NIEK HOOGERVORST

On The Psychology of Displaying Ethical Leadership
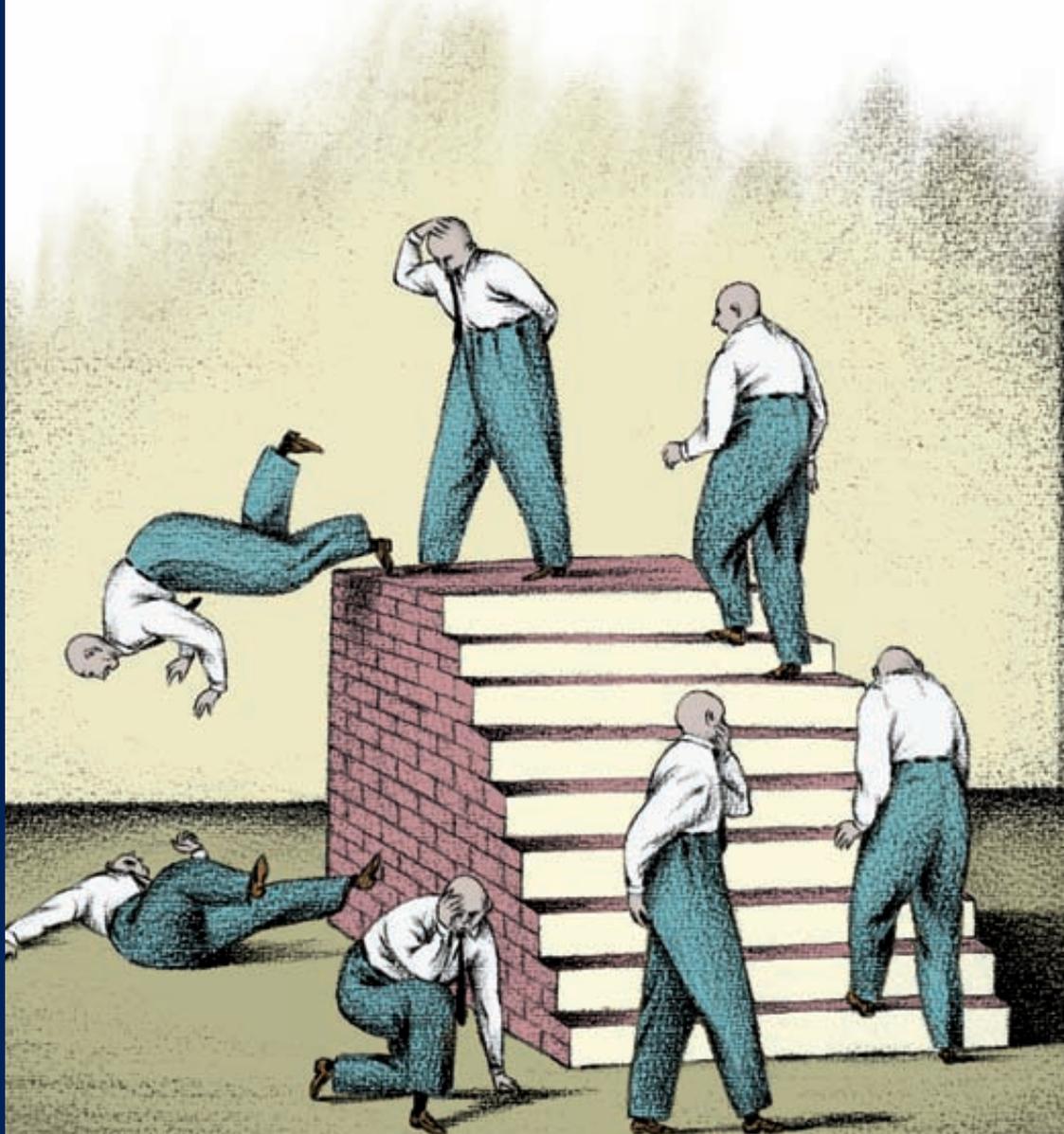
A Behavioral Ethics Approach

On The Psychology of Displaying Ethical Leadership

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Over de psychologie achter het vertonen van ethisch leiderschap.
Een gedragsethiek-benadering

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There ain't no sin and there ain't no virtue. There's just stuff people do.

Tom Joad
(John Steinbeck - The Grapes of Wrath)

When the one-ways collude
with the map that you folded wrong,
and the route you abandoned
is always the path that you probably should be upon.
When the bottle-cap ashtrays
and intimate's ears are all full
with results of your breath,
and the threads of your fear are unfurled with the tiniest pull.

One more time, try.
Stand with your hands in your pockets,
and stare at the smudge on a newspaper sky,
and ask it to rain
a new name for everything.

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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

In 2001, a shocking case of accounting fraud made Enron news headlines everywhere. Rather than an anomaly, the Enron scandal proved to be a catalyst. Indeed, ever since Enron, we have seen an abundance of additional ethical scandals in businesses, governments, sports and religious organizations. The consequences of these cases have been devastating. Several organizations went belly-up and many people lost their jobs, houses or life savings, some of them all at the same time. Naturally, people have become cynical about organizations, deeming business ethics an oxymoron or a contradiction in terms (Shaw, 2009). Organizational leaders are particularly scrutinized. They are held responsible, not only for committing unethical acts themselves, but also because of the important role they play in managing the (un)ethical conduct of other organizational members (Trevino & Brown, 2005). It appears that now, more than ever, there is a need for ethical leaders in organizations and society at large.

Given the number of ethical scandals and its consequences, it should come as no surprise that social scientists have increasingly put business ethics and ethical leadership on the forefront of their research agenda (for recent overviews, see Brown & Trevino, 2006; Trevino, Weaver & Reynolds, 2006). An overwhelming majority of the ethical leadership literature has taken a *prescriptive* or *normative* approach, suggesting what leaders *should* do. However, this approach does not help in explaining why leaders sometimes deviate from such moral standards (De Cremer, Van Dijk, & Pillutla, 2010). More recently, there has been a shift towards a more *descriptive* and *predictive* approach of ethical leadership (e.g., Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005; De Cremer, Tenbrunsel & Van Dijke, forthcoming). A central assumption in this so-called *behavioral ethics*

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approach is that unethical behavior is not necessarily the result of bad apples (i.e., bad people doing bad things), but rather of bad barrels (i.e., situational and psychological factors; De Cremer et al., forthcoming). In other words, given the right circumstances, psychological processes can cause most people to engage in unethical behavior (Bazerman & Banaji, 2004). Thus, a behavioral ethics approach to studying ethical leadership should focus on what leaders actually do and on identifying the consequences and antecedents of leader's actions (for recent overviews, see De Cremer, Mayer, Schminke, 2010; De Cremer, Van Dick, Tenbrunsel, Pillutla & Murnighan, 2011; De Cremer & Tenbrunsel, forthcoming; De Cremer et al., forthcoming).

However, research that systematically examines the ethical dimension of leadership is still in its formative years and most of our knowledge comes from research on different, yet conceptually overlapping leadership styles such as transformational leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Furthermore, research on ethical leadership, but also leadership research in general, has focused primarily on the consequences of leader behavior (e.g., Bommer, Rubin & Baldwin, 2004; Scott, Colquitt & Paddock, 2009). The importance of such research of course cannot be overstated, as it has given us a plethora of insights on how leaders influence subordinates, which leader behaviors are effective and which are counterproductive. Still, one highly relevant part of leadership research that seemingly has been neglected by scholars, is to examine and identify the antecedents of ethical leader behaviors. Put differently, little is known about when and why leaders engage in (un)ethical behavior and display ethical leadership behaviors. The purpose of the present dissertation is to address this gap in the literature by examining the antecedents and underlying motives of several leader behaviors that can be placed under the umbrella of ethical leadership.

1.1 WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Ethical leadership has been defined as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (p. 120, Brown et al., 2005). It has been argued that an ethical leadership style directs employees towards goals and objectives which not only benefit the organization and its members, but also benefit other stakeholders and society (Kanungo, 2001). Most studies on ethical leadership related behaviors indeed find positive relationships with employee behaviors, perceptions and emotions. For instance, when employees perceive their leader to be fair and ethical, they perceive their leader as more effective (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008). Likewise, they are more satisfied (Vitell & Davis, 1990) and show more compliance with their leader (Tyler, 1997), as well as more commitment to their organization (Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith & Huo, 1997). Importantly, employees of ethical and fair leaders engage in less unethical behaviors (Trevino, Weaver, Gibson, & Toffler, 1999), more organizational citizenship behaviors (e.g., Niehoff & Moorman, 1993) and are more willing to report problems to management (i.e., whistleblowing; Weaver & Trevino, 1999). Clearly, ethical leaders play a crucial role in stimulating ethical behavior among employees.

1.1.1 How ethical leaders make ethical followers

Leadership involves influence (Yukl, 2002), but how do ethical leaders influence their followers and provide them with ethical guidance? To answer this question, it is important to dig a little bit deeper in what actually characterizes ethical leaders. According to Trevino and her colleagues (2000, 2003), there are

two aspects to ethical leaders. First, they are *moral persons*, who are perceived as fair, honest, trustworthy and as principled decision-makers who care about people and the broader society. Second, ethical leaders are *moral managers*, who take proactive actions to influence the ethical behavior of their subordinates. Such actions for instance include communicating the importance of ethics and values, but also using rewards and discipline to hold subordinates accountable for their actions.

Two theories have been introduced to explain how, by acting in an ethical manner, leaders create ethical followers (Trevino & Brown, 2005). According to *social learning* theory (Bandura, 1977, 1986), people learn and imitate by observing the actions, attitudes and values of attractive and credible role models. Ethical leaders are such attractive role models, because they treat others in a fair, honest and caring way (Brown & Trevino, 2006), and this attractiveness is further enhanced by their power and status (Bandura, 1986). In addition, by practicing what they preach, ethical leaders are also perceived as credible role models (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Thus, for starters, leaders provide ethical guidance by being ethical role models.

In addition, subordinates learn through leader's use of rewards and discipline. Rewards and punishments are highly social salient in organizations and employees will pay close attention to such disciplinary actions of the leader (Arvey & Jones, 1985; Kanfer, 1990; Trevino, 1992; Podsakoff, 1982). Consequently, when an unethical act is punished by a leader, this will send a clear message that such behavior is unacceptable to the punished employee, but also to other organizational members in the organization (Gini, 1998; Trevino et al., 2003). Hence, through direct and through vicarious learning, employees learn what behavior is accepted and what is not in the organization, making it less likely that they will engage in unethical acts in the future. Taken together, *social learning*

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theory suggests that leaders can provide ethical guidance to followers by being attractive, credible role models and by using timely rewards and discipline.

In addition to *social learning* theory, *social exchange* theory (Blau, 1960; Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1958) has also been introduced to explain how ethical leaders influence their followers (Trevino & Brown, 2005). Social exchange processes form an important part of interdependent relations between leaders and followers and in developing and maintaining trusting relations between these two parties (cf. Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard & Werner, 1998). The central idea is that followers follow the norm of reciprocity in social exchange relationships, leading them to voluntarily reciprocate rewards or benefits they have received from their leader. Importantly, these rewards from the leaders are not necessarily monetary, but can also entail for instance respect, gratitude or status (Avolio, 1999; Bass, 1985).

A nice example of the workings of social exchange processes comes from research on fairness, which is an important part of ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005). Followers who feel that they are treated in a fair manner by their leader reciprocate by acting in a positive manner towards their supervisor and organization they work for. For instance, they are more compliant (Lind & Tyler, 1988) and display more cooperative employee behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg., 2002, 2003), and even increased in-role performance (Zapata-Phelan, Colquitt, Scott & Livingston, 2009). In contrast, perceived unfairness can lead to detrimental consequences. Employees who feel unfairly treated have been found to engage in more counterproductive and unethical behaviors, such as retaliation, sabotage and aggression (e.g., Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2001; Greenberg, 1993; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). Thus, through social exchange processes, leaders can positively influence the actions of their followers by engaging in ethical leader behaviors such as fairness and negatively by engaging in unethical behaviors.

Overall, theory and research suggests that by a) being an attractive and credible role model, b) by acting in a fair and caring manner, and c) by using rewards and punishments, leaders provide ethical guidance for their followers and positively influence ethical conduct in organizations (Trevino & Brown, 2005). Ethical leadership thus can (and should) play a crucial role in business and society. Indeed, ethical leadership is nowadays perceived as "the essence of effective leadership" (p. 6, Rhode, 2006). However, given the importance of ethical leadership, it is also important to understand what drives and motivates leaders to engage in ethical leader behaviors.

1.2 AN "ACTOR" PERSPECTIVE TO ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

Leadership deals with influencing and directing followers towards a common goal (e.g., Chemers, 2000). Leadership is one of the most important issues in the social sciences and the literature on the topic is "enormous" (p. 182, Van Vugt, Hogan & Kaiser, 2008). A major part of this literature has dealt with identifying the dispositional, situational and behavioral factors that make leaders effective, giving us many insights in how leaders affect followers. In doing so, leadership research often has taken a *receiver* perspective, by examining how leaders' actions cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally affect followers. A largely understudied part of leadership research remains the empirical examination of antecedents of leaders' actions. Therefore, to gain a more complete and balanced understanding of leadership, it is also important to study leadership from an *actor* perspective (e.g., Bommer, Rubin & Baldwin, 2004; Scott, Colquitt & Paddock, 2009). Put differently, research should also address why and when leaders engage in effective and ineffective behaviors. In the case of ethical leadership, this means examining when leaders show ethical versus unethical behaviors.

In this dissertation, I aim to identify and examine potential antecedents of ethical leadership. Due to the broad scope of the ethical leadership construct, I build the studies and conceptualize ethical leadership as having three important aspects through which leaders provide ethical guidance: by being a role model (Chapter 2), acting fairly (Chapter 3), and by taking proactive actions (i.e., punishments) against unethical followers (Chapters 4 & 5). Moreover, I build my studies around the social psychological notion that leadership concerns interactions between leaders, followers and their environment (e.g., Vroom & Jago, 2007). Specifically, I argue that aspects of the leaders themselves (leader motives and dispositions), aspects of their followers (follower needs, intentions and acts) and aspects of the environment (e.g., accountability) in which leaders operate, interact in determining whether leaders engage in ethical leader behaviors or not.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE PRESENT DISSERTATION

1.3.1 PART I: When do leaders act as a rolemodel? (Chapter 2)

In the first part (and second chapter) of this dissertation, I will address the question of when leaders act as a role model. Specifically, I examine when leaders will go beyond their self-interest and show concern for others. Such self-sacrificial behavior to benefit the group or organization is important, because it contributes to leaders being perceived as attractive and credible role models by their followers (e.g., Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1998, 1999; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; De Cremer, 2002; De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2002). Furthermore, self-sacrificial leaders elicit cooperation and trust among their followers and direct employees to the goals of the organization (De Cremer, 2006; Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005). Taken together, for leaders, self-sacrificial behavior can be

an effective way to model and stimulate positive and ethical behaviors among their followers.

In Chapter 2, I propose that power and belonging are two important leader motives in determining whether leaders engage in self-sacrificial behavior. Both motives seem theoretically and practically relevant in relation to self-sacrifice. First of all, leaders are group members in the groups they lead and feeling included is one of the main concerns within groups (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Furthermore, research has shown that when they feel included, people are more willing to engage in cooperative, prosocial behaviors (e.g., De Cremer, 2002; Twenge et al., 2007). Building on such findings, I expect that leaders might be more willing to engage in self-sacrifice (i.e., risky and costly behavior that others benefit from) when they feel included rather than excluded.

At the same time, leaders take an unique position in groups, because they control resources and make decisions that concern others (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Turner, 2005). Thus, experienced power also likely plays an important role in leader's actions. However, the findings on the effects of experienced power (i.e., sense of power) are mixed, showing both positive and negative implications. So, how does subjective sense of power moderate the relationship between sense of belonging and leader self-sacrifice? Following recent studies that have shown that power makes leader more directed to the goals of the organization (e.g. Guinote, 2007; Overbeck & Park, 2006), I argue that sense of power might function as a substitute for sense of belonging. That is, leaders high in sense of power might already be motivated to self-sacrifice. In contrast, leaders low in sense of power are likely more affected by situational constraints (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2008). The findings in Chapter 2 support this reasoning: leaders engage in more self-sacrificial behavior when they feel included but this is particularly the case for leaders who are low in sense of power. In

contrast, leaders high in sense of power self-sacrifice regardless of whether they feel included.

1.3.2 PART II: When do leaders act in a fair manner? (Chapter 3)

In the second part and third chapter of this dissertation, I focus on when leaders treat employees in a fair manner. Like self-sacrifice, acting fairly is important because it contributes to leaders being perceived as attractive and credible role models (Trevino & Brown, 2005). Furthermore, perceptions of fairness lead to support for and compliance with the leader (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Most importantly, fairness is seen as an important component of ethical leadership (Brown et al., 2005) and it has been found that fair leaders are perceived as being more ethical than unfair leaders (Trevino et al., 2000, 2003).

Chapter 3 aims to answer the question of when leaders enact fair procedures. There is ample evidence for the importance of procedural fairness (i.e., the fairness of procedures used to allocate outcomes and make decisions; Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975), as it provides many positive outcomes for organizations and society (see De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Greenberg & Colquitt, 2005; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002 for overviews). Such research has shown that followers care about fairness because it serves two important psychological needs. That is, a procedurally fair treatment by authorities is found to serve peoples need for control and need to belong (e.g., Cropanzano, Bobocel & Rupp, 2001). In Chapter 3, I take a reversed perspective on research that has identified these two needs, by examining whether leaders take these needs into account in their enactment of fair procedures. In line with past leadership research (e.g., Hollander, 1980, 1992), I argue that leaders are motivated to balance the needs of their followers with what is in the best interest for the organization. As a consequence, leaders might be willing to give control (i.e., grant voice) to

followers who desire this (i.e., have a high control need), but only to followers who leaders believe also have a strong desire to contribute and be a part of the organization (i.e., have a high need to belong). The findings in this chapter show that leaders in fact do so: they are more fair (i.e., grant more voice) when interacting with a follower with a high control and high belongingness need rather that when one or both of these needs were low.

1.3.3 PART III: When do leader use punishments in regulating unethical follower acts? (Chapters 4 & 5)

In the third and final part of the dissertation, I will examine factors that influence whether leaders take proactive and disciplinary action when confronted with unethical followers. As discussed before, showing disapproval of and taking disciplinary actions against unethical followers is important because it communicates to all employees what behavior is accepted in organizations and what behavior is not. This arguably makes it less likely that followers and their co-workers engage in similar unethical acts in the future (Chonko and Hunt, 1985). In contrast, when leaders condone unethical behavior among their followers, unethical behavior will likely prevail or even increase in the organization (Offerman, 2004).

In Chapter 4, I focus on the issue of whether leaders show disapproval of unethical follower behavior (UFB) when they personally benefit from such follower behavior. In such situations, leaders face a conflict of interest between doing the morally right thing (i.e., show disapproval) and doing what is best for their personal interest (i.e., condoning UFB and profit from it). In Chapter 4, I examine whether holding leaders accountable (i.e., introducing the possibility that leaders have to justify their actions to others) motivates leaders to show disapproval of UFB. I predict and find that this effect of accountability is inhibited

when leaders personally benefit from UFB. Interestingly, I also find that followers correctly predict when leaders will condone UFB, which implies that followers might particularly engage in UFB in those situations in which they most likely can get away with it.

In Chapter 5, I go one step further by examining when leaders take actual disciplinary actions rather than showing disapproval when dealing with UFB. Following attribution theory, I argue that the cause of UFB might be an important determinant of leaders' disciplinary use. That is, unethical behavior can be caused by a competence violation (e.g., a lack of understanding of the rules), but also by an integrity violation (e.g., intentionally for personal gain) of the follower. Research on these two dimensions has shown that, to observers, integrity violations are more diagnostic of ones character than competence violations (Reeder & Brewer, 1979; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987, 1989). Hence, integrity violations might be weighed more strongly by leaders as they signal that their follower might engage in unethical behavior in the future. At the same time, leaders may vary in the extent to which they probe situations in terms of morality and the importance they assign to morality. Indeed, moral values will be more central to the identity of some leaders than others (i.e., moral identity; Aquino & Reed, 2002; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). Moreover, those leaders with a high moral identity are likely motivated to act in a manner consistent with their idea of being a moral person (cf. Aquino & Freeman, 2009; Blasi, 1983; Damon & Hart, 1992; Hardy & Carlo, 2005). Therefore, I predict and find that leaders take harsher disciplinary actions against integrity violations compared to competence violations, but this is only the case for leaders with a strong moral identity.

Overall, in this dissertation, I will present and discuss research in which I introduce and examine potential antecedents of ethical leadership. In the empirical Chapters 2 through 5, I will provide findings that show that aspects of the leaders

themselves (e.g., leader motives and individual characteristics), aspects of their followers (follower needs, intentions and acts) and aspects of the environment in which leaders operate (e.g., accountability), interact in determining whether leaders engage in ethical leader behaviors or not. Finally, Chapter 6 will provide a summary and discussion of the results, implications and suggestions for future research.

To conclude this introductory chapter, I would like to note that Chapters 2 through 5 are submitted or published as separate manuscripts for publication. Each chapter can therefore be read independently of the other chapters. At the same time, the attentive reader might also notice similarities and overlap between the chapters in the dissertation.

CHAPTER 2

WHEN LEADERS SACRIFICE: THE EFFECTS OF SENSE OF POWER AND BELONGINGNESS ON LEADER SELF-SACRIFICE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Research on leadership has taught us that leaders who act as role models and contribute to the welfare of their group or collective motivate and inspire their subordinates to do so as well (Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Hogan & Kaiser, 2005; Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002). One effective way in which leaders motivate and inspire their followers is by going beyond their self-interest and taking on personal costs to benefit their group or organization (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Shamir, House & Arthur, 1993). Indeed, leaders engaging in self-sacrificial behavior are considered more charismatic, effective, and legitimate by their followers than self-benefiting leaders (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999; De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004; Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005; Yorges, Weiss & Strickland, 1999). Consequently, self-sacrificial leaders elicit more positive affect, trust, cooperation, and improved performance among their followers (De Cremer, 2006; Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005). However, despite the fact that self-sacrifice is clearly an important type of leader behavior, past research has failed to account for the antecedents of leader self-sacrifice. In other words, an important question that the literature on leader self-sacrifice to date has failed to address is what makes leaders actually engage in this influential type of behavior?

Leader self-sacrifice has been defined as the abandonment or postponement of personal interests, privileges, or welfare in the division of labor, distribution of rewards, and exercise of power (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999). Such sacrifice can be partial or total and also temporary or permanent (Choi & Mai-

Dalton, 1998). In the present research, we argue that leaders' sense of belongingness (i.e., feeling socially included in their team) and a leaders' sense of power (i.e., the belief that (s)he can influence others) are important antecedents of a leaders' self-sacrifice. We derive these antecedents from the observation that a crucial characteristic of leaders is that they take a lateral (i.e., within) as well as a vertical (i.e., hierarchical) position in the groups they lead (cf. Van Vugt, Hogan & Kaiser, 2008). As such, these two antecedents are relevant from a theoretical as well as a practical point of view, because leaders are at the same time (a) group members who are susceptible to the same concerns as other group members are, perhaps most importantly the concern of feeling included (De Cremer, Van Dijke, Brebels & Hoogervorst, 2008; Van Dijke & De Cremer, 2010; Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003), and (b) unique persons, as they are able to exert disproportionate influence and power over other members of the social collective (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Turner, 2005).

Following recent insights from both the belongingness and power literatures, we argue that leaders who experience a high sense of belongingness feel more alignment with the interests of their group or team and will be more motivated to take on personal costs to benefit their group (i.e. self-sacrifice) than leaders with a low sense of belongingness. Furthermore, we advance the hypothesis that leaders' sense of power interacts with their sense of belongingness because leaders with a high sense of power are likely to be motivated to engage in behaviors that contribute to their group or organization, regardless of their level of belongingness. More specifically, in the present paper, we aim to test the idea that feeling powerful substitutes for (and thus interacts with) feeling included in the sense that when leaders feel either powerful or included (or both), they are expected to be motivated to engage in self-sacrificial behavior.

2.1.1 Leader self-sacrifice and sense of belongingness

Arguably the most important human concern within groups and organizations is experiencing a sense of belongingness (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; De Cremer & Blader, 2006; Hornsey & Jetten, 2004; Thau, Aquino & Poortvliet, 2007). Indeed, people are attuned to how others socially evaluate them and when people feel that they belong to a group they are likely to display positive behavior towards this group (De Cremer, 2002; Leary & Baumeister, 2000; Patrick, Knee, Canavello & Lonsbary, 2007). This positive behavior appears to be driven by social exchange processes: people who feel included believe that positive behavior will be returned in the long term, whereas people who feel excluded are afraid they will be taken advantage of (Twenge, Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco & Bartels, 2007). Because leaders are group members who are especially subject to the social evaluations of their followers (Hallet, Harger & Eder, 2009; cf. Meindl, 1995), they are likely to care about feeling included in the group they lead. Consequently, it stands to reason that their willingness to engage in self-sacrifice, which is a unique behavior to promote group welfare as it entails personal costs or risks, will be influenced by the extent to which they feel included. Thus, when group members act in ways that indicate acceptance of their leader, this leader should feel more alignment with the interests of his/her group and be more motivated to take on personal costs or risk to promote the interests of the group and its members.

