Followership styles scrutinized: Temporal consistency and relationships with job attitudes and self-efficacy

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While followership has been repeatedly acknowledged as an important part of leadership, key questions are still awaiting empirical testing. In two studies, we test Kelley's (1992) prominent concept of followership styles for the first time in a longitudinal design. Specifically, we use a latent-state trait approach (Geiser, 2020; Steyer et al., 2015) to examine the degree to which followership behaviors (i.e., active engagement [AE] and independent, critical thinking [ICT]) reflect rather stable or rather dynamic behaviors. Furthermore, we examine the relationships of followership behaviors with job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) and self-efficacy in latent states cross-lagged models. We first test our hypotheses in a sample of $N = 184$ employees from eleven German service organizations, which were surveyed twice with a time lag of nine to 12 months. To replicate and extend our findings from Study 1, we conducted Study 2 with a sample of $N = 570$ participants from a German open-access panel, which were surveyed twice with a time lag of four months. In Study 2, we additionally test leader humility and perceived organizational support (POS) as potential moderators of the relationships between followership and job attitudes. While our findings support Kelley's (1992) conceptualization of followership styles as rather consistent behavior patterns, mixed results were found for the relationships with the other variables. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of our findings as well as the relevance of time in followership research.

Followership Styles Scrutinized: Temporal Consistency and Relationships with Job

Attitudes and Self-efficacy

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The two studies that we present in our manuscript were preregistered in the Open Science

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24   **Abstract**

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26   questions are still awaiting empirical testing. In two studies, we test Kelley's (1992) prominent

27   concept of followership styles for the first time in a longitudinal design. Specifically, we use a

28   latent-state trait approach (Geiser, 2020; Steyer et al., 2015) to examine the degree to which

29   followership behaviors (i.e., active engagement [AE] and independent, critical thinking [ICT])

30   reflect rather stable or rather dynamic behaviors. Furthermore, we examine the relationships of

31   followership behaviors with job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment)

32   and self-efficacy in latent states cross-lagged models. We first test our hypotheses in a sample of

33   $N = 184$ employees from eleven German service organizations, which were surveyed twice with

34   a time lag of nine to 12 months. To replicate and extend our findings from Study 1, we

35   conducted Study 2 with a sample of $N = 570$ participants from a German open-access panel,

36   which were surveyed twice with a time lag of four months. In Study 2, we additionally test

37   leader humility and perceived organizational support (POS) as potential moderators of the

38   relationships between followership and job attitudes. While our findings support Kelley's (1992)

39   conceptualization of followership styles as rather consistent behavior patterns, mixed results

40   were found for the relationships with the other variables. We discuss the theoretical and practical

41   implications of our findings as well as the relevance of time in followership research.

43   **Followership Styles Scrutinized: Temporal Consistency and Relationships with Job**

44   **Attitudes and Self-efficacy**

45   The tradition of a classic leader-centric view (i.e., the focus on the leader's role and

46   characteristics) is still dominant in the field of leadership research and practice (Avolio et al.,

47   2009; Banks et al., 2018; Dinh et al., 2014). However, the specific roles and contributions of

48   followers in the leadership process (i.e., followership) have gained more attention in recent years

49   (see, for instance, Khan et al., 2019; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). In their integrative literature review

50   and "Formal Theory of Followership" (FTF), Uhl-Bien et al. (2014) highlighted several ways to

51   study how followers construe and enact their follower role, and how this may affect leaders and

52   followership outcomes (i.e., the role-based approach to followership; see Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

53   In addition, they introduced the constructionist perspective on followership, which centers on

54   how individuals mutually interact to (co-)construct leadership and followership identities. Thus,

55   according to the FTF (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), followership either describes the role enactment

56   from a predefined follower rank or position, or reflects an individual's actual act of following in

57   a social interaction process. While the co-construction approach to followership is a rather novel

58   approach within the field of followership research, the role-based approach has been developed

59   over several decades (see, for instance, Chaleff, 1995; Hurwitz & Hurwitz, 2015; Kelley, 1988,

60   1992).

61   Although Kelley (1988) provided one of the first (role-based) theories on the positive

62   impact that followers can have in the leadership process, some of his assumptions are still

63   awaiting empirical testing. Specifically, Kelley (1992) conceptualized different followership

64   styles as rather stable behavior patterns based on the interaction of the followers' active

65   engagement (AE) in the leadership process and their independent, critical thinking (ICT) toward

66 their leader. The notion of stable followership behaviors was also echoed by subsequent

67 approaches to followership styles, such as Kelley (2008), Khan et al. (2019), or Uhl-Bien et al.

68 (2014). However, prior studies on Kelley`s proposed followership behaviors[1] (Blanchard et al.,

69 2009; Gatti et al. 2014; 2017; Ribbat et al., 2021) used cross-sectional designs and thus could not

70 test his assumption of stable followership patterns. Indeed, there are various prominent

71 approaches that consider behaviors at work as dynamic and variable (see, for instance, Beal et

72 al., 2005; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Therefore, followership behavior could also depend on

73 situational factors such as followers' mood or the current environment in which they work

74 (Benson et al., 2015; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996).

75   Furthermore, followership approaches stress the role of followers by considering

76 followership as an important independent variable in leadership research instead of considering it

77 as the dependent variable (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014; Uhl-Bien & Carsten, 2018). Thus, according to

78 followership theory (Kelley, 1988, 1992; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), followership behavior should be

79 a major predictor for followership outcomes (e.g., individual follower outcomes such as job

80 satisfaction or organizational commitment). On the individual follower level, prior research in

81 fact demonstrated that AE and ICT correlate with job attitudes such as job satisfaction and

82 organizational commitment (Blanchard et al., 2009; Gatti et al., 2014; Ribbat et al., 2021). In

83 contrast to followership approaches (Uhl-Bien et al. 2014; Uhl-Bien & Carsten, 2018), the

84 literature on job attitudes and job performance (e.g., Riketta, 2008), however, suggests that job

85 attitudes precede follower behavior. Since prior research (Blanchard et al., 2009; Gatti et al.,

86 2014; Ribbat et al., 2021) cannot provide insights into the direction of relationships due to their

87 cross-sectional designs, the direction of the relationship between followership and job attitudes is

88 still unclear.

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[1] In the following, "followership behavior(s)" refer to Kelley's (1992) definition and conception.

89   In the current research, we conducted two studies to test the temporal consistency of

90   Kelley's (1992) followership behaviors in a longitudinal design, along with their relations to

91   critical job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) and self-efficacy for

92   the first time. Specifically, we test both the construct stability of followership behaviors and the

93   cross-lagged relationships between followership, job attitudes, and self-efficacy in two different

94   samples. In Study 2, we additionally test two potential new moderator variables that were not

95   part of Study 1 (i.e., leader humility and perceived organizational support [POS]).

96   Thus, our studies extend current research in several ways. First, we explore whether

97   followership behavior can be characterized as rather stable or trait-like behavior patterns as

98   proposed by Kelley (1992). This is important because Kelley's (1992) conception of styles

99   suggests that followership should be conceptualized as rather trait-like behavioral tendencies that

100 are related to rather stable personal characteristics and/or general circumstances. A state-like

101 nature of followership behavior, however, would necessarily shift the focus of future research

102 from general and typical factors to more specific, situational, and contingent factors as

103 followership would then rather be spontaneous, dynamic, or variable. Second, we examine

104 whether followership behaviors are antecedents of job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and

105 organizational commitment) as conceptualized by Kelley (1992) and/or vice versa in multistate

106 models (Geiser, 2020; Prenoveau, 2016). These relationships have been investigated only in

107 cross-sectional studies and, therefore, prior research could not yet provide a rigorous test of the

108 direction of these relationships (see Byun et al., 2018; Ribbat et al., 2021). Third, we explore the

109 link of AE and ICT with self-efficacy, an important variable in the organizational context that

110 has, however, not been studied thus far. According to Kelley (1992, p. 143), active and critical

111 followers are goal-oriented, success-oriented, and effective, which culminates in a "can do aura".

112   Therefore, active and critical followership should be related to the followers' perception of self-

113   efficacy. Finally, we consider leader humility and POS as moderators. Hence, we also explore

114   two potential new conditions under which the relationships of followership with job attitudes

115   might be fostered. In this way, we contribute to a better understanding of the followership

116   construct (as conceptualized by Kelley, 1992) and potential followership outcomes.

117   **Followership**

118   Followership behavior is defined as "behaviors of individuals acting in relation to a

119   leader(s)" (Carsten et al., 2010, p. 545). In our study, we refer to the followership concept by

120   Kelley (1992) that describes followership styles based on the interaction of the followers' active

121   engagement (AE) in the leadership process and their independent, critical thinking (ICT) towards

122   their leader. According to Kelley (1992), the best followers are those who participate actively in

123   the leadership process and take initiative. At the same time, they independently think for

124   themselves and provide constructive criticism for their leader and group. By contrast, the worst

125   followers do not independently think for themselves, simply take directions, and do not

126   challenge their leader and group. Moreover, they are passive, lazy, and require constant

127   supervision. Kelley (1992) proposes that the different combinations of AE and ICT result in five

128   styles of followership behavior, which he describes as "passive" (i.e., low in both dimensions),

129   "conformist" (i.e., high in AE, but low in ICT), "alienated" (i.e., low in AE, but high in ICT),

130   "exemplary" (i.e., high in both dimensions), and "pragmatist" (i.e., with medium levels in both

131   dimensions). The exemplary followership style is considered as most effective and most valuable

132   to the organization (Kelley, 1988; 1992).

133   In our current study, we will examine whether followership behavior can be characterized

134   as rather stable behavior patterns as proposed by Kelley (1992). To do so, we apply a latent state-

135 trait approach (Geiser, 2020; Steyer et al., 2015). This approach can provide answers to the

136 question of whether measurement instruments assess more trait-like or more state-like attributes.

137 Specifically, a latent state-trait approach quantifies to which degree observed and/or underlying

138 latent state (τ) variables reflect trait effects that indicate consistency (i.e., coefficient Con_τ; see

139 Geiser, 2020) or situation effects/person by situation interaction effects that indicate occasion

140 specificity (i.e., coefficient Osp_τ; see Geiser, 2020). Measures can be considered as trait-like,

141 when more than 50% of their true state variance is due to trait effects (Geiser, 2020; Steyer et al.,

142 1999). In accordance with Kelley's (1992) conceptualization of followership styles as rather

143 stable (i.e., trait-like) behavior patterns we predict:

144 *Hypothesis 1: (a) AE and (b) ICT will have a higher proportion of state variance at each time*

145 *point that is due to trait effects (i.e., Con[$\tau_{t1,t2}$] > .50) than state residual variance (i.e.,*

146 *Osp[$\tau_{t1,t2}$] < .50).[2]*

Followership and Job Attitudes

148 Again, in accordance with Kelley's conceptualization, we posit that followership behavior

149 will be related to important job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment).

150 Our Hypotheses are visualized in Figure 1 and Figure 2. Job satisfaction is defined as "a

151 pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job

152 experiences" (Locke, 1976, p. 1304). Organizational commitment "(a) characterizes the

153 employee's relationship with the organization, and (b) has implications for the decision to

154 continue or discontinue membership in the organization" (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67).

155 Empirical evidence suggests a positive relationship of AE with job satisfaction (e.g.,

156 Blanchard et al., 2009; Ribbat et al., 2021). With regard to ICT, several studies found no

157 significant relationship of ICT with job satisfaction (Gatti et al., 2014; Gatti et al., 2017; Ribbat

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[2] This study was preregistered on the Open Science Framework.

