

DO GOAL-FOCUSED LEADERS CURTAIL SUBORDINATE PRODUCTION DEVIANCE?
CONTRIBUTING TO THE VALIDITY EVIDENCE OF THE GFL MEASURE

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department

Of Psychology

University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements of the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

By

Lars U. Johnson

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to contribute to the validating evidence of the goal-focused leadership construct measure in two ways. First, in order to establish the invariance of the Colbert and Witt (2009) measure, I fitted a series of nested item factor models to two independent samples. The results revealed the measure is partially invariant across samples. Second, I present a conditional process model that investigates the relationship of goal-focused leadership with production deviance—a performance facet (Sackett, 2002) characterized by aberrant or behaviors. The path analytic results were supportive of the hypothesized negative relationship between goal-focused leadership perceptions and self-reported production deviance through emotional exhaustion. Applying Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) and investigating the moderating role of conscientiousness at each path in the *ab* indirect relationship, findings revealed that higher (lower) levels of conscientiousness reduce (increase) emotional exhaustion (*path a*) and subsequent engagement in production deviance (*path b*).

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Chapter I

Irrespective of industry, market position, or profit status, organizations are fundamentally concerned with the outcomes of a single, yet seemingly ubiquitous process—leadership. Aside from research and practice focused on general mental ability, the study of leadership is among the oldest topics in organizational science. Since early papers on the functional origin, definition, and form of leadership (e.g., Lewin, Lippitt, & White, 1939; Lewin, 1944; Stogdill, 1950), the contribution of leadership research has been equally notable as it is expansive—reaching beyond the halls of the “ivory tower” to organizations public, private, and non-traditional with respect to those often described in the methodology sections of seminal or recent refereed papers. Undeniably, the leadership challenge is as old as it is studied. Interestingly, after over half a century of research and practice, substantive questions remain.

What are some of the primary contributions of leadership research to the workplace? Can leadership be studied in its entirety, or is the sum less than its component parts? Whereas these questions can be answered to some degree, scholars would likely agree that there is still much to be explored. For example, Bass (1997) suggested that universal conceptualizations of leadership are often applicable across individual leaders, meaningfully explaining patterns in leader behavior. However, Bass also asserted that variability is inevitable and is often a function of contingent factors, such as subordinate motivation, culture, or situational contexts, suggesting that continued study is warranted to further understand conditional factors of influence and their boundaries. Studies of leadership provide evidence that, contingencies aside, leadership is optimized through integrated task- and relation-oriented approaches (Bass, 1960, 1990, 1997; Blake & Mouton, 1964; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Whereas I agree that integrated approaches are of significant value, there is much to learn by isolating leader behaviors and further exploring theoretical boundaries and practical significance. This is especially true when considering the

expansion of criteria investigated in leadership research after the shift from dimensional research to style.

Following papers by House (1971), Burns (1978), and Seltzer and Bass (1990) that highlighted the value-added by broader leadership measures that assessed “style,” the field shifted from targeted explorations of leader initiating structure and individual consideration to style research—often capturing elements of leader initiation and consideration along the way. Nonetheless, results of a turn of the century meta-analysis show that initiating structure and individual consideration, which I also refer to as leader initiation and leader consideration throughout this paper, are still quite meaningful as independent constructs, which is arguably why the dimensions are often embedded in the measurement and theoretical specification of the transformational and transactional leadership styles (Judge, Piccolo, & Illies, 2004; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Judge et al. (2004) found that consideration ($\rho = .48$) and initiating structure ($\rho = .29$) are both meaningfully related to leadership outcomes, and that the relationship of initiating structure with group-organization performance was stronger than that of leader consideration. This finding coincides with arguments pertaining to how initiating structure is task-focused, promotes goal-alignment, and reduces task-detrimental ambiguity (House, 1971, 1996; Bass, 1990; Judge et al., 2004; Messick, 2005). Building upon this position and recent studies, an important aim of this study is to investigate the relationship of goal-focused leadership—as a facet of initiating structure—with criteria that emerged after the expansion to contextual leadership (i.e., style) measurement.

Following the previous contributions of Colbert and Witt (2009) and Perry, Witt, Penney, and Atwater (2010), this study focuses on contributing to the existing validity evidence of the goal-focused leadership measure by first assessing whether or not Colbert and Witt’s measure is

invariant across a sample of 482 active duty military personnel deployed in non-combat zones and a sample of 310 light construction workers. An instrument is considered measurement invariant when it measures identical constructs with the same construct across groups, time points, or methods of measurement (Schoot, Lugtig, & Hox, 2012). The extent to which a measure is invariant is central to comparing items, latent factor scores, or relationships within or between study groups. When a measure is found to be non-invariant, comparisons are ill-advised as there is evidence that the measure is interpreted different across conditions (i.e., samples).

A second way in which I attempt to provide a potential contribution to the validity of the goal-focused leadership measure is by extending upon previous studies in an investigation of outcomes that are likely associated with goal-focused leadership. Goal-focused leadership behaviors are best described within an initiating structure and path-goal framework. Goal-focused leaders promote goal priority and achievement by orienting subordinates to task and goal achievement (Colbert & Witt, 2009; Perry et al., 2010). Congruent with earlier works on initiating structure, Colbert and Witt found that subordinates with leaders who engage in high levels of goal-focused behavior have higher levels of performance and higher levels of goal congruence with their supervisor. Exploring the boundaries of goal-focused leadership as a resource to employees, Perry et al. found that for most employees, goal-focused leadership was either negatively related or unrelated to resource depletion (emotional exhaustion). Regarding performance behaviors, disposition towards group goals, and perceived resources, goal-focused leadership is especially of interest. Many research developments and contributions to the job performance and emotional exhaustion literatures took place after scholars transitioned from investigations that targeted the relationship of initiating structure with outcomes of interest to correlates of broader leadership style constructs.

Borman and Motowidlo (1993, 1997) conceptualized performance as a two dimensional construct composed of task performance—the effectiveness with which employees carry out core job duties—and contextual performance—supportive or helping behaviors that contribute to the social fabric, or social capital, of the organization. Their dual-dimension conceptualization emerged after the proliferation of broader leadership style investigations. A few years later, the performance domain was expanded further to include behaviors that began to populate Presumably attributable to timing, leadership style research occupied journal space dedicated to dual-dimension performance research—virtually ignoring initiating structure as an independent predictor. Continuing the expansion of the performance domain, Sackett (2002) argued that counterproductive work behaviors are facets of job performance, as they explain variance through the willful dismissal or subversion of normative performance behaviors. Following Judge and colleagues' (2004) meta-analysis, and arguably attempting to revive investigations of dimension-specific leadership outcomes, Keller (2006) found that initiating structure was minimally related to transformational leadership ($r = .19$) and accounted for unique variance across multiple performance measures in a longitudinal design—suggesting that a closer look at initiating structure is of benefit to performance-related outcomes.

Following Judge et al. (2004) and Keller (2006), I investigated the relationship between goal-focused leadership and production deviance. Production deviance is a type of counterproductive work behavior that includes such behaviors as delaying progress on assignments or intentionally failing to complete a task or reducing effectiveness (Hollinger, 1986; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, & Kessler, 2006). Unlike more overt constructs, such as aggression, production deviance is passive and difficult to detect (Spector et al., 2006). Nevertheless, deviant workplace behaviors are costly—responsible

for an estimated \$20 billion in annual losses and about one-third of business failures (Litzky, Eddleston, & Kidder, 2006). Studies linking leadership to deviance have primarily focused on abusive leadership, finding that destructive leadership behaviors are positively related to deviant workplace behaviors (Tepper, Henle, Lambert, Giacalone, & Duffy, 2008; Velez & Neves, 2016). Because it's unlikely that leaders can be simultaneously destructive and goal-focused, destructive leadership likely acts as a barrier to success. To the contrary, by providing employees with instrumental support, goal-focused leaders likely diminish or remove the effects of mechanisms (e.g., ambiguity, resentment, or perceived lack of support) that undermine task or goal achievement.

Penney, Hunter, and Perry (2011) and Velez and Neves (2016) suggested that employee deviance, and counterproductive behaviors in general, are likely the product of a perceived threat to resources (e.g., abusive supervision). Employing a Conservation of Resources Theory (COR; Hobfoll, 1989) framework, I concur with their assertion that perceived threats engender counter-normative employee behaviors. Alternatively, goal-focused leaders are likely to contribute to an individual's store of resources, reducing the likelihood of resource depletion in the form of emotional exhaustion. Perry and colleagues (2010) found evidence in support of this conclusion. For employees other than those low in both emotional stability and conscientiousness, goal-focused leaders did little to take away from individual resources—with some combinations of emotional stability and conscientiousness leading to reduced reports of exhaustion.