Several studies provide evidence for a strong correlation between feeling socially accepted and acting in a prosocial manner (e.g., Parkhurst & Asher, 1992; Schonert-Reichl, 1999). Twenge et al. (2007) for instance showed in a series of experimental studies that people who feel excluded (i.e., operationalized as being predicted a lonely future or being rejected by their peers) consequentially act less prosocially, by being less cooperative in a mixed-motive game or donating less to

a worthy cause. It is important to note, however, that the behaviors measured in these past studies were usually not directed at the target(s) of social inclusion or exclusion and that these studies thus only provide *indirect* support for the idea that social inclusion elicits self-sacrificing behavior towards the source of the inclusion (i.e., fellow group members). In fact, we know of only one study that focused on behavior that is directed at the target of social inclusion, by showing that people who feel included in their group contribute more to a public good than people who feel socially excluded (De Cremer, 2002). Furthermore, prior work usually did not focus on prosocial acts that can be regarded as self-sacrificial behavior (i.e., behavior that is costly and/or risky). Despite these limitations, these studies do suggest that social inclusion or exclusion affects people's willingness to engage in behaviors that can benefit the greater good.

Although prior research did not apply these insights on the effects of social inclusion on prosocial behaviors to leaders in general or to self-sacrificial behavior in organizations (i.e., leader behaviors that are risky and costly), it follows that social information communicating a sense of belongingness should also affect group members, including those in leader positions (Bradford, 1976). Therefore, we expect that leader self-sacrifice is more likely to emerge if the others in the group (i.e., followers) communicate information that indicates social acceptance of the leader rather than social rejection.

However, it is also necessary to point out that a leader's self-sacrifice may not only be facilitated by leaders' perceptions of how they are evaluated socially by others in the group. Specifically, leaders who feel powerful might also be motivated to engage in behaviors that benefit the organization, such as self-sacrifice. Moreover, feeling powerful and feeling included may substitute for (and thus interact with) each other in the sense that when either one or both are high, leaders can be expected to be motivated to engage in self-sacrificial behavior.

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Below, following recent insights from the power literature, we develop this argument.

2.1.2 Sense of power as a substitute for sense of belongingness

Although leaders generally have more power than employees at lower levels, leaders vary in how powerful they perceive themselves to be (cf. Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Magee, Gruenfeld, Keltner & Galinsky, 2005). In other words, some leaders will have a higher subjective sense of power than others. The extensive amount of research and literature on the subject has shown that power affects behavior, perception, attention and other domains of human life (e.g. see Guinote, 2007a; Keltner et al., 2003 for overviews). Traditionally, research has often focused on the potential corrupting influence of power. Examples include, but are not limited to inflated self-perception (Georgesen & Harris, 1998), increased stereotyping (Fiske, 1993) and proneness to sexual harassment (Bargh, Raymond, Pryor & Strack, 1995). Conversely, other work has suggested that power promotes selfless behavior and thus leads people to contribute more to the organization (Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Willer, 2009).

Recent work shows that power should in itself not be considered as a variable that makes people behave in selfish or cooperative ways, but that it improves people's capacity to respond to the goals in the situation (e.g., Galinsky, Gruenfeld & Magee, 2003; Overbeck & Park, 2006; Guinote, 2008). Powerful individuals have thus been shown to be more goal-oriented (e.g. Guinote, 2007b; Overbeck & Park, 2006), and this, dependent on the goals present in the situation, makes powerful people act more selfish or more prosocially than less powerful people (Galinsky et al., 2003). In the present study we follow these recent insights in the power literature and propose that feeling powerful (i.e., having a high sense of power) facilitates positive leadership behaviors such as self-sacrifice because a

high sense of power facilitates a focus and motivation to act in ways that serve the interests and contribute to the group or organization (Overbeck & Park, 2001, 2006), which can be seen as an indispensable part of the leader role (Hogan & Kaiser, 2005).

Furthermore, because of this focus on the goals of the collective, leaders with a high sense of power disregard information that is less directly related to these goals (Guinote, 2007c). This implies that leader's sense of belongingness will matter less to those leaders who feel powerful when the opportunity arises to engage in self-sacrificial behavior. Leaders with a low sense of power, on the other hand, who are less effective in focusing on the organization's goals (Overbeck & Park, 2006) and are thus affected more by information that is less relevant to achieve these goals, can be expected to focus on belongingness information to determine whether they will engage in risky and/or costly behaviors for the benefit of the group. In other words, we predict that a high sense of power can substitute for a high sense of belongingness in leaders, because leaders will engage in self-sacrifice when they either have a high sense of power or a high sense of belongingness, or both.

Some recent research findings in the power literature provide supportive evidence for the idea that leaders' sense of power might act as a substitute for the effect of leaders' sense of belongingness on leaders' self-sacrifice. As noted, individuals high in sense of power have been shown to engage in more goal-directed behavior (Chen, Lee-Chai & Bargh, 2001; Guinote; 2007a, 2007b, 2007c; Smith & Trope, 2006; Smith, Jostmann, Galinsky, & Van Dijk, 2008), and this includes doing the task that one's role requires one to do (Overbeck & Park, 2006) and contributing to the collective (Galinsky et al., 2003). Indeed, those with a high sense of power can be seen as dealing more with the instrumentally oriented aspects of one's position (Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee & Galinsky, 2008) and in doing so are better in resisting situational influences (Galinsky, Magee, Gruenfeld,

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Whitson, & Liljenquist, 2008; Overbeck, Tiedens & Brion, 2006). Overall, those with a high sense of power can thus be seen as focusing more on the bigger picture (Smith & Trope, 2006) and dealing more with the role requirements of one's position (Overbeck & Park, 2006). Therefore, when given the opportunity, leaders with a high sense of power are expected to engage in behaviors that serve their group's or organization's welfare, such as self-sacrifice, regardless of the situation (i.e., their belongingness to the group). In contrast, those individuals low in sense of power are found to be more sensitive to evaluations and external constraints (Fiske, 1993; Steele & Aronson, 1995) and more affected by social pressures (Galinsky et al., 2008) and information that is less relevant to achieving the organization's goals (Guinote, 2007c; Overbeck & Park, 2006). This would imply that leaders with a low sense of power should be particularly affected by information about their belongingness in the group.

Taken together, our review of the literature suggests that those leaders with a high sense of power are likely to engage in behaviors that serve the organization's interest, such as self-sacrificial behavior. Following this reasoning, sense of power could act as a substitute of the facilitating effect of sense of belongingness on the willingness to engage in self-sacrifice. In other words, leaders who have a high sense of power, contrary to leaders with a low sense of power, might not need a strong sense of belongingness to engage in self-sacrificial behavior.

Building on these insights we formulate the hypothesis that sense of belongingness and sense of power will interact in predicting leader self-sacrifice. When leaders are low in sense of power, there will be a positive relation between sense of belongingness and leader self-sacrifice, whereas this relationship will be attenuated when leaders are high in sense of power.

2.1.3 The present research

We examined our hypotheses in three studies. The purpose of Study 2.1 was to provide evidence for causality, by testing in a laboratory experiment whether a leader's sense of belongingness positively affects a leader's self-sacrifice and whether sense of power acts as a substitute for this facilitating effect on leader self-sacrifice. Subsequently, we further explored our predictions in actual organizational settings in which we measured our constructs of interest. We relied on leaders as the source for all measures in Study 2.2. In Study 2.3, we used a multisource approach such that leaders assessed our independent variables (i.e., sense of power and sense of belongingness) and subordinates assessed leader self-sacrifice.

2.2 STUDY 2.1

2.2.1 Method

Participants and design. Ninety-eight undergraduate students at a Dutch university (36 males, 62 females, $M_{age} = 20.39$ $SD = 1.90$) participated voluntarily in the study, in exchange for EURO 7 ($10). Participants were randomly assigned to a 2 (sense of power: low vs. high) x 2 (sense of belongingness: low vs. high) between-subjects design.

Procedure. Participants sat in adjacent yet soundproof cubicles, in which they worked on the experiment using a computer. We explained that they would take part in a six-person group brainstorming task on how to improve facilities at their university. Participants were assigned to either the role of group leader or regular group member based on a questionnaire they had answered at the start of the experiment, which ostensibly measured leadership skills. In reality, every

participant was assigned to the leader position and was thus led to believe that he or she would be the leader of a group of five others who – after the leader was appointed – allegedly were seated together in a nearby classroom by a lab assistant.

Subsequently, the leader performed two tasks to establish a relationship between the leader and the followers. This was important because at a later stage we manipulated the leader's sense of belongingness in the group. The first task of the leader was to choose and distribute some tasks to his or her followers. As a second task, the leader introduced him-/herself to the group by answering some questions about his/her personal life and ideas about working together in a group. Ostensibly, these answers would be communicated to the group.

Then, we introduced the leader's *sense of power manipulation* using a priming procedure developed by Galinsky et al. (2003). Specifically, half of the leaders had to recall and write down a situation in which they had experienced power over another person or persons (inducing a high sense of power) while the other half had to write about a situation in which they had experienced the power of others over themselves (inducing a low sense of power). This power prime is the most commonly used manipulation of sense of power and has proven to be very effective (e.g., Anderson & Galinsky, 2006; Galinsky et al., 2003; Guinote; 2007b, 2007c; Smith & Trope, 2006; Smith, Dijksterhuis & Wigboldus, 2008).

Thereafter, the leader was required to listen to the group discussing the task for about a minute via a microphone that was secretly placed in the room where the other group members allegedly had gathered. At this point, the *belongingness manipulation* was introduced as the leader overheard the group gossiping either positively (inducing a high sense of belongingness) or negatively (inducing a low sense of belongingness) about him/herself. Gossip is an important social force within groups and organizations (Kurland & Pelled, 2000) and is a potential mechanism through which leaders become aware of how they are

evaluated socially by their followers (Hallet, Harger & Eder, 2009). The group gossip used here was in fact a scripted group conversation pre-recorded with the help of semi-professional actors. Inspired by the extensive literature on social inclusion, we identified three important aspects of belongingness, namely feeling liked, accepted, and respected (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995; De Cremer, 2002, Leary, 2001). For each of these aspects we included sentences in the dialogue, for instance "...(does not) seem(s) like a nice person" [liking], "I (do not) appreciate the leader's contribution" [respect], "I can (not) understand why this person is appointed leader" [acceptance]. A manipulation check confirmed that all participants overheard the group conversation.

Next, as an introduction to the dependent measures, we told the leader there would be an extra assignment for which the group would be rewarded with a financial bonus. However, s/he was also told, this assignment (i.e., presenting the results) was designed for groups of only four people. Hence, the leader had to decide which two group members had to leave. We then asked whether the leader was willing to give up part of his/her own financial bonus to benefit these two group members. Subsequently, the leader learned that the task might not be finished in time and we asked whether the leader was willing to invest his/her -own time to help out the group. Finally, we thanked, debriefed, and paid the participants.

2.2.2 Results

Participants responded to all measures on a seven-point Likert-scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*; 7 = *Strongly agree*).

Manipulation checks. A 2 (power) x 2 (belongingness) ANOVA on perceived power (two items, α = .85, "I think I had a great deal of power in this situation", "I could get others to do what I wanted in this situation") revealed a

significant main effect of power, $F(1,94) = 165.88$, $p < .001$, showing that participants in the high sense of power condition felt more powerful than participants in the low sense of power condition ($Ms = 5.30$ vs 2.41, $SDs = 1.09$ and 1.09 respectively). Neither the main effect of belongingness, $F(1,94) < 1$, ns, nor the interaction, $F(1,94) < 1$, ns was significant.

In addition, two independent judges blind to the conditions rated the essays of the participants on power. The ratings of the judges ($\alpha = .90$) were combined into a power scale for further analyses. The participants in the high power condition were judged to have more power ($M = 4.97$, $SD = .93$) in their described situation than participants in the low power condition ($M = 2.51$, $SD = .70$), $F(1,94) = 209.83$, $p < .001$. Neither a main effect for belongingness $F(1,94) < 1$, ns, nor an interaction effect was found $F(1,94) < 1$, ns.

Our belongingness manipulation check consisted of four items ($\alpha = .97$) based on the work of Baumeister and Leary (1995), De Cremer (2002) and Leary (2001, p. 4), which assessed to what extent participants felt "accepted", "respected", and "liked" by the group and "connected" to the group. A two-way ANOVA revealed that participants in the high belongingness condition experienced higher belongingness ($M = 5.71$, $SD = .93$) to the group than participants in the low belongingness condition ($M = 2.04$, $SD = .84$), $F(1,94) = 406.77$, $p < .001$. Neither the main effect of power, $F(1,94) = 1.32$, $p > .25$ nor the interaction, $F(1,94) < 1$, ns, was significant. In sum, both the power and belongingness manipulation were successfully and independently induced.

Self-sacrifice. We measured self-sacrifice with two items inspired by the work of Choi and Mai-Dalton (1998, 1999) and Conger and Kanungo (1998) (i.e., "Will you … give up your own financial bonus?" and "…invest your own time."), which were combined into an average self-sacrifice scale ($r = .34$, $p < .001$) for further analyses. The mean scores and standard deviations of leader's self-sacrifice are reported in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Leader's Self-Sacrifice by Sense of Power and Sense of Belongingness Condition (Study 2.1)

	Low Sense of Power		High Sense of Power	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Low Sense of Belongingness	3.36	1.06	4.00	1.48
High Sense of Belongingness	4.07	.97	3.91	1.22

N = 98

A two-way ANOVA revealed no main effect of power, $F(1,94) < 1$, *ns*, or belongingness, $F(1,94) = 1.54$, $p = .22$. However, as predicted, a significant interaction was found, $F(1,94) = 4.08$, $p < .05$, $f = .18$, see Figure 2.1. Simple effects tests revealed a significant effect of sense of belongingness, but only in the low sense of power condition $F(1,94) = 4.16$, $p < .05$, and not in the high sense of power condition $F(1,94) < 1$, *ns*. Participants who received positive belongingness information were thus more willing to engage in self-sacrificial behavior than participants who received negative belongingness information, but only when they were low in sense of power.

Figure 2.1: Interaction between Leader's Sense of Power and Leader's Sense of Belongingness on Leader Self-Sacrifice (Study 2.1)
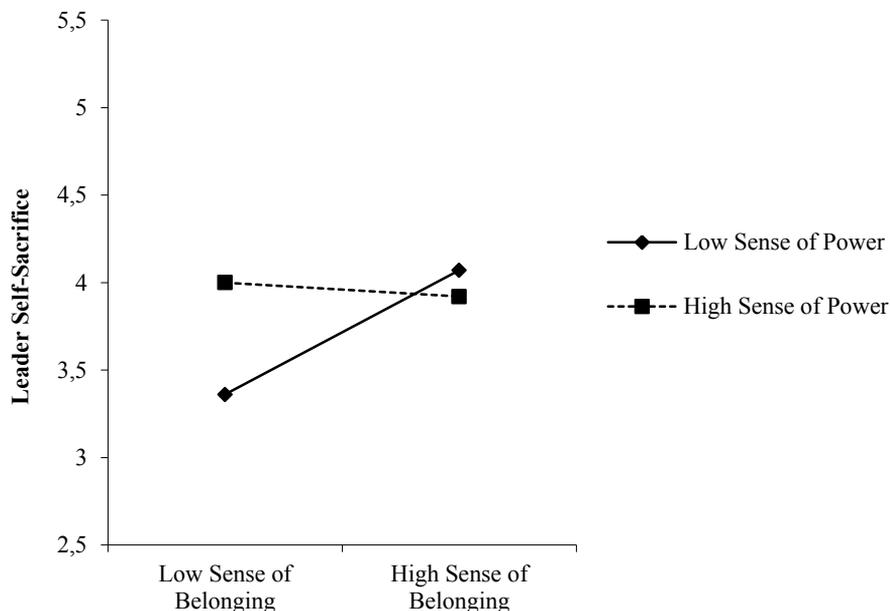
2.2.3 Discussion

The results of Study 2.1 show that belongingness information (inducing high or low sense of belongingness) from followers positively affected leader's self-sacrifice, but only among leaders with a low sense of power. This is consistent with our hypothesis that sense of power might act as a substitute for sense of belongingness. Leader with a high sense of power appear to engage in self-sacrificial behavior regardless of their sense of belongingness. To our knowledge, Study 2.1 provides the first empirical support that sense of belongingness and sense of power are antecedents of leader self-sacrifice.

Although prior research has demonstrated the value of lab experiments, providing us with findings high in internal validity (De Cremer & Van

Knippenberg, 2002, 2004), a possible limitation of our experimental design concerns the fact that leaders had neither actual face-to-face contact with their followers nor a shared history or the prospect of future interaction and cooperation with these followers. Another concern might be that the power prime manipulation we used in Study 2.1 induced a general sense of power, whereas in our theoretical rationale we focus on leader's sense of power in the organization, by arguing that feeling powerful facilitates behavior that contributes to the organization's goals and interest. Therefore, we conducted a second study to address these concerns by testing our predictions in an actual work environment. In this second study, we measured leader's sense of power in the organization, rather than leader's general sense of power.

2.3 STUDY 2.2

2.3.1 Method

Sample and procedure. Participants were 411 organizational supervisors (51.1% male, 48.9% female, *M*age = 42.65 *SD* = 10.93) from a variety of Dutch organizations. For their participation, they received credit points they could trade in for certain gifts (i.e., a ticket for the movies). The respondents worked an average of 34.82 hours each week (*SD* = 9.00), had been in a supervisor position for an average of 6.91 years (*SD* = 6.85) and supervised an average of 3.32 (*SD* = 2.16) employees. Finally, 21.1 % worked for the government, 74.9% worked for non-governmental organizations, and 4% worked as temporary employees.

Measures. All responses were given on a five-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*).

We measured leader's *sense of belongingness* using a five-item scale (*α* = .88) of which four items were also used in Study 2.1 as a check of our

belongingness manipulation. Examples of items are "I feel accepted by my employees" and "I feel like I am part of the group." We assessed leader's *sense of power* with the situational version of Anderson, John & Keltner's (2005, validated by Anderson & Galinsky, 2006) eight-item sense of power scale (α = .88).

Finally, we measured leader's *self-sacrifice* with three items (α = .76) inspired by the work of Conger and Kanungo (1998), Choi and Mai-Dalton (1998, 1999), and partly taken from Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg (2005, Study 3). Items included "I am willing to make personal sacrifices for the benefit of the team," "I am prepared to defend the interests of my team members, even if this does not serve my own interests," and "In hard times, team members can count on me, even if this does not serve my own interests."

2.3.2 Results

We calculated the main and interaction effects of leader's sense of power and sense of belongingness on leader's willingness to engage in self-sacrificial behavior to use in hierarchical regression procedures. Following Aiken and West (1991), we centered leader's sense of belongingness and leader's sense of power (by subtracting the means) prior to the analyses and we based the interaction term on these centered scores. The results are reported in Table 2.2 and 2.3.

Table 2.2: Means, Standard Deviations and Intercorrelations of Leader's Self-Sacrifice, Leader's Sense of Power and Leader's Sense of Belongingness (Study 2.2)

	M	*SD*	1	2	3
1. Leader's self-sacrifice	3.66	.64	-		
2. Leader's sense of power	3.27	.66	.38***	-	
3. Leader's sense of belongingness	4.02	.53	.48***	.34***	-

$N = 411$. *** $p < .001$.

Leader's sense of power and leader's sense of belongingness were positively related to leader self-sacrifice, $\beta = .25$, $p < .001$, $f^2 = .15$ and $\beta = .37$, $p < .001$, $f^2 = .29$ respectively. Furthermore, we found a significant interaction effect between leader's sense of power and leader's sense of belongingness, $\beta = -.09$, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .03$. A simple slopes analysis (Aiken & West, 1991; see Figure 2.2) revealed that, as expected, leader's sense of belongingness was significantly more positively related to leader's self-sacrifice when the leader's sense of power was low (1 *SD* below the mean; $\beta = .45$, $p < .001$) than when leader's sense of power was high (1 *SD* above the mean; $\beta = .29$, $p < .001$).

Table 2.3: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Leader's Self-Sacrifice on Leader's Sense of Power and Leader's Sense of Belongingness (Study 2.2)

	β	R^2	$Adj\ R^2$	R^2_{change}	df
Step 1		.28	.28	.28	2, 408
Leader's sense of power	.25***				
Leader's sense of belongingness	.39***				
Step 2		.29	.28	.01	1, 407
Leader's sense of power	.25***				
Leader's sense of belongingness	.37***				
Leader's sense of power x Leader's sense of belongingness	-.09*				

* $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 2.2.: Interaction between Leader's Sense of Power and Leader's Sense of Belongingness on Leader Self-Sacrifice (Study 2.2)
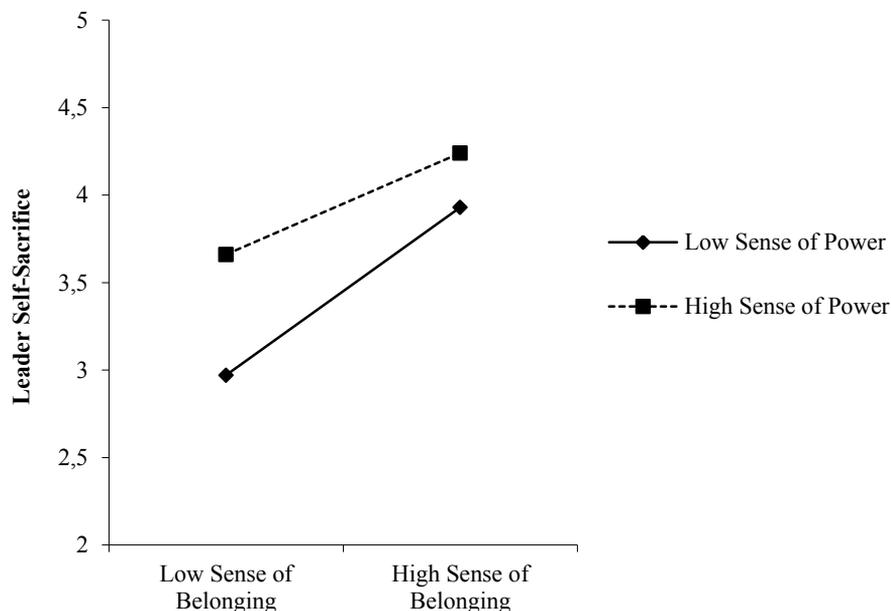
2.3.3 Discussion

Study 2.2 revealed support for our idea that sense of power functions as a substitute of sense of belongingness in an actual work environment: Leader self-sacrifice was positively affected by leader's sense of belongingness, but particularly so when the leader was low in sense of power. By replicating the interaction effect as found in our lab study (Study 2.1) in this field study, we provide findings that are high in both internal and external validity. However, a possible limitation of Study 2.2 is that our measurement of leader's self-sacrifice was based upon self-report ratings, leaving room for socially desirable or self-serving answers (e.g., Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002; Moorman & Podsakoff, 1992). Therefore, we conducted a third study, of which the purpose was twofold.

The first goal was to replicate the findings of Studies 2.1 and 2.2 using a different measure of leader self-sacrifice, as the use of constructive replication has been argued to strengthen the validity of findings (Lykken, 1968). A second goal of Study 2.3 was to provide a more objective measure of leader self-sacrifice, one that is not based upon leaders' self-report ratings. Therefore, Study 3 had a multisource design, in which leader's sense of power and sense of belongingness were based upon self-report ratings of the leader. This time, however, we assessed leader self-sacrifice using follower ratings (i.e., a multisource design).

2.4 STUDY 2.3

2.4.1 Method

Sample and procedure. We invited 402 undergraduate business students from a university in the southeastern United States to take part in the study and 177 participated (for a response rate of 44%). To avoid same source bias concerns, we used a snowballing method whereby undergraduate students working at least 20 hours a week served as the subordinate, or could choose another working adult (i.e., friend, relative, colleague) to serve as the subordinate. The subordinate asked his/her supervisor to also participate in the study (e.g., see also De Cremer, Mayer, Van Dijke, Schouten, & Bardes, 2009; Lee & Allen, 2002; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). We administered the subordinate and supervisor surveys online and gave each respondent a unique identification number to ensure anonymity and to make sure we could match the subordinate and supervisor data. We took a number of steps to ensure that the surveys were completed by the correct sources. First, in introducing the study, we emphasized the importance of integrity in the scientific process. We told the students that it was essential for the focal and coworker respondents to fill out the correct surveys. Second, when participants submitted

their on-line surveys, time stamps and IP addresses were recorded to ensure that the employee and supervisor surveys were submitted at different times and with different IP addresses. We found no irregularities in the responses.

A total of 334 individuals (177 subordinates and 157 supervisors) participated in the study. We could only include data of respondents who had matching supervisor data, which resulted in 148 matched leader-follower dyads (i.e., subordinate-supervisor dyads). The subordinates (48.3% female) were an average of 24.8 years old. As for their ethnic background, 5.4% were African American, 3.4% Asian American, 67.6% Caucasian, 13.5% Hispanic, 2.7% Latino, 0.7% Native American, 2% Biracial, and 4.7% of the respondents listed "other". They worked an average of 3.5 years in the organization and 43.9% worked full-time.

The average age of the supervisors (41.5 % female) was 38.9 years old and 7.6% were African American, 0.7% Asian American, 75.9% Caucasian, 6.9% Hispanic, 4.8% Latino, 0.7% Native American, 1.4% Biracial, and 2% of the participants listed "other." The supervisors worked an average of 8.5 years in the organization and 97.9% worked full-time.

The supervisor filled out measures of his/her sense of power and sense of belongingness. The subordinate reported on leader self-sacrifice.

Measures. All responses were given on a seven-point scale (1= "Strongly disagree", 7= "Strongly agree").

Leader's sense of power was assessed with the same version of Anderson et al.'s (2005, validated by Anderson & Galinsky, 2006) eight-item sense of power scale that we used in Study 2.2 (α = .83).

Leader's sense of belongingness was assessed with a four-item scale (α = .61) inspired by the work of Baumeister and Leary (1995). Examples of items are "I do not feel part of my team" (reversed) and "I feel like I belong to my team."

Leader self-sacrifice was assessed with two items ($r = .52$, $p < .01$) inspired by the work of Conger and Kanungo (1998) and Choi and Mai-Dalton (1998, 1999). These items were "My supervisor is not willing to give up privileges if the team needs this" and "My supervisor is not willing to take on extra work to help a team member, if this means that he/she has to stay longer than usual." We reverse coded both items for interpretation and to facilitate comparison between the studies.

