ethnically diverse stimulus groups and relatively simple (i.e., positive and negative) emotion categories may ameliorate related concerns (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016). Nevertheless, future research that constructively replicates the present findings in alternative cultural contexts or in more diverse samples could create further confidence in our conclusions' cross-cultural transferability.

Further, again mirroring the majority of the studies on age and individual emotion recognition as well as the existing research on EA (Doerwald et al., 2016; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016), we employed a cross-sectional study design. Consequently, we cannot ascertain whether the age differences observed in the present sample arise from age or cohort effects (Rhodes, 1983), and we cannot draw strong causal conclusions (e.g., on the causal link between agreeableness and EA). Multi-wave longitudinal designs that track multiple cohorts and repeatedly measure individuals' EA (along with other potential antecedent variables, such as agreeableness) over extended periods of time would be helpful to address these concerns (Doerwald et al., 2016).

2.5.4 Future Research Directions

Besides addressing limitations, our study offers a number of interesting directions for future research. Despite the relatively wide age range covered in our sample (i.e., 18-72 years), for instance, it is clear that our findings do not allow for conclusions about EA among younger or older individuals. With EA representing a novel and largely unexamined construct (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016), it would therefore be worthwhile to further examine this ability within such age groups. It seems particularly interesting to investigate EA's development through childhood and adolescence, thereby creating new knowledge on the origins of this ability during early life. Similarly, with increasing life spans in most industrialized societies (Anderson & Hussey, 2000; Wilmoth, 2000), it seems important to examine whether the EA decline among less agreeable individuals continues at older ages, and whether highly agreeable individuals can maintain their relatively high EA during even later life stages.

Moreover, the present study has illustrated the role of individuals' personality (i.e., agreeableness) as a boundary condition for the age-EA linkage. Future research could extend this notion to also examine contextual (rather than individual) moderators. In organizational settings, in particular, explicit or implicit display rules and emotion norms may influence how employees express and perceive emotions (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989). It seems possible that such norms and rules may shape EA among employees that spend large parts of their working lives within the respective organization, potentially altering age-related developments in this capacity.

Further, our theoretical reasoning has drawn on various cognitive mechanisms to explain the expected pattern of the age-EA linkage, including age-related changes in fluid cognition and global processing (Salthouse, 1996, 2010; Schwarzer et al., 2010). We note, however, that the present study did not empirically examine such mediating variables. Also, whereas age-related deficits in fluid cognition are well-established (Salthouse, 2010, 2012),

research on age and global processing has produced more complex and sometimes contradictory results (e.g., Bruyer et al., 2003; Georgiou-Karistianis et al., 2006). Hence, future research that directly tests the proposed mechanisms may advance new knowledge on why individuals' age may shape their EA. Similarly, we have drawn on potential experience and learning effects (cf. Carstensen et al., 2000; Labouvie-Vief et al., 1989) to explicate the inverted U-shaped relation between age and EA among less agreeable individuals. Possibly, such effects might also account for the observed pattern among more agreeable persons who (somewhat unexpectedly) retained relatively high EA even at older age. With agreeable individuals likely paying very close and deliberate attention toward emotional expressions in their social surrounding (Costa et al., 1991; Digman, 1990), intense practice effects may accumulate over the years and, thus, may be strong enough to outbalance age-related declines in fluid cognition and/or global processing. Hence, research that simultaneously investigates the joint interplay of various (potentially competing) mechanisms may decisively advance our theoretical understanding of the complex role of age for EA.

Finally, the emergent literature on EA could benefit from further investigation of additional antecedent variables (other than age and broad personality traits). Although prior research has repeatedly shown a female advantage in individual emotion recognition (Hall & Matsumoto, 2004), for example, we did not observe similar gender differences in EA (see also Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016, Study 3). We believe this finding deserves further exploration. It may be particularly interesting to focus on relevant contingency factors that may qualify gender-EA linkages. Similarly, scholars could draw from the literature on individual emotion recognition to identify and empirically examine other possible antecedents and/or correlates of EA, including general cognitive ability (Joseph & Newman, 2010), regulatory focus (Sassenrath et al., 2014), mood states (Schmid et al., 2011), and power (Schmid Mast et al.,

2009). Besides creating new insights on EA, such research could highlight key differences and similarities in the nomological nets surrounding individual vs. collective emotion recognition.

2.5.5 Conclusion

The present research illustrates that individuals' EA jointly hinges on the complex interplay of their age and agreeableness. As such, this study represents one of the first empirical investigations into EA's antecedents, and it offers new insights into this novel and important construct. We hope our findings will stimulate additional research efforts related to the predictors and consequences of collective emotion recognition, hence offering a relevant contribution to the empirical knowledge base on individuals' emotional abilities.

3 Paper 2: Power and Emotion Recognition – The Moderating Role of Work Stress[4]

Anna Faber and Frank Walter

Abstract

Purpose – Based on the situated focus theory of power, this chapter empirically investigates the relationship between an individual's organizational power position and emotion recognition accuracy, and it examines individuals' stress experiences at work as a boundary condition for this relationship.

Design/ methodology/ approach – Survey data were collected in a field sample of 117 individuals employed across various organizations in Germany. We used an established, performance-based test of emotion recognition accuracy and applied hierarchical regression analysis to examine our model.

Findings – An individual's power was negatively related with his or her ability to decipher others' emotional expressions among individuals experiencing higher work stress, whereas this relationship was not significant for participants with lower stress.

Research limitations/ implications – Although the cross-sectional study design and data collection within one country are relevant limitations, the findings promote a better understanding of the complex relation between power and emotion recognition accuracy.

Practical implications – Given the relevance of accurate emotion perception, the results indicate that stressful work environments may be an important risk factor for organizational power holders' personal and professional success.

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Originality/ value – The findings advance the literature on power and emotion recognition by highlighting the role of work stress as an important, heretofore neglected boundary condition that may explicate the ambiguous results in prior research.

Keywords: power; emotion recognition; stress, emotion perception; DANVA; situated focus

3.1 Introduction

Power, defined as asymmetric control over valued resources, is a prominent topic in recent research in psychology and organizational science (Galinsky et al., 2015). This research has shown power to go along with important psychological consequences, distinctly influencing the way individuals think, feel, and act (Galinsky et al., 2006; Galinsky et al., 2015; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015). In particular, power has been suggested to shape key aspects of interpersonal perception, including the ability to correctly decode and assess others' emotion expressions (i.e., emotion recognition accuracy [ERA]; Galinsky et al., 2006; Schmid Mast & Darioly, 2014).

Such ERA is generally seen as an elementary skill that enables individuals to effectively manage their own and others' emotions (Joseph & Newman, 2010) and, thus, to build and maintain positive social relationships (Ekman, 2003; Elfenbein et al., 2007; Nowicki & Duke, 1994; Rosenthal et al., 1979). Moreover, ERA has been associated with important leadership processes and outcomes that are particularly relevant for powerful individuals in organizations, including an individual's emergence as leader (Walter et al., 2012) as well as formal leaders' transformational behavior (Rubin et al., 2005) and leadership effectiveness (Byron, 2007). Logically, then, it is important to thoroughly understand the potential association between an individual's power position within an organization and his or her ERA.

The existing theory and research on power–ERA linkages are rather ambiguous, however. On the one hand, some scholars have suggested that power may promote an individual's ERA, for example by triggering a global processing style that focuses individual's attention on broad patterns rather than details (Schmid Mast et al., 2009). On the other hand, various scholars have argued that power may evoke a highly automatized style of information-processing that induces a tendency to stereotype others rather than relying on specific, individuating information (Fiske, 1993; Goodwin et al., 2000), such that power may diminish

an individual's emotion recognition (Nissan et al., 2015). Similarly, empirical findings on the power–ERA link have been inconsistent. A recent meta-analysis, for example, did not uncover clear-cut associations between power and different aspects of interpersonal sensitivity, including the recognition of others' expressed emotions (Hall et al., 2015). Some studies have illustrated negative relationships in this regard (Galinsky et al., 2006), whereas others reported positive associations between power and emotion recognition (Schmid Mast et al., 2009).

This state of the literature has led scholars to call for research that examines possible boundary conditions that may moderate the power–ERA linkage (Bombari, Schmid Mast et al., 2013; Hall et al., 2015). In fact, Côté et al. (2011) have shown a negative relation between power and ERA, but this relation only manifested among individuals with relatively low agreeableness. Beyond this study, however, research has not systematically examined possible contingency factors and, in particular, the existing literature has not investigated situational (rather than personal) moderators for the role of power on emotion recognition. We believe consideration of such aspects is crucial to more solidly anchor the power–ERA relation within its organizational context and to better understand the complexities underlying this relationship.

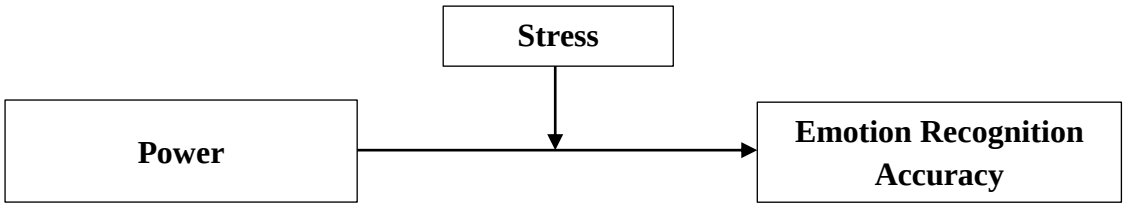
The present study draws from the situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007a, 2010) to address the question when power may help or hinder an individual's ERA. This theoretical perspective suggests that increasing power induces individuals to respond more flexibly to situational cues (Guinote, 2017). Specifically, powerful individuals' greater sense of control may lead them to focus on central aspects of their situation to a larger extent and to adapt their cognitive reactions to meet situation-specific requirements (Guinote, 2008, 2013). Higher-power persons may, accordingly, form social perceptions in a relatively situated manner, relying on stereotypes and other cognitive shortcuts in some contexts and on more specific, individuating information in others (Overbeck & Park, 2006). Less powerful persons, by contrast, should exhibit lower cognitive flexibility, because their relative lack of resources and

control puts a premium on thorough, controlled information processing across diverse situations (Guinote, 2007b, 2008; Vescio et al., 2003). Hence, these individuals may have a general tendency to focus on detailed, individuating information when forming social perceptions, independent of contextual characteristics (Dépret & Fiske, 1999; Stevens & Fiske, 2000).

Building on this logic, we expect individuals in lower-power positions to pay rather close attention to (more powerful) others' emotion expressions across situations, such that low-power individuals' ERA should, in general, be relatively pronounced. With increasing power, by contrast, we anticipate situational differences to become more important for an individual's ERA. In particular, we believe work stress is a key contextual boundary condition in this regard, because stress experiences may undermine cognitive processes that are vital for an individual's emotion recognition (Keeley-Dyreson et al., 1991). Stress has been shown to interfere with individuals' social attention, for example, as people often shy away from additional cognitive effort when highly stressed, concentrating on primary (rather than peripheral) situational aspects to effectively cope with their stress experiences (Chajut & Algom, 2003). Integrating predictions from the situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007a, 2010) with insights from the stress literature (Kahneman, 1973; Westman et al., 2004), we therefore cast work stress as an important moderator for the power–ERA linkage (see Figure 3.1). We anticipate higher power to diminish individuals' ERA when they experience relatively high work stress, but not when they experience lower work stress.

Figure 3.1:

The Conceptual Model (Paper 2)



We examined this model in a field sample of 117 individuals employed across various organizations, using an established, performance-based test of emotion recognition (Nowicki & Duke, 1994). In doing so, this research strives to shed new light on the complex relation between an individual's organizational power position and his or her emotion recognition capacity. To better comprehend this association, we aim to illustrate that power–ERA linkages can be adequately understood only within the organizational context in which they are located. Examining the interactive role of power and work stress for individuals' ERA, in particular, the present study extends prior research by illustrating an important, yet heretofore neglected, boundary condition that may explicate the ambiguous findings uncovered in previous work.

3.2 Theory and Hypothesis Development

3.2.1 Theoretical Background

The situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007a, 2010) offers a conceptual perspective that may reconcile conceptual controversies around the power–ERA linkage and explicate prior, diverse empirical findings in this regard (Hall et al., 2015). This approach posits that powerful individuals' privileged position (i.e., their superior control over resources and associated independence) enables them to flexibly respond to their environment to achieve personal goals, selectively considering information that they perceive as crucial and ignoring other inputs (Guinote, 2008). Individuals with relatively high power may, consequently, exhibit pronounced contextual variability in their patterns of social thought and action, deliberately

channeling their attention towards key aspects of their situation and the tasks at hand (DeWall et al., 2011; Schmid et al., 2015; Willis et al., 2011). When considering others' emotion expressions, we therefore anticipate that power holders may dynamically switch between quick, superficial, and highly automatized modes of cognition, on the one hand, and slower, more controlled, and more detail-oriented cognition types, on the other, as is required to meet situational demands.