As previous findings have illustrated the indirect and direct effects of leadership and emotional exhaustion on counterproductive work behaviors (e.g., Wheeler, Halbesleben, & Whitman, 2013), I offer a conceptual model that depicts a potential psychological process in which emotional exhaustion explains meaningful variance in the relationship between the goal-

focused leadership and production deviance. Overall, I expected that the indirect effect of goal-focused leadership to be negative—a product of the negative relationship between goal-focused leadership and emotional exhaustion and the positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and production deviance. I further expected that the relationship to be conditional upon individual conscientiousness. I present in Figure 1 the conceptual model. Referring to it, I argue that the negative relationship between goal-focused leadership and emotional exhaustion is likely to be stronger (more negative) among workers high (low) in conscientiousness. At *path b*, employees higher (lower) in conscientiousness are expected to report lower (higher) levels of production deviance.

The potential contributions of this study are two-fold. First, I attempt to extend upon previous goal-focused leadership studies to explore the extent to which resource depletion (i.e., emotional exhaustion) explains the link between leadership and employee engagement in deviant behavior. Goal-focused leadership, by some employees, may be viewed as a demand (Perry et al., 2010). The current student takes a potential first step in the direction of understanding how this perception may translate to seeking negative coping mechanisms. Additionally, the current study provides evidence of potential boundary conditions that offer a potential explanation as to why some individuals engage in higher levels of deviant behaviors than others. Second, this study might make a contribution to the measurement of goal-focused leadership as a facet of the initiating structure leadership dimension literature. Rather than redefining the initiating structure construct space or negatively contribute previously cited construct confusion (Schriesheim, House, & Kerr, 1976), I argue that goal-focused leadership is a practical appendage that promotes benefits associated with goal congruence (i.e., performance-or attitudinal-related outcomes; Colbert & Witt, 2009; Witt, 1998). I also contend that this study may make an

important practical contribution. Goal-focused leadership lacks the dimensional complexity associated with many style-based leadership constructs by focusing on the structuring and alignment aspect of initiating structure. Specifically, unlike transformational leadership or servant leadership, goal-focused leadership does not assess or require a strong social exchange component. This is not to suggest that style-based research is misdirected or of little benefit; the exact opposite is true. However, the conceptual nature of the goal-focused leadership construct is simple; minimizing or removing obstructions to task or goal achievement is likely to yield a meaningful return on investment. Therefore, leaders who execute or are trained to execute goal-focused behaviors are of dual utility to employees and organizations.

Contribution to the Validity Evidence of the Goal-Focused Leadership Measure

Validity has assumed many meanings, several of which suffer from ambiguity or gross inaccuracies. Arguably, the most common definitional (or conversational) error describes validity as a property of an assessment or test. One potential reason that the definition of validity has become so confused is that researchers often inadvertently suggest that validity is a property via the start of every paper—the title. For instance, I point to the title of the current section of this paper. Although rather long, I contend it is more aligned with the true nature of validity than what is often seen in articles with titles that include phrases, such as “scale validation.” Indeed, such titles convey the notion that the featured test or assessment has reached a pinnacle in research, and when findings are sufficient, the featured test or assessment is then an acceptable standard for future research. Whereas these articles often feature rigorous methodological approaches that are well-aligned to theory in support of the underlying construct, it is important scholars to ensure that any shared work that contributes to the validity evidence of a measure avoid seemingly trivial misnomers.

Validity is the meaning of the scores associated with a measure (Messick, 1995). Rather than suggest that a measure is valid, the interpretation of the associated scores must be valid (Cronbach, 1971). To contribute to the existing validity evidence provided by Colbert and Witt (2009) and Perry et al. (2010), I investigated the extent to which their measure is invariant across two independent samples. This will provide clearer direction in interpreting measurement components such as item means and factor loadings. Because the goal-focused leadership is relatively new and has only been featured in two peer-reviewed studies, a measurement investigation of this nature is both timely and required. First introduced by Byrne, Shavelson, and Muthen (1989), measurement invariance strengthens validity arguments and allows further investigation of the occurrence, determinants, and outcomes of a latent factor and its associated scores (Schoot, Lugtig, & Hox, 2012). Although tests of invariance are not a sufficient criteria for publication or scientific contribution, continued investigations that utilize any measure and seek to substantiate comparisons and develop meaningful inferences are strengthened by such tests.

After the completing tests of invariance, I presented additional evidence of goal-focused leadership's relationship with the stress-induced state of emotional exhaustion and subsequent counterproductive work behaviors as depicted by the conceptual model in Figure 1. Perry and colleagues and Colbert and Witt established that the interactive relationship between Big Five personality traits and goal-focused leadership is well-suited for investigations outcomes such as performance-related employee behaviors. Thus, the current study offers a potential contribution by replicating the relationship between goal-focused leadership and emotional exhaustion established by Perry et al. (2010) and expanding upon the performance-domain relationship in Colbert and Witt's paper.

Production Deviance

Counterproductive work behaviors—a broad, higher-order term describing categorically similar yet distinct constructs—are intentional acts that undermine organizational norms, potentially bringing harm to the organization, its members or customers, or other stakeholders (Spector & Fox, 2005). Whereas Sackett's (2002) definition of counterproductive work behaviors was limited to behaviors counter to an organization's interests, Spector and Fox expanded the definition to include behaviors that may potentially harm other stakeholders with legitimate interests in the organization. Allowing for broader investigation, Spector and Fox's definition opened important substantive channels of inquiry, such as production deviance.

The literature suggests that counterproductive work behaviors are typically emotionally-motivated (Spector & Fox, 2005) or responsive acts (Spector, 2011). Following an environmental appraisal, Spector and Fox's (2005) stressor-emotion model suggests that counterproductive work behaviors are preceded by negative emotional experiences. Whereas this may be true in many cases, their model is dependent upon negative emotionality—effectively monopolizing (or ignoring) the variance space potentially held by contributors to counterproductive behaviors. This is not to suggest that Spector and Fox's model is misspecified or inadequate; their model was well thought out and applicable in many scenarios. However, their model simply does not cover situations that are not centered in emotional events—a point Spector and Fox pointed out in their paper. Recent studies suggest that counter-normative behaviors may also be perceived as a point of advantage for employees in threat of distress or imminent loss of resources (Krischer, Penney, & Hunter, 2010).

Production deviance is regarded as a passive form of displaced aggression. Individuals engaging in production deviance do so through various methods of withholding effort (e.g., working slowly, less effectively, or ignoring assigned duties (Hollinger, 1986; Robinson &

Bennett, 1995; Spector et al., 2006). Because these deviant behaviors often go unnoticed and subsequently unpunished (Neuman & Barron, 1997; Spector et al, 2006), determining the target(s) may sometimes prove difficult; however, many scholars agree that the likely target is often the organization (Hollinger, 1986; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). As mentioned earlier, the costs and consequences associated with production deviance are far from trivial.

In many ways, production deviance can be conceptualized as a means of regaining some degree of control in unfavorable or hostile situations (Neuman & Baron, 2005). For instance, employees capable of high degrees of emotional regulation may view stressors as a call to action—engaging in counterproductive work behaviors as a response perceived to yield some net gain, but unrelated to a change in emotional state. I propose that production deviance is instrumental to the extent that it allows individuals to prevent the loss of resources. COR theory (Hobfoll, 1989) describes resources as objects, conditions, personal characteristics, or energies that reduce the potential detrimental effects of environmental stressors. Individuals continually appraise the environment in search of potential threats to resources or opportunities to gain additional resources—conservation of resources being salient in the presence of potential threats. Penney et al. (2011) found that employees low in individual resources are more likely to engage in counterproductive work behaviors. They argued that this is likely to case because employees see counterproductive behaviors as a way to counteract psychological strain or obtain additional resources. Bowling and Eschleman (2010) also found that employees turn to counterproductive work behaviors when facing workplace stressors (i.e., constraints). Indeed, production deviance likely acts as a mechanism that alleviates some degree of perceived threat or concern associated with a source of resource drain.

