

**PROACTIVITY PERMISSION: WHY ARE SOME EMPLOYEES ALLOWED TO ACT  
PROACTIVELY WHILE OTHERS ARE NOT?**

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A Dissertation  
Submitted to  
the Temple University Graduate Board

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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August 2022

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## ABSTRACT

Proactive behaviors are defined as employees' future-oriented, agentic behaviors that aim to improve workplace conditions. Recent research alludes that employee perceptions of whether they have permission to act proactively may influence their actions. With these ideas in mind, this dissertation introduces the concept of *proactivity permission*, which is defined as the perception of the extent to which an employee is allowed to perform proactive actions at work. Using a multilevel research design with 501 employees from 112 work groups, I examined the effects of employee and supervisor personality characteristics, relational factors, and contextual factors on proactivity permission. Findings indicate that employee personality characteristics (i.e., psychological entitlement and psychological reactance) positively influence employee proactivity permission beliefs, whereas supervisor personality characteristics (i.e., social dominance orientation and rule-based reasoning) negatively influence proactivity permission judgments of supervisors. The quality of relationships (LMX) between a focal employee and his/her supervisor positively affects both employee proactivity permission and supervisor proactivity permission judgments, while workplace contextual factors (e.g., organizational rule formalization, rule consistency, and normative tightness) are relatively distal to, and play a minor role in, proactivity permission. Additionally, this dissertation finds that employees who believe they have permission to act proactively engage in proactive behaviors to a greater extent, and that supervisors are more supportive toward the proactive behaviors of those employees who they perceive to have greater permission to act proactively. In all, this dissertation offers important contributions to theory and research on employee proactivity and suggests several practical recommendations for managers and organizations who are interested in fostering greater proactivity in the workplace.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

What a journey it is to complete a Ph.D. – how virtuous in reason; how rich in faculties, in forms, and in query; how difficult and daunting in process; how joyful and elating in friendship! I embarked on this journey, filled with the wisdom of the wise, the devotion of devotees, the imagination of a child, and the purest spirit of curiosity. This was my journey, yet without the guidance of incredible people, there would have been no light at the end of the tunnel. So here I am today, in large part due to those guiding forces who helped me get to this point – a significant accomplishment in my life.

My heartfelt gratitude to my adviser, Dr. Ryan Vogel, for his unwavering support throughout the research process. He was meticulous in every detail – an excellent mentor who constantly pushed me to do better, and an excellent advisor who helped pave the way when mental hurdles loomed on my path. I will greatly miss our conversations as this journey concludes but will treasure them as I move forward in life. And I look forward to remaining connected through shared bonds of trust and friendship.

Furthermore, I would like to express my profound thanks to the members of my dissertation committee: Dr. Lynne Andersson, Dr. Ravi Kudesia, and Dr. Regina Ruane. At various stages of this process, each of you contributed critical insights and perspectives that aided in shaping the direction of this dissertation. Additionally, as much as I would like to acknowledge all of the numerous ways other Temple University faculty contributed to my intellectual and personal development, I recognize that doing so would be impossible. However, several faculty members deserve special recognition, including Dr. In-Sue Oh, Dr. Crystal Harold, Dr. Brian Holtz, Dr. John McClendon, Dr. Deanna Geddes, Dr. John Deckop, Dr. Yifan Song, and Dr. Kathleen Voss. You have all served as mentors, educators, and pathfinders for me. Additionally, I want to

express my gratitude to Brisilda Doma for her help and kind concern as I struggled to navigate the maze of ceaseless bureaucracy.

I would like to express my gratitude and admiration for my friends who supported me throughout this process: Dr. Soojung Han, Dr. Biyun Hu, Dr. Joe Kim, Dr. HyeSoo (Hailey) Park, Dishu Hu, Anastasiia Agolli, Jenson Lau, Dayoung Kim, Xiao Xiao, Kristian Gardner, Junghwan Park, Dr. Atilla Onuklu, Dr. Nese Nur, Dr. Gunes Alkan, and Dr. Huseyin Kaya. I am constantly astounded by your razor-sharp intelligence, intellectual engagement, and cooperative spirit. Our shared experiences were not just temporary interactions or fleeting feelings, but the signs of undying friendships that will stay with us forever. Dr. Tamara Altman, my writing coach and friend, also deserves recognition for the countless hours she spent helping me improve my writing.

Last but not least, no journey is ever taken alone – I am indebted to all those who have loved and supported me throughout this process, my family in Turkey and the US. Mom (Ayten) and Dad (Mehmet Ali), your steadfast belief in me has always been a foundation on which I could stand; Omer Faruk and Jennifer, your ever-supportive presence in my life as a brother and a sister-in-law is cherished and loved by me; Ertugrul and Irem, I cannot express how grateful I am that fate brought us together as a brother and a family, and you know how difficult this task would have been without your help in Turkey. Finally, thank you to my American mom, Karyn, for always being there to listen, understand, and provide support and love and, of course, delicious treats; to my American dad, Bob, for your suggestions about life and for becoming a better thinker and Long Islander; to my American brother, Evan and his wife Daniyyel, for free baseball games; and to my American Pops and Grandy, Milton and Jacqueline (loved one), for your being a constant example as exemplary human beings.

Lastly, my beautiful wife, Rebecca—my heart overflows with gratitude for all the little moments we shared while I was working on this dissertation, moments where you patiently listened to me talk about my work, shared your insights and perspectives, or just provided a much-needed hug and kisses. You have lit my life for many years, and I continue to believe that everything is possible with you. There is nothing quite like experiencing something challenging head-on while being side-by-side with someone who makes every moment feel just a little bit lighter and brighter – I love you deeply! Finally, to our baby cats, Albie and Pretzel, you cannot read this but meow...

There are so many people who have indirectly assisted me in this process by providing me with friendship, care, advice, or encouragement over these many years – it is impossible to name them all here. From the depths of my heart: Thank you so much!

Mustafa Akben

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

Evan, a staff member for the executive office, was excited—and even a little bit proud—when he took the initiative to present a solution for a long-lasting and sticky problem. However, when he sent the solution to his boss and the technology VP, he was a little puzzled by their response. With a chastising voice, the VP's email indicated that he had breached an unwritten rule by creating and publishing the solution before consulting with the department head, and that he is not permitted to take such actions. Later, corroborating the email, his boss told Evan, “*You should not have taken that initiative; it was not your place!*” Evan was bewildered; the organization generally encouraged employees to be proactive and take initiative. Indeed, just a few months ago, one of his colleagues proactively solved a similar problem and was praised for it. Evan depressively asked himself, “Why was I admonished for my actions while others have been praised? I solved an important problem, with minimal cost in time, manpower, and money.” After that incident, he decided to be less proactive and instead keep his head in the sand.

(Personal communication, 2020 – the name has been changed for data privacy)

For organizations and employees, proactivity matters. Proactive work behavior is broadly defined as employees' self-initiated, future-oriented, extra-role action that aims to bring about a change in the workplace (Grant & Ashford, 2008) and subsumes a set of behaviors such as employee voice (Van Dyne et al., 2003), taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), and individual innovation (Scott & Bruce, 1994; see Table 1 for construct definitions). In recent years, proactivity has gained a great amount of attention from both practitioners and scholars. A Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) survey, for example, highlighted the significance of employee proactivity, reporting that 49% of human resources managers believe that proactivity is a critical work behavior for employees when they start to work for an organization (Society for Human Resource Management & Mercer, 2016). Similarly, meta-analytic evidence suggests that greater proactivity is associated with a wide range of desirable work outcomes (Fuller & Marler, 2009; Thomas et al., 2010), ranging from facilitating the

development of innovative ideas (Jiang & Gu, 2015) to strengthening team performance (Farh et al., 2020), and from fostering employee well-being (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2014) to preventing costly financial errors (Parker & Collins, 2010).

Although managers want their employees to be proactive, employees' reluctance to engage in such actions has been reported by many managers and documented by many studies (Edwards et al., 2009; Knoll et al., 2021; Milliken et al., 2003). Various reasons have been proposed to explain why some employees engage in proactive behaviors and others do not. The prevailing theoretical framework explains that employees who feel confident in their ability, energized for action, and motivated by a compelling reason will demonstrate proactivity (Parker et al., 2010). This leads to the assumption that those who do not engage in proactive behavior do not have confidence in their ability to do so, are not full of enthusiasm, or do not understand that proactivity is required.

However, research and anecdotal evidence has hinted at the idea that this may not be the entire story. In a qualitative study, for example, Bindl (2019) found that when employees do not know whether engaging in a proactive action would be perceived as acceptable, they refrain from engaging in the behavior, even when they had identified a problem the action would have addressed. One participant lamented this dilemma, noting that "I've thought about [taking proactive actions] but not actually implemented it... I have thought that that is something that I should probably do ... but it never feels right... and I've just stuck with what I know is safe" (Bindl, 2019, p. 627). Furthermore, in a qualitative study of hospital nurses, Hughes (2012) reported that almost 10% of nurses, even though they believed that acting proactively was the right thing to do and might "save a life," were reluctant to act because they perceived they were not *permitted* to do so. One nurse reported, "You're really putting yourself out on a plank if you

do something in this hospital without an order, even if it was in the best interest of the patient” (Hughes, 2012, p. 59). Findings from these studies underscore that perceptions related to normative regulations at work – those informal regulations that define *what is permissible or not* and *for whom* (Beller, 2010) – may be a crucial component in employee proactivity. In other words, whether an employee engages in proactive action might be due to their perceptions about the extent to which they are allowed to perform such action at work. In this dissertation, I refer to these perceptions as *proactivity permission*.

In considering the above quotes provided by Bindl (2019) and Hughes (2012), one must ask whether these findings are merely outliers, where employees remain inactive despite feeling motivated and knowing their proactivity would benefit the organization? My core argument, here, is that these are not outliers and that there is something occurring that is more important and, to date, overlooked. In my studying of the literature, I have come across similar paradoxical circumstances in organizations – where employees are aware of work problems but do not take proactive action because they believe it is not their place to take such actions (e.g., Sherf et al., 2017)—fairly frequently. It appears from this research that employees often feel that they do not have permission to take proactive action. These emerging findings beg the question of what proactivity permission is and how employees come to believe they have permission to engage proactively.

As a concept, permission and permission beliefs have never been the subject of a systematic, conceptual or empirical investigation by organizational researchers, though some similar yet nuanced notions have been expressed throughout management research. For example, it was Barnard (1938/1968) who first suggested that organizational actors have a zone of acceptance in which they feel their actions are acceptable. Further, Hollander (1959) contended

that some actors in an organization may have the privilege to transgress group norms, and they may take out-of-script roles. More recently, Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, and Lawrence (2001) argued that proactive employees enact their actions successfully when they develop normative knowledge or an "understanding of the accepted or appropriate behavior patterns in a particular organizational setting" (Dutton et al., 2001, p. 728). Parker et al. (2019) underscored the dialectical nature of proactivity (i.e., factors that are in tension with each other) as well as the role of external conditions constraining proactive actions based on social rules and regulations. Collectively, these studies hint at the idea that normative regulations, especially with regard to permission, may be a critical consideration for employees when deciding to engage in proactive behaviors.

While all of these perspectives provide valuable insights, those studies are limited in their scope and in their conceptualizations of the concept of permission at work. Notably, the prevailing assumption from these studies has been centered around the idea that normative regulations regarding the permissibility of proactivity uniformly apply to everyone in the workplace. However, this assumption does not reflect organizational reality. As illustrated in my opening quote, proactivity permissibility likely varies considerably across employees; some employees (perceive that they) have greater permission to act proactively than others. For example, a recent college graduate just starting in an organization's marketing department might not be permitted to take many actions beyond the prescribed parameters of his/her job. Conversely, a new employee with previous extensive experience at a competitor may be given (or may take) implicit license to make changes that s/he believes are necessary and in the best interests of the firm. Consequently, if these two employees were to take the same proactive action in their identical roles, they might expect different responses from others. Accordingly,

studies have shown that individuals tend to positively judge and support behaviors carried out by employees with a higher level of credibility, expertise, or social status (Cummins, 2015; Feng & Feng, 2013; Hollander, 2004; Lam et al., 2019). These and other similar findings suggest that researchers need a better understanding of the factors that contribute to whether an employee perceives s/he is allowed to act proactively in the workplace and those that contribute to others' perceptions of whether an employee is permitted to take those actions.

Further systematic and rigorous research on proactivity permission is needed because such research may not only explain employee proactivity above and beyond other factors, but it also may shed significant light on the “initiative paradox.” Defined by Campbell (2000), the initiative paradox is a situation where, on the one hand, managers encourage employees to act proactively but, on the other hand, chastise them for their proactive actions. Steve Jobs, Apple's former CEO, often nicely exemplified this paradox. Despite his reputation of highly valuing and encouraging employee proactivity, Jobs fired an engineer on the spot for voicing a valid concern about the design and commercialization of the computer mouse (Isaacson, 2011). Jobs' behavior suggested that he believed the engineer had overstepped by being proactive.

Indeed, a growing number of studies indicate that certain employees are disciplined for acting proactively. Employees are particularly at risk when they do not understand appropriate and acceptable ways to act proactively (Vough et al., 2017) or when they take actions beyond their formal authority – even if their efforts aim to benefit the organization (Hughes, 2012). To illustrate, in a qualitative study with a sample of 39 energy supply company call center employees and their supervisors, one of the participants stated: “Anybody that tries to bring in anything new sort of has to *go about it the right way*” (Vough et al., 2017, p. 1192; emphasis added). Since proactive behavior, due to its disruptive nature to the status quo (Van Dyne et al.,

1995) and the absence of formal regulations on it (Griffin et al., 2007), requires employees to exercise caution, it makes proactivity permission more relevant to and essential for employees and supervisors.

In organizational setting, it is likely that some employees are kept on a “tight leash” – their actions are closely controlled, and they are not given much leeway to make decisions, voice their opinions, and act proactively – and that other employees have a “long leash” – their actions are not controlled, and they have a great deal of leeway to make decisions, voice their opinions, and act proactively. If employees want to be successful at work, employees should try to ascertain whether they are on a tight leash (i.e., do not have their supervisors’ permission to act proactively) or a long leash (i.e., do have their supervisors’ permission to act proactively). As such, when employees act in accordance with their supervisors’ judgment regarding whether they have a “tight or long leash ”—or have permission to act proactively or not—, employees are more likely to benefit from positive responses from their supervisors (e.g., support for proactive behaviors). In contrast, employees who do not act in accordance with their supervisors’ proactivity judgment may be perceived as breaking the rules, challenging established norms, or disrupting the social fabric of the workplace (Chiaburu et al., 2007; Van Dyne et al., 1995). As such, they are not likely to receive positive responses from their supervisors.

Taken together, in this dissertation, I argue that proactivity permission is a critical component of the proactivity process and that it explains both employee proactivity and supervisor reactions to employee proactivity. In an attempt to shed light on the complexities of proactivity permission, this dissertation focuses on answering two overarching research questions: (1) How do employees and supervisors come to perceive whether or not an employee is permitted to engage in proactive actions? and (2) What are the consequences of employees

acting in (non-) accordance with those perceptions? To answer these questions, I introduce to the literature the concept of *proactivity permission*, which is defined as the perception about the extent to which an employee is allowed to perform proactive actions at work. I intend to identify the antecedents of proactivity permission, examine the effects of proactivity permission on employees' proactive behavior, and explore the effects of supervisors' perceptions of employees' proactivity permission on supervisors' support for employees' proactive behaviors. The following sections outline the goals of this dissertation.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

As discussed above, differences in employees' perceptions about their proactivity permissions and differences in supervisors' perceptions about these permissions have important implications for employees and, ultimately, for organizations. However, there has not yet been a formal framework developed to understand these differences and the very nature of the concept of proactivity permission. Although central in our work life, the role of normative regulations, especially those related to permission, in the proactivity process is not clearly understood (Dutton et al., 2001; J. M. Howell & Boies, 2004). The literature on antecedents of proactive behavior has been dominated by motivational constructs. From this perspective, individuals' motivational states are the critical determinants of proactive actions (Parker et al., 2010). A practically undeniable assumption in the extant literature is that confident, self-determined, and enthusiastic employees will act proactively, presumably "regardless of the contingencies of a situation at work or in one's career" (Parker & Bindl, 2016, p. 7). This conceptualization leaves little room for the effects of normative regulations on proactivity. However, proactive behaviors occur within a social context (Vough et al., 2017), and, like other social behaviors, are subject to social regulations – regulations that are expected to be followed or, otherwise, lead to social sanctions. While scholars have called for greater integration of the social regulatory context into

the proactivity process (Cai et al., 2019; Dutton et al., 2001; Parker et al., 2019), most recent studies focusing on the role of the social context have taken a more interpersonal approach, examining factors such as leadership practices (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012; Schmitt et al., 2016), team climates (Raub & Liao, 2012; Wallace et al., 2016), and team member interactions (Venkataramani & Tangirala, 2010). Although these studies undoubtedly provide valuable contributions to our knowledge, they do not truly tap at the underlying social fabric of the organization in terms of the role those normative regulations have on proactivity.

I argue that proactive behavior – due to its role in challenging the status quo (Van Dyne et al., 1995) – can be socially and psychologically costly for employees, and employees need to consider social normative factors before engaging in proactive behaviors. They need to believe that they are allowed to act proactively and that their proactivity will be neither normatively disturbing nor subject to punishment. Otherwise, and given that negative factors generally overwhelm positive ones in peoples' minds (Baumeister et al., 2001), if employees believe they are not permitted to engage in proactive behaviors, the associated social and psychological costs of such actions will ultimately lead to them deciding not to behave proactively. Even though they may feel confident (i.e., self-efficacy; (Bandura, 1997), be enthusiastic (i.e., positive emotions; Parker et al., 2010), and possess a strong desire to accomplish their goals (i.e., self-determination motives; (Deci & Ryan, 2000), the belief that they are not allowed to act proactively may ultimately hinder employees from engaging in proactive actions. Thus, given the critical role of perceptions about social normative rules in determining organizational actions (March et al., 2000), together with calls from organizational scholars, more research is needed to assess the impact of social regulations and employees' perceptions of these regulations on the proactivity process.

One may argue that some proactive employees act without having permission to do so, according to the adage that "it's better to beg for forgiveness than to ask for permission." This statement is partly in alignment with some of the concepts reviewed in this dissertation. More specifically, if an employee is considering the forgiveness-permission trade-off (i.e., whether to ask for forgiveness or to seek permission), this means, necessarily, that they are cognizant of the idea that permission to act proactively is a factor that exists and must be considered. Rather than denying the importance of the construct, then, the forgiveness-permission trade-off simply implies that for some employees, the permission concept might not be central. Moreover, employees who subscribe to this adage might know that they lack proactivity permission and may take action without it; these employees knowingly violate normative expectations and are taking calculated risks.

Furthermore, the influence of supervisor permission beliefs on their reactions to employee proactivity may help us explain greater variance in those reactions. In particular, a better understanding of what supervisors consider to be permissible proactive behavior for an employee to engage in can help us better understand when proactive behavior will be supported or not. Employees generally require managerial support to achieve their proactive goals (Pingel et al., 2019) because proactive behaviors typically lack tangible and intangible resources. However, managers may not equally support every proactive action. Managers might be less supportive of behaviors they consider disruptive to social regulations, work relationships, and the implicit rules and roles in the workplace (Dutton et al., 2001). For instance, studies have found that managers tend to be averse to supporting proactive actions if they consider them to be status quo challenging (Burriss, 2012) or beyond what they consider to be an employee's implicit role (E. McClean et al., 2021). This suggests that if employees want to accomplish their proactive

actions and obtain support from their managers, they need to consider what actions are more appropriate and permissible within the social context. To be sure, other actors within the social context are likely to have perceptions about the extent to which a given employee is permitted to act proactively (e.g., coworkers). However, because of the critical role that managerial support has for the ultimate success of employee proactivity (Lam et al., 2019), I take a manager-centric perspective and treat the manager as the crucial “other” whose perception about an employee’s permission to engage in proactivity is of paramount importance.

Although some limited studies have considered the role of normative regulations related to proactivity, they have not captured the complexities of such regulations in the proactivity process. And such studies have yielded mixed and somewhat confusing findings. For example, Ashford et al. (1998) implicitly conceptualized favorable issue-selling norms as a normative dictum that is uniformly applicable to the organization's members. Their conceptualization aligned with the predominant reasoning in the social norm literature, which broadly defines social norms as the standards and rules for behaviors that most members of an identified group expect others to follow (Morris et al., 2015). Yet, as I outline, social regulations do not always apply to every individual equally. Organized groups can have tacit social rules that vary according to one’s social position and relationships (see Cummins, 1999). The idea that social norms related to proactivity might be uniformly applicable to everyone might not reflect organizational reality.

Furthermore, social norms alone might not be sufficient in explaining agentic, proactive behaviors. For example, Shin and Kim (2015) predicted that proactivity norms would have a positive effect on employees’ proactive behaviors, as social norms may contribute to the formation of a positive intention to engage in proactive behaviors (Ajzen, 1991). However, their

results showed the opposite pattern: the direct effect of norms on proactivity was strong and negative. To understand this, one must consider the difference between strong and weak normative regulations. Strong regulations describe behavioral expectations about social actions through rules that define what someone *must* or *must not do* (e.g., employees *must* share their ideas with their work units) – this is illustrative in the case of social norms (Beller, 2010). In contrast, weak normative regulations describe rules about what someone *may* or *need not do* in the social setting. These rules refer to actions that are or are not permissible for an individual (Beller, 2010; Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005). Indeed, if there are strong regulations on proactive actions (e.g., “By the end of this year, employees must take three personal initiatives”), there is little space left for weak regulations (e.g., “Employees may or may not take personal initiative”). Strong regulations reduce the space for freedom to make personal judgments and may lead employees to not demonstrate personal choices with regard to proactivity (Wellman & Miller, 2008). As such, utilization of a framework where the norms for proactive behaviors are conceptualized as strong normative rules (i.e., social norms) might constrain the possibility for agentic actions and, thus, yield a negative relationship between social norms and proactivity, as Shin and Kim (2015) found.

Accordingly, a more promising examination of how the social context influences proactive behavior would recognize the role of weak conditions in the proactivity process (i.e., the permission concept). This does not mean that (strong) social norms are inconsequential for proactivity. Instead, by conceptualizing the role of weak regulations (i.e., permission) in proactivity and examining how employees understand these weak regulatory states (i.e., whether they are allowed to act proactively), the role of social regulation in agentic and proactive processes can be modeled more accurately. To this end, this dissertation will engage in a more

fine-grained treatment of how employees develop and perceive weak social regulations that reflect permission states with regard to proactive actions.

Finally, the current literature also presents a limited understanding of why some employees have more permission to act proactively than others. To be sure, several reviews and studies on the topic of proactivity at work have alluded to the idea that some employees are allowed to act more proactively, while others are not (J. J. Dahling & Whitaker, 2016; Grant et al., 2009; Parker et al., 2019; Shi et al., 2011). Because proactive behaviors are typically not explicitly bound by a specific set of social norms and workplace expectations (D. J. Campbell, 2000; Griffin et al., 2007), there is likely to be variance in whether a given employee's proactive actions are supported or championed versus undermined or reprimanded, as noted above. Two employees in identical positions with identical tenures in their organizations may differ in their social positions, educational backgrounds, years of experience in the industry, and/or expertise. These and other factors may contribute to others' perceptions regarding whether these individuals have built up the necessary 'social credentials' to engage in proactive behaviors (Abrams et al., 2008; Hollander, 2004). A few studies and theoretical explanations have indirectly supported these ideas. For example, in an experimental vignette study with a sample of 164 participants in supervisory roles, Bohlmann and Zacher (2020) found that employees' age and gender affect how supervisors judge the acceptability and effectiveness of employees' proactivity. This finding implies that some characteristics of employees affect how others perceive their proactive behaviors. However, there has been no systematic investigation of characteristics that contribute to employees' proactivity permission beliefs to date.

This dissertation extends theorizing on proactivity by introducing the concept of proactivity permission to address the issues enumerated above. I unpack ideas from the deontic

regulation literature (Beller, 2001; Cummins, 2015; Johnson-Laird, 2010) to conceptualize the construct, better understand the factors that contribute to perceptions of proactivity permission and study the effects of proactivity permission on employees' proactivity and supervisors' support for employees' proactive actions. The deontic regulation literature offers three sets of variables that contribute to perceptions of permissibility. The mental model theory of deontic reasoning (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005; Johnson-Laird, 2010) suggests that people perceive and understand normative regulations based on general, trait-like tendencies. In light of this theory, the first set of factors I investigate relates to dispositional characteristics. For employees, those characteristics are psychological entitlement, psychological reactance orientation, and self-construal orientation. For supervisors, I study social-dominance orientation, rules-based mindset, and the need for control (i.e., the desirability of control). While people with some trait characteristics (e.g., psychological entitlement, reactance-orientation, and independent self-construal) tend to perceive the normative landscape as more lax and flexible, others (with a social-dominance orientation, rules-based mindset, and/or need for control) may see social rules as more restricted and rigid. In this dissertation, I examine how these trait tendencies affect employees' and supervisors' proactivity permission perceptions.

The second set of factors is related to employees' social and relational characteristics that might affect proactivity permission. According to deontic dominance theory (Cummins, 2000, 2015), individuals' beliefs about and the judgment of the permissibility of given actions are affected by one's social standing, as social standing grants individuals control over important social resources that may benefit group members. As a relational concept, social standing refers to one's social rank, prestige, and esteem in the eyes of others (Blader & Chen, 2012). Social standing is typically achieved through one's own means – by providing value to the workgroup –

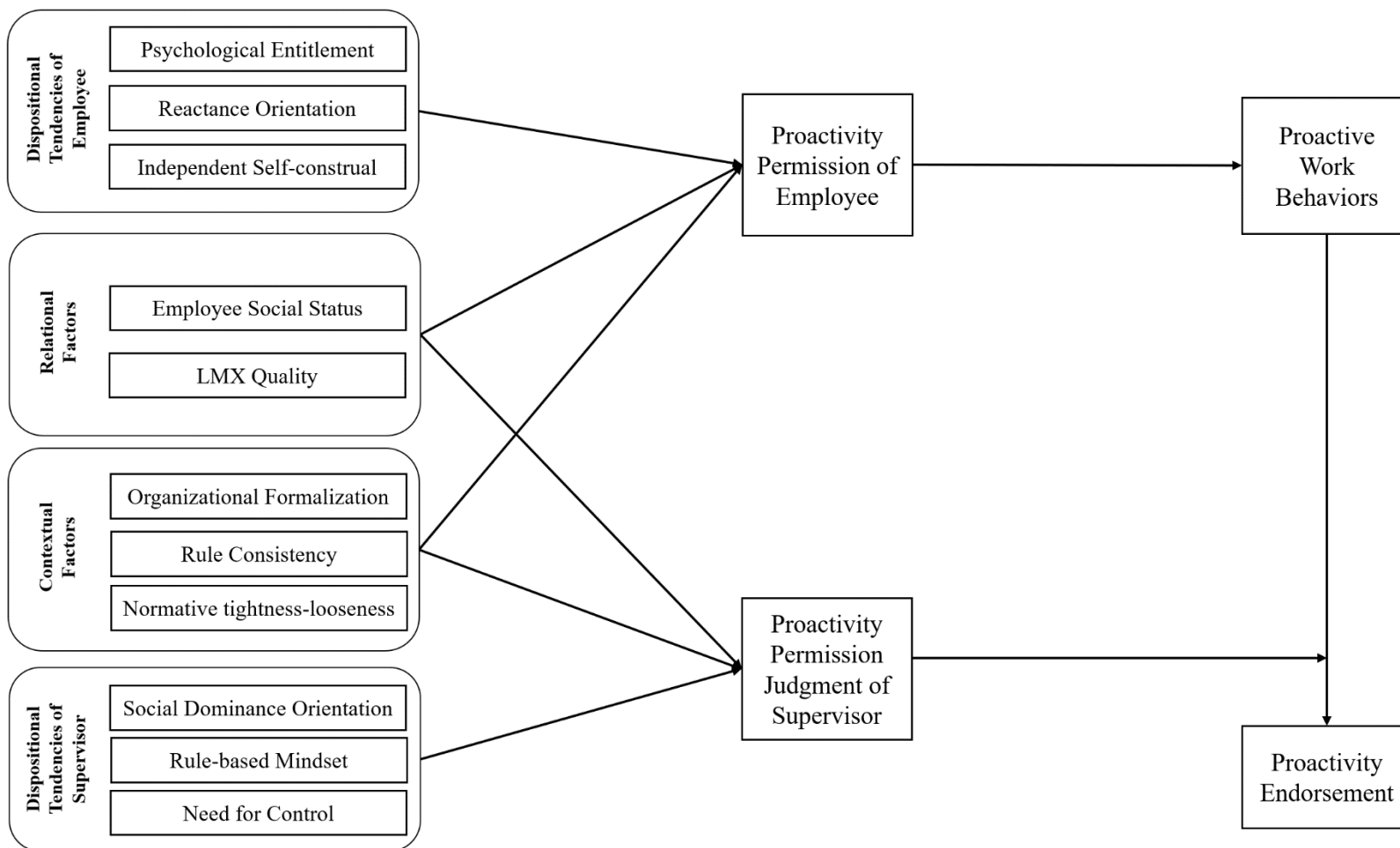
or vicariously through the relationships one has built with respected, powerful, and influential others (Cummins, 2000). Based on this reasoning, I identify social status and employees' relationship quality with the supervisors (i.e., leader-member exchange quality, LMX) as important relational factors at work. Accordingly, I argue that these factors will be positively related to employees' proactivity permission and their supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permission.

The third set of factors is related to perceived contextual characteristics of the workplace. According to the deontic reasoning literature (Beller, 2010; Cummins, 2015), to understand what permission rules are and how people reason about them, one must also consider overall rule systems and their application in the workplace. Social rules and how they are applied in the social setting may affect social actors' rule-related cognition and, subsequently, their behaviors (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Based on this view, I investigate three factors: organizational formalization (i.e., the extent to which rules are written at the organization), rule consistency (i.e., the extent to which rules are consistent with each other), and normative strength-looseness (i.e., normative tightness; the extent to which organizational actors feel pressured to follow unwritten rules and the extent to which violations of unwritten rules are severely punishable). Consequently, I argue that these factors will contribute to employees' proactivity permission and their supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permission.

Furthermore, I develop arguments about, and test the predictive power of, proactivity permission for employees' proactive behavior relative to known predictors (e.g., role breadth self-efficacy; Parker et al., 1998). Based on the expectancy-value-cost model (Barron & Hulleman, 2015; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), I argue that proactivity permission will be positively related to employees' proactivity, as proactivity permission suggests that given actions are

perceived as more acceptable and associated with lower social costs for the actor, thereby reducing employees' perceived social and psychological costs for proactivity (Ashford et al., 1998).

Finally, I argue that supervisors' perceptions of employees' proactivity permission will moderate the relationship between employees' proactive behaviors and managerial endorsements of these proactive actions (i.e., the extent to which managers positively receive and accept employees' proactivity; Burris, Rockmann, & Kimmons, 2017; Lam, Lee, & Sui, 2019). When supervisors perceive employees as having less, rather than more, proactivity permission, supervisors are likely to provide less support for proactive behaviors. Figure 1 illustrates my proposed model.



**Figure 1. Proposed Model**

### **1.3 Significance of Research**

Integrating and building on deontic regulations theories (Beller, 2001; Johnson-Laird, 2010), this dissertation extends the literature on proactive behavior in several ways. First, this dissertation addresses a question that has not been sufficiently examined in an organizational context up to this point: How do normative social regulations, particularly those relating to permission, affect employees' proactivity? More specifically, this study is the first effort to conceptually distinguish between the concept of weak normative regulations (i.e., permission) and strong normative regulations (i.e., social norms). Some studies point to the idea that normative regulations play an important role in the proactivity process (Dutton et al., 1997, 2001; Shin & Kim, 2015). However, because extant findings are mixed, it is unclear whether and how normative regulations play a role in the proactivity process. Thus, this dissertation examines individual variation in the concept of proactivity permission as a weak social regulation and offers new insights into the role of social regulations at work. Findings from this dissertation can help inform organizations and managers about how one's social standing, individual characteristics, and social context affect their beliefs regarding whether one is permitted to engage in proactive behaviors. As such, these findings enable managers and employees to better understand the proactivity paradox.

Second, this dissertation extends theory on the drivers of employees' proactivity, identifying an important predictor over and above the motivation to act proactively. As organizations continue to decentralize and blur role definitions (Griffin et al., 2007; Sluss, van Dick, & Thompson, 2011), employees will increasingly need to understand whether they are permitted to engage in a given proactive behavior or not. In this sense, proactivity permission plays an important role in how employees consider potential proactive actions and, perhaps, influences their motivation to engage in a given proactive behavior. From a behavioral

perspective, the impact of proactivity permission on employee proactivity, over and above motivation, has been widely ignored in research and practice. Although research on expectancy-value models of motivation has typically stressed the importance of psychological or social costs of action as important predictors of employee behavior (see, Barron & Hulleman, 2015), proactivity researchers have not yet integrated social costs into conceptual models. The current research attempts to fill this gap by introducing proactivity permission as an important driver of behavior. As such, this dissertation offers the potential to explain additional variance in proactive behaviors.

Lastly, this dissertation aims to improve our understanding of how and when employees' proactive behaviors are offered support by supervisors. I argue that a supervisor's approval of and support for an employee's proactivity is contingent upon the supervisor's assessment of the acting employee's permission to engage in the proactive behavior. Scholars have indicated that supervisors do not assess all of their direct reports' proactive actions as uniformly acceptable (Lam et al., 2019; Parker et al., 2019). By examining supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permission as an important contingency of how proactive behaviors are perceived, this dissertation seeks to extend the scholarly discourse on this topic by integrating the deontic reasoning literature into this conversation (Fiddick, 2004; Wellman & Miller, 2008).

**Table 1. Proactive Behaviors Definitions**

Proactive Behavior	Definition	Illustrative Behavior from Original Measures
<b>Proactive work behavior</b>	Taking control of, and bringing about change within, the internal organizational environment	
Taking charge	Voluntary and constructive efforts to effect organizationally functional change with respect to how work is executed; change-oriented behavior aimed at improvement (Morrison & Phelps, 1999)	Try to bring about improved procedures in the workplace
Voice	Making innovative suggestions for change and recommending modifications to standard procedures even when others disagree; speaking up that is constructive and intended to positively contribute to the organization (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998)	Communicate your views about work issues to others in the workplace, even if your views differ and others disagree
Individual innovation	Behaviors involved in the creation and implementation of ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994), including identifying an opportunity, generating new ideas or approaches, and implementing the new ideas	Search out new techniques, technologies, and/or product ideas
Problem prevention	Self-directed and anticipatory action to prevent the reoccurrence of work problems (Frese & Fay, 2001)	Try to find the root cause of things that go wrong
<b>Proactive strategic behavior</b>	Taking control of, and causing change in, the broader organization's strategy and its fit with the external environment	

Strategic scanning	Proactively surveying the organization's environment to identify ways to ensure a fit between the organization and its environment, such as identifying ways the organization might respond to emerging markets or actively searching the environment for future organizational threats and opportunities	Actively scan the environment to see how what is happening might affect organization in the future
Issue selling credibility	Influencing the formation of a strategy in organizations by making others aware of particular issues (Dutton & Ashford, 1993); calling an organization's attention to key trends, developments, and events that have implications for its performance (Morrison & Phelps, 1999, p. 404)	Positive track record for selling issues
Issue selling willingness	Influencing the formation of a strategy in organizations by giving the time, energy, and effort into behaviors to ensure key decision makers in the organization know the issues (Ashford, Rothbard, Piderit, & Dutton, 1998)	Amount of time willing to devote to selling this issue
<b>Proactive person-environment fit behavior</b>	Changing oneself or the situation to achieve greater compatibility between one's own attributes and the organizational environment	
Feedback inquiry	Directly asking for feedback from others; a type of proactive feedback seeking in which employees engage in voluntary and anticipatory actions to obtain information about their behavior (Ashford & Black, 1996; Ashford, Blatt, & Van de Walle, 2003)	Seek feedback from supervisor about work performance
Feedback monitoring	Using as feedback the information obtained from actively monitoring the situation and others' behavior (Ashford	Observe what performance behaviors the boss rewards and use this as feedback on one's own performance

& Black, 1996; Ashford et al., 2003);  
is considered a type of proactive  
feedback seeking

Job change negotiation	Explicit attempts to change one's job so that it better fits one's skills and abilities (Ashford & Black, 1996; Nicholson, 1984); a type of proactive socialization in which employees actively adjust to new job conditions (Jones, 1986), originally applied to newcomers, though equally applicable to all employees	Negotiate with others about task assignments and role expectations
Career initiative	Individual's active attempts to promote his or her career rather than a passive response to the job situation as given (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001); engaging in career planning, skill development, and consultation with more senior personnel.	Engage in career path planning

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*Note.* Adapted from “Taking Stock: Integrating and Differentiating Multiple Proactive Behaviors”, by Parker, S. K., & Collins, C. G. 2010. Taking Stock: Integrating and Differentiating Multiple Proactive Behaviors. *Journal of Management*, 36(3), 633–662

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Permissions Concept Reviewed

#### 2.2 Definition of Permission

If a shepherd, *without the permission of the owner of the field*, and without the knowledge of the owner of the sheep, lets the sheep into a field to graze, then the owner of the field shall harvest his crop, and the shepherd, who had pastured his flock there without permission of the owner of the field, shall pay to the owner twenty gur of corn for every ten gan.

— Law 57, The Code of Hammurabi, 1755–1750 BC

The idea of deontic regulations first surfaced when the first organized human societies emerged onto the historical stage. In Greek, “deontic” refers to what is required and/or what is appropriate (Hilpinen, 2017). Deontic regulations, more specifically, are a collection of formal or informal social rules that define prohibitions, obligations, and permissions to guide human conduct (Beller, 2010). These regulations underpin all ethical, legal, and social structures and are at the core of human social relationships (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005). In social settings, these regulations define what individuals are obligated to do (*obligations* such as employees having to work in the office space provided by the organization), which actions are prohibited (*prohibitions* such as prohibiting employees from using their office computers outside of the office), and when and for whom these obligations or prohibitions are suspended or permitted (*permissions* such as allowing employees who satisfy certain criteria to work at home or to use their office computers outside of the office). Thus, deontic regulations include everything that directs human interactions, from social norms that proscribe behaviors (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004) to simple rules among strangers that prescribe meaningful daily interactions (Beller, 2001).