Powerless individuals, by contrast, are less likely to afford this type of cognitive and behavioral flexibility (Dépret & Fiske, 1999; Guinote, 2013; Willis et al., 2011). Due to their relative lack of resources, low-power individuals often are highly dependent on others and, thus, they may put a premium on paying close attention to their social environment, largely irrespective of specific contextual and task features (Guinote, 2007b; Stevens & Fiske, 2000). Consequently, the situated focus theory of power would suggest relatively powerless people to generally utilize relatively controlled, deliberate modes of information processing when considering others' emotion expressions.

Building on these theoretical considerations, we propose that contextual features will moderate the role of power for emotion recognition, with more (rather than less) powerful individuals being more responsive to such features. As outlined in the following, we cast an individual's work stress as an important contingency factor in this regard.

3.2.2 Power and ERA: The Moderating Role of Work Stress

A broad body of theory and research suggests that individuals' stress experiences may induce them to consider environmental inputs in a more focused and restricted manner (Chajut & Algom, 2003). For example, Kahneman (1973) argued that due to their limited cognitive capacity, individuals generally cope with stressful and highly demanding conditions by focusing on core information related to their main tasks while, at the same time, neglecting

more peripheral information. Empirical findings support this notion, with research illustrating that stress can diminish individuals' attention toward external cues and reduce their processing of environmental information (for a review, see Staal, 2004). This restricted attention may lead individuals to neglect social information when highly stressed (Cohen & Lezak, 1977), potentially including others' emotion expressions. Specifically, in focusing on core aspects of direct relevance for their immediate task accomplishment, individuals may regard socio-emotional cues as largely irrelevant or even distracting (Chajut & Algom, 2003). Hence, individuals are more likely to ignore others' emotional expressions when they are highly stressed, with potentially detrimental consequences for their ERA (Hänggi, 2004; Keeley-Dyreson et al., 1991).

Importantly, however, we draw from the situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2010) to suggest that higher-power individuals are more likely than lower-power individuals to follow these stress-induced cognitive tendencies. As outlined before, powerful individuals may possess the resources and independence to flexibly adjust their attention toward aspects they regard as most relevant in a specific situation (Guinote, 2007b). Thus, the situated focus theory would suggest that power holders are particularly likely to follow impulses toward selective information processing, as they typically accompany stress experiences (Chajut & Algom, 2003). Pronounced work stress should, by consequence, negatively relate with powerholders' attention to task-peripheral social cues, in general, and toward others' emotion expressions, in particular. Hence, we conclude that powerful individuals in high-stress conditions are likely to process others' emotional displays in a relatively quick and superficial manner, drawing on general stereotypes rather than specific, individual emotion signals. Under lower-stress conditions, in contrast, individuals generally perceive less need for selective information processing and restricted attention, because they are able to address environmental demands with relative ease (Chajut & Algom, 2003; Staal, 2004). In this situation, power holders may

therefore experience little impulse to focus on core task aspects at the expense of socio-emotional cues. Thus, consistent with their cognitive flexibility and situational adaptability (Guinote, 2007b), power holders may be willing to pay greater attention to others' emotion expressions and to process such information in a relatively careful, individuating manner when experiencing less stress. In sum, we therefore expect powerful individuals' ERA to be less pronounced under conditions of higher rather than lower stress.

For individuals with lower power, in contrast, we anticipate ERA to be relatively high, irrespective of their stress experiences. As noted before, these individuals are dependent on resources from their immediate social environment, in general, and from higher-power individuals, in particular (Fiske & Dépret, 1996). Hence, correctly recognizing and deciphering social information (e.g., regarding others' feelings, thoughts, and intentions) is vital for relatively powerless people, because this may help them uncover opportunities for resource acquisition and avoid relevant resource threats (Stevens & Fiske, 2000). In other words, individuals in low-power positions may be predisposed to attend to socio-emotional cues to increase situational predictability and control (Fiske & Dépret, 1996) – and they may therefore pay close attention to others' emotion expressions, largely independent of specific contextual features. Hence, contrary to power holders, lower-power individuals are less likely to perceive socio-emotional information as peripheral and irrelevant even when highly stressed, as such information should continue to be critical for the powerless. We would therefore expect little differences in ERA across higher-stress and lower-stress situations, respectively, among individuals with relatively low power.

Integrating these notions, we conclude that increasing power is likely to negatively associate with ERA among individuals that experience relatively high work stress, as the powerful (but not the powerless) tend to focus on core task requirements in such context and, thus, to largely neglect others' emotion displays. When experiencing lower work stress, by

contrast, both powerful and powerless individuals' ERA should be relatively pronounced, as both types of individuals should retain the motivation to attend to others' emotion expressions. Hence, we expect power and ERA to be largely unrelated under these conditions.

Hypothesis 1: Work stress moderates the negative relationship between power and ERA, such that this relationship is more pronounced among individuals experiencing higher rather than lower stress.

3.3 Method

3.3.1 Sample and Data Collection

We approached the targeted participants using an internal mailing list directed mainly toward current and former trainees at a large transportation company in Germany. The persons subscribed to this list received an email invitation that solicited their participation, including general information about the study and a link to an online survey. This email emphasized that study participation was voluntary and anonymity was guaranteed. The survey included self-report measures of power and work stress as well as a performance-based ERA test, along with control and demographic variables. We translated the respective measures to German using a back-translation procedure.

Of the 211 individuals that had initially opened the survey, 123 provided complete data (i.e., 58%). Five of these participants indicated that they had technical problems during survey completion and one participant scored far below chance performance on the emotion recognition test, indicating careless responding (Meade & Craig, 2012). Excluding these six individuals, our final sample comprised 117 participants. These participants came from a variety of organizational levels and functional areas (e.g., marketing, controlling, and human resources). They were, on average, 28.48 years old (*SD* = 6.13), 66% were female, and their mean tenure with their current employer was 4.23 years (*SD* = 4.55).

3.3.2 Measures

Emotion recognition ability. We used the DANVA-2 Adult Facial Expressions Test (Nowicki & Duke, 1994) to measure individuals' ERA. The DANVA (i.e., Diagnostic Analysis of Nonverbal Accuracy) is a performance-based emotion recognition test in which participants view 24 color pictures of adult male and female faces, each displaying one of four basic emotions (happiness, sadness, anger, and fear) in varying intensities for 2 seconds. Following each picture, participants indicate which of the four emotions was being expressed. This test represents a well-established ERA measure that is frequently used in both psychological and organizational research (Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002; Galinsky et al., 2006; Schmid Mast et al., 2009). To avoid possible response biases (e.g., due to participants' tendency to better recognize or more frequently choose a specific emotion), we followed prior research (e.g., Bombari, Schmid et al., 2013; Schmid et al., 2011) and coded individuals' DANVA results using a nonparametric signal detection measure of discriminability (i.e., A'; Smith & Trope, 2006; for formulas, see Snodgrass et al., 1985; Snodgrass & Corwin, 1988). Values on this measure can range from 0 to 1, with .50 indicating chance performance and larger scores indicating a better ability to differentiate a specific emotion expression from other emotions (i.e., higher ERA).[5]

Power. Consistent with prior research (Lammers et al., 2010; Lammers et al., 2011), we used a single item to measure participants' power ("At your place of work, what level are you in the organizational hierarchy?"). Participants indicated their hierarchical power within their current organization by entering a number between 0 and 100, with zero representing a position without management responsibilities and 100 representing a top managerial position. Research

[5]The correlation between DANVA raw scores (i.e., the number of correct responses) and this discriminability measure was $r = .98$ ($p < .001$). Also, using raw scores rather than the present measure when testing our hypothesis yielded a largely equivalent pattern of findings, such that the predicted interaction coefficient was also significant in this alternative analysis ($p = .037$). Given the present measure's superior ability to circumvent response biases, we believe this measure is more adequate for our purposes (for details, see Schmid et al., 2011; Snodgrass et al., 1985).

has shown that this instrument represents a simple but robust measure of subjective power within organizations that correlates highly with alternative power measures, including an individual's self-perceived control and influence over others (Lammers et al., 2010).

Work stress. We measured participants' general stress experiences at work using Motowidlo and colleagues' (1986) four-item instrument. Sample items included, "I feel a great deal of stress because of my work" and, "My work is extremely stressful". Cronbach's α was .82.

Control variables. We considered participants' age and gender as possible covariates, because previous research has shown that these variables are related to work stress (e.g., Barnes-Farrell et al., 2002; Rauschenbach et al., 2013) and ERA, with older individuals generally exhibiting decreased ERA (Isaacowitz et al., 2007) and women generally exhibiting higher ERA than men (Hall & Matsumoto, 2004). Further, we captured individuals' Big Five personality traits as potential control variables using positively keyed items from the IPIP (https://ipip.ori.org/newBigFive5broadKey.htm; cf. Goldberg, 1999), because prior research (a) has illustrated linkages between an individuals' personality and ERA (e.g., Matsumoto et al., 2000) and (b) has found agreeableness to moderate the power–ERA link (Côté et al., 2011). Cronbach's alpha values were .76 for agreeableness, .71 for openness, .81 for conscientiousness, .79 for extraversion, and .82 for neuroticism.

3.4 Results

3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 3.1 presents means, standard deviations, and bivariate correlations for all study variables. As shown, the bivariate correlations of power and stress with ERA were not significant. Given the expected interaction pattern, this does not contradict our theorizing. Further, of the control variables, only age was significantly correlated with ERA (r = -.19, p <

.05). Following Becker's (2005) recommendations, we therefore controlled for participants' age when testing the study hypothesis, whereas we excluded gender as well as the Big Five personality traits to avoid biased parameter estimates. We note, however, that the results and conclusions remained virtually unchanged when including all of the control variables.

Table 3.1:

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations (Paper 2)

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Age	28.48	6.13									
2. Gender	1.34	.48	.17								
3. Agreeableness	3.91	.57	-.12	-.24*							
4. Extraversion	3.04	.74	-.00	.01	.12						
5. Openness	3.77	.52	.17	.11	.12	.25**					
6. Conscientiousness	3.56	.66	-.04	.04	-.02	.05	.18*				
7. Neuroticism	2.58	.76	-.11	-.27**	-.11	-.27**	-.18*	.08			
8. Power	31.61	22.39	-.29**	-.01	-.15	.04	.13	.24**	-.02		
9. Work stress	2.68	.86	.10	-.14	-.04	.00	-.01	.21*	.31**	-.18*	
10. ERA	.84	.11	-.19*	-.15	.10	-.03	-.02	.04	-.11	-.17	-.18

Note. $N = 117$. For gender, 1 = female, 2 = male. ERA = Emotion Recognition Accuracy.

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$

3.4.2 Hypothesis Testing

We conducted a moderated hierarchical regression analysis on individuals' ERA to test our hypothesis, entering control variables in Step 1, the main effects of power and stress in Step 2, and the power * stress interaction in Step 3. All independent variables were standardized prior to hypothesis testing. As shown in Table 3.2, our findings revealed a significant two-way interaction between power and stress on ERA (B = -.03, $p < .05$, ΔR^2 = .06). Figure 3.2 depicts the pattern of this interaction (cf. Aiken & West, 1991). As predicted, simple slopes analyses illustrated that power was negatively related with ERA among participants that reported relatively high stress at work (+1 *SD*; B = -.04, SE = .02, p = .01). For participants that reported relatively low stress, in contrast, the power–ERA linkage was not significant (-1 *SD*; B = .02, SE = .02, p = .27).