For example, an employee facing workplace challenges (e.g., increased seasonal production quotas) may view guidance towards specific goals as additional work. Because workplace challenges are high, likely resulting in a sparse supply of individual resources due to recent expenditure, the employee may choose to ignore the leader's directive in order to conserve resources. Doing so likely (temporarily) diminishes the perceived threat. Alternatively, an employee may also view a unit goal-related directive as a lack of support on behalf of the leader. That is, because leaders are aware of individual and group workloads, directives that depart from immediate tasks may be viewed as a form of punishment or as being intentionally apathetic to the employee's well-being or performance outcomes. As a result, the employee is likely to turn to production deviance as a way of coping with the perceived transgression (Krischer et al., 2010) by passively "sticking it" to her or his superior.

Employee Response to Leadership as a Resource

Best described as a process, leadership is concerned with persuading employees to align personal goals and objectives with those of the unit or organization (Hogan, Curphy, & Hogan, 1994). Leadership becomes necessary when social conditions permit a collection of individuals to be described as a group (two or more people), have a common task, and assigned responsibilities (Stogdill, 1950). When leadership is deficient or absent, employees likely focus on personal goals or career objectives. Stogdill referred to leadership as an attribute of the organization—not an individual. Employees are inclined to adhere to guidance provided by leaders because of the power they are granted by the organization (French & Raven, 1959). Described as a two-dimensional construct, leadership reflects authority/influence through initiating structure and individual consideration. Whereas individual consideration reflects the social or relational component of leadership, initiating structure is most concerned with persuading employees through structuring and alignment of priorities.

Following seminal contributions on transformational and transactional leadership, leadership studies for nearly two decades focused on broadly specified style constructs (Judge et al., 2004; Keller, 2006). Relational leadership styles (i.e., transformational or servant leadership) were touted as key to developing employee commitment and facilitating performance (Avolio & Bass, 1988; Bass, 1985, 1997; Graham, 1991; Seltzer & Bass, 1990; Schriesheim, 1980). Judge and colleagues' (2004) meta-analysis revealed nontrivial construct validity evidence of leader initiating structure. They also found that its relationship to performance outcomes is likely contextually driven (i.e., military versus business setting). Keller (2006) also provided evidence that outcomes of initiating structure are likely a function of context. In a longitudinal study of a sample of research and development employees, Keller found that the performance of employees working in development was more strongly influenced by initiating structure, whereas employees working in research were more strongly influenced by transformational leadership. He argued that this difference was likely due to research requiring more originality and development requiring more direction towards milestones. Similarly, Judge and his colleagues found that initiating structure was strongly related to performance outcomes in the military and that the strength of this relationship declined in environments that featured less structure. However, both studies found that initiating structuring made meaningful contributions to outcomes of interest irrespective of setting or general environmental structure—suggesting that employees are likely to benefit universally from task-oriented support.

Although much of the discussion surrounding leadership revolves around subordinate outcomes, leaders are likely motivated to increase positive valences associated with task or goal directives (House, 1971). Goal-focused leadership captures the alignment and prioritizing facets associated with leader initiating structure. Colbert and Witt (2009) stated that goal-focused

leaders move beyond basic definitions of initiating structure and path-goal leadership by providing detailed information as to how goals can be achieved. A more granular task and goal alignment leadership is likely beneficial, as the link between tasks and goals may not always be defined in a manner that provides a clear path to performance. Role ambiguity or a lack of task- or goal-related clarity likely reduces the potential development of positive task-associated valences.

By providing structure (e.g., guidance), leaders concerned with establishing positive valences and removing barriers are likely instrumental to employees in at least two ways. First, at minimal, these leaders create an accessible support channel for employees in need of guidance. Organizations sponsoring environments that support shared resources create what Hobfoll (2011) referred to as resource caravans—channels or known locations of resources that are readily available to employees. Organizations likely call upon leaders to act as resource gatekeepers and facilitate the growth of these resource conduits or spaces. However, leaders can similarly create resource-rich environments within an assigned workgroup. Goal-focused leaders—concerned with task and goal priorities—likely do so regardless of the organization’s mandate for leadership expectations. A leader’s motivation to meet organizational objectives is arguably the driving force that structures task and goals for subordinates, providing resources along the way. Second, goal-focused leaders likely reduce the number of potential threats to employee resources. Leaders who focus on structure and prioritize tasks are viewed as effective, and structure is positively associated with job satisfaction, satisfaction with the leader, and motivation (Judge et al., 2004). This is likely because goal-focused leaders reduce perceived demands associated with a lack of clarity, thereby allowing subordinates to conserve resources that might have been expended on attempts to complete a task or goal in situations of

uncertainty. When organizations or leaders create environments that are supportive of employee task and goal achievement, employees are less likely to seek alternative means of completing objectives due to uncertainty (Hobfoll, 2011; Krischer et al., 2010; Penney et al., 2011).

Leaders perceived as being high in goal-focused leadership are likely to have subordinates who comply with normative performance behaviors. Colbert and Witt (2009) found that goal-focused leadership increases goal congruence between leaders and subordinates in addition to being positively related to performance. As opposed to destructive leadership behaviors that promote counterproductive work behaviors (i.e., abusive leadership; Tepper et al., 2008; Velez & Neves, 2016), goal-focused leadership likely reduces subordinate inclinations to engage in production deviance. This prediction is supported by meta-analytic evidence that shows initiating structure is the leadership dimension most strongly related to group and organization performance (Judge et al., 2004). Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, and Roberts (2008) found that in addition to being negatively related to initiating structure, deviant behaviors had a strong negative relationship with in-role performance ($r = -.48, p < .00$). Taken together, these findings suggest that leader initiating structure increases the likelihood that employees will engage in performance-supportive behaviors and decrease the likelihood of behaviors that undermine individual or group performance. In line with COR, I believe that goal-focused leadership provides a channel for employee resources by directly supporting task and goal achievement in addition to supporting employees in conserving extant resources—reducing the likelihood that employees will perceive a need to engage in counter-normative behaviors.

Accordingly, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1: Goal-focused leadership is negatively related to production deviance.

Emotional Exhaustion

Burnout has emerged as a popular term that describes a wide range of stress-related topics. However, when people describe their experiences with burnout, they usually focus on a single component—emotional exhaustion (Maslach, 2003; Maslach Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Often considered the central component of the three-part burnout model (Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne, 2003; Pines & Aronson, 1988; Shirom, 1989), emotional exhaustion is as a chronic state of resource depletion—both emotional and physical (Cropananzo et al., 2003; Wright & Hobfoll, 2004). The other two components, depersonalization and diminished personal accomplishment, are characterized by attempts to distance oneself from others and reduced efficacy beliefs, respectively (Maslach et al., 2001). Whereas each component of burnout is vital to understanding burnout as a psychological phenomenon, emotional exhaustion is most representative of workplace strain resulting from environmental stressors (Cropanzano et al., 2003).

One reason that employees experience emotional exhaustion is a perceived loss of control (Ito & Brotheridge, 2003; Jackson & Schuler, 1983; Jackson, Scwab, & Schuler, 1986; Tubre & Collins, 2000). When the path to achieving a desired objective is complex or ambiguous, exhaustion invoking uncertainty sets in (Ito & Brotheridge, 2001). COR holds that threats (i.e., uncertainty) are managed by dedicating the appropriate resources to resolving the issue (Hobfoll, 1989). However, negative consequences associated with task uncertainty or other objective-related threats can likely be averted when leaders intervene (House, 1996). House (1971, 1996) argued that effective leaders support employees by dismantling barriers or providing alternative routes to achievement. Regarding goal-focused leadership, this is likely accomplished through ensuring that subordinates understand both role and responsibility by clarifying tasks and objectives, relaying their relationship to an overarching goal, and prioritizing tasks and objectives in a way that enhance performance outcomes (Colbert & Witt, 2009; Perry et al.,

2010). Densten (2005) and Mulki, Jaramillo, and Locander (2006) found evidence in support of this premise. In their respective studies, the researchers found that leadership behaviors seeking to establish a supportive environment and increase motivation were negatively related to emotional exhaustion. Following these findings, it seems plausible that leader behaviors that support employees by targeting (reducing) potential role or task ambiguity issues are likely to aid employees in circumventing burnout. Aligning with theoretical arguments specified by Perry et al. (2010) and in attempt to replicate their main effect relationship, I propose:

Hypothesis 2: Goal-focused leadership is negatively related to emotional exhaustion.