Among these deontic regulations, permissions play a unique role. According to the Oxford English dictionary, permission is broadly defined as the act of allowing or giving consent and liberty to someone to do something (“Permission,” 2021). While ostensibly simple to define, the concept itself is elusive, intermingled with diverse literature ranging from normative ethics to deontic logic (Alexander, 2014; Müller & Schaber, 2018; Stolpe, 2010) and from developmental psychology (Cummins, 1996a) to cognitive psychology (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005). Despite its ubiquity across disciplines, permission as a concept has not been studied rigorously in the organizational literature. Each literature that investigated permission has offered a unique definition of it specific to their particular research and objectives; thus, a general definition of permission remains nebulous across disciplines.

Some disciplines, such as legal studies and criminology, define permission based on a performative view (Müller & Schaber, 2018), in which permission refers only to explicitly stated communications or written documents that represent the voluntary, autonomous, and “component” decision allowing for specific behaviors or actions. For example, before starting work as a medical doctor, an individual must receive an official document (i.e., a medical license) from the government to prove their credentials, thereby “receiving permission” to engage in the profession. Other disciplines (e.g., cognitive psychology) define permission based on a cognitive view (Müller & Schaber, 2018), in which permission refers to a cognitive state or belief that an individual constructs after observing social cues and incorporating both implied and explicit permission rules into their understanding (Hurd, 1996). For example, an individual who has been hired as a financial reporter might implicitly perceive that she has permission to access financial data at work to carry out her tasks, even if she has not been explicitly told this to

be the case. She can deduce her permission to access the financial data simply from her job description.

In this dissertation, I introduce the concept of permission to management literature, broadly, and to the proactivity literature, more specifically. In doing so, I aim to provide a comprehensive literature review and offer a definition that can facilitate future management research and paradigm development (Pfeffer, 1993), enable integration of other research bodies into the management literature, and highlight the unique role of permission in organizational settings. For this dissertation, I adopt the cognitive view of permission and define proactivity permission as the perception about the extent to which an employee is allowed to perform proactive actions at work.

This definition implies three essential material consequences. First, that proactivity permission is subjective, meaning it is likely to be constructed by individuals' observations of social reality. Social cues and individuals' characteristics affect how people understand social situations and develop beliefs based on their understanding (Spector, 2012). As a result, social cues related to rules and normative regulations, as well as individuals' traits, may affect proactivity permission. Second, according to the proposed definition, proactivity permission refers exclusively to proactive actions. It is quite likely that individuals hold a range of permission beliefs about different behaviors that are not considered to be proactivity, such as whether they are allowed to work from home, leave early from work, or use certain office items for personal reasons. However, proactivity permission is specifically related to individuals' proactive actions and focuses on whether individuals believe their self-initiated, anticipatory, and change-oriented behaviors are permitted. Third, proactivity permission is also specifically related to behaviors at work – whether employees believe that proactive behaviors are allowed in the

workplace. Of course, it is possible that individuals who engage in proactivity outside of work do not feel they have permission to act proactively inside the workplace and vice versa. However, the definition of proactivity permission used in this dissertation strictly focuses on permission beliefs related to one's role in the workplace.

### **2.3 Theoretical View of Permission**

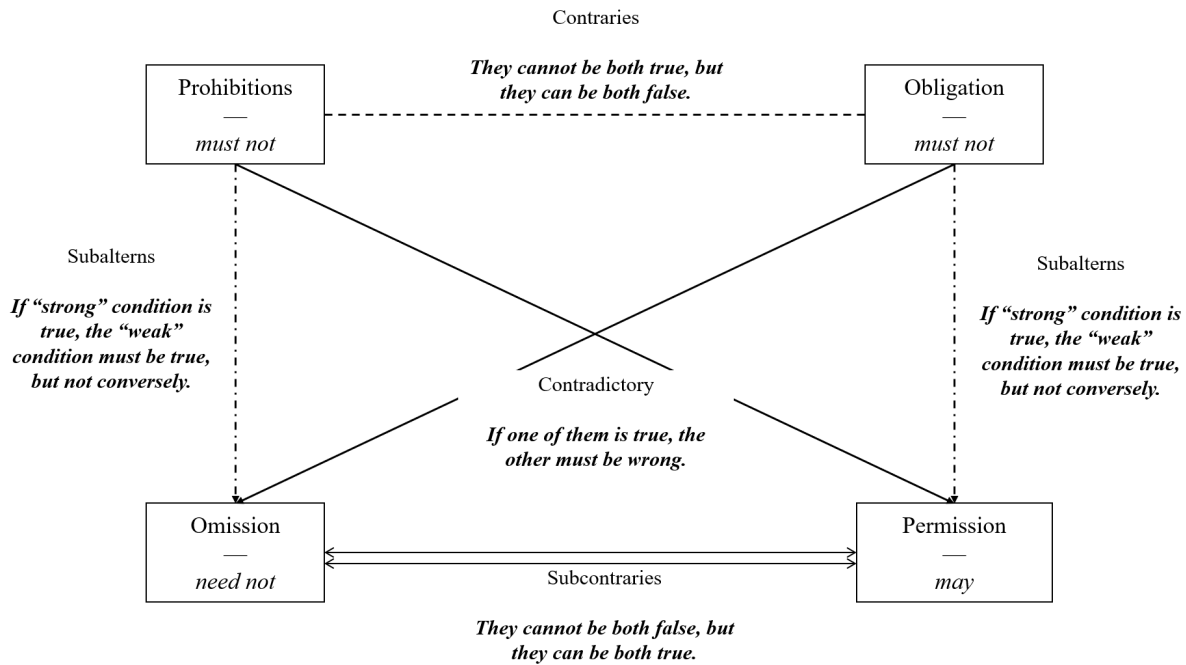
As noted above, although the concept of permission has been given notable attention in the literature from various disciplines, permission as a concept has not been studied in organizational scholarship. There are three areas of study outside of organizational scholarship that have examined the concept of permission and relate to the current manuscript: deontic logic in philosophy, developmental psychology, and cognitive psychology. Deontic logic provides a robust framework with which we can conceptualize what is meant by permission, particularly in relation to other forms of deontic regulations that influence individuals' behaviors such as obligations, prohibitions, and omissions from obligations (Stolpe, 2010). Second, cognitive psychology focuses on how individuals understand and reason about deontic regulations, primarily from the perspective of cognitive processes (Johnson-Laird, 2010). Finally, developmental psychology provides an understanding of the functions of permission in coordinated human societies and organizations, especially in social relationships (Cummins, 2000). Because there is no unified general theory of permission, I draw from these three bodies of literature to conceptualize how permission beliefs exist and operate in organizational settings. In the following sections, I review the concept of permission and include relevant theories and findings from deontic logic, cognitive psychology, and developmental psychology.

#### **2.3.1 Permission in Deontological Logic**

Deontic logic is a branch of logic that studies normative principles, normative structures, and normative rule reasoning (Hilpinen, 2017). From the deontic logic perspective, permission is

conceptualized as a normative action that allows appropriate social behaviors in relation to a wider system of normative regulations (Stolpe, 2010). Deontic principles, at their core, determine the behaviors that are viewed as socially permissible or not. According to this literature, social constraints on behavior are defined by two concepts, which are called *strong* conditions: An *obligation* denotes the need to execute an action, while a *prohibition* refers to the need to omit an action. For example, a marketing employee might be *obliged* to carry out weekly market analyses as part of her task requirements, but she might be *prohibited* from sharing this analysis with third parties outside the organization. In addition, there are two *weak* conditions of deontic rules that denote the absence of strong deontic conditions: A *permission* denotes the absence of a prohibition or restriction, while an *omission* indicates the absence of an obligation (Beller, 2010). For example, the marketing employee might be *permitted* to use nationwide marketing data for her analysis without any prohibitions, and she may have an *omission* from her task when she is no longer required to produce data tables for the project.

All four conditions are functionally connected (Hilpinen, 2017) and together produce a square of oppositions (see Figure 2). Thus, permission appears as a negative and weak term in deontic logic, definable and valid only in conjunction with the three other terms (i.e., obligations, prohibitions, and omissions). In deontic logic, the terms *contrary*, *contradictory*, *subalterns*, and *subcontrary* are inference rules (see Figure 2), which refer to syntactical transformations used to deduce a conclusion from a premise in order to construct an argument (Hurley, 2014). This dissertation focuses on the permission condition and its relation to other deontic conditions. Therefore, in the following sections, I briefly describe the inference rules of permission, but not other deontic conditions. The brief discussion aims to clarify the concepts of permission from a *deontic logic perspective* and show the relationship of the concept with other deontic rules.



**Figure 2. The Deontic Square of Oppositions**

In deontic logic, permission is *contradictory* to prohibition: If an action is prohibited, this implies that it cannot be permitted, and vice versa. This rule simply means that if proactive behaviors are not prohibited, then they can be permitted. Furthermore, permission and obligation have a *subaltern* relationship, meaning that the existence of a strong condition (i.e., obligation) implies a weak condition (i.e., permission), but not vice versa. This indicates that if employees are allowed to engage in proactive behaviors, this does not *necessarily* imply that employees are obligated to engage in them. Finally, permission and omission are *subcontraries*, meaning that they can both be true but cannot be false. If an action is permitted, it may also be omitted, and vice versa. The subcontrary condition also stresses the role of agency and intentionality in permission rules (Searle, 1983). For example, a permission rule that says, "employees may express their opinions" implies the possibility of an omission statement such as "employees do not have to express their opinions if they do not want to." This creates an agentic condition in

which employees can decide to engage in action if they desire. To understand this, we can compare permission to obligation. Obligation conditions (e.g., task roles) require employees to “engage in an action regardless of [their] desires,” whereas permission conditions allow employees to “engage in an action if [they] desire” (Wellman & Miller, 2008, p. 111). As such, deontic logic literature implies that permission is a state in which individuals can demonstrate their agency.

Although there are four fundamental inference rules among conditions (i.e., contrary, contradictory, subaltern, and subcontrary), when all proposed relationships are reduced to their simple structures, we can see that, overall, two qualitative conditions hold. According to deontic logic, an action can either have a strong normative condition, which is constrained (i.e., prohibition/obligation), or a weak normative condition, which is not constrained (i.e., permission).

Recent studies on deontic logic have added *negative* and *positive permission* concepts to the definition and conceptualization of permission (Stolpe, 2010). From this perspective, an action can be permitted in two forms. On the one hand, *negative permission* is a form of implied permission without any social constraints. According to this definition, permission is implied because the social rules that constrain an action do not explicitly state that it is not allowed. From a legal perspective, negative permission is tantamount to the principle of “*nullum crimen sine lege* – there is no crime where there is no law” (Stolpe, 2010, p. 97). This conceptualization points out that since often there are less clear rules regulating proactivity at work (Griffin et al., 2007), employees’ proactive actions are likely to occur under negative permission. Additionally, negative permission may increase individuals’ accountability for their discretionary behaviors (Stolpe, 2010). Negative permission denotes a condition in which no explicit rules guide human

actions, and no obligations state that persons must act in a certain manner. Under this condition, individuals who display their own discretionary behaviors will be held responsible for their mistakes if something goes wrong due to their actions. Similar reasoning was expressed by Grant and Ashford (2008): "if employees fail, under-perform, or make an error, the spotlight will be on them, as proactive behavior is difficult to blame on external circumstances due to its self-starting nature" (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 14). In this respect, deontic logic coincides with observations made by organizational scientists.

On the other hand, *positive permission* refers to giving or receiving explicit permission for action. An example of positive permission is when an employee asks for permission from a supervisor to organize a meeting and greet for new employees. Unlike negative permission, positive permission has the power to change accountability for an action. When a supervisor explicitly permits an employee's action, the supervisor assumes the liability for the potential negative consequences of that action. Thus, the supervisor's acceptance of the liability of that action reduces the likelihood of the employee's exposure to negative consequences (Hurd, 1996). The concept of positive permission is beyond the scope of this dissertation because the focus of the current dissertation is on proactivity permission and, thus, is limited to negative permission cases.

In sum, deontic logic enables us to eloquently conceptualize permission as a type of normative condition that relates to other normative regulations within a well-defined, rational system. Deontic logic suggests that proactivity permission reflects a type of weak deontic regulation in which one believes that proactive action is allowed. An action in a normative social system can be permitted in two ways : implied (i.e., negative permission) and explicitly stated (i.e., positive permission). Since proactive behaviors are not regulated with explicit rules at work

(Griffin et al., 2007), proactive behaviors likely occur under negative permission conditions with implied permission. In this sense, deontic logic agrees with the definition of proactivity permission provided in this dissertation.

Although deontic logic provides a comprehensive and thought-provoking account of permission, its perspective on the concept is often restricted to theoretical and philosophical discussion. Indeed, one of the most frequent criticisms of this approach (e.g., Bucciarelli et al., 2008) notes that, in reality, organizations are not likely to define normative regulations in the completely rational manner that is referred to by deontic logic. From a deontic logic perspective, normative social systems that define obligations, prohibitions, and permissions must be coherent and free from any dilemmatic rules. However, real-world social situations typically have a notable degree of irrationality, with competing normative expectations (Miron-Spektor et al., 2018) and poorly defined rules. This leads to dilemmatic situations that are incompatible with deontic logic (Johnson-Laird, 2010). For example, in some organizational settings, rules can create conundrums (e.g., an employee may be obligated to access his locked office building over the weekend in order to complete a project by Monday, but, at the same time, he is not permitted to be at the office over the weekend by another rule in place.). Such complexities require that the permission concept be moved beyond the abstract, perfectly defined normative system into real-world applications. Accordingly, it is critical to understand how the concept of permission operates in the real world. Cognitive psychology and developmental psychology researchers have considered this challenge and have extended the permission concept by empirically examining real-life situations. In the following sections, I discuss the findings from these bodies of research and highlight related theoretical frameworks.

### 2.3.2 Permission in Cognitive Psychology

Cognitive psychology focuses on how individuals think and reason about normative rules and permissions (Beller, 2010; Bucciarelli et al., 2008). In cognitive psychology, permissions and other forms of deontic rules are typically thought of as conditional reasoning processes. Permission is often seen as a kind of *if-then* statement (e.g., If you complete your task at work today, then you may leave early from work). Conditional reasoning is a reliable method for conceptualizing permission in both deontic logic and experimental settings because by constructing a conditional declaration, researchers may add contextual knowledge to the task (Dunbar, 2000).

Initially, Wason's famous experiments sparked interest in permission reasoning (Wason, 1969). In a series of experiments, Wason and colleagues revealed that, on average, individuals perform better on tasks that involve social rules than on tasks that involve abstract logic (Wason, 1969; Wason & Johnson-Laird, 1972). Generally speaking, individuals were better at discerning whether a given social rule was violated or not versus whether a logical proposition was accurate or incorrect. In the literature, this effect has been referred to as *deontic advantage*, which denotes the human advantage for reasoning about normative rules over descriptive statements (Cummins, 2013; Dack & Astington, 2011). Numerous studies have shown evidence for this advantage in adults (Cheng & Holyoak, 1985; Cosmides, 1989; Cox & Griggs, 1982) and even in children (Cummins, 1996b, 2013). As a result, researchers have developed various normative reasoning theories to explain why individuals reason rules and permissions differently than they make abstract statements. In the following sections, I present two notable theoretical frameworks from cognitive psychology: pragmatic reasoning schema theory (Cheng & Holyoak, 1985) and the mental model theory of deontic reasoning (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005).

### **2.3.2.1 Theoretical Perspectives of Permission in Cognitive Psychology**

#### **2.3.2.2 Pragmatic Reasoning Schema Theory**

In an attempt to explain permission reasoning, cognitive psychology provides several frameworks that share conceptual similarities and marked differences. The first cognitive psychology theory to consider permission reasoning was Cheng and Holyoak's (1985) pragmatic reasoning schema theory. According to pragmatic schema theory, individuals develop mental schemas (i.e., patterned ways of thinking) that store abstract knowledge structures that have been developed from daily experiences. Thus, when individuals encounter a situation in which they must assess whether they have permission for doing something, they activate their permission schemas. Furthermore, permission schemas dictate that a specific action or set of actions may be permissible only if a specific condition or set of conditions are satisfied beforehand (see Cheng & Holyoak, 1985). Accordingly, people generally believe that they have permission if they meet certain criteria for the actions they intend to carry out. However, this theory does not identify which specific criteria are relevant for permission reasoning. In short, the framework predicts that (1) situations requiring individuals to think about social rules will cause them to engage in social rule reasoning more robustly, and (2) individuals will believe they have permission if they consider the preconditions for the action satisfied. From this perspective, it can be hypothesized that workplaces that emphasize rules and regulations are more likely to influence their employees to be rule-oriented and when employees believe they have fulfilled certain preconditions, they will be more likely to perceive that they are allowed to behave in a specific way (e.g., proactive behavior).

Although this theory provides an initial theoretical model for permission reasoning, it has been previously criticized (for response to the criticisms, see Holyoak & Cheng, 1995). From a

theoretical standpoint, this theory only accounts for explicitly stated positive permission conditions. However, recent research has shown that individuals also validly reason about negative permission states, which are neither explicitly stated nor overtly regulated by social rules (Beller, 2008; Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005). For example, people can infer permission conditions from other normative conditions using analogical reasoning (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005). From an empirical standpoint, some studies have not confirmed the presence of permission schemas in reasoning. Based on permission schema theory, Dunbar (2000), for example, speculated that when participants are presented with social cues to activate their permission schemas, they will reason more accurately about their permissions. Dunbar's (2000) findings, however, do not support his prediction. Instead, Dunbar's (2000) research demonstrates that initial permission cues have little impact on people's reasoning regarding permission.

### **2.3.2.3 Mental Model Theory of Deontic Reasoning**

The model theory (i.e., the mental model theory of deontic reasoning) is a more elaborate theory than the pragmatic reasoning schema theory (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005). According to the model theory, individuals reason permission conditions by creating tentative mental models that reflect the semantic relationships of social rules, along with one's unique background, experience, and knowledge, and testing these tentative models against their observations to validate their understanding (Beller, 2003; Johnson-Laird, 2011). In other words, people evaluate whether they have permission to do something based on their understanding of the world, and they will assume that they have permission until they fail to affirm that belief according to their models.

The model theory suggests that when individuals' mental models conflict with social rules, they adjust their mental models by comparing them with alternative models (Johnson-Laird, 2010). This implies that unless individuals encounter situations that challenge their mental models, they will tend to believe that their mental models of social rules are valid. The model theory also argues that because mental models tend to focus on what the individual believes to be true, rather than what might be false, individuals often succumb to various cognitive biases such as confirmation biases, selective information processing, or illusory inference biases (Barrouillet & Lecas, 1999; Beller, 2010; Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005). Furthermore, the model theory asserts that reasoning about permission requires building more alternative mental models than reasoning about obligations or prohibitions. When people build more mental models, more cognitive processing and capacity are needed. However, because the cognitive capacity of individuals is limited (Barrouillet & Lecas, 1999), permissions often tend to be harder to process than are other forms of social rules (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005). Finally, since personal knowledge and previously developed mental models affect an individual's construction and processing of social reality, reasoning and processing of social rules vary between individuals based on their previous mental models, world views, and/or trait-like tendencies (Fumero et al., 2008, 2010; Prebble et al., 2013).

One of the primary advantages of this model is that it relies on a domain-general perspective in reasoning about social rules (Beller 2008). In cognitive psychology, domain-general broadly refers to cognitive processes that transcend particular subject or content areas, whereas domain-specific refers to cognitive processes related to specific subject or content areas (Efklides et al., 1994). With domain-general cognition, individuals apply similar cognitive techniques or processes across different situations. For example, counting is a domain-general

strategy: Individuals count cars, buildings, or people similarly. Because the mental model theory argues that permission reasoning is a domain-general cognitive process, this framework enables us to incorporate many other predictions of the general mental models' theory into the permission reasoning models (Beller, 2001). Hence, this theory enables permission reasoning models to incorporate a variety of socio-cognitive theories.

#### **2.3.2.4 Findings From Cognitive Psychology**

The cognitive science literature includes some significant research observations based on pragmatic schema theory and the model theory (Beller, 2010). First, in traditional permission reasoning tasks, individuals tend to be highly accurate in judging whether social rules are violated or not (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005; Cox & Griggs, 1982; Dominowski, 1995). However, people are less accurate in judging whether abstract logic propositions are true or false (e.g., "(1) If A, then B; (2) B; ∴ (3) Is it true that it is A?"). Dominowski (1995) showed that a strong majority (90%) of participants provide wrong answers to abstract logic propositions, while they are very accurate in normative rule reasoning. The difference between the abstract and normative reasoning increased the interest in the topic, leading the further developments in the field.

According to cognitive psychology, when individuals think about permissions, they often consider accessible facts about what is omissible, what is prohibited, and what is obligated. Drawing on mental model theory, Beller (2008), for example, showed that individuals believe that they have permission if there are no prohibition rules on actions and vice versa. As such, permission can often be derived from obligations, prohibitions, and omission rules, which aligns with the deontic logic literature (Beller & Spada, 2003).

Of particular importance for this dissertation is the finding that across different types of rule reasoning tasks, individuals are generally better at understanding and reasoning about strong deontic conditions such as obligations and prohibitions than they are for permission conditions (Sudić et al., 2019). Sudić et al. (2019) demonstrate that when individuals reason about permission conditions, they tend to demonstrate cognitive biases as well as respond more quickly and with higher confidence than they do for other forms of rule tasks; however, their responses tend to be less accurate. Furthermore, Bucciarelli and Johnson-Laird (2005) show that thinking about permission can be more challenging in developing their mental model theory. Participants in Bucciarelli and Johnson-Laird's study were presented with a task prompt that reflected a permission condition (e.g., "You are permitted to carry out only one of the following actions"), and they were asked whether they would be permitted to engage in the given behavior. Interestingly, 93% of participants were inaccurate in their responses (Experiment 3). They believed they had permission, even though the test prompt indicated otherwise. On the other hand, when the task statement reflected prohibitions on actions (i.e., "You are prohibited from carrying out more than one of the following actions"), participants were significantly more accurate in their responses than they were for the permission conditions (Experiment 4; Prohibition: 18% correct answers versus Permission: 7% correct answers). Overall, these findings indicate that individuals are better at reasoning related to social rules for obligations and prohibitions than for rules regarding permissions. Especially when they need to consider the permission related rules, individuals are often subjected to a wide range of biases, some of which are related to individuals' personality tendencies (Johnson-Laird, 2011).

Lastly, individuals' trait-like tendencies might influence how individuals construct mental models to think about whether they are allowed to do something. The model theory, in

particular, argues that to develop a valid belief about permission, individuals should consider all possible states in which an action is or is not permissible for them. However, more possible states individuals can incorporate into their mental representations can be dependent on individual trait characteristics. Based on this reasoning, Fumero et al. (2010) show that individuals with low openness to experience but high conscientiousness strictly follow inference rules and thus tend to make more valid conclusions. On the other hand, individuals with high openness to experience but low levels of conscientiousness think more flexibly about rules and tend to make less valid inferences about the rules. This finding signifies the importance of individual differences in reasoning and constructing beliefs about normative regulations, especially with regard to permission statements.

#### **2.3.2.5 Summary of Cognitive Psychology**

Since Wason's selection task studies (1969), cognitive psychology has stimulated research on why individuals reason, deduce and develop specific beliefs about permissions and other forms of social rules. In the literature, two primary theories have received considerable attention: pragmatic reasoning schema theory (Cheng & Holyoak, 1985) and the mental model theory of deontic reasoning, or the model theory (Bucciarelli et al., 2008). As the first theory to conceptualize permission as a concept, pragmatic reasoning schema theory offers both theoretical perspectives and some empirical support. The model theory provides more elaborated accounts of permission reasoning and enables us to incorporate a body of research into permission reasoning literature.

In alignment with these theories, growing evidence has shown that a few empirically supported principles guide individuals' interpretations of permissions. Individuals are better at the reasoning of social rules than abstract rules (Wason & Johnson-Laird, 1972). They are also

better at conceptualizing obligations and bans than permissions (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005; Sudić et al., 2019). In addition, people tend to reason more accurately about positive permissions (i.e., explicitly stated permissions) than about negative permissions (i.e., implied permissions) (Cheng & Holyoak, 1985; Manktelow et al., 1995). However, people can also infer permissions from prohibitions and obligations (Beller, 2008), although they tend to be less accurate when they process permissions due to the cognitive load they experience (Bucciarelli et al., 2008; Sudić et al., 2019). Finally, individuals' trait-like tendencies can affect (positively or negatively) how they process social rules (Fumero et al., 2010).

There are some limitations associated with cognitive psychology's study of permissions. First, this body of research often equates the reasoning of permissions with a simplified form of a deductive task in the laboratory setting (i.e., Wason's selection task). Using this research paradigm as the primary tool might be problematic because it has restricted the study of permission reasoning within the boundaries of laboratory settings, thus ignoring the essential social aspects that potentially can only be assessed outside the laboratory (see also, Fiddick, 2004). For example, whether a statement creates an influential normative force on an individual can only be understood when considering who made the statement. A statement such as, "You may leave today early," can be either normative or descriptive depending on the context in which it is communicated. If the statement is made by a supervisor, then it probably represents permission. However, if it is spoken by a coworker, then it likely refers to a mere suggestion. Cognitive psychology does not adequately explain such critical social aspects of permission reasoning.

A second limitation with the cognitive psychology stream of research is its reluctance to explain the function of deontic reasoning in human society. In other words, while cognitive

psychology theories explain the process of how individuals reason and develop beliefs about normative rules, they do not explain why it is so critically important that organized humans have permission reasoning skills. Permissions and other social rules function to organize human actions and coordinate these actions to achieve common goals (Cummins, 2000). These two limitations of cognitive psychology are at least partially addressed by developmental psychology. By focusing on the social aspects of deontic rules and reasoning, developmental psychology helps to answer some of the questions left unanswered by cognitive psychology. In the following section, I discuss the role of developmental psychology in the conceptualization of the permission concept.

### **2.3.3 Permission in Developmental Psychology**

Developmental psychology focuses on how individuals, from early childhood on, develop an understanding of the social deontic world in conjunction with other social concepts such as punishment, authority, and rule violations. Piaget (1948) analyzed children's reasoning of rules. He examined the rules of the games children play, how children understand these rules, the fairness in the allocations of duties, and the justification of punishment if someone violates these rules. Piaget understood rule reasoning as an important factor in the development of authority in society and autonomy in social interaction. He argued that children agree to interact with others based on permission-based relationships. Thus, voluntary permission-giving and agreeing to social rules enables individuals to cooperate with others in respectful ways. As Piaget (1948) noted: "The rule of a game appears to the child no longer as an external law, sacred in so far as it has been laid down by adults; but as the outcome of a free decision and worthy of respect in the measure that it has enlisted mutual consent" (Piaget, 1948, p. 57). This initial observation paved

the way for investigating deontic concepts in developmental psychology, mostly under the guise of normative and moral reasoning research.

The second influential line of research within developmental psychology to be considered here is Lawrence Kohlberg's research on the normative dilemma (Kohlberg, 1969). Kohlberg utilized normative dilemmas to shed light on the evolution of moral values. As a result, he advanced a system of moral developmental stages in relation to deontic ideas such as obligations, prohibitions, and permissions. More recent studies in developmental psychology have investigated whether and how people distinguish normative rules, how and in what stage of their life people develop a normative understanding of social rules, and what the functions of deontic reasoning are – from an evolutionary perspective – in human society. These questions are answered in the following sections.

### **2.3.3.1 Distinguishing Deontic Rules**

As described above, deontic rules are the social rules that regulate human actions by specifying what is obligated, prohibited, or permissible in social settings (Beller, 2010). Piaget (1948) asserted that individuals have a unitary sense of deontic understanding and categorize all social rules in a similar manner. From this view, individuals do not differentiate rules. For individuals, overarching moral principles (e.g., thou shalt not kill) are the same as daily interaction rules (e.g., you should wait in line before getting on the bus). However, recent studies have garnered evidence showing that even children as young as two and a half years old can discriminate between various types of social rules.

More specifically, research has found that individuals tend to react differently to moral, conventional, and prudential rules (i.e., sensible) (see Fiddick 2004). Moral rules, according to Smetana (1993), are represented by categories of right versus wrong. Moral rules are connected

to the idea of justice and are regarded as largely universal (e.g., murdering an innocent person is *never* permissible), mandatory for all, and independent of any source of authority (i.e., all individuals should follow these rules, even though the authority may or may not support them; cf., Milgram, 1963). Social conventional rules are rules that structure human interaction in organized social systems. They are context-dependent, alterable, and reinforced or weakened by authority (e.g., organizational policies and organizational social norms; Morris, Hong, Chiu, & Liu, 2015). Finally, prudential rules are personal rules that focus on actions that may produce consequences for oneself (e.g., I should not eat too many carbohydrates).

Research has found that people differentially perceive the permissibility of rules and the seriousness of rule violations based on the type of rule they are considering (Fiddick, 2004; Nucci et al., 1991; Tisak, 1993). For example, people have reported that moral rules should be followed by everyone and never violated, while social conventional rules (e.g., organizational rules and norms) need not be followed by everyone and may be violated for some reasons (Song et al., 1987). In addition, studies show that individuals perceive the violation of moral rules to be worse than the violation of social conventional or prudential rules, even when the degree of violation is the same (Tisak & Turiel, 1988). Peoples' perceptions about the role of authority in regulating social rules also differ based on the type of rule under consideration (Nucci & Weber, 1995; Smetana & Bitz, 1996). Participants have reported that authorities have the legitimacy to regulate behaviors in social domains (e.g., at work) but not in moral or personal ones (Smetana & Bitz, 1996). This body of research implies that individuals may have a different reaction to the violation of rules based on how they perceive these rules. This body of findings directly speaks to one of the main premises of this dissertation, in which people may give different degrees of importance to the social rules at work. Although the literature implication has been discussed in

the following section, it would be useful to provide a quick example here to clarify the indications of this body of research. For example, a supervisor who thinks that social rules at work are not just a conventional regulation but rather a moral framework that secures justice at work may find employees rule-bending proactive actions as a form of justice disturbing behavior. The degree to which individuals perceive rules ontologically different might affect how they process them and, consequently, how they react to violations of them.

### **2.3.3.2 Development and Acquisition of Normative Systems**

The second set of questions addressed in the developmental psychology literature have to do with how people develop and acquire their deontic reasoning systems and whether (and how much) deontic reasoning skills are influenced by the environment. Several experiments have demonstrated that about the age of three, infants begin to recognize whether a deontic rule is breached (Cummins, 1996a; Dack & Astington, 2011; Harris et al., 2001), and around the age of five, they begin to deduce which behaviors are permissible (Chao & Cheng, 2000). Thus, this line of research suggests that reasoning about deontic rules might be at least somewhat inherent in our DNA and the product of a Darwinian process. Furthermore, these findings suggest that reasoning about permissions and other deontic rules may be likely to develop as a process evaluation, opening the door for a Darwinian understanding of social rules, as discussed below.

### **2.3.3.3 Possible Darwinian Roots of Permission Reasoning**

Darwinian accounts of normative rule reasoning postulate that the human mind is a “toolbox” furnished with inherent brain modules that have resulted from adaptive evolutionary pressures (Gigerenzer & Hug, 1992). According to the Darwinian viewpoint, humans need to be good at reasoning and understanding obligations and permissions because, in order to cooperate in human civilization, individuals must be able to identify individuals who break the rules

(Cosmides, 1989), who benefit from collective social resources without contributing (e.g., free-riders, Hiraishi & Hasegawa, 2001), and who behave inconsistently with their social hierarchical level (Cummins, 2000). One of the main predictions from this stream of research is that individuals' social standing (i.e., social status and reputations) affect how they perceive and judge their permissions, as described below.

One overarching theory of relevance here is the dominance theory by Cummins (2000, 2015). While previous theories such as pragmatic reasoning theory (Cheng & Holyoak, 1985) and the mental model theory (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005) have not adequately examined the role of social context in permission reasoning, the dominance theory focuses on the role of social context (e.g., power, social status, and hierarchy factors) in reasoning about permissions. As such, the dominance theory provides a useful framework for conceptualizing permission reasoning in organizational settings. Dominance theory (Cummins, 2000, 2015) argues that each social organization has an implicit set of social norms and rules that constrain the social actions of individuals with lower social standing while at the same time providing individuals with higher social standing specific priorities and privileges. When individuals gain social status, they also gain more freedom from social constraints, and their behaviors are seen as more permissible (see also Approach/Inhibition Theory of Power; Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003). This difference between individuals with high- and low-level social status creates social pressures in the organized group. Dominance theory suggests that, due to this social pressure, low-status individuals must learn and understand social rules faster so that they can gain desired priorities and privileges, while high-status individuals reason and monitor social rules accurately so they can protect their social resources from free-riders and cheaters. Thus,

social status and standing among peers affect how individuals perceive and reason about permissions.

Evidence from a diverse range of fields supports the predictions of dominance theory. For example, to some extent, various mammalian species have been documented to have social rules that define which behaviors are permitted and prohibited for certain groups (see for review, Cummins, 2000). Research with human participants also provides evidence supporting dominance theory. For example, individuals are more careful and attentive when determining if lower-status individuals violate social rules (Cummins, 1999). In addition, it has been demonstrated that people are less severe in their evaluations of rule breaches when the rules have been broken by higher-status individuals. For example, Mealey and her colleagues (1996) discovered that individuals recall rule violations committed by low-status individuals much more clearly than violations committed by high-status individuals. However, recent studies have not replicated these findings (see for discussion, Kruepke & Barbey, 2016). Finally, Kilpatrick et al. (2007) have shown that individuals are more likely to perceive permission as valid if the permission was granted by a high-status individual than by a low-status individual. In sum, dominance theory and associated findings indicate that permissions and social rules are perceived differently based on social status; to be permitted to engage in certain actions, individuals should first establish their social standing among key group members (Cummins, 2000).

#### **2.3.3.4 Summary of Developmental Psychology**

Developmental psychology advances the concept of permissions in several ways. First, it shows that permissions and other deontic concepts are typically acquired as early as the age of about two. However, from an early age, people are likely to better understand what is banned

than what is permissible. Second, also from an early age, humans can distinguish various types of deontic rules based on their content. Finally, some empirical evidence shows support for possible evolutionary roots of deontic reasoning, especially in relationship with the concepts of dominance and social status.

## **2.4 Proactive Behaviors Reviewed**

### **2.4.1 Definition of Proactivity**

Proactive behaviors refer to “anticipatory, future or change-oriented, active, self-starting, and persistent work behaviours” (Belschak & Hartog, 2010, p. 475). Grant and Ashford (2008) stated that the “key criterion for identifying proactive behavior is not whether it is in-role or extra-role, but rather whether the employee anticipates, plans for, and attempts to create a future outcome that has an impact on the self or environment” (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 9). Furthermore, they argued that every action could be carried out proactively. In this respect, many forms of work behaviors fall under the category of proactivity (see Table 1). However, Parker and Collins (2010) categorize domain-specific proactivity under three overarching forms, which provides a useful framework for clarifying the boundaries between proactivity and other work behaviors. The categories presented by Parker and Collins (2010) include voice, taking-charge, problem prevention, and individual innovation as *higher-order proactive work behaviors*; issue-selling willingness, issue-selling credibility, and strategic scanning as *higher-order proactive strategic behaviors*; and feedback monitoring, feedback inquiry, job change negotiation, and career initiative as *proactive higher person-environment fit behaviors*. See Table 1 for definitions of these constructs.

In this dissertation, I follow Parker and Collins’ (2010) classification model. I use the terms *proactivity*, *proactive work behaviors*, *proactive behaviors* interchangeably to reflect the overall concept of proactive work behaviors (i.e., employees self-initiated and future-oriented

work behaviors that aim to change something at work) to improve the natural flow of the dissertation.

#### **2.4.2 Proactive Behaviors: Theories and Models**

One line of thought conceptualizes proactivity as a self-regulation process (Parker et al., 2010). From a self-regulatory perspective (Bandura, 1994; Boekaerts et al., 1999), proactive behavior is an agentic process in which employees *anticipate, plan, and enact* future-oriented actions by themselves (Grant & Ashford, 2008). In this model, anticipation refers to employees' intuition and ability to think forward and predict potential consequences of their actions, including the costs and advantages of achieving the imagined goal (Oettingen et al., 2018). Planning is when employees provide a cognitive framework and roadmap for their anticipated future states and allocate resources to achieve their goals. This is the stage where divergent thinking comes into play – where alternative strategies can be formulated if the initial approach fails (Frese & Fay, 2001). Finally, enactment refers to the stage in which employees carry out their proactive attempts to produce their desired outcomes (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Although this framework has been proposed, there is still a lack of interest in utilizing this framework in proactivity research (see an example, Bindl et al., 2012).

Another research on proactivity focused on the notion that social cues and personality variables impact employee proactivity. Crant (2000), one of the early scholars to identify the concept of proactivity, proposed that an individual's *dispositional characteristics* and *contextual cues* had a profound and direct influence on their decisions to act proactively. Crant (2000) argued that, “contextual factors, such as uncertainty and organizational norms toward proactive behavior, appear in the model as antecedents because they also are associated with the decision to behave in a proactive fashion.” (Crant, 2000, p. 437). In this regard, both contextual cues and

dispositional tendencies of employees were given equal weight. However, as the proactivity concept developed further, the academic emphasis shifted to greater investigation on the impact of motivating states on proactive work behaviors. According to Parker, Williams, and Turner (2006), personality characteristics and contextual cues are relatively distal factors that impact proactivity behavior indirectly through cognitive-motivational processes. Extending this view, Parker, Bindl, and Strauss (2010) contend that the motives for generating proactive goals and enacting proactive behaviors fall within the realm of three proximal proactive motivating states, which can be referred to as *can do motivation*, *reason to motivation*, and *energized to motivation*. Each of these is discussed below.

*Can do motivation* refers to an employee's belief that one can "bring about change as well as deal with any consequences arising from that change" (Wu & Parker, 2017, p. 1030). This type of motivation relies on having feelings of self-efficacy, or the "belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (Bandura, 1997, p. 3). *Reason to motivation* involves intrinsic, integrated, and/or identified motivations, which provide goal direction for engaging in proactive behaviors. Lastly, *energized to motivation* represents affect-related motivational states, such as activated positive feelings of vigor and energy, which prompt proactive behaviors. This framework is the current dominant paradigm, in which several studies utilized this idea and gathered substantial evidence (see the following sections).