158   et al., 2021). Blanchard et al. (2009) even reported that ICT was negatively associated with job

159   satisfaction. Their results further suggest that the interaction of AE and ICT increases intrinsic

160   job satisfaction (i.e., satisfaction with job aspects that are task-related such as responsibility) but

161   decreases extrinsic job satisfaction (i.e., satisfaction with job aspects that are unrelated to the task

162   such as the supervisor; Blanchard et al., 2009). Specifically, followers with high AE and high

163   ICT had the highest levels of intrinsic job satisfaction. The more followers engaged in ICT, the

164   lower was their extrinsic job satisfaction, while this effect was weaker when followers were also

165   actively engaged (Blanchard et al., 2009). The findings of Favara (2009) and Saraih et al. (2018)

166   also showed a positive relation of an exemplary followership style (i.e., high scores both on AE

167   and ICT) with job satisfaction. Furthermore, two studies (Blanchard et al., 2009; Ribbat et al.

168   2021) showed that AE was positively associated with organizational commitment, whereas ICT

169   was negatively related to organizational commitment.

170   To derive our first set of hypotheses we apply Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger,

171   1957; Harmon-Jones & Mills, 2019). According to Cognitive Dissonance Theory, employees

172   tend to harmonize conflicting cognitions (e.g., attitudes and behaviors). We follow the effort

173   justification tenet of Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Aronson & Mills, 1959; Harmon-Jones et al.,

174   2018), which refers to the strategy of adding consonant cognitions to dissolve experienced

175   dissonance when undertaking demanding or exhausting activities and achieving outcomes that

176   may not be satisfying. Thus, we expect followers to value their job and their organization more

177   to justify the considerable effort they spend on engaging actively in the leadership process (see

178   also Blanchard et al., 2009; Ribbat et al., 2021). Hence, their earlier active engagement (at t1) is

179   expected to increase their later job attitudes (at t2). This reasoning is in line with the dominant

180   view that AE antecedes followers' job attitudes (Blanchard et al., 2009; Gatti et al., 2014; Ribbat

181   et al., 2021). Thus, we predict:

182   *Hypothesis 2a: AE at t1 will be positively related to job satisfaction at t2.*

183   *Hypothesis 2b: AE at t1 will be positively related to organizational commitment at t2.*

184   However, we expect that ICT at t1 exerts a negative influence on attitudinal variables at t2,

185   because it increases the followers' awareness of the problems and negative aspects of their job.

186   Hence, rather than valuing their job and organization more due to the effort that has also to be

187   expended on independent, critical thinking, followers with high levels of ICT should become less

188   satisfied and committed when faced with the problems and negative aspects of their job (see also

189   Blanchard et al., 2009; Ribbat et al., 2021). Therefore, we hypothesize:

190   *Hypothesis 3a: ICT at t1 will be negatively related to job satisfaction at t2.*

191   *Hypothesis 3b: ICT at t1 will be negatively related to organizational commitment at t2.*

192   Besides effort justification, another strategy to avoid cognitive dissonance according to

193   Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger 1957; Harmon-Jones & Mills, 2019) would be to bring

194   behaviors in line with one's attitudes. That is, attitudes can guide and facilitate behavior. This

195   notion suggests that job attitudes can cause later job behaviors (Hinojosa et al., 2017; Riketta,

196   2008). Therefore, we expect satisfied and committed followers to actively engage in the

197   leadership process. We state:

198   *Hypothesis 4a: Job satisfaction at t1 will be positively related to AE at t2.*

199   *Hypothesis 4b: Organizational commitment at t1 will be positively related to AE at t2.*

200   However, we do not expect satisfied and committed followers to question the leader and

201   the organization frequently. Since satisfaction and commitment are pleasurable and positive

202   emotional states (Locke, 1976; Meyer & Allen, 1991), there should be no incentive for the

203 followers to create conflicting cognitions and risk psychological discomfort (Festinger 1957;

204 Harmon-Jones & Mills, 2019). Thus, satisfied and committed followers might avoid becoming

205 aware of negative aspects of their job through ICT in order to prevent cognitive dissonance.

206 Hence, we predict that job attitudes at t1 will be negatively related to ICT at t2.

207 *Hypothesis 5a: Job satisfaction at t1 will be negatively related to ICT at t2.*

208 *Hypothesis 5b: Organizational commitment at t1 will be negatively related to ICT at t2.*

209 Additionally, we argue that the effort justification mechanism (cf. Hypothesis 2) is stronger

210 than the "attitudes as guidelines" mechanism (cf. Hypotheses 4 and 5), because followership

211 styles, which are conceptualized as relatively stable or trait-like behavior patterns (Kelley, 1992;

212 see also our Hypothesis 1), should be more difficult to change than job attitudes. Therefore, we

213 expect stronger relations of AE and ICT at t1 with the attitudinal variables at t2 due to effort

214 justification than the opposite relations between attitudes (at t1) and AE and ICT (at t2). Thus,

215 we hypothesize:

216 *Hypothesis 6: The relationships of AE at t1 with (a) job satisfaction at t2 and (b)*

217 *organizational commitment at t2 is stronger as compared to the relationships of (a) job*

218 *satisfaction at t1 and (b) organizational commitment at t1 with AE at t2.*

219 *Hypothesis 7: The relationships of ICT at t1 with (a) job satisfaction at t2 and (b)*

220 *organizational commitment at t2 is stronger as compared to the relationships of (a) job*

221 *satisfaction at t1 and (b) organizational commitment at t1 with ICT at t2.*

222 Since Kelley's (1992) typology of followership styles refers to the interaction of both

223 followership dimensions (i.e., AE and ICT), we also investigate this interaction. Continuing the

224 argumentation above, the less followers engage actively in the leadership process, the more

225 should the negative influence of ICT on job attitudes prevail over effort justification. However,

226   independent, critical followers might also use active engagement to change undesired working

227   conditions and, thus, they should become more satisfied and committed. Therefore, following the

228   logic of both Cognitive Dissonance Theory (Festinger, 1957) and Kelley's (1992)

229   conceptualization, we predict:

230   *Hypothesis 8: ICT at t1 will be less negatively related to (a) job satisfaction at t2 and (b)*

231   *organizational commitment at t2 when AE at t1 is high as compared to when AE at t1 is low.*

232   **Followership and Self-Efficacy**

233   Self-efficacy is defined as "people's judgements of their capabilities to organize and

234   execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (Bandura, 1986, p.

235   391). According to Kelley (1992), active and critical followers are goal-oriented, success-

236   oriented, and effective. He describes effective followers as those who determine early and

237   accurately the criteria for success in the leadership environment, who track a record of successes

238   in tasks that are important to the leader, and who "seize smaller victories that accumulate into a

239   'can do' aura" (Kelley, 1992, p.143). Therefore, active and critical followership should raise the

240   followers' awareness for their own capabilities to attain personal and leadership goals.

241   Consequently, active and critical followership should be related to the followers' perception of

242   self-efficacy. Prior meta-analyses (Sadri & Robertson, 1993; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998)

243   demonstrated that self-efficacy is positively related to work-related behaviors (e.g., changes in

244   career tracks or intentions to show assertiveness) and job performance. However, the relation of

245   this important individual-level construct with followership behavior has not been tested so far.

246   Therefore, we will investigate this relationship in our study.

247   According to Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997), self-efficacy emerges from four

248   sources: (1) physiological and affective states, (2) verbal persuasion, (3) vicarious experience,

249   and (4) mastery experience. Mastery experience is considered to have the strongest impact on the

250   development of self-efficacy, because it provides authentic evidence for one's capability to

251   succeed, and, thus, builds a robust belief in one's personal efficacy (Bandura, 1997). When

252   followers simply take directions, there is no evidence for the followers' own capability to

253   succeed, because success fully depends on the leader's decisions. Active and critical

254   followership, however, allow for evaluating the followers' own contributions to leadership

255   success (e.g., followers' high individual or collective job performance) and, thus, raises the

256   awareness for mastery experiences. Therefore, we expect that the followers' self-efficacy

257   substantially results from ascribing (at least parts of) the leadership success to own efforts when

258   carrying out an active and independent follower role. Hence, we expect that both AE at t1 and

259   ICT at t1 are positively associated with self-efficacy at t2, which is also in line with the dominant

260   view of followership research (Kelley, 1992; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) that followership should be a

261   major predictor for followership outcomes:

262   *Hypothesis 9a: AE at t1 will be positively related to self-efficacy at t2.*

263   *Hypothesis 9b: ICT at t1 will be positively related to self-efficacy at t2.*

264   Paralleling our above hypotheses on job attitudes, the relationship of ICT (at t1) with self-

265   efficacy (at t2) might depend on the level of AE. While it may be obvious to ascribe leadership

266   success to own efforts (i.e., to allow for mastery experience; see Bandura, 1997) when active

267   engagement is high, the contribution of ICT to leadership success might not always be apparent.

268   This should, for instance, be the case when a follower expresses concerns about the leader's

269   direction and consequently does not (strongly) contribute to goal attainment. According to

270   Kelley (1992), followers may become frustrated and "alienated", when their concerns are

271   ignored repeatedly, which keeps them away from their goal achievements and day-to-day job

272 satisfaction (see Kelley, 1992). When active engagement is high, however, ICT could be

273 considered as an additional contribution to leadership success and therefore raise even more

274 awareness for mastery experiences than the active engagement alone. Thus, we predict:

275 *Hypothesis 10: ICT at t1 will be more positively related to self-efficacy at t2 when AE at t1*

276 *is high than when AE at t1 is low.*

277 Furthermore, according to Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997), self-efficacy is also

278 considered to be a predictor for one's choices of activities, effort expenditure, persistence,

279 thought patterns, and emotional reactions when confronted with obstacles (Lent et al., 1994).

280 Followers with high self-efficacy should therefore be more likely to actively engage in the

281 leadership process and rather be willing to act independently and critically. Thus, we predict:

282 *Hypothesis 11a: Self-efficacy at t1 will be positively associated with (a) AE at t2.*

283 *Hypothesis 11b: Self-efficacy at t1 will be positively associated with ICT at t2.*

284 **Study 1**

285 **Materials and Methods**

286 This study was preregistered at the Open Science Framework

287 (https://osf.io/tf493/?view_only=03c75588fa514565be62adbdc58b24dc). Following Simmons et

288 al. (2012), we report and explain in detail (a) how we determined our sample size, (b) all

289 exclusions, and (c) all independent and dependent variables (see also Simmons et al., 2012).

290 ***Sample***

291 The variables that we investigated in this study were part of a more comprehensive data

292 set, which had been collected for the German Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and

293 Health between 2017 and 2018 (https://www.baua.de/EN/Tasks/Research/Research-

294 projects/f2372.html) in German language. Employees and their supervisors from eleven German

295   service organizations were surveyed twice with an online questionnaire. Participants gave their

296   consent for participation within the questionnaire by checking the associated box.[3] In this study,

297   we only used data from the employees' surveys. The time lag between the two measurement

298   waves (i.e., t1 and t2) was between nine and 12 months. Persons responsible for human resources

299   in the participating organizations invited various teams to complete the survey via e-mail.

300   Therefore, we have no information about the exact number of employees that were invited to the

301   survey. The first measurement wave was answered by 551 employee responses. For the second

302   wave, employees who were originally invited had again the opportunity to participate, regardless

303   of whether they had participated in the first wave. The second measurement wave was answered

304   by 349 employees in total. For 187 employees (or 34% of the original population), we could

305   match the questionnaires of both time points.[4]

306   Following our preregistration, some participants were excluded from the data set because

307   of responding in a careless manner. Following the procedures recommended by Meade and Craig

308   (2012), three outlier cases were identified by computing the Mahalanobis Distance over all

309   items, which reduced the overall sample size to 184 employees. Moreover, for five persons, the

310   followership values were recoded as missing values either for t1 or t2 due to zero-within-

[3] Our research is in line with the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki and the Psychologists Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association. Please note that correlational studies are exempt from institutional review in Germany (see also Sonnentag et al., 2022). As prescribed by the German Medicines Laws (AMG, MPDG) and the associated EU regulations (CTR 536/2014, MDR 2017/745), institutional ethical approval is mandatory if research involves drug or medical device testing, or if physicians participate. Our studies do not meet any of those criteria. However, we obtained retrospective ethical approval of the University of Münster for Study 2 (approval number 2022-65-ChN). For Study 1, the data had been collected by the German Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health in a very similar way as Study 2.