Table 3.2:

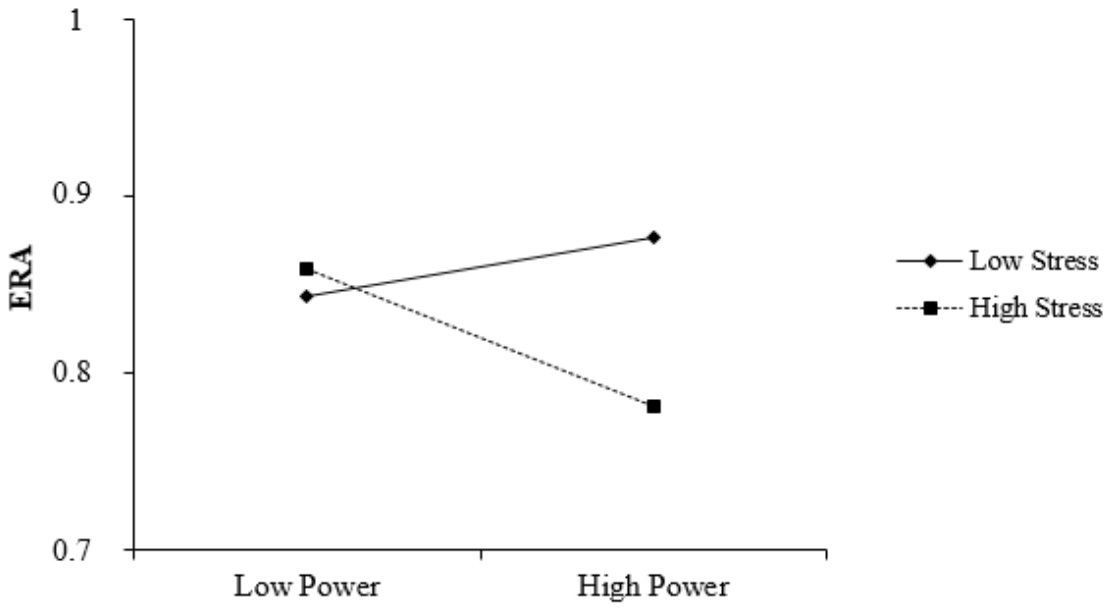
Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis (Paper 2)

	Emotion Recognition		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant	.84** (.01)	.84** (.03)	.84** (.01)
Control Variables			
Age	-.02* (.01)	-.02 (.01)	-.02 (.01)
Main Effects			
Power		-.01 (.01)	-.01 (.01)
Stress		-.02 (.01)	-.02 (.01)
Interaction			
Power x Stress			-.03* (.01)
R^2	.04*	.07*	.13**
Adjusted R^2	.03	.05	.09
ΔR^2		.03	.06*

Note. Unstandardized regression weights are shown. Standard errors in parentheses.
*p< .05, **p< .01

Figure 3.2:

Two-way Interaction of Power and Work Stress on Emotion Recognition Accuracy



3.5 Discussion

This study examined work stress as a moderator in the relationship between an individual's organizational power position and his or her ERA. As expected, we found the role of power for ERA to be most pronounced among individuals that experienced high stress, such that power was negatively associated with an individual's ERA under these circumstances. With less work stress, in contrast, power was not significantly related with ERA.

3.5.1 Theoretical Implications

These findings make important contributions to the literature on power and emotion recognition. As outlined before, the existing theory and research have been ambiguous and, in parts, contradictory in this regard (e.g., Bombari, Schmid Mast et al., 2013; Hall et al., 2015). To address this issue, the present investigation argued that the role of an individual's power for his or her ERA should be considered within the organizational context in which this relationship

unfolds. Rather than emphasizing potential main effects, our findings accordingly show that research can benefit from focusing on important boundary conditions that shape the strength and/or direction of power's consequences. In particular, we highlight the role of work stress as a relevant, yet heretofore neglected, contingency factor. Our results indicate that power, by itself, may not make individuals blind for others' emotion expressions. Rather, it is stressful circumstances that may lead powerful individuals to direct their attention away from socio-emotional information and thus, to become more oblivious (as compared with less powerful individuals) to others' emotions. Beyond the personality moderators examined in prior work (Côté et al., 2011), these results show that examination of contextual boundary conditions is vital for a more complete and realistic understanding of the complexity underlying power–ERA linkages.

Moreover, the present findings provide supporting evidence for the situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007a, 2010). Consistent with the notion that power liberates individuals to more freely adapt to specific situational demands, we found greater ERA variability between more and less stressful situations, respectively, among higher-power than among lower-power individuals. Corroborating key notions from the situated focus theory of power, it therefore appears that the powerless feel a consistent urge to thoroughly focus on socio-emotional cues in their environment, even in highly stressful conditions. The powerful, on the other hand, seem to more flexibly adjust to their stress levels, investing attentional resources to decipher others' emotional cues when experiencing little stress but largely neglecting others' emotion expressions when highly stressed. Together with prior empirical research (e.g., Slabu & Guinote, 2010; Willis & Guinote, 2011), these findings attest to the viability of the situated focus theory as an important approach toward understanding the diverse psycho-social consequences that power can bring about.

3.5.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

A key strength of the present research is its use of a standardized, performance-based test of ERA (i.e., the DANVA; Nowicki & Duke, 1994, 2001). This instrument has repeatedly been shown to provide a valid assessment of individuals' respective emotional ability that can predict important outcomes (e.g., leadership behaviors and effectiveness; Byron, 2007; DiMatteo et al., 1980; Elfenbein et al., 2007). Moreover, this performance-based (rather than self-report) measurement of the dependent variable has enabled us to largely circumvent common method concerns (De Vries et al., 2014; Spector, 2006).

At the same time, we acknowledge that the emotional cues depicted in the present DANVA version are limited to static pictures of facial expressions, such that this instrument cannot cover other emotional facets (e.g., dynamic emotion displays or emotion expressions in individuals' voices or body language). It seems worthwhile, therefore, to constructively replicate the present study using alternative measures of emotion recognition (for overviews, see Hall & Bernieri, 2001; Mayer, Roberts et al., 2008). Similarly, future research may benefit from extending the present considerations towards a dyadic perspective, capturing individuals' ability to decipher the emotions expressed by specific target persons. It may be particularly interesting, in this regard, to investigate whether the role of an individual's power and work stress for ERA might differ based on a specific target individual's power position (Hall et al., 2006).

Moreover, the generalizability of our results may be limited due to our relatively small sample size and due to the fact that all data were collected within a single organization from one country, Germany. Also, we acknowledge our use of a single-item power measure as a potential limitation, although prior research has shown that this global measure (a) correlates highly with alternative measurement instruments and (b) predicts relevant outcomes (Lammers et al., 2010). In this regard, we further note that the participants' overall power was somewhat

limited in the present sample (M = 31.61 on a 0-100 point scale). Alleviating this concern to some extent, our sample nevertheless covered a relatively wide range of power levels (i.e., from 0 to 85 points), with 20% of the participants rating their subjective power at 55 points or higher and 10% at 65 points or higher.

Still, it is clear that future research could provide additional confidence in our findings by using larger samples, examining our model in other organizations and cultural contexts, utilizing alternative (multi-item) power measures, and/or replicating our study among individuals with greater organizational power (e.g., top executives). Moreover, given our correlational, cross-sectional study design, we acknowledge that causal claims are not warranted. Hence, although our conceptual model builds on a solid theoretical fundament, and although post-hoc analyses did not support a possible reverse-causality model (i.e., with ERA and stress interactively influencing an individual's power), we encourage future research using experimental or longitudinal methods to further address this issue.

Beyond addressing limitations, our study offers a number of additional directions for future research. Aside from individuals' general power, for example, scholars have distinguished perceptions of social power (i.e., control over others' resources and outcomes) versus personal power (i.e., control over one's own resources and outcomes; van Dijke & Poppe, 2006). Studies have shown that these distinct power forms may differentially relate with attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (e.g., Lammers et al., 2009; van Dijke & Poppe, 2006). Hence, future research that distinguishes social and personal power as potential predictors of an individual's ERA (possibly in conjunction with an individual's stress experiences) may advance a finer-grained understanding of the relationships examined in the present study. Similarly, it seems possible that power's socio-cognitive consequences hinge on the origins of an individual's power. Relatively 'soft' power bases (e.g., referent or expert power; French et al., 1959) have been linked with person-oriented and considerate types of behavior (Atwater &

Yammarino, 1996), in particular, whereas "hard" power bases (e.g., based on formal authority) may emphasize egocentric action tendencies (Ansari, 1990; Wisse & Rus, 2012). As such, the power–ERA linkage might differ with the way individuals have attained their power position.

Moreover, future research could consider additional boundary conditions in the relationship between power and ERA. We focused on the moderating role of individuals' work-related stress, for example, and it would be interesting to investigate whether our findings generalize toward stress experiences originating from other sources (e.g., social and/or family stress; Aneshensel, 1992; McCubbin et al., 1980). Alternatively, future studies could examine characteristics of the work environment other than work stress as possible contingency factors. Circumstances in which powerful individuals feel scrutinized and pressured to justify their decisions, for instance, may stimulate more focused attention towards others (Chen et al., 2001; Overbeck & Park, 2001). As such, it seems possible that situations of high accountability may ameliorate high-power individuals' tendency toward reduced ERA even when they are highly stressed.

Finally, we note that ERA is often viewed as a specific ability within broader models of emotional intelligence (Mayer et al., 1999). Moving beyond the present conceptual framework, it may therefore be interesting to examine the joint linkages of power and stress with other EI abilities, such as emotion understanding and emotion regulation (Joseph & Newman, 2010). Research has shown, for instance, that higher-power individuals are less emotionally responsive to others' suffering, as compared with lower-power individuals, potentially indicating more autonomous emotion regulation among more powerful persons (van Kleef et al., 2008). It may be fruitful to consider the moderating role of individuals' stress experiences within such linkages, thus illustrating whether the present model extends toward a broader array of emotion-related abilities.

3.5.3 Practical Implications

The ability to correctly recognize and decipher others' emotions is important both for personal and professional success and for individuals' well-being (Byron et al., 2007; Carton et al., 1999). In organizational contexts, in particular, research has shown that high ERA can contribute to high-power individuals' (e.g., formal leaders') effective behaviors and outcomes (Schmid Mast et al., 2009). At the same time, the present study shows that holding organizational power may negatively relate with an individual's ERA in highly stressful contexts, thus pointing toward an important risk factor for successful leadership. To counteract these detrimental implications, organizational power holders should be aware of this risk and deliberately pay close attention to others' (e.g., subordinates') emotional expressions. Systematic training efforts may further aid leaders in sustaining appropriate ERA (Ekman, 2003).

Additionally, the moderating role of work stress uncovered in this study points toward important practical implications. The negative association between power and ERA was shown to manifest only among individuals that feel relatively stressed at work. As such, organizations seem well-advised to carefully monitor and balance their leaders' stress experiences. By keeping power holders' work demands within reasonable limits and/or ensuring that these individuals have sufficient control and resources to effectively deal with such demands, organizations may avoid excessive stress levels among this important group of employees (Bakker et al., 2005; Karasek, 1979). In doing so, organizations may enable their leaders to retain an adequate focus on others' emotion expressions, thus maintaining relatively high ERA even among individuals in powerful positions.

3.6 Conclusion

The present study sheds new light on the ambiguous linkage between an individual's power, on the one hand, and his or her ERA, on the other, highlighting individuals' experiences of work stress as a key boundary condition for this relationship. In doing so, this investigation advances our understanding of the psychosocial consequences associated with holding a power position, and it contributes to anchoring the role of power within its organizational context. As such, we hope our study will provide a new impetus for research on power as a pervasive phenomenon that fundamentally shapes human interactions both inside and outside the workplace.

4 Paper 3: Ruling with an Iron Fist – The Dissatisfied Powerful and Their Leadership Behavior

Anna Faber and Frank Walter

Abstract

Research has illustrated that powerful individuals often exhibit dominant, assertive, and unfriendly behaviors toward less powerful others. Hence, in a leadership context, it seems plausible that more (rather than less) powerful supervisors may exhibit more autocratic and less employee-oriented leadership behaviors. At the same time, theorists have emphasized that the behavioral consequences of power are highly complex and contingent on important boundary conditions. To address this issue, we draw from the situated focus theory of power to cast a supervisor's job satisfaction as a key moderator of the linkage between his or her power and the resulting leadership behaviors. Results from a field study of 58 supervisors and 249 of their direct subordinates revealed that power was positively related with autocratic and negatively related with employee-oriented leadership among supervisors with relatively low job satisfaction. These relationships were not significant, by contrast, for supervisors with higher job satisfaction. These findings advance our understanding of how power relates to different leadership styles, highlighting supervisory job attitudes as a key contingency factor that may induce more (rather than less) powerful supervisors to act in more dominant and less sociable ways.

Keywords: power; leadership; job satisfaction

4.1 Introduction

Power, defined as asymmetric control over valued resources (Magee & Galinsky, 2008), has been an important focus of organizational and psychological research for decades. In the leadership literature, in particular, scholars have described power as fundamental for the capacity to influence others and, thus, as a critical foundation for leadership processes (Galinsky, Jordan et al., 2008; Yukl, 2013). Moreover, a large number of studies in the social psychology literature attest to the far-reaching consequences of having more or less power for individuals' feelings, thoughts, and actions (for reviews, see Galinsky et al., 2015; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015). As such, it seems plausible that a formal supervisor's degree of power may shape his or her leadership behaviors toward subordinates. In this regard, we note that supervisors may possess markedly differing power levels (despite their formal authority), depending for example on differences in personal characteristics as well as organizational structures and procedures (Anderson et al., 2012).