Emotional exhaustion serves as an estimate of the cumulative effects of workplace stressors (Gaines & Jermier, 1983; Shirom, 1989). Because its assessment reflects a chronic state, it is likely that sustained exposure to stressors increases the likelihood that employees experiencing emotional exhaustion seek alternative means of resource conservation (Hobfoll, 1989, 2011) to offset the associated effects (Allen & Greenberger, 1980; Bolton, Harvey, Grawitch, & Barber, 2012). In situations where external resources are not readily available or are insufficient, employees may turn to production deviance. The literature shows that employees who are emotionally exhausted may engage in counterproductive work behaviors as a coping mechanism and method to reduce psychological strain (Bolton et al., 2012; Krischer et al., 2010) because they lack the cognitive or tangible resources to do otherwise (Jaarsveld, Walker, & Skarlicki, 2010). Accordingly, I propose:

Hypothesis 3: Emotional exhaustion is positively related to production deviance.

Multiple studies have examined emotional exhaustion as a mediator between leadership behaviors and performance-related outcomes. Aryee, Sun, Chen, and Debrah (2008), in a sample

of manufacturing supervisor-supervisee dyads, found that destructive leadership behaviors were negatively related to job dedication—described as self-discipline, working hard, and following the rules (Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996). In a later study of abusive supervision in fifty-five workgroups, Chi and Liang (2013) found that emotional exhaustion mediated the relationship between abusive supervision and withdrawal among employees that engaged in high-frequency expressive suppression or low-frequency cognitive appraisals. Similar to this study, Mulki and colleagues (2006) explored the indirect effects of participative leadership and person-job fit on organizational deviance through emotional exhaustion and job attitudes. They found that both predictors were negatively related to emotional exhaustion, which partially mediated the relationship between the dual predictors and organizational deviance. Each of the studies made clear an essential factor in their respective indirect relationships—the role of resources.

Resources are essential in everyday life, especially in the workplace (Hobfoll, 1989, 2011). A lack of goal or task clarity likely leads to internal and external chaos. Internally, employees may become confused about their individual responsibilities or expectations (e.g., how the task or goal is best achieved). Externally, a lack of clarity may cause employees to overstep boundaries or mistakenly assume a task or goal was assigned to a colleague. In either case, employees potentially expend unintended resources while attempting to determine the appropriate course of action. Goal-focused leaders are likely instrumental in these situations because they make clear what is expected of individuals and the unit. In doing so, goal-focused leaders reduce the likelihood that individuals experience internal chaos as well as chaos between colleagues. Stated differently, goal-focused leadership reduces potential threats to resources by ensuring that employees understand individual and group expectations, in addition to providing a path for allocating and directing individual (and group) resources towards achievement. Hence, I

argue that the relationship of goal-focused leadership with production deviance is indirect through emotional exhaustion. COR suggests that the probability of experiencing emotional exhaustion and engaging in counterproductive work behaviors increases as individuals exhaust resources (Hobfoll, 1989, 2011); however, goal-focused leadership is likely to curb this relationship by removing barriers and providing instrumental guidance and structure (House, 1971, 1996). Thus, I propose:

Hypothesis 4: The relationship of goal-focused leadership with production deviance is indirect through emotional exhaustion.

The Moderating Role of Conscientiousness

The Five Factor Model has emerged as the leading personality taxonomy in the organizational science literature. Prior to the resurgence of personality in the literature led by McCrae and Costa (1987), the Five Factor Model (questionnaire approach) or the “Big Five” (lexical approach) were hardly known, and personality scholars were without a consensus on an organizing framework for personality research (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). John et al. (2008) argued that the Big Five provide such a framework—acting as a descriptive system for the five well-established personality traits and as an integrative function for other personality traits and systems. Since its introduction, the Big Five/FFM have been featured in over 3,000 publications (John et al., 2008), many of which explored the role of personality in the workplace.

Although Hogan (2005) argued that each of the Big Five/FFM traits accounts for meaningful variance in workplace outcomes, I turn to the most consistent non-cognitive, individual differences predictor of performance-related criteria—conscientiousness. Conscientiousness is associated with orderliness, dependability, being responsible, and an orientation towards achievement (John et al., 2008). Employee conscientiousness influences the relationship between leadership perceptions and outcomes (Judge, Bono, Illies, & Gerhardt,

2002; Perry et al., 2010; Zheng et al., 2015). However, because of the paradigm shift following the introduction of transformational and transactional leadership to the literature, only a limited number of studies have focused on granular leadership behaviors (i.e., initiating structure and goal focus). Perry et al. (2010) found that goal-focused leadership was negatively related to emotional exhaustion and that this relationship was stronger (weaker) among workers at higher (lower) levels of conscientiousness. Because highly conscientious people are more likely to prepare for potential obstructions, conscientiousness is likely to act as a defense against stressors that lead to emotional exhaustion—an argument in line with that of Perry et al. Hence and to replicate previous findings, I propose at *path a*:

Hypothesis 5: Conscientiousness moderates the relationship between goal-focused leadership and emotional exhaustion; the negative relationship is stronger among individuals approaching higher (versus lower) levels of conscientiousness.

Researchers have primarily focused on emotional exhaustion as a focal criterion or the main effects of emotional exhaustion on outcomes of interest (e.g., Cropanzano et al., 2003; Halbesleben & Bowler, 2007; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Studies have yet to explore the conditional role of personality traits, such as conscientiousness. Even for studies focusing on the link between emotional exhaustion and counterproductive work behaviors, moderators have been limited to job attributes (e.g., Aryee et al., 2008; van Jaarseld & Walker, 2010) rather than individual attributes. I submit that conscientiousness is also likely to moderate the relationship between emotional exhaustion and production deviance. Highly conscientious individuals, even when faced with exhaustion, are less likely to find engaging in production deviance reasonable means of recouping or maintaining resources. Applying COR, conscientious individuals likely have more resources in general, affording them more opportunities to invest prior to and during

periods of chronic stress or even strain. Because of this, I expect that highly conscientious employees are least likely to engage in choose counter-normative options as means of coping.

Accordingly, I propose at *path b*:

Hypothesis 6: Conscientiousness moderates the relationship between emotional exhaustion and production deviance; the positive relationship is weaker among individuals approaching higher (versus lower) levels of conscientiousness.

Employees high in conscientiousness likely maintain a reservoir of personal resources attributable to characteristic preparation, planning, and concern for carrying out directives. Whereas conscientiousness and associated resources are unlikely to provide complete protection from chronic stressors and emotional exhaustion, high-conscientiousness employees likely experience lower levels of resource depletion and strain. In contrast, individuals low in conscientiousness are likely more exposed to resource threats, some of which may be acceptable or characteristic job demands. For this reason, employees who are low in conscientiousness may perceive goal-focused leadership as both a resource and a stressor. Although the leader's behaviors are supportive, a general lack of buffering resources may cause these employees to perceive guidance as a threat due to a perceived lack of control. This lack of control likely drives employees low in conscientiousness to engage in production deviance as a restorative mechanism. Because control plays an integral role in minimizing the effects of stressors and strain (Karasek, 1979), low-conscientiousness employees are also likely to experience higher levels of emotional exhaustion. Thus, goal-focused leadership is likely to indirectly lead to production deviance, through emotional exhaustion, when employees are low in this trait.

Accordingly, I propose:

Hypothesis 7: Conscientiousness moderates the indirect relationship of goal-focused leadership with production deviance through emotional exhaustion; the negative relationship is stronger among individuals approaching higher (versus lower) levels of conscientiousness.

Control Variable

I included emotional stability as a covariate in hypothesis testing because of its relationship with experienced negative emotionality and resource depletion (e.g., Buhler & Land, 2003; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2009; LePine, LePine, & Jackson, 2004). Additionally, Perry et al. (2010) found that goal-focused leadership was detrimental to individuals that reported low levels of emotional stability. Controlling for emotional stability allowed for stronger inferences to be drawn about the effect of goal-focused leadership on emotional exhaustion and production deviance. Additionally, modeling emotional stability as a covariate allowed any unique variance associated with the conditional role of conscientiousness to be expressed in each step of the regression model.

Chapter II

Method

Sample and Procedure

I tested all hypotheses using two independent samples. In Sample 1, 482 uniformed military personnel deployed overseas nested within 42 units participated in a survey during duty hours (81% male, 63% White, 17% Black, and 51% = ages 22-30). In Sample 2, 284 of 311 (91%; 27 cases were dropped due to data missing not at random) light construction and engineering employees nested within 38 supervisors participated in a pencil-and-paper survey at the start of the workday in a breakroom. In Sample 2, restrictions in the research agreement did not permit the collection of demographic data.