Recently, Shin and Kim (2015) argue that previous proactivity theories have overlooked the role of social norms on proactivity and the cognitive decision-making processes that lead to it. Shin and Kim (2015) drew on Azjen's (1991) theory of planned behavior to investigate the function of proactivity norms in relation to other contextual and cognitive variables. Based on

the planned behavior theory, Shin and Kim (2015) had assumed that norms would positively influence proactivity. However, the authors found that subjective norms actually have a direct *negative* impact on employee proactivity. This might be explained the difference between weak and strong normative conditions, discussed in the literature on permission above. Because social norms are strong conditions that constraint individuals' actions, they left little room for agentic and discretionary decisions. Since proactive behaviors require individuals to act with their discretion, social norms might have a negative impact on employee proactivity, shown in Shin and Kim's (2015) study. This finding partly implies that the effect of normative social regulations on proactivity might be different based on weak (i.e., permission) and strong (i.e., social norms and obligations) conditions; thus, research may need to consider such differences in their conceptualization.

Overall, early theoretical frameworks on proactivity have suggested that dispositional and situational factors may impact proactive behaviors (Crant, 2000). However, whether these effects will be distal or proximal is still debatable (Crant, 2000; Parker et al., 2010). Furthermore, while proactivity literature is deeply rooted in an interactionist perspective that stressed the role of person, environment, and behaviors altogether (Bandura, 1997), recent literature is limited to exploring the role of contextual factors— especially those factors that directly regulate human actions at work such as social rules and deontic regulations (Beller, 2010). In Bandura's (1997) model of self-regulation framework, for example, self-regulated behaviors, in my case proactivity, cannot be adequately explained and examined without considering social sanctions (i.e., normative rules and regulations in the social setting) in relationship with self-sanction (i.e., internalized social rules and regulations). However, even though built upon Bandura's self-regulatory framework (Bandura, 1997), current literature has shown limited progress

incorporating these normative factors into the overall research. Furthermore, some scholars argue that proactivity may contrast with “adhering to rules” (Curcuruto & Griffin, 2016). However, regardless of their self-initiated behaviors, employees are expected to follow the rules and act in a socially acceptable manner. Indeed, one of the primary tenets of the organized human groups is related to social rules: there will be rules, and there will be people who follow the rules (Weber, 1921). With this regard, it is also important to consider the effect of such social regulatory factors in employee proactivity, which is one of the main purposes of this dissertation. The following section discusses proactivity antecedents and groups them into the following categories: individual differences, contextual and cognitive-motivational states.

### **2.4.3 Antecedents of Proactive Behavior**

In this section, I explore the antecedents of proactive actions at work and provide insight into how various variables affect an individual's decision to act proactively.

#### **2.4.3.1 Individual Differences**

Proactive personality is one of the key individual differences that predict proactivity. Proactive personality, which broadly refers to one's relatively stable tendency to take the initiative to bring about changes in the self and/or his or her environments, has traditionally been seen as an indicator of proactive behavior (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Proactive employees, scholars have argued, monitor their surroundings, take advantage of opportunities, and persist in their proactive goals until they reach them (Crant, 2000), making them valuable for the organization. Meta-analytic studies also show that proactive personality is positively associated with overall work performance ( $r_c = .35$ ), task performance ( $r_c = .23$ ), and proactive behaviors ( $r_c = .32$ ) (Fuller & Marler, 2009).

One vital personality characteristic that fuels proactivity is employees' goal orientation (Parker et al., 2010). Referring to stable trait characteristics, goal orientation has been categorized under two concepts. Learning goal orientation refers to one's goal preferences to “develop competence by acquiring new skills and mastering new situations,” whereas performance goal orientation refers to one's goal preferences “to demonstrate and validate the adequacy of one's competence by seeking favorable judgments and avoiding negative judgments about one's competence” (Anseel et al., 2015, p. 321). Research has shown that overall learning-goal-oriented employees are more likely to engage in proactive actions than their counterparts with performance-oriented employees, who tend to focus on gaining positive judgments and reducing negative feedback from others (Anseel et al., 2015, Crant, 2000; Parker et al., 2010).

Domain-relevant information is another individual factor argued to play an essential role in proactivity (Frese & Fay, 2001). Previous studies argue that to effectively make proactive plans, efficiently resource proactive actions, and successfully enact proactive behaviors, employees need three types of knowledge: relational knowledge (i.e., the knowledge of who will get affected by the proactivity); strategic knowledge (i.e., the knowledge of what the goal and strategic directions of the organization are); and normative knowledge (i.e., the knowledge of what is deemed permissible and legitimate; Dutton et al., 2001). Related to this dissertation is normative knowledge, which is, more specifically, referring to "the extent to which individuals understand the formal and informal structure of the organization such as accepted behaviors and norms" (J. M. Howell & Boies, 2004, p. 128). Although the concept was proposed almost 20 years ago, there are limited quantitative studies on this concept. After a thorough search of the literature, the only study I found that attempted to measure this concept was Howell and Boies (2004). Using a content analysis method, Howell and Boies (2004) examined the effect of

normative knowledge on formal and informal issue selling (i.e., strategic proactive behaviors). However, contrary to Dutton et al.'s (2001) predictions, normative knowledge was not related to proactive issues selling. One reason might be that Howell and Boies (2004) measured normative knowledge by coding interview contents instead of using a validated scale. Thus, the operationalization of normative knowledge in their research might not adequately reflect the construct itself. Even though domain-related knowledge has been proposed as a critical indicator of proactivity (Parker et al., 2019), it remains unclear how individuals develop, gain, and understand the social environment at work, especially in terms of normative knowledge.

#### **2.4.3.2 Contextual Antecedents**

Work design denotes “how jobs, tasks, and roles are structured, enacted, and modified, as well as the impact of these structures, enactments, and modifications on individual, group, and organizational outcomes” (Grant & Parker, 2009, p. 319) and includes task feedback, job autonomy, job complexity, task variety, task significance, and task identity. In addition, proactivity research suggests that work design characteristics affect critical psychological states and shape proactive behaviors (Parker et al., 2010).

Job autonomy is the most frequently studied work design factor and refers to the “opportunity that employees possess for independence and freedom in conducting their jobs” (T.-Y. Kim et al., 2009, p. 987). Job autonomy has been hypothesized to positively relate to proactivity because job autonomy induces employees to feel more responsible and in control at work, thus driving them to engage in proactive behaviors (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker et al., 2010). Recent meta-analyses results support the link between job autonomy and proactive behaviors ( $r_c = .38$ ) (Marinova et al., 2015). However, in recent research, it has been suggested that this relationship might be more complicated than previously believed. For example,

Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008) detected a curvilinear relationship between job autonomy and employee voice: when employees have less autonomy, they try to improve their conditions by engaging in change-oriented behaviors (i.e., psychological reactance). On the other hand, when they have more autonomy, they experience an increased sense of ownership and act more proactively.

In addition, job complexity (i.e., “the intrinsically motivating and challenging properties of a job;” Chae & Choi, 2018: 316) is believed to motivate employees to experiment with their work environments (Frese et al., 1999), which includes engaging in proactive behaviors. Consistent with this claim, meta-analytic results have shown significant correlations between job complexity and proactive behaviors ( $r_c = .30$ , Marinova et al., 2015). On the other hand, job characteristics associated with routine and formalized jobs are negatively associated with proactive behaviors (see Marinova et al., 2015). However, under different conditions or for some proactive behaviors, these relationships might differ. For example, Ohly, Sonnentag, and Pluntke (2006) demonstrated that routinization at work sometimes increases proactivity through expanding the availability of psychological resources that employees can direct into proactive actions.

Leadership was another frequently studied contextual factor. Leadership styles, leaders’ attitudes, and leader-follower relationships are also associated with employees’ proactivity (see, Cai et al., 2019). Strong leadership can inspire and enhance proactive goal setting, voice and taking-charge behaviors (J. Zhang et al., 2018), job crafting (M. Kim & Beehr, 2019), and risk-taking behaviors (Schilpzand et al., 2018). For example, transformational leaders have been shown to play a critical role in employee proactivity (Schmitt et al., 2016). In addition, ethical leadership (i.e., “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;” Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005: 120) is positively associated with employee proactivity through increasing work engagement (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012), improving moral efficacy (D. Lee et al., 2017), fostering intrinsic motivation (Yidong & Xinxin, 2013), and establishing organizational and relational identification with leaders (Zhu et al., 2015).

Climate reflects employees’ shared perceptions of practices and procedures in their proximal or distal environments (Schneider et al., 2013). Organizational and team climates characterized by support for employee-led change, self-directed initiatives, and overall safety are more likely to promote proactivity. For example, Hong et al. (2016) report that work climate predicts personal initiative behaviors via role breadth and self-efficacy. Axtell et al. (2000) also show that climates perceived to be psychologically safe are positively associated with employees’ self-initiated innovative behaviors. Frazier and Fainshmidt (2012) also found that voice climates that encourage employees to provide suggestions have a positive effect on employees’ voice behaviors. Taken together, these findings suggest that when employees work in encouraging and safe environments where they feel supported, they are more likely to engage in proactive behaviors.

#### **2.4.3.3 Cognitive-Motivational States**

According to the proactive motivational framework (Parker et al., 2010), individual differences and contextual factors are mediated by employees’ cognitive-affective motivational states. In the following section, I discuss three mediating factors that are relevant to motivational proactivity: self-determination motives (i.e., reason to do), self-efficacy (i.e., can do), and affect (i.e., energized to do; Parker et al., 2010).

#### 2.4.3.3.1 Self-determination motives

Proactivity literature presents a wide range of proximal motivational antecedents (i.e., *reason to motivation*) to explore why employees engage in proactive behaviors and the *self-determination theory* enable us to organize a useful framework for understanding such motivational states. This framework proposes that human actions are driven by motivational states that fall on a spectrum from autonomous to controlled (Deci & Ryan, 2000). At the autonomous end of the spectrum (and here I will discuss self-determination theory with specific regard to the work environment), *intrinsic motivation* reflects a state in which individuals engage in a work activity because they derive enjoyment and satisfaction from doing so (Deci & Ryan, 2008). On the other end of the spectrum, *external motivation* represents the desire to carry out an action that will result in outcomes not directly related to work performance (e.g., gaining recognition from coworkers). Between these two motivational states lie *integrated motivations* (i.e., motivated by socially defined values).

Literature has shown positive relationships between various self-determination motives and proactive behaviors. For example, studies have demonstrated that intrinsic motivation was associated with proactive work behaviors in general (Wu & Parker, 2017) and proactive innovation behaviors more specifically (Chen et al., 2013). Similarly, intrinsically motivated employees tend to frequently use safety voices (i.e., suggestions to improve safety in the workplace, Conchie et al., 2012). In addition, employees who have intrinsic goals reportedly engage in more proactive career behaviors than employees who do not have such goals (Herrmann, 2013). Literature also associated integrated motivation with several proactive behaviors (Ayaita et al., 2019; De Dreu & Nauta, 2009; Y.-J. Kim et al., 2013; Sonnentag & Starzyk, 2015). For example, Grant and Rothbard (2013) documented that prosocial values, as a

form of integrated motives, predict proactive behaviors when the workplace provides an ambiguous environment that allows them to act as they wish. Grant and Rothbard (2013) explain that people with prosocial values who work in such an environment tend to readily recognize opportunities to improve others' conditions, leading them to act more proactively.

#### **2.4.3.3.2 Self-efficacy**

Proactive behaviors also require deliberate calculations and cognitive decision-making processes in which employees assess whether they can feasibly take a proactive action (e.g., self-efficacy; Ashford et al., 1998; Detert & Burris, 2007). Self-efficacy beliefs, or one's "beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives" (Bandura, 1994, p. 71), represents one of the most examined cognitive-based motivators across various proactivity behaviors. Morrison and Phelps (1999) and Parker et al. (2010) claim that employees with high self-efficacy exhibit more proactive behaviors than those with low self-efficacy because proactive behaviors tend to be risky and psychologically costly. Because of this, willingness to engage in such behaviors requires one's belief that one can cope with possible obstacles. Indeed, research has found that self-efficacy was positively associated with personal initiative (Bledow & Frese, 2009, 2009; Y. Hong et al., 2016), proactive innovation behaviors (Axtell et al., 2000), taking charge behaviors (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), upward-feedback behaviors (Kudisch et al., 2006), safety initiatives (Curcuruto et al., 2019), and proactive customer service (Raub & Liao, 2012). In addition, meta-analyses have shown that self-efficacy is significantly associated with proactive behaviors (Rudolph et al., 2017).

#### **2.4.3.3.3 Affect and Emotion**

Parker et al. (2010) argued that positive and activated affective states (e.g., vigor, enthusiasm) represent another motivational impetus that is likely to prompt proactive behaviors. Because proactive behaviors require high levels of confidence in dealing with obstacles, activated positive affect plays a role in enabling proactivity by providing necessary self-regulatory resources and improving employees' confidence. Indeed, Fritz and Sonnentag's (2009) experience-sampling study found that activated positive affect predicts taking-charge behaviors. In addition, Den Hartog & Belschak (2007) found that activated positive affect predicted self-rated personal initiatives. However, the relationship between emotional states and proactivity was not linear. In two different studies, Lam, Spreitzer, and Fritz (2014) documented a curvilinear (inverted-U shape) relationship between positive affect with regard to work (e.g., feeling alive and vital at work) and proactive work behaviors. Taken together, these findings align with the affect-as-information theory (Carver, 2003) to suggest that emotions provide information to individuals as they judge how to respond to their environments.

#### **2.4.4 Consequences of Proactive Behaviors**

Proactive behaviors are often associated with enhanced employee performance. Proactive employees tend to demonstrate better work performance by dealing with environmental demands and obstacles more actively (Griffin et al., 2007; Z. Zhang et al., 2012) and by coming up with new methods for enhancing their and others' work conditions (Parker et al., 2016). The link between employee proactivity and work performance has been demonstrated in studies focused on voice (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998) and proactive information-seeking (Morrison, 1993a, 1993b). Meta-analytic studies also support the findings that personal initiative is correlated with objective work performance ( $r_c = .20$ ) and that taking charge is linked with supervisor-rated

performance ( $r_c = .40$ ) (Tornau & Frese; 2015). However, some studies show that proactive behaviors do not always lead to positive outcomes. For example, Chamberlin et al. (2017) found that the relationship between promotive voice and overall task performance is significant and negative ( $r_c = -.37$ ). Especially, Chamberlin et al. (2017) argued that because the prohibitive voice (i.e., "employee communication intended to address past or current problems and concerns that could otherwise lead to harmful outcomes for the organization" p. 13) is focused on an active objection to the status quo, such type of voice could be seen as an out of ones' place and thus led to a negative performance evaluation. This reasoning aligns with the overall predictions of this dissertation, as well.

Being proactive also helps employees feel like they are thriving at work ( $r_c = .48$ ) (Kleine et al., 2019) as well as more satisfied with their jobs (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2016, 2019), their careers (Dubbelt et al., 2019), and their lives in general (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2010). By engaging in feedback-seeking, information-gathering, and network building, proactive employees feel more satisfied with their work and report fewer turnover intentions (Alarcon et al., 2009; Yang et al., 2011). Being proactive at work also contributes to greater positive affect and work engagement (Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2016). Indeed, meta-analytic findings have shown that a proactive personality correlates with work engagement ( $r_c = .37$ ) than the other big five personality traits (Young et al., 2018). In addition, while proactive behaviors contribute to psychological and subjective well-being, they also prevent job stress (Rudolph et al., 2017), burnout (Tims et al., 2013), and depression (M. Kim & Beehr, 2018).

#### **2.4.5 Managerial Support for Proactivity**

Management support is an important ingredient for the success of proactive actions. Due to their discretionary nature (Grant & Ashford, 2008), proactive behaviors are outside of one's

role. As such, proactive behaviors are not regulated by specific task descriptions and in-role expectations and are often limited by one's personal resources (Pingel et al., 2019) rather than having formal organizational tangible or social resources to accomplish them. Managerial support is vital in enacting proactivity because managers may hold influential positions within the organization and often have access to the resources that can be used to accomplish the goals of the proactive action.

Often studied in the literature specific to voice behavior, managerial endorsement, defined as “the extent to which managers endorse, accept, or positively receive a subordinate’s voiced suggestion” (Lam et al., 2019, p. 643), represents managerial support for and agreement with employees’ proactive actions. This body of research has found that employees receive support from managers based on various factors, including characteristics of proactive actions, leaders, and employees. Managers tend to be more supportive of proactive actions that are constructive and those that they deem likely to lead to organizational improvements. For example, Burris (2012) found that supervisors were less supportive of employees' ideas when these ideas were more challenging to the status quo rather than supportive (i.e., those that is aimed at stabilizing or preserving existing organizational policies or procedures) because supervisors tended to consider challenging ideas as a threat to their position.

Other studies in this area have focused on leaders’ dispositional characteristics such as self-efficacy, goal orientation, and power motives. Studies have shown that managerial self-efficacy can affect how managers perceive proactive actions and support them. For example, Fast, Burris, and Bartel (2014) found that leaders with low levels of self-efficacy are less supportive of employees’ voiced ideas than are leaders with high self-efficacy. Other research has shown that performance goal-oriented leaders are less supportive than mastery goal-oriented

leaders of employees' ideas about strategies for organizational improvement (Sijbom et al., 2015a, 2015b). In both of these studies, perceived image threat mediated the relationship between the leaders' characteristics and their support for proactivity; leaders who are less supportive of their employees' proactive actions tend to be those who feel more threatened because such proactive actions can pose a risk to the reputations of leaders in the workplace. Urbach and Fay (2018) found that employees' proactive actions and ideas that threaten leaders' power are generally less supported than actions that are not threatening in this way. Furthermore, Li et al. (2019) found that ego depleted managers, which refers to managers who are in a "state in which the self does not have all the [self-control] resources it has normally" (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007, p. 2), are more likely to reject employees' proactive suggestions than managers who are not ego depleted.

Finally, some studies have found that employee characteristics influence managerial support of proactivity. Drawing from the social judgment literature, Lam et al. (2019) show that managers are more supportive of employees' proactive, change-oriented suggestions when they effectively demonstrate their credibility and present their ideas politely. In addition, Li et al. (2019), found that ego-depleted managers are less supportive of employees' proactive suggestions and discovered that depleted managers' support depends on the level of expertise of the employees recommending the proactivity. Depleted managers are more supportive when the proactive suggestions come from employees who are experts in their field. Urbach and Fay (2020) argued that the relationship quality between leaders and employees also plays a role here. They found that managers tended to perceive employee proactivity as less threatening and show greater support for their proactive actions when managers and employees had a loyal, trusting relationship.

In sum, various studies from the literature on managerial endorsement indicate that managers tend to support proactive behaviors when these behaviors are not challenging the status quo or posing a threat to the managers' position; when managers have a positive attitude and open to change and less in desire for power and control over employees; and finally, when employees are credible, expert in their area, and tactful in acceptably presenting their ideas.

#### **2.4.6 When Is Proactivity Acceptable and Effective?**

Although researchers have garnered evidence showing the benefits of proactivity, proactive behaviors do not always lead to beneficial outcomes or are seen as acceptable, and even sometimes can be harmful to employees, coworkers, and others (M. Bolino et al., 2017). In addition, proactive behaviors can negatively influence social contexts and produce unintended consequences. For instance, voice can increase intra-group conflict (de Vries et al., 2012), and personal initiatives can induce task conflict (Spsychala & Sonnentag, 2011). It also may be demanding to work with proactive supervisors who expect proactivity from their employees (Fuller et al., 2015) and provide lower performance ratings to employees who do not act accordingly.

In addition, several likely factors contribute to when proactivity can be seen more acceptable, including individuals' characteristics and skills (Chan, 2006; Parker et al., 2019), work designs (Kim et al., 2009), and leader behaviors (Wang & Kim, 2013). In terms of individuals' characteristics, scholars have argued that contextual knowledge and expertise (Ashford et al., 1998), situational knowledge (2006)(Chan, 2006), employees' motives (Lebel & Patil, 2018), and learning orientations (Deichmann & Ende, 2013) can all contribute to the effectiveness of proactive endeavors. For example, Chan (2006) found that when employees do not have situational judgment abilities (i.e., "the general ability to make effective judgments or

responses to situations;” p. 476), their proactive behaviors might be more harmful than beneficial because such employees lack an accurate understanding of situational demands and contingencies and do not align their proactive behaviors accordingly. That is, employees need to judge their environment accurately and understand the situational demands. In addition, some workplaces have very political environments that are characterized by authority figures and frequent power conflicts. Employees who work in these environments but do not have adequate political skills (i.e., “the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives;” (Russell et al., 2016, p. 4) are likely to face obstacles and to be less effective when carrying out proactive actions (Sun & van Emmerik, 2015).

When employees engage in proactive behaviors that they hope will notably impact their workplaces, they need to know about exactly how they can effectively make such changes, how they can gain active support for their attempts, and how to engage important stakeholders in achieving their goals. In other words, they need to have some expert knowledge about the relevant issues (Ashford et al., 1998) and about how to influence their peers (Wihler et al., 2017). They also need to hold credibility and status within their organizations (T. M. Howell et al., 2015). For example, when employees have more influential social network positions, they tend to be perceived as more effective in their proactive behaviors (Bizzi, 2017). All in all, these findings indicate the importance of knowing what and how one *should* engage in proactivity as an important predictor for proactivity.

Sometimes, what drives proactive employees to engage in such behaviors will determine whether they gain benefit from their proactive actions. For example, Grant et al. (2009) demonstrated when employees with prosocial-oriented motives take proactive actions, their

supervisors are more likely to highly value their proactivity and provide positive performance evaluations. In addition, Dahling et al. (2015) found that employees who seek feedback to improve their work, compared to those who do so to enhance their work image, are more likely to receive positive performance ratings.

In addition, leaders often play notable roles in defining and determining the effectiveness and acceptability of proactivity in the workplace. For example, research has found that proactive behaviors are more beneficial when team leaders are lower in the extraversion trait (Grant et al., 2011) and more effective when leaders are open to suggestions (Tucker & Turner, 2015). However, studies have also shown that when leaders have low self-efficacy, they are often less likely to accept suggestions and more likely to appraise proactive voice behaviors as threats (Fast et al., 2014). Furthermore, when leaders believe that individuals have fixed rather than malleable abilities, they tend to attribute employees' proactive feedback-seeking to impression management motives and evaluate these employees more negatively (de Stobbeleir et al., 2010). Altogether these findings show that the success of proactive actions might crucially depend on how supervisors perceive employee behaviors.

#### **2.4.7 Do Employees Need Permission to Act Proactively?**

The predominant view in the proactivity literature is that employees do not need *official written* permission to engage in proactive behaviors. As Hornung et al. (2010) note, "...[proactivity] principally refers to constructive, legitimate actions, [and] it is not explicitly authorized by the employer" (p. 190). By authorization, they refer to permission. In their recent review paper, Zhang and Parker (2019) supported this view and argued that employees do not need any formal permits for their proactive actions since employee proactivity occurs in the *zone of acceptance*, which refers to a "cognitive array of shared beliefs and expectations job

incumbents and supervisors hold regarding acceptable activities on the job” (McClelland et al., 2014, p. 477).

The concept of the zone of acceptance was first noted by Chester Barnard in 1938 (Barnard, 1968) and subsequently developed by Simon (Simon, 1976). Based on Simon’s conceptualization, Hornung et al. (2010) introduced the concept to the proactivity literature, particularly with regard to job crafting. Hornung et al. (2010) argued that employees and their managers develop shared perceptions about which employee activities are authorized and acceptable. When employees act outside the zone of acceptance boundaries, managers object in various ways, ranging from minor criticisms to major punishments. After receiving these objections, proactive employees re-interpret their perceptions about which actions are acceptable for them. This perspective aligned with the conceptualization of implicit permission shared by employees and managers, and also the idea of the zone of acceptance aligns with the main proposition of this dissertation, in which I argue that employees construct mental models about their social environments and use them to determine if they have permission to engage in proactive behaviors. However, current theorizing and research on the concept of the zone of acceptance offer little insight into the complexity of permission reasoning, limiting its explanatory power between employee and supervisor. That is, the zone of acceptance is a shared mental model between only the employee and his or her supervisor.

However, permission and acceptability of proactive behaviors might be influenced not only by the supervisor-employee relationship but also by the much broader normative system in which employees are situated (see Beller, 2010). Furthermore, apart from the contextual and relational issues, employee personal characteristics might influence how they perceive the normative landscape (Johnson-Laird, 2011). Organizations often regulate proactivity with weak

rather than strict rules, as discussed in the above literature review on permission (Hilpinen 2001). Because weak regulations are not clearly defined, individuals, rely on their own judgment about whether a proactive action will be socially permissible among the members of their group (Bicchieri & Mercier, 2014). Given that it is impossible for organizations to explicitly set up every possible rule governing proactivity and that written, or unwritten rules are often incomplete and fragmented (Simon, 1976), to make sense of this vague and fragmented social world, employees rely again on their intersubjective judgment, abound with their heuristics and biases (Johnson-Laird, 2010). In a certain sense, they simulate, integrate, and predict what will happen if they act proactively. However, current theorizing and research on the zone of acceptance offer little insight into the complexity of proactivity permission, which is the main focus of this dissertation.

In the following section, by integrating the bodies of permission reasoning literature, I develop and present my theoretical framework to disentangle the complexity of permission related to proactive actions at work.

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORY AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 Proactivity Permission Defined

After reviewing prominent studies across a range of fields, I will now integrate these bodies of research to formulate a more specific concept of proactivity permission. In general, the concept of permission itself is a weak normative condition that suspends the prohibition of social activities, allowing individuals to demonstrate their agency and self-directed behaviors (Beller, 2010; Hilpinen, 2017). Permission as a concept accepts normative regulations and rules as its focal point, and these regulations can be a set of written or unwritten social rules (Beller, 2010).

Analogous to the general concept of permission, I define proactivity permission as an individual's perception of the extent to which an employee is allowed to perform proactive actions at work. Specifically, this concept focuses on the normative acceptability of one's proactivity in alignment with social regulations at work. Proactivity permission implies proactive actions are not normatively prohibited for oneself and thus not subject to any formal sanctions or constraints. When an employee believes that s/he has proactivity permission, s/he feels secure in carrying out proactive behaviors, believing s/he has been given an increased opportunity to demonstrate self-directed behavior and has been encouraged to implement their proactive behavior.

Proactivity permission is a perception rather than an act. According to deontic logic (Stolpe, 2010), permission can take two different forms: positive or negative. On the one hand, positive permission denotes explicitly stated permission, which is the act of giving or receiving permission. On the other hand, negative permission denotes implicitly understood permission, which is the perception of one's permission. Permission for proactivity refers more to employee perceptions of normative conditions concerning proactivity in their workplaces than actual

employee behaviors related to receiving or seeking permission. This is because most workplaces lack explicit proactivity regulations and have a tacit understanding germane to proactivity rules (Griffin et al., 2007), which have some important implications for the subsequent development of the concept.

It is important to note that this conceptualization of proactivity permission is somewhat aligned with that of the zone of acceptance. The zone of acceptance concept (Hornung et al., 2010) argues that proactive employees do not need official authorization to act proactively as long as they perceive their intended actions to be acceptable. In this sense, the zone of acceptance focuses on the perception of employees, rather than actual permission-giving or -receiving behaviors, in alignment with my definition of proactivity permission. However, one of the major differences between the zone of acceptance theory and the proactivity permission concept relates to where permission beliefs originate. The zone of acceptance concept focuses exclusively on relational factors between supervisors and employees that affect these actors' shared beliefs, while the proactivity permission concept considers the combined influence of individual, relational, and contextual factors. According to the underlying logic of the proactivity permission concept – relating to deontic principles (Beller, 2008) – employees incorporate social cues and information from their supervisors, relational factors, and organizational characteristics into their understanding of workplace social rules. As such, all three factors help to form proactivity permission beliefs.

However, the literature on deontic reasoning acknowledges that permissions, obligations, and rules can be granted by various sources, and thus the effects of these sources on individuals' perceptions can vary. According to dominance theory (Cummins, 2000), whether formal or informal, influential individuals or groups can influence the validity of rules and permission

beliefs. Kilpatrick et al. (2007), for example, discovered in rule reasoning research that when people perceive permission granted by someone with formal authority (e.g., a supervisor) or social expertise power, they perceive this permission as more valid than permissions granted by less powerful people (e.g., a peer). Given that there are commonly notable and intricate power dynamics at work, it is critical to discuss which sources influence an actor's perception of permission more than others. We can address this issue using social impact theory (Latané & Wolf, 1981), a theoretical framework for investigating social influence processes. According to social impact theory, the impact of social information is determined by actors' social strength, social immediacy, and a number of other similar sources. From this viewpoint, the more powerful and socially close one person or group is, the more likely it is to influence employees' permission perceptions. Thus, even though there may be multiple permission sources, individuals at work may rely mainly on those sources that have an immediate, powerful, and consistent impact on their understanding of social regulations.

Proactivity permission varies across different individuals, which begs the question: Why do some people think they are allowed to carry out proactive actions while others do not? According to deontic logic and permission schema theory (Hilpinen, 2017; Holyoak & Cheng, 1995), individuals perceive that an action is permissible and acceptable if the normative prerequisite of this action is fulfilled. For example, accessing financial data as an in-role task behavior is likely to be perceived as permissible if someone works as a financial analyst as a prerequisite. However, unlike in-role behaviors, proactive behaviors often do not have clear and well-defined prerequisites (Griffin et al., 2007). It is rare for workplace policies and rules to specify when and for whom proactive behavior is permitted. Because when formal regulations of actions are not present, informally shared regulations may tend to be formed among individuals

to coordinate human conduct (Bicchieri & Mercier, 2014). This observation is consistent with dominance theory's claim (Cummins, 1999) that organized systems have latent social rules that regulate social actors' behaviors. Thus, it is possible that although proactivity permission tends to lack formal prerequisites, informal prerequisites such as being a respected member of the group or occupying a powerful social situation may be present and play an influential role in employees' proactive permission (Cummins, 1999). This would help explain why some individuals (e.g., those with high social standing) perceive or are perceived as having more permission than others.

Social position is not the only factor that contributes to individual differences in perceptions of proactivity permission. As suggested by the model theory of deontic reasoning (Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005), individuals may construct mental models about their social environment to process social rules. Mental models are created from individuals' contextual and social realities and are affected by trait-like tendencies of individuals (Fumero et al., 2010). However, the influence of trait orientations on reasoning about social rules likely differs when there are explicit rules versus when there are no such rules (Johnson-Laird, 2011). More specifically, employees may rely less on mental models for *processing the social rules* when explicit rules are present and thus have little room for inferring the rules from their point of view. For example, the explicit rule indicating that “to receive a promotion, employees must possess satisfactory evaluation performance in three recent review cycles” gives little room for idiosyncratic inferences. The rule clearly states that if an employee wishes to be promoted, they must meet specific criteria beforehand. In contrast, there is usually a lack of explicit information when there are no explicit rules, requiring employees to think about a subject and infer their own understanding by using mental models. In such cases, reliance on mental models is likely to be

more necessary for processing social information. In a context with loosely established rules, then, mental models are relatively more activated, where individual trait-like tendencies can affect rule reasoning outcomes.

Given that proactive behaviors are not explicitly regulated and a form of negative permission (Griffin et al., 2007), employees who consider proactivity rely on their mental models to construct their proactivity permission. In this case, personality traits likely affect how these employees perceive their proactivity permission. As discussed above, employees may use their mental models for incomplete rules and regulations about proactivity to process proactivity permission. Thus, individuals' unique personality traits may take place in processing proactivity permission, affecting how proactivity permissions are perceived by different individuals differently. In the theory development section, possible personality orientations that may affect proactivity permission are discussed in detail.

What are the consequences of having proactivity permission? Proactivity permission may affect one's attitudes and behaviors in several ways. Obviously, proactivity permission may increase individuals' sense of safety in their proactive actions and thus free them from considering psychological and social costs. When employees think they have proactivity permission, they tend to perceive their own behaviors as normatively acceptable and believe they are in a socially sheltered place to realize their proactive goals without risk. This reasoning is aligned with the predominant theorizing of proactivity, which states that employees assess possible costs and benefits of their actions before engaging in proactive actions (Barron & Hulleman, 2015; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Parker et al., 2010). When employees see their actions are costly, they tend to eschew demonstrating such actions. In line with this, proactivity

permission can be a cost-reducing belief, in which employees perceive their behaviors less costly, both socially and psychologically.

Employees with proactivity permission might also feel an increased sense of ownership of their proactive actions. Although they are not obligated to engage in proactive behaviors, employees with proactivity permission know that they can exhibit their proactivity if they wish to. This gives them a sense of ownership over their own behaviors *when* they decide to demonstrate their proactive actions. Psychological ownership, referring to “the state in which individuals feel as though the target of ownership or a piece of that target is ‘theirs’ (i.e., ‘It is mine!’)” (Pierce et al., 2003, p. 86), arises individuals associate an action with their own decision, rather than considering those actions to be influenced by external forces. Since proactivity permission allows employees to make their own decisions without any inference and obligation, this increases their sense of ownership for their proactive actions (Wellman & Miller, 2008). As such, it may increase their ownership of proactive behaviors. While having positive proactivity permission increases one’s ownership of their behaviors, it also increases accountability for the consequences of these actions.

As stated above, proactivity permission is negative permission in which employees do not explicitly request permission from authority figures. Employees instead assume that they have permission to take proactive actions. According to normative ethics scholars (Koch, 2018), tacit understanding does not *objectively* alter actions’ liability and accountability distribution. If an employee commits wrongdoing with negative permission, they will be held fully accountable for their mistake. This logic agrees with observations made by some scholars about organizations. As noted by Grant and Ashford (2008), “if employees fail, under-perform, or make an error, the spotlight will be on them, as proactive behavior is difficult to blame on

external circumstances due to its self-starting nature” (Grant & Ashford, 2008, p. 14). As such, employees with proactivity permission will be fully liable and accountable for their actions when problems arise objectively. Subjectively, however, employees with proactivity permission might still believe that their actions are less likely to be problematic because they believe they are normatively allowed to act proactively. This brings us to the next and final point: What happens when there is a misalignment between the proactivity permission of employees and the proactivity permission judgment of supervisors?

It is important to note that employees' perceptions of proactivity permission may or may not coincide with their supervisors' perceptions. Because proactivity permission is a cognitively constructed belief that varies across people, supervisors may have different opinions about the permissibility of employees' proactive behaviors than employees. In such cases – when employees and their supervisors disagree about proactivity permissions – the supervisors may perceive employees as acting out of place, generating problems, or being deviant. As a result, negative attitudes towards employees are likely to develop, unsupportive behaviors for employees are likely to surface, and informal sanctions for employees are likely to take place on the part of the supervisor.

## **3.2 Proactivity Permission Differentiated**

### **3.2.1 Proactivity Permission and Work Autonomy**

Proactivity permission shares similarities with some constructs explored in organizational scholarship, but it differs in a few crucial ways that justify its inclusion as a new construct. The first relevant concept that should be discussed is work autonomy, which refers to the capacity the organization allow employees to make decisions concerning how work gets accomplished (Breugh, 1998; Hackman & Oldham, 1975; Oldham et al., 1976). With work autonomy, employees can choose how and when to perform job-related activities (Morgeson & Humphrey,

2006). Proactivity permission is similar to work autonomy in that they both denote a condition under which individuals demonstrate their discretionary decisions and agentic behaviors. Despite their similarity in referring to discretionary conditions of employees, these two concepts differ from each other in several important ways.

First, work autonomy is largely an objective job characteristic, whereas proactivity permission is a subjective perception. Work autonomy refers to a work design characteristic in which all employees are provided with a relatively similar degree of freedom to act and decide their work-related activities (Breugh, 1998; Oldham et al., 1976), whereas proactivity permission is a perception that organizational actors hold, which varies among them. A straightforward implication of this condition is when an organization provides employees with autonomy, each employee has, at least, a similar degree of decision-making latitude in choosing their day-to-day activities. Unmistakably, employee perceptions of autonomy may vary; however, as a concept, work autonomy itself reflects objective work design characteristics. On the other hand, unlike work autonomy, one of the key tenets of proactive permission varies from employee to employee and does not reflect a uniform concept. Proactivity permission emphasizes differences across employees, suggesting that some employees may perceive or be perceived as having more permission to act proactively than other employees based on social standing, individual characteristics, or other contextual factors. As such, the subjective nature of proactivity permission makes it orthogonal to work autonomy. Consider, for example, an organization where employees do not have a lot of autonomy. In such an organization, employees from the research and development department with a great deal of expertise in the field may be able to proactively speak about work issues with their managers due to their unique social standing among their colleagues. However, those in the same department who have lesser

expertise might not have such a high level of permission. It is possible that while work autonomy, overall, is low at a particular workplace, experts in such a workplace can have a greater degree of proactivity permission. Consequently, work autonomy and proactivity permission differ in how they are conceptualized—one as an objective work characteristic and the other as subjective perception that varies among people.

Second, the scope of these concepts is different. Work autonomy is an essential characteristic of motivational work design, in which individuals are permitted to make their own decisions in carrying out a work assignment and their duties (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). In other words, employees who experience work autonomy are allowed to choose work-related actions to perform their duties and tasks (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2006), as work autonomy is conceptualized with a focus on *accomplishing tasks* within one's role definition by increasing individuals' control over their work. By definition, it can be argued that work autonomy denotes a condition in which employees are allowed to decide and control actions that relate to *in-role*, but not necessarily *extra-role*, work behaviors. However, proactivity permission differs from work autonomy, focusing on the conditions in which employees believe that they are allowed to engage in *proactive behaviors* (i.e., extra-role behaviors) without any formal and normative sanctions. In this sense, proactivity permission focuses primarily on extra-role behaviors, while work autonomy mostly focuses on an accomplishment of in-role tasks.