Importantly, however, existing theory and research on the behavioral consequences of power are ambiguous regarding the linkages one would expect between a formal supervisor's power and his or her leadership behavior. On the one hand, power may have positive leadership consequences by promoting individuals' optimism, action-taking, and goal-directed behavior (Galinsky, Jordan et al., 2008). Some studies have, accordingly, associated power with increased prosocial and ethical behavior (Chen et al., 2001; Galinsky et al., 2003) as well as greater interpersonal sensitivity (Schmid Mast et al., 2009). On the other hand, power may have detrimental implications for formal supervisors' leadership by inducing a tendency to devalue, objectify, and stereotype others (Goodwin et al., 2000; Gruenfeld et al., 2008) and by triggering over-confidence and excessive risk-taking (Anderson & Galinsky, 2006; Fast et al., 2012).

To explain these seemingly contradictory perspectives and results, scholars have emphasized that the interpersonal consequences of power may be contingent on important

boundary conditions. Experimental studies, for instance, have illustrated factors like moral identity (DeCelles et al., 2012), feelings of uncertainty (Lammers et al., 2008), personal values (Chen et al., 2001), or accountability (Pitesa & Thau, 2013) as moderators of the relation between power and its prosocial or antisocial consequences. Similarly, although only a few studies have examined the role of power for formal supervisors' leadership behavior, the initial research on this issue has found the implications of power to hinge on supervisors' self-perceptions (e.g., competence, self-focus, sense of belongingness; Fast & Chen, 2009; Hoogervorst et al., 2012; Wisse & Rus, 2012) and on whether supervisors construe their power role as an opportunity or a responsibility (DeWit et al., 2017).

Overall, it is clear that (a) power has the potential to critically influence how formal supervisors lead their subordinates (Fast & Chen, 2009; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Wisse & Rus, 2012) and (b) the role of power is unlikely to be straightforward, in this regard, but may hinge on important moderating variables. At the same time, empirical research has rarely investigated the behavioral consequences of power in a formal leadership context, and our knowledge about relevant boundary conditions therefore remains fragmented and incomplete. Specifically, we believe previous work on this issue has overlooked formal supervisors' job attitudes (i.e., affective and cognitive evaluations of specific job facets; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012) as a highly relevant class of contingency factors. This is an important omission for several reasons. First, job attitudes are known to represent key predictors of individuals' general behavior at work (Harrison et al., 2006; Judge et al., 2001; Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012) and, in particular, of formal supervisors' leadership behavior (Bommer et al., 2004). Second, and more importantly, prevalent theories suggest that individuals' attitudes may critically shape the behavioral consequences associated with feelings of higher vs. lower power. Rather than focusing on power's main effects, for example, the situated focus theory of power emphasizes that "power enhances the expression of any traits, states, or desires that emerge as individuals

interact with the environment" (Guinote, 2017, p. 365; see also Guinote, 2007a). Hence, we believe consideration of job attitudes as moderating factors in the linkage between formal supervisors' power and leadership behavior is crucial to promote more integrative knowledge about the seemingly contradictory consequences of power, as outlined before, and to better understand the role of formal supervisors' power within their specific job context.

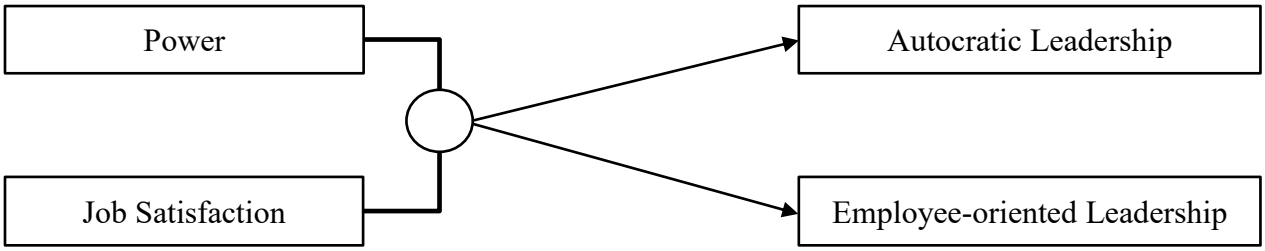
On this basis, a key conceptual notion of the present study is that formal supervisors' job attitudes may critically shape the power-leadership behavior linkage. Specifically, we draw from the situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007a) to highlight job satisfaction (i.e., a general positive or negative attitude toward one's job; Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Robbins et al., 2010) as a key boundary condition that may emphasize either the desirable or the undesirable implications of a formal supervisor's power. We focus on the possible moderating role of supervisors' job satisfaction because this construct represents a broad, fundamental work attitude that prior research has repeatedly linked with numerous important consequences for individuals' behaviors and outcomes at work (Judge et al., 2001; Kovacs et al., 2018).

As depicted in Figure 4.1, our conceptual model therefore casts job satisfaction as a key moderator of the linkage between formal supervisors' power, on the one hand, and their employee-oriented leadership behavior (i.e., leadership aimed at promoting subordinate well-being and facilitating interpersonal relations with subordinates; DeRue et al., 2011; Stogdill & Coons, 1957) and autocratic leadership behavior, on the other (i.e., leadership that emphasizes centralized control and hierarchical decision-making and minimizes subordinate participation; De Hoogh et al., 2015; Lewin et al., 1939). We examine these leadership styles as dependent variables because employee-oriented leadership represents a prototypically friendly, sociable, and supportive type of supervisory behavior that is generally seen as desirable (Judge et al., 2004), whereas autocratic leadership represents a prototypically insensitive, domineering, and sometimes even hostile type of leadership behavior (Harms et al., 2018; Mackey et al., 2017).

In doing so, our goal is to uncover both positive and negative leadership consequences associated with formal supervisors' power.

Figure 4.1:

The Conceptual Model (Paper 3)



By empirically examining this conceptual model, the present study aims to make important contributions to theory advancement, bringing together diverse perspectives on power-leadership linkages that may appear incompatible at first glance. In doing so, we highlight formal supervisors' job attitudes as a salient class of boundary conditions. By emphasizing the moderating role of supervisors' job satisfaction, we strive to illustrate that power has the potential to evoke both desirable *and* undesirable leadership behaviors. As such, this investigation widens our theoretical knowledge about the role of power for leadership by addressing existing ambiguity — illustrating that power, by itself, is neither beneficial nor detrimental in a formal leadership context. A more complete understanding of power's consequences requires a nuanced perspective that carefully considers a supervisor's subjective assessments and evaluations of his or her job as a critical contingency factor.

4.2 Theory and Hypotheses Development

4.2.1 Theoretical Background

A key tenet of the situated focus theory of power is that power holders exhibit greater behavioral variability, compared with less powerful individuals (Guinote, 2017). This idea is based on the notion that higher power affords individuals with superior control over relevant

resources and, thus, makes them relatively independent of others and frees them from contextual constraints (Fiske & Dépret, 1996; Overbeck et al., 2006). Hence, individuals with higher (rather than lower) power are in a better position to flexibly act upon their internal preferences, feelings, beliefs, and goals, rather than following external requirements, norms, and behavioral standards (Guinote, 2007b). Empirical research has shown, accordingly, that higher power enables individuals to act in more self-directed ways (Fiske & Dépret, 1996) and to display more flexible interpersonal behaviors (Guinote et al., 2002). Individuals with lower power, by contrast, are relatively dependent on others' resources to achieve their goals and, therefore, have fewer opportunities for autonomous, self-directed action (Guinote, 2007a; Schaerer et al., 2018). Rather than flexibly acting upon their own inclinations, such individuals are likely, by consequence, to more closely follow prevalent norms and expectations (Overbeck et al., 2006).

It is important to reiterate, in this regard, that prior research has shown individuals' job satisfaction to critically shape their preferences, inclinations, and behaviors at work (e.g., Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012; Organ & Ryan, 1995; Spector, 1997). Hence, building on the conceptual backdrop offered by the situated focus theory (Guinote, 2007a, 2017), we propose that supervisors with higher power will follow the behavioral inclinations associated with their job (dis)satisfaction to a greater extent in their actions toward subordinates, compared with their lower-power counterparts. In other words, we anticipate the linkage between a supervisor's power, on the one hand, and his or her leadership behavior, on the other, to critically hinge on the supervisor's degree of job satisfaction. In the following, we detail the implications associated with this reasoning for the association between a supervisor's power and his or her autocratic as well as employee-oriented leadership.

4.2.2 Supervisors' Power and Autocratic Leadership Behavior

We anticipate a strong, positive relationship between a formal supervisor's power and his or her autocratic leadership behavior among supervisors with relatively low job satisfaction, whereas this relationship should be less pronounced for supervisors with higher job satisfaction. This notion is based on research that has described dissatisfaction at work as an aversive experience that is linked with tendencies toward negative and antisocial behavior (Spector, 1997). Specifically, this broad, unfavorable work attitude has been associated with intense experiences of negative affect (Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; Fisher, 2000; Thoresen et al., 2003), deteriorating individuals' interpersonal interactions and negatively coloring their social relations at work (Brief & Weiss, 2002). Accordingly, research has demonstrated job dissatisfaction to positively associate with individuals' undesirable work behaviors, including counterproductive (Mount et al., 2006) or even aggressive acts toward colleagues and subordinates (Glomb, 2002; Hershcovis et al., 2007).

Drawing from the situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007a), this reasoning suggests that supervisors' power may positively associate with autocratic leadership behavior among supervisors with relatively low job satisfaction. As noted before, autocratic leadership entails a bossy, domineering, and highly authoritarian treatment of subordinates (De Hoogh et al., 2015; Harms et al., 2018). On the one hand, such behaviors appear consistent with the tendencies and preferences generally associated with low job satisfaction, as outlined before (Bennett & Robinson, 2003; Hershcovis et al., 2007). On the other hand, scholars have noted that such behaviors are at odds with the norms for civility and empowerment prevalent in many of today's organizations (Parker et al., 2017) and are typically associated with negative consequences for subordinates' well-being (Briker et al., 2019). Importantly, the situated focus theory suggests that these latter, normative considerations should be of less relevance for more (rather than less) powerful supervisors. Such powerful supervisors' relative independence from

others and freedom from contextual constraints (Galinsky, Jordan et al., 2008; Galinsky, Magee et al., 2008) should enable them to act out the negativity associated with low job satisfaction in their interactions with subordinates. Hence, powerful supervisors that are dissatisfied with their jobs may indulge in their tendencies toward aversive interpersonal behaviors without much reservation—making a highly authoritarian approach toward leadership more likely. For less powerful supervisors, by contrast, normative considerations should play a more important part (Gruenfeld et al., 2003; Keltner et al., 2003). Such supervisors lack relevant resources and, thus, they are dependent on others for their own goal attainment to a relatively large extent (Galinsky, Jordan et al., 2008; Schaerer et al., 2018). As such, lower-power supervisors may find it more necessary than higher-power supervisors to withstand undesirable behavioral inclinations in order to avoid social repercussions. Rather than freely following the negative behavioral tendencies triggered by low job satisfaction in their subordinate interactions, these supervisors are therefore likely to refrain from autocratic acts even if they are dissatisfied with their jobs to comply with prevalent norms and expectations.

For more satisfied supervisors, by contrast, the linkage between power and autocratic leadership should be less pronounced. Research has associated high job satisfaction with positive affective experiences at work (Thoresen et al., 2003) and with a preference for favorable work interactions (George, 1996b; George et al., 2005; LePine et al., 2002). Hence, higher job satisfaction is likely to diminish tendencies toward hostile, domineering, and aggressive behaviors (Dalal, 2005; George, 1991). As noted before, relatively powerful supervisors are likely to follow internal behavioral preferences and inclinations (Galinsky, Magee et al., 2008; Hecht & LaFrance, 1998), such that these supervisors should generally exhibit little autocratic leadership when they are satisfied with their jobs. Similarly, given both their positive work attitudes and the counternormative nature of domineering and autocratic

leadership styles (Harms et al., 2018), low-power supervisors with high job satisfaction are unlikely to exhibit autocratic behaviors as well.

Overall, this reasoning suggests that power is more likely to positively associate with an autocratic leadership style among dissatisfied rather than satisfied supervisors. Hence, we propose:

Hypothesis 1: A supervisor's job satisfaction moderates the relationship between power and autocratic leadership behavior, such that power is positively related with autocratic leadership among supervisors with relatively low (but not with higher) job satisfaction.