[4] One reason for the relatively high drop-out could be that we had to rely on third persons (i.e., organizational multipliers) to recruit the respondents within the organizations. Furthermore, we did not pay participants for each response. Another reason could be that the matching process was realized via a self-chosen code. The need for retaining the self-chosen code over nine to 12 months might have resulted in mistakes in some cases. Hence, there might be more respondents that completed both questionnaires, which, however, could not be matched via the personal code. However, the resulting sample of participants for which the questionnaire could be matched for both time points is comparable to the original sample at time point one in terms of their mean age, gender distribution, level of education, and professional sector distribution. Furthermore, the drop-out rate is comparable to studies with a similar approach to data collection (see, for instance, Rayton & Yalabik, 2014; Tims et al., 2015).

311 variance in responses, resulting in a sample of 179 participants. The respondents were mainly

312 employed within the public service sector (76%). Another 17% worked within the finance

313 service sector (banking or insurance). A small proportion (7%) was employed in other service

314 organizations (i.e., health services or information technology services). The mean age was 43.5

315 years and 67% of the respondents were female, 33% were male. The level of education was

316 distributed as follows: 43% had a completed apprenticeship, 40% had a university of applied

317 science degree, and 17% had a university degree.

318 ***Measures***

319   Both dimensions of followership behavior (i.e., AE and ICT) were measured using the

320 German version of Kelley's (1992) Followership Questionnaire by Ribbat et al. (2021; with 10

321 items for AE and four items for ICT). An exemplary item for AE was "Do you understand the

322 leader's needs, goals, and constraints, and work hard to help meet them?". The ICT subscale, for

323 instance, included the item "Do you assert your views on important issues, even though it might

324 mean conflict with your group or reprisals from the leader?". Possible responses ranged from *1*

325 *([almost] never)* to *7 ([almost] always)*.

326   Job satisfaction was measured with six items of the "Copenhagen Psychosocial

327 Questionnaire" (Nübling et al., 2005). The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with

328 their colleagues, leadership, challenges of work, use of abilities, career perspective, and job

329 satisfaction overall. The response options ranged from *very dissatisfied (1)* to *very satisfied (7)*.

330   Organizational commitment was measured with three items of the scale from Mowday et

331 al. (1979) in the German Version by Maier and Woschée (2002). A sample item was "I talk up

332 this organization to my friends as a great organization to work for". Response options ranged

333 from *strongly disagree (1)* to *fully agree (7)*. Finally, we measured self-efficacy using the scale

334 by Rigotti et al. (2008) with six items. A sample item was "I feel up to most of the job demands".

335 Response options ranged from *not correct at all (1)* to *applies completely (7)*.

336 ***Data Analysis Strategy***

337 We applied a latent state-trait approach (Geiser, 2020; Steyer et al., 2015). This approach

338 allows for differentiating trait effects from situation/person situation interaction effects (Steyer et

339 al., 1999; Steyer et al., 2015). Specifically, we applied single-trait multi-state models with

340 indicator-specific residual factors (STMS-IS; see Geiser, 2020) for both followership dimensions

341 (i.e., AE and ICT). The single-trait multi-state model (STMS) refers to the test of a single trait

342 (i.e., AE or ICT) in multiple situations (i.e., t1 and t2). The indicator-specific residual factors

343 account for indicator specific effects of latent variables (Eid et al., 1999; Geiser, 2020). This is

344 important, because the simple STMS model would assume perfect homogeneity of the indicators

345 for the latent variable that are measured at the same time point (Geiser, 2020). However, this was

346 not a realistic assumption, as both AE and ICT measures were not perfectly consistent (see Table

347 1). Thus, the STMS-IS model was more appropriate to test the consistency of the followership

348 measures, as it reflects potential method effects of indicator heterogeneity. The model fit was

349 evaluated using the resulting chi-square values, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation

350 (RMSEA), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual

351 (SRMR). The following cut-off values were considered to indicate a good model fit (West et al.,

352 2012): $\chi^2/df < 5$, RMSEA < .06, CFI > .95, and SRMR < .08.

353 In order to test the hypotheses on the interrelations of followership with the other study

354 variables, we applied latent autoregressive/cross-lagged states models (LACS; see Geiser, 2020).

355 Latent states cross-lagged models are longitudinal models that allow for testing relationships of

356 latent state variables over multiple states (i.e., t1 and t2) in both directions in the same model,

357   while correcting for random measurement error. By controlling for the autoregressive effects of

358   the variables (i.e., the autoprediction of the dependent variables), LACS models additionally take

359   into account that in social science previous states are usually strong predictors for future states of

360   the same variable (Adachi & Willoughby, 2015; Geiser, 2020). We also considered potential

361   method effects of indicator heterogeneity and applied models with indicator-specific residual

362   factors (Eid et al., 1999; Geiser, 2020). For the models that tested the interaction effects of AE

363   and ICT, we also controlled for the autoregressive effects of job attitudes and self-efficacy, and

364   applied indicator-specific residual factors. We used one-tailed tests of significance for the

365   regression coefficients, since we had directed hypotheses (Cho & Abe, 2013; Jones, 1952;

366   Lakens, 2016).

367   As our measures of internal consistency, we used a reliability indicator based on factor

368   models and report coefficient omega (ω; McDonald, 1978). We report the omega subscale (ω_s)

369   for multidimensional constructs (i.e., for each followership dimension) as described by

370   Rodriguez et al. (2016). We used Watkins' (2013) standalone program to compute the omega

371   subscale (ω_s). Every other analysis was computed with MPlus 7.4 (Muthén & Muthén, 2015).

372   ***Pre-analyses***

373   **Construct Validity.** In our study, we analyzed four latent variables including five latent

374   factors at two measurement times: followership behavior with its two dimensions AE and ICT,

375   job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and self-efficacy. In order to ensure the

376   distinctiveness of our study variables, we compared our five-factor measurement model to an

377   alternative four-factor model that specified both job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and

378   organizational commitment) as one common factor. Chi square difference tests revealed that our

379   measurement model fitted the data better than the alternative model both at t1, $\chi^2_{diff}(3) = 96.43$, *p*

380 $< .001$, and at t2, $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(3) = 111.98$, $p < .001$. Hence, our analyses indicate the distinctiveness of

381 our study variables.

382   Note, however, that we allowed the residual correlation between the two items "Instead of

383 waiting for or merely accepting what the leader tells you, do you personally identify which

384 organizational activities are most critical for achieving the organization's priority goals?" and

385 "Do you actively develop a distinctive competence in those critical activities so that you become

386 more valuable to the leader and the organization?" in the followership model ($r = .71$, $p < .001$

387 for t1; $r = .52$, $p < .001$ for t2). In their validation study for the German version of Kelley's

388 (1992) followership questionnaire, Ribbat et al. (2021) argued for this model specification as the

389 latter item was formulated with a direct reference to the former. In addition, the two concerned

390 items reflect the efforts to achieve overarching organizational goals and thus share a plausible

391 commonality (Ribbat et al., 2021). In our study, allowing the respective error term correlation led

392 to better model fit both at t1, $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(1) = 119.43$, $p < .001$, and at t2, $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(1) = 46.47$, $p < .001$.

393   **Measurement Equivalence Across Time.** Before testing the hypotheses, we tested for

394 measurement equivalence across time to follow a common standard for our analyses: „ME is a

395 prerequisite for meaningful across-time comparisons […] Without measurement equivalence,

396 differences in latent state factor means or variances across occasions may be due to changes in

397 measurement (observed variable) properties rather than true changes in latent variables" (Geiser,

398 2020, pp. 122-123). Following Geiser (2020), we consecutively tested measurement equivalence

399 models that differ by the level of measurement equivalence (i.e., various parameter equality

400 constraints) for every latent variable. First, we tested for configural invariance that specified the

401 same number of factors and the same factor loading pattern across time. Second, we also

402 constrained the factor loadings to remain the same for a given observed variable in addition to

403   configural invariance (weak invariance). Subsequently, we tested for strong invariance (strong

404   measurement equivalence), which additionally set the intercepts to remain the same across time

405   for a given observed variable. Finally, the strict invariance model (strict measurement

406   equivalence) additionally determined the measurement error variance to remain the same across

407   time for a given variable. Researchers typically aim for at least strong measurement equivalence,

408   because it allows for meaningful comparisons of latent variable means and variances across time

409   (Meredith, 1993; Widaman & Grimm, 2014).

410   The fit of the various measurement equivalence models is presented in the Supplemental

411   Material 1 (SM1). In our model comparisons, strong measurement equivalence was preferred for

412   AE and strict measurement equivalence was preferred for ICT. Thus, for AE and ICT at least

413   strong measurement equivalence could be assumed. This was also the case for the other latent

414   variables: Strong measurement equivalence was preferred for organizational commitment and

415   self-efficacy. For job satisfaction, the strict model was the best fitting model. Hence, we used

416   these models in further analyses.

417   **Results**

418   Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, the intercorrelations of the latent variables and the

419   reliabilities of the measures. For ICT at t2, $\omega_s = .69$ was slightly below the commonly used

420   minimum value (Dunn et al., 2014; Kline, 1998). However, we addressed this problem by

421   specifying latent state-trait models with indicator-specific residuals (Eid et al., 1999; Geiser,

422   2020; see also above).

423   ***Temporal Consistency of Followership Behavior***

424   To test Hypothesis 1, we used a STMS-IS model, which fitted the data well, $\chi^2(df) =$

425   207.53(141), $p < .001$, $\chi2/df = 1.47$, RMSEA = .05, CFI = .96, SRMR = .06. The results revealed

426   that AE was rather stable and trait-like over time as indicated by consistencies exceeding the

427   commonly applied 50% threshold for both AE at time 1 (Con[$\tau_{AE,t1}$] = .78, $p < .001$,) and AE at

428   time 2 (Con[$\tau_{AE,t2}$] = .74, $p < .001$) as compared to the coefficients that indicate occasion

429   specificity (Osp[$\tau_{AE,t1}$] = .22, $p = .001$, Osp[$\tau_{AE,t2}$] = .26, $p < .001$). Hence, our results suggest

430   that AE was consistent across time and rather trait-like, which supported Hypothesis 1a.

431   The results of the STMS-IS model for ICT revealed Con[$\tau_{ICT,t1}$] = .59, $p < .001$, Con[$\tau_{ICT,t2}$]

432   = .82, $p < .001$, Osp[$\tau_{ICT,t1}$] = .41, $p < .001$, and Osp[$\tau_{ICT,t2}$] = .18, $p < .001$. The model fit was

433   good: χ^2(df) = 35.89(24), $p = .06$, χ^2/df = 1.50, RMSEA = .05, CFI = .96, SRMR = .08. Thus,

434   ICT, was consistent across time and rather trait like. Hence, Hypothesis 1b was also supported.

435   ***Followership and Job Attitudes***

436   The first cross-lagged model explored the relationship of AE with job satisfaction. Both

437   autoregressive paths were significant (for AE: $\beta = .75$, $p < .001$; for job satisfaction: $\beta = .71$, $p <$

438   $.001$). The relationship of AE (at t1) with job satisfaction (at t2) was not significant, $\beta = -.08$, $p =$

439   $.12$, thereby not supporting Hypothesis 2. However, job satisfaction (at t1) was positively related

440   to AE (at t2), $\beta = .13$, $p = .02$, thereby supporting Hypothesis 4a. The model explained 60% of

441   the variance in AE and 49% of the variance in job satisfaction and the model fit was good: χ^2(df)

442   = 524.84(371), $p < .001$, χ^2/df = 1.42, RMSEA = .05, CFI = .95, SRMR = .06.