Measures

I present a complete list of items for the respective constructs in Appendix A. Other than emotional exhaustion in Sample 1 and the personality constructs assessed in Sample 2, participants answered to items using a 5-point response scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). In Sample 1, participants responded to items about emotional exhaustion using a 5-point frequency scale (1 = *never*, 5 = *very often*). For the personality items in Sample 2, participants answered using a 9-point scale (1 = *extremely inaccurate*, 9 = *extremely accurate*). For all measures, high scores reflect high levels of the construct. Cronbach's alpha reliability estimates for all measures are presented in Table 1.

Goal-focused leadership. I used four items from the Colbert and Witt's (2009) scale (e.g., "This supervisor follows up to make sure the job gets done") to assess goal-focused leadership.

Emotional exhaustion. In Sample 1, I assessed emotional exhaustion using six of the emotional depletion items (e.g., "My job made me feel fatigued") from Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, and Kelloway's (2000) Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale (JAWS). In Sample 2, I used five items that assessed emotional exhaustion (e.g., "I feel used up at the end of the workday") from the Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter (1996).

Production deviance. I used three items that assessed production deviance (e.g., "Purposely failed to follow instructions") from the Counterproductive Work Behavior Checklist (CWB-C; Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, & Kessler, 2006).

Personality. In Sample 1, personality was assessed using three items for conscientiousness (e.g., "I pay attention to details") and three items for emotional stability (e.g., "I get stressed out easily") from the IPIP representation of Goldberg (1992) Big Five markers

scale. In Sample 4, personality was assessed using eight items for conscientiousness (e.g., “efficient”) and eight items for emotional stability (e.g., unenvious) from Saucier (1994).

Chapter III

Results

Test of Measurement Invariance

Conceptually, measurement invariance refers to the equivalence of a construct measure across a range of conditions (i.e., time, populations, measurement method; Kline, 2011). The statistical properties of a construct measure as it relates to invariance can be assessed by fitting a series of confirmatory factor models that impose specific and increasingly restrictive constraints in each subsequent model. Because these models are nested, likelihood ratio ($\chi^2\Delta$) tests are used to determine whether or not successive models are equivalent. Additionally, models are fit simultaneously across groups, allowing for each group to independently contribute to the overall χ^2 value. The models used to test the overall measurement invariance hypothesis as described by Kline (2011) and Schoot et al. (2012) include the following:

1. Configural invariance – this is the most basic test of measurement variance that assumes the factor structure of the latent construct is equivalent across group (i.e., Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the theoretical factor structure).
2. Metric invariance – this is a measurement model that tests whether or not respondents between groups differ in the perceived meaning of the latent construct; this is accomplished by constraining factor loadings to be equal across groups. These factor loadings (or regression coefficients) indicate how much an individual item explains the latent factor.
3. Equal intercepts – this is a measurement model that constraints intercepts to be equal in order to determine if the meaning of the level of the intercepts are equal across

- groups. That is, when all indicators are held at zero, the intercept represents the average value of the latent score as it relates to the given indicator.
4. Scalar invariance – this is a measurement model in which both loadings and intercepts are constrained to equal; this test implies that the construct (factor loadings) and levels of the items (intercepts) are equal across groups.
 5. Full uniqueness measurement invariance – also known as strict invariance, this model has two levels and constrains item-level residual variances and factor variances to be equal across groups; this determines if the latent construct is measured identically across groups.

Prior to implementing steps for assessing measurement invariance recommended by Schout and colleagues, I used a confirmatory approach to assess the fit of the hypothesized factor structure independently in Samples 1 and 2. Because goal-focused leadership was assessed using a unidimensional item-level measure, item responses were treated as categorical due to the likelihood of multivariate non-normality in item-level data. Employing the MPlus Version 7.4 statistical software package (Muthén & Muthén, 2006), I used WLSMV (weighted least squares) estimation to fit each confirmatory factor model. In addition to the χ^2 test statistic, MPlus provides an estimate of the comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI; Bentler & Bonnett, 1980), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger & Lind, 1980), and weighted root mean square residual (WRMR; Muthén & Muthén, 1998). Due to the sensitivity of χ^2 to sample size (Bollen, 1989), (mis)fit indices act as acceptable indicators of model fit when CFI > .95, TLI > .90, RMSEA < .10, and WRMR < 1.00 (Jackson, Gillaspay, & Purc-Stephenson, 2009; Yu, 2002). In Sample 1, the item factor model displayed good fit, $\chi^2(2, N = 482) = 1.36, p = .51, CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00, WRMR = 0.11$). The goal-focused leadership

item factor model in Sample 2 also fit the data well, $\chi^2(2, N = 310) = 1.29, p = .53, CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00, WRMR = 0.14$). Taken together, acceptable fit of each of the measurement models suggested that it was appropriate to continue with the test of measurement invariance.

Inter-item correlations from the goal focused leadership measure and results of each item factor model are presented in Tables 1 and 2. Configural invariance, also known as weak factorial invariance, was established by fitting a baseline model that assessed whether or not the factor structure of goal-focused leadership measure was invariant across groups, $\chi^2(4) = 2.21, p = .70, CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00, WRMR = 0.16$. In the next step, I implemented the metric invariant model by constraining all factor loadings to be equal. This model fit the data well, $\chi^2(4) = 16.70, p = .02, CFI = 1.00, TLI = 0.99, WRMR = 0.16$. However, the likelihood ratio test revealed that the metric invariance model was a significantly better fit to the configural model, $\chi^2\Delta(3) = 10.84, p = .01$. Stated differently, the fit of the configural model was significantly different from that of the metric model. At this point in the test of invariance, a significant difference between the fit of the configural model and the metric model suggests that the item factor loadings are likely non-invariant. To address this issue, I followed procedures described by Schout et al. (2012) and allowed the factor loading of Item 2 to load freely as the modification indices suggested this would lead to the highest amount of change in the model χ^2 value. Doing so produced a model that fit the data well $\chi^2(6) = 10.98, p = .09, CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00, WRMR = 0.50$. However, this model was also significantly different from the configural model, $\chi^2\Delta(2) = 10.84, p = .05$. Whereas the improved fit suggests an approach to partial metric invariance, at least one item remained non-invariant between groups. After reviewing the modification indices, factor loadings for Items 2 and 3 were released resulting in a fourth estimated model that fit the data well, $\chi^2(5) = 2.43, p < .79, CFI = 1.00, TLI = 1.00, WRMR =$

0.19. Additionally, the fit of this model was not significantly different when compared to the configural model, $\chi^2\Delta(2) = 1.17, p = .28$, thus providing reasonable evidence of partial metric invariance. Whereas these findings are not as strong as full metric invariance (or higher), inferences and cross-group comparisons related to the factor loadings and overall structure of the goal-focused leadership measurement can be made with a reasonable degree of confidence (Kline, 2011; Schoot et al., 2012). Without establishing (partial) scalar invariance, it is difficult to develop conclusions about the intercepts and factor means in each sample with the highest degree of certainty. However, partial metric invariance does allow some degree of interpretation here. Because at least two items were invariant, one can conclude that the variability in the values of the factor means follow some appreciable pattern. Thus, cautious interpretations can be made and tested in future studies.

Hypothesis Testing

First, because the data were collected at a single point in time using the same methodology, I employed a series of general specific models using confirmatory factor analysis. Whereas one goal of this approach is to assess the distinctiveness of each measured construct, this method also allows a test of the potential impact of common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). This approach allowed me to assess the amount of variance explained by the hypothesized factor structure versus a general “method” factor and compared it to the 25% threshold in published studies (Williams, Cote, & Buckley, 1989). In Sample 1, the method factor accounted for 29% of the variance explained in the hypothesized model, whereas the method factor only accounted for 17% of the explained variance in Sample 2. Although the variance accounted for by the method factor in Sample 1 exceeded the 25% threshold, this is likely due to unmeasured attributes that accompany the underlying relationships between the constructs. In other words, it’s possible that the degree of the interrelatedness

between the factors also captured some unknown (unmeasured) relationship in the estimated method factor, subsequently imposing a “penalty” when compared to the 25% threshold seen in studies. Thus, I proceeded with my analysis of the hypothesized relationship and I provide a discussion of the potential impact of common method bias in the discussion section.