4.2.3 Supervisors' Power and Employee-oriented Leadership Behavior

We similarly anticipate a supervisor's job satisfaction to moderate the relationship between his or her power and employee-oriented leadership behavior. As noted before, low job satisfaction has been associated with pronounced negative affectivity among employees (Fisher, 2000; Thoresen et al., 2003) and with a negative approach towards social interactions and interpersonal relations (Hershcovis et al., 2007). Following the situated focus theory (Guinote, 2007a), we expect that high-power supervisors are particularly likely to yield to these inclinations, thus exhibiting little employee-oriented leadership towards subordinates. Again, this rationale is based on the notion that power affords individuals with important resources and control, thus making them relatively independent of others (Fiske, 1993; Fiske & Dépret, 1996). As such, powerful supervisors may not find it particularly important to establish positive working relationships and goodwill with their subordinates, because such supervisors are likely to feel that their goal attainment does not hinge on subordinates' contributions to a large extent (Fiske, 1993). When dissatisfied with their job, such supervisors may therefore see little reason to counteract the resulting, negative behavioral tendencies in their subordinate interactions, making it less likely that they will exhibit key behaviors that characterize employee-oriented

leadership – such as being friendly and considerate, providing support and encouragement, and showing concern for individual subordinates' personal well-being (Yukl, 2013).

Among supervisors with lower power, by contrast, we anticipate relatively high levels of employee-oriented leadership even when they experience a lack of job satisfaction. As noted earlier, their relative lack of resources may make such supervisors more sensitive to the normative constraints and social expectations (Fiske, 1993; Gruenfeld et al., 2003) that, in many organizations, emphasize the relevance of friendly and considerate interactions between employees. Maybe more importantly, a lack of power may create strong perceptions of dependency (Fiske & Dépret, 1996; Keltner et al., 2003), such that low-power supervisors may feel that their own success and professional goal attainment hinges on subordinates' contributions. Hence, even when dissatisfied with their job, these supervisors are likely to perceive that they cannot afford to risk subordinates' goodwill through inconsiderate behaviors. Rather, they may see an urgent need to establish rapport and maintain subordinates' motivation – and employee-oriented leadership behaviors may represent an important means of achieving this (Judge et al., 2004; Stogdill & Coons, 1957). Consequently, we anticipate supervisors with relatively low job satisfaction to exhibit substantively less employee-oriented leadership behaviors when they experience higher rather than lower power.

For supervisors with higher job satisfaction, however, we anticipate the association between power and employee-oriented leadership to be less pronounced. As noted before, high job satisfaction has been linked with employees' positive emotionality (Thoresen et al., 2003) and with a strong tendency towards amicable workplace interactions (Bateman & Organ, 1983; George et al., 2005). Hence, higher job satisfaction has been shown to advance individuals' friendly, helpful, and supportive behaviors towards coworkers and employees (LePine et al., 2002). Given powerful supervisors' general inclination to act in line with their preferences and desires (Galinsky, Magee et al., 2008; Hecht & LaFrance, 1998), it is clear that these tendencies

should be mirrored in their leadership behaviors toward subordinates, thus promoting relatively high levels of employee-oriented leadership. Similarly, this type of leadership behavior should be relatively pronounced among low-power supervisors with high job satisfaction as well, because the positive behavioral tendencies induced by pronounced job satisfaction should meet these supervisors' perceived need to build and maintain favorable working relationships with subordinates and secure subordinates' rapport. On this basis, we therefore expect little difference between the employee-oriented leadership behaviors of higher-power versus lower-power supervisors under conditions of relatively high job satisfaction

Overall, this rationale suggests that power is more likely to negatively associate with an employee-oriented leadership style among supervisors with lower rather than higher job satisfaction. We therefore propose:

Hypothesis 2: A supervisor's job satisfaction moderates the relationship between power and employee-oriented leadership behavior, such that power is negatively related with employee-oriented leadership for supervisors with relatively low (but not with higher) job satisfaction.

4.3 Method

4.3.1 Sample and Procedure

To test the present hypotheses, we collected data from supervisors and their direct subordinates from various organizations in Germany, in an effort to increase our findings' generalizability. We approached the potential study participants through personal and university contacts (for similar procedures, see Breevaart & de Vries, 2017; Bunderson et al., 2016). The potential participants received either web-based or (otherwise identical) paper-and-pencil surveys, and we provided them with general information about the study's purpose, without disclosing the specific hypotheses. We note that controlling for the mode of survey

administration (i.e., online vs. paper-and-pencil) did not meaningfully alter our substantive results and conclusions. To alleviate common source concerns (MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012), we used two separate survey versions—one designed for supervisors and one for subordinates. Supervisors self-assessed their power and job satisfaction, whereas subordinates rated their supervisors' autocratic and employee-oriented leadership behaviors. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, and we assured confidentiality to all study participants.

Overall, we gathered data from 63 supervisors and 292 of their subordinates. For a supervisor's inclusion in the present study, (a) he or she had to provide information concerning the focal study variables and (b) at least two subordinates had to provide information on the respective supervisor's autocratic and employee-oriented leadership (Rubin et al., 2005). Moreover, subordinates were included in the final sample if (a) they had a direct reporting relationship with their supervisor for at least three months and (b) they interacted with the supervisor on a regular basis (i.e., at least one day a week). Fifty-eight supervisors (92% of the initial sample) and 249 subordinates (85% of the initial sample) met these criteria. The number of subordinate responses per supervisor in our final sample ranged from 2 to 10 (M = 4.31, SD = 1.98), for an average within-team response rate of roughly 70% among subordinates. The supervisors in our final sample had been working for their present organization for an average of 13.71 years (SD = 9.43), their average age was 47.24 years (SD = 10.02), and 67.24% were male. Moreover, subordinates' average organizational tenure was 9.43 years (SD = 9.03), their average age was 38.70 years (SD = 11.89), and 53% were male. Finally, the teams in our sample represented a variety of industry areas, such as manufacturing (36%), services (28 %), health care (19%), sales (5%), public service (5%), and finance (2%).[6]

[6] Controlling for industry sector dummies in our hypotheses tests did not meaningfully alter the reported results and conclusions.

4.3.2 Measures

We translated all measures to German using a back-translation procedure (Brislin, 1980). Unless otherwise noted, responses were given on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Power. Following prior research (Feenstra et al., 2017), we captured supervisors' power at work using two items. First, we measured *subjective power* by asking supervisors to indicate their hierarchical position within their current organization on a scale from 0 and 100, with zero representing a position without management responsibilities and 100 representing the highest top management (Lammers et al., 2011). Research has shown that this simple but robust instrument correlates highly with alternative power measures, including an individual's self-perceived control and influence over others (Lammers et al., 2010). Second, we measured *formal hierarchical power* by asking supervisors to indicate on a 3-point scale whether they were in a lower management (coded as 1; $n = 26$), middle management (coded as 2; $n = 18$), or top management (coded as 3; $n = 13$) position (see also Lammers et al., 2010). There was one missing value on this variable.

These two power measures were highly correlated ($r = .75$, $p < .01$, $\alpha = .85$). Thus, besides separately testing the hypotheses based on both of these measures, we also combined the two power items into a single score by first standardizing and then averaging the respective items, and we repeated all hypotheses tests using this composite measure (cf. Feenstra et al., 2017).

Autocratic leadership. Subordinates rated their supervisors' autocratic leadership behavior using a five-item measure from De Hoogh, Den Hartog, and Koopman (2004; see also De Hoogh et al., 2015; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2009). Example items are, "My supervisor is bossy and orders subordinates around," "…is very critical of new ideas," and "...makes sure

that his/her self-interests are always met". We averaged multiple subordinate ratings of the same supervisor's behavior, based on adequate intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC1 = .30, F[57, 191] = 2.81, $p < .001$, ICC2 = .64) as well as inter-rater agreement statistics (median $r_{wg(j)}$ = .83, using a uniform expected variance distribution; Bliese, 2000). Cronbach's α was .75.

Employee-oriented leadership. Subordinates rated five items from the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire's consideration dimension (Stogdill, 1963) to capture supervisors' employee-oriented behavior. Sample items include, "My supervisor is friendly and approachable," "…does little things to make it pleasant to be a member of the team," and "...looks out for the personal welfare of team members." Again, aggregation of individual members' ratings to the supervisor-level was justified based on both intraclass correlation coefficients (ICC1 = .40, F[57, 191] = 3.77, $p < .001$, ICC2 = .73) and interrater agreement statistics (median $r_{wg(j)}$ = .86). Cronbach's α was .91.

Job satisfaction. Following prior research (e.g., Judge & Klinger, 2008; Kifer et al., 2013; Wiltshire et al., 2014), supervisors rated their job satisfaction using a five-item measure based on Brayfield and Roth (1951). Sample items include, "I feel fairly satisfied with my present job", "I find real enjoyment in my work", and "I consider my job to be rather unpleasant" (reverse coded). Cronbach's α was .60.

Control variables. We considered supervisors' age and gender as possible covariates because previous studies have shown that these variables are related to leadership behavior, with older supervisors generally exhibiting less active approaches toward leadership (Zacher et al., 2011) and female supervisors generally adopting more participative (rather than authoritarian) leadership styles than male supervisors (Eagly et al., 2003; Eagly & Johnson, 1990). Finally, research has shown that supervisors' experiences of stress and exhaustion relate with their tendencies toward counternormative leadership behaviors (e.g., Lam et al., 2017; Marcus & Schuler, 2004; Thau & Mitchell, 2010). Hence, we considered supervisors' stress at

work as a possible covariate, using Motowidlo and colleagues' (1986) four-item self-report measure (α = .87).

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.1 presents means, standard deviations, and correlations between all study variables. As shown, formal hierarchical power as well as the composite power measure were positively related with autocratic leadership (r = .32, p < .05 and r = .30, p < .05, respectively), but not with employee-oriented leadership. Moreover, supervisors' job satisfaction was not significantly related with either autocratic or employee-oriented leadership. Given the expected interaction patterns, we note that this does not contradict our theorizing

Further, regarding the control variables, the only significant correlation was between supervisors' gender and autocratic leadership, such that male supervisors exhibited more autocratic leadership behavior than female supervisors (r = .27, p < .05). To avoid power problems and biased parameter estimates, we therefore followed Becker's (2005) recommendations and only controlled for supervisors' gender when testing the study hypotheses, whereas we excluded the other potential covariates. Parenthetically, we note that the results and conclusions remained virtually unchanged when including all of the control variables.

Table 4.1:

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations (Paper 3)

Variables	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Supervisor Age	47.24	10.02								
2. Supervisor Gender	.67	.47	.22							
3. Supervisor Stress	3.19	.87	-.27*	-.07						
4. Subjective Power	65.04	30.21	.22	.24	-.13					
5. Formal Hierarchical Power	1.77	.80	.19	.36**	-.21	.75**				
6. Power Composite	.01	.93	.22	.32*	-.20	.94**	.94**			
7. Supervisor Job Satisfaction	4.31	.46	.08	-.03	-.23	.07	.13	.12		
8. Autocratic Leadership	2.52	.46	.02	.27*	.12	.25	.32*	.30*	-.15	
9. Employee-oriented Leadership	3.97	.61	-.21	-.22	.01	-.18	-.19	-.19	.15	-.68**

Notes. N ranges from 57 to 58. For gender, 0 = female, 1 = male.

$^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$

4.4.2 Hypotheses Testing

To test our hypotheses, we conducted separate moderated hierarchical regression analyses with autocratic and employee-oriented leadership as dependent variables. In Step 1, we entered the control variables, whereas Step 2 examined the main effects of supervisors' power and job satisfaction. Finally, we entered the power * job satisfaction interaction in Step 3. All independent variables were standardized prior to hypotheses testing. Table 4.2 depicts the respective findings.

Table 4.2:

Results of Hierarchical Regression Analyses (Paper 3)

	IV: Subjective power				*IV: Formal hierarchical power*				*IV: Composite power*			
	DV: Autocratic leadership		***DV: Employee-oriented leadership***		***DV: Autocratic leadership***		***DV: Employee-oriented leadership***		***DV: Autocratic leadership***		***DV: Employee-oriented leadership***	
	B (SE)	*ΔR²*	*B (SE)*	*ΔR²*	*B (SE)*	*ΔR²*	*B (SE)*	*ΔR²*	*B (SE)*	*ΔR²*	*B (SE)*	*ΔR²*
Control Variables		.08*		.05†		.10*		.05†		.08*		.05
Constant	2.34** (.10)		4.13** (.13)		2.36** (.10)		4.11** (.14)		2.40** (.10)		4.10** (.14)	
Supervisor Gender	.22† (.13)		-.31† (.17)		.24† (.13)		-.22 (.17)		.20 (.13)		-.24 (.17)	
Main Effects		.08*		.03		.06*		.04		.08*		.04
Power	.13* (.06)		-.09 (.08)		.10 (.06)		-.10 (.08)		.13*(.06)		-.11 (.09)	
Job Satisfaction	-.10† (.06)		.15† (.08)		-.08 (.06)		.10 (.08)		-.09 (.06)		.12 (.08)	
Interaction		.08**		.17**		.06*		.06†		.08**		.12*
Power x Job Satisfaction	-.15* (.06)		.28** (.08)		-.11† (.06)		.15† (.08)		-.15* (.06)		.24** (.09)	

Note. *N* ranges from 57 to 58. IV = Independent variable. DV = Dependent variable. Final model results with unstandardized regression weights are shown.