443   The second cross-lagged model included AE and organizational commitment. Both

444   autoregressive paths were significant (for AE: $\beta = .74$, $p < .001$; for organizational commitment:

445   $\beta = .87$, $p < .001$). The relationship of AE (at t1) with organizational commitment (at t2) was not

446   significant, $\beta = .02$, $p = .39$, which does not support Hypothesis 2. However, organizational

447   commitment (at t1) was positively related to AE (at t2), $\beta = .11$, $p = .049$, thereby supporting

448   Hypothesis 4b.[5] The model explained 59% of the variance in AE and 75% of the variance in

449   organizational commitment and the model fit was good: χ^2(df) = 325.76(236), $p < .001$, $\chi2/df =$

450   1.38, RMSEA = .05, CFI = .96, SRMR = .05.

451   The relationship of ICT with job satisfaction was explored in the third cross-lagged model.

452   While we had predicted this relationship to be negative, our results rather pointed in a positive

453   direction. Thus, we applied a two-tailed test for this model. We, therefore, could neither find a

454   significant relation of job satisfaction (at t1) to ICT (at t2), $\beta = .16$, $p = .08$, nor between ICT (at

455   t1) and job satisfaction (at t2), $\beta = .09$, $p = .21$. These results do not support Hypotheses 3a and

456   5a. Both autoregressive paths were significant (for ICT: $\beta = .74$, $p < .001$; for job satisfaction: β

457   = .71, $p < .001$). The model explained 53% of the variance in ICT and 50% of the variance in job

458   satisfaction and the model fit was again good: χ^2(df) = 201.37(146), $p = .002$, $\chi2/df = 1.38$,

459   RMSEA = .05, CFI = .97, SRMR = .06.

460   The fourth cross-lagged model explored the relationship of ICT with organizational

461   commitment. Again, we applied a two-tailed test for the model, because our results pointed in

462   another direction than we had expected. Both autoregressive paths were significant (for ICT: $\beta =$

463   .72, $p < .001$; for organizational commitment: $\beta = .86$, $p < .001$). No significant relationship of

464   ICT (at t1) with organizational commitment (at t2) could be found, $\beta = .06$, $p = .41$.

465   Organizational commitment (at t1) was also not related to ICT (at t2), $\beta = .17$, $p = .07$. These

466   results do not support Hypotheses 3b and 5b. The model explained 55% of the variance in ICT

467   and 75% of the variance in organizational commitment and the model fit was good: χ^2(df) =

468   80.71(65), $p = .09$, $\chi2/df = 1.24$, RMSEA = .04, CFI = .98, SRMR = .06.

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[5] Please note that this relationship was no longer significant when we additionally controlled for age and gender. Controlling for age and gender did not, however, significantly affect any other tested relationship.

469   In Hypotheses 6 and 7, we proposed the relationships of AE (at t1) and ICT (at t1) with job

470   attitudes (at 2) to be stronger than those of job attitudes (at t1) with AE (at t2) and ICT (at t2).

471   Both hypotheses were not supported by our results, because we found no significant relationship

472   of AE or ICT (at t1) with any job attitude (at t2). The relationship of AE (at t1) with job

473   satisfaction (at t2) was not significant, $\beta = -.08$, $p = .12$. The relationship of AE (at t1) with

474   organizational commitment (at t2) was not significant, $\beta = .02$, $p = .39$. The relationship between

475   ICT (at t1) and job satisfaction (at t2) was also not significant, $\beta = .09$, $p = .21$. Finally, no

476   significant relationship of ICT (at t1) with organizational commitment (at t2) could be found, $\beta =$

477    $.06$, $p = .41$.

478   Furthermore, in Hypothesis 8 we posited ICT (at t1) to be less negatively related to job

479   satisfaction and organizational commitment (at t2) when AE (at t1) was high, as compared to

480   when AE (at t1) was low. In our analysis, the interaction of AE (at t1) and ICT (at t1) was not a

481   significant predictor for job satisfaction (at t2), $\beta = -.10$, $p = .14$. However, the interaction (at t1)

482   predicted organizational commitment (at t2), $\beta = .14$, $p = .04$, while controlling for the

483   autoregressive effect of organizational commitment (at t1), $\beta = .86$, $p < .001$. The interaction

484   effect is plotted in Figure 3. Overall, the model explained 78% of the variance. Since the

485   interaction of AE and ICT (at t1) was associated with a higher score in organizational

486   commitment, Hypothesis 8b was supported.

487   ***Followership and Self-Efficacy***

488   We explored the relationship of AE and ICT with self-efficacy in different cross-lagged

489   models. In addition, we tested whether the interaction of AE (at t1) and ICT (at t1) could predict

490   self-efficacy (at t2). We could not find a significant relationship of AE (at t1) with self-efficacy

491   (at t2), β = -.02, p = .37, nor did ICT (at t1) predict self-efficacy (at t2), β = -.09, p = .11. Hence,

492   Hypothesis 9 was not supported. The interaction of AE (at t1) and ICT (at t1) did also not predict

493   self-efficacy (at t2), β = .01, p = .47. Thus, Hypothesis 10 was not supported. Finally, we found

494   no evidence for Hypothesis 11, as no significant relationship of self-efficacy (at t1) and AE (at

495   t2) was detected, β = .07, p = .15, and as self-efficacy (at t1) did also not predict ICT (at t2), β =

496   .08, p = .19.

497   **Brief Discussion**

498   Overall, we found evidence for some, but not for all of our hypotheses. The results of

499   Study 1 support Kelley's (1992) assumption that followership behaviors are rather stable

500   behavior patterns. Since we found no evidence for the relationships of AE or ICT (at t1) and later

501   job attitudes or self-efficacy (at t2), our results of Study 1 challenge the original idea of

502   followership theory, that followership behaviors are significant predictors for important

503   organizational variables (see, for instance, Kelley, 1992; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). However, the

504   interaction of AE and ICT (at t1) was positively related to organizational commitment (at t2),

505   which corresponds to Kelley's (1992) assumption that exemplary followership leads to desired

506   organizational variables. One reason for the absence of the expected effects could be the length

507   of the time lag between the two measurement waves (nine to 12 months). That is, some effects

508   might have simply vanished over time and, thus, might not have been possible to detect. This

509   would be the case, for instance, if the respondents' leader changed between the two measurement

510   waves, if the proposed effects unfolded too quickly, or if the effects did not last long enough to

511   be detected (for a related analysis of time-lags in leadership research, see Fischer, 2017).

512   Another reason could be that we did not include conditions under which the relationships

513   of followership with job attitudes might be fostered in our first study. Kelley (1988) argued that

514   active and critical followers are the most effective and, thus, active and critical behaviors should

515   be positively related to followership outcomes. However, he also admitted that an exemplary

516   followership style might not always be the preferred style of a certain leader or organization.

517   Therefore, exemplary followership might not always be acknowledged or rewarded. The missing

518   acknowledgement of the followers' efforts of engaging actively and critically in the leadership

519   process could explain why followership behavior does not necessarily increase the follower's job

520   satisfaction.

521   Since our results have considerable implications both scientifically and practically, we

522   conducted a second study to once again test our hypotheses and check whether the results of

523   Study 1 are robust with a bigger sample size and, thus, more statistical power. In addition, we

524   include potential moderator variables to test whether leader-related or organizational variables

525   that may facilitate or even reward exemplary followership can foster the relationship of

526   followership with job attitudes.

527   **Study 2**

528   Compared to Study 1, we made the following changes in Study 2: In addition to the

529   variables that were considered in Study 1, we also tested two moderator variables that were not

530   part of Study 2 (i.e., leader humility and perceived organizational support, see below). Thus,

531   Study 2 went beyond a mere replication of Study 1 and examined two potential new conditions

532   under which the relationships of followership with job attitudes may be fostered. Finally, we

533   used a shorter time-lag than in Study 1 and assessed whether the followers' direct leader (i.e., the

534   person they referred to when responding to the followership questionnaire) had changed between

535   t1 and t2 to rule out potential shortcomings of our initial study design.

536   **Followership, Leader Humility, and Perceived Organizational Support**

537   We argue that leader humility is likely to moderate the proposed relationships between

538   followership and job attitudes. Leader humility comprises leaders' willingness to view oneself

539   accurately, teachability, and the appreciation of the followers' strengths and contributions (Chiu

540   et al., 2016; Owens et al., 2013). Specifically, Kelley (1992) suggests that both actively engaged

541   and independent, critical followers are most valuable for leaders and for organizations. However,

542   he admits that not every leader or organization might actually appreciate active and/or critical

543   followership (Kelley, 1988). Thus, positive relationships of followership behavior with job

544   satisfaction and organizational commitment is likely to depend on leaders' teachability and

545   leaders' appreciation for "exemplary followership" as a valuable resource. That is, followership

546   can only unfold its positive effect on followers' job attitudes when leaders' are willing to learn

547   from followers and appreciate their contributions. Therefore, we expect that high leader's

548   humility facilitates the relationship between followership (at t1) and job attitudes (at t2). Thus,

549   we predict:

550   *Hypothesis 12: AE at t1 will be more positively related to (a) job satisfaction at t2 and (b)*

551   *organizational commitment at t2 when the leader's humility at t1 is high, as compared to when*

552   *leader humility at t1 is low.*

553   *Hypothesis 13: ICT at t1 will be less negatively related to (a) job satisfaction at t2 and*

554   *(b) organizational commitment at t2 when the leader's humility at t1 is high, as compared to*

555   *when leader humility at t1 is low.*

556   In addition to leader humility, we expect that perceived organizational support (POS)

557   moderates the relationship of followership behaviors and job attitudes as another form of

558   appreciation for "exemplary followership" as a valuable resource. This is generally consistent

559   with notions from Organizational Support Theory according to which "employees develop global

560   beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about

561   their well-being" (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 698). Organizational Support Theory

562   (Eisenberger et al., 1986) assumes that the caring, approval, and respect connoted by POS

563   strengthen the employees' beliefs that the organization recognizes and rewards increased

564   performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Meta-analytic results by Kurtessis et al. (2017)

565   suggest that POS is an important link between favorable treatment by the organization and

566   employees' positive orientation toward the organization, psychological well-being, and

567   performance. For example, they report positive relationships of POS with employees'

568   performance–reward expectancy, commitment, and job satisfaction (Kurtessis et al., 2017). In

569   line with the general predictions of Organizational Support Theory and these meta-analytical

570   results, the interaction of the efforts of carrying out an active and independent follower role and

571   its acknowledgement through POS (at t1) should also be positively related to job satisfaction and

572   organizational commitment (at t2). Thus, we predict:

573   *Hypothesis 14: AE at t1 will be more positively related to (a) job satisfaction at t2 and (b)*

574   *organizational commitment at t2 when POS at t1 is high, as compared to when POS at t1 is low.*

575   *Hypothesis 15: ICT at t1 will be less negatively related to (a) job satisfaction at t2 and*

576   *(b) organizational commitment at t2 when POS at t1 is high, as compared to when POS at t1 is*

577   *low.*

578   In addition, we will also investigate as a research question whether the simultaneous

579   occurrence of leader humility and POS (at t1) will strengthen the relationships between

580   followership behaviors (at t1) and job attitudes (at t2), since the acknowledgement of "exemplary

581   followership" might be even more present for the follower, when both the leader and the

582   organization accordingly consider active and critical followership a valuable resource.