2.4.2 Results

The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations between the study variables are displayed in Table 2.4. We tested the hypotheses using the same hierarchical regression procedures as in Study 2.2. The regression results are shown in Table 2.5.

Table 2.4: Means, Standard Deviations and Intercorrelations of Leader's Self-Sacrifice, Leader's Sense of Power and Leader's Sense of Belongingness (Study 2.3)

	M	*SD*	1	2	3
1. Leader self-sacrifice	4.82	1.53			
2. Leader's sense of power	5.17	1.12	.33***		
3. Leader's sense of belongingness	5.70	.99	.35***	.57***	

Note. Higher scores indicate higher leader self-sacrifice, etc.

$N = 148$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 2.5: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Leader's Self-Sacrifice on Leader's Sense of Power and Leader's Sense of Belongingness (Study 2.3)

	β	R^2	Adj R^2	R^2_{change}	df
Step 1		.15	.14	.15	2, 142
Leader's sense of power	.20*				
Leader's sense of belongingness	.23*				
Step 2		.17	.15	.02	1, 141
Leader's sense of power	.21*				
Leader's sense of belongingness	.22*				
Leader's sense of belongingness x Leader's sense of belongingness	-.16*				

* $p < .05$

The analyses showed that both leader's sense of power ($\beta = .20$, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .12$) and leader's sense of belongingness ($\beta = .23$, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .14$) were positively related to leader self-sacrifice. Furthermore, we found a significant interaction between leader's sense of power and leader's sense of belongingness, $\beta = -.16$, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .03$, see Figure 2.3. Simple slopes analyses (Aiken and West, 1991) revealed that, as expected, when leader's sense of power was low (1 *SD* below the mean), leader's sense of belongingness was positively related to leader's self-sacrifice, $\beta = .39$, $p < .01$. On the other hand, when leader's sense of power was high (1 *SD* above the mean), the relationship between leader's sense of belongingness and leader self-sacrifice was non-significant, $\beta = .06$, $p = .65$.

Figure 2.3: Interaction between Leader's Sense of Power and Leader's Sense of Belongingness on Leader Self-Sacrifice (Study 2.3)
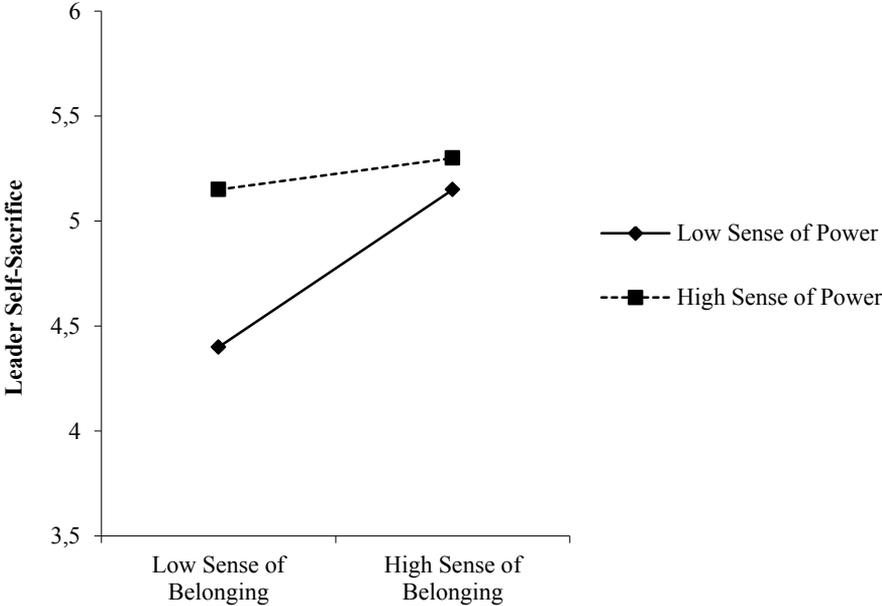
2.4.3 Summary

Study 2.3 revealed that the predicted interaction effect is also found when followers (i.e., subordinates) rate their leaders' self-sacrificial behavior. Followers found their supervisors to be more self-sacrificial when these leaders felt socially included, but only when those leaders felt low in sense of power. The self-sacrificial behavior of leaders with a high sense of power was not predicted by their sense of belongingness, which provides additional support for our assumption that sense of power functions as a substitute of sense of belongingness with regard to leader self-sacrifice.

2.5 GENERAL DISCUSSION

An extraordinary way in which leaders can contribute to their group or organization is by engaging in self-sacrificial behavior. Indeed, when leaders engage in such personally risky or costly behavior, they positively influence perceptions and actions of their subordinates and direct these subordinates towards the goals of the organization (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Shamir et al., 1993). Rather than focusing on consequences of self-sacrificial leadership, which has been the primary focus of past research, the present research is –at least to our knowledge- the first to study the antecedents of self-sacrificial leader behavior. Specifically, we focused on the interplay between an antecedent relating to what leaders have in common with other group members (i.e., leaders' sense of belongingness) and an antecedent that derives from the unique position that leaders have in the group (i.e., leaders' sense of power). We predicted that leader self-sacrifice would emerge when leaders experience a sense of belongingness to their followers as this should direct their focus to the group's welfare. However, we expected this influence of leaders' sense of belongingness to be relatively limited for leaders high in sense of power because these leaders might already be more likely to act in ways that contribute to the organization's welfare. Put differently, sense of power might function as a substitute for the positive effect of sense of belongingness in motivating leaders to engage in self-sacrificial behavior. In contrast, leaders low in sense of power should be relatively sensitive to belongingness information when determining whether they will engage in costly and risky behaviors that serve their group. Across different types of methodologies (i.e., a lab study and a single and multisource field study), using different measures and manipulations and conducted in two different countries (the Netherlands and the U.S.), we found clear and robust support for these predictions.

2.5.1 Theoretical implications

The present research responds to recent calls for more research on antecedents rather than consequences of leader behavior (e.g., Bommer, Rubin & Baldwin, 2004; Scott, Colquitt & Paddock, 2009). Indeed, we should not only look at which leader behaviors are effective, but also at situational and dispositional variables that affect when and/or why leaders display these effective behaviors. Our findings not only show that sense of belongingness and sense of power are relevant antecedents of one such effective leader behavior (self-sacrifice), but also provide useful insights regarding the role followers might play in leaders' decision-making processes, which is in line with recent calls for more empirical research on the role of followers in the psychology of leadership (see Shamir, 2007 for an overview). Although there have been some studies that focused on how followers affect leader behavior (e.g., Farris & Lim, 1969; Greene, 1975; Lowin & Craig, 1968; Sims & Szylagyi, 1979), the focus of research has overwhelmingly been *leader-centered*. This dominant perspective which suggests that leader behavior is a one-way process in which influence flows from leaders to followers and views followers mainly as passive receivers of social influence has been under increased scrutiny in the past decade (e.g., Lord, Brown & Freiberg, 1999; Northouse, 2004; Van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). Our present research testifies to this issue by adopting a more balanced perspective on leadership and showing that leaders' behavior is influenced by their social relations with their followers (see also Korsgaard, Roberson & Rymph, 1998), but especially for leaders who do not feel powerful. Specifically, our results show that when leaders have a low sense of power their self-sacrifice is affected by how included they feel in their group or team.

Our findings also contribute to the existing power literature. Past research often focused on the corrupting influence of power on perceptions, decisions and

behavior. Those studies show for example that power is often used by people for their self-interest (Kipnis, 1976) and self-enhancement (Georgesen & Harris, 1998). More recently, power has been associated with more prosocial behaviors (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2003; Guinote, 2007b; Overbeck & Park, 2006; Schmid Mast et al., 2009), and with more goal directed and role consistent behavior (Chen et al., 2001; Galinsky et al., 2003 Guinote; 2007a, 2007b, 2007c; Smith & Trope, 2006; Smith et al., 2008). Our findings fit in with and extend those recent studies by showing that feeling powerful might also facilitate costly and risky prosocial leader behaviors such as self-sacrifice (see also Anderson & Galinsky, 2006). Leaders who feel powerful (i.e. have a high sense of power) appear to be motivated and confident to act in ways that contribute to and benefit the company, which can be seen as an indispensable part of their role as a leader (e.g., Van Vugt et al., 2008). More importantly, when the opportunity arises, they will likely act in ways that serve their group or organization, even when this means giving up privileges, welfare or time (i.e., self-sacrificing). We believe these findings contribute to a more balanced and complete picture of the role of power in the psychology of leadership by showing that power does not necessarily corrupt leader behavior.

Of course, our claim that sense of power can substitute for sense of belongingness also implies that sense of belongingness can substitute for sense of power. Additional analyses[1] show support for this alternative perspective on our findings. That is, when they feel included, leaders engage in self-sacrificial behavior regardless of how powerful they feel. Sense of power then only appears

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[1] In Study 2.1, sense of power revealed a significant effect in the low $F(1,94) = 4.83$, $p < .05$, but not in the high belongingness condition $F(1,94) < 1$, ns. In Study 2.2, sense of power was significantly more positively related to leader's self-sacrifice when the leader's sense of belongingness was low (1 SD below the mean; $\beta = .33$, $p < .001$) than when leader's sense of belongingness was high (1 SD above the mean; $\beta = .17$, $p < .01$). Finally, in Study 2.3 leader's sense of power was positively related to leader's self-sacrifice when leader's sense of belongingness was low (1 SD below the mean, $\beta = .37$, $p < .01$), but not when leader's sense of belongingness was high (1 SD above the mean, $\beta = .04$, $p = .72$).

to facilitate self-sacrifice when leaders experience a low sense of belongingness. This perspective actually fits well into our current theoretical rationale: When leaders experience a high sense of belongingness they already feel a strong alignment with the interests of their followers, making their sense of power less relevant as a predictor of self-sacrifice. In fact, such leaders would generally be inclined to engage in self-sacrifice. When they do not feel a strong alignment with the interests of their group (i.e., when they feel excluded), sense of power becomes important in motivating leaders to contribute to their group and organization.

2.5.2 Practical implications

What can organizations do to stimulate leaders' displays of self-sacrificial behavior? First of all, we argue that organizations could benefit from monitoring relations between followers and supervisors and addressing signals of negative relationships between these two parties. In light of this recommendation, organizations are thus advised to stimulate positive relations between leaders (e.g., managers) and their employees, for instance through team-building exercises. Second, organizations could benefit from giving their managers more autonomy. This way, managers are free to choose how to act among their followers, which could have a positive effect on their sense of belongingness. Moreover, increased autonomy is likely to increase leader's sense of power (Van Dijke & Poppe, 2006), and this should, in turn, not only make a leader more resilient against negative follower influence, but also more likely to shape his/her influence in ways that serve the interests of the organization.

It has to be noted that top management is often wary of increasing autonomy (Yukl & Fu, 1999) and decentralizing decision-making processes in their organization. This is understandable; it is difficult to hand over control over processes that one bears final responsibility for (Bedeian & Zammuto, 1991).

Nevertheless, top management should realize that organizations are necessarily social collectives and the quality of interactions between leaders and their teams will increase the effectiveness of the organization as a whole. Moreover, our research suggests that such a leap of faith (i.e., handing over autonomy to team supervisors) may actually make such managers focus more on the goals of the organization (see also Overbeck & Park, 2006). Overall, by stimulating positive relationships between their leaders and followers and giving their leaders more autonomy, organizations can create an environment in which leaders will exert their influence in ways that serve the interests of their employees and the organization.

2.5.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research

It should be noted that although this research is the first to empirically address the antecedents of self-sacrificial behavior of leaders, there are still unanswered questions concerning other possible motives leaders might have for engaging in self-sacrificial behavior. Because leader self-sacrifice often has positive effects on followers such as trust, affect and cooperation (De Cremer, 2006; Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005), one such concern is whether we can actually speak of a true sacrifice for the leader or whether it is in the leader's self-interest to self-sacrifice (for a debate on this topic, see Avolio and Locke, 2002). Indeed, leaders may use self-sacrifice not purely for altruistic reasons, but at least partly for strategic or instrumental reasons (Avolio and Locke, 2002). Still, leader self-sacrifice, like other leader behaviors, is in the eyes of the beholder and hence, we believe that as long as followers perceive their leader's sacrifice to be personally costly or risky, we can call the leader's behavior self-sacrificial. The extent to which this is the case provides an interesting avenue for

future research, especially since the motives behind leaders' actions are considered important by followers (Ames, Flynn & Weber, 2004).

Another interesting topic to explore in future studies is the potential effect of mixed messages from followers on leader self-sacrifice. In other words, is leader self-sacrifice affected when some group members communicate messages of social inclusion and others communicate exclusion? An interesting starting point in answering this question might be to look at research that has (albeit indirectly) addressed *why* exclusion leads to less prosocial behavior (although this research focused on general prosocial behavior, not behavior targeted at the source of inclusion; Twenge et al., 2007). This research suggests that people who are excluded feel uncertain that their inputs in the group will (in the short or long run) be reciprocated by the group. From this perspective, being excluded appears to decrease positive group-oriented behaviors because people fear that they will be taken advantage of. It is likely that mixed messages of inclusion and exclusion also increase the fear of being taken advantage of, and thus decrease prosocial behavior. It would be interesting to study whether we can extend this idea to self-sacrifice, and whether mixed messages might also decrease leader self-sacrifice.

2.5.4 Concluding remarks

We believe the major strength of the present research lies in identifying how subjectively sensed power and sense of belongingness interactively stimulate leader self-sacrifice. By focusing on the antecedents of this important type of leader behavior, the present study can be seen as a first step in painting a more complete picture of self-sacrificial leadership. After all, previous research in the leadership literature has mainly focused on leader behaviors that are effective, while still not much is known about when and why leaders engage in such behaviors. It is a path that should provide fruitful avenues for future research on the "when" and "why" of leader behavior.

CHAPTER 3

WHEN ARE LEADERS FAIR? THE ROLE OF FOLLOWERS' CONTROL AND RELATIONAL NEEDS IN LEADERS' ENACTMENT OF FAIR PROCEDURES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Modern business leaders such as Jack Welch, classic philosophers Socrates and Aristotle, civil rights leader Martin Luther King, and scientist Albert Einstein have at least one thing in common: They have all stressed the importance of fairness in our society. One influential type of fairness that has been the focus of considerable research attention over the last three decades is the fairness of procedures that authorities use to allocate outcomes and make decisions (i.e., *procedural fairness*, Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Research shows that procedural fairness positively influences a variety of attitudinal and behavioral outcomes that are important to organization functioning and employee wellbeing (see De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Greenberg & Colquitt, 2005; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002 for overviews). For instance, procedural fairness promotes employees' job satisfaction (Sweeney & McFarlin, 1993), organizational commitment (Tyler, Boeckmann, Smith & Huo, 1997), cooperative employee behavior like organizational citizenship behavior (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg., 2002, 2003), and even in-role performance (Zapata-Phelan, Colquitt, Scott & Livingston, 2009).

Enacting procedures in a fair manner is thus clearly an important part of being an effective leader. Yet, in reality, authority figures do not always practice it (Brockner, 2006; Folger & Skarlicki, 1998; Greenberg, 2009). This begs the question exactly what makes leaders decide to treat their followers in a

procedurally fair manner. Although this question appears to be highly relevant, to date, procedural fairness research has focused primarily on people's *reactions* to fair or unfair treatment by authorities (i.e., a *receiver* perspective, Scott, Colquitt & Paddock, 2009). In fact, despite numerous calls for procedural fairness research from the perspective of the leader (an *actor* perspective), hardly any empirical attention has been given to the psychological conditions under which leader figures enact procedures in a fair manner (for a recent discussion on this issue, see Scott et al., 2009; for an exception, see Brebels, De Cremer, Van Dijke & Van Hiel, 2011).

In the present study, we develop and test a model that explains when authorities will enact procedures fairly. Because an indispensable part of being an effective and influential leader is to recognise and respond in an adequate manner to follower needs (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003; Conger & Kanungo, 1987, Goleman, 2000), we build our framework on research that has identified people's *need for control* and *need to belong* as two important motives that explain why followers care so deeply about procedural fairness (for an overview, see Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel & Rupp, 2001; De Cremer & Tyler, 2005). Applying these insights to an *actor perspective* of procedural fairness enactment (Scott et al., 2009), we set out to investigate whether leaders' enactment of fair procedures is also regulated by their followers' control and belongingness needs.

3.1.1 Why people care about procedural fairness: control and belonging

Procedural fairness refers to the perceived fairness of decision making procedures (Tyler, 1989). Generally speaking, when decision making procedures are accurate, consistent, correctable, ethical, unbiased, and when members of social collectives are given the opportunity to voice their opinion, they evaluate these procedures as fair (Leventhal, 1980; Sheppard & Lewicki, 1987).

The topic of procedural fairness was put on the research agenda by Thibaut and Walker's (1975) publication of their influential *control model of justice*. The central premise of this model is that people value fair procedures in their relationships with authorities because it gives them the feeling that these authorities take their interests into account, which maximizes the probability of favourable outcomes in decision making processes (Greenberg & Folger, 1983; Tyler, 1987). This control model has received clear support in the literature. For instance, research shows that fair procedures such as voice give people a sense that their views are taken into consideration by decision makers and consequently, that they can influence outcomes more than when procedures are unfair (Barry & Shapiro, 2000; Greenberg, 2000; Shapiro, 1993). Moreover, other research shows that people react to the fairness of decision making procedures particularly when they feel that they lack control (Van den Bos, 2001, Study 2) and when they actually do lack control in the decisions of authorities (Korsgaart, Schweiger & Sapienza, 1995). Thus, the control model of justice indicates that people care about fair procedures, because it serves their need for control (Cropanzano et al., 2001).

Yet, other research shows that control cannot be the only motive that explains people's reactions to the fairness of decision making procedures. For instance, Lind, Kanfer & Early (1990) showed that people react positively to having voice *after* the decision has been made, making it impossible that their input will affect the actual decision. Studies like these have paved the way for relational models of justice such as the *group-value model* and the *relational model of authority* (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992). These models build on the influential finding that people have a strong need to belong to social collectives (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). In support of these models, a wealth of research indicates that people care about fair procedures because they communicate a symbolic message of acceptance and standing in the group or

organization (e.g., Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Furthermore, several studies show that particularly those individuals with a strong need to belong are affected by the fairness of procedures and process information about procedures carefully (De Cremer & Blader, 2006; see also De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Van Prooyen, Van den Bos & Wilke, 2004).

Taken together, a vast amount of work shows that people care about procedural fairness because it serves their need for control as well as their need to belong (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 2001; Mayer, Bardes & Piccolo, 2008). Leaders who enact procedures fairly are thus able to serve and contribute positively to the control and belonging needs of their followers. But do leaders take these needs into account when enacting fair procedures?

3.1.2 The present study: An actor perspective on fairness enactment

Arguably the most important goal of leadership is to direct followers towards the goals of their organization (e.g., Hollander, 1980; Yukl & Van Fleet, 1992). At the same time, leadership does not operate in a social vacuum in which influence only flows from the leader to the follower and where followers are passive receivers of influence from their leaders (see Shamir, 2007 for an overview). Rather, leaders and followers have a dynamic and interdependent relationship that is characterized by exchange processes and mutual influence (Hollander, 1992; Tjosvold, 1989; Weick ,1979). Therefore, leaders are likely motivated to balance between, on the one hand serving the needs of their followers, and, at the same time, serving their organization's interest.

Following this line of reasoning and applying it to the present research question, leaders can be expected to sometimes take into account the control need of their followers. That is, leaders will sometimes be willing to grant followers with a high control need a certain level of control in decision making processes

through the enactment of fair procedures (i.e., voice). However, this will likely only be the case for followers who, according to the leaders' perception, also care strongly about being a part of the organization and contributing to the organization (i.e., have a high need to belong).

This line of reasoning leads to the following Hypothesis:

Leaders will adapt their enactment of fair procedures to the strength of their followers' control and belongingness needs such that leaders will be fair particularly when interacting with followers with a strong control and *a strong belongingness need.*

We tested this prediction regarding the interactive effect of followers' control and belongingness need on leaders' enactment of fair procedures in two studies. Study 3.1 is a laboratory experiment. All participants were assigned to the position of group leader. We independently manipulated the strength of the control and belongingness need of one their followers. Study 3.2 was a field study that relied on employees and their leaders from a variety of different organizations as respondents. This study applied a multisource design in which leaders rated their follower's belongingness and control needs and followers rated their leader's procedural fairness.

3.2 STUDY 3.1

3.2.1 Method

Participants. Ninety-eight students (73 females and 25 males, M_{age} = 21.01 years, SD = 4.41) from a Dutch University, participated in this study in return for 7 Euros. They were randomly assigned to a 2 (follower control need: low vs. high) x 2 (follower belongingness need: low vs. high) design.

Procedure. Upon arriving in the lab, participants learned that they would take part in a group study. Sitting in adjacent, soundproof cubicles, they worked on the study using a computer. All communication took place via the computer, which participants believed to be linked to a central server. In the first part of the experiment, participants filled out several questionnaires. We would ostensibly use these questionnaires later on to appoint them to a leader position and also to make our manipulations of follower control and belongingness needs credible.

Next, the participants learned that they would work on an *in basket* test, a task that is often used in personnel selection procedures to assess specific competencies of job applicants. We chose this task, because it provides a realistic work setting to our laboratory experiment (cf. Trevino, 1992; Zedeck, 1986). In this task, job applicants are faced with a series of memo's, emails and documents which they have to prioritize, fit into their schedule and respond to. In the present study, we utilized a version of this test that involves a group situation in which there is one leader (i.e., manager) and a group of employees. Participants believed that these roles would be appointed based upon their answers to some of the questionnaires that they filled out at the start of the experiment and that ostensibly measured leadership skills. In reality, every participant was appointed to the leader position and believed that (s)he supervised four employees.

After being explained in detail what the in basket task entailed and what the responsibilities of their personal role as a leader would be (e.g., prioritizing emails and memos, distributing tasks and supervising employees), we introduced the manipulations of employees' control and belongingness needs. Supposedly to get to know their employees better, participants received the results of the analyses of their employees' answers on the questionnaires they had ostensibly filled out at the beginning of the experiment. In the high control need conditions, participants read the following information about one group member:

Group member A is someone who lies awake at night when important decisions have to be made in his environment. He is someone who needs to feel part of the decision making process so that he can influence the outcomes

In the low control need conditions, participants read:

Group member A is someone who does not lie awake at night when important decisions have to be made in his environment. He is someone who does not need to feel part of the decision making process in order to influence the outcomes

Subsequently, participants received the belongingness information about their employee. In the high belongingness need conditions, the participants read:

The scores also show that Group member A needs to feel at home in his environment. Feeling like an included and valued member is of great importance to him.

In the low belongingness need conditions, the participants read:

The scores also show that Group member A does not need to feel at home in his environment. Feeling like an included and valued member is not important to him.

Upon reading this information, participants learned that, as part of the task, they would first have to make several important decisions (e.g., distributing tasks) concerning this particular follower. They were then introduced to our dependent measures. Specifically, they were asked several questions concerning their treatment of Group member A when making decisions. Furthermore, they were told that they would have to go through 10 individual procedures to make an important decision. As a behavioral measure of fairness enactment we asked participants in how many of these ten procedures they were planning to grant voice to Group member A. Finally, we assessed our manipulation checks and participants were thanked, debriefed and paid.

Measures. Participants responded to all measures on a seven-point Likert-scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*; 7 = *Strongly agree*).

Manipulation checks. To assess whether our manipulation of follower control need was successful, we asked participants to respond to two items (α = .97). Specifically, they had to rate the extent to which they believed that their follower (Group member A) needs to feel that he can influence decisions and outcomes.

Likewise, two items (α = .97) were included to assess whether we manipulated follower belongingness need successfully. Participants rated the extent to which they believed that Group member A likes to feel accepted and valued in his environment.

Dependent measures. We measured leader's procedural fairness enactment with four items based on Colquitt (2001), which were combined in an average fairness enactment scale (α = .74). These items measured the extent to which leaders wanted to grant voice to their follower. Sample item: [To what extent] "…are you willing to invest time to listen to this group member's opinion when making decisions?". As an additional measure of fairness enactment, participants had to indicate in how many of a total of ten individual procedures they wanted to grant voice to Group member A.

3.2.2 Results

Manipulation checks. A 2 (follower control need) x 2 (follower belongingness need) ANOVA revealed a main effect of follower control need $F(1,94)$ = 393.26, p < .001 on the control need scale. Participants in the high follower control need condition (M = 6.02, SD = 1.03) perceived a higher follower control need than those in the low follower control need condition (M = 2.00, SD =

.96). Neither the main effect of follower belongingness need $F(1,94) < 1$, *ns*, nor the interaction effect was significant $F(1,94) < 1$, *ns*.

A 2 (follower control need) x 2 (follower belongingness need) ANOVA revealed a main effect of follower belongingness need $F(1,94) = 310.86$, $p < .001$ on the belongingness need scale, showing that participants in the high follower belongingness need condition (*M* = 6.42, *SD* = .66) perceived a higher follower belongingness need than those in the low follower belongingness need condition (*M* = 2.49, *SD* = 1.42). Neither the main effect of follower control need $F(1,94) =$ 1.99, *p* = .16, nor the interaction effect was significant $F(1,94) < 1$, *ns*. Thus, the manipulation checks show that we successfully and independently induced our follower control and belongingness needs manipulations.

Procedural fairness enactment. A 2 x 2 ANOVA on the combined fairness enactment scale revealed a marginally significant main effect of follower control need $F(1,94) = 3.14$, *p* = .08. Leaders intended to enact fair procedures (i.e., grant voice) when interacting with a follower with a high, rather than a low control need. Belongingness need did not significantly influence procedural fairness enactment of the leader, $F(1,94) = 1,06$, *p* = .31. Most importantly, we found an interaction effect (see Figure 3.1), $F(1,94) = 4.24$, $p < .05$.