†$p < .10$; *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$

As shown, we found equivalent two-way interactions of power and job satisfaction on autocratic leadership using the measures of subjective power (B = -.15, p = .02) and formal hierarchical power (B = -.11, p = .06) as well as the composite power measure (B = -.15, p = .02), after considering control variables and main effects, although we note that the interaction coefficient for formal hierarchical power did not meet conventional significance levels. Figure 4.2 illustrates the pattern of the interactive association for the composite power measure. Supporting Hypothesis 1, simple slopes analyses (Aiken & West, 1991) revealed that the relationship between power and autocratic leadership was positive and significant for supervisors with relatively low job satisfaction (-1 *SD*; B = .31, SE = .10, p = .00) but non-significant for supervisors with higher job satisfaction (+1 *SD*; B = -.01, SE = .09, p = .93). Further analyses using the Johnson-Neyman technique (Hayes, 2018; Preacher et al., 2006) showed that the simple slope for the power-autocratic leadership linkage was positive and significant for any value of job satisfaction lower than .01 above the mean (i.e., all unstandardized job satisfaction values lower than 4.32), whereas the respective simple slope was not significant for any higher moderator value within the sample range.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that job satisfaction moderates the relationship between power and employee-oriented leadership. As shown in Table 4.2, hierarchical regression analyses revealed highly similar interactions between power and job satisfaction on employee-oriented leadership for all three power measures although, again, the respective interaction coefficient for formal hierarchical power was only marginally significant (subjective power: B = .28, p = .00; formal hierarchical power: B = .15, p = .06; composite power: B = .24, p = .01). Consistent with expectations, simple slopes analyses using the composite power measure indicated that power was negatively related to employee-oriented leadership for supervisors with relatively low job satisfaction (-1 *SD*; B = -.39, SE = .14, p = .01), whereas this relationship was non-significant for supervisors with higher job satisfaction (+1 *SD*; B = .12, SE = .12, p =

.31*;* see Figure 4.3). Further analyses using the Johnson-Neyman technique (Hayes, 2018; Preacher et al., 2006) showed that the simple slope for the power-employee-oriented leadership linkage was positive and significant for any value of job satisfaction lower than .14 below the mean (i.e., all unstandardized job satisfaction values lower than 4.17), whereas the respective simple slope was not significant for any higher moderator value within the sample range. Hence, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Figure 4.2:

Two-way Interaction of Power and Job Satisfaction on Autocratic Leadership

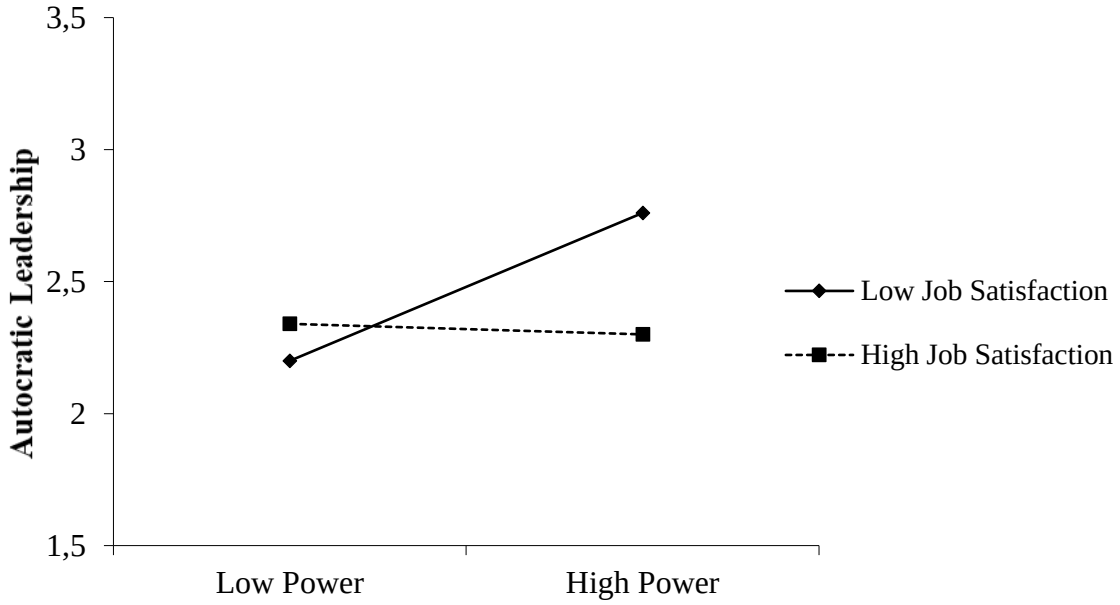
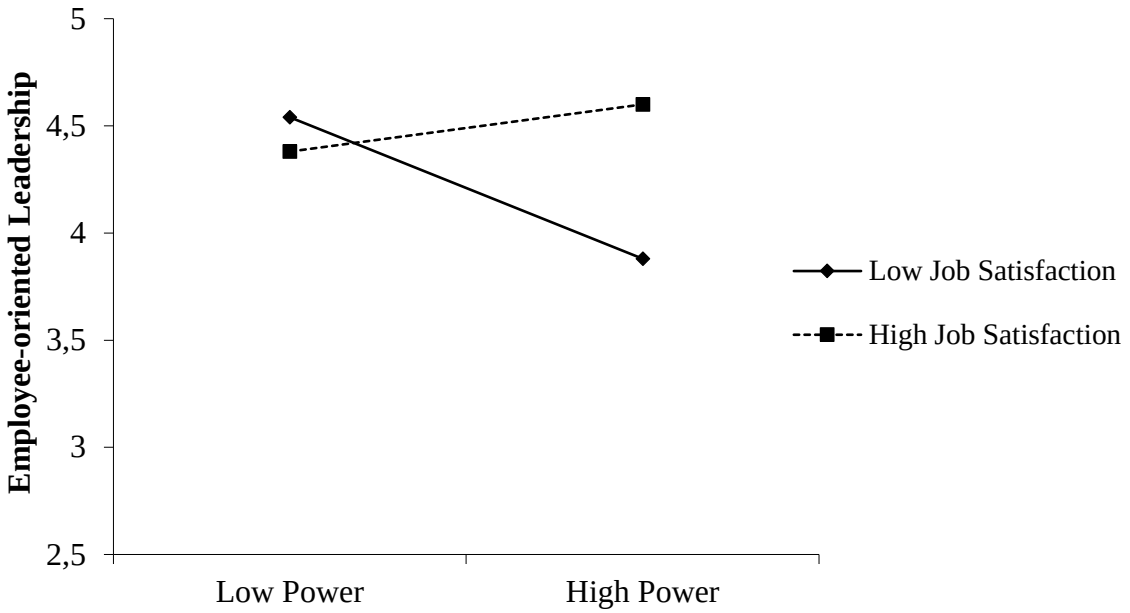


Figure 4.3:

Two-way Interaction of Power and Job Satisfaction on Employee-oriented Leadership



4.4.3 Supplementary Analyses and Robustness Checks

We conducted supplementary analyses to address possible alternative explanations and further explore our results. To exclude the possibility that the observed moderator effects spuriously resulted from curvilinear relationships between the predictor and outcome variables (e.g., Edwards, 2008), we re-examined our moderation hypotheses after adding the squared terms for supervisors' power and job satisfaction as controls. The results showed that neither of the respective squared terms were significantly related to employee-oriented leadership or autocratic leadership. More importantly, controlling for the squared terms did not change the significance and overall pattern of the interaction effects, corroborating our findings' robustness.

To further illustrate the relevance of our results, we empirically examined a number of well-known outcomes of employee-oriented and autocratic leadership. Our data collection included self-ratings of individual subordinates' work stress (four items, $\alpha = .82$; Motowidlo et

al., 1986) and turnover intentions (three items, α = .90; Cammann et al., 1979, as cited in Chen et al., 1998; Seashore et al., 1982). Given that prior research has repeatedly linked both employee-oriented leadership (Montano et al., 2017) and autocratic leadership (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2009; Gastil, 1994) with these variables, we examined these possible outcomes in supplementary analyses, rather than incorporating them into our formal theorizing.

Results from separate multilevel conditional indirect effects models (using Preacher and Selig's [2012] Monte Carlo procedure; see also Krull & MacKinnon, 2001; Walter et al., 2015) illustrated that, for supervisors with relatively low job satisfaction (1 *SD* below the mean), power was indirectly and positively related with individual subordinates' work stress, through both employee-oriented leadership (*indirect effect* = .11, 95% CI = .01, .25) and autocratic leadership (*indirect effect* = .11, 95% CI = .01, .26). Similarly, both of these leadership styles mediated the linkage between supervisors' power and individual subordinates' turnover intentions if supervisors' job satisfaction was relatively low (*indirect effect* for employee-oriented leadership = .14, 95% CI = .03, .29; *indirect effect* for autocratic leadership = .10, 95% CI = .01, .23). For supervisors with higher job satisfaction (1 *SD* above the mean), by contrast, none of these indirect associations was statistically significant. These findings underscore that, beyond a supervisor's own leadership behaviors, his or her power can have important downstream repercussions for subordinates' work experiences and attitudes (at least when supervisors are relatively dissatisfied with their job). Detailed results for all supplementary analyses are available from the first author.

4.5 Discussion

This study examined job satisfaction as a moderator of the relationship between a supervisor's power and his or her leadership behavior. As expected, we found power to be particularly relevant for leadership among supervisors that were relatively dissatisfied with their job, but not among supervisors with higher job satisfaction. More specifically, power related

positively with autocratic leadership behavior and negatively with employee-oriented leadership behavior when supervisors felt less satisfied with their job. With higher job satisfaction, in contrast, supervisors' power was not significantly associated with these leadership styles. Finally, our supplementary analyses suggest that, by shaping a supervisor's leadership behavior, his or her power is indirectly associated (under conditions of lower job satisfaction) with subordinates' work stress and turnover intentions.

4.5.1 Theoretical Implications

These findings make important contributions to our theoretical understanding of the role of power in organizations. Specifically, although it is clear that power is fundamental for processes of leadership (Galinsky, Jordan et al., 2008), research on these phenomena has often proceeded in relative isolation and has exhibited limited cross-fertilization (Gordon, 2002; Williams, 2014). Despite the well-known behavioral consequences associated with individuals' experiences of higher vs. lower power (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2015; Gordon, 2002; Sturm & Antonakis, 2015), for example, only few studies have empirically examined how formal supervisors' power may shape their behavior toward subordinates (for exceptions, see Fast & Chen, 2009; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Wisse & Rus, 2012). The present study reiterates the relevance of power in this regard. Organizational leaders' formal authority notwithstanding, our findings demonstrate that individual supervisors differ markedly in their experiences of power – with potentially important implications for both the desirable and the undesirable leadership styles they use in their subordinate interactions (i.e., employee-oriented and autocratic leadership) as well as associated downstream consequences.

Importantly, our findings further illustrate that these implications of power are contingent on supervisors' job satisfaction as a key boundary condition. As such, the present study sheds new light on the diverse and often inconsistent approaches toward power's consequences put forward in the literature, with some studies emphasizing the role of power for

individual's positive and prosocial behaviors (Chen et al., 2001; Galinsky et al., 2003) and others emphasizing power's detrimental role for interpersonal interactions (e.g., Goodwin et al., 2000; Gruenfeld et al., 2008). Our research highlights supervisors' job attitudes as a critical – yet heretofore largely neglected – class of contingency factor that may consolidate these seemingly contradictory perspectives. We show, on the one hand, that supervisors with relatively high job satisfaction are able to maintain positive and avoid negative leadership behaviors largely irrespective of their power levels. For supervisors that are dissatisfied with their jobs, by contrast, the detrimental consequences of power seem to prevail, with increasing power diminishing employee-oriented and promoting autocratic types of leadership. Consistent with the situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007a), these findings suggest that formal supervisors' power, by itself, is not 'good' or 'bad' for processes of leadership. Rather, the consequences of such power critically hinge on the way supervisors think and feel about their job.