583   **Materials and Methods**

584   We again conducted a two-wave survey. In contrast to the time lag between the two

585   measurement waves in Study 1 (i.e., nine to 12 months), we realized a time lag of four months

586   for Study 2. With a shorter time lag, we intended to rule out possible shortcomings of Study 1:

587   Some effects might have simply disappeared over time and thus could not be detected. This

588   would be the case, for instance, if the respondents' leader changed between the two surveys, if

589   the proposed effects unfolded too quickly, or if the effects did not last long enough to be detected

590   (for a related analysis of time-lags in leadership research, see Fischer, 2017). Since there were no

591   other longitudinal studies that studied followership behaviors when we planned our study, we

592   drew from the meta-analysis on relationships between performance and job attitudes by Riketta

593   (2008) to obtain information about suitable time lags. On that basis, we considered four months

594   to be a reasonable time lag to detect effects on attitudinal variables in the context of work. This

595   was also in line with the general recommendation of pertinent literature to use, in case of doubt,

596   a rather shorter time-lag (e.g., Dwyer, 1983; Griep et al., 2021; Voelkle et al., 2012). This study

597   was preregistered at the Open Science Framework

598   (https://osf.io/9q48p/?view_only=b02c98f57f7841129cf6daf42405b410).

599 **_Sample_**

600   We conducted an anonymous online survey via the German "WiSoPanel", an online-

601 access-panel based on voluntary registration (Göritz, 2014). All eligible users were invited to

602 participate in 2021 and 2022. We included only employees with a direct superior to ensure

603 credible responses concerning followership behaviors in organizations. Participants gave their

604 consent for participation within the questionnaire by checking the associated box.[6] At t1, 777

605 respondents completed the questionnaire. However, two cases were excluded because of the

606 respondents' statement not to use the data. Thus, 775 respondents of t1 were invited to

607 participate again at t2. At t2, 628 respondents completed the questionnaire (response rate 81%),

608 while three cases were excluded due to the respondents' statement not to use the data. Following

609 our preregistration, we additionally tried to detect careless responses by following the procedures

610 recommended by Meade and Craig (2012). We tested for zero-within-variance in responses and

611 defined the values in question as missing values. For t1 data, 70 cases were affected regarding

612 leader humility, 28 cases were affected regarding followership, 46 cases were affected regarding

613 job satisfaction and self-efficacy, and 41 cases were affected regarding POS and organizational

614 commitment. For t2 data, 69 cases were affected regarding leader humility, 25 cases were

615 affected regarding followership, 33 cases were affected regarding job satisfaction and self-

616 efficacy, and 39 cases were affected regarding POS and organizational commitment.

617 Furthermore, we computed Mahalanobis Distance overall items and excluded 55 cases that were

618 detected as outliers.

619   The final sample consisted of 570 employees. The mean age was 49.1 years and 55% of

620 the respondents were female, 45% were male. The level of education was distributed as follows:

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[6] Our research is in line with the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki and the Psychologists Code of Conduct of the American Psychological Association. We obtained ethical approval of the University of Münster for Study 2 (approval number 2022-65-ChN).

621   1% had no professional qualification, 42% had a completed apprenticeship, 22% had a university

622   of applied science degree, and 35% had a university degree, and 1% had another degree that was

623   not specified in the questionnaire. Nearly a third (34%) of the respondents worked in the public

624   service sector, 5% worked in the finance service sector (banking or insurance), and 61% worked

625   in another sector (i.e., for instance, other professional services or industry sector). Hence, in

626   Study 2, we tested our hypotheses in a more heterogeneous sample than in Study 1.[7]

627   ***Measures***

628   We used the exact same measures that were used in Study 1 for followership, job attitudes

629   and self-efficacy. Additionally, we measured leader humility with the "Expressed Humility

630   Scale" of Owens et al. (2013) as adapted for the leadership context by Chiu et al. (2016). A

631   sample item was "My supervisor shows appreciation for the unique contributions of others"

632   (nine items in total). Response options ranged from *strongly disagree (1)* to *fully agree (7)*.

633   Following Bracken and Barona (1991), this scale was translated into German and back-translated

634   into the original language (English) by another organizational psychology expert without prior

635   knowledge of the questionnaire. Finally, this back-translation was compared to the original

636   version by a native speaker. POS was be measured by Eisenberger et al. (2001) in the German

637   translation by Klasmeier and Rowold (2020). A sample item was "The organization values my

638   contributions to its well-being" (six items in total). Response options ranged from *strongly*

639   *disagree (1)* to *fully agree (7)*. All questions were in German language.

640   ***Data Analysis Strategy***

641   We applied the same statistical analyses that we used in our initial study. In order to

642   investigate the construct stability of followership behavior, a latent state-trait analysis (Geiser,

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[7] Note that we preregistered our data collection with the intention to generate a sample that was comparable to the sample of Study 1. Since the panel was not successful in providing the desired highly comparable distribution for the sectors, we had to use the resulting, more heterogeneous sample for Study 2.

643 2020; Steyer et al., 1999) was conducted. Furthermore, we again applied LACS models (see

644 Geiser, 2020) to test the hypotheses on the interrelations of followership with the other study

645 variables. For the models that tested the interaction effects of AE and ICT, we again controlled

646 for the autoregressive effects of job attitudes and self-efficacy.

647 *Pre-analyses*

648 **Construct Validity.** In order to ensure the distinctiveness of our study variables, we

649 applied Chi square difference tests to test whether our measurement model fitted the data better

650 than two alternative models both at t1 and t2. In the first alternative model, we specified both job

651 attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) as one common factor. Our model

652 fitted the data better than the alternative model both at t1, $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(5) = 347.902$, $p < .001$, and t2,

653 $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(5) = 290.357$, $p < .001$. In the other alternative model, we specified both organization-

654 related variables (i.e., organizational commitment and POS) as one common factor. Again our

655 model fitted the data better at t1, $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(5) = 186.424$, $p < .001$, and t2, $\chi^2_{\text{diff}}(5) = 165.31$, $p < .001$.

656 Hence, our analyses indicate the distinctiveness of our study variables.

657 **Measurement Equivalence Across Time.** Before testing the hypotheses, we again tested

658 for measurement equivalence across time. According to the tests of measurement equivalence,

659 the strict model was preferred for AE, ICT, job satisfaction, organizational commitment. The

660 strong model was preferred for self-efficacy. Hence, all constructs that were used for

661 longitudinal analysis showed at least strong measurement equivalence (see SM1 for more

662 details).

663 **Results**

664 Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics, the intercorrelations of the latent variables and the

665 reliabilities of the measures of Study 2.

666   *Temporal Consistency of Followership Behavior*

667   The results of Study 2 again revealed that AE was rather stable and trait-like over time as

668   indicated by consistencies exceeding the commonly applied 50% threshold for both AE at time 1

669   (Con[$\tau_{AE,t1}$] = .73, p < .001,) and AE at time 2 (Con[$\tau_{AE,t2}$] = .80, p < .001) as compared to the

670   coefficients that indicate occasion specificity (Osp[$\tau_{AE,t1}$] = .27, p < .001; Osp[$\tau_{AE,t2}$] = .20, p <

671   .001). The model fitted the data well, χ^2(df) = 277.90(151), p < .001, $\chi2/df$ = 1.84, RMSEA = .04,

672   CFI = .98, SRMR = .04. Hence, our results suggest that AE was consistent across time and rather

673   trait-like, which supported Hypothesis 1a.

674   The results of the model for ICT revealed Con[$\tau_{ICT,t1}$] = .58, p < .001, Con[$\tau_{ICT,t2}$] = .63, p <

675   .001, Osp[$\tau_{ICT,t1}$] = .42, p < .001, and Osp[$\tau_{ICT,t2}$] = .37, p < .001. The model fit was good: χ^2(df)

676   = 36.25(24), p = .05, $\chi2/df$ = 1.51, RMSEA = .03, CFI = .99, SRMR = .04. Therefore, ICT was

677   consistent across time and rather trait like. Hence, Hypothesis 1b was also supported.

678   *Followership and Job Attitudes*

679   In the first cross-lagged model, the relationship of AE with job satisfaction was explored.

680   Both autoregressive paths were significant (for AE: β = .80, p < .001; for job satisfaction: β =

681   .67, p < .001). The relationship of job satisfaction (at t1) with AE (at t2) was not significant, β = -

682   .03, p = .26, thereby not supporting Hypothesis 4a in Study 2. However, AE (at t1) was

683   positively related to job satisfaction (at t2), β = .09, p = .02, thereby supporting Hypothesis 2 in

684   Study 2. The model explained 59% of the variance in AE and 52% of the variance in job

685   satisfaction and the model fit was good: χ^2(df) = 634.05(381), p < .001, $\chi2/df$ = 1.66, RMSEA =

686   .03, CFI = .98, SRMR = .04. We received similar results when controlled for a potential change

687   of the reference leader since t1 in addition to the autoregressive paths. Results were then β = .08,

688   *p* = .04, for the relationship between AE (at t1) and job satisfaction (at t2), and *β* = -.03, *p* = .26,

689   for the opposite path.

690   The relationship of AE and organizational commitment was explored in the second cross-

691   lagged model. Both autoregressive paths were significant (for AE: *β* = .75, *p* < .001; for

692   organizational commitment: *β* = .86, *p* < .001). The relationship of AE (at t1) with organizational

693   commitment (at t2) was not significant, *β* = -.05, *p* = .12, thereby not supporting Hypothesis 2b.

694   Organizational commitment (at t1) was positively related to AE (at t2), *β* = .08, *p* = .02, thereby

695   supporting Hypothesis 4b. The model explained 60% of the variance in AE and 72% of the

696   variance in organizational commitment and the model fit was good: χ^2(df) = 432.59(249), *p* <

697   .001, $\chi2/df$ = 1.74, RMSEA = .04, CFI = .98, SRMR = .04. We again received similar results

698   when we additionally controlled for a potential leader change (for the relationship between AE

699   (at t1) and organizational commitment (at t2): *β* = -.04, *p* = .13; for the opposite path: *β* = .08, *p* =

700   .02).

701   The third cross-lagged model explored the relationship of ICT with job satisfaction. Both

702   autoregressive paths were significant (for ICT: *β* = .61, *p* < .001; for job satisfaction: *β* = .72, *p* <

703   .001). We could neither find a significant relation of job satisfaction (at t1) to ICT (at t2), *β* = .03,

704   *p* = .23, nor between ICT (at t1) and job satisfaction (at t2), *β* = .01, *p* = .43. Hence, these results

705   do not support Hypotheses 3a and 5a. The model explained 38% of the variance in ICT and 52%

706   of the variance in job satisfaction and the model fit was again good: χ^2(df) = 196.28(146), *p* =

707   .004, $\chi2/df$ = 1.34, RMSEA = .03, CFI = .99, SRMR = .03.

708   The fourth cross-lagged model included ICT and organizational commitment. Both

709   autoregressive paths were significant (for ICT: *β* = .62, *p* < .001; for organizational commitment:

710   *β* = .84, *p* < .001). No significant relationship of ICT (at t1) with organizational commitment (at

711   t2) could be found, β = -.03, p = .18. Organizational commitment (at t1) was also not related to

712   ICT (at t2), β = .02, p = .34. These results do not support Hypotheses 3b and 5b. The model

713   explained 39% of the variance in ICT and 72% of the variance in organizational commitment

714   and the model fit was good: χ^2(df) = 134.32(68), p < .001, $\chi2/df$ = 1.98, RMSEA = .04, CFI =

715   .98, SRMR = .04.

716   In Hypotheses 6 and 7, we proposed the relationships of AE (at t1) and ICT (at t1) with job

717   attitudes (at 2) to be stronger than those of job attitudes (at t1) with AE (at t2) and ICT (at t2).[8]

718   While we found a significant relationship for AE (at t1) and job satisfaction (at t2) but not for the

719   opposite path, the results of Study 2 support Hypothesis 6a. However, we could not find

720   significant relationships between AE (at t1) and organizational commitment (at t2) or of ICT (at

721   t1) with any job attitude. Therefore, Hypothesis 6b and Hypothesis 7 were not supported.

722   Furthermore, in Hypothesis 8 we posited ICT (at t1) to be less negatively related to job

723   satisfaction and organizational commitment (at t2) when AE (at t1) was high, as compared to

724   when AE (at t1) was low. In Study 2, the interaction of AE (at t1) and ICT (at t1) was not a

725   significant predictor for organizational commitment (at t2), β = .01, p = .37. In addition, the

726   interaction (at t1) did not predict job satisfaction (at t2), β = .01, p = .36. Thus, Hypothesis 8 was

727   not supported.