Figure 3.1: Interaction Between Follower Control Need and Follower Belongingness Need on Leader's Fairness Enactment (Study 3.1).
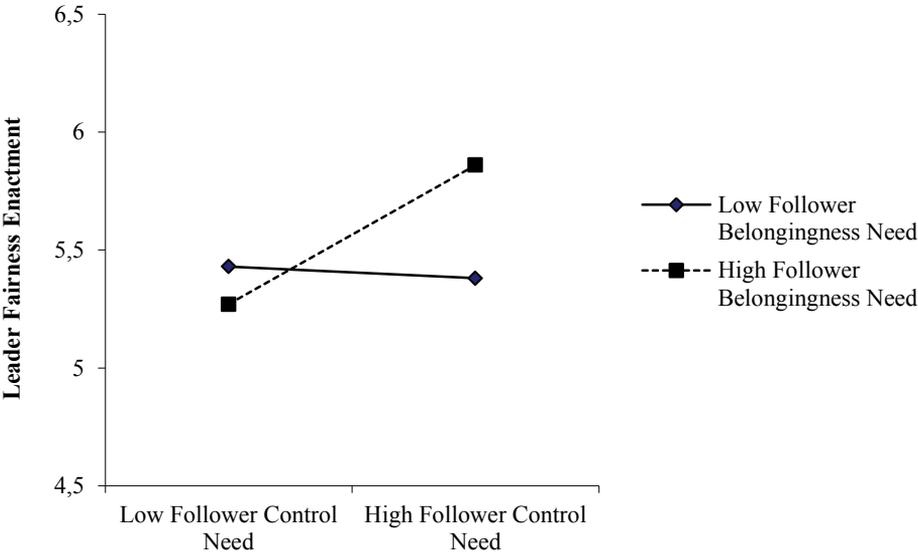
Simple effects tests revealed a significant main effect of follower control need when the belongingness need of the follower was high $F(1,94) = 7.34$, $p < .01$, but not when this need was low $F(1,94) < 1$, ns.

As a second measure of leader fairness enactment, we assessed in how many out of a total 10 procedures the leaders wanted to grant voice to their follower. A 2 x 2 ANOVA on this measure revealed a significant main effect of follower control need $F(1,94) = 6.06$, $p < .05$. No main effect of follower belongingness need was found, $F(1,94) = 1.27$, $p = .26$. However, as predicted, a significant interaction was found, $F(1,94) = 6.06$, $p < .05$ (see Figure 3.2). Simple effects tests revealed a significant main effect of follower control need when the follower had a high belongingness need $F(1,94) = 12.11$, $p < .01$, but not when this need was low $F(1,94) < 1$, ns.

Figure 3.2: Interaction Between Follower Control Need and Follower Belongingness Need on the Number of Procedures in which Leader Granted Voice to the Follower (Study 3.1).
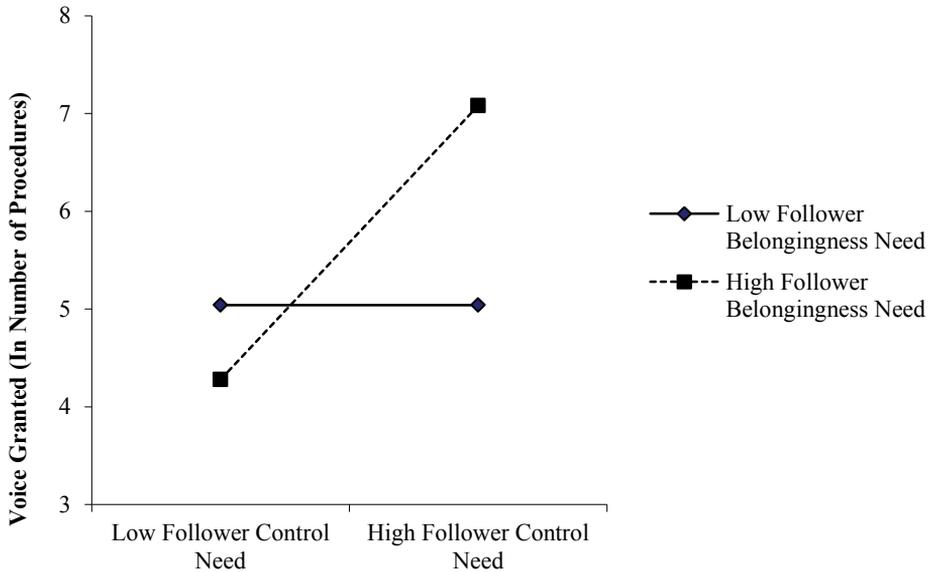
3.3 STUDY 3.2

In Study 3.1, in an experimental setting we found that leaders adapt their fairness enactment to the strength of the control and belongingness needs of a follower. Specifically, leaders enacted procedures more fairly (i.e., provided more voice opportunities) when interacting with a follower with a high, rather than a low control need, but this was particularly the case when the need to belong of the follower was also high.

One possible limitation of the experimental setting we used in Study 3.1 is that it is not clear to what extent our findings can be generalized to organizational leadership. Therefore, we conducted a second study to test our predictions in actual work environments. To reduce concerns about socially desirable or self-serving biases associated with self report measures (e.g., Donaldson & Grant-

Vallone, 2002; Moorman & Podsakoff, 1992), we employed a multisource design in which leaders rated the control and belongingness needs of one of their employees, while their fairness enactment was rated by this employee.

3.3.1 Method

Sample and procedure. 412 members of a Dutch research panel consisting of employees from a variety of different organizations were invited to fill out the questionnaire on a web page. For their participation, they received credit points that would allow them to receive certain gifts (i.e., movie tickets). A total number of 312 employees responded by filling out the questionnaire (a response rate of 75.7%). These employees were requested to ask their direct supervisor to also participate in the study. Participants did so by sending a questionnaire link to their supervisor. Both the employee and supervisor surveys were administered online and we gave each respondent a unique identification number to ensure anonymity and to make sure we could match the employee and supervisor data. We took a number of steps to ensure that the surveys were completed by the correct sources. First, in introducing the study, we emphasized the importance of integrity in the scientific process. We told the employees that it was essential for them and their supervisor to fill out the correct surveys. Second, when respondents submitted their on-line surveys, time stamps and IP addresses were recorded to ensure that the employee and supervisor surveys were submitted at different times and with different IP addresses. We found no irregularities in the responses.

A total of 312 employees and 108 supervisors participated in the study. We included only the data of focal employees who had complete and matching supervisor data, resulting in 93 focal employee-supervisor dyads. The employees were on average 43.88 years old (SD = 9.78) and 36.6% were female. They

worked on average for 10.9 years (SD = 10.27) in their organization and worked an average 6.1 years (SD = 6.51) in their current job.

The supervisors were on average 46.1 years old (SD = 8.99) and 33.0% were female. They worked an average of 12.9 years (SD = 9.55) in their organizations and worked an average 6.1 years (SD = 5.51) in their current job.

Measures. Responses were given on 7-point scales with regard to follower control and belongingness need. Responses to the fairness enactment measures were given on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*).

Control need. Employee's need for control was measured using the following three-item scale (α = .91) based on the work of Burger & Cooper (1979) and Skinner (1996): "This employee has the need to influence important decisions in the organization", "This employee has the need to exercise some level of control when decisions are made in the organization" and "This employee finds it annoying when you have not taken into account his/her interest in making important decisions".

Belongingness need. Employee's need to belong was assessed with a 3 item scale (α = .92) based on the work of Baumeister & Leary (1995) and included "This employee has a high need to feel at home in the organization", "This employee has a high need to feel valued in the organization", and "This employee has a strong need to feel connected to the organization."

Procedural fairness enactment. Leader's enactment of fair procedures was measured by a four-item combination (α = .84) inspired by Colquitt (2001). The items included "My supervisor listens to my opinion", "My supervisor involves me in his / her decisions", "My supervisor takes my opinion into consideration when making decisions", "My supervisor takes my feelings into account when making decisions".

3.3.3 Results

Table 3.1: Means, Standard Deviations and Intercorrelations of Leader's Enactment of Fair Procedures and Follower's Control and Belongingness Need (Study 3.2)

	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Leader's fairness enactment	3.53	.67	-		
2. follower's control need	4.65	1.30	.30***	-	
3. follower's belongingness need	5.23	.86	.31***	.60***	-

N = 93, *** *p*<.001.

OLS regression was used to assess the main and interaction effects of follower's control and belongingness need on the leader's enactment of fair procedures. The interaction term was based on the centred versions of the independent variables (Aiken & West, 1991). The results are reported in Table 3.1 and Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Leader's Fairness Enactment on Follower's Control and Belongingness Need (Study 3.2)

	β	R^2	$Adj\ R^2$	R^2_{change}	df
Step 1		.12	.10	.12	2, 90
Control need	.20				
Belongingness need	.18				
Step 2		.15	.12	.03	1, 89
Control need	.19				
Belongingness need	.28*				
Control need x belongingness need	.20*				

*p<.05

No significant relation between follower control need and leader's enactment of fair procedures was found, β = .19, *p* = .12. However, follower belongingness need was positively related to fairness enactment β = .28, *p* < .05. Furthermore, a significant interaction effect between follower control and

belongingness need was found, see Figure 3.3, $\beta = .20$, $p < .05$. Simple slope analyses (Aiken & West, 1991) showed that, as expected, follower control need was positively related to leader's enactment of fair procedures when the follower's need to belong was high (1 *SD* above the mean; $\beta = .31$, $p < .05$), but not when follower's need to belong was low (1 *SD* below the mean; $\beta = .07$, $p = .63$).

Figure 3.3: Interaction Between Follower Control Need and Follower Belongingness Need on Leader's Procedural Fairness Enactment (Study 3.2).
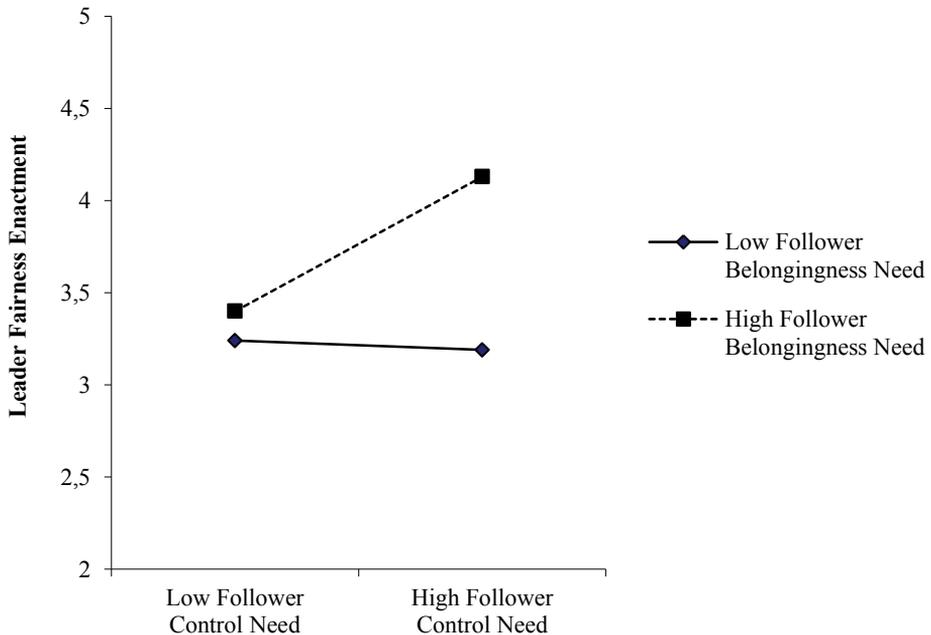
3.4 GENERAL DISCUSSION

Research has illustrated convincingly that procedural fairness reveals a wide range of positive implications for organizations (for recent overviews, see De Cremer & Tyler, 2005; Greenberg & Colquitt, 2005; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002).

Although enacting fair procedures clearly is an important managerial tool that effectively and positively influences employees (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2002, 2003), surprisingly little research has focused on the question when leaders actually enact fair procedures (Scott et al., 2009). The present study therefore examined theoretically relevant antecedents of leaders' enactment of fair procedures. We did so by employing a reversed approach with respect to two important motives that are known in the fairness literature to explain why people care so deeply about fair procedures. Specifically, we examined whether leaders take followers' control and belongingness needs into account in their enactment of fair procedures.

We reasoned that leadership deals with directing followers towards the goals of the organization. However, because they have an interdependent relationship with their followers, we also argued that leaders are motivated to balance the needs of their followers with what is in the best interest for the organization. Therefore, we predicted that leaders are willing to enact fair procedures (e.g., grant voice) to those follower who have a strong need for control, but only when these followers are also care strongly about being a part of the organization (i.e., have a high need to belong). Across two studies (one lab study and one multisource field study), we found support for this prediction: leaders enacted procedures more fairly when interacting with a follower with a high rather than a low control need, but this was only the case when the follower also had a high need to belong.

3.4.1 Theoretical implications

We build our study on past research that has identified control and belonging as two motives that are crucial in explaining why followers care about fairness (Cropanzano et al., 2001). The present findings contribute to a more

balanced understanding of that knowledge by showing that both follower motives also affect the procedural fairness enactment of leaders. In doing so, we respond to recent calls for more research on antecedents rather than consequences of effective leader behaviors (e.g., Bommer, Rubin & Baldwin, 2004) and specifically on procedural fairness enactment (Scott et al., 2009). To our knowledge, the present research is among the first to study procedural fairness enactment from a leader (actor) perspective (see also Brebels et al., 2011).

Given that procedural fairness is commonly enacted by leaders (De Cremer & Tyler, 2010), it is surprising that enacting fair procedures is rarely included as an aspect of leadership in the leadership literature (for a discussion, see De Cremer & Tyler, 2005). After all, both leadership and procedural fairness deal with influencing and motivating followers (Chemers, 2001; Colquitt & Greenberg, 2003). We believe that our research answers the call for more integration between the fairness and leadership literature (e.g., De Cremer, 2006; De Cremer & Tyler, 2010; Van Knippenberg, De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2007). In fact, our finding that the leaders in our studies adapt their fairness enactment in decision making processes to the needs of their followers suggests that leaders sometimes use fairness as a managerial tool to influence their followers.

Our findings provide an interesting leap from previous work in the fairness literature that has argued that leaders might sometimes have difficulty with acting fairly (Brockner, 2006; Folger & Skarlicki, 1998). One possible explanation for this discrepancy might be that past work focused more on bad news situations (such as layoffs) while this was more neutral in our studies. Still, our findings provide a rather positive picture of leaders. Indeed, effective and influential leaders recognise and respond in an adequate manner to follower needs (Bass, Avolio, Jung & Berson, 2003; Conger & Kanungo, 1987, Goleman, 2000). Our findings suggest that leaders sometimes take such needs into account, but

particularly so when they feel that their followers also want to be part of and contribute to the organization's goals.

3.4.2 Practical implications

Research on fairness training (for an overview, see Skarlicki & Latham, 2005) shows that leaders can be trained to be fair, and more importantly that these programs are effective in inducing positive job attitudes (e.g., satisfaction, commitment) and work behaviors (e.g., organizational citizenship behaviors). Studying fairness from an actor perspective contributes in identifying potential opportunities and pitfalls that can help in further improving fairness training programs. Our findings indicate that leaders adapt their behavior to the strength of their followers' motives. Yet, in practice it might often be difficult for leaders to recognize and identify the intensity of their followers' control and belongingness needs. Furthermore, to our knowledge, fairness training has focused primarily on leader actions rather than on the dynamics between follower needs and leader actions (cf. Skarlicki & Latham, 2005). Therefore, fairness training programs could benefit from incorporating elements that help leaders to recognize, identify and adapt to follower needs (Goleman, 1998).

Interestingly, our finding that leaders recognize and take follower needs into accounts in enacting fair procedures, also suggests that followers themselves can sometimes facilitate leaders to enact fair procedures. This is in line with the idea that influence between leaders and follower does not only flow from the leader to the follower, but also the other way around (see Shamir, 2007 for an overview). Specifically, by communicating their need to feel included and need to be involved in decision making procedures, followers might contribute to leaders' recognition of their needs. In turn, this should make it more likely that leaders take their needs into account in their fairness enactment. Therefore, organizations could

also benefit from promoting an environment in which employees are stimulated to speak up and discuss their needs with their leaders.

3.4.3 Limitations, strengths and future research

A major strength of our research is that, using different methodologies (i.e., laboratory experiment and multisource field study) across two studies, it is among the first to examine fairness enactment from an "actor" perspective. Of course, each of our studies has its limitations and strengths. An important strength of our lab experiments is that it provides us with findings that are high in internal validity (e.g., De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2002). However, by giving leaders information about their follower's personality, we manipulated follower's control and belongingness needs rather explicitly in this study. This may raise some concerns on the generalizability of our findings to the actual leadership that is common in organizations, in which follower needs might be less explicitly presented. We addressed this concern by conducting a second study in which we tested our predictions in an actual work environment. To reduce concerns about socially desirable or self-serving answers associated with self report measures (e.g., Donaldson & Grant-Vallone, 2002; Moorman & Podsakoff, 1992), we employed a multisource design in Study 3.2 in which leaders rated the control and belongingness needs of one of their employees, while their procedural fairness enactment was rated by this particular (focal) employee.

Given the limited amount of research that has taken this perspective, there are of course still many unanswered questions about why and when leaders enact fair procedures (Scott et al., 2009). In the present research we examined whether leaders take economical (i.e., control) and social (i.e., belonging) concerns of followers into account in their fairness enactment. However, we did not focus on a third follower motive that has been identified to explain why people care about

fairness. That is, people also see fairness as a (moral) value in itself, and people want to act in accordance with this as well as being treated accordingly (Folger, 1998) Therefore, it would be interesting to gain more insight in the underlying intentions of leaders' decision to enact fair procedures or not. Do they enact procedures fairly because it's the right thing to do morally? Or, do they do this for strategic and instrumental reasons such as getting their subordinates to comply with them through social exchange processes?

3.4.4 Concluding Remarks

Former General Electrics CEO Jack Welch once said: "The hardest part is to be fair. No one trains you to be a judge" (Tichy & Sherman, 1993, p. 148). This suggests that business leaders a) are aware of the importance of treating employees fairly but b) find it difficult to do so. The findings of the present study paint a more positive picture of leaders. That is, leaders do appear to be aware of the importance of treating employees fairly. However, they do so particularly in situations when it satisifies both the follower's needs and the organization's interest.

CHAPTER 4

WHY LEADERS NOT ALWAYS DISAPPROVE OF UNETHICAL FOLLOWER BEHAVIOR: IT DEPENDS ON THE LEADER'S SELF-INTEREST AND ACCOUNTABILITY[2]

4.1 INTRODUCTION

An important task for ethical leaders is to create a climate in which it is clear what is morally acceptable and what is not. To achieve this level of moral clarity, leaders are supposed to act in ways that influence their followers' ethical and unethical decisions and behaviors (Trevino et al., 2000, 2003). One important way to communicate what is acceptable and what is not is by showing disapproval of unethical follower behavior (UFB from now on; Brown and Trevino, 2006). Showing disapproval should make it less likely that followers and their co-workers display unethical behaviors in the future (Chonko & Hunt, 1985), whereas condoning unethical behavior makes it likely that UFB will prevail or even increase (Offerman, 2004). Also, leaders displaying disapproval of UFB create a sense of justice among other employees as they will expect their leaders to take action against unethical followers (Trevino & Ball, 1992). Given the clear importance for organizations that leaders show disapproval when confronted with UFB, it is necessary to examine whether leaders, in fact, also show actual disapproval of UFB when needed. In the present study we address this question, by zooming in on both leader motives and organizational circumstances and how they interact in affecting whether leaders display disapproval of UFB.

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[2] This chapter was based on Hoogervorst, De Cremer & Van Dijke (Journal of Business Ethics, 2011)

In the present paper, we start from the assumption that leaders in general consider taking action against followers to be a highly negative emotional experience (Ball & Sims, 1991; Butterfield et al., 1996); a state that may inhibit leaders to show disapproval of UFB. To promote the incidence that leaders do the morally right thing (i.e., show disapproval of UFB), organizations often turn to the solution of installing systems that monitor leaders' actions (Lindsay et al., 1996). For example, accountability (i.e., having leaders justify their actions to others) has been argued to be a necessary social monitoring mechanism for organizations (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999). Indeed, condoning UFB could lead to considerable reputational damage for leaders when there is a possibility that others will find out about this. Therefore, being held accountable should motivate leaders to do the morally right thing and display disapproval of UFB.

At the same time, UFB can often be instrumental to the leader (e.g., when the leader receives a bonus, because UFB contributed to the sales of his/her department) and leaders thus often face a conflict of interest when confronted with UFB. This begs the question whether social pressures on the leader (i.e., holding leaders accountable) to do the normative and morally right thing (i.e., disapprove UFB) will prevail when UFB is instrumental to the leader. In the present paper, we propose that the self-interest of leaders can inhibit the social pressure to disapprove of UFB and consequently, that accountability is a less efficient tool in stimulating leader disapproval when leaders personally benefit from UFB. Furthermore, in a second study, we will look at the role of the accountability and leader self-interest from the perspective of the follower. That is, we will investigate whether followers are able to accurately estimate when leaders are most likely to disapprove UFB. If this is the case, it introduces the possibility that this assessment makes followers engage in UFB especially in those situations where they feel they can get away with it.

4.1.1 Leader accountability

Leader accountability refers to a leader's expectation that s/he may be called on to justify his/her decisions and actions to others (De Cremer & Van Dijk, 2009; De Kwaadsteniet et al., 2007; Scott and Lyman, 1968: Semin and Manstead, 1983; Tetlock, 1992). A lack of leader accountability can be an important antecedent of unethical behavior in organizations (Beu & Buckley, 2001). In fact, when leaders do not expect to be held accountable for their decisions or actions, it stands to reason that the temptation will be more present to act in ways that benefit their own interest rather than the welfare of the common good (e.g., customers, society). Given the importance of this construct, it is surprising to see that accountability has not received extensive empirical attention in the management literature (Hall et al., 2004), nor in the field of psychology (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999), particularly at the leader level.

The reason why accountability makes people act in a more ethical manner relies on the idea that human beings have a strong aversion against being evaluated in a negative manner by others (De Cremer & Sedikides, 2008; Leary, 1996; Tyler, 1999). Thus, when people expect to have to justify their decisions and actions to others, reputational concerns are activated and people are motivated to display behaviors that are fair, normative and socially responsible (De Cremer & Van Dijk, 2009; Lerner &Tetlock, 1999). Indeed, cooperative and altruistic behavior is relatively high when people's reputation is being evaluated as research in both (evolutionary) biology and psychology has shown (e.g., Barclay, 2004; Hardy & Van Vugt, 2006; Milinski et al., 2002; Nowak & Sigmund, 1998; Panchanathan & Boyd, 2004; Price, 2006). Important to the present paper is that concerns about other people's perceptions seem particularly strong in the domain of morality or ethicality (Jones & Pittman, 1982; Kurzban et al., 2007) as people

care deeply about not being seen as an unethical or immoral person by others (Jordan & Monin, 2008).

Although past research on the effects of accountability did not focus on leaders specifically, we argue that leaders, for whom a positive reputation is indispensible (Sims, 2009), should be especially concerned when having to justify their actions to others. After all, leaders are generally seen as representing the company and therefore reputational damage would hurt both their own and the organization's trustworthiness. Specifically, when others (i.e., top level management, co-workers, accounting agency) find out that a leader has condoned UFB, this could damage the leader's reputation significantly. Taken together, situations of high accountability will put social pressure on leaders to do the morally right thing which should result in showing disapproval of UFB. However, recent research demonstrated that accountability pressures do not always lead to just and moral behavior (De Cremer & Van Dijk, 2009, Lerner and Tetlock, 1999; Sedikides et al., 2002). Rather, other motives might override the motive to conform to social pressures due to accountability. One such situation that might make accountability less successful in stimulating the disapproval of UFB is when the leader personally benefits from the unethical behavior displayed by the follower.

4.1.2 Instrumentality of UFB for the leader

Self-interest is at the root of unethical behavior: individuals are more likely to engage in unethical behavior when there is a high payoff for engaging in such behavior (e.g., Carson, 2003; Grover, 1993; Moore & Loewenstein, 2004; Trevino, 1986). Although obviously hired to act in the interest of the company, leaders, like their followers, are also individuals who sometimes act in line with their own interests (Eisenhardt, 1989). Importantly, employees might not be the

only ones who benefit from engaging in unethical behavior. Rather, in organizations the interests of leaders (i.e., managers) and followers are often aligned. In fact, UFB might sometimes reveal positive implications for the financial or overall performance of departments, which in turn has a positive effect on how leaders are evaluated by their organization. Following these insights, it stands to reason that leaders sometimes might be less motivated to disapprove of UFB, particularly when they personally benefit from those unethical actions.

To our knowledge, no research has focused on how the alignment of interests between followers and leaders affect leaders' disapproval of UFB. Some studies do however, *implicitly* suggested that leaders might be sensitive to the instrumentality of their followers' unethical behavior. Supervisors have, for instance, been found to react less strongly to rule violation of employees who score high on creativity or have a high job status (Rosen & Jerdee, 1974). Furthermore, in several studies, Bellizzi and colleagues (e.g., Bellizzi and Hite, 1989; Bellizzi & Hasty, 2003; Bellizzi & Bristol, 2005; Bellizzi, 2006) have shown that sales managers treat unethical sales behavior of their top selling agents more leniently than lesser selling agents' unethical behavior. Although the instrumentality of UFB was not directly manipulated in these studies, top performing employees can be seen as instrumental to leaders as they help leaders to achieve their own goals or quota (DeConinck, 1992).

Overall, these findings at least suggest that leaders are sensitive to the instrumentality of their followers. If this is the case, leaders may be less willing to show disapproval of unethical acts by valuable employees (i.e., top performing employees, employees with a high job status). Therefore, when UFB is instrumental in serving the leader's self-interest, a leader is expected to be less likely to disapprove those unethical actions.