Third, proactivity permission is based on the concept of normative independence, which is roughly defined as freedom from social sanctions and punishment (Berlin, 2002; Müller & Schaber, 2018). To clarify, individuals who believe they have proactivity permission may also think that most of the social rules and sanctions that apply to others do not apply to them and that if they engage in proactive actions, they will not be judged negatively. As a result, they tend to

view that they are, to some degree, normatively independent from the social rules that govern the vast majority of their proactive efforts. On the other hand, work autonomy does not focus on normative regulations. Rather, it focuses on increasing employees' control over the situation, concentrating on actual work design factors (e.g., decision-making) and not making assumptions about socially shared rules and concerns. It is essential to notice the difference between autonomy and independence. Correspondingly, Breugh (1985) previously stated that there is a confusion between autonomy and independence. According to Breugh (1985), along with Kiggundu (1983), autonomy refers to the degree of discretion and control that a worker has in completing tasks, while independence refers to being "free from" any external constraints or influences. Deci and Ryan (2006) addressed a similar issue in the self-determination literature. They contend that while individuals may have autonomy (control over situations and their decisions), their autonomous choices may be limited or restricted. As a result, Deci and Ryan (2006) conclude that "autonomy is not defined by the absence of external influences but rather by one's assent to such influences or inputs. Autonomy is thus not equivalent to independence" (p. 1561). As a result, whereas work autonomy is based on the concept of having control over the situation, proactivity permission is based on the idea of being normatively and relatively independent of social sanctions (see [Berlin, 2002](#)).

Fourth, proactivity permission does not create obligations, whereas work autonomy is all about obligations. When someone has permission to do something, they are not obligated to carry out this action. In deontic logic (Hilpinen, 2007), this condition refers to a subaltern condition to obligation. When employees believe they have proactivity permissions, they perceive that they may engage in such behaviors if they wish but do not feel obligated to do so. On the other hand, conceptually, work autonomy is a capacity designated by organizations for

employees to decide how they work to achieve organizational goals (Hackman & Oldham, 1975). Organizations do not give employees work autonomy to suspend their obligations from essential work duties. They give this control and flexibility to achieve organizational goals. In this sense, work autonomy is given to employees with a sense of obligation. With work autonomy, employees are still expected to carry out their duties, but they can control how they do so, and they are not freed from normative sanctions for their decisions. As such, work autonomy does not effectively change one's work obligations, whereas proactivity permissions, by definition, refer to the lack of obligations and prohibitions for proactive actions (see Hilpinen, 2017).

### **3.2.2 Proactivity Permission and Psychological Empowerment**

Another concept that is related to proactivity permission is psychological empowerment, defined as a type of intrinsic task motivation—"an active rather than a passive orientation to a work role ... an orientation in which an individual wishes and feels able to shape his or her work role and context" (Spreitzer, 1995, p. 1444). Psychological empowerment denotes a belief held by employees "reflecting a sense of self-control in relation to one's work and an active involvement with one's work role" (Seibert et al., 2011, p. 981). The concept of psychological empowerment shares some similarities with proactivity permission. First, like proactivity permission, psychological empowerment focuses on employees' perceptions and beliefs rather than on more tangible work design characteristics. In that sense, it differs from work autonomy, which makes psychological empowerment more closely related to proactivity permission. Second, both proactivity permission and psychological empowerment focus on the discretionary conditions in that employees are allowed to engage in behaviors they wish. Despite these similarities, the proactivity permission and psychological empowerment concepts differ in two

notable ways. First, psychological empowerment focuses on more than just employees' discretionary conditions and control beliefs. Psychological empowerment is a multidimensional concept encompassing meaning, self-determination, competence, and impact. According to Seibert et al. (2011),

meaning refers to the alignment between the demands of one's work role and one's own beliefs, values, and standards... Self-determination is one's sense of choice concerning the initiation or regulation of one's actions... Competence refers to one's belief in one's capability to successfully perform work activities... Finally, impact is one's belief that one can influence strategic, administrative, or operational activities and outcomes in one's work unit... (p. 981).

However, proactivity permission is a unitary concept, focusing exclusively on employees' beliefs about the permissibility of proactive behaviors at work and the discretionary conditions stemming from such beliefs.

Second, although proactivity permission might relate most to the self-determination dimension of psychological empowerment, there are also differences between proactivity permission and the self-determination concept. Self-determination focuses on individuals' inner capacity to decide whether to freely act about the context in which individuals are located. In early theorizing, psychological empowerment was conceptualized with self-concept theories to reflect beliefs about one's inner capacity in controlling the environment (see, Zimmerman, 1995). For example, Seibert et al. (2011) stressed the role of the self-concept in psychological empowerment, arguing that "both contextual variables and individual characteristics, especially those reflecting one's self-concept, should be considered as antecedents to perceptions of psychological empowerment" (p. 984). On the other hand, proactivity permission emphasizes perceptions of social normative reality, as opposed to innate beliefs of employees, in generating perceptions of permission. Empowered employees may believe they are allowed to control their work activities because they can do so, whereas employees with proactivity permission may

believe that they are allowed to act proactively because they satisfy specific criteria and because the actions are not normatively prohibited for them. Therefore, proactivity permission and psychological empowerment differ in how they focus on such beliefs – proactivity permission identifies external social factors, in conjunction with individuals’ social information processing tendencies of such external social cues, as responsible for such beliefs, while psychological empowerment recognizes the internal self-concept as the key factor.

### **3.2.3 Proactivity Permission and Psychological Safety**

Lastly, proactivity permission may be related to psychological safety, which Kahn (1990) defined as “feeling able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career” (Kahn, 1990, p. 708). Extending this definition, Edmondson (1999) argued that psychological safety is a shared belief among teammates that interpersonal risk is safe within the team. In this conceptualization, psychological safety is an emergent team concept that develops through repeated social exchanges between team members. Both psychological safety and proactivity permission are beliefs held by social actors. And both psychological safety and proactivity permission involves perceptions that help minimize negative consequences of employees’ actions. However, there are at least two important distinctions between these concepts. First, while psychological safety stems from employees’ beliefs that *other team members* do not negatively judge an employee’s behavior, proactivity permission stems from the belief that the *authority* does not negatively judge an employee’s behavior because the actions of the employee are in the range of normative regulations. With psychological safety, social pressure stems from the negative judgment of team members; in proactivity permission, it stems from the normative judgment of the authority in place. In this sense, proactivity permission focuses less on whether other team members will negatively judge an employee’s proactivity and

more on whether normative rules and relevant authority judge an employee's proactivity as acceptable. Second, the scope of the judgment is different. Psychological safety might be broader in the sense of concerns of how employees will be negatively judged. For example, employees might have negative psychological safety views due to various group dynamics, such as the fear of being ridiculed by one's colleagues or feeling an inferior part of the group (Kahn, 1990). Although such interpersonal relationships might be a conduit for reflecting social regulations in some sense, proactivity permission focuses on a more specific employees' perception that employees are normatively not violating any social rules, either implicit or explicit. Thus, proactivity permission differs from psychological safety in that it is more focused on normative social rules rather than merely on interpersonal judgments among peers, such as whether employees believe they will be ridiculed or considered less capable if they demonstrate their proactive actions.

### **3.3 Theory Overview**

Proactivity research, as presented above, has suggested that not all proactive behaviors might be seen positively. While some people may have a certain degree of approval and permission for their proactive behaviors, others might not have such permission. For example, in the managerial endorsement literature, when employees do not have certain characteristics such as credibility, high social status, or political skills (Burriss, 2012; Ejaz et al., 2017; Lam et al., 2019), their proactive attempts might be perceived as inappropriate, careless, or unacceptable. This emerging literature implies that the acceptability and permissiveness of proactive behaviors vary among individuals. However, little is currently known about what contributes to permission perception at work and how employees and supervisors perceive which actions are permissible (or not) for whom. Understanding the concept of permission involves considering various yet complementary frameworks such as deontic logic, cognitive psychology,

and developmental psychology (Beller, 2010). With these views, the nature, function, and outcomes of proactivity permission can be explained. To develop a framework of proactivity permission and its effects on workplace outcomes, I draw from the deontic logic, cognitive psychology, and developmental psychology literature to argue proactivity permission at work is a function of four overarching sets of factors: an employee's dispositional characteristics, which affect their perceptions of proactivity permission (i.e., psychological entitlement, reactance orientation, independent self-construal); supervisors' characteristics (i.e., social dominance orientation, rule-based reasoning, desirability for control); relational factors (i.e., employee social status and leaders member exchange relationship (LMX)); and contextual factors (e.g., structural formalization, deontic rule consistency, and social norm tightness-looseness). Each of these factors is discussed in detail below.

### **3.4 Dispositional Tendencies in Employee Proactivity Permission**

According to the mental model theory (Beller, 2001; Bucciarelli & Johnson-Laird, 2005), individuals construct normative beliefs by relying on information from their social settings and incorporating them into their overall mental models about social reality. Mental models are cognitive organizations of conceptually related elements that enable people to understand, organize, and predict their worlds (Johnson-Laird, 2011). Such models, which emerge progressively from previous experiences, reflect a prototypical abstraction of a complex world and guide one's beliefs and actions (Gentner, 2001). In developing mental models, individual characteristics also play an essential role in understanding their normative environment and proactivity permission. The model theory focuses on the premise that humans do not passively categorize and interact with the social world. Rather, they actively filter and process social information based on their pre-existing cognitive patterns (Werhane et al., 2011). As a well-established pre-existing cognitive pattern, an individual's traits and orientations affect how one

constructs and employs conceptual mental models related to normative forces at work. Following this claim, previous research has shown that individuals exhibit differences in understanding statements, processing information, and predicting outcomes in mental model reasoning tasks (Fumero et al., 2008, 2008). When asked to reason about a series of statements, highly conscientious individuals focused on conditions consistent with the given rules and tended to infer conclusions from the given rules validly. At the same time, those open to experience were more flexible in their inferences and did not provide valid conclusions strictly consistent with the given rules. Furthermore, moral reasoning literature, a field related to deontic reasoning, also offered some support for the idea that individuals might differently judge moral rules and demonstrate differing beliefs about whether an action is morally permissible or not. For example, Smillie et al. (2020) found that intellectually curious and cognitively engaged individuals are more likely to judge behaviors based on the outcome of those behaviors rather than the face values of behaviors that follow specific moral rules. Thus, for those people, the permissibility of moral behaviors was more about how the moral behaviors provide utility for groups rather than how or whether such behaviors followed given moral rules.

However, in terms of proactivity permission, not all trait-like tendencies are likely to relate to individuals' mental model of permission. Although there is no clear theory to articulate which personality orientations might be related to permission reasoning, we can infer some personality traits that might be more relevant to proactivity permission than others. Based on norm judgment literature (Malle, 2020) and social dominance theory (Cummins, 1990), I argue that employee traits related to how employees perceive themselves in the social context and how they perceive social rules will influence their perceptions of proactivity permissions. In contrast,

supervisors' traits related to how they judge one's actions and how they perceive one should follow social regulations will affect their judgments of proactivity permissions.

There are differences between “perceiving” and “judging.” By perceiving, one makes sense of a situation with information gathered from social environments, whereas by judging, one decides about the social situation based on whether that social situation is aligned with pre-defined or established standards. Perceiving defines *what it is*, while judging determines *whether “what it is” is appropriate or not* (Malle, 2020). Perceiving and judging, in this respect, reflect two mental states that are affected by different personality tendencies.

I argue that employees perceive, while supervisors judge, and thus different personality traits might be more relevant in these two mental processes. In perceiving whether an employee has permission to do something, the saliency of self is more pronounced because individuals need to understand whether they, not necessarily others, are allowed to do something. They are deciding about their own situation, so their self-concept and the role of self in the social situation will be the focus (Cummins, 2000). In line with this, traits related to self-definition and understanding one's social standing (e.g., psychological entitlement, independent self-construal, and reactance orientation) will have a substantial impact on permission perceptions.

I present a line of general logic about these trait orientations in relationship with permission reasoning. In the following sections, I presented my hypotheses about these concepts in more detail. The first one is psychological entitlement, which refers to a sense of unconditional deservingness and self-importance (W. K. Campbell et al., 2004). Because entitled people tend to believe they deserve more than others, that belief of deservingness might affect how they process social rules at work, making them more inclined to see that regulations should be flexible and applied differently to them. The second one is trait reactance orientation, which

refers to one's dispositional tendency to perceive social situations as threats to one's freedom and react against that social situation (S.-M. Hong & Faedda, 1996). For those with a high reactance orientation, social constraints are a limitation on their actions and freedom. To regain their freedom, those people tend to react to the social rules with less conformity, possibly seeing a great degree of permission to act freely. The third and last one is independent self-construal, which refers to "one's perceiving a clear boundary that separates the self from others and to giving higher priority to personal goals than to group goals" (Grace & Kenneth L. Cramer, 2003, p. 650). For people who have high independent self-construal, the self comes before groups. Instead of conforming to the social rules and regulations, those people have put their uniqueness and independence in front of the social regulative forces and tend to protect this view. They might believe the rules and regulations applicable to others do not apply to them. Hence, those people may have more flexibility in following regulations and perceive themselves as having more permission to act proactively.

### **3.4.1 Psychological Entitlement**

Psychological entitlement refers to "a stable and pervasive sense that one deserves more and is entitled to more than others" (W. K. Campbell et al., 2004, p. 31). Entitled employees perceive their social realities with a skewed lens. Due to inflated self-perceptions, entitled workers feel they deserve greater praises, rewards, or unique treatments regardless of their actual social position or performance (Naumann et al., 2002; O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2016; Priesemuth & Taylor, 2016). This skewed self-perception also affects social information processing. Not only do they believe they deserve more than their actual work inputs, but they also register the idea that they are superior to others and deserve special treatment others might not have (W. K. Campbell et al., 2004; Exline et al., 2004).

I argue that psychology entitlement positively contributes to an employee's perception of proactivity permission. As noted above, entitled individuals tend to perceive themselves as particularly important and unique social actors in their social settings. They typically grant themselves special privileges and develop skewed perceptions of themselves and their social realities (Exline et al., 2004). These skewed perceptions might create false interpretations of social rules and leads entitled individuals to believe that social rules are more alterable and flexible. As a result, entitled individuals are more likely than non-entitled people to judge their own actions are permissible. As such, entitled employees might tend to assume they can act freely without being constrained by social rules.

Research studies have shown strong associations between feelings of psychological entitlement and skewed judgments of normative rules. For example, in a series of six studies, Zitek and Jordan (2019) demonstrated that entitled participants were significantly more likely to ignore rules, no matter how persuasive their instructions were, how easy they were to follow, or how likely the punishment would be if they didn't follow them. Furthermore, research has shown that despite potential personal or societal risks, entitled individuals are less likely to follow pandemic health guidelines since they believe they are special, the guideline messages overblown, and other people less deserving (Zitek & Schlund, 2021). Studies have also found that entitled individuals assume the right and privilege to violate social regulations and engage in various forms of normative misconduct (Tamborski et al., 2012), such as using unethical tactics in negotiations (Neville & Fisk, 2019), deviant behaviors at work (Harvey et al., 2014), and deception (R. P. Brown et al., 2009). These findings suggest that entitled people are less likely to demonstrate concern for what is objectively permissible and are more likely to perceive social rules as flexible. Thus, I predict that psychologically entitled employees are more likely to

perceive they have more permission than normal. I hypothesize that psychological entitlement will positively contribute to employees' perceived permission beliefs about proactivity.

**Hypothesis 1:** Employees' psychological entitlement is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

### **3.4.2 Reactance Orientation**

Reactance refers to a motivational state characterized by distress, resistance, and a desire to restore autonomy and control (Miron & Brehm, 2006). Autonomy has been considered to be a basic psychological need (Deci & Ryan, 2008) that makes individuals free to make their own choices. According to Brehm (1966), people believe they possess specific behavioral and cognitive freedom and autonomy. When people feel that social regulations constrain their freedom and autonomy, they may experience a state in which they desire to reestablish their freedom and autonomy by giving themselves more independence and/or by acting out against social rules (Rosenberg & Siegel, 2018). Individuals can reestablish and restore their autonomy in various ways, ranging from increasing the number of available free actions to positing oneself to increase future autonomous behaviors (Chadee, 2011).

Although reactance has been conceptualized as a motivational state that tends to occur when people feel their freedoms have been threatened (Linder & Crane, 1970), recent studies have shown that some individuals demonstrate a dispositional tendency of reactance. This dispositional tendency of reactance is called trait reactance and denotes "an individual's predisposition to perceive situations as threats to his/her freedom and to act with reactance" (Soveri et al., 2020, p. 6). Previous research has found that when some individuals feel their autonomy is threatened, they respond with reactance behaviors, including demonstrating negative attitudes and behaviors (C. H. Miller et al., 2007; Rains & Turner, 2007), oppositions

towards the freedom-threatening conditions (Buller et al., 1998), and tend to increase their available free choices by acting with their own discretion (S. S. Brehm & Brehm, 2013; Miron & Brehm, 2006; Quick et al., 2007). As a result of individual differences in the degree to which they desire autonomy (Wicklund, 1974), people show different levels of trait reactance (Soveri et al., 2020).

I argue that trait reactance is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs. Those with high trait-reactance tend to be autonomous, placing a high level of importance on their personal liberty. For them, personal liberty is not a means but rather an end, in and of itself (Iyer et al., 2012). Any social rules limiting individual actions will be considered a threat to personal liberty and autonomy. While social regulations tend to restrict individual personal liberty and autonomy, these very social rules have an intention to increase the likelihood of achieving group outcomes. However, this intention behind the social rules does not speak to reactance-oriented people clearly. High trait-reactance individuals might tend to believe that those rules are there not for conforming and not accomplishing the group success, but for resisting and limiting one's freedom. As a result, to restore their freedom, they might think they can act more freely from social regulation and tend to believe their behaviors are independent of referent others in social systems (Donnell et al., 2001). Previous evidence has shown the negative relationship between normative regulations and trait reactance, indicating that high trait-reactance individuals respond negatively to pressure to conform to social directions and rules and tend to bend these rules for them to restore their personal freedom (Goldsmith et al., 2005; Ping Dong et al., 2015; Yost & Finney, 2018). Overall, evidence and theory indicate that individuals with high levels of trait reactance are likely to perceive social rules as sources of freedom-restricting conditions and believe they can act freely to restore their freedom. Taken together, I

expect that trait reactance will have a positive relationship with employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

**Hypothesis 2:** Employees' trait reactance is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

### 3.4.3 Independent Self-Construal

Self-construal is a term that applies to one's own perceptions of individuality (i.e., what one thinks s/he should be), which affect how individuals think of their social position in relation with other individuals (Cross et al., 2011; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Markus and Kitayama (1991) distinguish two distinct modes of self-construal. Independent self-construal denotes a self-definition stemming from "a belief in the wholeness and uniqueness of each person's configuration of internal attributes" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 226); it highlights the uniqueness of individuals' skills, emotions, and feelings. By comparison, interdependent self-construal denotes a self-definition stemming from the belief that "the person not as separate from the social context but as more connected and less differentiated from others" (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p. 227). This form of self-definition highlights interpersonal relationships and places a premium on belonging to a group. These concepts are not polar opposite; to a certain extent, individuals may experience independent and interdependent self-construals (Cross et al., 2011). However, in general, one of the self-construal schemas can be dominant over the other. Thus, individuals tend to demonstrate relatively stable dispositional tendencies regarding their self-construal (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

I argue that independent self-construal contributes to employees' perceptions of proactivity permission. Employees who perceive themselves as independent from others tend to view themselves as unique, free agents in their social settings and are motivated to protect their

views under most social conditions (Wu et al., 2018). Those individuals have a self-reliance belief, in which they consider themselves capable, competent, and knowledgeable enough to make their own decisions on issues and situations that constrain their behaviors (Voyer & Franks, 2014). They might think those rules restricting individual actions are for those who do not have such capacity, and because they are unique and independent individuals rather than common, those rules applicable to general are not applicable for them. In other words, they might believe that permission is required for those who are not capable enough to carry out their own actions in a social setting. This belief allows employees with independent self-construal to disregard social rules and regulations, allowing their own permissions belief to stand out in the workplace. Furthermore, independent self-construal individuals tend to demonstrate less normative awareness (Cojuharenco et al., 2012). For those people, the primary purpose of social action is to realize individual wishes, goals, and rights. Thus, “the goals and needs of society, family members, or others are secondary or subordinate....” (Cross & Madson, 1997, p. 7). This suggests that employees who view themselves as independent and self-reliant are more likely to disregard social norms and act in their own self-interest rather than considering the interests of others. In 12 independent studies, Lalwani and Shavitt (2009) documented that independent self-construal participants were more likely to present themselves as hard-working and capable individuals while being less likely to present themselves as sensitive to social rules or suitable group members. Proactivity research has also shown that independent self-construal influenced employees' choice of proactive action. Employees with interdependent self-construal focused on more socially oriented proactive actions aimed at adding benefit to the work unit, whereas employees with independent self-construal focused on more personal oriented proactive actions aimed at creating benefit for the individuals (Wu et al., 2018). Due to their emphasis on

individuality, self-reliance, and self-oriented belief, employees with independent self-construal can interpret social rules and permissions more loosely, holding the impression that they have more permission to engage in proactive behaviors regardless of the actual situation.

**Hypothesis 3:** Employees' independent self-construal is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

### **3.5 Dispositional Tendencies in Supervisor's Proactivity Permission Judgment**

Permission, and other forms of deontic rules, cannot be understood without considering the roles of authority (Kilpatrick et al., 2007). One of the functions of authority is to decide on and monitor which actions at work are aligned with acceptable social regulations (Cummins, 2000). At work, supervisors fulfill this role (Luhman & Cunliffe, 2013), by judging their subordinates against organizational, social, and personal standards. As explained in the previous sections, the supervisor's judgment may vary in judging the acceptability and permissibility of employees' proactivity (Lam et al., 2019). The mental model theory suggests that, just as individuals differ in their construction and utilization of proactivity permission beliefs related to themselves, supervisors as authority figures may also differ in their permissibility judgments based on their personality. Given that judgment requires standards to be held (Malle, 2020) and the social position of individuals affect one's standards (Cummins, 1990), personality traits related to one's social and personal standards and their view of social position and others might be more relevant for supervisors' judgments of proactivity permissions.

As a result, I anticipate that social-dominance orientation (i.e., a preference for one specific social hierarchy within a social system in terms of power and priority), rule-based reasoning (i.e., a tendency to judge whether an action is permissible based on compliance with preconceived rules), and the need for control (i.e., aspirations to be in charge of and able to control resources, people, and things) will be important predictors of supervisors' judgment. This

is primarily due to the fact that dominance-oriented people will focus on standards relating to the idea that one must act in accordance with their position, individuals who follow rule-based reasoning will have standards centered on acting in accordance with social rules, and those with a high need for control will rely on standards relating to acting in accordance with their control. In light of this, I elaborate on my hypothesis in the following section.

### **3.5.1 Social-Dominance Orientation**

Social-dominance orientation refers to a generalized tendency to desire the priority and power of one specific social hierarchy within a social system (Pratto et al., 1994). People with high social-dominance orientation tend to prefer that the current social hierarchical powers in the social system dominate over other groups. Previously, social-dominance orientation was associated with conservative political ideologies (Passini & Villano, 2013), support for status hierarchies, and prejudice toward people from lower social status (Bäckström & Björklund, 2007; Cohrs et al., 2012).

I argue that supervisors' social-dominance orientations are negatively related to their judgments about employees' proactivity permissions. High social dominance-oriented individuals prioritize the social structure and hierarchy and are less tolerable to deviations from the social hierarchy (Bäckström & Björklund, 2007; Pratto et al., 1994). This tendency is likely to shape how supervisors process and judge their subordinates' proactivity permissions. Employee proactivity permission requires supervisors to have a certain degree of openness to change from current work conditions. When a supervisor allows an employee to engage in proactivity, the supervisor knows that the employee might challenge the status quo and perhaps affect workplace power dynamics (Chiaburu & Baker, 2006). Instead of focusing on the potential positive aspects of the employee's proactive attempts, supervisors with a high social dominance

orientation are more likely to focus on the status quo, challenging the potential of the actions. Because supervisors with a social-dominance orientation are likely to perceive employees' proactivity as unacceptable and impermissible, I argue that supervisors' social-dominance orientation is negatively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.

**Hypothesis 4:** Supervisors' social-dominance orientation is negatively related to their judgments about employees' proactivity permission.

### **3.5.2 Rule-Based Mindset**

Norm judgment literature from moral psychology suggests that individuals have certain dispositional tendencies to judge and perceive whether an action is permissible or not (Cornelissen et al., 2014; Ditto et al., 2009). When judging a social action, individuals might show either an outcome-based mindset or a rule-based mindset (Cornelissen et al., 2014). Outcome-based mindset refers to the tendency to judge the permissibility of an action based on the potential consequences of that action (Robinson, 2012). On the other hand, a rule-based mindset refers to the tendency to judge the permissibility of an action based on the conformity of the act to preconceived rules (Robinson, 2012). Researchers have identified that these two terms are related to moral philosophy and arise from psychological processes when individuals decide about normative actions (Greene, 2009; Greene et al., 2008). People typically show a reasonably stable preference for one type of judgment over another when considering different situations, although they may sometimes combine these outcome and rule-based reasoning schemas (Lombrozo, 2009).

I argue that supervisors' rule-based mindset is negatively related to their judgments of employees' proactivity permissions. Supervisors with a primarily rule-based mindset tend to

highlight the importance of an organizations' social rules. For those with a rule-based mindset, rules are the most important factors facilitating and shaping human behaviors and are associated with justice, fairness, and other moral principles (Graham et al., 2013). As such, those with a rule-based mindset tend to expect that everyone should follow the rules. Those rule-based mindset people tend to be cognitively lazy in judging the behaviors of others outside the preconceived rules, thus providing little room for any actions pushing the boundaries of rules. For example, research has documented that individuals with a rule-based mindset tend to engage in less cognitive processes when they are judging social actions and do not consider whether the actions of others might benefit society as a whole (Greene et al., 2009). On the other hand, proactive employees attempt to take actions that are typically not clearly constrained and explicitly regulated by social rules (Griffin et al., 2007). Because there are no explicit rules with regard to proactive actions, supervisors need to judge and decide whether employees have permission to take such actions. Supervisors with a primarily rule-based mindset tend to be less open to behaviors that are not well-defined and display less cognitive flexibility in judging such actions. Therefore, those supervisors are more likely to see employee proactivity are less permissible. I hypothesize that supervisors' rule-based mindset is negatively related to their judgments of proactivity permissions.

**Hypothesis 5:** Supervisors' rule-based mindset is negatively related to their judgments of employees' proactivity permission.

### **3.5.3 Need for Control**

Many central psychological theories contend that individuals have an intrinsic desire and motivation to be seen as competent by exerting effective influence over their environments (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2000) Burger and Cooper (1979) define this intrinsic drive as a "need for control,"

“desire for control” or “desirability for control.” The need for control, a primary human need, has been found to affect different aspects of one's life, ranging from how one perceives the environment (Burger & Hemans, 1988) to how one can behave and feel (Moulding & Kyrios, 2007). While people have a general desire for control, different people have varying degrees of control over their surroundings (Burger & Cooper, 1979).

I argue that supervisors' desire for control is negatively related to their employees' proactivity permissions judgments. Research shows that employees' desire for control drives their proactive behavior (Parker et al., 2010), the same concept can negatively affect judgments about proactivity permissions when applied to supervisors. Individuals with a high level of desire for control tend to be self-driven and enjoy taking on a dominant role in groups (Burger & Cooper, 1979). For those people, the social situation should be closely monitored and should be under their control because when confronted with events they cannot control, they feel increased stress and irritation (H. L. Fritz & Gallagher, 2019). Especially when they are faced with circumstances that challenge their control over the situation, they feel as if they are losing control and power. Therefore, they may experience high levels of stress, leading to attempts to regain control and discount the situation that reduces their control (Wortman & Brehm, 1975).

Since proactivity can be seen as unpredictable and risky (Grant & Ashford, 2008), supervisors with a high level of desirability for control might feel uncomfortable by their perceived inability to adequately control, monitor, and predict such events. Therefore, these supervisors might judge overall employee proactivity permissions negatively. They might hold the general belief that employees should not engage in proactive behaviors due to the uncertainties and risks associated with such actions and the possibility that supervisors, due to this uncertainty, might lose their influence on the work environment. Previous research from

organizational scholarship has suggested that supervisors with a high level of desirability for control (e.g., authoritarian tendencies) tend to assert absolute control over employees and expect absolute obedience (R. Li et al., 2021), possibly leaving little room for the permissibility of proactive behaviors. In line with this finding, Urbach and Fay (2018) have also shown that supervisors with power and control motives tend to attribute employees' proactivity as egoistic and negatively judge employees' proactive voice attempts. In light of this reasoning and evidence, I argue that supervisors with a high level of desirability for control tend to judge employees' proactivity permissions more negatively.

**Hypothesis 6:** Supervisors' desirability for control is negatively related to their judgments of employees' proactivity permission.

### **3.6 Relational Factors in Proactivity Permission**

The previous hypotheses primarily draw on the mental model theory to argue that employees' and supervisors' trait-like characteristics affect the perception and judgment of proactivity permissions. Some personality characteristics are positively related to proactivity permissions, and others are negatively associated. While the mental model theory (Johnson-Laird, 2010) can help explain individual tendencies in permission reasoning, this theory has some limitations in accounting for social and contextual factors. Given that proactive behaviors are not devoid of context (Vough et al., 2017) and these behaviors are influenced by contextual and relational work factors (Cai et al., 2019), it is important to consider and account for contextual and relational effects on proactivity and proactivity permissions. In this respect, dominance theory (Cummins, 2000) provides a useful framework that argues that the social position of individuals may affect how people perceive and judge social rules. In the following sections, I discuss how social and relational factors contribute to the perception and judgment of proactivity permission.

### 3.6.1 Social Status of Employees

Social hierarchy is an inescapable aspect of organizational life, and most individuals aspire to attain a desirable social status (Blader & Yu, 2017; Hasty & Maner, 2020). Social status, defined as respect, prominence, and deference from group members (Magee & Galinsky, 2008), frequently provides individuals with opportunities for better social exchange, lucrative careers, and even well-being (Anderson & Berdahl, 2002; Keltner et al., 2003). Dominance theory (Cummins, 2000) suggests that when individuals have a desirable social status in the social settings, their social actions will be perceived more permissible by themselves and others. According to this perspective, within a social setting, there is a laden normative regulation set and monitored by the dominant or high-status group members to regulate social actions. High-status individuals put these laden normative regulations to protect their position in the social hierarchy and restrict the accessibility of valuable tangible or intangible resources to others. Although there might not be any explicit rules stating one should act or not in a certain way, social actors expect individuals to access social resources available to their social ranking and engage in acceptable behaviors for their social standing. As Cummins (2000) put it, to function effectively in a social setting, one must “learn what is forbidden and what is permitted given *one’s rank*” (Cummins, 2000:9, emphasized added). To illustrate, consider the following scenario. When a novice researcher attempts to debunk a long-standing scientific theory, the scientific community may find the claims unsound and unacceptable, giving fewer credits, even though the claim might be valid and very well-articulated. However, if a noble laureate in the field makes the same claims, they be perceived as highly worthy and beneficial by the very same scientific community (see Mathew effect and Matilda effect, Lincoln et al., 2012; Rossiter, 1993). As such, because of the novice researcher’s social status, he or she likely does not have

permission to “debunk” a scientific theory, even though there would be no rules stating that novice research should not debunk a theory. From the perspective of dominance theory (Cummins, 2000), the permissibility of actions is a function of one’s social status.

This reasoning indicates that when employees have higher social status at work, they might have a greater degree of proactivity permission. When individuals demonstrate a high social standing and gain social credit from others (D. T. Miller et al., 2010), they become immune to negative criticism and judgment and thus hold a more powerful situation “associated with increased rewards and freedom” (Keltner et al., 2003, p. 265). Socially valuable people occupy a social position in a hierarchy considered desirable, and thus their social standing confers a privilege to act with fewer constraints (Huberman et al., 2004). Furthermore, because an individual's social status conveys the amount of value other people place on him or her (Ridgeway et al., 1998), having a high social status allows employees to take a relatively sheltered social position where their supervisors and others may be more tolerant of those high-status employees’ proactive actions. Some studies indicated that an employee’s social worth might influence how they perceive employee proactivity. Whiting et al. (2012) reported that voices provided by more expert or credible sources, which contribute to one's social status, were perceived as more constructive, resulting in a positive performance assessment. Similarly, supervisors were more accepting of those suggestions and employee ideas when those ideas came from expert, credible, and high status employees (T. M. Howell et al., 2015; Lam et al., 2019; J. (Jason) Li et al., 2019). Furthermore, evidence revealed that when employees perceive they do not have an “enough” social status, they might feel less secure and engage in proactive actions. In a qualitative study with 40 employees from a wide range of industries, Milliken, Morrisson, and Hewlin (2003) discovered that employees cited several status-relevant factors as

one of the main reasons for their inability to speak up. For example, referring to her social status characteristics, one of the participants stated, "If you are young in the company, don't speak unless you are spoken to." (p. 1465). Thus, I expect that employee social status is positively related to both employee's perception of proactivity permission and the supervisor's judgment of employee proactivity permission.

**Hypothesis 7a:** Employee social status is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

**Hypothesis 7b:** Employee social status is positively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.

### **3.6.2 Quality of Leader-Member Exchange**

Apart from attaining their own social status, individuals may gain a proxy status by having a good relationship with powerful others in the social setting (Brass, 2017; Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994; Lin, 1999). At work, supervisors hold an influential position and serve as powerful social figures (Lian et al., 2014). Hence, it is possible that employee's relationship with their supervisor will have an impact on proactivity perception. To capture this relationship, I introduce the concept of leader-member exchange (LMX) quality.

According to LMX theory, relationships between supervisors and subordinates differ in quality (Dansereau et al., 1975; Erdogan & Bauer, 2014; Graen et al., 1982). A high-quality relationship between supervisors and followers is often described as partnerships with enhanced trust, support, and mutual influence. In contrast, a low-quality relationship between supervisors and followers tends to be primarily transactional, raised upon the supervisor's authority (Erdogan & Bauer, 2014). The quality relationship between the leader and the subordinate is called LMX quality, and it is an essential predictor of job attitudes and work behaviors. Meta-analyses have

linked LMX quality to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Martin et al., 2016).

I argue that LMX quality will have a positive effect on employees' perception of proactivity permission and the supervisor's judgment of proactivity permission. First, when employees have a good relationship with their supervisor, they will be able to mobilize the social capital of their supervisor, too (Brass, 2017; Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994; Lin, 1999). In LMX theory, that is called sponsorship. When employees have a high-quality relationship with their supervisor, they tend to be sponsored to a greater degree by their managers (Erdogan & Bauer, 2014). Because of this sponsorship of their supervisor, employees tend to have a greater degree of social resources, contributing to their sense of social standing (Keltner et al., 2003). For example, Sparrowe and Liden (2005) found that employees who had a high-quality relationship with their leader also became valuable advisors within their workgroup network, gaining an influential social position among their peers. In social network studies, similar effects have been observed. For example, having a high-quality relationship with powerful others in one's social network called the prism effect in social network theory (Podolny, 2001), carried a "spillover" effect such that employees with a high-quality relationship with powerful others were also perceived as powerful and high performers (Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994). Similarly, Brass (1984) reported that having a good relationship with a group of executive leaders was related to power and promotions for nonmanagerial employees. These findings and theories suggest that when employees have a high-quality relationship with their supervisors, they will likely attain a proxy social status and feel more resourceful and powerful, ultimately changing employees' perceptions of social regulations (Cummins, 2000, Keltner et al., 2003). Given this, I argue that LMX quality contributes positively to employees' perception of proactivity permission.

Second, a high LMX quality indicates less social distance, "perceived or experienced distance from other individuals" (Hasty & Maner, 2020, p. 1). Supervisor's social distance between their subordinates has important implications for their proactivity permission judgment. When there is a low level of social distance due to LMX quality, supervisors tend to engage in more perspective-taking before judging their employee's proactivity permission (Galinsky et al., 2016). For instance, compared to those with a high level of social distance, those with a low level of social distance are more empathic in understanding the mental states of others and tend to engage in more perspective-taking (Blader et al., 2016). This is because a high-quality LMX may reduce the social distance between employees and supervisors, it might increase the supervisor's perspective-taking. When supervisors adopt a more perspective-taking approach, they are more likely to understand employees' intentions and give them more credit rather than blindly following social regulations and rules (Wellman & Miller, 2008). Thus, I expect that LMX quality will also be positively related to the supervisor's proactivity permission judgment.

**Hypothesis 8a:** Leader-member exchange quality is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

**Hypothesis 8b:** Leader-member exchange quality is related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.

### **3.7 Contextual Factors in Proactivity Permission**

Finally, deontic logic and deontic reasoning literature suggest that to understand what deontic rules are and how people reason about them, one must also consider overall rule systems and their applications in the workplace (Beller, 2010; Cummins, 2000). One of the basic premises of this body of research is that social rules and their utilization in the social setting affect social actors' rule-related cognitions and, thus, their behaviors. Deontic rule systems should be simple to understand and consistent across the organization, with little room for

subjective, individual interpretations. When individuals face competing and complex deontic rules, they tend to find themselves in conflict and often attempt to resolve this conflict using self-serving biases to confirm their needs and perspectives (Festinger, 1957; Mullen & Riordan, 1988). Given this, the rule structure in organizational settings is likely to affect employees' perceptions of social regulations and proactivity permissions.

Furthermore, the degree to which social rules are monitored and applied is also of great importance. If social rules are not regularly monitored and consistently applied to individuals across the organization, people tend to behave more freely and perceive more permission for their behaviors (Cummings, 1990). As such, the degree to which rules are monitored and applied is likely to affect perceptions and judgments of proactivity permissions.

Based on this theorizing, I identify three sets of contextual variables that contribute to employees' perceptions of proactivity permissions and supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions: deontic formalization, deontic consistency, and normative tightness-looseness. Each of these is discussed in the sections below.