In both samples, subordinates were nested in supervisors. Addressing the structure of the data, I estimated a null random intercepts model for goal-focused leadership, emotional exhaustion, and production deviance using maximum likelihood estimation in each sample in order to determine if there were significant between group differences. For both samples, estimates of between group variance in goal-focused leadership perceptions were nonsignificant (Sample 1, $\tau^2 = 0.03$, $SE = .03$, $ICC(1) = .02$, $p < ns$; Sample 2, $\tau^2 = 0.01$, $SE = .01$, $ICC(1) = .02$, $p < ns$). In Sample 1, the between group variability for emotional exhaustion was significant ($\tau^2 = 0.09$, $SE = .04$, $ICC(1) = .08$, $p < .05$) whereas this was not the case for production deviance ($\tau^2 = 0.03$, $SE = .05$, $ICC(1) = .03$, $p < ns$). In Sample 2, the between group variability for emotional exhaustion ($\tau^2 = 0.00$, $SE = .01$, $ICC(1) = .00$, $p < ns$) and production deviance ($\tau^2 = 0.00$, $SE = .02$, $ICC(1) = .00$, $p < ns$) were both nonsignificant. In both samples, I used MPlus to simultaneously estimate each mediation model. However, I used multilevel analysis in Sample 1 due to the significant between group variability and sufficiently large $ICC(1)$. For this sample, I centered all individual level predictors at their grand mean and estimated the respective group means at level two.

Table 3 presents model estimated correlations and descriptive data. Results of Sample 1 and Sample 2 simple mediation analyses are presented in Table 4. I followed the recommendations of Becker (2005) and Spector, Zapf, Chen, and Frese (2000) for inclusion and reporting of statistical covariates. If emotional stability failed to reach significance at $p < .05$, I

removed the covariate from the regression model as its contribution to the estimated model R^2 was likely trivial. Spector and colleagues (2000) noted that the relationship of individual difference variables that capture one's ability to self-regulate or proclivities for experiencing negative emotionality (e.g., emotional stability or negative affectivity) likely bias model estimates by effectively neutralizing the relationship between predictors and the criterion. Tables 4 and 5 present all path estimates and reflect the paths that did not include emotional stability.

Consistent with Hypothesis 1, goal-focused leadership was negatively related to production deviance (Sample 1: $r = -.27, p < .001$; Sample 2: $r = -.21, p < .001$). Hypothesis 2 stated that the relationship between goal-focused leadership and emotional exhaustion would be negative. Replicating the relationship found by Perry et al. (2010), Hypothesis 2 was supported in Sample 1 ($\gamma = -.19, SE = .04, p < .001$) and Sample 2 ($b = -.26, SE = .07, p < .001$).

Hypothesis 3 stated that emotional exhaustion would be positively related to engagement in production deviance. This hypothesis was also supported in Sample 1 ($\gamma = .27, SE = .07, p < .001$) as well as Sample 2 ($b = .45, SE = .07, p < .01$). Hypothesis 4 referred to the indirect (ab) relationship of goal-focused leadership with production deviance through exhaustion. Supporting Hypothesis 4 in both samples, the indirect effect was significant (Sample 1, $ab = -.05, SE = .02, p < .01$; Sample 2, $ab = -.12, SE = .03, p < .001$). In Sample 1, goal-focused leadership was significantly related to production deviance ($\gamma = -.19, SE = .06, p < .01$), providing evidence of a partially mediating effect of emotional exhaustion. The relationship of goal-focused leadership with production deviance was not significant in Sample 2 ($b = -.11, SE = .10, p = .28$); thus, emotional exhaustion fully mediated the relationship between goal-focused leadership and production deviance in this sample.

Recall that Hypotheses 5, 6, and 7 reflect the moderating role of individual conscientiousness. To test these hypotheses, I followed recommendations made by Edwards and Lambert (2007), Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes (2007), and Hayes (2013) for testing moderation hypotheses in mediation models. Predictors were centered at their grand mean, and the conditional effect was calculated at the mean and ± 1 SD above and below conscientiousness at *path a* and *path b*. Hypothesis 5 stated that conscientiousness would moderate the relationship between goal-focused leadership and emotional exhaustion such that the negative relationship would be strongest (weakest) for employees reporting higher (lower) levels of conscientiousness.

Results from the moderated mediation regression analysis for each sample are presented in Table 5. The predicted moderating effect was supported in Sample 1 ($\gamma = -.09$, $SE = .04$, $p < .05$) and Sample 2 ($b = -.13$, $SE = .05$, $p < .05$). Providing additional support for Hypothesis 5, the relationship of goal-focused leadership with emotional exhaustion was strongest at high levels of conscientiousness (Sample 1, $\gamma = -.27$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$; Sample 2, $b = -.41$, $SE = .09$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 6 predicted that conscientiousness would moderate the relationship between emotional exhaustion and production deviance; this hypothesis was also supported (Sample 1, $\gamma = -.16$, $SE = .05$, $p < .01$; Sample 2, $b = -.14$, $SE = .05$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 6 also stated that the conditional relationship between emotional exhaustion and production deviance would be weakest (strongest) for subordinates higher (lower) in conscientiousness. This was also supported across both samples (Sample 1, $\gamma = .43$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$; Sample 2, $b = .64$, $SE = .10$, $p < .001$). Hypothesis 7, the moderating role of conscientiousness on the indirect effect, received mixed support. I expected that the indirect effect of goal-focused leadership on production deviance would be strongest (weakest) at high (low) levels of conscientiousness. In Sample 1, the indirect effect was strongest at the average levels of conscientiousness ($\gamma = -.06$,

$SE = .02, p < .001$), weakest at low levels of conscientiousness ($\gamma = -.05, SE = .03, p < .05$), and non-significant at high levels of the trait. However, a different pattern of results emerged in Sample 2; whereas the indirect effect was also strongest at average levels of the moderator ($b = -.10, SE = .03, p < .01$), the size of the indirect effect was nearly identical at high levels of the moderator ($b = -.09, SE = .04, p < .05$) and non-significant at low levels of conscientiousness (Table 6). The findings for Hypothesis 7 are mixed, lending partial support at best.

Figures 2 through 5 provide visual representation of the interaction of goal-focused leadership and conscientiousness and emotional exhaustion and conscientiousness plotted at one standard deviation above and below the mean of conscientiousness. Figures 2 and 4 show that the relationship of goal-focused leadership to emotional exhaustion was strongest at higher levels of conscientiousness. In Figure 4, the displayed slope for low conscientiousness is nonsignificant (see Table 6). This is of interest as the endpoints for low and high conscientiousness nearly overlap at low levels of goal-focused leadership. To the contrary, in Figure 2, the endpoint for high conscientiousness is higher than that of low conscientiousness, suggesting that highly conscientious employees experience emotional exhaustion at higher levels when perceived goal-focused leadership is low. Figures 3 and 5 display the emotional exhaustion \times conscientiousness interactions—the negative relationship with production deviance was predicted to be more negative at higher levels of conscientiousness. Not only do the plots of this relationship provide further support of Hypothesis 6, visually, the slope and form of the plots are quite similar across samples.

Chapter IV

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to contribute to the validating evidence of the goal-focused leadership measure in two ways. First, I analyzed a series of item factor models to assess the

factor structure of the goal-focused leadership measure in addition to assessing whether or not the measure was invariant across two unique samples. Whereas the factor structure presented in previous structure replicated in both samples, the goal-focused leadership measure was only partially invariant in this study. After establishing configural (equal form) invariance, I assessed the metric invariance hypothesis to determine if the factor loadings were invariant between Samples 1 and 2—the metric invariance hypothesis was not supported. After allowing Item 2 and Item 3 to be estimated freely, partial invariance was established. This finding suggests that participants in each sample may interpret Items 3 and 4 differently. Because at least two items were invariant, conclusions about the factor loadings are not without merit but should be developed with caution (Schout et al., 2012).

Item 2, “My supervisor makes responsibilities clear,” and Item 3, “My supervisor clearly communicates plans so that people know what to do,” may be non-invariant due to the difference in professions between samples. Sample 1 participants were deployed, active duty military personnel in non-combat zones, whereas Sample 2 participants worked light construction jobs for a public sector organization in contiguous United States of America. The military is known for both formalization, routinization, and dependency on directives from members in a rank-ordered hierarchy. As such, the wording of the items may have lack the specificity required to capture leader behavior in this sample. Alternatively, though the ICC for goal-focused leadership in the sample did not warrant concerns about the influence of clustering, some effect due to clustering may still exist. This may account for the unusually large differences in the inter-item correlations and factor loadings between samples. Future researchers should attempt to improve Items 2 and 3, better account for potential effects due to clustering, and investigate the invariance of the adjusted measure.