4.1.3 How accountability and instrumentality interact

Thus far, we have argued that the likelihood that a leader will be held accountable as well as the extent to which UFB is instrumental to the interest of the leader might influence leader's disapproval of UFB. However, in a situation in which UFB is instrumental to themselves, leaders nevertheless face a conflict of interest in which taking the morally right decision (i.e., show disapproval) is the direct opposite of doing what is in their own best interest (i.e., condoning UFB and profit from it). An important question therefore is whether accountability can be a successful tool in motivating leaders to put aside self-interested motives and display disapproval even when UFB is instrumental to their own interest.

Recent behavioral ethics research has illustrated that the decisions and actions of human beings are often distorted in a self-enhancing manner (e.g., Chugh et al., 2005; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004). In situations where there is a tradeoff between self-interest and morality, this self-enhancement tendency reveals itself by people's engagegement in self-deception, causing the ethical colors of a decision to fade (*ethical fading*; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004). These self-enhancing processes take place in an unconscious and automatic manner, which leads self-interest to prevail in human decision making processes (Moore & Loewenstein, 2004). Consequently, people automatically act in a self-interested manner resulting in accepting and showing unethical behavior more easily.

Following this line of thinking, when leaders profit themselves from UFB, self-interested concerns are activated, which consequently should override moral concerns about unethical follower acts. Therefore, self-interest salience should inhibit the normative and social pressures of being held accountable. That is, accountability might only be successful in stimulating the disapproval of leaders who don't profit themselves from the UFB. As such, we expect that leaders will

show more disapproval of UFB when they are held accountable, but this is most likely the case when the UFB is not instrumental to their own interest.

4.1.4 The present research

We examined our predictions first in a controlled laboratory experiment where participants were placed in a leader position in a group and were confronted with an unethical act of one of their group members. Specifically, we tested the prediction that leaders display more disapproval against an unethical follower when they potentially can be held accountable, but particularly so when they do not benefit themselves from this UFB.

We further designed a second study (Study 4.2) in which we look at the other side of the coin, by examining *when followers expect* their leaders to disapprove of their unethical behavior the most. Research shows that, followers often believe that leaders are driven by self-interest (Fiske, 1993; 2001), which induces followers to closely observe their leader's behavior (Lind, 2001). This assumption that leaders are driven by selfishness may thus allow followers to an accurate assessment of when leaders will disapprove of UFB: When the leader does not personally benefit from such behavior (i.e., low instrumentality) and when the leader's reputation might be on the line (i.e., high accountability), it is likely that such disapproval will occur. However, when the leader benefits from UFB, it is less likely that disapproval will occur. Demonstrating that followers are correct in predicting leaders' reactions is important, because it indicates that UFB might not be easily rooted out. Indeed, correct predictions by followers imply that they can show strategic behavior and show unethical behavior serving their own interest in those situations where they have the best chance to get away with it.

This focus on how followers evaluate and judge the exact conditions under which UFB is accepted or not by their leaders is also interesting from a theoretical

point of view. Specifically, this research question responds to recent claims that more empirical research should be done on the role of followers in the psychology of leadership (e.g., see Shamir, 2007 for an overview). In line with this claim, Study 4.2 thus examined how well followers predict leader reactions to UFB.

4.2 STUDY 4.1

4.2.1 Method

Participants and design. One hundred and two undergraduate students at a Dutch university (22 males, 80 females, M_{age} = 19.61 SD = 2.81) participated voluntarily in the study, for which they were paid 7 euros ($10).

Procedure. Participants were seated in adjacent yet soundproof cubicles, in which they worked on a computer during the experiment. We explained that they would work on a series of tasks in a 4-person group and that one individual would be appointed as the leader of the group. Participants were ostensibly assigned to either the role of group leader or regular group member based on a questionnaire they had answered at the start of the experiment, which ostensibly measured leadership skills (for a similar procedure, see Overbeck & Park, 2006). In reality, every participant was assigned to the leader role and led to believe that (s)he would supervise a group of three other individuals. Furthermore, the leader believed that the group members could communicate with their leader at fixed times during the group task.

Next, we told the leader that the group could earn a bonus for their performance on the first task if they were among the two best groups of their session. For the first task, this would depend on the performance of one of the group members (i.e., group member C). We told the leader that group member C had to solve several mathematical problems and that the performance of this group

member would be rated according to the number of correct answers and the time used. After finishing the first task, group member C could communicate to the leader how (s)he had performed. While group member C was allegedly working on the mathematics task, the leader worked on a bogus individual task in which the (s)he rated the importance of several typical leader behaviors (i.e., motivating employees, problem solving, planning etc.). This task was added to improve the believability of the group experience. After finishing this task, the leader received the results of the mathematics task of group member C. This group member solved 5 out of 5 problems in 148 seconds. Then the leader found out that because of this performance, his/her group belonged to the two best groups of the day and thus were entitled to a bonus (lottery tickets for an Ipod).

Subsequently, the manipulation of *instrumentality for the leader* was introduced. Half of the leaders read that the bonus would be divided equally among the other three group members and that the leader would not receive any bonus (*low instrumentality* for the leader) while the other half read that the leader would receive the largest part of the bonus (*high instrumentality* for the leader). Thereafter, the *leader accountability* manipulation was introduced. Half of the leaders read that the communication between the leader and the group members was completely confidential, that none of this information would be saved and thus, that the information would be viewed neither by the experimenter nor the other participating groups (*low accountability* for the leader, for a similar procedure, see Kramer et al., 1993). The other half of the leaders read that all communication between the group members would be saved and might possibly be viewed by the other groups and the experimenter (*high accountability* for the leader).

Thereafter, the leader received a message from group member C in which the group member explained that (s)he had acted unethically (i.e., cheated) in solving the problems. Specifically, the email read:

"Hey! I have to admit that these sums were rather difficult, but I found a paper with notes from a previous participant that had the correct answers. ☺ So, I copied the answers…I finished really quickly!"

After reading this message, we solicited the manipulation checks and our measure of leader disapproval. Finally, we thanked, debriefed, and paid the participants.

Measures. Participants responded to all measures on a seven-point Likert-scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*; 7 = *Strongly agree*).

We checked for *leader instrumentality* with two the items including "The bonus will be completely divided among the other three group members [reversed item]" and "I will receive the largest part of the bonus", $r = .44$, $p < .001$)

We checked *leader accountability* with three items ($\alpha = .91$). These items were "The interactions between me and my fellow group members will not be visible to the experimenter or the other groups [reversed item]", "All interactions between me and my fellow group member will be saved and will be visible to the experimenter and the other groups", and "All interactions between me and my fellow group members will be private [reversed item]".

We measured *leader disapproval* of his/her follower's behavior with two items. We asked the participants to what extent they wanted to compliment group member C [reversed] and to what extent they disapproved of group members C's performance. These two items were combined into one average disapproval score ($\alpha = .91$).

4.2.2 Results

Manipulation checks. A two-way (accountability vs instrumentality) ANOVA on perceived instrumentality for the leader revealed a significant main effect of instrumentality, $F(1,98) = 6,48$, $p < .05$, showing that participants in the

high instrumentality condition believed more strongly they would receive the largest part of the bonus ($M = 2.90$; $SD = 1.52$) than participants in the low instrumentality condition ($M = 2.26$, $SD = 1.15$). Neither the main effect of accountability, $F(1,98) < 1$, *ns*, nor the interaction, $F(1,98) = 2,25$, $p = .12$ was significant.

A two-way ANOVA revealed that participants in the high accountability condition experienced higher accountability ($M = 5.42$, $SD = 1.51$) than those in the low accountability condition ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 1.48$), $F(1,98) = 86,29$, $p < .001$. Neither the main effect of instrumentality, $F(1,98) = 2.25$, $p = .14$ nor the interaction, $F(1,98) < 1$, *ns*, was significant. In sum, both the instrumentality and accountability manipulation appear to be successfully and independently induced.

Leader disapproval. A two-way ANOVA with leader disapproval as dependent variable revealed no main effect of instrumentality, $F(1,98) < 1$, *ns*, or accountability, $F(1,98) < 1$, *ns*. However, as hypothesized, a significant interaction was found, $F(1,98) = 4,77$, $p < .05$, see Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1.

Table 4.1: Leader's Disapproval of UFB by Accountability and Instrumentality (Study 4.1)

	Low Instrumentality for Leader		High Instrumentality for Leader	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Low Accountability Leader	4.08	1.52	4.46	1.43
High Accountability Leader	5.00	1.59	4.05	1.66

N = 102

Simple effects tests revealed a significant effect of accountability, but only in the low instrumentality condition $F(1,98) = 4,64$, $p < .05$, and not in the high instrumentality condition $F(1,98) < 1$, *ns*. Specifically, leaders disapproved more of the unethical act of their follower when they could be held accountable, but only when they themselves did not benefit from this unethical act of the follower.

Figure 4.1: The Interaction Effect of Accountability and Instrumentality on Leader Disapproval (Study 4.1).
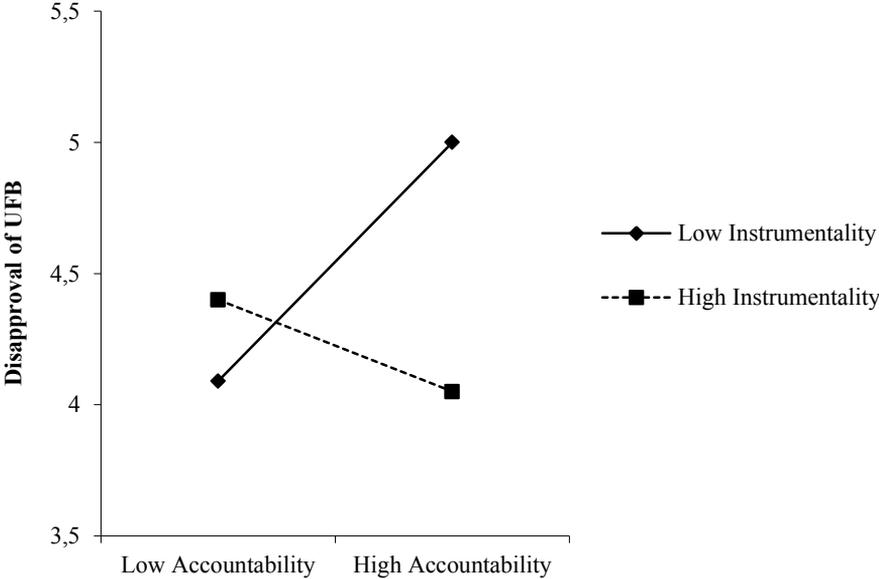
4.2.3 Discussion

The findings from Study 4.1 provide support for our predicted interaction effect: Leaders disapproved more of UFB when they could be held accountable for their decision, but only when this UFB was not instrumental in serving the leader's self-interest. To our knowledge, these findings are the first empirical evidence to show that leaders are not always consistent in showing disapproval of UFB. Specifically, it shows that accountability might not always be an effective tool in motivating leaders to do the morally right thing (i.e. display disapproval), particularly when the leader personally benefits from the UFB.

Importantly, these findings also illustrate that conditions exist under which followers more easily can get away with being unethical, consequently promoting

the emergence of unethical behavior in organizations. That is, leaders display less disapproval when instrumentality is high and/or when accountability is low. If followers are aware and accurate in predicting these specific conditions then the risk may exist that followers will act on these beliefs and thus display unethical behavior under those specific conditions where leaders are more likely to condone UFB. As a consequence, unethical behavior may even prevail in organizations. Therefore in Study 4.2, we wanted to examine whether followers are aware of those exact situations where they can get away with being unethical and those situations where their leader will disapprove of their unethical actions. Put differently, do followers correctly predict leaders' reactions to UFB?

4.3 STUDY 4.2

4.3.1 Method

Participants and design. Ninety-nine undergraduate students at a Dutch university (54 males, 45 females, M_{age} = 21.15 SD = 1.73) participated voluntarily in the study for research credits.

Procedure. Participants were seated in adjacent yet soundproof cubicles, in which they were presented with a vignette situation. Specifically, all participants read a scenario in which they engaged in unethical behavior.

You are working for an insurance company specialized in car insurances. Through a friend who works at the CBR (Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheid; a Dutch agency that takes care of drivers' licenses) you've gotten hold of a customer base with the names and addresses of individuals who have just passed their driver's exam. As a consequence you are now in possession of a large list of potential customers that you could benefit greatly from. However, the list was confidential and therefore illegally obtained by you.

Participants then indicated the type of situation in which they anticipated their supervisor to disapprove of their behavior the most. We presented four potential situations to the participants in which we independently varied whether the employees' unethical behavior was *instrumental* to the leader and whether the leader could be held *accountable* for the employees' actions. Specifically, the leader could either benefit from the employee's unethical behavior as it would increase his/her chances to obtain a bonus (i.e., *high instrumentality* for leader) or the employees unethical behavior did not affect the leader's chance of obtaining a bonus (i.e., *low instrumentality* for the leader). With regard to *accountability* of the leader, we varied whether there was a real possibility that a third party (i.e., a watchdog for insurance companies) would find out about the illegal obtainment of the customer base (*high accountability*), or whether this possibility was almost nonexistent *(low accountability)*. After being presented with and choosing from these four situations, participants were thanked and debriefed.

Table 4.2: Percentage of Followers That Believed their Unethical Act Would Result in the Most Leader Disapproval in Specific Situation (Study 4.2).

	Low Instrumentality UFB for Leader	High Instrumentality UFB for Leader
Low Accountability for Leader	8.1%	3 %
High Accountability for Leader	79.8.%	9.1 %

N = 99

4.3.2 Results

As predicted, a significant majority of participants (79.8 %, see Table 4.2 for all percentages) believed that their leader would disapprove of their behavior the most when there was a chance that a third party would found out about the unethical act (i.e., *high accountability*) and when the leader could not personally benefit from the employees' action (i.e., *low instrumentality*), $\chi^2(3) = 159,38$, $p < .001$. From this result, we can conclude that followers appear to assess accurately when their leader will disapprove of UFB the most. Indeed, in Study 4.1 we found that leaders disapproved the most of UFB in the specific situation where they could be held accountable and did not personally benefit from UFB. Taken together, our findings thus show that (a) leaders are not always consistent in taking proactive actions (i.e., by displaying disapproval) against unethical followers, and (b) that followers appear to be aware of this.

4.4. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Organizational leaders play an indispensable role in influencing the ethical and unethical decisions and acts of their followers (Trevino et al., 2000, 2003). One important way through which leaders can create an ethical climate in which it is clear what is morally acceptable and not, is by disapproving unethical follower behavior (UFB; Brown & Trevino, 2006). To date, research has failed to account for those factors that influence when leaders actually display such disapproval. In the present study, we argued that accountability activates reputational concerns and puts social pressure on leaders to do the morally right thing, that is, to show disapproval of UFB. Additionally, we argued that accountability might be less effective in facilitating leader disapproval when the leader personally benefits from UFB. In this case, leaders face a conflict of interest between what's morally right and what is best for their own interest. When confronted with such conflicts

of interest, people automatically and intuitively reason and act more in terms of their own interest (Chugh et al., 2005; Moore & Loewenstein, 2004; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004). For that reason, we proposed that in such conditions self-interest might inhibit the social pressure that accountability puts on leaders to do disapprove of UFB. Consequently, we hypothesized that leaders that are held accountable will be more likely to display disapproval of UFB, but particularly so when the UFB is not instrumental to the leaders' own interest. In an experimental lab study we found support for this line of reasoning. To our knowledge, these findings provide the first empirical evidence that leaders sometimes fail to disapprove of UFB and inherently that conditions exist in which followers can get away with engaging in unethical acts.

Our finding that leaders are not consistent in displaying disapproval brings with it an interesting possibility. That is, followers might particularly engage in unethical acts in those situations where they are more likely to get away with it. For this behavior to emerge, we need to examine whether followers indeed understand or are aware of the specific conditions under which leaders will display less disapproval. Therefore, we designed a second study, which focused on followers' expectations of leader disapproval. We argued that followers are motivated to understand the actions of their leader (Galinsky et al., 2006; Kelley, 1972; Lind, 2001). and that followers often believe that leaders act in line with their self-interest (Fiske, 1993; 2001). Therefore, we argued that followers might accurately predict that their leader will disapprove of UFB the most when the leader does not personally benefit from UFB and when their leader's reputation is on the line (i.e., when their leader can be held accountable). As expected, our findings show that followers predict correctly, and are aware of those situations when leaders disapprove of UFB the most. Taken together, our findings thus show that leaders disapprove less of UFB when they personally benefit from this

unethical follower act even when they can be held accountable and that followers are aware of this inconsistency.

4.4.1 Theoretical implications

The present findings contribute to the ethical leadership literature in several ways. First, whereas the literature on ethical leadership often focuses on what ethical leaders should do and why they should do this (i.e. a *prescriptive* approach), the present study examines how leaders actually react to unethical acts committed by their followers (a *descriptive* approach as advocated by the behavioral ethics perspective, De Cremer, 2009). By adopting such a descriptive approach, we also respond to recent calls for (a) more research on antecedents rather than consequences of leader behavior (e.g., Bommer et al., 2004; Scott et al., 2009) and (b) more research on the role that followers play in the psychology of leadership (see Shamir, 2007 for an overview).

Furthermore, our findings show that taking an instrumental perspective on ethical leadership behaviors provides a fruitful research avenue. Leaders' actions, just as human beings in general are sometimes affected by self-interested motives (Eisenhardt, 1989) and this seems particularly relevant with regard to how leaders respond to the unethical behavior of others. The fact that our findings show that leaders show less disapproval of UFB when they personally profit from it (i.e., and the interests of the leader and follower are thus aligned), even when they are socially pressured to make the morally right choice, stands testimony to the strength of self-interested motives. Adopting this instrumental perspective, we feel it is important to stress that to date, past research focusing on aligned interests of leaders and followers particularly focused on predicting *positive* behaviors such as cooperation, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1998; Settoon et al., 1996). For instance, strong follower

identification with the organization and trust in the leader is associated with more cooperative behavior (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004). In contrast, our research takes a first step in showing how the alignment of interests between followers and leaders can sometimes also affect negative behaviors that have moral consequences, like condoning UFB.

Our findings do not only identify instrumentality of UFB and accountability as important factors influencing leader's disapproval of UFB, but also represent a more dynamic description of unethical behavior in organizations. Specifically, our research zoomed in on how leaders react to UFB and whether followers can anticipate upon this behavior. Our findings first of all showed when leaders are most likely to disapprove of UFB (Study 4.1). This is an important finding, because a display of disapproval indicates to followers that unethical acts are not tolerated which should decrease UFB in the future. At the same time our findings also showed that followers accurately predict when leaders will disapprove the most of UFB (Study 4.2). This accurate prediction introduces the possibility that followers might be motivated to especially engage in unethical acts when the likelihood of being spoken to by their leader is least likely. As such, the relationship between leader and followers seems clearly more dynamic than suggested by prior literature portraying leaders as simply influencing followers (rather than vice versa) (e.g., Goffee and Jones, 2001; Northouse, 2004).

4.4.2 Practical implications

What can organizations do to stimulate leaders' display of disapproval when confronted with UFB in their ranks? First of all, organizations should be aware that leaders might not always act in line with the company's interest, but that their behavior is sometimes influenced by their own self-interest. Moreover,

leaders may not always be aware that this is the case (cf. Chugh et al., 2005; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004; Moore & Loewenstein, 2004).

Furthermore, because of the way organizations are structured, leader and follower interests are often intertwined. An obvious solution would be to try and disentangle the interests of leaders and followers where possible, for instance by making leader bonuses independent of follower performance. However, because team work is pervasive in organizations, such independence is not easy to achieve. What may be more practical for organizations, is stressing to their managers the importance of displaying disapproval of UFB, for instance through training. Organizational leaders should be made aware that although condoning UFB might seem beneficial to them in the short term, this can backfire in the long term when unethical behavior increases and escalates in their ranks. Moreover, such training sessions should also educate managers about the psychological processes that come into play when self-interest is involved. Although some of these processes work automatically and unconsciously and thus are difficult to recognize, making leaders aware of the potential (psychological) effects should be a first step. Indeed, as noted by Tenbrunsel & Messick (2004, p. 234) "by confronting the tendency toward self-deception head on, we will be more likely to reduce its prevalence than if we ignore it and act if it did not exist".

As we mentioned in the introduction of the present paper, leaders may experience strong negative emotions when having to take action against employees and therefore might be reluctant to do so (Ball & Sims, 1991; Butterfield et al., 1996). Therefore, it might also be worthwhile for organizations to train their leaders *how* to take disciplinary actions (Cole & Latham, 1997). The purpose of such training programs should be to reduce the negativity managers often associate with taking action against employees and to give them the right tools on how to react when confronted with unwanted follower behavior. Specifically, it is important for leaders to take disciplinary actions in a fair manner.

For instance, leader's disciplinary actions should be done privately and in a timely manner, the leader should explain to the unethical follower why the leader shows disapproval and finally, give the follower an opportunity to explain his/her actions (Ball et al., 1992). Taking disciplinary action in a fair manner increases acceptance of the punishment and has the potential to reduce most of the negative emotions surrounding disciplinary actions for both the followers and leaders (Ball et al., 1992).

4.4.3 Limitations and future research

It should be noted that although this research takes an innovative approach to examine UFB and leader's reactions to such behavior, it is not without limitations. A first potential limitation is that although we proposed that self-interest might inhibit the effect of accountability on leader disapproval of UFB, we did not include a direct measure for the proposed underlying psychological process (e.g., automatic and self-enhancing processing invoked by self-interest) that drives this interaction effect. To rule out alternative explanations, future research should include such a measure and further examine and identify the underlying processes of UFB and leader's reactions to such acts. A possible way to do this could be to include an implicit measure such as a word completion task (for a similar procedure, see Karremans & Aarts, 2007) in which the accessibility of the construct of self-interest is measured.

A second limitation might be that we did not test our predicted interaction effect in an organizational setting. Although we present findings that are high in internal validity, there might be concerns about the generalizability of our findings. Still it has been argued that an experimental approach can be a very useful strategy in studying business ethics, for instance because it reduces the probability of evoking socially desirable responses (Trevino, 1992). It has also

been found that results obtained in the laboratory and the field often are very similar (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2002, 2004; Locke, 1986). Nevertheless, it would be interesting to see whether we can replicate our findings with actual managers in actual organizations.

A final potential limitation is that although we show that followers accurately predict when leaders will disapprove of UFB the most, we do not have evidence that followers will actually engage in such behavior in those situations where they expect the likelihood of being caught is the smallest. Examining whether employees are this strategic in engaging in unethical behavior should provide an intriguing avenue for future research. Some research indirectly suggests that this might be the case. First of all, as we discussed in the present paper, human beings are vulnerable to self-enhancing biases (Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004). These same biases should make it more likely that followers will engage in unethical behavior in situations that are the most beneficial for them (i.e., low risk of being disciplined by leader). Second, research on social dilemmas has shown that group members often coordinate their actions on the expected actions of others (e.g., Wubben et al., 2009). Taken together, this provides a starting point for studying unethical behavior in a dynamic two-way manner.

4.4.4 Concluding remarks

The present study dealt with an important part of being an ethical leader, that is, to show disapproval when being confronted with unethical follower behavior. Our findings provide more insight in how holding leaders accountable and leaders' self-interest facilitate and inhibit such leader behavior. Furthermore, by focusing on leader behavior and at the same time at follower expectations of that behavior, our research takes a first step in a more complete and dynamic understanding of ethical leadership.

CHAPTER 5

DISCIPLINING UNETHICAL FOLLOWERS: HOW LEADERS' MORAL IDENTITY AFFECTS THEIR REACTIONS TO COMPETENCE AND INTEGRITY VIOLATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Following the news, one cannot help but observe the important role organizational leaders often play in business scandals. Not only are they held responsible for their own unethical actions (e.g., in the Enron case), they are also expected to manage the (un)ethical conduct of other organizational members (Trevino & Brown, 2005). Indeed, a crucial part of ethical leadership is to take disciplinary action when confronted with *unethical follower behavior* (UFB from now on, Brown & Trevino, 2006). Such disciplinary action communicates to unethical followers and to other organizational members that the behavior is considered unacceptable in the organization, making it less likely that the unethical act will recur or be copied in the future (Chonko & Hunt, 1985). In contrast, when leaders fail to address UFB, unethical behavior will continue to prevail (Hunt & Vasquez-Parraga, 1993; Offerman, 2004). Furthermore, this will likely lead to a sense of injustice among other employees who expect leaders to take action against unethical co-workers (Trevino & Ball, 1992).

Given the importance of leader's disciplinary actions in managing UFB, it becomes important to understand what drives such leader behavior. A key factor that has been identified in the literature is that leaders' disciplinary use is influenced by how they interpret and attribute poor or unwanted follower performance (e.g., Ashansky, 1989; Gioia & Sims, 1986; Green & Mitchell, 1979; Martinko, Harvey & Douglas., 2007; Mitchell, Green & Wood, 1981; Rosen & Jerdee, 1974). For instance, research has shown that the valence of the outcome

(Fukami & Hopkins, 1993; Rosen & Jerdee, 1974), the severity of the bad performance or outcome (e.g., Trahan & Steiner, 1994; Wood & Mitchell, 1981) and performance history of the follower (Fukami & Hopkins, 1993; Rosen & Jerdee, 1974) all influence how strongly and harshly leaders will punish followers. Thus, it is clear that leaders' attributions about unwanted follower acts are important determinants of their decision to punish followers or not. However, research to date has not looked at how different attribution dimensions can influence leader reactions to UFB.

Two important attribution dimensions on which leaders might evaluate UFB is whether the unethical act is the result of a competence violation or of an integrity violation (cf. Martijn, Spears, Van der Plight & Jakobs, 1992; Rosenberg & Sedlak, 1972). Accounting fraud for instance might be the result of a lack of understanding of the rules of the follower (i.e., lack of competence), or the result of an intentional pursuit for personal gain by the follower (i.e., lack of integrity). Interestingly, whereas the outcome might be similar regardless of the violation type, an integrity violation of the follower might be weighed more strongly by the leader (Reeder & Brewer, 1979; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987, 1989).