### **3.7.1 Organizational Formalization**

People are governed by organizations, and organizations are governed by social rules (Weber, 1921/1921). Deontic rules are often formalized in written documents that contain information about organizational policies, procedures, and other types of social regulations (DeHart-Davis et al., 2013). Organizational formalization (or deontic rule formalization) refers to the comprehensiveness, content, and quality of such written documentation. Formalization is considered a type of formal control system within organizations (Cardinal et al., 2004). Formal control denotes “officially sanctioned (usually codified) institutional mechanisms, such as written rules, standard operating systems, and procedural directives—visible, objective forms of

control,” whereas informal control refers to “unwritten, unofficial, ... less objective, uncodified forms of control” (Cardinal et al., 2004, p. 414). The formalization of deontic rules varies significantly from organization to organization, from entirely written to entirely unwritten (March et al., 2000; Pugh et al., 1969). Some organizations (e.g., the military) tend to rely on more formalized rules to maintain control among their employees; other organizations are more flexible (e.g., technology start-ups) and often operate with unwritten rules.

I expect that formalization negatively affects employees’ perceptions of proactivity permissions and supervisors’ judgments of employees’ proactivity permissions. Deontic rules in organizations enable organizational actors to direct their attention on desirable versus unacceptable work behaviors (Borry et al., 2018; Vlaar et al., 2006). Formalization of rules increases the salience of the rules themselves within the organizational setting, their roles in regulating human affairs, their constraints on human activities, and the importance of abidance to them. Increased formalization of rules often leaves no room for interpretations of individuals’ actions and intentions, instead only focusing on whether the actions align with the prescribed rules (Merton, 1940). While a certain degree rule formalization is important to contribute to the clarity of organizational roles and duties (Pugh et al., 1968) as well as to assure that organizational actors will follow overall organizational goals (Weber, 1921), a high level of rule formalization is likely to shift employees’ attention from organizational ends to organizational means (Merton, 1963). With Merton’s word (1963), “displacement of sentiments from goals onto means is fostered by the tremendous symbolic significance of the means (rules)” (p. 260). When the rules gain their symbolic meaning, the rules set to regulate social actions turn into a setback for social actions. As a result, a high level of deontic formalization can create a less welcoming

environment for employees who attempt to challenge the status quo and supervisors who accept these challenging behaviors and may inspire deviations from formalized rules.

By contrast, less formalized rules leave more room for interpretation and greater opportunities to deviate from organizational standards to accomplish organizational ends (Fleming, 2020). Unlike highly formalized rules, less formalized rules are not stored in any specific location, are less generalizable, are not as widely circulated across time and space in the organizational setting, and are more likely to be disseminated, instead, through word of mouth (McPhee, 2004). Less formalized rules are typically transmitted through social interactions, which are inherently associated with specific situations and people and enable individuals to flexibly respond to the changing nature of normative expectations based on situational needs (DeHart-Davis, 2009). When there is a lesser degree of formalized rules, organizational actors tend to have greater flexibility in assessing situations and greater capability to decide whether they have permission to carry out actions that have not been documented in written form. Consequently, less formalized rules increase the likelihood that organizational actors might bend normative regulations and perceive that they have a greater degree of permissibility in their actions to accomplish ongoing and changing organizational goals. In line with this reasoning, previous research has associated deontic formalization with lesser discretionary and more rule abidance (Borry et al., 2018) and lesser risk-taking behaviors such as prosocial rule-breaking behavior (Fleming, 2020). Based on these theories and findings, I hypothesize:

**Hypothesis 9a:** Organizational formalization is negatively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

**Hypothesis 9b:** Organizational formalization is negatively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.

### 3.7.2 Rule Consistency

Rule consistency here refers to settings wherein rules are logically constructed without any contradictions. Organizations rely on a multitude of rules to codify their current knowledge and disseminate it for future use (DeHart-Davis, 2009). Thus, they attempt to increase the organizational learning process (Levitt & March, 1988). Such organizational rules enable organizations to store and retrieve lessons from previous experiences, preserving them over time and across people (Levitt and March 1988). While it is often assumed that deontic rules are derived and revised in ways that are completely rational and logical (ensuring that there are no conflicting rules), reality usually departs from this assumption (DeHart-Davis, 2009). Organizational complexity and changing organizational environments demand that organizations rapidly create new rules and modify existing ones (Zhou, 1993). This sense of urgency often results in inconsistent rule redundancies, rules that no longer serve a purpose within the organization, and contradictory and inconsistent rules (Bozeman & Scott, 1996).

When organizational rules are inconsistent, they lose their strength and formal control over organizational actors (Meyer et al., 2010). Moreover, inconsistent organizational rules often create a condition in which organizational actors perceive normative expectations more loosely (DeHart-Davis, 2009). Consistency in deontic rules indicates organizational attention to rules, which communicates to social actors that the organization has meticulously formulated its rules and expects employees to follow them (DeHart-Davis, 2009). On the other hand, inconsistent deontic rules suggest that organizations are not paying attention to regulating behaviors. Inconsistent deontic rules might signal that organizations are not necessarily concerned about those social actions related to the inconsistent rules and that the enforcement of rules is not likely to take place. In this sense, when there is deontic inconsistency in organizational rules, the rules

merely hold new symbolic meaning and lose their normative importance: the rules are set merely for the sake of setting rules. Under such conditions, rules lose their power over organizational actors and are more loosely interpreted and flexible (Meyer et al., 2010). As such, individuals in these situations may be more likely to perceive they have proactivity permission than those in situations with deontic consistency.

Furthermore, inconsistency in deontic rules creates situations in which individuals can interpret rules according to their own expectations. The self-regulation framework suggests that when individuals face contradictory situational demands, they attempt to assert control over the situation (Fenton-O’Creevy et al., 2003). They support their position with selected information that corresponds to their unique perspectives and needs (Festinger, 1962). In other words, when organizational actors face contradictory rules, they tend to make sense of such rules in ways that align with their own perspectives and needs. And because individuals often attempt to increase their power over situations (Burger & Hemans, 1988), they are likely to interpret conflicting rules in ways that allow them to engage in proactive behaviors. Following this reasoning, evidence suggests that when individuals find deontic rules inconsistent, they tend to demonstrate more discretionary behaviors such as task revision (Staw & Boettger, 1990). Deontic inconsistency similarly affects managers' reasoning about the rules as well. For example, corporate managers report that they are more willing to bend the rules and perceive employees' actions as permissible when there are “poorly conceived” and inconsistent organizational rules (Veiga et al., 2004, p. 86). Recent evidence also demonstrates that deontic consistency and rules designed logically influence employees and managers abide by deontic regulations and to perceive rule deviations as normative violations (DeHart-Davis, 2009). In light of this logic and evidence, I predict that deontic consistency will create a hiatus for organizational actors,

whereby they will lose their focuses on formal rules, interpret these inconsistent rules in alignment with their needs, and thus form a perception that they may have permission to act proactively.

**Hypothesis 10a:** Rule consistency is negatively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

**Hypothesis 10b:** Rule consistency is negatively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.

### 3.7.3 Normative Tightness-Looseness

In the previous sections, I focused on formalization and consistency – two concepts that reflect formal control systems in organizational settings (Cardinal et al., 2004). However, social actions can also be regulated with informal control mechanisms, which refer to the unwritten, shared, and less objective social control processes that often affect how employees think, assess, and act in organizations (Cardinal et al., 2004). It is important to consider the informal control mechanisms that influence employees' perceptions about the acceptability and permissibility of their intended proactive actions. In this regard, normative tightness-looseness concepts provide a useful framework. Normative tightness-looseness reflects variations in the strength and tolerance of norms in human groups (Gelfand et al., 2011). Norm strength refers to the extent to which people feel socially pressured to follow unwritten rules, whereas tolerance refers to how severely people can be punished for breaking unwritten rules. Normatively tight groups consist of a high level of norm strength with a low tolerance for deviance; normatively loose groups consist of a low level of norm strength with a high tolerance for deviance. Neither tight nor loose groups are superior. Instead, tightness and looseness can be thought of as adaptive strategies to groups' ecological and historical contexts. Both tightness and looseness are associated with trade-offs

such as rigidity versus flexibility in order, intensity versus laxness in regulation, and stability versus change in social actions (R. Li et al., 2017). Initially, the concept of normative tightness-looseness was applied at the societal level in conjunction with cultural studies. However, Gelfand and other scholars developed a multilevel theory of normative tightness-looseness (Gelfand et al., 2006, 2017), arguing that there is the variability of tightness-looseness across different levels of social units such as cultural, regional, organizational, business departments, or workgroups (Gelfand et al., 2006).

I propose that normative tightness-looseness at work will have a negative effect on employees' and supervisors' perceptions and judgments of proactivity permissions. According to Gelfand et al. (2017), tightness-looseness of groups dictates the range of acceptable and permissible behaviors and affects how individuals perceive social actions. At the individual level, felt accountability explains why there is a cognitive and psychological difference between tight and loose groups. *Felt accountability* denotes "the subjective experience that one's actions are subject to evaluation and that there are potential punishments based on these evaluations" (Gelfand et al., 2006, p. 1229). In response to a heightened sense of responsibility, people in tight groups tend to have greater access to social norms and deontological regulations and concentrate more often on what they "must" do rather than on their "may" (Aarts & Dijksterhuis, 2003). Furthermore, individuals in tighter rather than looser groups tend to experience greater self-monitoring, higher need for structure, greater cautiousness, more focus on prevention, and less openness (Gelfand et al., 2006, 2017). These characteristics emphasize a preference for stability over flexibility in social actions and reduce permission beliefs among social actors, creating a less "permissive" context (Li et al., 2017). Several comparative cultural studies have also supported the idea that tightness-looseness affects how individuals evaluate the permissibility of

social actions. For example, parents in the U.S. (an example of loose culture) are more permissive than their East Asian counterparts (an example of tight culture) (Gelfand et al., 2017). Similarly, Chua, Roth, and Lemoine (2015) investigated the effect of tight versus loose culture on individuals' creative behaviors. Given that creativity requires a certain degree of deviation from preconceived standards (Amabile, 2006), it might be a good indicator to consider. Chua et al. (2015) found that individuals from tight cultures were less tolerant of foreign ideas in creative endeavors. Moreover, those individuals were less likely to succeed in creative tasks held by international platforms than their counterparts from loose cultures. These findings are consistent with the idea that those from tight cultures focus on whether activities align with the preconceived standards and norms instead of looking for opportunities to diverge from the conventional way of doing things. Based on these observations, I hypothesize that

**Hypothesis 11a:** Normative tightness is negatively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.

**Hypothesis 11b:** Normative tightness is negatively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.

### **3.8 Consequences of Proactivity Permission**

#### **3.8.1 Proactivity Permission to Proactive Behavior**

Proactivity permission reflects the sense that an action is normatively acceptable and not subject to any form of formal or informal regulatory punishment. When employees perceive they have permission to act proactively, they are likely to feel safer and secure in their intended proactivity. In addition, the belief that it is permissible to behave proactively plays an important role in actually being willing to engage in proactive behaviors. As such, I expect that proactivity permission will contribute to proactive behaviors.

Proactive behaviors are goal-directed and self-regulated behaviors; employees actively and deliberately think about and assess their possible future situation before acting proactively (Parker et al., 2010). Based on the expectancy-value theory (Barron & Hulleman, 2015; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), proactivity theories suggest that when a possible action is seen as less psychologically and socially costly, individuals feel more motivated to take action (Ashford et al., 2016). Given that the benefits and costs of all social behaviors are socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Searle, 1995), in determining the costs and benefits of proactive behaviors, interpersonal evaluations are a key factor. People evaluate whether engaging in proactive actions will be positively or negatively viewed by others. Individuals' anticipation of, or concern over, their proactive behaviors being viewed negatively can engender fear and anxiety, which are major deterrents to engaging in proactivity (Anseel et al., 2015; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker et al., 2010). Because perceived proactivity permission indicates that employees have permission to act proactively and that such actions are acceptable, perceived permission will likely reduce negative and psychological states and increase employees' optimism regarding engaging in proactive behaviors. In line with this reasoning and theorizing, previous research found that employees tended to avoid engaging in proactively seeking feedback when they believe it was socially costly (Park et al., 2007; VandeWalle et al., 2000). I expect that proactivity permission beliefs reduce perceived social costs associated with proactive actions. Therefore, perceived proactivity permissions are likely to be positively related to proactive behaviors.

**Hypothesis 12:** Employees' perceived proactivity permission is positively related to employees' proactive behaviors.

### **3.8.2 The Moderation Effect of Supervisors' Proactivity Permission Judgement on the Relationship Between Proactivity and Managerial Endorsement**

Proactive employees tend to demonstrate better work performance by dealing with environmental demands and obstacles more actively (Griffin et al., 2007) and coming up with new methods for enhancing workplace conditions (Parker et al., 2016). However, for these benefits to materialize, employees need support from others – especially from their supervisors. Because proactive actions at work are encouraged by the management yet lack formal resources. Especially, when employees attempt to proactively change something at work or voice their opinion about an important work matter, they need their supervisors supports because they typically have both tangible and intangible resources available – are necessary for the proactive behaviors to have an impact (Yukl & Becker, 2012). Employees who engage in such behaviors require managerial endorsement, which refers to the degree to which leaders endorse, accept, or value their subordinates' proactivity (Burriss, 2012). Previous research on proactivity has shown that not all proactive attempts are equally supported and endorsed by supervisors (T. M. Howell et al., 2015; Sijbom et al., 2015a; Urbach & Fay, 2020). In particular, studies have found that the relationship between proactive behaviors and managerial endorsement is moderated by supervisors' judgments (e.g., Lam et al., 2019). In line with these previous studies, I suggest that the relationship between employee proactivity and managerial endorsement will be moderated by the degree to which supervisors judge employees' proactivity permissions positively.

Supervisors fulfill several roles and functions in the workplace. One of the supervisors' functions is to monitor whether employees' actions are aligned with normative organizational regulations (Kurke & Aldrich, 1983; Mintzberg, 1973). With that, supervisors decide to support actions that align with the organizational goals and regulations and engage in punitive actions to

correct behaviors misaligned with the organizational goals and regulations. However, as stated in the previous sections, proactive actions are discretionary behaviors that are not explicitly prescribed by roles or rules (Grant & Ashford, 2008). These behaviors are particularly susceptible to supervisors' social construction processes when deciding to support or punish such behaviors (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Thus, it makes the supervisor's judgment of employee proactivity permission more important. It is likely that when supervisors judge employees who have less permission to act proactively, they are less likely to be less supportive, rather than more, towards employee's proactivity. When a supervisor endorses actions at work, they signal other organizational actors of the potential implicit acceptance of similar behaviors from them as well. By approving the behavior of employees with less proactivity permission, managers risk creating the possibility that other organizational actors will exhibit similar impermissible behaviors in the future (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Because supervisors do not want to reinforce behaviors that they consider to be normatively unacceptable, they are likely less supportive of employees' proactivity when they have negatively judged employee's proactivity permission.

In addition, endorsing proactive behaviors viewed as unacceptable may be threatening for supervisors. Supervisors are also accountable and responsible for their actions. Endorsing and supporting an employee's behavior indicates that a supervisor is willing to take responsibility for such actions. Because supporting a not permissible behavior would likely jeopardize a supervisor's situation, it is likely that when supervisors have a negative proactivity permission judgment, they are less, rather than more, supportive towards proactive behaviors. Based on the rationale above, I argue that:

**Hypothesis 13:** The relationship between an employee's proactive behaviors and managerial endorsement is moderated by supervisors' judgments of the employee's proactivity permission, such that the relationship will be stronger when the supervisor's judgment of the employee's proactivity permission is higher.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODS

#### 4.1 Method Overview

As discussed by Edmonson and McManus (2007), a nascent theory, rather than a mature one, requires some degree of exploration, creativity of inductive reasoning, adaptability of the empirical landscape, and a great degree of integration of these pieces. The richness and depth of a qualitative study would be a very appropriate choice for a nascent theory. However, given that the permission concept has a long academic history in various literatures (Beller, 2010), accompanied with solid theoretical frameworks, these permission theories provide hypothesis deductive predictions that can be empirically tested with strong survey design. In line with this reasoning, using four independent samples, I conducted a series of survey studies in this dissertation.

Since there is no established measure to assess proactivity permission, in Study 1 to Study 3, I created and validated a measure of proactivity permission, following Hinkin's (1998) measure development guideline. In Study 4, I used the proactivity permission measure that I developed in Study 1 to Study 3 to test my proposed hypotheses. Study 4 utilizes multiple waves of data (*Time 1 (T1) to Time 3 (T3)*) from multiple raters and from multiple groups. This design allows me to mitigate the likelihood of common method variance biasing the parameters of the model (Podsakoff et al., 2003) and allows me to model the variance in proactivity permission that might exist across different organizational settings, thus increasing the external validity of the study.

Apart from my other hypotheses, I theorized that organizational formalization, rule consistency, and normative tightness-looseness would have contextual effects on employee proactivity permission and supervisor proactivity permission judgment. To properly model these

effects, I collected data from supervisors and group members who work under the same supervision. Due to this nested nature of the data, I tested my hypotheses with a multilevel perspective (Hox et al., 2017). In the following sections, I explain the details of each study.

#### **4.2 Study 1: Content Validity**

Based on the definition of proactivity permission, I deductively generated nine items to assess proactivity permission. During the development of the items, I used comparable and previously validated measures as a guide, such as Griffin et al.'s (2007) measure of proactive behaviors. The wording of the proactivity permission items was discussed with organizational scholars who have expertise in the field. Furthermore, I conducted three focus group interviews with managers from a variety of organizations to determine whether these items were representative of organizational realities. The nine items are presented in Appendix I.

In Study 1, I followed the recommendations of Colquitt et al (2019). I contacted 28 expert raters; a total of 18 expert raters participated in this study, all of whom are faculty or doctoral students in the fields of organizational behavior, industrial/organizational psychology, and business administration. Prior to requesting ratings from raters, I ensured that they had a firm grasp on the assignment. To accomplish this, they engaged in practice rating on an example scale on the survey's first page, which was adapted from Colquitt et al.'s (2019) study. Upon completing the practice, they provided their ratings on subsequent pages. Expert raters were given nine items of proactivity permission (focal construct), along with four items of Karasek's (1979) perceived work autonomy scale as a non-focal construct, and seven items of Edmondson's (1999) psychological safety scale as another non-focal construct. Proactivity permission items were compared to these two related constructs to determine the definitional content correspondence and distinctiveness of proactivity permission from work autonomy and psychological safety. After reading the definitions of each concept, a random list of the items

was presented to expert raters, and raters were asked to determine how closely each item corresponds to the provided definition (1 = *Item does an extremely bad job measuring the concept provided above* to 7 = *Item does an extremely good job measuring the concept provided above*). Raters repeated this task for each of the three randomly presented measures.

#### 4.2.1 Analysis and Results

The content validity results are presented in Table 2. In a series of analyses of variance (ANOVA) using Duncan's Multiple Range Test (Hinkin & Tracey, 1999), I compared mean scores of items on each of the three constructs (i.e., proactivity permission as the focal construct, and work autonomy and psychological safety as the non-focal constructs). In accordance with previous studies, items were retained if they had a statistically higher mean score on the focal construct. As such, each proactivity permission item was retained (see Table 2, column 1). In addition to the ANOVA test, it is also vital to determine how accurately each item reflects the defined concept when we consider the maximum score an item can get, as well as how distinct these items are relative to other non-focal items (Colquitt et al., 2019). Accordingly, I calculated the Hinkin-Tracey correspondence (*htc*) index, which is defined as the degree to which an item rating corresponds to a construct definition relative to the maximum score an item can get (Colquitt et al., 2019). For the calculation of the *htc*, I divided the mean correspondence scores by 7 (i.e., the maximum score an item can get) *htc* ranges from 0 to 1; larger numbers indicate a higher degree of correspondence. The mean *htc* index for the proactivity permission items was .93 (*SD* = .01), which is suggestive of “very strong” definitional correspondence.

In the final step, I evaluated the distinctiveness of the proactivity permission measure items using the Hinkin-Tracey distinctiveness (*htd*) index. This index indicates how well the items in the measure represent the focal construct, as relative to non-focal items. For the

calculation of the *htd*, I subtracted the mean correspondence scores of the focal construct from the mean correspondence scores of the non-focal constructs, then divided it by the maximum score an item can get in the scale minus one. *htd* ranges from -1 to 1; a higher value indicates a higher degree of definitional uniqueness and distinctiveness. Colquitt et al. (2019) recommend a .48 *htd* value or higher to be regarded as a strong indicator of definitional uniqueness. The *htd* index for the proactivity permission items ranged from .51 to .69 ( $M = .62$ ,  $SD = .06$ ), which provides strong support for definitional distinctiveness. In conclusion, these results provide support for the content validity of the proactivity permission scale.

**Table 2. Study 1: Proactivity Permission Content Validity Assessment**

Item	Proactivity Permission		Autonomy		Psychological Safety		<i>htc</i>	<i>htd</i>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Proactivity Permission 1	<b>6.39</b>	.92	4.33	2.35	2.33	1.91	.91	.51
Proactivity Permission 2	<b>6.61</b>	.78	3.56	2.06	2.56	2.01	.94	.59
Proactivity Permission 3	<b>6.39</b>	.61	4.28	2.14	2.22	1.73	.91	.52
Proactivity Permission 4	<b>6.50</b>	.62	2.78	1.63	2.39	1.79	.93	.65
Proactivity Permission 5	<b>6.67</b>	.49	3.17	2.07	2.33	1.75	.95	.65
Proactivity Permission 6	<b>6.61</b>	.78	3.28	2.22	2.22	1.73	.94	.64
Proactivity Permission 7	<b>6.56</b>	.62	3.17	2.01	2.28	1.71	.94	.64
Proactivity Permission 8	<b>6.72</b>	.57	2.89	1.91	2.28	1.56	.96	.69
Proactivity Permission 9	<b>6.61</b>	.78	2.61	1.79	2.28	1.87	.94	.69

Note.  $n = 18$ . Boldface indicates a significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) mean score. *htc* = Hinkin-Tracey Correspondence Index; *htd* = Hinkin-Tracey Distinctiveness Index.

### 4.3 Study 2: Factor Structure of Proactivity Permission

#### 4.3.1 Sample and Procedure

In Study 2, I refined and determined the simple structure of the measure in an attempt to create a parsimonious measure, using an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with an independent sample representing the population of interest. To accomplish this, I recruited 216 individuals

through Amazon's Mechanical Turk service (MTurk). MTurk was the ideal platform for conducting this research for a number of reasons. MTurk enables researchers to gather data from diverse sets of individuals, increasing generalizability across various regions and organizational levels (Buhrmester et al., 2016). In addition, past proactivity and scale development studies have shown that for recruiting participants and obtaining high-quality data, MTurk was a suitable instrument (e.g., M. E. Brown et al., 2005; Lam et al., 2019; E. J. McClean et al., 2018). In the present study, to represent the target population and to ensure data quality, I restricted participation to those over 18 years of age who spoke English, currently worked in an organization, and had a rating of 98% or higher on previous MTurk assignments. Each participant received a reward of \$2.50 for participating in the study.

The sample was 64% female and 78% Caucasian, with an average age of 35.68 years ( $SD = 11.23$ ) and an average tenure with their organization of 5.21 years ( $SD = 4.35$ ). Participants had a diverse range of backgrounds including accountants, project managers, and teachers. Participants were prompted to consider their current workplace and work situation and rate the degree to which they agreed (from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*) with the nine items developed in Study 1. The Temple University Institutional Review Board (IRB) authorized this research (approval number 28763).

#### **4.3.2 Analysis and Results**

A principal axis factor analysis with ProMax rotation was used to examine the factor structure of the proactivity permission measure. Table 3 shows the EFA results. The items were retained if the item loading exceeded .40 and the communality exceeded .60 (MacCallum et al., 2001). As expected, among the nine items, one factor emerged that accounted for 70.33 % of the variation, with each item loading exceeding .79. The minimum communality was .62, and the

coefficient alpha ( $\alpha$ ) for the nine-item scale was .95. As such, all nine items were retained and included in Study 3.

**Table 3. Study 2: Exploratory Factor Analyses Results**

Item	EFA	
	Factor Loading	Communality
Proactivity Permission 1	.83	.69
Proactivity Permission 2	.82	.67
Proactivity Permission 3	.79	.62
Proactivity Permission 4	.82	.67
Proactivity Permission 5	.81	.65
Proactivity Permission 6	.84	.70
Proactivity Permission 7	.83	.69
Proactivity Permission 8	.81	.65
Proactivity Permission 9	.81	.65
Eigenvalue	6.33	
% of variance explained	70.30	
Cumulative % of variance explained	70.30	
Coefficient alpha ( $\alpha$ )	.95	

*Note.*  $n = 216$ . I conducted EFA (i.e., exploratory factor analyses) with principal axis factor analyses and promax rotation, without predned factors to be extracted. Items that exceeded .40 loading and .60 communality were retained..

#### **4.4 Study 3: Psychometrics Properties of Proactivity Permission**

##### **4.4.1 Sample and Procedure**

Similar to Study 2, Amazon's MTurk was used to recruit new participants ( $n = 216$ ). Thirty-three percent of the sample was male, 73.15% identified as Caucasian and the average age was 32.03 years old ( $SD = 7.06$ ). In exchange for participating in this study, participants received \$2.50. When providing ratings for the items, participants were asked to consider their current work environment. Temple University's IRB approved the study (approval number 28763).

To examine the proactivity permission measure's convergent and discriminant validity, I assessed various forms of proactivity at work, ranging from employee voice to problem prevention (Griffen et al., 2007; Parker et al., 2010), as well as well-established antecedents of proactivity, such as personality factors (i.e., proactivity personality), motivational factors (i.e., role-breadth self-efficacy, intrinsic and prosocial motivations) and contextual factors (i.e., work autonomy, psychological safety, and perceived psychological empowerment at work).

#### 4.4.2 Measures

Unless otherwise noted, items were rated on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*. Complete details for all Study 3 measures are provided in Appendix IV.

**Proactivity permission** was measured with the nine items retained in Study 2 ( $\alpha = .95$ ).

**Proactive behaviors** were assessed with the 9-item proactive behaviors measure from Griffin et al. (2007). Participants were asked how frequently in the past month they carried out the behavior indicated by each item, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *A great deal*. Sample items are, "I made changes to the way my core tasks are done" and "I developed new and improved methods to help my work unit perform better" ( $\alpha = .93$ ).

**Voice behaviors** were assessed with the 4-item measure from Parker and Collins (2010). Participants were asked how frequently in the past month they carried out the behavior indicated by each item, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *A great deal*. A sample item is, "I communicated my views about work issues to others in the workplace, even if my views differed and others disagreed with me" ( $\alpha = .84$ ).

**Taking charge behaviors** were assessed with the 3-item measure from Parker and Collins (2010). Participants were asked how frequently in the past month they carried out the

behavior indicated by each item, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *A great deal*. A sample item is, “I tried to bring about improved procedures in my workplace” ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

**Personal innovation behaviors** were assessed with the 3-item measure from Parker and Collins (2010). Participants were asked how frequently in the past month they carried out the behavior indicated by each item, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *A great deal*. A sample item is, “I searched out new techniques, technologies and/or product ideas” ( $\alpha = .85$ ).

**Problem prevention behaviors** were assessed with the 3-item measure from Parker and Collins (2010). Participants were asked how frequently in the past month they carried out the behavior indicated by each item, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Not at all* to 7 = *A great deal*. A sample item is, “I spent time planning how to prevent reoccurring problems” ( $\alpha = .80$ ).

**Perceived work autonomy** was assessed with the 4-item measure from Karasek (1979). Respondents used a 7-point scale from 1 = *Never* and 7 = *Extremely Often* to rate each item. Sample items are “To what extent do you have the freedom to decide how to organize your work?” and “To what extent do you have control over what happens on your job?” ( $\alpha = .76$ ).

**Psychological empowerment** was measured using a 12-item measure (Spreitzer, 1995) designed to evaluate employees’ sense of psychological empowerment. This measure consists of four subscales: self-determination (e.g., “I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job”), meaning (e.g., “My job activities are personally meaningful to me”), impact (e.g., “My impact on what happens in my department is large”), and competence (e.g., “I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities”) ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

**Perceived psychological safety** was assessed using Edmondson's (1999) 7-item measure designated to assess team psychological safety. The wordings of the items were changed to reflect the overall workplace rather than a specific workgroup or team. Sample items include, “If

you make a mistake in this [workplace], it is often held against you” (reverse coded) and “People [at this workplace] are able to bring up problems and tough issues” ( $\alpha = .80$ ).

**Proactive personality** was measured with the 6-item version of Bateman and Crant’s (1993) 17-item measure from Claes, Beheydt, and Lemmens (2005). Sample items are, “If I see something I don’t like, I fix it” and “No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen” ( $\alpha = .83$ ).

**Role breadth self-efficacy** was measured with the 10-item measure from Parker (1998). Participants were asked to rate how confident they would feel if they were asked to carry out each task (1 = *Not at all confident* to 7 = *Very confident*). Sample items are, “How confident would you feel presenting information to a group of colleagues?” and “How confident would you feel making suggestions to management about ways to improve the working of your section?” ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

**Prosocial and intrinsic motivation** were assessed with the self-regulation measure developed by Ryan and Connell (1989) and adapted by Grant (2008). Participants were prompted with an initial question, “Why are you motivated to do your work?” and asked to rate statements about intrinsic and prosocial motivation. A sample statement for prosocial motivation is, “Because I want to help others through my work,” and a sample statement for intrinsic motivation is, “Because it’s fun.” ( $\alpha$  for prosocial motivation = .80;  $\alpha$  for intrinsic motivation = .83)

**Activated positive affectivity** was assessed with ten items from the PANAS (Watson & Clark, 1999). Using a 7-point scale (1 = *Slightly or Not at all* to 7 = *Extremely*), participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt each of the emotions listed over the last month

(i.e., attentive, active, alert, enthusiastic, determined, excited, proud, interested, inspired, strong) ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

#### 4.4.3 Convergent and Discriminant Validity Analyses and Results

I examined the discriminant validity of the proactivity permission measure using a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) in Mplus version 7 (D. T. Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Muthén & Muthén, 2012). The hypothesized four-factor model for proactivity permission, work autonomy, psychological safety, and psychological empowerment was compared against a set of three-factor models in which proactivity permission items were allowed to load onto a factor with items from one of the other constructs. The comparative fit index (CFI), the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI), the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR), and the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA; Kline, 2015) were used to assess model fit. As shown in Table 4, the hypothesized four-factor model fit the data reasonably well ( $\chi^2(458) = 975.93$ , CFI = .86, TLI = .85, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .07). However, some of the fit measures were lower than the typical cut-off standards (Hu & Bentler, 1999). When I examined the factor loadings, I noticed that the reverse-coded items of the psychological safety measure had unsatisfactory factor loadings onto their factors. I examined the effect of dropping these items from the models and ran the entire set of analyses without them in an *ad hoc* manner. The series of CFAs without the reverse-coded psychological safety items are shown in Table 5. As shown in Table 5, the hypothesized four-factor model provided significantly better fit measures for the data ( $\chi^2(344) = 684.66$ , CFI = .90, TLI = .89, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05), demonstrating the discriminant validity of proactivity permission measure.

I further tested the discriminant validity of the proactivity permission measure following the suggestions of Hair et al. (2010). In particular, discriminant validity is established if: (a) the

average variance extracted (AVE) score is greater than average squared variance (ASV) and the maximum squared variance (MSV) scores, and (b) the inter-correlations of a particular construct with other constructs are smaller than its square root of the AVE scores (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Rönkkö & Cho, 2022). Table 6 shows that the MSV (.35) and ASV (.22) scores for the proactivity permission measure are less than its AVE value (.67), which indicates an acceptable level of discriminant validity. All square root of AVE scores (.82) were higher than the correlations with other constructs. In addition, at the construct level, proactivity permission was positively related to work autonomy ( $r = .59$ ), psychological safety ( $r = .49$ ), and each of the dimensions of psychological empowerment, namely meaning ( $r = .41$ ), competence ( $r = .37$ ), self-determination ( $r = .40$ ), and impact ( $r = .50$ ). All in all, these findings demonstrate the convergent as well as discriminant validity of the proactivity permission measure, in comparison to similar concepts.

**Table 4. Study 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Results (A)**

Models	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2(df)$
Four-Factor Model: PP, WA, PE, PS	975.93	458	.86	.85	.07	.07	
Three-Factor Model: PP & WA, PE, PS	1154.87	461	.81	.79	.08	.09	178.94 (3) ***
Three-Factor Model: PP & PE, WA, PS	1632.88	461	.68	.65	.11	.13	656.95 (3) ***
Three-Factor Model: PP & PS, WA, PE	1239.18	461	.79	.77	.09	.10	263.25 (3) ***

*Note.*  $n = 216$ . CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual. PP = Proactivity Permission; WA = Work Autonomy; PE = Psychological Empowerment; PS = Psychological Safety. \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Table 5. Study 3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Results (B)**

Models	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2(df)$
Four-Factor Model: PP, WA, PE, PS	684.66	344	.90	.89	.07	.05	
Three-Factor Model: PP & WA, PE, PS	860.77	347	.84	.83	.08	.09	176.11 (3) ***
Three-Factor Model: PP & PE, WA, PS	1330.00	347	.70	.67	.11	.13	645.35 (3) ***
Three-Factor Model: PP & PS, WA, PE	890.43	347	.83	.82	.09	.07	205.77 (3) ***

*Note.*  $n = 216$ . CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual. PP = Proactivity Permission; WA = Work Autonomy; PE = Psychological Empowerment; PS = Psychological Safety.

(B) In this series of analysis, reverse-coded items of the psychological safety measure were not included due to their unsatisfactory factor loadings. \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Table 6. Study 3: Discriminant and Convergent Validity Results**

	Composite Reliability and Variance				Factor Correlation							
	CR	AVE	MSV	ASV	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. Proactivity Permission	.95	.67	.35	.22	<b>(.82)</b>							
2. Work Autonomy	.76	.45	.55	.40	.59	<b>(.67)</b>						
3. PE - Meaning	.79	.56	.65	.43	.41	.70	<b>(.75)</b>					
4. PE - Competence	.71	.45	.50	.32	.37	.50	.65	<b>(.67)</b>				
5. PE - Self-Determination	.77	.52	.59	.42	.40	.67	.75	.71	<b>(.72)</b>			
6. PE - Impact	.75	.50	.65	.49	.50	.74	.81	.69	.77	<b>(.71)</b>		
7. Psychological Safety	.79	.36	.43	.28	.49	.58	.53	.38	.52	.66	<b>(.60)</b>	

*Note.*  $n = 216$ . AVE = Average Variance Extracted; MSV = Maximum Shared Variance; CR = Composite Reliability ( $\omega$ ); PE = Psychological Empowerment. ASV = Average Shared Variance. Factor correlation matrix with  $\sqrt{\text{AVE}}$  on the diagonal.

#### 4.4.4 Incremental Concurrent Validity Analyses and Results

With a series of hierarchical regression analyses on different forms of proactive behaviors, I tested the incremental concurrent validity of proactivity permission, which refers to the extent to which a psychometric measurement of a construct predicts criterion-related outcomes over and above the prediction of the same criterion-related outcomes by other measures (Hunsley & Meyer, 2003).

I first introduced the distal, contextual factors (i.e., work autonomy, psychosocial empowerment, psychological safety) in predicting proactive behavior into all of the regression models. I then added proximal personality (i.e., proactive personality), and motivational (i.e., role-breadth self-efficacy, prosocial and intrinsic motivation, and positive affectivity) factors to the model in the second step. I entered proactivity permission as the third and final step (e.g., Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2008). I calculated the changes in the  $R^2$  with an  $F$ -test ( $\Delta R^2$ ) for each step; this indicates how much of the explained variance in the predicted variables can be attributed to the variables added in that step. Table 7 shows the variables' means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations.

The zero-order correlation between proactivity permission and proactive behaviors was significant and positive ( $r = .50, p < .001$ ); similarly, the correlation between proactivity permission and the other types of proactive behaviors were in a similar direction and of a similar magnitude ( $r$  for voice = .49,  $p < .001$ ;  $r$  for taking charge = .49,  $p < .001$ ;  $r$  for personal innovation = .50,  $p < .001$ ;  $r$  for problem prevention = .44,  $p < .001$ ). Proactivity permission showed similar relationships, in magnitude and direction, with the established antecedents of proactivity. The correlations between proactivity permission and the established antecedents of proactivity ranged from  $r = .26$  (activated positive affectivity;  $p < .001$ ) to  $r = .50$  (work

autonomy;  $p < .001$ ). This pattern of relationships provides support for the convergent validity of the proactivity permission measure, and with this pattern of relationship, proactive permission is similar to other antecedents in the nomological network of proactivity.

The results of the hierarchical regression analyses are shown in Tables 8–12. I calculated the incremental variance explained by proactivity permission using the hierarchical regression results. Over and above the other antecedents, proactivity permission was uniquely related to proactive work behaviors ( $b = .11, p < .001; \Delta R^2 = .98, p < .001$ ), employee voice ( $b = .12, p < .001; \Delta R^2 = 1.04, p < .05$ ), personal innovation ( $b = .13, p < .001; \Delta R^2 = 1.07, p < .01$ ), and taking charge ( $b = .12, p < .01; \Delta R^2 = .08, p < .05$ ). However, although the direction of the estimate was in the predicted line, the coefficient estimate for proactivity permission was not significant for problem prevention ( $b = .08, ns; \Delta R^2 = .39, ns$ ). The lack of significance for problem prevention may be explained by the fact that this particular proactive behavior is more likely to be influenced by other antecedents, and, thus, that proactivity permission may be less important for this construct. However, it is also possible that the measurement error associated with the problem prevention construct ( $\alpha = .80$ ) – which is greater than those associated with the other proactive behaviors – reduced the effect of proactivity permission on problem prevention due to a statistical artifact (Schmidt & Hunter, 2015). Taken together, the findings of Study 3 indicate that proactivity permission has acceptable incremental validity and explains significant variance in proactive behaviors beyond the variance explained by other, well-established antecedents.