Second, I assessed a potential psychological process developed from previous findings in this line of research. This study not only provided evidence that goal-focused leadership, to some extent, reduces the likelihood of employees engaging in production deviance, I found that this relationship was direct and indirect through emotional exhaustion. The unpredicted direct relationship between goal-focused leadership and production deviance was limited to Sample 1 and is potentially due to the strict leadership structure in the military. That is, military leadership is unique in that it is driven by rank and affords leaders in external units legitimate power over lower-ranking personnel. When combined with the deployment status of the participants in this sample, the perceived importance and the effect of goal-focused leadership (or leadership in general) likely manifested differently in Sample 1 versus Sample 2. Returning to the partial metric invariance findings, future research might benefit from a test of invariance between active duty personnel stationed in the United States and those deployed in non-combat zones outside of the United States.

Using a COR framework, I investigated the moderating role of conscientiousness on the relationship between goal-focused leadership and emotional exhaustion as well as emotional exhaustion and production deviance. The results were supportive of the predicted pattern of relationships. In both samples, participants reporting higher levels of conscientiousness and high levels of goal-focused leadership reported lower levels of emotional exhaustion compared to those reporting lower levels of conscientiousness. However, Sample 1 participants who reported high levels of conscientiousness also reported the highest levels of emotional exhaustion when goal-focused leadership was low. This finding may be attributable to situational or environmental contexts unique to the military setting. Alternatively, the military setting may create a need for guidance and direction among individuals high in conscientiousness. When

these individuals develop expectancies related to the leadership behavior, the absence of expected guidance may result in exponential resource loss due to attempts to compensate while processing the potential impact that ambiguity or lack of clarity may have on the more nuanced aspects of task or goal achievement.

My final hypothesis predicted that the negative indirect relationship of goal-focused leadership with production deviance would be most negative at higher levels of conscientiousness when compared to lower levels. Whereas the results suggest this prediction was partially supported, I encourage caution in interpretation. Because the average value of the moderator was consistently significant and presented the largest effect size, this may be indicative of the paths offsetting one another. That is, the conditional effect of conscientiousness at *path a* and at *path b* are somewhat average across the conditional indirect effect. This would assume that the individuals psychologically process each path simultaneously. Whereas this is possible, I encourage follow-up investigations of this finding. Emotional exhaustion is most often the end-state of chronic stressors. Its link to production deviance is likely to manifest over time, making it difficult to argue the likelihood of an averaging effect in this study.

Future studies may benefit from three additional recommendations. First, whereas longitudinal design is preferable, cross-sectional design is not without merit. With respect to emotional exhaustion, it is possible that the manifestation of strain is differential between individuals within a group. That is, people are likely to vary in their respective levels of emotional exhaustion due to variability in perceptions of and responses to stressors. Cross-sectional or longitudinal designs that attempt to disentangle the role of time as it relates to individual levels of emotional exhaustion will potentially capture a better representation of how goal-focused leadership influences perceptions of emotional exhaustion and subsequent

production deviance. Second, comparing a military sample to a civilian sample is problematic within the context of counterproductive work behavior. Although production deviance is likely to go undetected, the likelihood of being able to ignore instructions or get away with working ineffectively in the military is substantially lower than what would be expected of civilian jobs. Including multiple military and multiple civilian samples in future studies will provide a more accurate test of the means between groups. Last, future studies should consider the antecedents of goal-focused leadership behaviors. Because most leadership constructs are represented by other-rated perceptions, it is difficult to understand how true (objectively measured) leadership behaviors affect perceptions of goal-focused leadership. Future studies that include objectively measured leadership behaviors (e.g., frequency of goal-related communication) as antecedents of goal-focused leadership will likely add value to the developing literature on this construct.

Theoretical Contributions

The conceptual model was tested using path-goal theory, theoretical discussions involving leader initiating structure, and COR. The findings support the contention that leadership guidance and direction, as predicted by House (1996), may act as an invaluable resource. From a COR perspective, having a leader that clarifies expectations while linking directives to unit and organizational goals likely clarifies the broader scope and contribution of individual employee task achievement and group goal achievement. When employees better understand the path to achievement and how that achievement is connected to hierarchical goals, they may be less likely to turn to production deviance as a coping mechanism. Additionally, these employees are less likely to experience emotional exhaustion as supportive leadership behaviors reduce the impact of potential stressors. Additional resources such as conscientiousness add an important condition to this argument. Whereas leaders may be viewed as external resources, conscientiousness is an important internal characteristic that also acts as a

resource. The pattern of findings in this study suggest that high conscientiousness employees may be the least affected by low task or role clarity or chronic environmental stressors, ultimately reducing the need for counterproductive coping. However, Figure 2 presents an important question about how individuals high in conscientiousness might respond to deficits in leadership in highly formalized settings. That is, formalization and the nature of the organizational leadership structure may have some meaningful impact on perceptions of stressors and resulting strain.

Practical Contributions

This study tested a potential psychological process that is balanced in regard to theoretical and practical implications. That is, as previously mentioned, goal-focused leadership is of interest because of its unidimensional structure and simplicity. The measure taps into leader behaviors such as vertically and horizontally aligning goals and expectations, providing instrumental support, and following up with employees to ensure that tasks are carried out as expected. Goal-focused leaders likely reduce the number or frequency of chronic stressors through individual and group interactions that promote task clarity. Training leaders to engage in goal-focused behaviors will likely increase goal congruency and performance (Colbert & Witt, 2009), lower levels of emotional exhaustion (Perry et al., 2010), and reduce the likelihood that employees will engage in performance-avoidance behaviors. Additionally, in high stress or performance environments, selecting on individual conscientiousness may be advantageous, as high conscientiousness appeared to buffer negative outcomes in this study.

Limitations

Like most studies, this study is not without limitations. Three limitations are emphasized. First, although the confirmatory factor analyses of the data provide some degree of certainty that threats associated with common method variance are minimal, the employed survey

methodology and overall study design should be considered when interpreting the results.

Whereas this study's findings are likely of value to the literature and practice, and the employed methodology provided meaningful support to the validity of the goal-focused leadership measure and theoretical framing of the hypothesized model, future studies are likely to benefit by taking multiple sources of data into consideration. Doing so will reduce the likelihood of self-report bias and threats to external validity due to omission.

Second, the study design was cross-sectional. Although the replication of Perry et al.'s (2010) results and internal replication of the hypothesized relationships are a strength, it remains possible that participants' responses to the model predictors (other than personality) are partially driven by their responses to the mediator and criterion variables. Future studies should attempt to replicate the results of this study using longitudinal methods to establish the causal direction of the model. Doing so will also reduce concerns related to common method variance and, if included in the design, open the possibility of exploring the longitudinal invariance of the goal-focused leadership measure.

Last, the hypothesized model did not include a measure of job demands. Participants in the two samples worked in markedly different professions. Whereas there may be some degree of commonality in how goal-focused leadership behaviors are perceived, on-the-job demands likely differed in appreciable ways. Because the participants in Sample 1 were deployed and potentially living at work, perceptions of environmental contexts and resulting job demands may have influenced perceptions of goal-focused leadership. Additionally, participants in Sample 1 responded to the JAWS instead of Maslach et al.'s emotional exhaustion measure. The combination of the omission of job demands as a predictor and the difference in measures of

emotional exhaustion should be addressed in future research to determine if the values of the factor loadings hold.

Conclusion

The results of the test of measurement invariance revealed Colbert and Witt's meets the criteria for configural invariance (equal form) but is only partially invariant in regard to factor loadings (partial metric invariance). These findings suggest the goal-focused leadership measure is likely to replicate in regard to factor structure and, to some degree, the pattern of factor loadings. In this case of partial metric invariance, reasonably strong inferences can be developed concerning latent factor means (Byrne et al., 1989), provided that within group loadings are used for factor mean estimation and at least some items are invariant across groups. Without full scalar invariance, comparison of sum scores and observable means are cautioned and unadvisable (Steinmetz, 2013). Nonetheless, the predicted pattern and direction of relationships of perceptions of goal-focused leadership with production deviance was established across each sample. The relationship of goal-focused leadership with emotional exhaustion established by Perry and colleagues was replicated in both samples as well. Taken together, these results provide compelling evidence in support of the validity of the goal-focused leadership measure.

As indicated by previous studies, the results of the conceptual model suggest that individual differences in conscientiousness significantly influence perceptions of emotional exhaustion and subsequent decisions to engage in production deviance. Because emotional exhaustion and production deviance are likely related to idiosyncratic job demands, measuring specific job demands is an important next step in this research. The infusion of job demands in future research may benefit from inclusion of the Job-Demands Resources Model (JD-R; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001) as a means of explaining the unique contribution of demands and resources to emotional exhaustion and counterproductive work

behaviors. Explicitly modeling demands versus resources is likely of benefit to practitioners in need of specific examples of contexts or behaviors that promote (undermine) employee well-being, task achievement, or performance behaviors. Additionally, understanding why some employees turn to production deviance may facilitate the development and implementation of employee-supportive strategies and initiatives that in turn reduce associate costs.