We propose that whether integrity attributions loom larger in the execution of disciplinary actions of leaders will depend on the strength of leaders' moral identity. The more leaders define themselves as being a moral person, the more they will probe the situation in terms of morality (Mayer, Aquino, Greenbaum & Kuenzi, forthcoming; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). As a result, leaders high in moral identity should be more motivated to punish UFB caused by an integrity violation. In the present study, we thus aim to test the idea that leaders take harsher disciplinary action against followers committing an integrity violation compared to a competence violation, but this effect should only be the case for leaders with a strong moral identity.

5.1.1 Violation type: competence versus integrity

Building on attribution theory (Jones & Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1967), research has robustly shown that the harshness of leader reactions to unwanted behavior or performance of followers is affected by how they attribute the cause of such follower actions (for overviews, see Ashansky, 2002; Martinko et al., 2007). Such research however, has mainly examined the influence of poor follower performance rather than the UFB that we wish to address in the present study (for exceptions, see e.g., Bellizzi & Hasty, 2003; Bellizzi & Hite, 1989; DeConinck, 1992). Following Jones (p. 367, 1991), we define unethical behavior as acts "that are either illegal or morally unacceptable to the larger community" (p. 367, Jones, 1991).

Zooming in on leader reactions to UFB, one factor that is highly relevant but has not received empirical attention yet in the area of ethical leadership is whether the unethical act by the follower is caused by a competence or an integrity violation. Indeed, competence and integrity play an important role in the way people evaluate others (Martijn et al., 1992; Rosenberg & Sedlak, 1972), particularly in organizational settings (Kim, Dirks, Cooper & Ferrin, 2006). Here, *competence* is the degree to which an individual possesses the necessary technical and interpersonal skills for their job (Butler & Cantrell, 1984). *Integrity* on the other hand, can be defined as the degree to which individuals adhere to a set of principles that are considered acceptable (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995). In the present study we apply these two dimensions to UFB. That is, a follower can engage in an unethical act because of a competence violation (e.g., lack of understanding of organizational rules), or an integrity violation (e.g., intentionally cheating for personal gain). Thus, although the outcome of unethical behavior might be similar, the underlying cause of such behavior can differ. But, do leaders distinguish between competence and integrity violations when dealing with UFB?

Research has shown that people process positive and negative information on competence and integrity in a different manner (e.g., Kim et al., 2004, 2006; Reeder & Brewer, 1979). Specifically, people believe that highly competent persons can show many levels of performance depending on their motivation and on task or situational demands. Therefore, a single competence violation is often discounted as a signal of incompetence, because both incompetent and competent persons can sometimes perform badly in certain situations (e.g., due to a lack of motivation). Intriguingly, an opposite inference is made for integrity. That is, people intuitively expect a person with high integrity to never engage in immoral or unethical behavior, whereas people with low integrity can act (im)moral depending on the situation. Therefore, compared to a competence violation, a single integrity violation is highly diagnostic about a person's character and will likely result in perceptions of low integrity (Kim et al., 2004, 2006; Martijn et al., 1992; Reeder & Brewer 1979; Reeder & Coovert, 1986; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987, 1989).

Because negative information about integrity is more informative and diagnostic than negative information about competence, it follows that integrity violations are weighed more strongly by observers than competence violations (e.g., Skowronski & Carlston, 1987, 1989). In support of this, Martijn et al. (1992) for example showed that negative traits on the integrity dimension (i.e., unreliable and hypocritical) are judged more negatively and given more weight than negative traits on the competence dimension (i.e., dull and stupid). In a similar fashion, Wojciszke, Bazinska & Jaworski (1998) found that information about others' integrity has a stronger influence on people's impression formation than information about others' competence.

Although these findings concerning the competence and integrity dimensions have not been applied to leaders, they seem highly relevant for understanding how leaders evaluate and react to UFB that is the result of either a

competence or an integrity violation. Indeed, attribution of causality and responsibility of followers' behavior has been found to play an important role in leaders' reactions towards these followers (for a recent overview see Martinko et al., 2007), including disciplinary actions (e.g., Bellizzi, 2003; Green & Liden, 1980; Mitchell et al., 1981). Arguably the most robust finding is that internal attributions (e.g., a lack of effort or motivation) rather than external attributions (e.g., bad luck, or situational variables) about bad follower performance led to harsher disciplinary actions by the leader (for an overview, see Martinko et al., 2007). Thus, leaders have been found to take the cause of unwanted follower behavior into account in their reactions to such behavior.

Based on the above, it stands to reason that a competence violation will be weighed less heavily and discounted more by a leader than an integrity violation. A single competence violation of a follower is more likely to be perceived as a one-off occurrence by the leader. In contrast, a single integrity violation is sufficient for a leader to perceive that this follower lacks integrity. Furthermore, a lack of integrity signals that the follower might show such unethical behavior again in the future. Therefore, leaders should be motivated to take disciplinary action against UFB that is caused by an integrity violation. Hence, we expect leaders to take stronger disciplinary actions against UFB that is caused by an integrity violation rather than a competence violation.

At the same time, despite its importance, several studies report relatively low rates of discipline use of leaders against unwanted follower behavior (e.g., Judge & Martocchio, 1995). This observation corresponds with the idea that punishing others is considered to be a highly negative emotional experience (Ball & Sims, 1991; Butterfield, Trevino & Ball, 1996), which makes leaders somewhat reluctant to punish unethical followers. Moreover, leaders may vary in the importance they assign to morality and integrity. Indeed, research has shown that people vary in how central moral values are to their identity (*moral identity*; e.g.,

Aquino & Reed, 2002). For this reason, we propose that whether leaders undertake harsher disciplinary actions against integrity violations (relative to competence violations) depends on the intrinsic importance leaders place on integrity violations. This is likely determined by leader's moral identity.

5.1.2 Moral identity

Moral identity is a relatively stable individual characteristic, which can be defined as "the cognitive schema a person holds about his or her moral character" (p. 124, Aquino et al., 2009). The more central moral identity is to ones self-definition, the more easily this schema will be accessible and activated in information processing (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Moreover, people who see moral values as an important part of their identity are motivated to act in accordance with that identity (Aquino, Freeman, Reed, Lim & Felps, 2009; Blasi, 1980, 1984, 2004; Damon & Hart, 1992; Erikson, 1964; Shao, Aquino, & Freeman, 2008). Indeed, moral identity has been argued to play a key role in the relationship between moral evaluations and moral behavior (e.g., Aquino, Reed, Thau & Freeman, 2007; Aquino & Freeman, 2009; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). The explanation for this is that people want to be consistent with their idea of being a moral person (Blasi, 1984, 2004). Hence, moral identity is regarded to be an important motivator for moral action (Aquino & Freeman, 2009; Blasi, 1984; Damon & Hart, 1992; Hardy & Carlo, 2005).

Several studies have shown that individuals with a strong moral identity are more willing to engage in moral acts, such as volunteering and other charitable behaviors (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). In addition, they are less likely to engage in lying in business negotiations (Aquino et al., 2009) and in antisocial behaviors such as intent to injure opponents or fooling the referee while playing football (Sage, Kavussanu & Duda, 2006). More recently, moral

identity has also been linked to ethical leadership (Mayer et al., forthcoming), showing that the moral identity of leaders motivates them to display ethical leadership. Leaders with a strong moral identity can thus be considered to care more about making decisions that are in accordance with moral values.

Based on these insights, we propose that the strength of leaders' moral identity will act as a moderator of the relationship between violation type of UFB (competence versus integrity) and leaders' disciplinary use. That is, leaders with a strong moral identity should be expected to evaluate a display of lack of integrity of a follower more negatively than leaders with a low moral identity. Moreover, leaders with a high, rather than a low moral identity are more motivated to act in a manner that is consistent with their moral schema. This should take form in how they respond to an integrity violation of the follower. Specifically, we expect that leaders will take harsher disciplinary actions against UFB when this is caused by an integrity violation rather than a competence violation, but this will only be the case for leaders with a strong moral identity .

5.1.3 The present study

The aim of the present research is to examine how the type of follower violation (competence vs. integrity) and the moral identity of the leader predict disciplinary actions of the leader against UFB. Our predictions were tested across two experimental studies. In Study 5.1, we first manipulated moral identity using a priming procedure (Aquino et al., 2009). That is, although moral identity is a relatively stable individual characteristic, the accessibility of this moral self-schema can also differ across situations (Lapsley & Lasky, 2001; Aquino et al., 2009). Priming moral values is one way to temporarily activate and increase the accessibility of individuals' moral identity. Indeed, research has shown that doing so increases the influence of moral identity on behavior (Aquino et al., 2009).

After being primed with moral values, participants were assigned to a leader position in an interdependent trust game with a follower. The reason we chose this type of game is because it simulates the interdependent relationship leaders and followers have in organizations (e.g., Hollander, 1992). Indeed, leaders place trust in their followers, and followers can violate this trust when they engage in unethical behavior (Hollander, 1995). Therefore, in Study 5.1 the leaders were presented with the opportunity to invest 10 euros in their follower. The followers received this amount tripled (30 euros) and had to decide how much they wished to return to the leader. A cooperative choice by both parties would yield a positive outcome for both parties. However, against the expectations of the leaders their follower returned only 5 euros (i.e., violating the equal division rule). Moreover, we manipulated whether the follower did this intentionally (i.e., an integrity violation) or due to a lack of understanding of the rules (i.e., a competence violation).

In Study 5.2, we used a laboratory setting with more external validity. In contrast to Study 5.1 where we manipulated moral identity salience, we measured the dispositional moral identity of our leaders before the study. Next, participants engaged in an in basket task in which they had to take on the role of a plant manager of a painting manufacturer. They had to respond to a series of e-mails of co-workers concerning the everyday functioning of their company. One of these e-mails concerned an unethical act (i.e., tax fraud) of an employee. We manipulated whether this act was caused either by an integrity or competence violation.

5.2 STUDY 5.1

5.2.1 Method

Participants and design. One hundred and twelve business administration undergraduates from a Dutch university (60 males, 52 females, M_{age} = 20.32 SD = 2.05) participated voluntarily in the study. They were randomly assigned to a 2 (UFB violation type: competency vs integrity) x 2 (moral identity: salient vs. not salient) between-subjects design.

Procedure. On arrival, participants were placed in adjacent yet soundproof cubicles containing a table, a chair and a computer. All communication was done via the computer which participants believed to be linked to a central server. At the start of the experiment they were asked to first participate in a supposedly unrelated study. This study constituted our moral identity manipulation and was framed as a handwriting task (for a similar procedure, see Aquino et al, 2009; Study 4). This priming procedure has been successfully used in a series of recent studies (Aquino et al., 2007; Aquino et al., 2009; Reed, Aquino & Levy, 2007). In the task, half of our participants were assigned to the moral prime condition (salient moral identity), and the other half to the control group manipulation (not salient moral identity). Participants were presented with a 9x3 matrix. The first column of this matrix featured nine words, and participants were asked to copy and write down these words in the remaining two columns. In the salient moral identity condition, these nine words were moral traits (e.g., caring, honest, fair), whereas in the not salient moral identity condition the nine words presented were morally neutral (e.g., chair, table, kitchen). After writing each word down twice, participants were asked to think about the words for a moment, and then to write a story about themselves in which they used all nine words.

Upon finishing the handwriting task, participants learned that they would be paired with another person in the lab, with whom they would engage in a computer-mediated interaction task. Furthermore, they believed that one of them would be appointed as the leader and the other as the follower. Allocation of these roles would be based on their responses to a questionnaire they were required to fill out at the start of the experiment. This questionnaire was said to measure leadership skills. In reality however, every participant was appointed the leader position (for a similar procedure, see Hoogervorst, De Cremer & Van Dijke, forthcoming).

Next, participants were provided with instructions concerning the interaction task. To create interdependence between leaders and followers in the present experiment, the interaction task consisted of a trust game (introduced by Berg, Dickhaut & McCabe, 1995). Indeed, in organizations, leaders and followers interact in a mutually dependent relationship in which trust plays an indispensable role. Similar to leader-follower relations in actual organizations, the trust game is a simple, yet concise paradigm in which both leaders and followers can have mutually beneficial outcomes if they cooperate with each other. However, leaders have to place trust in their follower (i.e., invest resources) to do the right thing as there is the risk that the follower decides not to cooperate with the leader (i.e., give little or nothing in return).

In the trust game we designed for this study, leaders learned they would be allocated an amount of 10 euros which they could decide to invest in their follower. Leaders who did not want to invest in their follower would receive half of this amount (5 euros) and they would be thanked and debriefed after which the experiment would be terminated. However, if they did decide to invest 10 euros in their follower, the follower would receive this amount tripled (30 euros). The follower would then have to decide how much (from 0 to 30 euros) s/he would return to his/her leader. To further enhance interdependence between leaders and

follower, participants learned that they would play multiple rounds of the game. Finally, they were told that the leader would be the first allocator in every round.

To check whether the rules of the interaction task were clear to participants, three questions were asked (sample item: "You have invested 10 euros and your follower has decided to return half of the amount s/he received. How much did you get?"). An additional reason for posing these questions at this stage of the experiment was that we could use them as a setup for our UFB violation type manipulation. Specifically, half of our participants learned that their follower had answered all questions correctly and thus had a clear understanding of the interaction task at hand (setup for an integrity violation). The other half of our participants learned that their follower had only 1 correct answer, which made it doubtful whether the follower had a clear understanding of the rules (setup for a competence violation).

Next, our participants had to choose whether they wanted to invest 10 euros in their follower. All but one decided to do so, and we removed this person from further analyses. The amount of 10 euros that the leader invested was tripled and the followers supposedly received 30 euros. Within a minute they received a message of the amount they received in return from their follower. All participants received 5 euros in return. To check whether the participants read this information, we asked them two questions. First, we asked them to type in the amount of euros they had received. Second, we asked whether this was the amount they had expected (yes or no). All participants correctly indicated they had received 5 euros. Furthermore, all participants also indicated that this was not the amount they had expected (see also, Lutz, 2001).

After these questions, we introduced the second part of our violation type manipulation. The follower e-mailed a private message to the leader. In the competence violation condition, participants read:

Hey, I did not really understand the rules, but I gave you 10/2 = 5 euros.

In contrast, in the integrity violation condition, participants read:

Hey, I received 10 euros so I gave you 10/2 = 5 euros.

Note that in the competence violation condition, leaders had beforehand already received a message casting doubt about the follower's understanding of the rules. In contrast, in the integrity violation condition they received a message suggesting that the follower had a clear understanding of the rules. Also, both messages were a clear violation of what actually happened (i.e., the follower received 30 euros, not 10)

Upon reading this information, the dependent measures of Study 5.1 were solicited. Participants were informed that, because of their leader role, they could take action against their follower. Specifically, the leaders could (a) issue a warning against their follower (yes or no) and (b) claim a money return from their follower. After they answered these questions, they were told that because of time constraints no further rounds would be played. Participants were thanked and debriefed.

Measures. Participants responded to all measures on a seven-point Likert-scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*; 7 = *Strongly agree*).

Manipulation checks. To assess whether our manipulation of Violation Type was successful, participants were asked to what extent they believed the other person acted intentionally.

Dependent measures. Two measures of leader's disciplinary use were included in Study 5.1. As a first measure, participants were given the option to issue a warning to their follower or not. In an additional measure of disciplinary action, leaders were also provided with the opportunity to claim money back from their follower (from zero to a maximum of 25 euros).

5.2.2 Results

Manipulation check. A two-way ANOVA on the manipulation check revealed that our manipulation of UFB violation type was successful. Specifically, a significant main effect of UFB violation type was found, $F(1,108) = 18.29$, $p < .01$, showing that people in the integrity violation condition believed the other person to have acted intentionally more than in the competence violation condition ($Ms = 5.27$ vs 4.21, $SDs = 1.25$ and 1.45 respectively). Neither the main effect of moral identity salience $F(1,108) = 1.27$, $p = .26$, nor the interaction effect was significant $F(1,108) < 1$, $p = .36$.

Leader's disciplinary use. As a first measure of leader's use of discipline, participants were given the option to issue a warning to the other person or not. To analyze this categorical item (issue a warning: yes or no), we performed a hierarchical logistic regression analysis. We entered violation type and moral identity salience as categorical predictors, as well as the two-way interaction in Step 1.

Note that logistic regression necessitates reliance on tests of odds and odds ratios to establish the significance of these effects. Here, an odd significantly larger than 1 means that issuing a warning to the unethical follower is significantly more likely than not issuing a warning. In contrast, an odd significantly smaller than 1 signals that issuing a warning is significantly less likely than not issuing a warning. Furthermore, an odds ratio a/b significantly larger than 1 means that chances of issuing a warning are significantly larger in the a than in the b category. Such an odds ratio being significantly smaller than 1 means that the likelihood of issuing a warning is significantly smaller in the a than in the b category (see Table 5.1 for an overview of these results). For our simple effects tests, we followed procedures as outlined by Jaccard (2001).

Table 5.1: Odds and Odds Ratios for the Effects of UFB Violation Type and Moral Identity Salience on Leader's Decision to Issue a Warning in Study 5.1

| | Moral Identity Salience | | |
	Not Salient Moral Identity	Salient Moral Identity	Not Salient/Salient
Competence Violation	2.14[#]	1.00	2.14
Integrity Violation	1.36	2.38*	.57
Competence / Integrity	1.58	.42[#]	3.75*

*Note: Table presents odds and odds ratios for giving a warning. * p < .05; [#] p < .10.*

At Step 1, no significant main effects of violation type and moral identity salience were found. However, as expected, we did find an interaction effect between violation type and moral identity salience, (B = -1.32, SE = .80; Wald's χ^2 (1, (N = 112)) = 2.71, p = .05, tested one-sided, Nagelkerke R^2 = .04).

Figure 5.1: Effects of UFB Violation Type and Moral Identity on Warning Probabilities (Study 5.1).
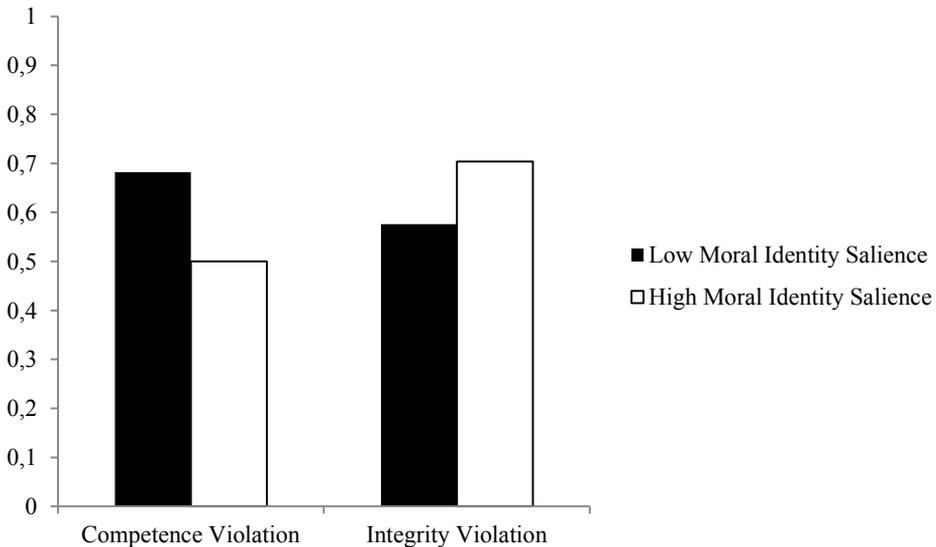
A closer inspection of the results (see Figure 5.1 and Table 5.1) revealed that leaders in the moral identity salience condition were significantly more likely to issue a warning than not in the integrity violation condition (warning rate = .70; odd = 2.38; $p < .05$), but not in the competence violation condition (warning rate = .50; odd = 1.00, n.s.). Furthermore, leaders with a salient moral identity were less likely to issue a warning when confronted with a competence violation than when confronted with an integrity violation (warning rate .50 vs. .70; *odds ratio* = .42; *p* =.06). In contrast, leaders in the control group (i.e., the not salient moral identity group) were marginally more likely to issue a warning than not in the competence violation condition (warning rate = .68; odd = 2.14; p < .10), but not in the integrity violation condition (warning rate = .58; odd = 1.36, n.s.). However, leaders in the not salient moral identity were not significantly more nor significantly less likely to issue a warning when confronted with a competence violation than when confronted with an integrity violation (warning rate .68 vs. .58; *odds ratio* = 1.58, *n.s.*)

As a second measure of disciplinary action, leaders were provided with the opportunity to claim money back from their follower (from zero to a maximum of 25 euros). In line with our hypothesis, a 2 x 2 ANOVA (UFB violation type x moral identity salience) revealed only a significant interaction effect, $F(1,108) = 4.58$, $p < .05$, see Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.2: Interaction between UFB Violation Type and Moral Identity Salience on Amount of Money reclaimed by Leader from Person B (Study 5.1)
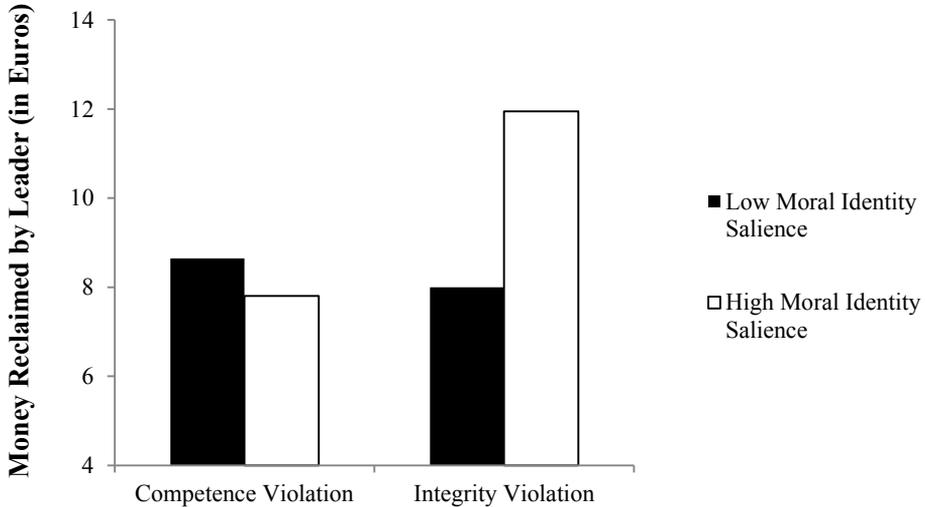
Simple effects test revealed a significant main effect of moral identity salience in the integrity violation condition $F(1,108) = 6.34$, $p < .05$, but not in the competence violation condition, $F(1,108) < 1$, $p = .56$. Specifically, leaders claimed more money from the follower when the unfair division was caused by an integrity violation of the follower than by a competence violation, but this was only the case for leaders with a salient moral identity.

5.3 STUDY 5.2

The findings of Study 5.1 provided evidence for our prediction that leaders distinguish between competence and integrity violations when disciplining unethical followers, but that this depends on leader's moral identity. Specifically, leaders whose moral identity was made salient punished their follower more harshly (i.e., issue a warning, claiming money) when the follower's unethical act was caused by an integrity violation rather than a competence violation.

In Study 5.1, we used a validated experimental game to elicit unethical behavior by the follower. That is, in a interdependent trust game the leader invested resources (i.e., 10 euros) in their follower. However, this follower offered an unexpected low return after lying about the resource to be divided (i.e., 10 euros instead of 30 euros). Such interdependence between the actions of leaders and followers is an important feature of organizational life. Another crucial aspect of organizational life is how leaders make decisions and respond to events in their organization. Therefore, to make our findings more applicable to organizational settings, we designed Study 5.2. In this study, we build our experiment around an in basket exercise. Such a managerial role playing exercise has been argued to provide realism and external validity in studying unethical behavior, while maintaining the advantages of doing research in a controlled environment (Trevino, 1992).

In addition, whereas we manipulated moral identity in Study 5.1, we measured the self-importance of moral identity in Study 5.2. The reason for this is that although the accessibility of moral identity can be affected across situations (e.g., by priming moral values as we did in Study 5.1), moral identity is also a rather stable individual personality variable (Aquino et al., 2009). Thus, in Study 5.2 we want to examine if we can replicate the findings of Study 5.1 in a more realistic environment, using a different measure of moral identity.

5.3.1 Method

Participants and design. Seventy-three business administration undergraduates from a Dutch university (39 males, 34 females, $M_{age} = 21.49$ $SD = 1.96$) participated voluntarily in the study in exchange for course credits. The study consisted of an UFB violation type (competence vs integrity) x moral

identity (continuous) between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to the violation type conditions.

Procedure. On arrival, participants were placed in adjacent yet soundproof cubicles containing a table, a chair and a computer. All communication was via the computer which participants believed to be linked to a central server. At the start of the experiment, participants were asked to fill out some questionnaires. The first questionnaire was our measure of moral identity. Specifically, we used Aquino & Reed's (2002) internalization subscale of their moral identity measure. This subscale has been found to be a robust predictor of moral attitudes and behavior (e.g, Aquino & Reed, 2002; Aquino et al., 2007; Detert, Trevino & Sweitzer, 2008). In this measure, participants are presented with 9 moral adjectives (e.g., honest, caring and fair) that can characterize a person. Subsequently, participants rate on five items to what extent these 9 adjectives are an important part of their own identity. The second questionnaire ostensibly measured leadership skills. We included this second questionnaire so that we could appoint leaders based on their responses to this questionnaire.

Upon entering the lab, participants believed that they would work on an *in basket* task, a test that is often used by companies in selection procedures to assess the suitability of applicants. In such tasks, job applicants are faced with a series of memo's, emails and documents which they have to prioritize, fit into their schedule and respond to. We chose this task, because it provides a more realistic work setting to our laboratory experiment (see also Trevino, 1992; Zedeck, 1986). In the present experiment, participants believed that they would test a new version of the in basket task. In the task, they could be appointed the role of group leader or group member (i.e., follower). This position would be determined by their scores on the questionnaire that they had answered at the beginning of the experiment, which supposedly measured leadership skills. Similar to Study 5.1, every participant was assigned to the leader position.