**Table 7. Study 3: Means, Standard Deviation, and Correlations among Variables**

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Proactivity Permission	5.41	1.17	<b>(.95)</b>													
2. Proactive Behaviors	5.19	1.05	.50	<b>(.93)</b>												
3. Voice	5.18	1.12	.49	.84	<b>(.84)</b>											
4. Taking Charge	5.33	1.22	.45	.86	.81	<b>(.86)</b>										
5. Personal Innovation	5.42	1.15	.50	.87	.80	.84	<b>(.85)</b>									
6. Problem Prevention	5.17	1.15	.44	.82	.82	.84	.78	<b>(.80)</b>								
7. Work Autonomy	5.28	.97	.50	.69	.67	.62	.66	.64	<b>(.76)</b>							
8. PE	5.55	.79	.44	.64	.61	.58	.56	.53	.61	<b>(.89)</b>						
9. Psychological Safety	5.02	.99	.41	.57	.54	.52	.53	.53	.42	.45	<b>(.80)</b>					
10. Proactive Personality	5.47	.85	.38	.64	.59	.59	.57	.59	.50	.69	.55	<b>(.83)</b>				
11. RBSE	5.40	.91	.47	.71	.67	.66	.68	.64	.61	.69	.52	.77	<b>(.90)</b>			
12. Motivation- Intrinsic	5.76	.95	.46	.65	.61	.67	.66	.60	.61	.72	.45	.62	.64	<b>(.83)</b>		
13. Motivation- Prosocial	5.61	.90	.34	.70	.61	.68	.63	.62	.45	.69	.51	.75	.70	.64	<b>(.80)</b>	
14. PA	5.47	1.05	.26	.71	.63	.71	.66	.62	.58	.63	.39	.61	.63	.66	.64	<b>(.90)</b>

*Note.*  $n = 216$ . Coefficient alpha values are in parentheses along the diagonal. Correlations greater than  $|.25|$  are significant at  $p < .01$ . PA= Activated Positive Affectivity; PE = Psychological Empowerment; RBSE = Role Breadth Self-Efficacy.

**Table 8. Study 3: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for Incremental Validity**

	Composite Proactive Behaviors (Griffen et al., 2007)					
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
Intercept	-.53 (.34)		-.91*** (.29)		-1.01*** (.29)	
<b>Contextual Factors</b>						
Work Autonomy	.45*** (.06)	.41*** (.06)	.33*** (.06)	.31*** (.05)	.29*** (.06)	.27*** (.05)
Psychological Empowerment	.34*** (.07)	.26*** (.06)	-.09 (.08)	-.06 (.06)	-.10 (.08)	-.08 (.06)
Psychological Safety	.30*** (.05)	.28*** (.05)	.18*** (.05)	.17*** (.04)	.15*** (.05)	.15*** (.04)
<b>Personality</b>						
Proactive Personality			-.07 (.08)	-.05 (.07)	-.06 (.08)	-.05 (.06)
<b>Motivational Factors</b>						
Role Breadth Self-Efficacy			.16** (.07)	.14** (.07)	.12* (.07)	.11* (.06)
Intrinsic Motivation			.03 (.07)	.03 (.06)	.00 (.07)	.00 (.06)
Prosocial Motivation			.34*** (.07)	.29*** (.06)	.34*** (.07)	.29*** (.06)
Activated Positive Affectivity			.25*** (.05)	.25*** (.05)	.28*** (.05)	.29*** (.06)
<b>Proactivity Permission</b>						
Proactivity Permission					.11*** (.04)	.12*** (.04)
$R^2$	.61	.61	.73	.73	.74	.74
Adjusted $R^2$	.60	.60	.72	.72	.73	.73
$\Delta R^2$				12.21***		.98**

Note.  $n = 216$ . The standard errors from the predicted models are presented with the values in parentheses.

$\beta$  = Standardized regression coefficients;  $b$  = Unstandardized regression coefficients.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

**Table 9. Study 3: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for Incremental Validity**

	Employee Voice					
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
Intercept	-.66*		-.94**		-1.04***	
	(.38)		(.36)		(.36)	
<b>Contextual Factors</b>						
Work Autonomy	.49***	.42***	.37***	.32***	.33***	.29***
	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)
Psychological Empowerment	.33***	.23***	-.01	-.01	-.03	-.02
	(.08)	(.06)	(.10)	(.07)	(.10)	(.07)
Psychological Safety	.29***	.26***	.19***	.17***	.17***	.15***
	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)
<b>Personality</b>						
Proactive Personality			-.06	-.05	-.06	-.04
			(.10)	(.08)	(.10)	(.08)
<b>Motivational Factors</b>						
Role Breadth Self-Efficacy			.23**	.18**	.19**	.15**
			(.09)	(.08)	(.09)	(.08)
Intrinsic Motivation			.04	.04	.01	.01
			(.08)	(.07)	(.08)	(.07)
Prosocial Motivation			.21**	.16**	.21**	.17**
			(.09)	(.07)	(.09)	(.07)
Activated Positive Affectivity			.18***	.17***	.22***	.20***
			(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)
<b>Proactivity Permission</b>						
Proactivity Permission					.12**	.13**
					(.05)	(.05)
$R^2$	.56	.56	.63	.63	.64	.64
Adjusted $R^2$	.60	.56	.61	.61	.61	.62
$\Delta R^2$				6.71***		1.04*

Note.  $n = 216$ . The standard errors from the predicted models are presented with the values in parentheses.

$\beta$  = Standardized regression coefficients;  $b$  = Unstandardized regression coefficients.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

**Table 10. Study 3: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for Incremental Validity**

	Personal Innovation					
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
Intercept	-.27 (.41)		-.69* (.36)		-.80** (.35)	
<b>Contextual Factors</b>						
Work Autonomy	.53*** (.07)	.44*** (.06)	.34*** (.07)	.28*** (.06)	.29*** (.07)	.24*** (.06)
Psychological Empowerment	.23** (.09)	.16** (.06)	-.31*** (.10)	-.21*** (.07)	-.33*** (.10)	-.23*** (.07)
Psychological Safety	.32*** (.06)	.27*** (.05)	.18*** (.06)	.16*** (.05)	.16*** (.06)	.13*** (.05)
<b>Personality</b>						
Proactive Personality			-.16 (.10)	-.12 (.07)	-.16 (.10)	-.11 (.07)
<b>Motivational Factors</b>						
Role Breadth Self-Efficacy			.31*** (.09)	.25*** (.07)	.27*** (.09)	.22*** (.07)
Intrinsic Motivation			.27*** (.08)	.22*** (.07)	.23*** (.08)	.19*** (.07)
Prosocial Motivation			.29*** (.09)	.22*** (.07)	.30*** (.09)	.23*** (.07)
Activated Positive Affectivity			.22*** (.07)	.20*** (.06)	.26*** (.07)	.24*** (.06)
<b>Proactivity Permission</b>						
Proactivity Permission					.13*** (.05)	.14*** (.05)
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.53	.53	.67	.67	.68	.68
Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.60	.52	.52	.65	.65	.66
$\Delta R^2$				14.08***		1.07**

Note. *n* = 216. The standard errors from the predicted models are presented with the values in parentheses.

$\beta$  = Standardized regression coefficients; *b* = Unstandardized regression coefficients.

\*\*\* *p* < .001, \*\* *p* < .01, \* *p* < .05, two-tailed.

**Table 11. Study 3: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for Incremental Validity**

	Taking Charge					
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
Intercept	-.74*		-1.23***		-1.34***	
	(.44)		(.37)		(.37)	
<b><i>Contextual Factors</i></b>						
Work Autonomy	.45***	.36***	.25***	.20***	.21***	.17***
	(.08)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)
Psychological Empowerment	.38***	.25***	-.23**	-.15**	-.25**	-.16**
	(.10)	(.06)	(.11)	(.07)	(.10)	(.07)
Psychological Safety	.32***	.26***	.17***	.14***	.14**	.12**
	(.07)	(.06)	(.06)	(.05)	(.06)	(.05)
<b><i>Personality</i></b>						
Proactive Personality			-.16	-.11	-.16	-.11
			(.10)	(.07)	(.10)	(.07)
<b><i>Motivational Factors</i></b>						
Role Breadth Self-Efficacy			.20**	.15**	.16*	.12*
			(.10)	(.07)	(.10)	(.07)
Intrinsic Motivation			.23***	.18***	.20**	.15**
			(.08)	(.06)	(.08)	(.07)
Prosocial Motivation			.40***	.30***	.41***	.30***
			(.09)	(.07)	(.09)	(.07)
Activated Positive Affectivity			.35***	.31***	.39***	.34***
			(.07)	(.06)	(.07)	(.06)
<b><i>Proactivity Permission</i></b>						
Proactivity Permission					.12**	.12**
					(.05)	(.05)
$R^2$	.50	.50	.67	.67	.68	.68
Adjusted $R^2$	.60	.49	.49	.66	.66	.67
$\Delta R^2$				7.00***		.08*

Note.  $n = 216$ . The standard errors from the predicted models are presented with the values in parentheses.

$\beta$  = Standardized regression coefficients;  $b$  = Unstandardized regression coefficients.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

**Table 12. Study 3: Hierarchical Regression Analysis Results for Incremental Validity**

	Problem Prevention					
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	$\beta$
Intercept	-.29 (.42)		-.77*** (.38)		-.84** (.39)	
<b><i>Contextual Factors</i></b>						
Work Autonomy	.52*** (.07)	.44*** (.06)	.39*** (.07)	.32*** (.06)	.36*** (.08)	.30*** (.06)
Psychological Empowerment	.18** (.09)	.13** (.06)	-.32*** (.11)	-.22*** (.08)	-.33*** (.11)	-.23*** (.08)
Psychological Safety	.34*** (.06)	.29*** (.06)	.19*** (.06)	.16*** (.05)	.18*** (.06)	.15*** (.05)
<b><i>Personality</i></b>						
Proactive Personality			.04 (.11)	.03 (.08)	.05 (.11)	.04 (.08)
<b><i>Motivational Factors</i></b>						
Role Breadth Self-Efficacy			.17* (.10)	.13* (.08)	.15 (.10)	.12 (.08)
Intrinsic Motivation			.15* (.09)	.12* (.07)	.13 (.09)	.11 (.07)
Prosocial Motivation			.29*** (.10)	.23*** (.08)	.30*** (.10)	.23*** (.08)
Activated Positive Affectivity			.19*** (.07)	.18*** (.07)	.22*** (.07)	.20*** (.07)
<b><i>Proactivity Permission</i></b>						
Proactivity Permission					.08 (.05)	.08 (.05)
$R^2$	.50	.50	.61	.61	.61	.61
Adjusted $R^2$	.60	.49	.49	.59	.59	.60
$\Delta R^2$				10.98***		.39

Note.  $n = 216$ . The standard errors from the predicted models are presented with the values in parentheses.

$\beta$  = Standardized regression coefficients;  $b$  = Unstandardized regression coefficients.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

## **4.5 Study 4: Multilevel Path Analysis**

### **4.5.1 Study Overview**

In Study 4, I tested the hypotheses of the dissertation. Hypotheses 9 through 11 concerned the effects of contextual factors – specifically organizational formalization, rule consistency, and normative tightness. To properly model these effects, I gathered data from intact workgroups (i.e., groups of three or more people working toward the same goal under the same supervisor; Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009). Supervisors' data were matched to their own workgroups. Given the nested nature of the data, I utilized a multilevel analytical framework (Hox et al., 2017). To account for possible common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003), time separated data were gathered across three time periods (T1, T2, T3) from multiple raters. This study received approval from Temple University's IRB (approval number 28763).

### **4.5.2 Sample and Procedure**

Study 4 involved 703 employees from 152 teams across 35 diverse organizations located in Turkey. Organizations were of various sizes ranging from small (< 10 employees) to medium-sized (> 100 employees) and represented a wide range of industries such as manufacturing, education, healthcare, and media. Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. To recruit participants, I utilized a snowball sampling strategy with my extended network. Snowball sampling strategies have been successfully utilized in previous studies that include team-level variables (e.g., Gabriel et al., 2018; Sanz-Vergel et al., 2012). First, I contacted managers from the organizations and explained the overall objectives and procedures of the study. Interested managers indicated how many employees were on their teams. Two undergraduate students that I hired and trained to be research assistants for the study

(and who were kept blind to the study's hypotheses) visited the interested managers' organizations and explained the study's overall objectives and procedures to the organizations' employees. Interested employees received a unique identification card with an associated QR code that provided a unique link to the survey platform (in an effort to protect participants' anonymity and reduce possible coercion from their managers).

Individuals were eligible for the study if they spoke Turkish, were 18 years or older, had a full-time job in an organization, and worked in a workgroup. All participants (workgroup members and supervisors) were compensated with a 50 TL (Turkish Lira; equivalent to US\$3-5) gift card. Further, all participants were told that after completing each measurement wave (T1, T2, T3), they would have a chance to win a 500 TL gift card (based on random prize drawings, one 500 TL gift card was awarded to a workgroup member and one was awarded to a supervisor).

I received responses from 703 employees representing 152 groups at Time 1, 637 employees and supervisors from 149 groups at Time 2, and 538 employees and supervisors from 120 groups at Time 3. Overall, the individual-level response rate was 77%, and the team-level response rate was 79%. I created a data set matching employees to their supervisor and checked the within-group response rates to ensure that they were above the suggested criterion of 75% (A. N. Li & Liao, 2014). In the case of missing data, listwise deletion of missing data was used (Allison, 2001). After the matching procedure and within-group response rate check, the final sample size was 501 employees from 112 groups ( $n$  for employees = 389;  $n$  for supervisors = 112). The overall averaged within-team response rate was 98%, which is well above the suggested criterion of 75%. Group sizes ranged from three to ten members ( $M = 5.22$ ,  $SD = 1.84$ ). The average age of participants was 30.55 years ( $SD = 6.04$ ), 66% of participants were

male, the average numbers of years of work experience was 9.91 ( $SD = 7.02$ ), and the average organizational tenure was 2.93 years ( $SD = 2.44$ ). The final sample consisted of a variety of different types of workgroups, including technical assistance, customer service, finance, news services, teachers, industrial design, and nursing. By gathering data from various workgroups across multiple organizations, I captured sufficient group-level variation across different settings, thereby contributing to the external validity of this research.

### 4.5.3 Power Analysis

I determined the minimum sample size that satisfies the required statistical power of .80. I ran a simulation analysis with Mplus 7, following the procedure outlined by Muthén and Muthén (2002). First, I defined the population-level model with medium effect size estimates. To model the nested data structure, I used random effect specifications with Mplus. Supervisor personality characteristics, organizational formalization, rule consistency, and normative tightness are modeled at the group-level (Level-2) with an average interclass correlation (ICC) of .40 to .80, while the rest of the variables were modeled at the between-level (Level-1) with an average ICC of .01 to .08 (e.g., dispositional tendencies of employees). I repeatedly sampled random independent observations from a multivariate normal distribution with 1,000 iterations, which satisfies the nested structure of the data. At the alpha level of .05, I tested the proposed model using a multilevel random path model for each randomly sampled observation (i.e., 1,000 times) (Preacher et al., 2010) with the MplusAutomation package in R (Hallquist & Wiley, 2018). For a group size of 75, the simulation results yielded an average of .80 empirical power ( $N_{iteration} = 1,000$ ,  $M = .80$ ,  $SD = .07$ ), with acceptable absolute fit indices at the between- and within-group-levels ( $M_{SRMR-Within} = .05$ ;  $M_{SRMR-Between} = .08$ ; see Table 13 for the simulation results). These results indicate that a sample of approximately 270 individuals from 75

workgroups or more provides enough power to test the proposed multilevel path analytical model with a medium effect size. In line with the previous studies on workgroups and proactivity, the estimated sample size appears reasonable to capture enough statistical power. Prior studies on teams gathered data from 285 individuals from 48 groups (H. W. Lee et al., 2019), 200 individuals from 54 workgroups (Ning Li et al., 2010), and 321 individuals from 46 workgroups (Vidyarthi et al., 2016). Therefore, based on the simulation study and previous research, the current sample size of this dissertation ( $N_{Employee} = 389$ ;  $N_{Group} = 112$ ) might be adequate to detect a moderate effect size of .30 (Cohen, 1988).

**Table 13. Study 4: Monte Carlo Simulation Results of Power Analysis**

	Total Iteration	Mean	SD	Robust Estimates	Skewness	Kurtosis
Group Size	1000	3.50	.06	3.50	-.06	-.03
Sample Size	1000	262.50	4.29	262.52	-.06	-.03
CFI	1000	.97	.04	.97	-1.08	.54
SRMR <sub>Within</sub>	1000	.05	.00	.05	.05	.36
SRMR <sub>Between</sub>	1000	.08	.03	.08	.48	-.24
Empirical Power	1000	.80	.07	.80	-.27	.22

*Note.* The population-level model with medium effect size was specified in Mplus. To model the nested data structure, I used random slope specifications. Based on the model specification, I repeatedly sampled random independent observations from a multivariate normal distribution with 1,000 iterations, which satisfies the nested structure of the data. At the alpha level of .05, I tested the proposed model using a multilevel random path model 1,000 times (Preacher et al., 2010) with the MplusAutomation package in R (Hallquist & Wiley, 2018).

#### 4.5.4 Attrition Analysis

I also examined potential attrition bias and/or omitted observation biases (R. Miller & Hollist, 2007). Using multiple logistic regression, I regressed whether the participants completed all of the surveys (coded as “1” if they had responded to T1 to T3) or dropped out after the initial

survey or were excluded from the final sample (coded as “0” if they had responded only to T1) on the demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, work experience, and tenure). Table 14 shows the attrition bias analysis results. There were no statistically significant differences between those who completed all surveys and those who dropped out after T1 or were excluded from the final sample. Coefficient estimates for age ( $b = .03, ns$ ), gender ( $b = -.16, ns$ ), work experience ( $b = -.01, ns$ ), and tenure ( $b = .00, ns$ ) were all not significant.

**Table 14. Study 4: Attrition Bias Analysis with Multiple Logistic Regression**

Variable	$b$	Adjusted Odds Ratio	SE	z-value
Intercept	.28	1.32	.72	.38
Age	.03	1.02	.03	.92
Gender	-.16	.85	.18	-.89
Work Experience	-.01	.99	.03	-.17
Tenure	.00	1.00	.04	.08
$\chi^2(4)$	4.26			
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	.01			
AIC	814.00			

*Note.*  $n = 703$ . To conduct the attrition bias analysis, a dichotomous dependent variable was created with a value of "1" representing participants who completed all surveys and a value of "0" representing participants who did not complete surveys after Time 1.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

#### 4.5.5 Measures

Unless otherwise specified, all measures were assessed on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*. Appendix IV contains all measures used in Study 4. The surveys were administered in Turkey, so it was necessary that the items were in Turkish. 66% of the measures used in this study had already been translated and validated by Turkish scholars (see Appendix V for measure information). To translate the remaining items that had not previously been translated, I used Brislin's (1970) back-translation method. I

employed two independent professional translators. One translator translated the English items into Turkish, and another translator translated the Turkish items back into English. To ensure that the original meanings of these items were maintained, I carefully examined all translations.

As group-level (Level-2) constructs in this study refer to employees' collectively-shared contextual perceptions, items were reworded with a referent-shift consensus models as needed (Chan, 1998). For each of the Level-2 constructs (organizational rule formalization, rule consistency, normative tightness, and work autonomy as a control variable), I tested whether there was empirical support for aggregating them to the group level (see Table 15). To justify group-level aggregation (LeBreton & Senter, 2008), I rely on the intraclass correlations, ICC(1) and ICC(2). Also presented is the interrater agreement index,  $r_{wg(j)}$ , which examines group members' agreement. Data were collected over three time periods (T1-T3) and from three rating sources (S=Supervisor, E=Employees, and G=Group, including supervisors). Finally, I present the multilevel version of McDonald's omega ( $\omega$ ) (Geldhof et al., 2014), which provides a reliability estimate for scales assessed at Levels 1 and 2.

**Psychological Entitlement (T1-E)** was assessed using the 9-item measure from Campbell et al. (2004). Sample items are, “Things should go my way,” and “If I were on the Titanic, I would deserve to be on the first lifeboat” ( $\alpha = .95$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .96$ ).

**Psychological Reactance (T1-E)** was measured with the 11-item measure from Shen and (2005) based on Hong and Faedda's scale (1996). Sample items include, “When something is prohibited, I usually think, ‘That is exactly what I am going to do’,” “I resist the attempts of others to influence me,” and “Regulations trigger a sense of resistance in me” ( $\alpha = .92$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .94$ ).

**Independent Self-Construal (T1-E)** was measured with the 4-item measure developed by Lu et al. (2014), in alignment with Singelis's (1994) original measure. Sample items are , "I enjoy being unique and different from others in many aspects," "My personal identity is independent of other people," and "I see myself as a very independent person" ( $\alpha = .93$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .93$ ).

**Supervisor Control Need (T1-S)** was measured using the 7-item measure from Gebhardt and Brosschot's (2002) measure, which they developed based on Burger and Cooper (1979). Sample items include, "I prefer a job where I have a lot of control over what I do and when I do it," "I enjoy being able to influence the actions of others," and "When it comes to orders, I would rather give them than receive them" ( $\alpha = .86$ ,  $\omega_{\text{Between}} = .81$ ).

**Supervisor Rule-based Mindset (T1-S)** was evaluated with the 5-item measure developed by Robinson (2012). Example items are "Some rules should never be broken," "If an action is a violation of society's most basic rules it should not be committed, even if it will result in a large amount of good," and "Some rules and laws are universal and are binding no matter the circumstance you find yourself in" ( $\alpha = .94$ ,  $\omega_{\text{Between}} = .94$ ).

**Supervisor Social Dominance (T1-S)** was assessed with the 7-item measure developed by Ho et al. (2015) to examine individuals' dominance orientation. Sample items include, "Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups" and "It is unjust to try to make groups equal" ( $\alpha = .90$ ,  $\omega_{\text{Between}} = .91$ ).

**LMX Quality (T1-S)** was assessed with the 12-item multidimensional LMX measure developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998). Sample items include, "I am impressed with this person's knowledge of his/her job," "I would come to this person's defense if he/she were "attacked" by others," and "This person is the kind of person one would like to have as a friend."

Several studies have used this scale to measure overall LMX quality (e.g., Erdogan, 2007;  $\alpha = .96$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .96$ ).

**Social Status (T1-S)** was assessed with the 3-item measure developed by Flynn and Brockner (2003). Items are “Compared with other employees, how well respected is this person at work?” (1 = *Not respected at all* to 7 = *Respected a great deal*); “Compared with other employees, how valuable are this person’s contributions at work?” (1 = *Not valuable at all* to 7 = *Extremely valuable*); and “Compared with other employees, how much influence does this person exert over decisions at work?” (1 = *Does not affect decisions* to 7 = *Has a great deal of influence*) ( $\alpha = .85$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .85$ ).

**Organizational Formalization (T1-G)** was assessed with the 4-item measure from Schminke et al. (2002). Sample items are, “A ‘rules and procedures’ manual exists and is readily available within this organization,” and “The organization keeps a written record of nearly everyone’s job performance” ( $\alpha = .92$ ,  $\omega_{\text{Between}} = .91$ ,  $\text{ICC}(1) = .82$ ,  $\text{ICC}(2) = .95$ ,  $r_{\text{wg}(j)} = .84$ ).

**Rule Consistency (T1-G)** was assessed with a 7-item measure adapted from Meyer et al.’s (2014) Situational Strength Scale. In Appendix IV shows both the original and the modified items. The wording of the items used for this study reflects deontic rules, while the original items focus on broader organizational processes. Examples of adapted items include, “On this job, all [rules] are highly compatible with each other,” “On this job, [rules and regulations] are generally the same, no matter who provides it,” and “On this job, supervisor instructions match the organization’s official policies and [rules]” ( $\alpha = .80$ ,  $\omega_{\text{Between}} = .89$ ,  $\text{ICC}(1) = .53$ ,  $\text{ICC}(2) = .84$ ,  $r_{\text{wg}(j)} = .94$ ).

**Normative Tightness (T1-G)** was measured by the 6-item measure from Gelfand et al. (2011). The items were reworded to refer to the respondents’ workgroups. Example items

include, “There are many social norms that people are supposed to abide by in my workgroup,” “In my workgroup, if someone acts in an inappropriate way, others will strongly disapprove,” and “People in my workgroup almost always comply with social norms” ( $\alpha = .61$ ,  $\omega_{\text{Between}} = .83$ ,  $\text{ICC}(1) = .64$ ,  $\text{ICC}(2) = .89$ ,  $r_{\text{wg}(j)} = .93$ ).

**Proactivity Permission of Employee (T2-E and S)** was measured with the measure developed in Study 1 to Study 3. Items were presented with a time referent (i.e., in the past month). Both supervisors and subordinates indicated the extent to which they agreed with each of the statements, considering their experience at their workplaces over the past month. For supervisor ratings, the scale was referent shifted (e.g., “This person has permission to proactively change the ways he/she does the tasks”), and the supervisor provided ratings for each of his/her subordinates (proactivity permission rated by employee:  $\alpha = .94$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .93$ ; proactivity permission judged by supervisor:  $\alpha = .92$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .91$ ).

**Proactive Behaviors (T3-S)** were measured with the same measure used in Study 3 from Griffin et al. (2007) ( $\alpha = .96$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .96$ ).

**Managerial Endorsement (T3-S)** was assessed with the same measure used in Study 3 from Burriss (2012). Sample items include, “I supported this person’s proactive behaviors” and “I found this persons’ proactive behaviors valuable.” Supervisors were asked to indicate to the extent to which they agreed with the presented statements, considering their observations of their subordinates at their workplaces over the past month ( $\alpha = .85$ ,  $\omega_{\text{within}} = .83$ ).

**Control measures.** I included several control variables to account for potential alternative explanations to my proposed model. In this dissertation, I argue that proactivity permission influences whether employees engage in proactive behaviors above and beyond other motivational factors. As such, this claim requires the inclusion of proactivity motivational

variables in the statistical model as controls. Based on Parker et al. (2010), I controlled for employee role breadth self-efficacy (Parker, 1998), prosocial and intrinsic motivation (M. C. Bolino & Grant, 2016), and positive affectivity (Watson & Clark, 1994). In addition, because proactive personality generally positively predicts individuals' engagement in proactive behaviors, I also controlled for proactive personality (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Finally, since work autonomy has been demonstrated to be a significant predictor of proactivity (Parker et al., 2010), I also controlled for autonomy. Appendix IV contains the measures used to assess the control variables.

**Table 15. Study 4: Aggregation Statistics of Contextual Variables**

Construct	Within-group variance ( $\sigma^2$ )	Between-group variance ( $\tau^2$ )	% Of between-group variance	ICC(1)	ICC(2)	F-value	$r_{wg(j)}$	Coefficient Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Organizational Formalization	.41	1.74	.81	.82	.95	21.80***	.84	.92
Rule Consistency	.17	.20	.54	.53	.84	6.16***	.94	.80
Normative Tightness	.12	.21	.63	.64	.89	8.94***	.93	.61
Work Autonomy	.60	1.00	.63	.62	.85	6.80***	.53	.97

*Note.* % of between-group variance was computed as  $\tau^2/(\tau^2 + \sigma^2)$  (LeBreton & Senter, 2008). Within-group agreement ( $r_{wg(j)}$ ) was calculated to investigate agreement among group members on a given construct, and the intraclass correlation coefficient, ICC(1), was calculated to determine the amount to which group membership explained members' responses (Bliese, 2000). The ICC(2) coefficient was calculated to determine the reliability of mean rating estimates (Bliese, 2000; LeBreton et al., 2003). Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) denotes internal consistency of a scale. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

#### 4.5.6 Analysis

Due to the nested nature of the data, I performed a multilevel path analysis using a Bayesian estimator with Mplus version 8.7 (Muthén & Muthén, 2012; Preacher et al., 2010). The Bayes estimator produces a non-parametric bootstrap, which can be applied to test stratified and non-independent data while accounting for non-standard distributions (Yuan & MacKinnon, 2009). Furthermore, due to its inherent nature as a full-information method (that is, rather than

aggregated statistics such as correlation/covariance matrices, raw data is used directly to estimate parameters), the Bayes estimator is remarkably robust to random data loss, which provides an additional advantage in cases of missing data (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2010). Additionally, researchers have criticized traditional significance testing, noting that statistical significance tests cannot be interpreted reliably due to often unmet statistical assumptions (Ioannidis, 2005; Schervish, 1996). As such, it would be beneficial to use Bayesian analysis to address these issues since it is more flexible in modeling the structure of complex data and Bayesian estimates are less dependent on the typical assumptions of statistical significance tests (Marin & Robert, 2014).

To determine the discriminant validity of the items, a confirmatory multilevel factor analysis was performed. At the between-group level (Level-2), I modeled contextual factors and supervisor personality factors; at the within-group level (Level-1), I modeled the employee personality factors, LMX quality, and social status . Dependent variables were specified at both levels because I hypothesized the existence of contextual cross-level effects. I group-mean centered the Level-1 predictors and grand-mean centered the Level-2 predictors (Hofmann et al., 2000). Group-mean centering allowed me to evaluate within-group effects while controlling more accurately for between-group variations. This is due to the fact that, statistically, group-mean centering of the Level-1 predictors reduces the issue that higher-level factors (e.g., organizational characteristics) may inflate or deflate construct variability (Hox et al., 2017). All within-group hypothesized relationships were modeled with random slopes, and the effects of the control variables were modeled with fixed slopes in order to reduce the complexity of the model (e.g., Wang et al., 2010). Residuals for the dependent variables were permitted to covary, which

is the default option in Mplus and suggested by researchers (Kline, 2005), as it reduces model misspecifications.

All hypotheses were tested simultaneously. To account for the interactive effect of supervisor proactivity permission judgment on the relationship between proactive behavior and managerial endorsement, I created an interaction term by multiplying the group-mean centered independent variable by the group-mean centered moderator. I created 20,000 bootstrapped replications and used the Bayes estimator to generate 95% non-parametric confidence intervals to probe multilevel moderation (i.e., Credibility Interval; CIs). Interaction terms were plotted at low and high levels of the moderator variable ( $\pm 1$  SD; Cohen et al., 2002).

#### 4.5.7 Results

Table 16 presents the means, standard deviations, reliability estimates, and intercorrelations of the Study 4 variables. Before testing the hypotheses, I ran a multilevel (ML-) confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Table 17 shows the results of the ML-CFA. The 21-factor hypothesized model provided a reasonable fit to the data ( $\chi^2(5616) = 8947.64$ , CFI = .87, RMSEA = .04, SRMR<sub>within</sub> = .05, SRMR<sub>between</sub> = .10). Moreover, the fit was better than a 19-factor model in which the employee and supervisor permission items and psychological entitlement items were allowed to load onto a single factor ( $\chi^2(5641) = 11801.28$ , CFI = .75, RMSEA = .05, SRMR<sub>within</sub> = .13, SRMR<sub>between</sub> = .10; Satorra–Bentler  $\Delta\chi^2(25) = 39.83$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Further, the fit statistics of the hypothesized model were better than an 8-factor model in which all personality items at the within- and between-levels loaded onto a single factor, respective to their levels, all contextual variable items are loaded onto a single factor at between-level, and all relational factors were allowed to load onto a single factor at the within-level ( $\chi^2(5712) = 15235.29$ , CFI = .62, RMSEA = .07, SRMR<sub>within</sub> = .14, SRMR<sub>between</sub> = .20; Satorra–Bentler  $\Delta\chi^2$

(96) = 152.94,  $p < .001$ ), as well as a 2-factor model where all within-level items loaded onto a single factor at the within-level and all between-level items loaded onto a single factor at the between-level ( $\chi^2(5728) = 24703.61$ , CFI = .24, RMSEA = .09, SRMR<sub>within</sub> = .18, SRMR<sub>between</sub> = .18; Satorra–Bentler  $\Delta\chi^2(112) = 178.40$ ,  $p < .001$ ).

The hypothesized model's factor loadings were all significant and within an acceptable range. However, the correlation estimates at *the latent-level* between employee independent self-construal and employee reactance were within the marginal limits for establishing discriminant validity at the within-level (CI %95  $r = [.87, .93]$ ), and the correlation estimates between supervisors' control needs and group-norm tightness were within the marginal limits for establishing discriminant validity at the between-level (CI %95  $r = [.71, .89]$ ). (Rönkkö & Cho, 2022). To further probe for discriminant validity, I utilized a heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) analysis (Henseler et al., 2015). HTMT builds and expands on the conventional multitrait-multimethod paradigm (D. T. Campbell & Fiske, 1959). An HTMT analysis compares the mean correlations of indicators across constructs to the geometric mean of the average correlations of indicators in each construct. This ratio is called the HTMT ratio. When the average item correlations within a concept are considerably stronger than the average item correlations across constructs, with an HTMT score of .85 or below, discriminant validity is established. HTMT has been demonstrated to be a robust and powerful method for testing discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). As shown in Table 18, the results for the HTMT analysis indicate that the value of the HTMT scores for each construct lies below the acceptable range (HTMT < .85), thus supporting the discriminant validity of the model.

The results of the multilevel-path analysis are presented in Table 19, and Table 20 summarizes the overall findings (see also Figure 4). Multilevel estimates are unstandardized. The

first set of hypotheses predicted that employee personality characteristics would be related to their perceptions of proactivity permission. As predicted by Hypothesis 1, psychological entitlement was positively associated with employee proactivity permission ( $\gamma = .47, p < .001$ ). In addition, psychological reactance was positively and significantly related to employee proactivity permission ( $\gamma = .28, p < .001$ ), which supports Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 3 predicted that independent self-construal would be positively related to proactivity permission. In contrast, I found that the relationship between independent self-construal and proactivity permission was significant and *negatively* associated ( $\gamma = -.31, p < .001$ ); thus, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

In terms of supervisor personality, supervisor dominance orientation was found to be significantly and negatively related to supervisor judgments of proactivity permission ( $\gamma = -.10, p < .001$ ), thereby supporting Hypothesis 4. In line with Hypothesis 5, supervisors' rule reasoning was significantly negatively related to supervisors' proactivity permission judgment ( $\gamma = -.06, p < .05$ ), supporting Hypothesis 5. Supervisor control need was predicted to be negatively related to supervisors' judgments of proactivity permission in Hypothesis 6. The relationship between supervisor control need and supervisor judgments of proactivity permission was negative but not significant ( $\gamma = -.10, ns$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was not supported.

Hypotheses 7 and 8 focused on the effects of relational factors on employee proactivity permission and supervisor proactivity permission judgments. Hypothesis 7 predicted that employee social status would be positively related to employee proactivity permission (7a) and supervisor proactivity permission judgements (7b). Neither of these hypotheses were supported by the data. The relationship between social status and employee proactivity permission was positive but not significant ( $\gamma = .01, ns$ ). Similarly, the relationship between social status and

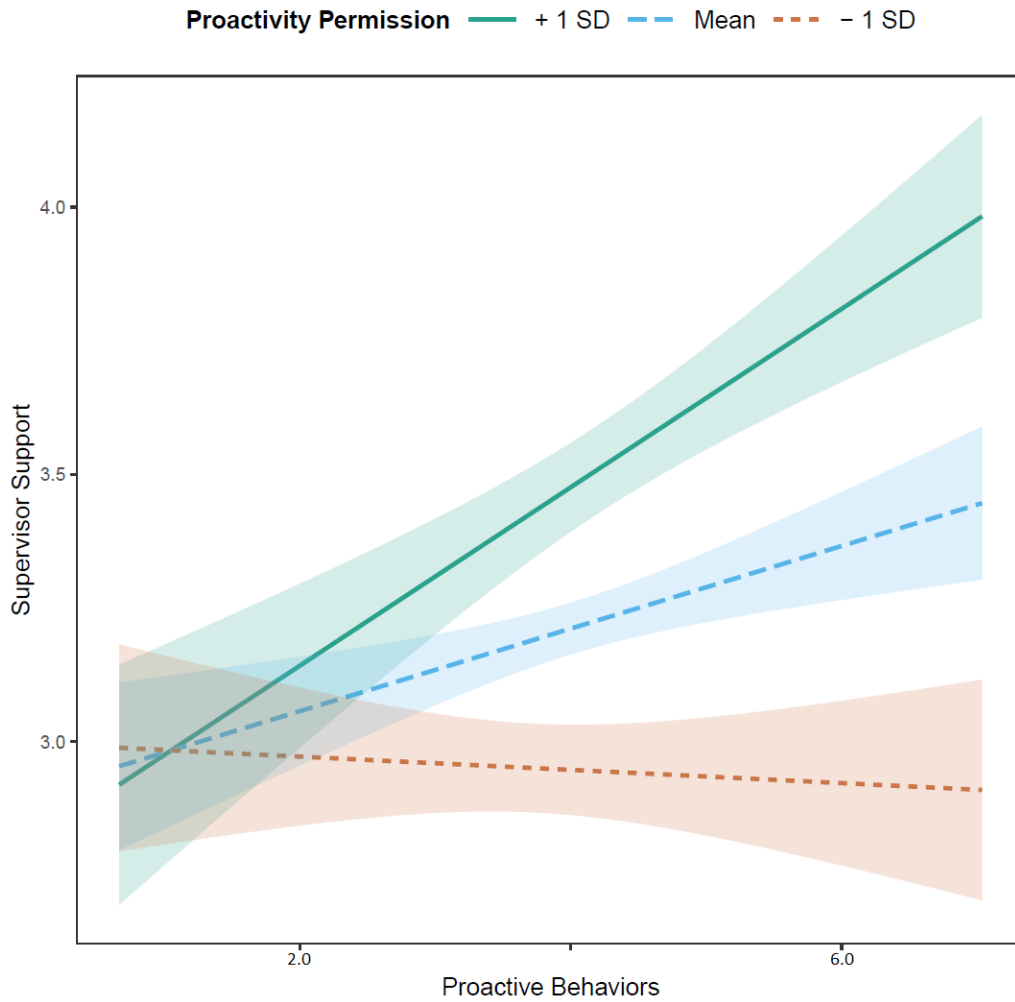
supervisor proactivity permission judgment was also positive but not significant ( $\gamma = .06, ns$ ). According to Hypothesis 8, the quality of LMX would be positively associated with employee proactivity permission (8a) and supervisor judgment of proactivity permission (8b). Consistent with these predictions, I found that LMX quality predicts both employee proactivity permission ( $\gamma = .27, p < .01$ ) and supervisor proactivity permission judgment ( $\gamma = .30, p < .001$ ), which supports Hypothesis 8 (a) and Hypothesis 8 (b).