728   ***Followership and Self-Efficacy***

729   We also explored the relationship of AE and ICT with self-efficacy in different cross-

730   lagged models. The first cross-lagged model included AE and self-efficacy. We could not find a

731   significant relationship of AE (at t1) with self-efficacy (at t2), β = -.07, p = .09, nor did self-

732   efficacy (at t2) predict AE (at t1), β = -.03, p = .55. Note, however, that we applied a two-tailed

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[8] Note that we did not preregister Hypotheses 6 and 7 for Study 2, because our results of Study 1 pointed in the opposite direction than we had expected. However, we obtained different results in Study 2. Hence, we tested all of our hypotheses again in Study 2.

733   test for significance in this model, since the regression coefficient pointed in a different direction

734   than we had expected. Hence, Hypotheses 9a and 11a were not supported. The autoregressive

735   paths were significant (for AE: $\beta = .78$, $p < .001$; for self-efficacy: $\beta = .83$, $p < .001$). The model

736   explained 61% of the variance in AE and 64% of the variance in self-efficacy with a good model

737   fit: $\chi^2(\text{df}) = 628.73(375)$, $p < .001$, $\chi2/df = 1.68$, RMSEA = .04, CFI = .98, SRMR = .04.

738   The relationship of ICT and self-efficacy was explored in another cross-lagged model. The

739   autoregressive paths were again significant (for ICT: $\beta = .59$, $p < .001$; for self-efficacy: $\beta = .85$,

740    $p < .001$). We could not find a significant relationship between self-efficacy (at t1) with ICT (at

741   t2), $\beta = .05$, $p = .34$, which does not support Hypothesis 11b. However, ICT (at t1) was

742   negatively related to self-efficacy (at t2), $\beta = -.12$, $p = .004$. We again applied a two-tailed test

743   for this model, since we had predicted this relationship to be positive. Hence, Hypothesis 9a was

744   also not supported. The model explained 39% of the variance in ICT and 63% of the variance in

745   self-efficacy with a good model fit: $\chi^2(\text{df}) = 211.12(140)$, $p < .001$, $\chi2/df = 1.51$, RMSEA = .03,

746   CFI = .99, SRMR = .03. We received similar results when we additionally controlled for a

747   potential leader change (for the relationship between ICT (at t1) and self-efficacy (at t2): $\beta = -$

748    $.12$, $p = .004$; for the opposite path, $\beta = .05$, $p = .34$).

749   In addition, we tested whether the interaction of AE (at t1) and ICT (at t1) could predict

750   self-efficacy (at t2). The interaction of AE (at t1) and ICT (at t1) did not predict self-efficacy (at

751   t2), $\beta = .05$, $p = .12$. Thus, Hypothesis 10 was not supported.

752   ***Followership, Leader Humility and POS***

753   In Study 2, we tested whether leader humility or POS could be mechanisms that foster the

754   relationships of AE or ICT with job attitudes. The interaction of AE and leader humility (at t1)

755   did not predict job satisfaction (at t2), $\beta = .00$, $p = .46$, and it did not predict organizational

756   commitment (at t2), β = -.02, p = .31. Hence Hypothesis 12 was not supported. The interaction of

757   ICT and leader humility (at t1) did neither predict job satisfaction (at t2), β = .01, p = .43, nor

758   organizational commitment (at t2), β = .03, p = .22. Thus, Hypothesis 13 was not supported.

759   Furthermore, we could neither find a significant relationship of the interaction of AE and POS (at

760   t1) with job satisfaction (at t2), β = .05, p = .08, nor with organizational commitment (at t2), β =

761   .03, p = .17. The interaction of ICT and POS (at t1) could neither predict job satisfaction (at t2),

762   β = -.03, p = .20, nor organizational commitment (at t2), β = -.02, p = .24. Therefore, Hypotheses

763   14 and 15 were not supported. Finally, a three-way interaction of AE, leader humility and POS

764   (at t1) could not predict job satisfaction (at t2), β = -.01, p = .43, nor organizational commitment

765   (at t2), β = .03, p = .08. A three-way interaction of ICT, leader humility and POS did neither

766   predict job satisfaction (at t2), β = .04, p = .07, nor organizational commitment (at t2), β = .01, p

767   = .35.[9]

768   **Discussion**

769   The results of both of our studies support Kelley's (1992) assumption that followership

770   behaviors are rather stable behavior patterns. We found significant relations of job attitudes with

771   active, engaged followership behavior in the cross-lagged models, above and beyond the

772   autoregressive effects in both studies. We also found significant relations of AE (at t1) with job

773   satisfaction (at t2) and of ICT (at t1) with self-efficacy (at t2) in Study 2. The interaction of AE

774   and ICT (at t1), however, predicted organizational commitment (at t2) only in Study 1.

775   Although the regression coefficients (.08 ≤ β ≥ .14) can be described as rather small

776   (Cohen, 1988), the identified effects indicate important findings for three reasons. First, cross-

777   lagged effects are generally hard to find. That is, autoregressive effects are often strong and

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[9] Note that Mplus did not provide standardized coefficients for the three-way interaction models. Thus, for these models, we report unstandardized coefficients.

778 therefore explain much of the variance by themselves (Adachi & Willoughby, 2015; Geiser,

779 2020). Hence, there is often little variance left to be explained by the cross-lagged effects.

780 Second, since our results demonstrate that followership styles are rather stable behavior patterns,

781 predicting change in followership behavior is even more noteworthy. Third, the reported effect

782 sizes are indeed in a typical range as compared to similar studies with cross-lagged models (see,

783 for instance, Riketta, 2008; Sonnentag et al., 2010). However, across both studies, we found

784 mixed results regarding our hypotheses. We will elaborate on these findings below.

785 **Theoretical Implications**

786 Our studies contribute to a better understanding of followership (Kelley, 1992) and its

787 outcomes (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). To go beyond prior research, we tested Kelley's (1992)

788 followership behaviors longitudinally, and explored their relationships to critical job attitudes

789 (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment) and self-efficacy as potential predictors

790 and consequences. Our findings support Kelley's (1992) assumption that followership styles

791 (i.e., AE and ICT) are rather stable behavior patterns. This is an important finding, because a

792 more state-like nature of followership behavior would necessarily shift the focus of future

793 research from general and stable factors to more specific, situational, and contingent factors as

794 followership would then rather be spontaneous, dynamic, or variable. For instance, the common

795 perspective on leadership styles (see Anderson & Sun, 2017; Bass & Avolio, 1995) as consistent

796 behavior patterns of leaders has been challenged most recently. An increasing number of authors

797 argue for considering leader behaviors as more dynamic (see, for instance, Kelemen et al., 2020;

798 McClean et al., 2019). In contrast, our findings suggest that an opposite perspective is adequate

799 for Kelley`s (1992) followership styles. However, several studies could show how leader and

800 follower identities (that did not necessarily correspond to their formal ranks as "leaders" and

801   "subordinates") were (co-)constructed in different leadership situations (e.g., Blom & Alvesson,

802   2014; Larsson & Nielsen, 2021; Van De Mieroop, 2020). Adopting the co-construction approach

803   to followership (see Uhl-Bien et al., 2014), Larsson and Nielsen (2021), for instance, found that

804   leader and follower roles remained abstract in the workplace interactions that they analyzed.

805   Participants rather focused on negotiated, task-oriented, expert or non-expert identities (Larsson

806   & Nielsen, 2021). Hence, a more dynamic or situational perspective on followership can be

807   helpful in those contexts, in which leaders and followers are not determined by their position.

808   Our findings, however, suggest that subordinates tend to enact their follower role rather

809   consistently within a continuum between active and passive, independent and uncritical (see

810   Kelley, 1992), when they interact with their superior leader.

811   It is noteworthy and plausible, however, that ICT is less stable or trait-like than AE, a

812   finding that we consistently observed across our studies. Speaking up in front of the leader can

813   be a risky behavior for followers, particularly when it is done in challenging rather than

814   supportive ways (Burris, 2012). Thus, followers probably consider their concerns carefully

815   before they actually express them to the leader (Bashur & Oc, 2015; Detert et al., 2013).

816   Consequently, they might hold back their contrary view, when they feel that their concern is less

817   important, but they rather have the courage to speak up in situations where they perceive

818   urgency. Therefore, it is plausible that potentially risky critical followership is more dependent

819   on the evaluation of the urgency and appropriateness of a specific situation than the willingness

820   to support the leader through active engagement. Still, even if followership behaviors cannot be

821   seen as fully invariable personality traits, both AE and ICT are more trait-like than state-like

822   according to our findings.

823   With regard to the relationships of AE and ICT with critical job attitudes (i.e., job

824   satisfaction and organizational commitment) and self-efficacy, we obtained mixed results. In

825   Study 1, we did not find significant relationships of AE or ICT (at t1) with job attitudes (at t2)

826   that we had predicted. Furthermore, we did not detect any significant relation of followership

827   with self-efficacy. In contrast, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (at t1) were

828   positively related to AE (at t2). In Study 2, we obtained similar results with three exceptions.

829   First, in Study 2, we did not find a relationship of job satisfaction (at t1) with AE (at t2), but AE

830   (at t1) predicted later job satisfaction (at t2). Second, ICT (at t1) was negatively related to self-

831   efficacy (at t2) in Study 2, although we had predicted a positive relation. This relationship was

832   not significant in Study 1. Third, our results of Study 1 suggest that high levels of both AE and

833   ICT (i.e., an exemplary followership style, see Kelley, 1992) lead to higher organizational

834   commitment, thereby supporting Kelley's (1992) assumption that high levels of both AE and

835   ICT imply desirable organizational behaviors. However, we could not detect this interaction

836   effect in Study 2. One reason for the relatively low bivariate associations across time and for the

837   missing interaction effects in our studies could be that our analysis was restricted by low

838   variance in followership styles. Most participants in both studies adopted either the pragmatist or

839   the exemplary followership style (see SM2 for more details). Furthermore, the high mean values

840   of both followership dimensions in both studies (see Tables 1 and 2) might indicate a certain risk

841   of social desirability of the questions, which has also been discussed in previous studies (see, for

842   instance, Gatti et al., 2014; Ribbat et al., 2020).

843   While some of our results indicate that followership behaviors can predict later job

844   attitudes or self-efficacy, most of our results either point in the opposite direction or indicate no

845   significant relationships at all. Those results challenge the original idea of followership theory

846   (Kelley, 1992; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) that followership behaviors are significant predictors for

847   organizational variables. However, our studies do provide at least a few hints for the potential of

848   followership behaviors as predictors for job attitudes and self-efficacy. In sum, our findings raise

849   important questions for future followership research.

850   First, the mixed findings across our two studies suggest that future research needs to

851   elaborate on time lags in longitudinal research. An increasing number of authors calls for the

852   appropriate inclusion of time aspects both in research designs and in theory, which has been

853   neglected in leadership and organizational research for a long time (see Fischer et al., 2017;

854   Griep & Zacher, 2021; Griep et al., 2021; Shamir, 2011). In Study 1, we used data from a

855   preexisting, more comprehensive data set that had a time lag of nine to 12 months. Since there

856   are some comparable studies that used shorter time lags to detect interrelations of job attitudes

857   and behaviors (for an overview, see, for instance, Riketta, 2008), we used a shorter time lag (i.e.,

858   four months) in Study 2. We indeed found two relationships of followership behaviors (at t1)

859   with later job satisfaction and self-efficacy (at t2) that we did not detect in Study 1. These

860   findings suggest that followership behaviors might affect job attitudes or self-efficacy in the

861   short-term rather than in the long-term. Hence, our findings correspond to the analysis of

862   leadership research by Fischer et al. (2017) in view of two points: Fischer et al. (2017) concluded

863   that effects at the team- or individual level unfold rather quickly, while they do not last very

864   long. Furthermore, they stated that effects on behaviors typically take longer to unfold and

865   persist longer than do effects on cognitions or emotions (Fischer et al., 2017). Still, we need

866   more information on the role that time plays both in followership and leadership research to

867   develop theory further and to better understand the nature of the studied effects (Castillo &

868   Trinh, 2017; Griep et al., 2021). We, therefore, highly recommend future research to consider

869   different time lags in order to learn in which time frames the effects of followership behaviors

870   occur and when they potentially decline. In our two studies, we could demonstrate that

871   followership behaviors are relatively stable, thereby supporting Kelley's (1992) conceptions of

872   rather consistent followership styles. Hence, our findings can guide future followership research,

873   since "the temporal stability of variables and the stability of effects on these variables are criteria

874   for deciding on repeated-measures designs" (Fischer et al., 2017, p. 1740).