Before starting with the in basket task, our participants were provided with instructions about the content and procedure of the task. Additionally, they were provided with background information concerning their role. First, they read a detailed description of their role (i.e., plant manager). Second, they read about their company (i., a paint manufacturer and seller) and how their company was organized. Finally, they read about who their co-workers were and what their roles in the organization entailed. Overall, this information was meant to create a realistic, meaningful and engaging setting for participants.

Subsequently, participants received several e-mails from their co-workers in the company. The first e-mails that participants received were unrelated to the present study. We did this to get the participants acquainted with the procedure, but also to provide a cover story for the actual topic of study (i.e., leader's response to UFB). For instance, participants received an e-mail with a proposal to switch to another employment agency. In this e-mail, characteristics were given about this new agency compared to the present agency the company used for hiring temporary workers. Participants were then provided with several possible replies to these e-mails. For every possible reply (e.g., call a meeting with the new agency; I want to have a meeting with our present agency to see if we can make a better deal), participants had to indicate the extent to which they would want to send these replies. Participants received several of these type of e-mails concerning the everyday functioning of the company. Every e-mail required a response from the plant manager.

After these first e-mails, we introduced our manipulation of UFB violation type. This was done in the form of an e-mail that came from a co-worker from the financial department. We based this on the integrity vs. competence violation manipulation introduced by Kim et al., (2004, 2006). In the competency violation condition the e-mail read:

This week we received a tax refund that was higher than expected. I've discovered that one of our employees in the Finance department has made some mistakes in the tax forms. I think he filled out a lower turnover result because he was not aware of certain tax codes. How would you like to handle this?

In contrast, participants in the integrity violation condition read:

This week we received a tax refund that was higher than expected. I've discovered that one of our employees in the Finance department has made some mistakes in the tax forms. I think he deliberately filled out a lower turnover result. How would you like to handle this?

Upon reading this information, participants were presented with our dependent measures. Specifically, they received several answer options ranging from showing disapproval to firing the employee. For every potential reply to the e-mail, they had to rate to what extent they were willing to send this reply. As an additional (behavioral) measure, they were asked whether they wanted to issue a formal warning against the employee (yes/no).

Finally, participants were thanked for their participation and debriefed.

Measures. Participants responded to all measures on a seven-point Likert-scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*; 7 = *Strongly agree*), except otherwise noted.

Manipulation checks. To assess whether our manipulation of violation type was successful, participants responded to two questions. First, they rated to what extent they believed that the employee intentionally filled out the tax form wrong. Second, they rated to what extent they believed that the employee filled out the tax form wrongfully because this group member was not aware of tax codes? This second item was reversed coded, and both items were combined into an average scale ($\alpha = .73$) for further analyses.

Moral Identity. We measured moral identity using the 5-item internalization subscale from Aquino and Reed's (2002) moral identity measure (α

= .73, sample item "Being someone who has these characteristics is an important part of who I am").

Dependent measures. We measured leader's disciplinary use with 5 items inspired by the work of Mitchell et al. (1981). Items included "I plan to suspend this employee.", "I plan to fire this employee", "I want to give this employee a talking to.", "I want to show my disapproval of the employee's behavior.", "I want to issue a firm warning against this employee.". We combined these items into an average disciplinary use scale (α = .76) for further analyses. In addition, participants had to indicate whether they wanted to issue a formal warning to the follower (yes/no question).

5.3.2 Results

Manipulation checks. A one way ANOVA revealed that our manipulation of UFB violation type was successful. Indeed, a significant main effect of violation type was found, $F(1,71) = 78.22$, $p < .001$, showing that participants in the integrity violation condition felt more strongly that the employee had acted intentionally than participants in the competence violation condition (Ms = 4.16 vs 2.28, SDs = 1.03 and .78 respectively).

To analyze leader's disciplinary use, we centered leader's moral identity by subtracting the means before the analyses (Aiken & West, 1991). We effect-coded the violation type variable by assigning the value -1 to the competence violation condition and the value 1 to the integrity violation condition. Subsequently, we conducted hierarchical regression analyses to test the main effects (Step 1) and interaction effect (Step 2) of moral identity and UFB violation type on leader's use of discipline. We refer to Table 5.2 for the regression results.

Table 5.2: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis of Leader's Use of Discipline on UFB Violation Type and Moral Identity (Study 5.2)

	β	R^2	$Adj\ R^2$	R^2_{change}	df
Step 1		.08	.05	.08	2, 70
UFB Violation Type	.24*				
Leader's Moral Identity	.11				
Step 2		.20	.17	.13	3, 69
UFB Violation Type	.23*				
Leader's Moral Identity	.20				
UFB Violation Type x Leader's Moral Identity	.36**				

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

The analyses revealed a significant positive effect of violation type and leader's disciplinary use ($\beta = .23$, $p < .05$), and a marginally significant positive effect of moral identity ($\beta = .20$, $p = .08$). Importantly, a significant interaction effect was also found ($\beta = .36$, $p < .01$, see Figure 5.3). Simple slopes analyses (Aiken and West, 1991) revealed that, as expected, for leaders with a high moral identity (1 *SD* above the mean), an integrity violation was more likely to result in disciplinary measures of the leader than a competence violation ($\beta = .60$, $p < .001$). In contrast, when leader's moral identity was low (1 *SD* below the mean), integrity and competence violations were equally likely to result in disciplinary measures ($\beta = -.14$, $p = .39$).

Figure 5.3: Interaction between UFB Violation Type and Moral Identity on Leader's Use of Discipline (Study 5.2)
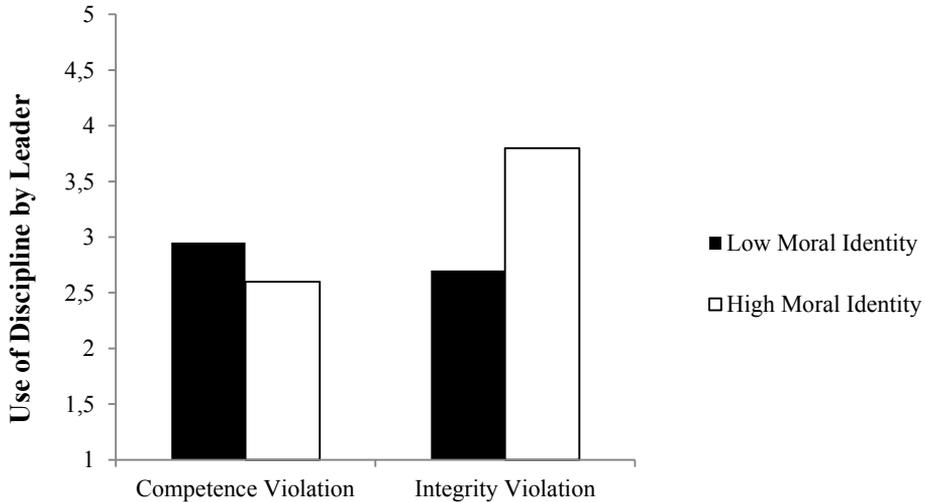
As an additional measure, participants were also given the option to give the unethical employee a formal warning or not. To analyze the result of this categorical item, we performed a logistic regression analysis using a similar procedure to Study 5.1 with one main difference. This time, violation type was entered as a categorical predictor, but moral identity as a continuous predictor. Similar to Study 5.1, the results only revealed a significant interaction between violation type and moral identity ($B = -1.40$, $SE = .70$; Wald's χ^2 (1, ($N = 73$)) = 4.03, $p = .05$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .11$).

Table 5.3: Odds and Odds Ratios for the Effects of UFB Violation Type and Moral Identity on Leader's Decision to Issue a Formal Warning in Study 5.2

	Moral Identity		
	Low	High	Low/High
Competence Violation	1.55	.45[#]	3.44*
Integrity Violation	.95	2.37*	.40*
Competence / Integrity	1.63	.19*	.25*

Notes: Table presents odds and odds ratios for giving a formal warning. * p < .05; [#] p < .10.

A closer inspection of the results (see Figure 5.4, and Table 5.3) revealed that, in line with our expectations, leaders with a high moral identity were significantly more likely to issue a formal warning than not in the integrity violation condition (warning rate = .70; odd = 2.38; $p < .05$). In the competence violation condition they were (marginally) significant more likely to not issue a warning (warning rate = .31; odd = .45, p< .10). Furthermore, high moral identity leaders were significantly more likely to issue a warning in the integrity violation condition than in the competence violation condition (warning rate .70 vs .31; *odds ratio* = .19; $p < .05$). No significant effects of violation type were found for leaders with a low moral identity, confirming our hypotheses.

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Figure 5.4. Effects of UFB Violation Type and Moral Identity on Formal Warning Probabilities (Study 5.2).
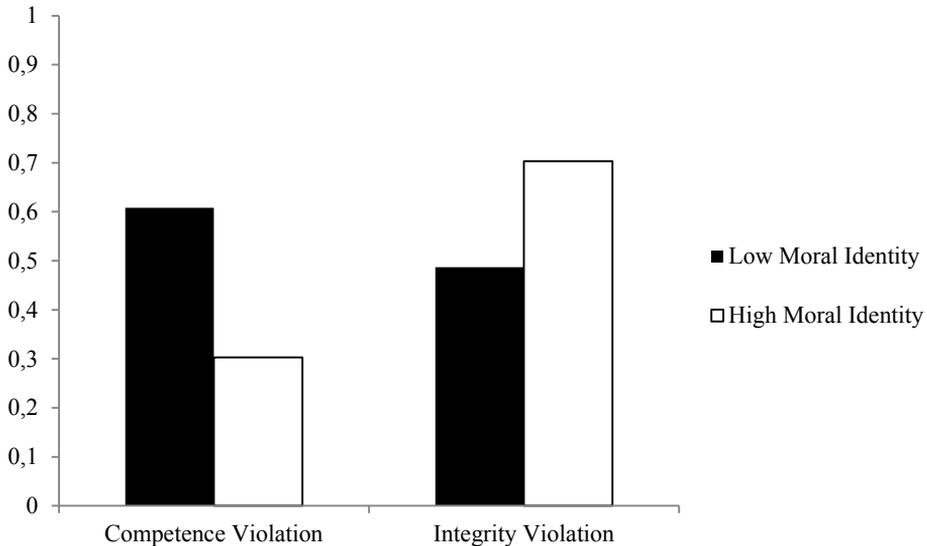
5.4 GENERAL DISCUSSION

Given the recent attention for ethics in society as well as in organizations, it becomes important to examine those factors that affect whether leaders consistently take action against unethical followers. In the present study, we examined leaders' disciplinary reactions to unethical follower behavior (UFB) that is caused by either a competence violation or an integrity violation by the follower. We predicted that leaders might weigh integrity violations more strongly, because such violations are more diagnostic about the follower's character than competence violations (e.g., Kim et al., 2004, 2006; Reeder & Brewer 1979). Consequently, the likelihood of recurrent unethical behavior by followers may be higher for integrity violations. Leaders, however, may differ in the way they assign importance to morality versus integrity issues. Specifically, we argued that whether leaders take stronger action against integrity violations

might depend on their moral identity (i.e., how central moral values are to their identity; Aquino & Reed, 2002). Across two experimental studies we found evidence for this line of reasoning: leaders took stronger disciplinary action against integrity violations compared to competence violations, but this was only the case for leaders with a strong moral identity.

5.4.1 Theoretical implications

The present study contributes in several ways to the existing literature. First of all, our research contributes to a more descriptive approach of ethical leadership research (Brown, Trevino & Harrison, 2005). The literature on ethical leadership has often focused on what ethical leaders should do and why they should do this (i.e. a *normative* approach). For instance, past research has revealed that leaders *should* consistently take action against unethical acts of followers (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Hunt & Vasquez-Parraga, 1993; Offerman, 2004). Recently, it has been advocated that research on ethical leadership should also focus on what leaders actually do and what the underlying motives for these actions are (i.e., a behavioral ethics approach; e.g., De Cremer, Mayer & Schminke, 2010; De Cremer, Tenbrunsel & Van Dijke, 2011). Our study fits in well with this *behavioral ethics* approach. In doing so, it is among the first to actually identify and examine factors that determine leaders reactions to UFB.

By examining antecedents rather than consequences of leader's disciplinary use, our research also contributes to the literature on punishments. Indeed, research on determinants of the use of discipline by leaders has received far less attention than research on the effects of such behavior (e.g., Podsakoff, 1982, Podsakoff, Bommer, Podsakoff & Mackenzie, 2006). Furthermore, those antecedents that were examined mainly focused on the poor performance of followers rather than unethical acts (Podsakoff, 1982; for exceptions, see Belizzi,

1989, 2003; Hoogervorst et al., 2011). Our research provides insights on how leaders react to UFB. That is, our findings reveal that the cause of and unethical act (i.e., a competence or integrity violation) and characteristics of the leader (i.e., moral identity) interactively affect leaders' reactions to UFB.

Finally, our findings contribute to the moral identity literature. Although it has been theorized that moral identity should affect the moral behavior of leader figures in organizations (Aquino & Freeman, 2009), most research has focused on individuals in general rather than leaders (Aquino & Freeman, 2009; Aquino & Reed, 2002; Lapsley & Lasky, 2001; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004; Reed & Aquino, 2003). Research that has actually examined the role of moral identity on leader behaviors has only recently surfaced and is still very limited (Aquino et al., 2009; Mayer et al., forthcoming; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). Our findings provide additional evidence for the important role that moral identity plays in leaders making the morally appropriate decision (i.e., taking action against UFB). Interestingly, past research has suggested that leaders might be somewhat reluctant to engage in punishment behaviors (Butterfield et al., 1996). Indeed, taking action against their followers arguably remains a highly aversive experience for leaders. Our finding that high moral integrity (relative to low moral identity) leaders take harsher action against integrity violations suggests that moral identity might make leaders less reluctant to engage in punishment behaviors.

5.4.2 Practical implications

Our findings also have practical implications. Compared to leaders with a low moral identity, those with a high moral identity were more likely to do the morally right thing by taking harsher action against integrity violations compared to competence violations. Organizations should thus benefit from increasing the

moral identity of leaders in their organization, but how can they achieve this in practice?

One obvious way through which leader moral identity can be stimulated in the organization is through selecting and hiring managers for whom moral values are central to their identity. Indeed, as argued by Reynolds & Ceranic (p. 1623, 2007) when "the organization employs individuals with strong moral identities, moral behavior is likely to follow". At the same time, we argue that organizations should not limit themselves to such employee selection strategies. Our findings suggest that making moral identity salient can also lead to more moral behavior. Thus, organizations might also benefit by creating an organizational culture in which moral values are valued, rewarded and encouraged (Aquino & Freeman, 2009; Aquino et al., 2009; Mayer et al., forthcoming). Such an approach should stimulate development of employees' moral identities as well as make these moral identities more accessible (Aquino et al., 2009; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). In turn, the extent to which moral identity is made accessible should positively affect moral outcomes (Aquino et al., 2007).

5.4.3 Limitations and suggestions for further research

It has to be noted that the present research is not without its limitations. One concern might be that we tested our predictions in laboratory settings rather than in an actual organizational setting. However, as outlined by Trevino (1992), there are several difficulties with studying unethical behavior in organizations. For instance, it is a phenomenon that happens rather infrequently and when it does, people will likely want to conceal it. Additionally, it is a topic that often attracts socially desirable answers from participants. Therefore, following comments by Trevino (1992) and Zedeck (1986), we designed Study 5.2 as an in basket task.

This task is well suited to simulate the daily routine of managers in actual work settings.

We took several measures to reduce concerns about social desirable answers in the in basket task. For instance, our participants (i.e., business students) believed that they were going to test a new version of the task for an outside assessment centre rather than work on an experiment of a professor. In fact, after finishing the experiment, several participants spontaneously approached the experimenter with tips on how to improve the task. Furthermore, the participants had to respond to many items that were related to running a daily business but unrelated to the topic of the present study (UFB). During the debriefing session, participants indicated that they did not suspect that the experiment was about unethical behavior specifically. Taken together, we believe that by providing a realistic experimental setting we addressed concerns about the validity of our results. Still, future studies should also focus on studying this matter using actual managers from actual organizations.

Our finding that competence violations are punished less severely could imply that leaders have a different goal when punishing competence violations relative to integrity violations. Indeed, research has found that leaders take less severe disciplinary actions when their intention is to motivate their followers to perform better (Arvey & Jones, 1985; Trahan & Steiner, 1994). Unfortunately, we did not measure such underlying intentions in the present research. This provides an interesting avenue for future research to address. For instance, it would be interesting to find out if leaders have different goals and use different types of discipline for the two violation types. A possible way to achieve this would be to also give leaders the option of disciplinary actions that focus on improving follower competence, such as training programs.

5.4.4 Concluding remarks

Fueled by the financial crisis and many ethical scandals in recent years, the need for ethical leadership now seems higher than ever. Naturally, research has mainly focused on the normative aspect of this leadership style, suggesting what leaders should do and say. However, ethical scandals often show that leaders do not always make the morally right decisions. Therefore, it becomes important to gain more insight in the ethical decision making processes of leaders by identifying and examining the underlying motives and determinants of ethical leader behaviors. The aim of the present study was to contribute to a more descriptive approach to studying ethical leadership. By examining how leaders react to unethical followers we hope to contribute to a more complete understanding of how and when leaders do the right things.

CHAPTER 6

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Given the shocking amount of ethical scandals in business, government, sports and religious organizations in the last decade, it is not surprising that the issue of ethics has taken a prominent role in the research agenda of social scientists. Obviously, leaders play a crucial role in how business ethics becomes part of the organizational culture. Not only are they the face of their respective companies and thus often held responsible by the public and the Law when something goes awry, they should also provide ethical guidance to others in their organization. Indeed, research has shown that when leaders are perceived as ethical, they positively influence ethical conduct on the work floor (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Trevino et al., 1999). Moreover, ethical leadership has also proven to be an effective leadership style (De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Rhode, 2006) and is found to stimulate desirable work outcomes, such as follower motivation, organizational citizenship behaviors and job performance (Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog & Folger, 2010).

Although it is clear that it is important for society and organizations that leaders are ethical, little empirical work has been conducted to examine antecedents of ethical leader behavior. In this dissertation, I addressed this gap in the literature by identifying and examining the interactive effects of leader motives and dispositions, the motives (and actions) of followers and situational factors on several ethical leader behaviors. In doing so, I focused on antecedents of the three most important aspects of ethical leadership (i.e., being a role model, acting fairly and punishing unethical follower behavior). Specifically, I addressed the following three research questions: Firstly, when are leaders willing to act as a positive role model by going beyond their self-interest (i.e., be self-sacrificial)? Secondly, when do leaders treat their employees in a fair manner? Thirdly, when do leaders take

proactive disciplinary actions when confronted with unethical follower behavior in their organization?

In this chapter, I will first provide a summarized overview of the findings of the empirical chapters 2 through 5. Subsequently, I will discuss what the contributions and implications are of these findings. Finally, I will discuss the strengths and limitations of my research and will provide some suggestions for future studies.

6.1 SUMMARY OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Chapter 2

The aim of Chapter 2 was to identify and examine antecedents of leaders' self-sacrificial behavior. Engaging in such behavior contributes to follower perceptions of leaders as effective and attractive role models (e.g., Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999; Yorges et al., 1999). Consequently, self-sacrificial leaders elicit more positive affect, trust, cooperation, and improved performance among their followers (De Cremer, 2006; Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005).

In Chapter 2, I argued that leader self-sacrifice might be influenced by leader's sense of belonging and sense of power. First of all, because leaders are members of the group they lead, feeling included in their social collective is likely an important concern to them (e.g., Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Moreover, research has shown that feeling included makes people more willing to engage in prosocial behaviors while feeling excluded results in less prosocial behavior (e.g., Twenge et al., 2007). Therefore, I expected that leaders who feel included might be more willing to self-sacrifice than leaders who feel excluded by their group. At the same time, it is important to note that leaders of course also are unique members of their groups because they have power over resources and the power to

influence others in their group. Therefore, leader self-sacrifice might also be influenced by the extent to which leaders feel powerful (i.e., subjective sense of power). Following recent insights in the power literature, I propose that feeling powerful (i.e., have a high subjective sense of power) might function as a substitute for the positive effect of sense of belonging on self-sacrifice. That is, leaders high in sense of power might already be motivated to contribute to the goals of the organization (e.g., Overbeck & Park, 2006) and are thus more likely to engage in self-sacrificial behavior when the job asks for it. In contrast, those low in sense of power have been found to be affected more by situational constraints and social pressures (e.g., Galinsky et al., 2008). Therefore, I predicted an interaction effect such that for leaders low in sense of power, there will be a positive relation between sense of belonging and leader self-sacrifice, whereas this relationship will be attenuated when leaders are high in sense of power.

I tested this predicted interaction effect across three studies. First, in an experimental laboratory setting (Study 2.1) participants were placed in a leader position in which they believed to be the leader of a group that would engage in a brainstorming task. Leader's sense of power was manipulated through a power priming procedure (based on Galinsky et al., 2003). The leader had to write a short story about a situation in which s/he had control over (an)other person(s) (inducing high sense of power) or a situation in which (an)other person(s) had control over him/her (inducing low sense of power). Subsequently, leader's sense of belonging was manipulated by letting the leader overhear his/her group gossip either strongly positive or negative about him/her. Before the end of the experiment, I provided the leaders with the opportunity to engage in several self-sacrificial behaviors (i.e., giving up part of their financial bonus, investing their own time) and measured whether they were willing to do so. The results confirmed my hypothesis that leaders are more willing to self-sacrifice when they feel included, but that this is only the case for leaders that feel low in sense of power.

To address concerns about external validity, two additional field studies were conducted to examine the interaction hypothesis in an organizational setting. In Study 2.2, leader figures from a wide range of organizations in the Netherlands rated the extent to which they felt included, their sense of power and the extent to which they were willing to engage in self-sacrificial behavior. Whereas Study 2.2 was a single source study, in Study 2.3 I applied a multisource design using employees from the United States of America. Again, leaders rated the extent to which they felt included as well as their sense of power. However, this time leader's self-sacrifice was reported by a focal employee. Both organizational studies replicated the findings of Study 2.1.

The findings of Chapter 2 therefore provide robust evidence for the role that power and belonging motives play in leaders' willingness to engage in risky and costly behavior that others benefit from (i.e., self-sacrifice). When leaders feel low in sense of power, feeling included facilitates self-sacrificial behavior. However, when leaders feel high in sense of power they are willing to self-sacrifice regardless of their social inclusion in their group.

Chapter 3

In Chapter 2, I showed that the belonging and power leader motives of leaders influence their willingness to go beyond their self-interest. Putting aside self-interest can be seen as an ethical act in itself. After all, self-interest is often at the root of unethical behavior (e.g., Carson, 2003; Grover, 1993; Moore & Loewenstein, 2004). Importantly, it also contributes to leaders being perceived as attractive and credible role models by their employees. In Chapter 3, I again focused on an ethical leader behavior that contributes to leaders being attractive role models, but that can also be regarded as ethical in itself. That is, my specific aim in this chapter was to identify antecedents of the procedural fairness

enactment of leaders.

Procedural fairness (i.e., the perceived fairness of decision making procedures; Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975) plays an important role in organizations and society. For instance, when they perceive procedures enacted by authority figures to be fair, people have been found to show more cooperative employee behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg., 2002, 2003) and increased in-role performance (Zapata-Phelan et al., 2009). In contrast, when people experience such procedures to be unfair, they are more likely to engage in negative and unethical acts (e.g., Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2001; Greenberg, 1993; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997).

Explanatory theories of fairness effects have identified people's need for control and need to belong as important motives for caring strongly about fairness (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 2001). In Chapter 3, I took a reversed approach to these motives by examining whether leaders adapt their fairness enactment to the strength of follower control and belongingness needs. I reasoned that leadership on the one hand deals with directing followers towards the goals of the organization (e.g., Yukl & Van Fleet, 1992). However, at the same time, leaders have an interdependent relationship with their followers in which influence flows both ways (e.g., Hollander, 1992). Thus, leaders arguably are motivated to balance the needs of their followers with what is in the best interest for their organization. As a consequence, leaders might be willing to give control to followers who desire this, but only to followers who they believe also desire to contribute and be a part of the organization (i.e., have a high need to belong). Put differently, I expected leader to enact procedures fairly especially when interacting with a follower with a strong control and a strong belongingness need. I tested this hypothesis across two studies.

First, in a similar manner to Study 2.1., participants were placed in a leader position in Study 3.1. In this experiment, participants performed a group

version of an in basket task in which they had to prioritize and respond to information and distribute tasks. The strength of follower control need (low vs. high) and belongingness need (low vs. high) was manipulated by providing the leaders with a psychological analysis of questionnaires one of their followers had supposedly filled out at the start of the experiment. Upon reading this information, the leaders were introduced to the dependent measures. Several items measured to what extent leaders were willing to enact fair procedures in decision making processes concerning the particular follower. Additionally, leaders had to indicate in how many of a total of 10 procedures they wanted to grant voice to the follower. Both measures revealed a similar outcome. In line with my hypothesis, leaders enacted procedures most fairly when interacting with a follower with both a strong control and a strong belongingness need, compared to when one or both of these needs were low.

To address concerns about the generalizability of my findings, I conducted Study 3.2., in which I employed a multisource design to an organizational setting. Leaders from a research panel of Dutch employees rated the control and belongingness need of a focal employee, and in turn, these focal employees rated the procedural fairness enactment of their leaders. The findings of this field study were consistent with those of Study 3.2.

To summarize, whereas control and belongingness concern have been identified in the literature to explain why people value being treated fairly (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 2001), Chapter 3 reveals that leaders actually adapt their procedural fairness enactment to these needs. That is, leaders grant voice to followers who desire to have control, but only when they sense that followers also want to be a part of the organization (i.e., have a high belongingness need).