Hypotheses 9 to 11 proposed that contextual factors influence both employees' and supervisors' proactivity permission assessments. I found no conventionally significant level of support for any hypothesis related to contextual factors ( $p < .05$ ). Hypothesis 9 predicted that organizational formalization would have a negative impact on employee proactivity permission (9a) and supervisor proactivity permission judgments (9b). Results showed that employee proactivity permission is negatively related to organizational formalization at a marginally significant level ( $\gamma = -.06, p < .10$ ). Furthermore, the relationship between organizational formalization and supervisor proactivity permission judgment was negative but not significant ( $\gamma = .04, ns$ ). As a result, Hypothesis 9 was not supported at conventionally significant levels. Hypothesis 10 predicted that rule consistency would have a negative impact on employee proactivity permission (9a) and supervisor proactivity permission judgments (9b). The relationships between rule consistency and employee proactivity permission ( $\gamma = -.15, ns$ ) and supervisor proactivity permission judgment ( $\gamma = -.18, ns$ ) were not significant. As a result, Hypothesis 10 was not supported. Hypothesis 11 stated that normative tightness and looseness would have a negative influence on employee proactivity permission and supervisor proactivity permissions judgement. Employee permission is influenced negatively by normative tightness and looseness ( $\gamma = -.24$ ), but this effect is only marginally significant ( $p < .10$ ). Similarly, the

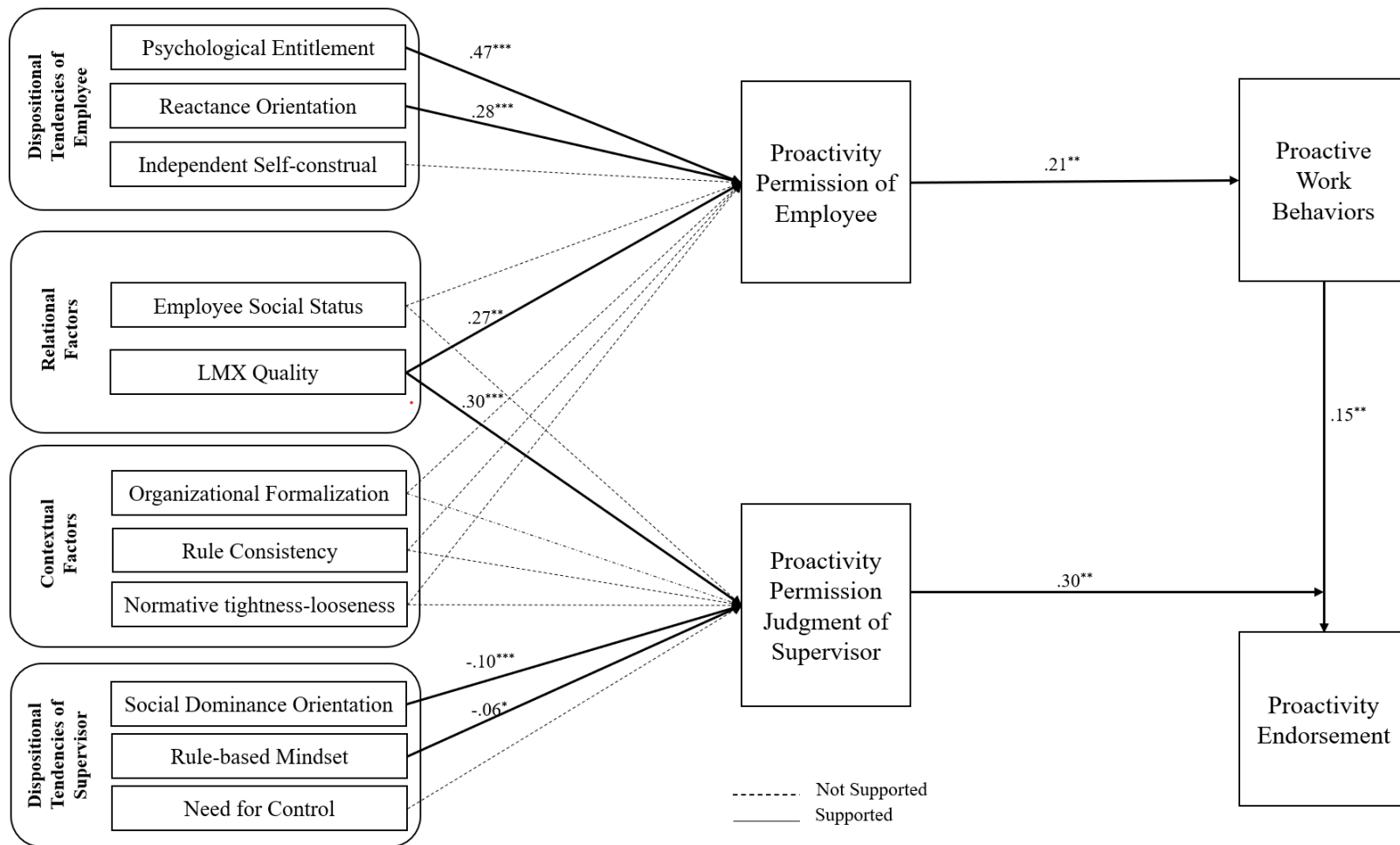
relationship between normative tightness and supervisor proactivity permission judgment was negative but marginally significant ( $\gamma = -.19, p < .10$ ), indicating that Hypothesis 11 was not supported at conventionally significant levels.

Hypothesis 12 predicted that employee proactivity permission would positively influence proactive behavior. In support of Hypothesis 12, there was a positive relationship between employee-rated proactivity permission and supervisor-rated proactive behaviors ( $\gamma = .21, p < .001$ ).

Hypothesis 13 predicted that supervisor proactivity judgement would moderate the relationship between employees' proactive behavior and supervisors' support of employee proactive behavior. Table 19 shows that interaction term was significant ( $\gamma = .30, p < .001$ ). Additionally, a simple slope analysis, illustrated in Figure 3, supported the hypothesized form of the relationship, showing that the relationship between supervisor-rated proactive behavior and supervisor support is stronger when supervisor proactivity permission judgment is high (+1 *SD*;  $\gamma = .24, p < .001$ ) than when it is low (-1 *SD*;  $\gamma = .06, ns$ ) and that the difference in slope was significant ( $\Delta\gamma = 0.17, SD_{Posterior} = .06, p < .001, CI\ 95\% [.06, .29]$ ), thus confirming Hypothesis 13.



**Figure 3. Study 4: Interaction Plot With 95% Confidence Interval**



**Figure 4. Results of Multilevel Path Analysis**

**Table 16. Study 4: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among Variables**

Variable	<i>M</i> <sub>Within</sub>	<i>SD</i> <sub>Within</sub>	<i>M</i> <sub>Between</sub>	<i>SD</i> <sub>Between</sub>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	
<i>Within-group Variables</i>																														
1. Managerial endorsement (T3-S)	3.24	.71	3.26	.44	<b>(.85)</b>	.63	.66	.70	.05	.22	-.09	.21	.54	.69	.37	.74	.73	.42	.17	-.05	.31	-.29	-.09	-.11	-.43	-.50	-.41	.57	-.09	
2. Proactive Behaviors (T3-S)	4.61	.76	4.63	.48	.53	<b>(.96)</b>	.57	.71	-.05	.24	-.10	.18	.40	.61	.22	.66	.60	.47	-.02	.05	.07	-.50	-.19	-.36	-.49	-.37	-.50	.53	-.07	
3. Proactivity Permission (T2-E)	3.86	.83	3.86	.51	.58	.46	<b>(.94)</b>	.79	.26	.36	-.09	.32	.51	.64	.17	.55	.62	.28	-.01	-.03	.07	-.29	.00	-.12	-.45	-.46	-.50	.52	-.06	
4. Proactivity Permission (T2-S)	3.94	.73	3.95	.49	.64	.52	.69	<b>(.92)</b>	.17	.33	-.14	.23	.49	.65	.21	.66	.63	.36	-.07	.07	.07	-.51	-.24	-.38	-.55	-.48	-.58	.52	-.12	
5. Psychological Reactance (T1-E)	3.62	.99	3.59	.51	.16	.10	.40	.21	<b>(.92)</b>	.48	.28	.17	.03	.05	.29	-.01	.12	.21	.02	.03	.04	.02	.06	.00	.11	.21	.17	.04	.12	
6. Psychological Entitlement (T1-E)	4.55	1.02	4.55	.59	.20	.19	.41	.29	.65	<b>(.95)</b>	.44	.17	.18	.22	.32	.16	.38	.36	-.25	-.02	-.10	.02	-.01	.01	-.10	.10	-.03	.28	-.05	
7. Independent Self-Construal (T1-E)	4.98	1.07	4.99	.62	.11	.09	.16	.09	.53	.72	<b>(.93)</b>	.37	.04	-.01	.33	-.11	.14	.17	-.24	-.09	-.02	.39	.28	.06	.20	.39	.39	-.15	-.09	
8. LMX Quality (T1-S)	5.13	.95	5.19	.66	.35	.26	.32	.35	-.02	-.06	.06	<b>(.96)</b>	.49	.26	.34	.33	.25	.14	.09	-.02	.20	.08	.30	-.06	.14	.17	.27	.13	-.23	
9. Social Status (T1-S)	4.85	1.03	4.90	.76	.46	.35	.41	.46	-.04	.04	-.06	.57	<b>(.85)</b>	.54	.18	.65	.61	.16	.11	-.05	.16	-.23	.07	-.02	-.21	-.22	-.22	.61	-.17	
10. Proactive Personality (T2-E)	4.04	.84	4.05	.55	.56	.46	.42	.52	.07	.14	.14	.34	.41	<b>(.90)</b>	.39	.76	.74	.48	.22	.06	.29	-.36	-.08	-.12	-.45	-.30	-.44	.67	-.04	
11. Role-Breadth Self-Efficacy (T2-E)	3.63	.67	3.64	.47	.40	.25	.20	.28	.18	.21	.28	.31	.24	.42	<b>(.91)</b>	.51	.52	.71	.16	-.24	.33	.10	-.04	-.02	.28	.22	.33	.29	-.07	
12. Prosocial Motivation (T2-E)	4.08	.86	4.10	.54	.54	.42	.29	.46	-.23	-.19	-.21	.44	.58	.53	.41	<b>(.86)</b>	.78	.58	.17	-.08	.26	-.35	-.10	-.20	-.24	-.33	-.27	.73	-.12	
13. Intrinsic Motivation (T2-E)	3.97	.96	3.98	.75	.50	.40	.41	.49	.13	.24	.21	.24	.49	.55	.40	.51	<b>(.90)</b>	.58	.04	-.12	.14	-.20	-.13	-.03	-.36	-.32	-.28	.76	-.04	
14. Positive Affectivity (T2-E)	3.81	.79	3.84	.58	.30	.34	.27	.26	.19	.15	.12	.16	.16	.41	.46	.39	.38	<b>(.89)</b>	.15	-.14	.34	-.16	-.21	-.11	-.01	.06	.00	.44	-.12	
15. Age – Year (T1-E)	30.55	6.04	30.64	3.91	.28	.10	.09	.13	-.01	-.14	-.12	.18	.20	.24	.25	.30	.16	.20	-	.18	.61	-.06	-.01	.12	.07	.06	.06	.14	.02	
16. Gender (1 = Male; 0 = Female; T1-E)	.66	.51	.66	.34	.02	.01	-.04	.02	-.02	-.08	-.07	.00	-.01	.00	-.07	.04	-.08	-.08	.20	-	.15	-.14	-.03	-.13	-.23	.10	-.18	-.08	.03	
17. Tenure – Year (T1-E)	2.93	2.44	2.93	1.52	.33	.16	.14	.17	.02	-.02	.04	.20	.21	.32	.36	.30	.17	.34	.68	.16	-	.05	-.06	.09	.05	.14	.03	.12	.06	
<i>Between-group Variables</i>																														
18. Supervisor Control Need (T1-S)	5.78	.58	5.74	.65	-.17	-.32	-.16	-.32	.03	.03	.23	.07	-.20	-.23	.07	-.24	-.16	-.10	-.04	-.07	.03	<b>(.86)</b>	.27	.33	.44	.25	.46	-.21	.18	
19. Supervisor Rule-based Mindset (T1-S)	5.83	1.12	5.85	1.10	-.06	-.07	-.01	-.17	.01	-.01	.17	.29	.07	-.06	-.03	-.07	-.10	-.10	.00	-.04	-.02	.26	<b>(.94)</b>	.03	.39	.10	.26	.03	-.08	
20. Supervisor Social Dominance (T1-S)	4.32	1.15	4.23	1.17	-.04	-.23	-.06	-.24	.00	.01	.01	-.04	.00	-.10	-.03	-.12	.00	-.08	.10	-.04	.07	.33	.01	<b>(.90)</b>	.11	.19	.14	-.02	.17	
21. Normative Tightness (T1-G)	5.37	.49	5.39	.47	-.29	-.29	-.32	-.38	.02	-.07	.10	.09	-.21	-.30	.19	-.16	-.33	.00	.02	-.14	.02	.40	.35	.05	<b>(.61)</b>	.43	.67	-.20	-.10	
22. Organizational Formalization (T1-G)	3.88	1.42	3.81	1.37	-.32	-.20	-.27	-.31	.08	.02	.18	.14	-.18	-.19	.18	-.19	-.26	.06	.05	.08	.10	.25	.09	.13	.44	<b>(.92)</b>	.53	-.28	.14	
23. Rule Consistency (T1-G)	5.44	.49	5.45	.50	-.27	-.31	-.33	-.41	.05	-.03	.21	.19	-.20	-.30	.23	-.19	-.26	.02	.04	-.12	.03	.44	.28	.13	.69	.53	<b>(.80)</b>	-.30	-.09	
24. Work Autonomy (T1-G)	3.84	1.07	3.84	1.11	.32	.32	.31	.34	.03	.13	-.11	.07	.45	.41	.15	.45	.56	.26	.08	-.03	.02	-.27	.02	-.04	-.23	-.26	-.34	<b>(.97)</b>	.01	
25. Group Size	5.22	1.84	4.63	1.48	-.05	-.03	.01	-.05	.07	.01	-.05	-.15	-.11	-.01	-.04	-.07	.00	-.06	.02	.06	.05	.18	-.15	.18	-.17	.22	-.16	.01	-	

*Note.*  $N_{Within} = 389$ ;  $N_{Between} = 112$ . Correlation coefficients below the diagonal represent correlations within groups, while those above the diagonal represent correlations between groups. Correlation scores among within-group and between-group variables were calculated by aggregating within-group scores and correlating them to between-group scores. Cronbach's alpha coefficients ( $\alpha$ ) are boldfaced on the diagonal. Leader-member exchange relationships are abbreviated as LMX. T1 to T3 represents the measurement periods. T1 denotes Time 1, T2 denotes Time 2, and T3 denotes Time 3. (E), (S), and (G) indicate the source of the ratings. Employees are denoted by the letter *E*; supervisors are denoted by the letter *S*; group ratings are denoted by the letter *G*. At the between-group level, correlations greater than |.19| are significant at  $p < .05$ ; correlations greater than |.24| are significant at  $p < .01$ ; correlations greater than |.32| are significant at  $p < .001$ . At within-group level, correlations greater than |.10| are significant at  $p < .05$ ; correlations greater than |.13| are significant at  $p < .01$ ; correlations greater than |.17| are significant at  $p < .001$ . Gender = 1 for Male and 0 for Female.

**Table 17. Study 4: Multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MCFA)**

Model	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR <sub>Within</sub>	SRMR <sub>Between</sub>	Satorra–Bentler $\Delta\chi^2$
21-Factor Hypothesized Model	8947.64	5616	.87	.86	.04	.05	.10	
19-Factor Alternative Model A	11801.28	5641	.75	.74	.05	.13	.10	39.83 (25)*
8-Factor Alternative Model B	15235.29	5712	.62	.61	.07	.14	.20	152.94 (96)***
2-Factor Alternative Model C	24703.61	5728	.24	.22	.09	.18	.18	178.40 (112)***

*Note.*  $n = 373$ . CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; SRMR = standardized root mean square residual. In Alternative Model A, proactivity permission items for employees and supervisors, as well as psychological entitlement items, were all loaded onto a single factor at the within-level, whereas the remaining items were loaded onto their own factors. In Alternative Model B, within-level personality items were loaded onto a single within-level factor, and between-level personality items were loaded onto a single between-level factor. Furthermore, at the within-level, all social status and leader-member exchange items were loaded onto another factor at the within-level, and at the between level, all contextual variable items were loaded onto another factor at the between-level. Finally, in Alternative Model C, all within-level items were loaded onto a single within-level factor, while all between-level items were loaded onto a single between-level factor.

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , two-tailed.

**Table 18. Study 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Analysis & Multilevel Construct Reliability Results**

Variable	Multilevel ( $\omega$ )	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1. Managerial Endorsement	.83 Within	-																			
2. Proactive Behaviors	.96 Within	.58	-																		
3. Proactivity Permission - Supervisor	.91 Within	.73	.54	-																	
4. Proactivity Permission - Employee	.93 Within	.66	.49	.75	-																
5. Psychological Reactance	.94 Within	.17	.12	.22	.43	-															
6. Psychological Entitlement	.96 Within	.22	.20	.30	.44	.68	-														
7. Independent Self-Construal	.93 Within	.12	.10	.10	.17	.58	.77	-													
8. LMX Quality	.96 Within	.40	.27	.37	.34	.03	.06	.06	-												
9. Social Status	.85 Within	.55	.38	.50	.45	.04	.05	.06	.63	-											
10. Supervisor Control Need	.81 Between	.22	.36	.35	.19	.02	.06	.28	.12	.20	-										
11. Supervisor Rule-based Mindset	.94 Between	.06	.02	.17	.01	.01	.00	.20	.30	.10	.28	-									
12. Supervisor Social Dominance	.91 Between	.05	.22	.25	.06	.01	.01	.02	.03	.01	.39	.00	-								
13. Normative Tightness	.83 Between	.31	.33	.44	.34	.05	.10	.15	.13	.29	.55	.42	.11	-							
14. Organizational Formalization	.91 Between	.36	.20	.34	.29	.10	.03	.20	.14	.20	.29	.09	.14	.49	-						
15. Rule Consistency	.89 Between	.31	.31	.43	.34	.08	.02	.24	.20	.22	.53	.29	.14	.72	.56	-					
16. Work Autonomy	.97 Between	.34	.30	.35	.31	.04	.16	.05	.11	.53	.27	.07	.02	.37	.22	.27	-				
17. Proactive Personality	.88 Within	.64	.49	.57	.45	.06	.15	.16	.37	.48	.27	.06	.11	.41	.21	.32	.44	-			
18. Role-Breadth Self-Efficacy	.89 Within	.44	.26	.30	.22	.20	.22	.32	.33	.26	.11	.03	.03	.19	.20	.25	.19	.46	-		
19. Prosocial Motivation	.84 Within	.63	.45	.52	.33	.26	.21	.22	.49	.68	.27	.07	.13	.25	.23	.23	.48	.62	.45	-	
20. Intrinsic Motivation	.82 Within	.58	.41	.54	.46	.15	.27	.24	.28	.57	.17	.08	.00	.42	.29	.27	.59	.63	.44	.58	-
21. Positive Affectivity	.86 Within	.33	.35	.28	.29	.22	.16	.14	.17	.18	.10	.07	.09	.02	.07	.04	.28	.45	.52	.43	.41

*Note.*  $n = 389$ . A heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) analysis was used for the discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015) An HTMT analysis compares the mean correlations of indicators across constructs to the geometric mean of the average correlations of indicators in each construct. This ratio is called the HTMT ratio. When the average item correlations within a concept are considerably stronger than the average item correlations across constructs, with an HTMT score of .85 or lower, discriminant validity is established. Multilevel-composite reliability scores ( $\omega$ ) were computed based on Geldhof et al.'s (2014) formulation.

**Table 19. Study 4: Multilevel Path Analysis Results**

Predictor	Employee Proactivity Permission		Supervisor Proactivity Permission		Proactive Work Behaviors		Supervisor Support	
	$\gamma$	$SD_{Posterior}$	$\gamma$	$SD_{Posterior}$	$\gamma$	$SD_{Posterior}$	$\gamma$	$SD_{Posterior}$
Intercept	.01	.03	.01	.03	.08	.04	.10	.03
<b>Level 1 Predictors</b>								
Proactivity								
Proactive Work Behavior (A)							.15	.05**
Proactivity Permission								
Employee Proactivity Permission					.21	.07**		
Supervisor Proactivity Permission (B)							.14	.05*
Employee Personality								
Psychological Entitlement	.47	.07***			.07	.08	.02	.06
Psychological Reactance	.28	.05***			-.02	.05	.05	.04
Independent Construal	-.31	.07***			.04	.08	.04	.06
Relational Factors								
LMX	.27	.09**	.30	.06***	.09	.08	.20	.06**
Social Status	.01	.08	.06	.06	.01	.07	-.06	.05
<b>Level 2 Predictors</b>								
Contextual Factors								
Rule Formalization	-.06	.03 <sup>†</sup>	-.04	.03	.01	.03	-.10	.03**
Rule Consistency	-.15	.12	-.18	.11	-.07	.10	.07	.10
Normative Tightness	-.24	.11 <sup>†</sup>	-.19	.11 <sup>†</sup>	-.22	.10*	-.22	.10*
Supervisor Personality								
Supervisor Soc Dominance			-.10	.03***	-.11	.03***	.00	.03
Supervisor Rule Reasoning			-.06	.03*	.00	.03	-.02	.03
Supervisor Control Need			-.10	.06	-.15	.06*	-.02	.06
Interaction								
(A) X (B)							.30	.10**
Control								
Work Autonomy	.18	.04***	.16	.03***	.18	.03***	.18	.03***
Proactive Personality	.04	.06	.12	.05*	.08	.06	.11	.05*
Role-Breadth Self-Efficacy	.02	.08	.13	.07 <sup>†</sup>	-.01	.08	.14	.06**
Prosocial Motivation	.15	.06*	-.08	.05	.14	.07*	.18	.05**
Intrinsic Motivation	.03	.06	.10	.05*	.03	.06	-.01	.05
Positive Affectivity	.07	.06	.00	.05	.12	.06 <sup>†</sup>	-.03	.05
Age	.00	.01	.01	.01	.00	.01	.02	.01*
Gender	.02	.08	-.01	.07	-.01	.08	.04	.06
Tenure	.01	.02	.01	.02	.02	.02	.00	.02
Pseudo-R <sup>2</sup>	.51		.43		.37		.57	

Note.  $N_{Within}$  = 389;  $N_{Between}$  = 112.  $SD_{Posterior}$  = Posterior Standard Deviation. Pseudo- $R^2$  for each model was calculated using the formula from Snijders and Bosker (1999). All reported effects are unstandardized. To address possible concerns about unmodeled heterogeneity, the models were tested using Bayes estimator. Gender was coded such that 1 = Male. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*  $p < .05$ , <sup>†</sup>  $p < .10$ , two-tailed.

**Table 20. Study 4: Summary of Results**

Hypothesis	Wording of Hypothesis	Supported (Yes/No)
H1	Employees' psychological entitlement is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.	Yes
H2	Employees' trait reactance is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.	Yes
H3	Employees' independent self-construal is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.	No
H4	Supervisors' social-dominance orientation is negatively related to their judgments about employees' proactivity permission.	Yes
H5	Supervisors' rule-based mindset is negatively related to their judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.	Yes
H6	Supervisors' desirability for control is negatively related to their judgments of employees' proactivity permission.	No
H7 (A)	Employee social status is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.	No
H7 (B)	Employee social status is positively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.	No
H8 (A)	Leader-member exchange quality is positively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.	Yes
H8 (B)	Leader-member exchange quality is related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.	Yes
H9 (A)	Organizational formalization is negatively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.	No
H9 (B)	Organizational formalization is negatively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.	No
H10 (A)	Rule consistency is negatively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.	No
H10 (B)	Rule consistency is negatively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.	No
H11 (A)	Normative tightness is negatively related to employees' proactivity permission beliefs.	No
H11 (B)	Normative tightness is negatively related to supervisors' judgments of employees' proactivity permissions.	No
H12	Employees' perceived proactivity permission is positively related to employees' proactive behaviors	Yes
H13	The relationship between an employee's proactive behaviors and managerial endorsement is moderated by supervisors' judgments of the employee's proactivity permission, such that the relationship will be stronger when the supervisor's judgment of the employee's proactivity permission is higher.	Yes

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Summary of Findings

Although past research has primarily focused on motivational and contextual factors in the prediction of proactive behavior, this dissertation investigates a phenomenon that has been largely overlooked within the workplace: the influence of employees' perceptions of the extent to which they have permission to engage in proactivity. I draw from the cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, and deontic logic literatures to identify three primary mechanisms that may shape proactivity permission of employees and proactivity permission judgment of supervisors as well as the influence of these beliefs on employee proactivity and supervisor support behaviors. The three groups of mechanisms identified in this study are (1) personality characteristics of employees and supervisors, (2) employee-supervisor relational factors, and (3) contextual factors. Utilizing a multilevel framework to examine the proposed hypotheses across various organizational contexts, this dissertation provides important contributions to the fields of management and organizational theory as well as valuable recommendations for managers.

Overall, this dissertation's findings reveal that personality characteristics have a crucial influence on proactivity permission of employees and proactivity permission judgment of supervisors. Supporting my predictions, employees' psychological entitlement and psychological reactance were both positively associated with their proactive permission beliefs. Contrary to my hypothesis, employee independent self-construal is not positively correlated with employee proactivity permission. Rather – and intriguingly – there is a strong negative association between independent self-construal and proactivity permission.

Turning to supervisors, I found that those with a strong social dominance orientation and a strong rule-based reasoning mindset tend to believe their subordinates to have less proactivity

permission. However, supervisor control needs do not significantly predict supervisor proactivity permission judgments. These findings indicate that supervisors' need for control may be less critical than other personality variables in predicting how managers view whether a subordinate have permission to act proactively.

Considering relational factors, I hypothesized that both social status and LMX quality would positively predict employee proactivity permission and supervisor proactivity permission judgments. As expected, LMX quality influences the perception of proactivity permission for both supervisors and employees. Employees who have a strong leader-member exchange relationship with their supervisor feel they have greater permission to act proactively. Similarly, supervisors judge employee proactivity permission more favorably when they have developed a strong leader-member exchange relationship. However, social status is not significantly associated with proactivity permission beliefs and judgments.

In terms of contextual factors, the findings are mostly muted. No evidence was found to support the predictions about organizational formalization, rule consistency, or normative tightness at the conventional statistically significant level ( $p < .05$ ). These contextual factors were hypothesized to have adverse effects on employee proactivity permission and supervisor proactivity permission judgments. Although these relationships were in the expected direction, they were not significant.

The findings depict a much clearer picture when we look at the consequences of proactivity permission. I argued that employees who believe they have permission to act proactively would tend to engage in proactive actions more frequently. As expected, the relationship between employee rated-proactivity permission and supervisor-rated employee proactive behavior was positive and significant (over and above the effect of other well-

established antecedents such as work autonomy, proactive personality, role-breadth self-efficacy, and positive affectivity).

Finally, I argued that supervisors' proactivity permission judgments are a crucial ingredient in predicting supervisors' support for employees' proactive actions. Specifically, I predicted that supervisors' proactivity permission judgments would strengthen the relationship between employee proactivity and supervisors' endorsement for employees' proactive actions. Accordingly, I found that when supervisors have higher proactivity permission judgments for an employee, they demonstrate stronger support for this employee's proactivity.

## **5.2 Theoretical Implications**

First, this study provides a detailed conceptualization of the proactivity permission construct and demonstrates its predictive utility for employee proactivity, as rated by employees (Study 3) and supervisors (Study 4). In contrast to the more widely researched motivational states framework (e.g., Parker et al., 2010), the current dissertation provides a new perspective on employee proactivity and illustrates how one's beliefs about permission to act proactively may impact one's proactive behavior. Using concepts from cognitive and developmental psychology as well as those from deontic logic (Beller, 2010; Cummins, 1990; Hilpinen, 2017), I deductively derived the prediction that proactive permission beliefs play a role in proactive behaviors. This study's findings confirm the role of proactivity permission for both employee proactivity and supervisor support for employee proactivity. Findings from this dissertation shed light on previous qualitative studies (e.g., Hughes, 2012; Vough et al., 2017) and anecdotal evidence, which has hinted that normative regulations might play an important role in the proactivity process (e.g., Dutton et al., 1997, 2001; Shin & Kim, 2015). As such, proactivity permission emerges as an important factor that influences employee proactivity at work as well as the consequences of their proactive actions.

Further, this dissertation sheds light on the proactivity paradox (Campbell, 2000) and advances our understanding of how and when proactive acts by employees are seen as favorable or undesirable. We know that supervisors do not consider all employee proactivity to be equally appropriate (Lam et al., 2019; Parker et al., 2019). Contributing to supervisor endorsement literature, this study has shown that supervisor approval and support for employee proactivity depend on supervisor judgment of the acting employee's permission to engage in proactivity. This suggests that the permission judgments of supervisors are critical predictors of the extent to which supervisors support their employees' proactivity. As such, this study advances the scholarly dialogue on this subject with a new theoretical lens based on the deontic reasoning literature (Fiddick, 2004; Wellman & Miller, 2008).

Additionally, my dissertation offers several novel insights and contributions to the broader literature on the antecedents of proactivity permission. Permission has been studied as a concept across a wide variety of literatures, with each literature adding a distinct perspective on the topic. On the one hand, deontic mental model theory emphasizes the significance of an individual's personality in the formation of permission beliefs; on the other hand, dominance theory emphasizes the impact of relational factors. Yet another – the deontic logic literature – highlights the significance of contextual rule systems. This dissertation provides an excellent opportunity to examine the predictions from various theories that influence employees' permission beliefs.

Consistent with the mental model theory (Johnson-Laird, 2011) and dominance theory (Cummins, 1990), personality and relational characteristics appear as proximal antecedents of proactivity permission beliefs. More specifically, employee psychological entitlement and reactance orientation were significant predictors of proactivity permission, demonstrating how

individuals' perceptions of themselves in social contexts and their beliefs about the importance of their personal freedom influence their proactivity permission beliefs. Supervisors' social dominance orientation and rule-based reasoning tend to be inhibitory with regard to their assessment of employees' proactivity permission, while supervisor control needs do not play an important role. By examining how these personality traits influence permission beliefs, this study extends the discussion on the mental model theory of deontic reasoning. Given the heavy reliance on laboratory research design in much of cognitive psychology research (Beller, 2010), this dissertation also contributes to the external validity of the concept of permission. In addition, this study's findings may be helpful to scholars in further developing their understanding of how various personality characteristics influence people's reasoning regarding the normative regulations and its effects on behaviors in real-world settings.

The current study's intriguing finding about the concept of self-construal is worth further discussion: Individuals who believe they are self-sufficient and have prioritized their own interests over the collective report lower levels of proactivity permission beliefs. To help make sense of this result, an idiosyncrasy credit model (Hollander, 2004) may be helpful. According to this model, individuals perceive that they gain credit when they engage in non-conforming behaviors that contribute to the group's wealth. In doing so, these individuals earn respect from other group members, thereby establishing themselves as powerful members of the group. However, since individuals who perceive themselves as more independent tend to have a weaker connection to their group, they may engage in fewer collaborative behaviors to garner attention and approval from others (Marcus & Le, 2013). As a result, they may be less likely to establish a powerful position within the group, thereby leading them and others to believe they lack social credit and permission to act in that context. This speculation might be tested in the

future by examining relationships between independent and dependent self-construal, collaborative behaviors, proactivity permission, and proactive behaviors.

Following the logic of dominance theory (Cummins, 1990), I proposed that a favorable social position (i.e., social status) and a relationship with a “powerful other” (i.e., LMX quality with supervisor) should foster stronger permission beliefs among both parties. While my prediction related to LMX was supported, the effect of employee social status on proactivity permission was not statically significant. This could be explained in two ways. From an empirical standpoint, although LMX quality and social status demonstrated acceptable discriminant validity, they may share a substantial amount of variance. When these two models are combined in a regression analysis, it is possible that no unique variance of social status remains to account for permission beliefs. As such, the effect of social status may be attenuated with the inclusion of LMX quality. From a theoretical standpoint, an employee's social status is determined in part by his or her group members and develops in an organic manner. However, whether an employee with a high or low social status has permission to act proactively is still likely defined by those in leadership who occupy a higher social position and have access to important resources— those powerful who have become the rule makers in that context. In this regard, whether an employee believes he or she has permission to act proactively may not be directly related to social status, but rather to how well this person gets along with other “powerful others” or hold a powerful social position. An implication for dominance theory might be that power might be more critical in permission reasoning among group members than is social status, where power determines the control over the resources, and social status reflects the prestige gained among group members (Hasty & Maner, 2020).

Finally, the findings were not encouraging in terms of deontic logic-based predictions related to contextual factors. According to deontic logic theory (Beller, 2010; Hilpinen, 2017), a rule must be established, consistent, and regulated with formal or informal control mechanisms in order to clarify perceptions of permissible actions at work. When personality and relational factors are considered along with contextual factors as a whole, this study's findings suggest that organizational rule formalization, consistency, and normative tightness may not be influential in shaping employee proactivity permission and supervisor proactivity permission judgment. One reason for this lack of support could be that deontic logic theory is based on a heavily positivistic logical approach (Beller, 2010; Hilpinen, 2017) in which the main assumption is that all social actors are rational and have access to enough information to make social decisions. However, in an actual organizational setting, social actors may have cognitive and informational limitations, even if the rules are clear and consistent (March et al., 2000; Simon, 1976). As a result, instead of taking formal, consistent, and regulated rules as their guides, they may rely on their immediate surroundings, peers and leaders, and inklings and intuition—which aligns with social impact theory (Latané & Wolf, 1981) as discussed on page 67. In this regard, organizational formalization, rule consistency, and other contextual factors appear to be distal antecedents of permission beliefs. Their effects may be attenuated when compared to more proximal antecedents such as personality and relational factors. The results of this study offer insight into deontic logic theories and deontic reasoning literature and highlight the significance of human factors in organizational rule systems and the impact of immediate surroundings and personality on normative reasoning.

### **5.3 Practical Implications**

The findings of the current study have several significant practical implications. First, organizations that want to encourage their employees to be more proactive at work could benefit

from recognizing that employees must feel they have *permission to act proactively*. This research has shown that at the contextual level, setting rules and creating consistent rule systems might not be enough to encourage employees to be proactive. Indeed, supervisors play a critical role in their employees' proactivity permission. In this sense, organizations should not only focus on formalizing rules but should also attend to the development of close relationships between supervisors and their subordinates, ensuring that these relationships are high quality and supportive. To achieve this goal, for example, organizations can provide supervisor training on how to develop supportive relationships with their subordinates or encourage and reward supervisors for being supportive of their subordinates' proactive actions.

Another important finding from this study involves personality characteristics. This research suggests that it would be beneficial for organizations to consider how people with different personality traits might hold different perceptions of proactivity permission. To garner the benefits of proactivity, organizations should try to match employee and supervisor personality characteristics with work that is accordingly suitable. For example, people with personality characteristics such as psychological reactance and psychosocial entitlement (which tend to be negatively viewed by organizations) might do best in job positions that require them to act proactively feeling that they have permission to carry out proactive actions. For those jobs require a great amount of structure and heavy rule-following behaviors, supervisors with a rule-based mindset might be beneficial. When matched in this way, supervisors and employees may be optimally beneficial for their organizations.

Finally, this study provides guidance for employees on what they can do to increase their chances of gaining supervisor support for proactive actions. If employees want to receive support from their supervisors, they should try to get to know their supervisors well and to act in ways

that are consistent with their supervisors' views. To do so, employees should be inquisitive and ask their supervisors about their goals and interests, fostering open communication and understanding and establishing a high-quality relationship with them.

#### **5.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions**

Although the current study provides valuable insights, several limitations must be pointed out. First, in study 4, proposed hypotheses were tested with a sample of Turkish participants. While the primary findings from Studies 3 and 4 (which included a sample of North American participants) were consistent, study 4 may have some limitations when extending its findings to North American populations. Like Eastern European and Mediterranean Culture, Turkish culture tends to be relatively collectivistic, emphasizing the importance of harmonious relationships within groups (Hofstede et al., 2005). Given that some of the findings in this research were related to exchange relationships at work and that collectivistic cultures are more likely to emphasize the importance of exchange relationships, it is possible that the findings from this study may demonstrate relative differences across different cultural contexts. Future research would benefit from replicating this study across different cultural settings.

Second, the research presented is correlational in nature; causative relationships cannot be determined from this data. It is conceivable that the reported associations between personality characteristics, relational factors, contextual factors, and proactivity permission might have resulted from an unidentified third variable or from reverse relationships among these constructs. While I used relevant statistical control variables and time separation to bolster my claims in the model, future research may benefit from triangulation, utilizing a variety of research methods such as longitudinal or experimental designs to disentangle these relationships and to provide more robust support for the causative relationship proposed in this dissertation.

Third, in Study 4, several constructs demonstrated suboptimal psychometric properties (Rönkkö & Cho, 2022), including a high correlation between employee psychological entitlement and reactance at the latent level, as well as poor internal reliability estimates of normative tightness and looseness ( $\alpha = .61$ ,  $\omega = .83$ ). To ensure the model's psychometric properties, I conducted additional analyses such as HTMT (heterotrait-monotrait analysis; Henseler, 2015) and calculated more credible multilevel internal consistency measures such as McDonald's omega ( $\omega$ ). It should be noted that although this additional analysis produced acceptable statistical results, the errors associated with the independent variables may have caused the slope estimates to shrink toward zero, thereby reducing the model's power (Schmidt & Hunter, 2015). To mitigate this limitation, future research may consider employing different measurement tools to assess the relevant constructs.

Fourth, although self-reported measurements are often utilized in organizational research, these tools raise concerns about common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). This problem has been addressed in numerous ways in the present research. First, I temporally separated the variables and collected the data across three time periods. Second, I gathered multiple ratings from different sources for the dependent, independent, and contextual variables. Third, to mitigate social desirability bias, the respondents were assured that the study was anonymous and confidential, that they could be as honest as they wanted, and that there was no right or wrong answer (Chang et al., 2010). However, the studies still rely on self-report ratings for some constructs such as employee and supervisor personality constructs. Future research may examine the proposed hypothesis with objective indicators (e.g., other-rated personality, archival recordings of the actual frequency with which an employee initiates proactive actions and

received support) to alleviate some of the problems associated with common method variance bias.

Fifth, future research directions should investigate other contextual factors that may be important in shaping proactivity permission beliefs. In this research, I explored the theoretically grounded contextual factors related to organizational rule systems and control mechanisms in relation to other personality and relational factors. These predictions were not supported. However, the study has opened up a new avenue of research to look at the effect of other socio-contextual factors on the formation of proactivity permission. For example, future research may explore group climate, organizational politics, social network centralization, social network density, and workflow centrality as factors that may shape employee proactivity permission.