875   Second, we encourage future research to explore potential mechanisms that might appear

876   to be the missing links for the relationships we could not detect in our studies. Benson et al.

877   (2015), for instance, suggest that the situational context affects how leaders see followership

878   behaviors. That is, attempts to influence a leader's decisions in front of others might not be

879   appreciated by the leader. However, while this might be obvious for independent and critical

880   behavior, we would still expect the leader to acknowledge the follower's support through active

881   engagement. Hoption (2016), for instance, demonstrated that the followers' provision of help to

882   leaders corresponds to greater leader relationship satisfaction. Thus, it is somewhat surprising

883   that we could find a positive relation of AE (at t1) with job satisfaction (at t2) only in Study 2,

884   and no positive relation of AE (at t1) with organizational commitment (at t2) in both of our

885   studies. Future research should, therefore, explore potential moderator and mediator variables

886   that might uncover the most detrimental and beneficial conditions for positive followership

887   outcomes.

888   We suggest that the leaders' preferences and reactions to certain followership styles should be a

889   good starting point to detect the missing links between active and critical followership and

890   followership outcomes. We firstly tested leader humility, which was not confirmed as a

891   moderator in our study despite our prediction. However, Shen and Abe (2022), for instance,

892   found an indirect effect of followership behaviors on job performance through perceived

893   supervisor support. Moreover, we expected POS to strengthen the employees' beliefs that the

894   organization recognizes and rewards increased performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and

895   thereby foster the relationships between active and critical followership with job attitudes. The

896   corresponding hypotheses, however, were not supported by our data. We could neither find a

897   three-way interaction of followership behavior, leader humility and POS. One reason for this

898   could be that leader humility, and POS were highly correlated ($r = .60$; see Table 2). Future

899   research could further explore which organizational environments affect followership behaviors

900   and its potential outcomes. Blair and Bligh (2018), for instance, argue that values and norms

901   focused on hierarchy and control limit active follower beliefs in shared responsibility for

902   leadership. The findings of Carsten et al. (2010) echo this argument by suggesting that followers'

903   ability to take initiative is diminished by strong bureaucracy.

904   Third, we explored the relationship of followership with self-efficacy for the first time. In

905   our hypotheses, we postulated that the followers' self-efficacy substantially results from

906   ascribing (at least parts of) the leadership success to own efforts when carrying out an active and

907   independent follower role as they experience mastery in this way. According to Social Cognitive

908   Theory (Bandura, 1997), mastery experience is considered to have the strongest impact on the

909   development of self-efficacy. We could only detect a negative relation of ICT (at t1) with later

910   self-efficacy (at t2) in Study 2, although we had predicted a positive relation. One reason could

911   be again that ICT was not appreciated by the leaders. The followers' efforts to contribute

912   independently then might had been not successful and, thus, they were experienced as a personal

913   failure rather than personal mastery. In addition, we did not detect any significant relationship of

914   self-efficacy (at t1) with later followership behaviors (at t2), which might result from strong

915   autoregressive paths or inconvenient time-lags. Future research should further investigate

916   whether followership can predict self-efficacy or vice versa with different time-lags. Thereby,

917   research should also clarify whether or under which circumstances exemplary followership

918   implies mastery experience and to which extent social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997) is

919   applicable to followership research. Moreover, future studies could additionally build on other

920   sources for self-efficacy. If other sources than mastery experience played a more important role

921   than we had expected based on Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997), different effects could

922   have cancelled each other out. This would be the case, for instance, if simply taking directions

923   (i.e., uncritical followership) led to vicarious experience for some followers, while high levels of

924   independent thinking led to mastery experience for others.

925   **Practical Implications**

926   Our findings provide interesting information for followers, leaders, and organizations. We

927   could demonstrate that followership behaviors are relatively stable behavior patterns, even

928   though it is possible that they change under certain circumstances. Thus, Kelley's (1992)

929   "Identify Your Followership Style Questionnaire" indeed allows for assessing one`s own general

930   behavioral tendencies and preferences regarding the interaction with the leader. Hence, our

931   findings support Kelley's (1992) conceptual idea of followership styles in this respect. Since

932   followership, here, is enacted from a formal follower rank or position (see also Uhl-Bien et al.,

933   2014), followership styles should be particularly relevant in the contexts of hierarchical

934   organizations. It may be more difficult to "Identify Your Followership Style", when the

935   reference leader is not apparent in non-hierarchical organizational structures. This would be the

936   case, for instance, in self-organized or agile teams, in which leader and follower roles shift more

937   fluently (see, for instance, Srivastava & Jain, 2017; Zhu et al., 2018).

938   Our finding regarding the consistency of Kelley's (1992) followership behaviors is

939   valuable for followers, because knowing one's own style allows for reflecting on how the style

940   might fit or not with the leader and/or organization. This is important, because many studies have

941   demonstrated that person-organization-fit, for example, increases satisfaction and reduces the

942   employee's intention to leave the organization (Verquer et al., 2003; Jin et al., 2018).

943   Furthermore, person–supervisor fit is associated with greater leader satisfaction and with a better

944   relationship between leader and follower (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Marstand et al., 2016). For

945   leaders, the assessment of the followers' individual styles may help to understand why followers

946   tend to behave in certain ways. This, in turn, can facilitate an adequate handling of leader-

947   follower-interactions.

948   For organizations, recognizing followership styles as rather stable behavioral patterns can

949   help to inspire development programs for followership styles that are needed or preferred within

950   the organization. An increasing number of authors calls for such development programs (see, for

951   instance, Bufalino, 2018; Hoption, 2014; Logan & Ganster, 2007). While complementing

952   effective leadership training with followership development programs (Bufalino, 2018; Hoption,

953   2014) might be a useful approach to foster desired followership behaviors, our findings suggest

954   that it might not be sufficient to simply call for active and/or critical followership to obtain

955   positive organizational outcomes. According to our study, satisfied and committed followers are

956   more likely to participate actively in the leadership process. Thus, our findings at least indirectly

957   point to satisfactory working conditions and appropriate organizational goals as beneficial

958   settings for active followership.

959   Following Andersson's (2018) argumentation that followership is an important social

960   resource for organizational resilience, organizations might care about developing desired

961 followership to successfully meet future challenges that could emerge from a pandemic or from

962 other far-reaching developments like, for instance, technological change, disruptive innovation,

963 or climate change. Consequently, followers, leaders, and organizations should reflect on what

964 styles of followership they want to have or show, and which styles they need. Kelley's (1992)

965 operationalization of followership behaviors (i.e., AE and ICT) can be a useful tool to learn

966 about the way followers actually carry out their follower role. Still, there is more research needed

967 to better understand the impact that different followership styles can have both on the individual

968 and on the organizational level.

969 **Limitations**

970   There are several limitations to this study. First, we used only self-report data, which

971 implies certain risks of common-method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). We addressed related

972 problems by using a time-lagged design. However, future research could complement the

973 evaluations of the followers with their leader's perceptions or with independent observations to

974 further decrease such risks (for related recommendations, see also Gatti et al., 2014; Ribbat et al.,

975 2021).

976   Second, an increasing number of authors (see, for instance, Antonakis et al., 2010;

977 Bastardoz et al., 2023; Wulff et al., 2023) pointed to the threat of making false causal claims due

978 to endogeneity problems. Since our analysis relied on self-assessment assessed with survey

979 measures both for behaviors and attitudes, our analyses were at risk to suffer from such

980 endogeneity problems. However, the inclusion of multiple measurement points and the cross-

981 lagged design should have reduced the risks for simultaneity bias and reverse causality in our

982 studies. Still, causal inferences should be made with due caution. Future studies, therefore, could

983 apply a variety of methods to further test the causal relationships between followership behaviors

984   and followership outcomes (e.g., experimental designs or multi-method designs with

985   independent observations).

986   Third, we used data from different samples that had been collected within different time-

987   lags. We used data from a preexisting more comprehensive data set that had a time lag of nine to

988   12 months in our first study. Since we assumed that a positive impact of followership may have

989   vanished by this time and since there are some comparable studies that used shorter time lags to

990   detect interrelations of job attitudes and behaviors (for an overview, see, for instance, Riketta,

991   2008), we used a shorter time-lag (i.e., four months) in our second study. While our findings

992   suggest that followership behaviors affect job attitudes and self-efficacy rather short-term than

993   long-term, change in relatively stable followership behaviors might unfold rather slowly.

994   However, several relationships that we had hypothesized were neither significant in Study 1 nor

995   in Study 2. While our studies still can be an orientation for designing time-lags for followership

996   research, we recommend future research to consider different time lags in order to learn in which

997   time frames the effects of followership behaviors occur and when they potentially decline.

998   Furthermore, future studies could include more than two time points for a more comprehensive

999   understanding of the longitudinal relationships.

1000   Finally, the sample of our first study consisted of employees that were employed within 11

1001   organization from the service sector. The sample of our second study was a heterogeneous

1002   convenience sample from an online respondent pool. Hence, we cannot claim generalizability of

1003   our findings, even if several findings were consistent across both of our studies. Future research

1004   should, however, further investigate followership behavior in various samples and different

1005   sectors to study the generalizability of the impact of active and critical followership.

1006   **Conclusion**

1007   Our study contributes to a better understanding of the Kelley's (1992) followership

1008   behaviors and its relations to important job-related variables (i.e., job attitudes and self-efficacy).

1009   Active engagement and independent critical thinking were both found to be stable and rather

1010   consistent followership behavior patterns across two different samples and within two different

1011   time-lags. Furthermore, we could detect positive relationships between followership behaviors,

1012   job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and a negative relationship between

1013   independent, critical thinking and self-efficacy above and beyond the autoregressive effects.

1014   However, across the two studies, we obtained mixed results for several relationships that we had

1015   predicted. While some of our hypotheses were only supported in one of the two studies, other

1016   relationships that we had predicted were neither significant in Study 1 nor Study 2. Hence, more

1017   research is necessary to explore potential mechanisms (including time) that link followership

1018   with relevant outcomes. Still, our studies open up promising avenues for future research and

1019   provide starting points for its conceptual designs (i.e., for instance, with regard to the treatment

1020   of followership behaviors as rather consistent behavior patterns or the definition of appropriate

1021   time-lags for longitudinal followership research).

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1364   **Tables**

1365   **Table 1.** Descriptives, intercorrelations between latent variables, and internal consistencies of

1366   Study 1.

1367   **Table 2.** Descriptives, intercorrelations between latent variables, and internal consistencies of

1368   Study 2.

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1370   **Figures**

1371   **Figure 1.** Hypotheses for the cross-lagged models.

1372   **Figure 2.** Hypotheses for the interaction effects.

1373   **Figure 3.** Interaction Effect of AE (t1) and ICT (t1) on Organizational Commitment (t2).

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1375   **Supplemental Material**

1376   **Supplemental Material 1 (SM1).** Testing For Measurement Equivalence.

1377   **Supplemental Material 2 (SM2).** Distribution of AE and ICT mean values (at t1).