4.5.2 Limitations and Future Research Directions

We note a number of limitations that should be taken into account when interpreting the present findings. Although our field study design (with actual supervisors and their subordinates from various organizations and industries) has advantages for external validity, this correlational design does not allow for causal conclusions. Experimental or longitudinal approaches would be helpful to address this concern. In fact, longitudinal study designs could be highly interesting for adding a dynamic perspective to the present considerations, for example illustrating how the role of power (and job satisfaction) for supervisors' behavior may change over time as the relationship between supervisors and their subordinates develops (cf. Boyd & Taylor, 1998; Nahrgang et al., 2009). Moreover, some studies have shown that job satisfaction may increase with individuals' power and/or hierarchical level (Kifer et al., 2013; Porter, 1962). One might wonder, therefore, whether job satisfaction may serve as a mediator

(rather than a moderator) between supervisors' power and leadership behavior. As shown in Table 4.1, however, none of the present power measures was significantly associated with supervisors' job satisfaction and, accordingly, supplementary analyses did not support an alternative mediation model in which job satisfaction transferred the power-leadership linkage.

Moreover, the present supervisor-level sample size is somewhat small (supervisor N = 58; although our dependent variable measures are based on 249 subordinate ratings), and the generalizability of our findings beyond the study's German cultural context is limited. Also, we acknowledge that the internal consistency estimate for our measure of supervisors' job satisfaction was lower than desirable (although this is likely to attenuate rather than enhance observed relationships). Clearly, future research could increase confidence in the robustness of our findings through constructive replication that uses larger supervisor-level samples from other cultures and/or alternative measures of job satisfaction (Smith et al., 1969; Weiss et al., 1967).

Beyond addressing limitations, our investigation points toward a number of interesting directions for further inquiry. Concerning the independent variable, for example, we used a relatively broad operationalization of supervisors' power in organizations (see also Feenstra et al., 2017; Lammers et al., 2011). Extending this general approach, scholars have distinguished different forms of power, for example illustrating distinct consequences of social power (i.e., power over others) vs. personal power (i.e., freedom from others) for individuals' social perceptions (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Lammers et al., 2009). Examining interactive relationships of these distinct power types and job satisfaction with supervisors' behavior toward subordinates may promote a finer-grained understanding of the present model.

Moreover, it would be fruitful to investigate our model's generalizability toward alternative moderators and outcome variables. Although our rationale is geared towards the moderating role of job satisfaction, for example, we believe analogous conceptual arguments

could be used to position related supervisory work attitudes (e.g., their job engagement or organizational commitment; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Rich et al., 2010) as boundary conditions for the role of power. Similarly, it would be highly interesting to examine the extent to which our theoretical considerations extend towards other types of desirable and undesirable leadership (e.g., transactional and transformational leadership vs. abusive supervision; Judge et al., 2004; Tepper, 2007). Empirical studies examining these issues may substantively broaden our knowledge of power-leadership linkages.

Finally, future research may benefit from further investigating the specific mechanisms underlying our hypothesized relationships. The present findings illustrate that job dissatisfaction steers power holders away from interpersonally sensitive, employee-oriented types of behavior and towards a dominant, authoritarian leadership style. It would be interesting to examine the extent to which these behavioral outcomes reflect deliberate, strategic choices (e.g., with powerful supervisors aiming to address possible causes of their dissatisfaction by pushing subordinates towards greater efficiency) or largely impulsive, less purposeful reactions (e.g., with powerful supervisors venting the frustration associated with feelings of dissatisfaction). By examining such alternative explanations, scholars may advance new theoretical insights into the role of power for processes of organizational leadership.

4.5.3 Practical Implications

This study has important practical implications because previous research has generally shown desirable consequences associated with supervisors' employee-oriented behavior (e.g., increased follower motivation and leader effectiveness; Judge et al., 2004) and undesirable consequences associated with autocratic leadership (e.g., diminished follower well-being, work attitudes, and performance; Harms et al., 2008; see also the present supplementary analyses). Given these insights, our findings illustrate situations of high power and low job satisfaction as a key risk factor for effective leadership in organizations (i.e., diminishing supervisors'

employee-oriented behavior and promoting their autocratic behavior). On this basis, two courses of action seem possible.

First, to stimulate effective and avoid ineffective leadership, organizations might aim to restrict supervisors' power position, e.g., by diminishing hierarchical differentiation and promoting a relatively egalitarian culture (Anderson & Brown, 2010; Anicich et al., 2015). Importantly, however, we believe this approach is only viable to curb excessive power differentials. After all, supervisors' formal authority position inevitably affords them with a certain degree of power over subordinates and, at least to some extent, such power may be instrumental in facilitating supervisors' influence attempts towards subordinates (Galinsky, Jordan et al., 2008; Yukl, 2013).

Hence, we believe a second approach that focuses on supervisors' job satisfaction is even more promising and viable. Traditionally, leadership scholars and practitioners have mainly been concerned with subordinates' job satisfaction as a key outcome variable associated with successful leadership efforts (e.g., Judge et al., 2004). Our study shows that organizations are well-advised to carefully consider supervisors' own job satisfaction as well (Bass, 1990a; Jin et al., 2016). It is clear, then, that higher-level managers play an important role, because these managers' behaviors may critically influence lower-level supervisors' work experiences and job attitudes (Mayer et al., 2009; Ruiz et al., 2011; Yang et al., 2010). By deliberately emphasizing positive leadership behaviors (e.g., employee-oriented, task-oriented, or transformational leadership; Judge et al., 2004; Judge & Piccolo, 2004), managers at the top of their organization may therefore enhance job satisfaction among lower-level supervisors (e.g., middle managers), promoting productive (and preventing ineffective leadership) throughout the organization even if lower-level supervisors perceive a relatively high degree of power. Similarly, deliberately adapting supervisors' working conditions (e.g., payment, career advancement opportunities, task design; Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Judge et al., 1994; Judge

et al., 2010) might advance powerful supervisors' job satisfaction, with potentially beneficial consequences for their leadership behaviors.

4.5.4 Conclusion

The present study corroborates the notion that power and leadership are inextricably linked (Galinsky, Jordan et al., 2008; Yukl, 2013). We illustrate, in this regard, that power is neither universally detrimental nor universally beneficial for processes of leadership. On the one hand, it seems that power has the potential to deteriorate supervisors' desirable and promote their undesirable behaviors toward subordinates. On the other hand, these consequences critically hinge on supervisors' job attitudes, such that highly satisfied supervisors are able to maintain productive leadership even if they experience relatively high power. We hope this investigation will provide an impetus for further research on power-leadership linkages and offer relevant insights for organizational efforts toward promoting effective leadership.

5 General Discussion

Interpersonal sensitivity is a central part of virtually all human interaction, and previous research in social psychology has revealed numerous antecedents and consequences of this important construct (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009). Similarly, scholars have shown crucial consequences of interpersonal sensitivity for interactions in organizational contexts (e.g., for sales activities, negotiations, and leadership; Byron et al., 2007; Elfenbein et al., 2007; Schmid Mast et al., 2012). Nevertheless, the literature on the antecedents of interpersonal sensitivity in organizations is still underdeveloped (Riggio, 2001; Williams & Polman, 2015). Consequently, relatively little is known about key factors that may promote employees' interpersonal sensitivity and, thus, shape their experiences and success at work (Schmid Mast & Hall, 2018).

The present dissertation aimed to address this issue from various angles. In doing so, in three independent empirical studies, I examined personal and contextual antecedents of interpersonal sensitivity that are particularly relevant in contemporary organizations. Specifically, to address existing ambiguity about the role of individual's age for their ability to decipher group-based emotions, Paper 1 integrated arguments from the lifespan and personality literatures (McCrae & John, 1992; Stanley & Isaacowitz, 2015) to investigate agreeableness as a key boundary condition for the linkage between employees' age and emotional aperture. Moreover, Papers 2 and 3 focused on the role of employees' power for two distinct domains of interpersonal sensitivity (i.e., interpersonal perception and behavior; Bernieri, 2001). Based on the notion that power's consequences are not straightforward, these papers examined work-related contextual variables as key boundary conditions for the relationship between power and interpersonal sensitivity. Specifically, Paper 2 illustrated employees' work stress as a relevant moderator in the power–emotion recognition linkage, whereas Paper 3 highlighted the moderating role of supervisors' job satisfaction in the association between their power and (in)considerate leadership behavior.

Taken together, this dissertation aimed to advance the emerging research on interpersonal sensitivity in work settings by examining personal (age, agreeableness, job satisfaction) and contextual (power, stress) antecedents. As such, the dissertation offers new insights into the origins of interpersonal sensitivity as an important yet under-examined area in organizational research. Before outlining the overarching theoretical contributions derived from the present findings, this final chapter provides a brief summary of the individual papers and discusses relevant limitations that pertain to the dissertation as a whole, and it presents associated research directions as well as practical implications.

5.1 Summary of Findings

Overall, the dissertation's results point to the crucial role of personal and contextual antecedents for perceptual as well as behavioral dimensions of employees' interpersonal sensitivity. In doing so, Papers 1 and 2 both focused on emotion perception, examining antecedents of employees' emotional aperture (i.e., the ability to identify collective emotion expressions) in Paper 1 and individual emotion recognition in Paper 2. Recognizing a prevalent trend towards an aging (and increasingly age-diverse) workforce in most industrialized societies (Burger et al., 2012; Hedge et al., 2006), in particular, Paper 1 aimed to reconcile ambiguous and seemingly contradictory arguments on the linkage between employees' age and emotional aperture (EA). In a sample of 181 employees, this paper illustrated a negative, curvilinear relationship between age and EA, such that EA remained largely unchanged until an employee's mid-age and then declined. Moreover, we found the personality trait of agreeableness to moderate the age-EA link, such that this curvilinear decline pattern only manifested for employees with relatively low agreeableness, whereas EA remained at relatively high levels across the age span among more agreeable employees. In conclusion, these findings illustrate that age is a potential risk factor for EA as a key aspect of interpersonal sensitivity, although

there is pronounced and systematic between-personal variability in this regard, with high agreeableness largely shielding employees from these detrimental consequences.

Paper 2 focused on employees' power as a central influencing factor for interpersonal interactions in organizations (Sturm & Antonakis, 2015) by examining such power as an important antecedent variable of employees' individual emotion recognition ability (ERA; i.e., the ability to correctly decipher other individuals' emotion displays). Prior empirical research has produced contradictory results on the link between power and ERA (Hall et al., 2015; Schmid Mast et al., 2009), and Paper 2 aimed to address this issue by adopting a contingency perspective, arguing that situational factors play an important moderating role. Our findings, derived from a sample of 117 employees, highlight the role of work stress as an important, heretofore neglected boundary condition that may contribute to explaining the ambiguous results reported in prior research. Specifically, power was negatively related with the ability to decipher others' emotional expressions among individuals experiencing higher work stress. For employees with lower work stress, in contrast, there was no significant relationship between power and ERA. In conclusion, these results illustrate that power has the potential to damage employees' interpersonal sensitivity – but these ramifications may only manifest under relatively stressful working conditions.

Finally, Paper 3 also examined the role of power for interpersonal sensitivity, but it aimed to connect such power with the second, behavioral dimension of this construct, focusing on the linkage between power and supervisors' (in)considerate interpersonal behavior toward subordinates. Again, prior findings on this relationship have been ambiguous and somewhat contradictory (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2006; Gruenfeld et al., 2008; Schmid Mast et al., 2009), raising the possibility that more (rather than less) powerful supervisors may exhibit both more employee-oriented (i.e., considerate) and more autocratic (i.e., inconsiderate) leadership behaviors. To address this issue, Paper 3 cast job satisfaction as an important boundary

condition for the respective consequences of supervisors' power, using a sample of 58 supervisors and 249 of their direct subordinates. The results demonstrated power to be particularly relevant (and detrimental) for supervisors' interpersonally sensitive leadership behavior among supervisors that were relatively dissatisfied with their job. In particular, power was positively related with autocratic and negatively related with employee-oriented leadership among supervisors with lower job satisfaction. For supervisors with higher job satisfaction, by contrast, these relationships were not significant. Overall, these findings advance our understanding of how power relates to interpersonally (in)sensitive behavior in situations of organizational leadership, and the supplementary analyses conducted in Paper 3 illustrate relevant downstream consequences for employees' work stress and turnover intentions. High power has the potential to damage important leadership processes and outcomes – but supervisors' favorable job attitudes can prevent these detrimental consequences.