Sixth, this study measured supervisors' perspectives about proactivity permission in a single way, namely through their endorsement of proactive actions. However, supervisors can respond to proactive actions in many different ways (e.g., providing help, feedback, or resources). Alternatively, they may react negatively to proactive efforts (e.g., penalizing, demoting, or disparaging). The current study did not explore these different supervisor reactions. Future research may shed light on the relationships between proactivity permission and additional forms of supervisor reactions.

Seventh, an interesting avenue for future research is to explore the role of emotion in supervisors' perceptions of employees' proactivity permission. In the current research, I did not explicitly consider the role of emotion in either employees' or supervisors' perception processes. However, it is possible that supervisors' daily emotional reactions to employees' proactive actions may influence how supervisors perceive proactivity permission (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). To capture these situational variations, researchers could conduct a daily diary study (i.e.,

experience sampling methodology, ESM) in which employees and their supervisors track their emotions as well as their perceptions of the employees' proactivity permission.

Eighth, the current research design did not assess how changing relational factors affect employee and supervisor proactivity permission beliefs and outcomes. One of the assumptions behind this dissertation was that employee proactivity permission is a relatively stable construct. However, it is also possible that, over time, individuals gain a more or less desirable social position within their group; these changes in relational factors may also affect proactivity permission of individuals (Lin, 1999). Future research might explore the possibility of how these changing workplace factors affect the proactivity permission of employees over time. For example, it would be interesting to investigate how quickly newcomers tend to establish their proactivity permission, what factors over time most contribute to the formation of proactivity permission, and what happens when a tenured long-term employee loses their proactivity permission?

Finally, proactivity permission implies that an employee believes that they have permission. Therefore, they believe that if they act in accordance with that permission, they will not experience any significant negative consequences. Nevertheless, some individuals may possess higher risk tolerances (Jensen et al., 2014). Therefore, even if they do not have permission to act proactively, they may still take the risk and engage in such activities. As such, individuals' risk tolerances might affect the relationship between proactivity permission and proactive actions. Future research might explore the moderating effect of risk tolerances on the relationship between proactivity permission and proactive behavior.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSION

Our beliefs about what is permissible or not are critical for guiding our actions on a daily basis. Previous qualitative research and anecdotal evidence alluded that employees' beliefs about whether they are allowed to act proactively at work (i.e., proactivity permission) influences their proactive actions. My dissertation examined how and what factors influence employee proactivity permission, as well as the consequences for both employee proactivity and supervisor support behaviors.

Using a multilevel research design involving 501 employees and 112 work groups, I examined the effects of employee and supervisor personality characteristics, workplace relationships, and contextual factors on proactivity permission. My research indicates that employee personality characteristics (i.e., psychological entitlement and psychological reactance) positively affect employee proactivity permission belief. I also found that supervisor personality characteristics (i.e., social dominance orientation and rule-based reasoning) negatively affect proactivity permission judgments. Additionally, while the quality of relationships (LMX) between a focal employee and his or her supervisors has a positive effect on both this employee's proactivity permission and supervisor proactivity permission judgement regarding the focal employee, workplace contextual factors (i.e., organizational rule formalization, rule consistency, or normative tightness) are relatively distal to, and play a minor role in, proactivity permission.

This research also found that employees who believe they have permission to act proactively exhibit more proactive behaviors. Moreover, this dissertation shows that proactivity permission judgment of supervisor plays an important role in supervisors' support behaviors.

Supervisors provide greater support for the focal employees who they judge as having higher proactivity permission than those who they judge as having lesser proactivity permission. The findings of this dissertation emphasize the critical nature of proactive permission at work and paves the way for future research on the concept.

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## **APPENDIX I.**

### **PROACTIVITY PERMISSION ITEM LIST**

1. I feel like I am allowed to make proactive changes on my own to do my tasks better.
2. I believe I am permitted to proactively suggest new ideas about my work task without being asked.
3. I believe that I have permission to proactively change the ways I do my tasks.
4. I feel like I have permission to speak about my ideas to make my team more efficient.
5. I believe I am permitted to proactively come up with new and improved ways to help my team.
6. I feel like I am allowed to proactively improve the way my team does things.
7. I think I am allowed to make proactive suggestions to make the organization more effective.
8. I feel like I am permitted to involve myself in proactive changes that aim to improve the organization's overall effectiveness.
9. I feel like I have permission to suggest proactive ways to increase efficiency within the organization.

## APPENDIX II.

### EXPERT LIST FOR CONTENT VALIDITY IN STUDY 1

Rater	Name	E-Mail
1	Anastasiia Agolli	anastasiia.agolli@temple.edu
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10	Saeed Andaji Garmaroudi	tuj44337@temple.edu
11	Keshav Gupta	tuj76222@temple.edu
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## **APPENDIX III.**

### **REGISTRATION AND PRE-SCREEN SURVEY**

1. How old are you?
2. What is your employment status?
  - Full-time employee
  - Part-time employee
  - Freelancer
3. Do you work in a workgroup?
  - Yes
  - No
4. What is your workgroup size?

## APPENDIX IV.

### STUDY MEASURES

#### 11.1 Demographic Information

1. What is your gender?
2. Is English your native language?
3. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnic identity?
  - a. White/Caucasian
  - b. Black/African/African American
  - c. Hispanic/Latino/Latina
  - d. Asian
  - e. Middle Eastern
  - f. Native American
  - g. Pacific Islander
  - h. Multi-racial
  - i. Other (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
  - j. Prefer not to respond
4. What is your current GPA? If you are not currently in school, please select your most recent GPA. [show only to respondents who answered c-k in #4 above]
  - a. 0.00-0.99
  - b. 1.00-1.99
  - c. 2.00-2.99
  - d. 3.00-3.99
  - e. 4.00+
  - f. I don't know
  - g. Prefer not to respond
5. Approximately how many years of work experience do you have?
6. Approximately how many years do you work in your current workplace?

#### 11.2 Study 3 Measures

##### 11.2.1 Proactivity Permission

The Proactivity Permission Scale was developed and validated in Study 1 to Study 3. Items to be evaluated for this measure were generated in a deductive manner, reflecting the concept definition, by using the well-established and frequently cited Proactive Work Behaviors Scale by Griffin (2007). Employees provided ratings for the following statements on a scale from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

“Some behaviors are expected of us at work – for example, all employees are expected to properly carry out the core parts of their job description. However, research suggests that some behaviors are permitted or allowed of only some employees. Please indicate the extent to which

YOU, in your current job situation, are permitted or allowed to engage in each of the following behaviors.

In my job:

1. I feel like I am allowed to make proactive changes on my own to do my tasks better.
2. I believe I am permitted to proactively suggest new ideas about my work task without being asked.
3. I believe that I have permission to proactively change the ways I do my tasks.
4. I feel like I have permission to speak about my ideas to make my team more efficient.
5. I believe I am permitted to proactively come up with new and improved ways to help my team.
6. I feel like I am allowed to proactively improve the way my team does things.
7. I think I am allowed to make proactive suggestions to make the organization more effective.
8. I feel like I am permitted to involve myself in proactive changes that aim to improve the organization's overall effectiveness.
9. I feel like I have permission to suggest proactive ways to increase efficiency within the organization.

### **11.2.2 Proactive Behaviors (Griffin et al. 2007)**

Griffin et al.'s (2007) employee performance measure assesses employees' multidimensional work performance behaviors. This multidimensional performance measure consists of nine subdimensions of employee performance across three factors:

*Task performance*

- (1) Individual task proficiency
- (2) Team task proficiency
- (3) Organization member proficiency

*Adaptive work behaviors*

- (4) Individual task adaptivity
- (5) Team task adaptivity
- (6) Organization member adaptivity

*Proactive work behaviors*

- (7) Individual task proactivity
- (8) Team task proactivity
- (9) Organization member proactivity

Previous studies on proactive behaviors have used these proactivity subscales to assess employees' work proactivity, with alpha reliability coefficients ranging from .81 (Nguyen et al., 2017) to .95 (Kuo et al., 2018). The current study measured overall employee proactivity and

used the three subscales (nine items) of the proactive work behaviors factor (see below). For all items, employees were asked how frequently they carried out a particular behavior over the past month. Respondents answered using a scale ranging from 1 = *Not at All* to 7 = *A Great Deal*.

#### **Individual Task Proactivity**

1. Initiated better ways of doing your core tasks.
2. Came up with ideas to improve the way in which your core tasks are done.
3. Made changes to the way your core tasks are done.

#### **Team Proactivity**

4. Suggested ways to make your work unit more effective.
5. Developed new and improved methods to help your work unit perform better.
6. Improved the way your work unit does things.

#### **Organization Member Proactivity**

7. Made suggestions to improve the overall effectiveness of the organization.
8. Involved yourself in changes that are helping to improve the overall effectiveness of the organization.
9. Come up with ways of increasing efficiency within the organization.

### **11.2.3 Proactive Behaviors Measure (Parker et al., 2010)**

Previously, proactive behaviors also were measured with a wide range of well-accepted measures. Parker and Collins (2010) categorized various forms of proactive behaviors under the three subcategories: proactive work behavior, proactive person-environment fit behavior, and proactive strategic behavior. Because employees might be direct at their proactivity at different levels, I plan to use Parker and Collins's (2010) measure as an alternative to capture the variation in the type of proactive behaviors.

#### **Proactive work behavior**

##### **Individual innovation: (How frequently do you . . .)**

1. Generate creative ideas?
2. Search out new techniques, technologies and/or product ideas?
3. Promote and champion ideas to others?

##### **Voice: (How frequently do you . . .)**

1. Communicate your views about work issues to others in the workplace, even if your views differ and others disagree with you?
2. Speak up and encourage others in the workplace to get involved with issues that affect you?
3. Keep well informed about issues where your opinion might be useful to your workplace?

4. Speak up with new ideas or changes in procedures?

**Taking charge: (How frequently do you . . .)**

1. Try to bring about improved procedures in your workplace?
2. Try to institute new work methods that are more effective?
3. Try to implement solutions to pressing organization problems?

**Problem prevention: (How frequently do you . . .)**

1. Try to develop procedures and systems that are effective in the long term even if they slow things down to begin with?
2. Try to find the root cause of things that go wrong?
3. Spend time planning how to prevent reoccurring problems?

#### **11.2.4 Perceived Work Autonomy (Karasek, 1979)**

Using his job-demand and control framework, Karasek (1979) developed a tool to measure the effects of work stress on employees' physical health. The original measure consists of three subdimensions: job demand, skill discretion, and decision authority. Decision authority (i.e., work autonomy) consists of four items that refer to an employee's autonomy to make job-related decisions. In the current study, the decision authority subscale was used to measure work autonomy. The alpha reliability coefficient for the decision authority subscale in the Karasek (1979) was .82; other studies have reported alpha reliability scores from .77 to .85 (see, Fields, 2021). Employees were asked to rate the items presented below, using a 7-point Likert scale from 1 = *Never* to 7 = *Extremely Often*.

1. To what extent do you have the freedom to decide how to organize your work?
2. To what extent do you have control over what happens on your job?
3. To what extent does your job allow you to make a lot of your own decisions?
4. To what extent are you assisted in making your own decisions?

#### **11.2.5 Psychological Empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995)**

Spreitzer's Psychological Empowerment Scale (Spreitzer, 1995) evaluates empowerment in the workplace with twelve items and four subdimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Alpha reliability coefficients for this scale have been adequate (.72 with a managerial sample and .62 with an employee sample; Spreitzer, 1995). In the current study, employees rated the extent to which they agree with the following statements, using a 7-point Likert scale from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

**Meaning**

1. The work I do is very important to me.

2. My job activities are personally meaningful to me.
3. The work I do is meaningful to me.

### **Competence**

4. I am confident about my ability to do my job.
5. I am self-assured about my capabilities to perform my work activities.
6. I have mastered the skills necessary for my job.

### **Self-Determination**

7. I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job.
8. I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work.
9. I have considerable opportunity for independence and freedom in how I do my job.

### **Impact**

10. My impact on what happens in my department is large.
11. I have a great deal of control over what happens in my department.
12. I have significant influence over what happens in my department.

## **11.2.6 Perceived Psychological Safety (Adapted from Edmondson, 1999)**

The Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior Survey was developed by Edmondson (1999) in a multi-method field study examining psychological safety in relation to a team learning model. In that study, psychological safety was assessed with a 7-item measure at the team level (Cronbach's alpha = .82). For the current study, perceived psychological safety was measured at the individual level, and the referent of the team were reworded to capture the overall perception of the workplace. The original and modified items are listed below. Employees rated the extent to which they agree with the items, considering their general work experience, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

### **Original Items**

1. If you make a mistake on this team, it is often held against you (reverse coded).
2. Members of this team are able to bring up problems and tough issues.
3. People on this team sometimes reject others for being different (reverse coded).
4. It is safe to take a risk on this team.
5. It is difficult to ask other members of this team for help (reverse coded).
6. No one on this team would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts.
7. Working with members of this team, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized.

### **Modified Items**

1. If you make a mistake at this workplace, it is often held against you (reverse coded).

2. People at this workplace are able to bring up problems and tough issues.
3. People at this workplace sometimes reject others for being different (reverse coded).
4. It is safe to take a risk at this workplace.
5. It is difficult to ask others at work for help (reverse coded).
6. No one at this workplace would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts.
7. Working with others at this organization, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized.

### **11.2.7 Proactive Personality (Bateman & Crant, 1993; T1: Subordinates)**

Bateman and Crant (1993) developed a 17-item self-report scale to measure proactive personality. Previously, researchers have deployed shortened scales from the original items. Claes, Beheydt, and Lemmens (2005) established the psychometrics for the 6-item scale based on the original scale. The coefficient alpha for the shortened 6-item scale ranged from .78 to .86 (Claes et al., 2005; Parker, 1998). Employees rated the extent to which they agree with the items, considering their relationship with their supervisor, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

1. If I see something I don't like, I fix it.
2. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen.
3. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition.
4. I excel at identifying opportunities.
5. I am always looking for better ways to do things.
6. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen.

### **11.2.8 Role Breadth Self-Efficacy (Parker, 1998; T1: Subordinates)**

The Role Breadth Self-Efficacy Measure (Parker, 1998) was developed to evaluate employee perceptions of their ability to handle tasks beyond prescribed technical requirements. The tool consisted of 10 task sets demonstrating key exemplary elements of an expanded role that spans jobs and hierarchical levels. Alpha reliability for this measure was .96 (Parker, 1998). In this dissertation, employees were asked to rate how confident they would feel if they were asked to carry out the following ten tasks (1 = not at all confident, 7 = very confident).

If they were asked to carry out, *how confident would you feel . . .*

1. Analyzing a long-term problem to find a solution?
2. Representing your work area in meetings with senior management?
3. Designing new procedures for your work area?

4. Making suggestions to management about ways to improve the working of your section?
5. Contributing to discussions about the company's strategy?
6. Writing a proposal to spend money in your work area?
7. Helping to set targets/goals in your work area?
8. Contacting people outside the company (e.g., suppliers, customers) to discuss problems?
9. Presenting information to a group of colleagues?
10. Visiting people from other departments to suggest doing things differently?

### **11.2.9 Prosocial and Intrinsic (Grant, 2008; T1: Subordinates)**

Prosocial and intrinsic motivation were assessed with self-regulation scales developed by Ryan and Connell (1989) and adapted by Grant (2008). With two independent samples, Grant found acceptable alpha reliability scores of .90 and .91 for the adapted prosocial motivation measure; .71 and .93 for the adapted intrinsic motivation measure. At Time 1 for this dissertation, employees were asked to provide a rating for the following statements, and items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

*Why are you motivated to do your work?*

#### **Prosocial Motivation**

1. Because I care about benefiting others through my work.
2. Because I want to help others through my work.
3. Because I want to have a positive impact on others.
4. Because it is important to me to do good for others through my work.

#### **Intrinsic Motivation**

1. Because I enjoy the work itself.
2. Because it's fun.
3. Because I find the work engaging.
4. Because I enjoy it.

### **11.2.10 Positive Affectivity (Watson et al., 1988; T1: Subordinates)**

The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) was designed to assess positive and negative affect (Watson et al., 1988). Watson et al. (1988) developed items by selecting three terms for each of 20 emotion categories. For example, the emotion category *guilty* consists of ashamed, blameworthy, and guilt. Using a principal-components analysis of terms, Watson et al. (1988) created a categorical emotion lexicon. PANAS has been used in many different organizational studies (e.g., Ozcelik & Barsade, 2018). Previously reported alpha reliability scores are acceptably high (.83 to .90 for positive affect; and .79 to .93 for negative affect)

(Watson & Clark, 1999). In this dissertation, employees were provided their ratings for the items presented below at Time 1.

**Instructions**

This scale consists of a number of words and phrases that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you have felt in general. Use the following scale to record your answers:

*(1 = Very Slightly, 7 = Extremely)*

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<input type="checkbox"/> cheerful	<input type="checkbox"/> sad	<input type="checkbox"/> active	<input type="checkbox"/> angry at self
<input type="checkbox"/> disgusted	<input type="checkbox"/> calm	<input type="checkbox"/> guilty	<input type="checkbox"/> enthusiastic
<input type="checkbox"/> attentive	<input type="checkbox"/> afraid	<input type="checkbox"/> joyful	<input type="checkbox"/> downhearted
<input type="checkbox"/> bashful	<input type="checkbox"/> tired	<input type="checkbox"/> nervous	<input type="checkbox"/> sheepish
<input type="checkbox"/> sluggish	<input type="checkbox"/> amazed	<input type="checkbox"/> lonely	<input type="checkbox"/> distressed
<input type="checkbox"/> daring	<input type="checkbox"/> shaky	<input type="checkbox"/> sleepy	<input type="checkbox"/> blameworthy
<input type="checkbox"/> surprised	<input type="checkbox"/> happy	<input type="checkbox"/> excited	<input type="checkbox"/> determined
<input type="checkbox"/> strong	<input type="checkbox"/> timid	<input type="checkbox"/> hostile	<input type="checkbox"/> frightened
<input type="checkbox"/> scornful	<input type="checkbox"/> alone	<input type="checkbox"/> proud	<input type="checkbox"/> astonished
<input type="checkbox"/> relaxed	<input type="checkbox"/> alert	<input type="checkbox"/> jittery	<input type="checkbox"/> interested
<input type="checkbox"/> irritable	<input type="checkbox"/> upset	<input type="checkbox"/> lively	<input type="checkbox"/> loathing
<input type="checkbox"/> delighted	<input type="checkbox"/> angry	<input type="checkbox"/> ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/> confident
<input type="checkbox"/> inspired	<input type="checkbox"/> bold	<input type="checkbox"/> at ease	<input type="checkbox"/> energetic
<input type="checkbox"/> fearless	<input type="checkbox"/> blue	<input type="checkbox"/> scared	<input type="checkbox"/> concentrating
<input type="checkbox"/> disgusted with self	<input type="checkbox"/> shy	<input type="checkbox"/> drowsy	<input type="checkbox"/> dissatisfied with self

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**11.3 Study 4 Measures**

**11.3.1 Study 4-Time 1: Subordinate Survey**

**11.3.1.1 Psychological Entitlement (Campbell et al. 2004)**

The Psychological Entitlement Scale (PES) is a single factor, 9-item tool that assesses respondents' sense of entitlement (Campbell et al., 2004). Campbell et al.'s (2004) study found an acceptable internal consistency for this scale (Cronbach's alpha = .85). In this dissertation, employees were asked to provide a rating for the following statements on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

1. I honestly feel I'm just more deserving than others.
2. Great things should come to me.
3. If I were on the Titanic, I would deserve to be on the first lifeboat!
4. I demand the best because I'm worth it.
5. I do not necessarily deserve special treatment.
6. I deserve more things in my life.

7. People like me deserve an extra break now and then.
8. Things should go my way.
9. I feel entitled to more of everything.

### **11.3.1.2 Reactance-Orientation (Hong & Page, 1996)**

The Hong Psychological Reactance Scale, HPRS, (S.-M. Hong & Faedda, 1996), was created to measure individual trait differences in reactance tendencies. This scale consists of four dimensions: freedom of choice, conformity reactance, behavioral freedom, and reactance to advice and recommendations. In a scale refinement study, Shen and Dillard (2005) confirmed the four-factor solution for this measure. However, these authors found significant cross-loadings across the factors, so three items were deleted from the original HPRS. With three independent samples, Shen and Dillard (2005) reported alpha reliabilities of .75, .79, and .80. In this dissertation, employees were asked to provide a rating for the following 11 statements, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

#### **Freedom of Choice**

1. I become frustrated when I am unable to make free and independent decisions.
2. It irritates me when someone points out things which are obvious to me.
3. I become angry when my freedom of choice is restricted.

#### **Conformity Reactance**

4. Regulations trigger a sense of resistance in me.
5. I find contradicting others stimulating.
6. When something is prohibited, I usually think, "That's exactly what I am going to do."

#### **Behavioral Freedom**

7. I resist the attempts of others to influence me.
8. It makes me angry when another person is held up as a role model for me to follow.
9. When someone forces me to do something, I feel like doing the opposite.

#### **Reactance to Advice and Recommendations**

10. I consider advice from others to be an intrusion.
11. Advice and recommendations usually induce me to do just the opposite.

### **11.3.1.3 Independent Self-Construal (Lu et al., 2014)**

Lu et al. (2014) created the Self-Construal Scale to assess the degree to which individuals believe themselves to be separate from or integrated with others (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). The Self-Construal Scale consists of two subscales: interdependent construal and independent construal. Lu et al. (2014) reported acceptable internal consistency reliabilities of .72 and .74 for interdependent and independent self-construal, respectively. In this dissertation, the independent

self-construal subscale was used, and employees rated the extent to which they agree with the following statements, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

1. I enjoy being unique and different from others in many aspects.
2. My personal identity is independent of other people.
3. I consider myself as a unique person separate from others.
4. I see myself as a very independent person.

### **11.3.2 Study 4-Time 1: Subordinate and Supervisor Survey**

#### **11.3.2.1 Rule Consistency (Adapted from Meyer et al., 2014)**

Meyer et al. (2014) developed the Situational Strength at Work Scale (SSW) to assess job-related situational strength, which is defined as explicit or implicit signals given by institutions external to the person that moderate and affect an individual's actions. This scale has a four-factor structure: clarity, consistency, constraints, and consequences. The consistency factor is relevant for this dissertation and refers to “the extent to which cues regarding work-related responsibilities or requirements are compatible with each other” (Meyer et al., 2010, p. 126). Meyer et al. (2014) found an acceptable internal consistency reliability estimate for the consistency dimension ( $\alpha = .90$ ). For the current research, the consistency factor items were revised to reflect *deontic rules at work*. Employees rated the extent to which they agree with the following statements on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

#### **Original Items**

1. On this job, different sources of work information are always consistent with each other.
2. On this job, responsibilities are compatible with each other.
3. On this job, all requirements are highly compatible with each other.
4. On this job, procedures remain completely consistent over time.
5. On this job, supervisor instructions match the organization's official policies.
6. On this job, informal guidance typically matches official policies.
7. On this job, information is generally the same, no matter who provides it.

#### **Modified Items**

1. On this job, different sources of work rules are always consistent with each other.
2. On this job, rules and regulations are compatible with each other.
3. On this job, all rules are highly compatible with each other.
4. On this job, procedures remain completely consistent over time.
5. On this job, supervisor instructions match the organization's official policies and rules.
6. On this job, informal guidance typically matches official policies and rules.
7. On this job, rules and regulations are generally the same, no matter who provides them.

### 11.3.2.2 Organizational Formulation (Schminke et al., 2002).

Schminke, Cropanzano, and Rupp (2002) created a 5-item formalization scale, following Pugh et al. (1968). Schminke et al. defined formalization as the extent to which an organization formally writes down its operating rules, procedures, instructions, and communications. The alpha reliability estimate for the measure was .73 (Schminke et al., 2002). For this dissertation, item 5 was dropped because this item reflects the formalization process in terms of organizational entry, rather than deontic formalization itself (i.e., the extent to which social rules, obligations, and bans are written down). Employees and supervisor were asked to provide ratings for the statements on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

1. The organization has a large number of written rules and policies.
2. A “rules and procedures” manual exists and is readily available within this organization.
3. There is a complete written job description for most jobs in this organization.
4. The organization keeps a written record of nearly everyone’s job performance.
5. \* There is a formal orientation program for most new members of the organization. [will not be included in the current study]

### 11.3.2.3 Normative Tightness-Looseness (Adapted from Gelfand et al., 2011)

Gelfand et al. (2011) created the 6-item Tightness-Looseness Scale (TLS) to examine the differences between “cultures that are tight (have many strong norms and a low tolerance of deviant behavior) versus loose (have weak social norms and a high tolerance of deviant behavior)” (Gelfand et al., 2011:1100). With a total of 6,823 participants from 33 nations, Gelfand et al. (2011) demonstrated good reliability for this measure ( $\alpha = .85$ ). In this dissertation, the wordings of the TLS items were adjusted to reflect workgroups, rather than countries. Employees and supervisor rated the extent to which they agree with the following statements, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

#### Instructions

The following statements refer to your *workgroup* as a whole. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements using the following scale. Note that the statements sometimes refer to “social norms,” which are standards for behavior that are generally unwritten.

#### Original Items

1. There are many social norms that people are supposed to abide by in this country.

2. In this country, there are very clear expectations for how people should act in most situations.
3. People agree upon what behaviors are appropriate versus inappropriate in most situations this country.
4. People in this country have a great deal of freedom in deciding how they want to behave in most situations. (reverse coded)
5. In this country, if someone acts in an inappropriate way, others will strongly disapprove.
6. People in this country almost always comply with social norms.

**Modified Items**

1. There are many social norms that people are supposed to abide by in my workgroup.
2. In my workgroup, there are very clear expectations for how people should act in most situations.
3. People agree upon what behaviors are appropriate versus inappropriate in most situations in my workgroup.
4. People in my workgroup have a great deal of freedom in deciding how they want to behave in most situations. (reverse coded)
5. In my workgroup, if someone acts in an inappropriate way, others will strongly disapprove.
6. People in my workgroup almost always comply with social norms.

**11.3.3 Study 4-Time 1: Supervisor Survey**

**11.3.3.1 Social Dominance Orientation (Ho et al. 2015)**

The Social Dominance Orientation-7 Scale, short version (SDO-7(S)), was designed to assess individual differences in group preference for hierarchy and inequality depending on their social dominance orientation (Ho et al., 2015). This scale contains four factors: pro-trait dominance, con-trait dominance, pro-trait anti-egalitarianism, and con-trait anti-egalitarianism. Ho et al. (2015) found alpha reliability scores of the SDO-7(S) that ranged from .78 to .90.

**Instructions**

Show how much you favor or oppose each idea below by selecting a number from 1 to 7 on the scale below. You can work quickly; your first feeling is generally best (1 = *Strongly Oppose* to 7 = *Strongly Favor*).

**Pro-trait Dominance**

1. An ideal society requires some groups to be on top and others to be on the bottom.
2. Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups.

**Con-trait Dominance**

3. No one group should dominate in society.
4. Groups at the bottom are just as deserving as groups at the top.

**Pro-trait Anti-egalitarianism**

5. Group equality should not be our primary goal.
6. It is unjust to try to make groups equal.

**Con-trait Anti-egalitarianism**

7. We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups.
8. We should work to give all groups an equal chance to succeed.

### **11.3.3.2 Rule-Based Mindset (Adapted from Robinson, 2012)**

Robinson (2012) developed this measure to assess individuals' deontological beliefs, which emphasize that rules are universal to everyone and should never be broken. The reported alpha reliability score in the original study was .70 (Robinson, 2012). For this dissertation, the wording of the items were adjusted to reflect the workplace. Because item 2 refers to a general moral principle, this item were dropped from the current study. Supervisors were asked to provide a rating for the extent to which they agree with the following statements, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

1. Some rules in the workplace should never be broken.
2. \* It is never morally justified to cause someone harm. [will not be included in the current study]
3. If an action is a violation of the workplace's most basic rules it should not be committed, even if it will result in a large amount of good in the workplace.
4. Some aspects of humanity in the workplace are sacred and should never be violated no matter the possible gain.
5. Some rules and laws in the workplace are universal and are binding no matter the circumstances you find yourself in.
6. No workplace rule or law is sacred; they can be broken in order to serve some greater good (reversed coded).

### **11.3.3.3 Desirability Of Control (Burger & Cooper, 1979)**

The Desirability of Control Scale (DC Scale) was created to measure individual tendencies in the general level of desire for control over events or over other people in one's life (Burger & Cooper, 1979). Gebhardt and Brosschot (2002) confirmed that this scale consists of three subscales: control over others, control of self, and relinquish control. For this dissertation, I used use the control over others subscale, which reflects one's desire for control and influence over other people. Gebhardt and Brosschot (2002) reported a reliability alpha score of .75 for this subscale.

### **Instructions**

Below you will find a series of statements. Please read each statement carefully and respond to it by expressing the extent to which you believe the statement applies to you. For all items, a response from 1 to 7 is required. Use the number that best reflects your belief when the scale is defined as follows: 1 = *The statement does not apply to me at all* to 7 = *The statement always applies to me*.

1. I enjoy political participation because I want to have as much of a say in running government as possible.
2. I would prefer to be a leader rather than a follower.
3. I enjoy being able to influence the actions of others.
4. I would rather someone else took over the leadership role when I'm involved in a group project (reverse coded).
5. I consider myself to be generally more capable of handling situations than others are.
6. I'd rather run my own business and make my own mistakes than listen to someone else's orders.
7. When it comes to orders, I would rather give them than receive them.

### **11.3.3.4 LMX Quality (Liden & Maslyn, 1998)**

The Multidimensional Measure of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX-MDM) was developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998) to evaluate aspects of the leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship. This scale consists of 4 distinct subdimensions: Professional respect; Contribution; Loyalty; and Affect,. Previous studies reported an acceptable level of internal reliability score ( $\alpha$ : .95; Erdogan, 2007;  $\alpha$ : .93; Jawahar et al., 2018). Supervisors rated the extent to which they agree with the items, considering their relationship with their supervisor, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

1. I like this person very much as a person.
2. This person is the kind of person one would like to have as a friend.
3. This person is a lot of fun to work with.
4. This person defends my decisions, even without complete knowledge of the issue in question
5. This person would come to my defense if I were 'attacked' by others.
6. This person would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake.
7. I provide support and resources for this person that goes beyond what is specified in my job description.
8. I am willing to apply extra efforts, beyond those normally required, to help this person meet his or her work goals.

9. I do not mind working my hardest for this person
10. I am impressed with this person's knowledge of his/her job.
11. I respect this person's knowledge of and competence on the job
12. I admire this person's professional skills.

### **11.3.3.5 Social Status of Employee (Flynn & Brockner, 2003)**

Flynn and Brockner (2003) developed the social status survey to measure perceived relative social status between exchange partners at work. In the original study, participants were asked to rate themselves in relation to their peers using this social status scale. The alpha reliability coefficient for the social status scale was .94. The original items are listed above. In the current study, the supervisor rated the following modified statements based on their perceptions about their subordinates.

#### **Original Items**

1. Compared with you, how well respected is this person at work? (1 = *not respected at all* to 7 = *respected a great deal*)
2. Compared with you, how valuable are this person's contributions at work? (1 = not valuable at all to 7 = extremely valuable)
3. Compared with you, how much influence does this person exert over decisions at work? (1 = does not affect decisions to 7 = has a great deal of influence)

#### **Modified Items**

1. Compared with other employees, how well respected is this person at work? (1 = *not respected at all* to 7 = *respected a great deal*)
2. Compared with other employees, how valuable are this person's contributions at work? (1 = not valuable at all to 7 = extremely valuable)
3. Compared with other employees, how much influence does this person exert over decisions at work? (1 = does not affect decisions to 7 = has a great deal of influence)

### **11.3.4 Study 4-Time 2: Subordinate and Supervisor Survey**

#### **11.3.4.1 Proactivity Permission**

Both employees' proactivity permission and supervisors' proactivity permission judgments were measured with the measure developed in Study 1 to Study 3. Items were presented with a past 2-month time referent. Both subordinates and supervisors indicated the extent to which they agree with each of the statements, considering their experience at their workplace over the past 2 months. For supervisor ratings, the scale was referent shifted to focus on the employee (e.g., On this job, [this employee is] allowed to proactively initiate better ways of doing [their] core tasks).

### **11.3.5 Study 2-Time 3: Supervisor Survey**

#### **11.3.5.1 Proactive Behaviors (Griffen et al., 2007)**

Proactivity was measured with the same scale used in Study 3. At Time 3, supervisors were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with statements regarding their employees' proactive behaviors in the workplace over the past month.

#### **11.3.5.2 Perceived Managerial Endorsement (Adapted from Burris, 2012)**

Burris (2012) developed a measure to assess managerial endorsement for employees' proactive voice behaviors. The reported alpha reliability coefficient of this scale was .83 (Burris, 2012). For the current study, the wording of this measure's items was changed to reflect employees' proactive behaviors in general, not only voice behaviors. The measure was also revised to allow employees to rate their supervisors' endorsements (the original measure asked supervisors to rate their level of support for employees' behaviors). In the current study, employees rated the following statements based on their perceptions about the extent to which their proactivity over the last month was endorsed by their supervisors, on a scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.

##### **Original Items (Supervisor rated)**

1. I supported this person's comments throughout the discussion.
2. I think this person's comments should be implemented.
3. I agree with this person's comments.
4. This person's comments are valuable.

##### **Modified Items (Employee rated)**

In the last month...

1. My supervisor supported my proactive behaviors.
2. My proactive suggestions were implemented by my supervisor.
3. My supervisor agreed with my proactive behaviors.
4. My supervisor found my proactive behaviors valuable.

### **11.4 Control measures**

#### **11.4.1 Proactive Personality (Bateman & Crant, 1993; T1: Subordinates)**

Proactive personality was measured with the same scale used in Study 3. At Time 2, employees were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with statements regarding their proactive personality.

#### **11.4.2 Role Breadth Self-Efficacy (Parker, 1998; T1: Subordinates)**

Role breadth self-Efficacy was measured with the same scale used in Study 3. At Time 2, employees were asked to rate how confident they would feel if they were asked to carry out the following ten tasks (1 = not at all confident, 7 =very confident).

#### **11.4.3 Prosocial and Intrinsic motivation (Grant, 2008; T1: Subordinates)**

Prosocial and intrinsic motivation was measured with the same scale used in Study 3. At Time 2, employees were asked to the extent to which they agree with statements regarding their motivation, (1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*.)

#### **11.4.4 Positive Affectivity (Watson et al., 1988; T1: Subordinates)**

Positive affectivity was measured with the same scale used in Study 3.

## APPENDIX V.

### SOURCES FOR TURKISH ITEMS USED IN STUDY 4

ID	Construct	Were items previously translated by Turkish scholars?	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) from Earlier Work	Source
1	Proactive work behaviors	YES	.93	Şahbazoğlu, M. 2014. The Relationship between Proactive Personality, Empowerment and Proactive Work Behavior. Yeditepe Üniversitesi SBE.
2	Work Autonomy	YES	.78	DemiRal, Y., Ünal, B., Kiliç, B., Soysal, A., BiLgiN, A. C., et al. 2007. İş Stresi Ölçeğinin İzmir Konak Belediyesi'nde Çalışan Erkek İşçilerde Geçerlik ve Güvenilirliğinin İncelenmesi, 8.
3	Reactance-orientation	YES	.78	Küçük, N. T. 2012. Tütün kontrol çalışmaları kapsamındaki yasal uyarıların üniversite öğrencilerinin sigara alışkanlıkları ve reaktans dereceleri üzerine etkisi. Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi, Eskişehir.
4	Leader Member Exchange Quality	YES	.97	Baycan, N. Ç. 2019. Çalışan-yönetici uyumu, lider-üye etkileşimi, ses iklimi ve çalışan sesinin etkileşimi. İstanbul University.
5	Rule consistency	YES	.80	Koçoğlu, Ö. 2020. Moderating effect of perceived situational strength on the relationship between the dark triad and counterproductive work behaviors. Middle East Technical University.
6	Deontic formulation	YES	.90	Şanal, M., & Kaya, A. F. 2018. Etnik Girişimci İşletmelerde Kurumsallaşma ve Belirsizlikten Kaçınma İlişkisi Üzerine Bir Araştırma. Çukurova Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi, 22(1): 115–126.
7	Normative tightness-looseness	YES	.78	Bozagaç, F. 2021. Örgüt kültürünün sıklık-esneklik boyutu, finansal performans ve girişimcilik yönelimi ilişkisi: Borsa İstanbul şirketlerinde bir uygulama. Toros Üniversitesi.
8	Social dominance orientation	YES	.91	Karaoğlu, E. 2015. The role of social dominance orientation, empathy and perceived threat in predicting prejudice of Turkish citizens toward Syrian immigrants. Middle East Technical University.
9	Need for Control	YES	.75	Evrin, E. 2002. Hemşirelerde iş kontrolü, kontrol isteği ile tükenmişlik ve fiziksel sağlık arasındaki ilişkiler. Hacettepe Üniversitesi.
10	Proactive Personality Scale	YES	.82	Şahbazoğlu, M. 2014. The Relationship between Proactive Personality, Empowerment and Proactive Work Behavior. Yeditepe Üniversitesi SBE.
11	Role Breadth Self-Efficacy	YES	.88	Uysal, B. 2014. Çalışma yaşamındaki güncel gelişmeler çerçevesinde iş dizaynı ve iş özelliklerinin proaktif iş davranışına etkisi üzerine bir araştırma (Doktora tezi). İstanbul Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İstanbul, Türkiye.
12	PANAS	YES	.85	Gençöz, T. 2000. Pozitif ve negatif duygu ölçeği: Geçerlik ve güvenilirlik çalışması. Türk Psikoloji Dergisi, 15(46): 19–26.
13	Proactivity permission	NO		Back-translation in this study
14	Supervisor Support for Proactivity	NO		Back-translation in this study
15	Interdependent-Self-Construal	NO		Back-translation in this study
16	Social Status	NO		Back-translation in this study
17	Rule-based mindset	NO		Back-translation in this study
18	Prosocial and Intrinsic motivation	NO		Back-translation in this study