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Descriptives, intercorrelations between latent variables, and internal consistencies of Study 1

Note. N = 184. AE = Active engagement; ICT = Independent, critical thinking; Values along the diagonal represent internal consistency ('ω or "ωs). * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

1   **Table 1**

2   *Descriptives, intercorrelations between latent variables, and internal consistencies of Study 1*

Model	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Followership: AE (t1)	5.18	0.87	.96''									
2. Followership: ICT (t1)	4.62	1.00	.41***	.75''								
3. Job satisfaction (t1)	5.03	1.14	.20*	-.11	.86'							
4. Organizational commitment (t1)	5.34	1.18	.27**	-.05	.56***	.78'						
5. Self-efficacy (t1)	5.27	0.95	.58***	.31***	.20*	.31***	.87'					
6. Followership: AE (t2)	5.16	0.88	.80***	.24*	.33***	.32***	.52***	.98''				
7. Followership: ICT (t2)	4.79	0.91	.32**	.86***	.08	.16	.36***	.41***	.69''			
8. Job satisfaction (t2)	5.96	1.12	.05	.01	.72***	.41***	.12	.17*	.04	.88'		
9. Organizational commitment (t2)	5.20	1.25	.27**	.03	.45***	.96***	.34***	.32***	.26*	.39***	.75'	
10. Self-efficacy (t2)	5.27	0.89	.45***	.18	.16*	.31***	.81***	.58***	.34***	.16	.31***	.86'

3   *Note.* $N = 184$. AE = Active engagement; ICT = Independent, critical thinking; Values along the diagonal represent internal

4   consistency ('ω or "ωs).

5   * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Descriptives, intercorrelations between latent variables, and internal consistencies of Study 2

Note. N = 570. AE = Active engagement; ICT = Independent, critical thinking; Values along the diagonal represent internal consistency ('ω or "ωs). * *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01. *** *p* < .001.

1 **Table 2**

2 *Descriptives, intercorrelations between latent variables, and internal consistencies of Study 2*

Model	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Followership: AE (t1)	5.10	1.07	.99''													
2. Followership: ICT (t1)	4.61	1.08	.54***	.84''												
3. Job satisfaction (t1)	5.02	1.21	.54***	.22***	.91'											
4. Organizational commitment (t1)	4.79	1.45	.46***	.08	.73***	.80'										
5. Self-efficacy (t1)	5.31	1.11	.71***	.57***	.61***	.38***	.93'									
6. Perceived organizational support (t1)	4.34	1.37	.45***	.16**	.70***	.84***	.44***	.95'								
7. Leader humility (t1)	4.70	1.42	.49***	.19***	.66***	.59***	.38***	.60***	.91'							
8. Followership: AE (t2)	5.08	1.01	.80***	.30***	.41***	.41***	.58***	.40***	.38***	.99''						
9. Followership: ICT (t2)	4.68	1.05	.50***	.69***	.17**	.13*	.44***	.18***	.12*	.61***	.85''					
10. Job satisfaction (t2)	5.09	1.16	.47***	.15**	.77***	.64***	.53***	.58***	.55***	.54***	.31***	.90'				
11. Organizational commitment (t2)	4.73	1.42	.42***	.04	.63***	.92***	.34***	.72***	.56***	.49***	.23***	.77***	.79'			
12. Self-efficacy (t2)	5.34	1.12	.56***	.35***	.45***	.32***	.81***	.33***	.27***	.69***	.54***	.60***	.40***	.93'		
13. Perceived organizational support (t2)	4.31	1.34	.37***	.15**	.58***	.72***	.35***	.79***	.56***	.45***	.26***	.72***	.85***	.38***	.95'	
14. Leader humility (t2)	4.65	1.41	.43***	.09	.53***	.54***	.32***	.51***	.75***	.48***	.23***	.68***	.63***	.31***	.63***	.92'

3 *Note.* $N = 570$. AE = Active engagement; ICT = Independent, critical thinking; Values along the diagonal represent internal

4 consistency ('ω or ''ωs).

5 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Figure 1

Hypotheses for the cross-lagged models
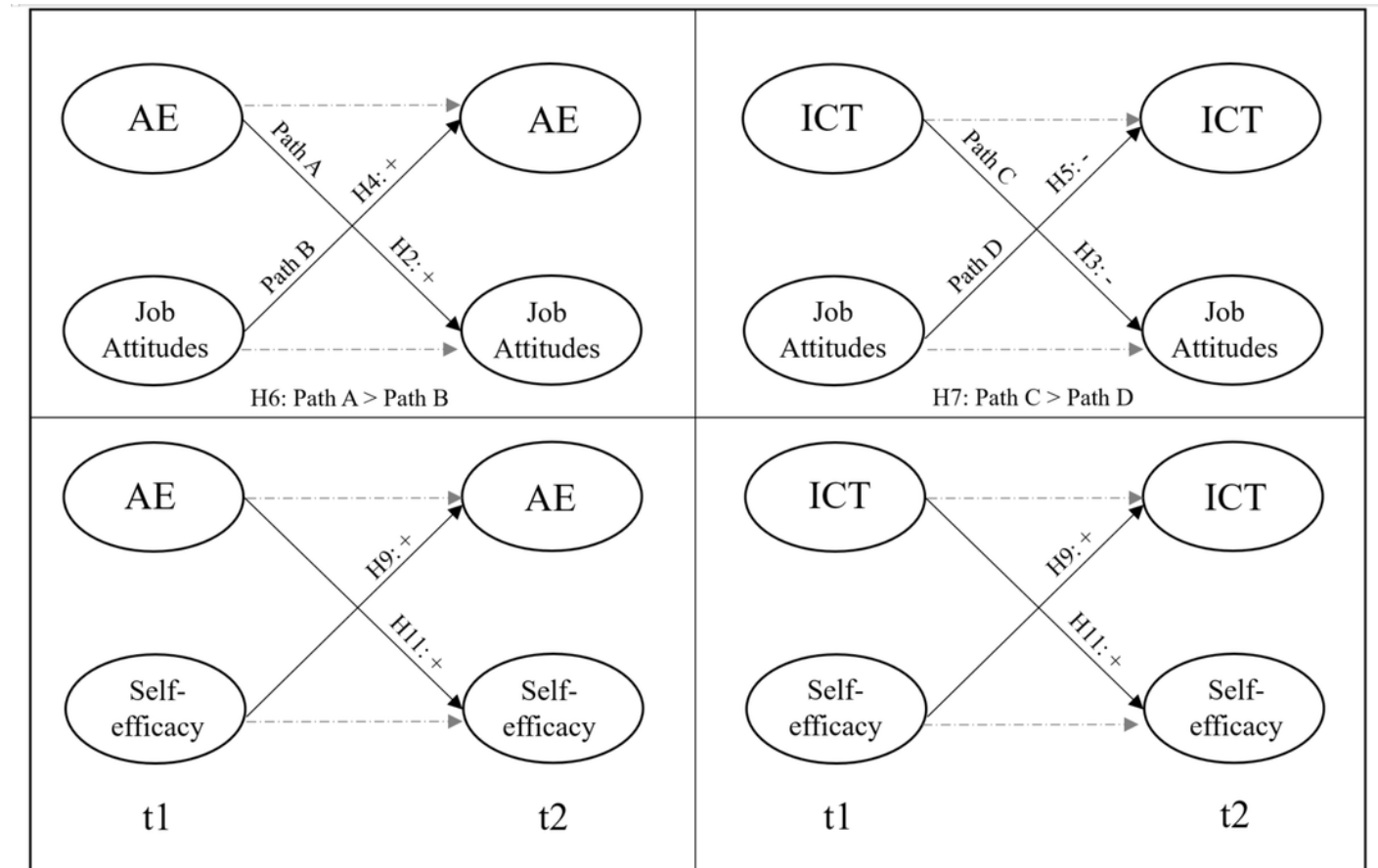
Figure 2

Hypotheses for the interaction effects
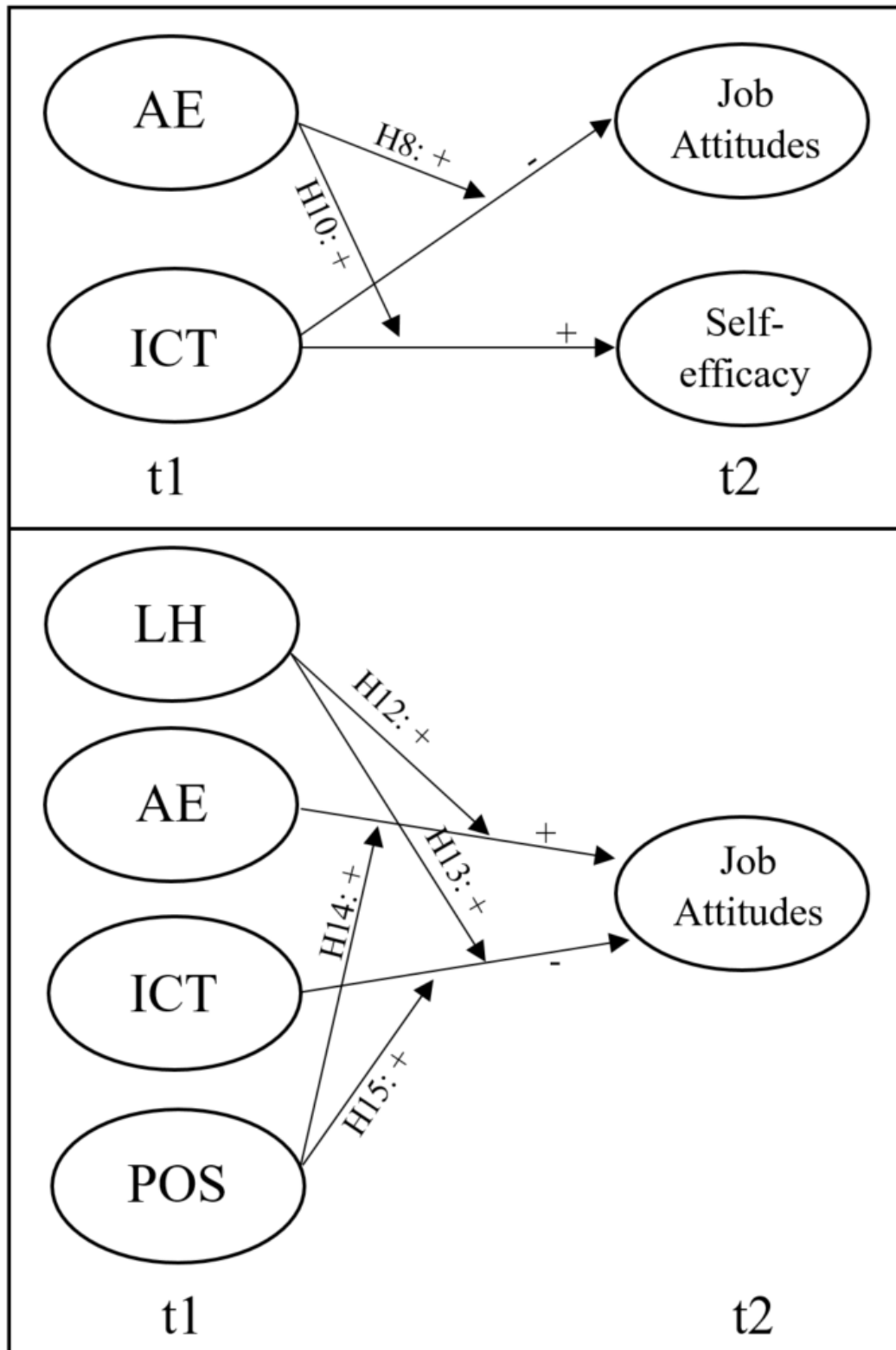
Figure 3

Interaction Effect of AE (t1) and ICT (t1) on Organizational Commitment (t2)

Note. AE = Active Engagement; ICT = Independent, Critical Thinking