Chapter 4

Whereas Chapters 2 and 3 dealt with the issue of when leaders set the right example (Chapter 2) and whether they treat their employees fairly (Chapter 3), the aim of Chapter 4 was to gain more insight in how leaders deal with unethical behavior of their followers. To ensure that unethical behavior does not prevail or escalate in their organization, it is important that leaders take proactive actions when confronted with such behavior (Chonko and Hunt, 1985; Offerman, 2004). However, taking such action is arguably an emotional, sometimes even an aversive experience for leaders (Ball and Sims, 1991; Butterfield et al., 1996). Moreover, leaders sometimes benefit from unethical follower behavior (UFB). For instance, they may receive a bonus because of a high sales performance obtained by a follower who used unethical sale tactics. This begs the question whether leaders will take action against a follower when the leader personally benefits from the follower's unethical behavior.

To promote the incidence that leaders do the morally right thing (i.e., show disapproval of UFB), organizations often turn to holding leaders accountable (i.e., having leaders justify their actions to others; Lerner and Tetlock, 1999; Lindsay et al., 1996). The aim of Chapter 4 was to examine whether such social pressures on the leader (i.e., accountability) to do the normative and morally right thing (i.e., show disapproval of UFB) will prevail when UFB is instrumental to the leader (i.e., in the leader's self-interest). Although research has shown that accountability makes people behave more in socially responsible and normative ways, I argued that when self-interest comes into play, these effects of accountability might be inhibited. Indeed, when UFB is instrumental to the leader, it creates a conflict of interest for leaders between what is the morally right thing to do (i.e, show disapproval) and what is best for the leader's self-interest (i.e., condoning UFB and profit from it). Importantly, in situations where there is a

tradeoff between self-interest and morality, people often engage in self-enhancing processing such as self-deception, causing the ethical colors of a decision to fade (*ethical fading*; Tenbrunsel & Messick, 2004). These self-enhancing processes take place in an unconscious and automatic manner, which leads self-interest to prevail in human decision making processes (Moore & Loewenstein, 2004). Following these insights, self-interest salience should inhibit the normative and social pressures of being held accountable. Therefore, I hypothesized that leaders will show more disapproval of UFB when they are held accountable, but that this would be most likely the case when the UFB is not instrumental to their own interest (i.e., when they do not personally benefit from the UFB).

I tested this hypothesis in a laboratory setting in Study 4.1. Using a similar procedure to Study 2.1 (and 3.1), participants were placed in a leader position and led to believe that they supervised a group of followers. After some initial instructions, they were told that one of their followers had to do a mathematical task and that they could receive a bonus if their follower performed well on the task. When this supposed follower finished the task, the leader found out that the follower did extremely well, finishing in the top two of all participants, resulting in a bonus for the group. Next, the manipulation of the instrumentality of the UFB was introduced: half of the leaders read that they would get the majority of the bonus (*high instrumentality for the leader*). In contrast, the other half read that the bonus would be divided among the followers, but that the leader would not receive anything from the bonus (*low instrumentality for the leader*). Subsequently, the accountability manipulation was introduced: half of the leaders read that the communication between the leader and the group members was completely confidential (*low accountability*). The other half of the leaders read that all communication between the group members would be saved and potentially could be viewed by the other groups and the experimenter (*high accountability* for the leader). Upon reading this information, the leader received an e-mail from the

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follower in which s/he stated that s/he cheated on the task. Specifically, the follower explained that s/he had copied the results of a piece of paper a previous participant had left in the cubicle. After reading this e-mail, leaders found out that their group finished in the top two and thus would receive a bonus. Finally, I solicited the measure of leader disapproval.

Study 4.1 confirmed my hypothesis. Leaders were more willing to show disapproval of UFB when they could be held accountable than when they were not held accountable. However this was only the case when the UFB was not instrumental to the leader. These findings thus show that accountability might not always be effective in motivating leaders to make the morally right decision, particularly when leader's self-interest is salient. An important implication of these findings is that conditions exist under which followers more easily can get away with being unethical without being called upon by their leader. If followers are aware and accurate in predicting these specific conditions, then the risk may exist that followers will act on these beliefs and thus display unethical behavior under those specific conditions where leaders are more likely to condone UFB. Therefore, I conducted Study 4.2 to test whether followers correctly predict leaders' reactions to UFB. The results of this additional study show that followers in fact do so. They appear to be aware that they are most likely to get away with being unethical when their leader benefits from the UFB and is not held accountable.

Taken together, the findings of Chapter 4 provide the first empirical evidence that leaders sometimes fail to disapprove of UFB. As such, conditions exist under which followers can get away with engaging in unethical acts. Interestingly, followers actually seem to be able predict those conditions correctly. This introduces the possibility that followers might especially engage in unethical behavior in those conditions.

Chapter 5

In Chapter 4, I showed how the instrumentality of UFB and the opportunity that leaders are held accountable interactively affect whether leaders display disapproval of UFB. The findings in Chapter 4 suggest that the *consequence* of UFB for the leader is an important determinant in leaders' decision to display disapproval of UFB. Indeed, when leaders personally benefit from the unethical act, they are less likely to show disapproval of such an act. In Chapter 5, I argued that the *cause* of UFB might also be an important determinant of leaders' proactive actions (i.e., punishment) against unethical follower. Indeed, looking at past research on determinants of leader's disciplinary use, we see that attribution processes play an important role. Specifically, when leaders are confronted with unwanted follower behavior, they are motivated to understand what caused this behavior. In turn, the causal attributions that leaders make, affects the severity of their disciplinary use (for recent overviews, see Ashansky, 2002; Martinko et al., 2007). However, research on disciplinary use of leaders has mainly focused on poor follower performance in general, rather than on unethical behavior specifically.

Zooming in on potential causes of UFB, two dimensions that seem highly relevant to unethical behavior in organizations are competence and integrity (Kim et al., 2006). Indeed, a follower might act unethically due to a lack of understanding of the rules (i.e., a competence violation) or intentionally for personal gain (i.e., an integrity violation). Integrity violations have been found to be more diagnostic about the violator's character than competence violations (Reeder & Brewer, 1979; Skowronski & Carlston, 1987, 1989). This implies that the likelihood of recurrent unethical behavior is bigger for followers who made an integrity violation. Consequently, leaders might weigh integrity violations more strongly and consequently take harsher disciplinary actions against such violations

compared to competence violations.

At the same time, leaders can vary in the importance they assign to morality in their environment. Indeed, the more leaders define themselves as being a moral person, the more they will probe the situation in terms of morality (Mayer, et al., 2011; Reynolds & Ceranic, 2007). Leaders with a strong moral identity should therefore be expected to evaluate a lack of integrity display of a follower more negatively than leaders with a low moral identity. Additionally, high moral identity leaders will be motivated to act in accordance with their moral values. Therefore, I formulated the hypothesis that leaders will take harsher disciplinary actions against UFB when this is caused by an integrity violation rather than a competence violation, but this will only be the case for leaders with a strong moral identity.

I tested this hypothesis across two laboratory experiments. In Study 5.1, I first manipulated moral identity salience. Participants were presented with nine words and were asked to copy and write down these words. In the salient moral identity condition, these nine words were moral traits (e.g., caring, honest, fair), whereas in the not salient moral identity condition the nine words presented were morally neutral (e.g., chair, table, kitchen). In addition to copying them, participants were asked to think about the words for a moment, and then to write a story about themselves in which they used all nine words.

Next, participants were appointed to a leader position in a dyadic trust game. I opted to use such a game, because it entails the trust and interdependence that also symbolizes leader-follower relations in actual organizations (e.g., Hollander, 1992). The trust game is a simple, yet concise paradigm in which both leaders and followers can have mutually beneficial outcomes if they cooperate with each other. However, leaders have to place trust in their follower (i.e., invest resources) to do the right thing as there is the risk that the follower decides not to cooperate with the leader (i.e., give little or nothing in return). In this specific

version of the the game leaders invested 10 euros in their follower. The follower would receive this amount tripled (30 euros) and had to decide how much they wanted to return to the leader. The follower then offered an unexpected low return (5 euros) after lying about the resource to be divided (i.e., 10 euros instead of 30 euros). I manipulated whether the follower had a clear understanding of the rules (i.e., which implied an integrity violation) or not (i.e., which implied a competence violation). As potential disciplinary actions, leaders were then provided with an opportunity to issue a warning against their follower and to claim money back from the follower.

Study 5.1 provides support for my hypothesis. Leaders took harsher disciplinary action against integrity violations compared to competence violations, but this was only the case for leaders with a high moral identity. To make my findings more applicable to organizational settings, I designed Study 5.2, which was built around an in basket exercise. This managerial role playing exercise was designed to provide realism and external validity in studying unethical behavior, while still maintaining the advantages of doing research in a controlled environment (Trevino, 1992). In the task, participants were provided with detailed background information about their role (i.e., plant manager), their company and their co-workers. Subsequently, they received several e-mails that required their response concerning the everyday functioning of the company. In addition, whereas I manipulated moral identity in Study 5.1, I measured the self-importance of moral identity in Study 5.2. The reason for this is that although the accessibility of moral identity can be affected across situations (e.g., by priming moral values as we did in Study 5.1), moral identity is also a rather stable individual personality variable (Aquino et al., 2009).

One of the e-mails the leaders received concerned an employee who had committed tax fraud. I manipulated whether the employee had done so intentionally (i.e., an integrity violation), or because of a lack of understanding of

tax codes (i.e., a competence violation). The leaders were presented with several possible actions (e.g., suspend the employee, show disapproval, give the employee a talking to), and had to indicate the extent to which they wanted to take such action. In addition, they could choose to issue a formal warning against the employee. The results of Study 5.2 were in line with those of Study 5.1.

Taken together, Chapter 5 reveals that leaders take harsher disciplinary actions against UFB that is caused by an integrity violation rather than a competence violation. However, this effect was only found for leaders with a strong moral identity. These findings are in line with previous research that has shown that the attributions and evaluations that leaders make about unwanted follower performance are important determinants of their use of punishments (for overviews, see Ashansky, 2002; Martinko et al., 2007). I show that this is also the case for unethical follower acts. Moreover, I show that the moral identity of leaders plays a crucial moderating role in the relationship between the attributions that leaders make (i.e., a lack of integrity or a lack of competence of the follower) and how they respond to unethical followers (i.e., harshness of punishments).

6.2 IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

In this section, I will discuss both the major as well as some more specific contributions and implications of the empirical work presented in this dissertation.

I believe the major contribution of this dissertation is that I addressed the concerns that the majority of the literature on ethical leadership has (a) taken a *prescriptive* or *normative* approach, and (b) a *receiver* rather than an *actor* perspective. That is, the ethical leadership literature has informed us mainly on the type of leader behaviors that are effective and on what leader should do, say and act to stimulate ethical behavior in their organizations. In practice, however, as we have seen in numerous ethical scandals, leaders do not always engage in the most

effective and ethical behaviors. From this observation it becomes clear that it is also important to identify and examine those factors that affect the actions and decisions of leaders. The aim of the present dissertation was to provide a first step in doing so.

I believe my approach in identifying and empirically examining potential antecedents and underlying motives of ethical leadership contributes to the rapidly growing research field of behavioral ethics (for recent overviews, see De Cremer, et al., 2010; De Cremer, et al., 2011; De Cremer & Tenbrunsel, 2011; De Cremer et al., forthcoming). Indeed, behavioral ethics researchers have highlighted the importance of studying what people and leaders actually do, why they do this and what factors affect their actions. Furthermore, although several scholars have called for more leadership research from an *actor* perspective rather than a *receiver* perspective (e.g., Bommer et al., 2004; Scott et al., 2009), actual studies that take such an actor perspective remain very rare in the literature.

Another important contribution of the present dissertation concerns the conceptualization of ethical leadership as having three important components. Ethical leadership has been defined as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (p. 120, Brown et al., 2005). Although this is one of the most quoted definitions of ethical leadership, and deservingly so, I argued that the broadness of the definition makes it rather difficult to examine ethical leadership as one holistic construct. Indeed, the topic of ethics (in general) and ethical leadership (specifically) often invite heated debates. In fact, I believe that most people that have attended an ethical leadership related conference can recall a discussion about what ethical leadership entails and similar discussions about what is ethical or not (e.g., see Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe, 2008).

In conceptualizing ethical leadership in a less abstract manner, I based

myself on the recent ethical leadership literature that discusses how ethical leaders actually provide ethical guidance and affect the ethical conduct of their followers (e.g., Trevino & Brown, 2005). Specifically, I operationalized ethical leadership as having three important aspects. First, ethical leaders are role models for positive behaviors, for instance by going beyond self-interest (i.e., self-sacrifice as discussed in Chapter 2). Second, ethical leaders act in accordance with important norms and values in the treatment of their employees (i.e., fairness enactment, as discussed in Chapter 3). Third, and finally, ethical leaders make use of reward systems and take pro-active actions when confronted with unethical behavior by their followers (i.e., take disciplinary actions, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively). Note that these three aspects fit well into Brown et al's (2005) definition of ethical leadership. Indeed, the behaviors I examined in this dissertation all fall under normatively appropriate conduct or behaviors that promote such conduct to followers. To summarize, in this dissertation, I examined antecedents of ethical leadership by measuring specific leader behaviors (i.e., self-sacrificing, being fair and punishing unethical behavior) rather than ethical leadership as one construct. Furthermore, all have their own theoretical and practical implications as discussed in more detail in the empirical chapters 2 through 5.

I believe that the findings in this dissertation show that ethical leadership research can benefit from such an operationalization. Above all, it makes ethical leadership a less abstract and more manageable construct to study. At the same time, it might also contribute to the use of available knowledge rather than unnecessary reinventing the wheel when studying or discussing ethical leadership. Indeed, the literature on related topics such as fairness, rewards and punishments as well as overlapping leadership styles (e.g., transformational leadership) provides many insights that are relevant in our scientific enterprise towards a better understanding of ethical leadership.

The research I presented in this dissertation paint a mixed picture of leaders that is neither fully positive nor completely negative. Rather, they show that whether leaders act ethically or unethically depends on the interaction between their own motives and personality, the motives and actions of their followers and situational forces. For instance, Chapter 2 shows that when leaders feel excluded in their social collective, they are less inclined to act as a positive role model (e.g., self-sacrifice). But, this appears only to be the case for leaders who do not feel particularly powerful. In contrast, leaders who do feel powerful appear to be motivated to act as a role model regardless of whether they are liked, accepted and valued by their group. This finding might be counterintuitive for those who believe that feeling powerful corrupts people's behavior as a rule of nature, but actually fits well into recent insights from the power literature that show that power can also have a positive effect on people's actions. Indeed, recent literature on the subject has shown that power sometimes can make people act more in accordance with the goals of their organizational role (Overbeck & Park) and contribute more to the collective (Galinsky et al., 2003).

A second crucial aspect of ethical leadership that was examined in this dissertation was leader fairness enactment. Whereas in the literature it has been suggested that leaders might not always enact fairness (Brockner, 2006; Folger & Skarlicki, 1998), Chapter 3 paints a more positive picture of leaders. The findings in this chapter revealed that leaders adapt their procedural fairness enactment to the strength of followers' control and belongingness needs, two motives that previous research has identified as explanatory factors of why people care so strongly about fairness. Our findings imply that leaders are aware of the importance of fairness in satisfying these followers' needs. However, leaders appear to be especially motivated to serve followers' control need by enacting fair procedures, when they feel that followers want to be a part of their organization (i.e., have a high need to belong).

The final aspect of ethical leadership that I researched in Chapters 4 and 5 is leaders' disciplinary use against unethical followers. Chapter 4 provides a possible explanation why unethical behavior sometimes prevails in organizations even when leaders are held accountable for their actions. That is, I showed that when leaders personally benefit from unethical acts of their follower(s), self-interested motives inhibit social pressures (i.e., accountability) to do the morally right thing (i.e., show disapproval). Additionally, I showed that followers accurately predict when leaders are less likely to show disapproval. This introduces the possibility, and further research is needed on this matter, that followers engage in unethical behavior in those instances that they are most likely to get away with it. This could create a negative vicious cycle of unethical behavior in the organization.

Of course, unethical follower behavior might be the consequence of a deliberate action of the follower, but followers can also engage in unethical behavior accidently or because of a lack of competence. Integrity violations (i.e., intentional unethical behavior) are a bigger issue for organizations and should be dealt with explicitly, because a lack of integrity might lead to repeated unethical acts. In Chapter 5, I showed that only leaders with a high moral identity take harsher disciplinary actions against integrity violations than competence violations. In contrast, low moral identity leaders do not distinguish between competence and integrity violations. As an interesting aside, I also showed that making moral identity salient leads to a similar effect as measuring moral identity as a personality measure. This is intriguing from a practical point of view as it implies that organizations might be able to stimulate effective disciplinary actions among their leaders by reinforcing moral identity in their working environment (Aquino & Freeman, 2009; Aquino et al., 2009; Mayer et al., forthcoming).

6.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine when and why leaders engage in ethical behaviors. The present dissertation reveals many new insights on this issue. Nevertheless, many questions still need to be addressed in future research. The findings reported in this dissertation provide some interesting starting points as well as fruitful avenues for such future endeavors as discussed in the empirical Chapters 2 through 5.

One particularly intriguing question is whether ethical leader behaviors are driven by moral or more strategic and instrumental concerns. Are leaders ethical because they want to do the morally right thing? Or, do they act ethically, because it is in fact in their best interest to do so? In the literature, it has often been argued that level of moral reasoning and moral identity play an important role in explaining why people engage in ethical behavior (e.g., Aquino et al., 2009). However, for leaders, engaging in ethical behaviors such as self-sacrifice and procedural fairness can also yield positive outcomes, because through social exchange processes, it can lead to enhanced commitment, cooperativeness and performance of their followers. In such instances, engaging in ethical behaviors is not only moral, but also in the best interest of the leader, as it makes them more effective and successful as a leader.

Looking at the findings in this dissertation, there is evidence that for leaders both moral and self-interested concerns are important determinants of their decision to act in an ethical manner. In Chapter 4 for instance, we saw that self-interested motives play a role in leader behavior and in fact can have a detrimental effect on leader's decision to do the morally right thing (i.e., show disapproval of UFB), even when they can be called upon to justify their decision. At the same time, Chapter 5 reveals that moral identity also is an important determinant of leader's disciplinary use against UFB. Indeed, leaders with a strong moral identity

punished integrity violations of their followers more strongly than competence violations. Low moral identity leaders did not make this distinction. It thus appears that both self-interested motives and moral motives play an important role in ethical leadership. Still, future research needs to examine more closely which motives underlies ethical leadership behaviors.

6.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this dissertation, using different methods, in laboratory as well as organizational settings, empirical findings are presented on how leaders' own motives and dispositions, the motives and actions of their followers as well as situational factors interactively predict when leaders engage in ethical or unethical leader behaviors. This approach was motivated by the hope that my work can contribute to and perhaps provide a starting point for a more *behavioral* and *actor* based study of ethical leadership. Ultimately, such an approach should contribute to a more balanced understanding of ethical leadership and insights on how to regulate ethical failures.

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SAMENVATTING (DUTCH SUMMARY)

Gezien de hoeveelheid ethische schandalen in het bedrijfsleven is het niet verwonderlijk dat sociale wetenschappers in toenemende mate hun aandacht richten op ethisch leiderschap. Van leidinggevenden wordt immers verwacht dat ze zelf ethisch handelen, maar ook dat ze ervoor zorgen dat hun werknemers dit doen. De literatuur over ethisch leiderschap heeft vooralsnog een sterk *normatief* karakter: de huidige literatuur geeft voornamelijk aan wat leiders *zouden moeten* doen. Helaas wijst de praktijk uit dat leidinggevenden niet altijd het juiste gedrag vertonen of de juiste morele keuzes maken. Dit maakt het belangrijk om meer inzicht te krijgen in wanneer en waarom leiders eigenlijk ethisch leiderschap vertonen. Deze meer *descriptieve* of zogenaamde *gedragsethiek*-benadering vormt het uitgangspunt van dit proefschrift.

Ik richt me hierbij op drie belangrijke aspecten van ethisch leiderschap. Allereerst toon ik aan dat leiders eerder bereid zijn om zich als een *rolmodel* te gedragen (in de vorm van het maken van persoonlijke opofferingen voor hun groep, Hoofdstuk 2) wanneer ze het gevoel hebben dat ze behoren tot de groep waarover ze de leiding hebben. Dit effect wordt echter alleen gevonden voor leiders die zich niet machtig voelden. Daarnaast toon ik aan dat leiders belangrijke behoeftes van hun volgers meenemen in de (procedurele) *rechtvaardigheid* van beslissingen die betrekking hebben tot deze volgers, maar vooral wanneer deze behoeftes ook binnen de belangen van de organisatie passen (Hoofdstuk 3). Tenslotte richt ik me op de vraag *hoe leiders omgaan met onethisch volgergedrag*. In Hoofdstuk 4 vind ik dat wanneer leiders profiteren van onethisch volgergedrag ze dit eerder zullen toleren, zelfs wanneer de mogelijkheid bestaat dat ze verantwoording moeten afleggen voor hun acties en beslissingen. In Hoofdstuk 5 vind ik dat niet alleen het gevolg, maar ook de oorzaak van onethisch volgergedrag een belangrijke voorspeller is van het strafgedrag van leiders. Leiders treden strenger op tegen onethisch gedrag dat veroorzaakt wordt door een

integriteitsschending (een bewuste daad) dan door een gebrek aan competentie, maar dit onderscheid wordt alleen gemaakt door leiders met een sterke morele identieit.

Samengevat bieden mijn resultaten inzichten in hoe de motieven en disposities van leiders zelf, de motieven en acties van hun volgers, en omgevingsinvloeden een interactieve invloed hebben op het ethisch gedrag van leiders. Het is mijn hoop dat dit proefschrift een startpunt kan zijn voor een meer gedragsmatige benadering van ethisch leiderschapsonderzoek. Uiteindelijk zou dit moeten leiden tot een meer gebalanceerde kennis van ethisch leiderschap dat inzichten biedt in hoe ethiek beter gereguleerd kan worden in het bedrijfsleven.

SUMMARY

Given the abundance of recent ethical scandals in business, it is not surprising that social scientists increasingly have turned their attention to ethical leadership. After all, leaders are expected to not only act ethically themselves, but also to promote such behavior among their employees. The current ethical leadership literature has taken a *normative* approach: it has focused mainly on what leaders *should* do. Unfortunately, in practice managers do not always display the right course of action. Therefore, it becomes important to also understand when and why leaders actually engage in ethical leadership behavior. This more *descriptive* or *behavioral ethics* approach is the starting point of this dissertation.

In doing so, I focus on three important aspects of ethical leadership. First, I show that leaders are more willing to act as a *role model* (i.e., by making personal sacrifices for their group, Chapter 2) when they feel included in the group that they lead than when they feel excluded. However, this effect is only found for leaders who do not feel powerful. Second, I show that leaders take important needs of followers into account in the (procedural) *fairness* of their decisions relevant to these followers, especially when these needs are consistent with the interests of the organization (Chapter 3). Finally, I focus on how leaders *deal with unethical followers*. In Chapter 4, I show that when leaders personally benefit from unethical follower behavior, they will condone such behavior even when they can be held accountable for their actions. Additionally, in Chapter 5, I provide evidence that the cause of unethical follower behavior is an important predictor of the disciplinary actions of leaders. Leaders take harsher action against unethical behavior that was caused by an integrity violation (a deliberate act) than by a competence violation of the follower, but this distinction is only made by leaders with a strong moral identity.

Taken together, my results show that the motives and dispositions of leaders themselves, the motives and actions of their followers and situational

influences interactively affect the ethical behavior of leaders. I hope that my research can act as a point of departure for a more behavioral approach to ethical leadership research. Ultimately this should lead to a more balanced understanding of ethical leadership that provides insights in how business ethics can be better regulated.

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[3] Uit "The Reasons" van The Weakerthans

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Niek Hoogervorst was born (and raised) in the small village of Hoogmade on September 28th in 1980. In 2001, he received his Bachelor's degree in Management, Economics and Law from the Haagse Hogeschool. He then decided to pursue his fascination with human interactions and behavior by studying Psychology at Leiden University in 2002. This resulted in the obtainment of his Master's degree in Social and Organizational Psychology in 2006. From working together with Arjaan Wit on his Bachelor thesis, and Peter de Heus & Eric van Dijk on his Master Thesis, Niek had become enthusiastic about doing research. As a result, he started to work as a PhD student for David de Cremer in 2007, with additional supervision by Marius van Dijke. The research that is reported in this dissertation was conducted at the University of Tilburg, and from December 2008 at the Rotterdam School of Management. His research has been published in Journal of Business Ethics and Journal of Experimental Social Psychology. Niek currently works as a post-doctoral researcher at the Erasmus Centre for Strategic Philanthropy.

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ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF DISPLAYING ETHICAL LEADERSHIP
A BEHAVIORAL ETHICS APPROACH

Given the abundance of ethical scandals in businesses, sports, governments and religious organizations, it should come as no surprise that social scientists have increasingly put ethical leadership on the forefront of their research agenda. However, the literature on ethical leadership has primarily taken a *normative* approach, suggesting what leaders *should* do. This approach does not help in explaining why leaders sometimes deviate from such moral standards. In fact, little empirical work has been conducted on the question of when or why leaders actually engage in (un)ethical behavior (a *behavioral ethics* approach).

The research presented in this dissertation aims to take a first step in filling this gap in the literature by identifying and examining antecedents of several ethical leader behaviors. I aim to answer important empirical questions such as: When do leaders go beyond their self-interest? When do leaders treat their followers in a fair manner? And, do leaders consistently take action against unethical followers, or do they sometimes condone unethical follower behavior? In answering such questions, I will show that aspects of leaders themselves (motives and dispositions), aspects of their followers (motives and actions) and aspects of the environment in which leaders operate interact in determining whether leaders engage in ethical leader behaviors or not.

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