5.2 Theoretical Contributions

Besides the specific contributions outlined in the dissertation's individual chapters, I believe it is possible to derive a number of broader, more overarching contributions to theory advancement from the dissertation as a whole. By examining antecedents of collective and individual emotion recognition (i.e., EA and ERA), in particular, Papers 1 and 2 contribute to the literature on emotion recognition as a key facet of interpersonal sensitivity. The results promote a new understanding of why some employees may be more (or less) apt at correctly recognizing and deciphering (group) emotions than others, indicating that both individual (e.g., age) and contextual predictors (e.g., power) are important in this regard. Moreover, these papers illustrate that the linkage between such predictor variables and emotion recognition is not straightforward – such that a full understanding of the respective relationships requires careful consideration of possible moderating factors, including individuals' personality (e.g., agreeableness) and job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction). Consequently, this dissertation deepens

our understanding of the development of interpersonal perception as a key aspect of interpersonal sensitivity in organizations by (a) identifying new antecedent factors in this regard and (b) clarifying ambiguous arguments on the possible role of such antecedents, as discussed in previous research (e.g., Hall et al., 2015; Stanley & Isaacowitz, 2015).

Moreover, by examining the role of power for both behavioral and perceptual dimensions of interpersonal sensitivity in Papers 2 and 3, this dissertation further advances the interpersonal sensitivity literature. Despite some ambiguous (and sometimes contradictory) perspectives and findings, a widespread notion in social psychological research is that power has largely negative consequences (e.g., Fiske, 1993; Galinsky et al., 2006; Keltner et al., 2003). And, in fact, our findings show that power has the potential to diminish key aspects of interpersonal sensitivity, including employees' emotion recognition and supervisors' considerate leadership. Importantly, however, the contingency perspective adopted in Paper 2 and 3 also illustrates that these disadvantageous effects are not inevitable. Rather, these ramifications of power are most likely to manifest in relatively unfavorable working circumstances characterized by high levels of work stress (Paper 2) or a lack of job satisfaction (Paper 3). Hence, the dissertation further advances theory on the development of interpersonal sensitivity in organizations, providing important nuance on the role of power in this regard and offering important insights into opportunities to mitigate power's potentially problematic impacts.

Finally, it is clear that Papers 2 and 3 have relevant implications for theory on the consequences of power as well. In particular, these studies' findings corroborate key notions put forward in the situated focus theory of power (Guinote, 2007a) and complement prior empirical work on this conceptual perspective (e.g., Côté et al., 2011; Pitesa & Thau, 2013). Broadly, this theory suggests that power does not have detrimental or beneficial consequences per se but, rather, that increasing power enables individuals to more flexibly respond to

situational cues (Guinote, 2007b, 2008). Consistent with this notion, results from both Papers 2 and 3 illustrate that higher-power employees are more reactive towards unfavorable work circumstances, with work stress (Paper 2) and job dissatisfaction (Paper 3) more strongly diminishing interpersonal sensitivity among employees experiencing higher (rather than lower) power at work. Hence, beyond supporting the general notion that the interpersonal consequences of power are complex and ambiguous (e.g., Sturm & Antonakis, 2015), this dissertation's results offer new explanations for the inconsistent findings on the social consequences of power put forward in prior research (e.g., Chen et al., 2001; Fiske & Berdahl, 2007; Schmid Mast et al., 2009; for a recent review, see Guinote, 2017). More specifically, the results highlight employees' work experiences as critical boundary conditions for the respective consequences of power, and they underline the utility of the situated focus theory of power as an overarching theoretical approach to understand such complex associations.

5.3 Strengths, Limitations and Future Directions

This dissertation addresses scholars' repeated calls to further examine the development of interpersonal sensitivity in applied organizational settings (Schmid Mast et al., 2009; Schmid Mast & Latu, 2016; Williams & Polman, 2015). When interpreting the findings, however, an important caveat is that the empirical research presented in this work uses cross-sectional survey designs. Hence, although the predictions in the individual studies are based on solid theoretical foundations, a better understanding of the causal relations between the respective predictor variables and interpersonal sensitivity would require experimental or longitudinal approaches. With regard to power's consequences for interpersonal sensitivity, for instance, prior experimental research generated promising conclusions on how power might affect individual's inclinations to adopt another person's visual perspective (Galinsky et al., 2006), and future research could use similar paradigms to constructively replicate some of the present studies. Similarly, scholars could provide additional confidence in the findings offered in this

dissertation by using longitudinal research to uncover relevant developments of both the antecedents and their possible effects on interpersonal sensitivity over time. With regard to Paper 1, for example, examining the relationship between age and interpersonal sensitivity using longitudinal within-person designs may help to more clearly distinguish age effects from cohort effects (Hofer & Sliwinski, 2001). Further, considering Papers 2 and 3, it is clear that power might not be stable over time (Aime et al., 2014; Sligte et al., 2011). It seems interesting to explore, for example, if (or how) a supervisor's interpersonal sensitivity varies when his or her power position changes and how subordinates, in turn, may dynamically adjust and respond to such changes.

Further, the data for all of the present studies were collected within one country, Germany. Hence, although the theoretical predictions in this dissertation are not culture-specific, it is unclear whether cultural factors might affect the postulated relationships. Specifically, since Eastern cultures tend to be more communally oriented than Western cultures (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989), such cultural differences might have an effect on individual's interpersonal sensitivity and possibly on the relationships hypothesized in this dissertation. With regard to power, for example, scholars have suggested that cultural differences in individualistic/collectivistic orientation as well as power distance might shape associated consequences (Torelli & Shavitt, 2010; Zhong et al., 2006). Thus, increasing sample diversity and conducting cross-cultural studies might enhance the generalizability of the dissertation's findings.

Moreover, future research could offer new theoretical insights by expanding the present models with new predictor and/or moderator variables (Hall, Andrzejewski et al., 2009). It might be worthwhile, for example, to explore whether other individual-level moderators, such as cognitive ability (Joseph & Newman, 2010), regulatory focus (Sassenrath et al., 2014), or mood states (Schmid et al., 2011) might moderate the roles of age and/or power for

interpersonal sensitivity. Similarly, considering work-related context factors, the way organizations deal with emotions (e.g., through affective display rules and norms; Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989) may crucially influence employees' interpersonal sensitivity (in particular, their recognition of individual and group emotions).

This dissertation contributes to a novel understanding of *when* some individuals may be more interpersonally sensitive than others and offers a nuanced picture of relevant boundary conditions in this regard. Unfortunately, however, the present studies do not provide empirical evidence on *why* the postulated relationships occur. Thus, future work could benefit from investigating mediating variables to uncover the underlying processes that may explain the relationships illustrated in this research. For instance, as the theoretical reasoning in Papers 1 and 2 suggests, an individual's information processing style may also serve as a possible mediator in the age/power – interpersonal sensitivity link. Indeed, prior research has revealed linkages between both age (Lithfous et al., 2016; Staudinger et al., 2011) and power (Guinote, 2007b; Smith & Trope, 2006), on the one hand, and individual's local vs. global perceptual processing styles, on the other. Given that global processing has been shown to promote interpersonal sensitivity (Ambady & Gray, 2002; Bombari et al., 2009), it seems reasonable to investigate the mediating role of such processing styles for the aforementioned associations. All in all, considering additional predictors of interpersonal sensitivity and examining alternative moderating and/or mediating variables in such relationships could extend our knowledge of the nomological network surrounding interpersonal sensitivity in important ways, beyond this dissertation's results.

Finally, the conceptual breadth of the interpersonal sensitivity construct suggests that it encompasses a number of distinct but related aspects (Schlegel et al., 2017; Zebrowitz, 2001). The present papers focused on two key dimensions in this regard, namely a person's ability to correctly decipher (individual and group) emotions and a person's interpersonally sensitive

(leadership) behavior. It may be useful for future research to extend this focus, examining the role of the present antecedents (and moderators) for other dimensions of interpersonal sensitivity, such as accuracy in judging others' personality traits, thoughts, and behavioral tendencies (and/or related constructs, such as empathy and tolerance; see the Introduction for further examples). In doing so, scholars may advance a more comprehensive and coherent depiction of the development of interpersonal sensitivity in organizations.

5.4 Practical Implications

Interpersonal sensitivity is known to not only play a major role for a focal individual's personal and professional success, but also to decisively affect others' well-being in social interactions (Byron et al., 2007; Carton et al., 1999). In an organizational context, for example, possessing elevated interpersonal sensitivity holds particular advantages for high-power employees (e.g., supervisors and higher-level managers), because acting in an interpersonally sensitive manner is often regarded as a key part of good leadership (Schmid Mast et al., 2009). Thus, executives are well advised to promote interpersonal sensitivity within their workforce, in general, and among supervisors and managers, in particular. The present dissertation's findings suggest that they may do so through appropriate interventions and selection procedures aimed for example at employees' work stress, job satisfaction, and agreeableness as well as the role of power.

Specifically, Paper 1 suggests that organizations may benefit from recruiting and selecting individuals who are high in agreeableness. By incorporating agreeableness into personnel selection procedures, in particular, organizations may contribute to emotional aperture among both younger and older employees, avoiding potential ramifications that might otherwise be associated with an increasingly older and age-diverse workforce. With previous research linking this type of collective emotion recognition with important outcomes (e.g.,

transformational leadership; Sanchez-Burks et al., 2016), it is clear that this may yield distinct organizational advantages.

With regard to the consequences of power (Papers 2 and 3), organizations should be aware of its potentially detrimental effects on interpersonal sensitivity, especially in highly stressful or dissatisfying job situations. It is clear that, within hierarchical settings, avoiding high-power situations is often not viable (and may not be desirable, given that power may also have various positive consequences; for a review, see Guinote, 2017). Accordingly, the aim should be to counteract the undesirable effects of power. One possibility, in this regard, is to contain stressful working conditions. Ensuring that employees have sufficient control and resources to effectively deal with stressful work demands (Bakker et al., 2005; Karasek, 1979), for example, may promote a more interpersonal sensitive attitude towards others even among employees with relatively high power. More generally, the dissertation's results suggest that organizations should concentrate on providing a work environment that encourages positive job reactions to mitigate power's potential ramifications. As shown in Paper 3, for instance, employees' positive job attitudes (specifically their job satisfaction) may encourage them to maintain interpersonally sensitive behavior largely irrespective of their power level.

Finally, although not directly examined in the present investigation, the present theorizing suggests that power may even have the potential to advance interpersonal sensitivity in some contexts. After all, the situated focus theory of power argues that powerful individuals have a tendency to adjust their thoughts and behaviors to situational cues in a goal-directed manner (Guinote, 2007a). Hence, by designing work situations in way that actively motivates an interpersonally sensitive approach, organizations may not only prevent power's negative consequences but may even encourage high-power employees (e.g., supervisors and managers) to explicitly incorporate such aspects into their actions (e.g., by exhibiting considerate leadership behavior). For example, interventions aimed at acknowledging the value of emotions

and the desirability of benevolent interactions in the workplace may be fruitful in this regard (see also Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995; Ashkanasy & Daus, 2002; Blanch-Hartigan et al., 2012).

5.5 Concluding Remarks

What prompts individuals to exhibit interpersonal sensitivity is a fundamental question in organizational behavior research. This dissertation adds important insights to the literature in this area. By empirically showing how personal and contextual factors relate with both perceptual and behavioral dimensions of employees' interpersonal sensitivity, the dissertation contributes to an expanded and more nuanced understanding of how such sensitivity develops in organizations – with potential benefits both for individual employees and for the organization as a whole.

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Affidavit

Ich erkläre hiermit, dass ich die vorgelegten und nachfolgend aufgelisteten Aufsätze selbstständig und nur mit den Hilfen angefertigt habe, die im jeweiligen Aufsatz angegeben oder zusätzlich in der nachfolgenden Liste aufgeführt sind. In der Zusammenarbeit mit den angeführten Koautoren war ich mindestens anteilig beteiligt. Bei den von mir durchgeführten und in den Aufsätzen erwähnten Untersuchungen habe ich die Grundsätze guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis, wie sie in der Satzung der Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher Praxis niedergelegt sind, eingehalten.

Gießen, 12. Mai 2021

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Anna Faber

Submitted Papers

- Faber, A., & Walter, F. (2017). The curvilinear relationship between age and emotional aperture: The moderating role of agreeableness. *Frontiers in Psychology (Section Organizational Psychology), 8*, 1200.
- Faber, A., & Walter, F. (2019). Power and emotion recognition: The moderating role of work stress. In N. M. Ashkanasy, C. E. J. Härtel, & W. J. Zerbe (Eds.), *Research on emotion in organizations: Emotions and leadership* (Vol. 15, pp. 3-20). Emerald.
- Faber, A., & Walter, F. Ruling with an iron fist: The dissatisfied powerful and their leadership behavior. *Working Paper.*