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Table 1

Item Intercorrelations of Goal-Focused Leadership Measure in Samples 1 and 2

Item	λ	R^2	1	2	3	4
<i>Sample 1</i>						
Item 1	.95	.89	--			
Item 2	.95	.90	.89	--		
Item 3	.94	.88	.89	.89	--	
Item 4	.87	.76	.83	.83	.81	--
<i>Sample 2</i>						
Item 1	.64	.41	--			
Item 2	.80	.63	.50	--		
Item 3	.77	.59	.49	.61	--	
Item 4	.49	.24	.33	.39	.35	--

Note. Sample 1 ($N = 482$). Sample 2 ($N = 310$). Item numbers correspond to items in Appendix

A. λ = Standardized factor loadings. All R^2 values and correlations significant at $p < .001$.

Table 2

Measurement Models for Tests of Invariance

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	$\chi^2\Delta$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	WRMR
Configural Invariance Model	2.21	4	.70	--	1.00	1.00	0.00	.16
Metric Invariance Model	16.70	7	.02	10.84*	1.00	.99	0.06	.64
Partial Invariance Model 1	10.98	6	.09	6.26*	1.00	1.00	0.05	.50
Partial Invariance Model 2	2.43	5	.79	1.17	1.00	1.00	0.00	.19

Note. Partial Invariance Model 1 = Item 2 factor loading freely estimated. Partial Invariance Model 2

= Items 2 and 3 factor loadings freely estimated. * $p < .05$.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations of Study Variables in Samples 1 and 2

Variable	Mean	SD	α	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Sample 1</i>								
Production Deviance	1.70	1.07	.93	--				
Emotional Exhaustion	2.93	1.04	.95	.36	--			
Goal-Focused Leadership	3.40	1.05	.95	-.27	-.26	--		
Conscientiousness	3.84	.82	.88	-.41	-.14	.37	--	
Emotional Stability	3.29	.76	.64	-.31	-.43	.20	.30	--
<i>Sample 2</i>								
Production Deviance	2.15	1.06	.58	--				
Emotional Exhaustion	2.40	.93	.78	.45	--			
Goal-Focused Leadership	3.63	.80	.71	-.21	-.26	--		
Conscientiousness	6.34	1.47	.73	-.37	-.20	.33	--	
Emotional Stability	6.14	1.72	.60	-.26	-.20	.16	.47	--

Note. Sample 1 ($N = 482$). Sample 2 ($N = 284$). Emotional exhaustion in Sample 1 measured using the Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale. Correlations less than .20 significant at $p < .01$; all other correlations significant at $p < .001$.

Table 4

Simple Mediation of Indirect Effect of Goal-Focused Leadership on Production Deviance

Variable	Emotional Exhaustion			Production Deviance		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
<i>Sample 1</i>						
Intercept (γ_{00})	2.92***	.06	46.85	1.71***	.07	23.65
Goal-focused Leadership (γ)	-.19***	.04	-4.58	-.19**	.06	-3.15
Emotional Stability (γ)	-.53***	.06	-9.07	-.21*	.10	-2.19
Emotional Exhaustion (γ)	--	--	--	.27***	.07	3.97
R^2	.19	--	--	.17	--	--
<i>Sample 2</i>						
Intercept	3.90***	.30	13.15	2.11***	.47	4.47
Goal-focused Leadership	-.26***	.07	-3.70	-.11	.10	-1.08
Emotional Stability	-.09*	.04	-2.48	-.11**	.04	-3.03
Emotional Exhaustion	--	--	--	.45**	.07	6.15
R^2	.10	--	--	.24	--	--

Note. Sample 1 (N = 482). Sample 2 (N = 284). Emotional exhaustion in Sample 1 measured using the Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table 5

Conditional Effects of Conscientiousness on Emotional Exhaustion and Production Deviance

Variable	Emotional Exhaustion			Production Deviance		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
<i>Sample 1</i>						
Intercept γ_{00}	2.92***	.06	46.96	1.71***	.08	21.92
Goal-focused Leadership γ (A)	-.20***	.05	-4.52	-.10	.06	-1.66
Conscientiousness γ (B)	.02	.06	.40	-.44***	.08	-5.93
Emotional Stability	-.53***	.06	-8.73	--	--	--
Emotional Exhaustion γ (C)	--	--	--	.29***	.06	4.95
$A \times B$	-.09*	.04	-2.26	--	--	--
$C \times B$	--	--	--	-.16**	.05	-3.06
R^2	.21***	.03	6.14	.25***	.04	5.85
<i>Sample 2</i>						
Intercept	2.45***	.06	42.75	2.11***	.05	41.25
Goal-focused Leadership (A)	-.23***	.08	-2.99	-.05	.10	-.51
Conscientiousness (B)	-.08*	.04	-1.95	-.21***	.04	-5.54
Emotional Exhaustion (C)	--	--	--	.43***	.06	7.27
$A \times B$	-.13*	.05	-2.62	--	--	--
$C \times B$	--	--	--	-.14**	.05	-3.07
R^2	.10**	.04	2.80	.31***	.06	5.14

Note. Sample 1 (N = 482). Sample 2 (N = 284). Emotional exhaustion in Sample 1 measured using the Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Table 6

Conditional Effect at Low, Average, and High Levels of Conscientiousness

Path	Low			Average			High		
	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>
<i>Sample 1</i>									
Path <i>a</i>	-.13	.06	-2.16	-.20	.05	-4.49	-.27	.05	-5.18
Path <i>b</i>	.43	.07	6.25	.30	.06	4.97	.17	.08	2.13
Indirect (<i>ab</i>)	-.05	.03	-2.06	-.06	.02	-3.33	-.05	.02	-1.95
<i>Sample 2</i>									
Path <i>a</i>	-.04	.11	-.37	-.23	.08	-2.99	-.41	.09	-4.40
Path <i>b</i>	.64	.10	6.47	.43	.06	7.18	.23	.08	2.72
Indirect (<i>ab</i>)	-.03	.07	-.41	-.10	.03	-2.97	-.09	.04	-2.29

Note. Sample 1 ($N = 482$). Sample 2 ($N = 284$). Path *a* = Goal-Focused Leadership ×

Conscientiousness Interaction. Path *b* = Emotional Exhaustion × Conscientiousness Interaction.

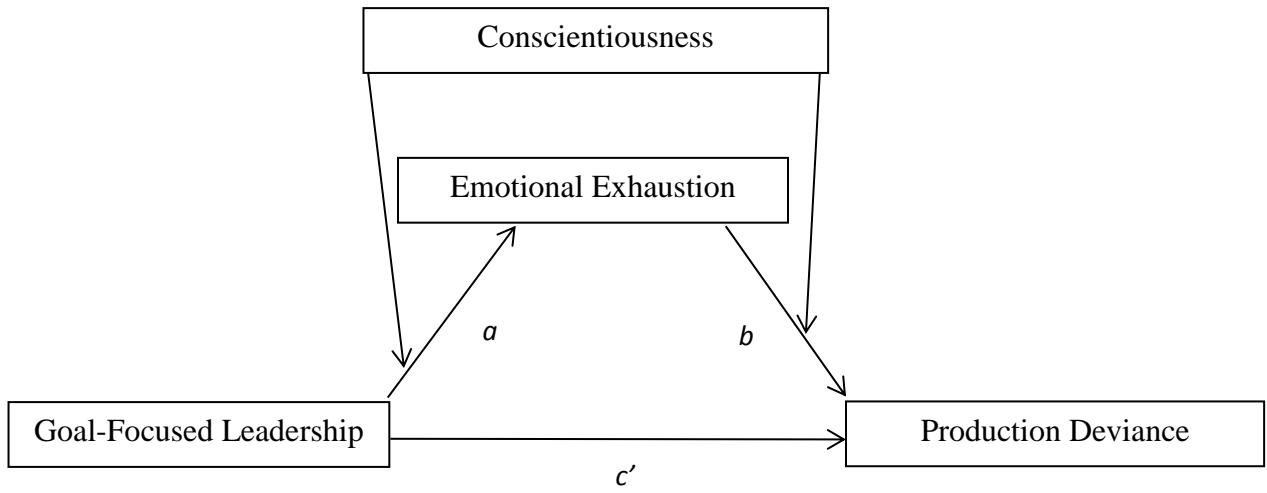


Figure 1. Conceptual Model.

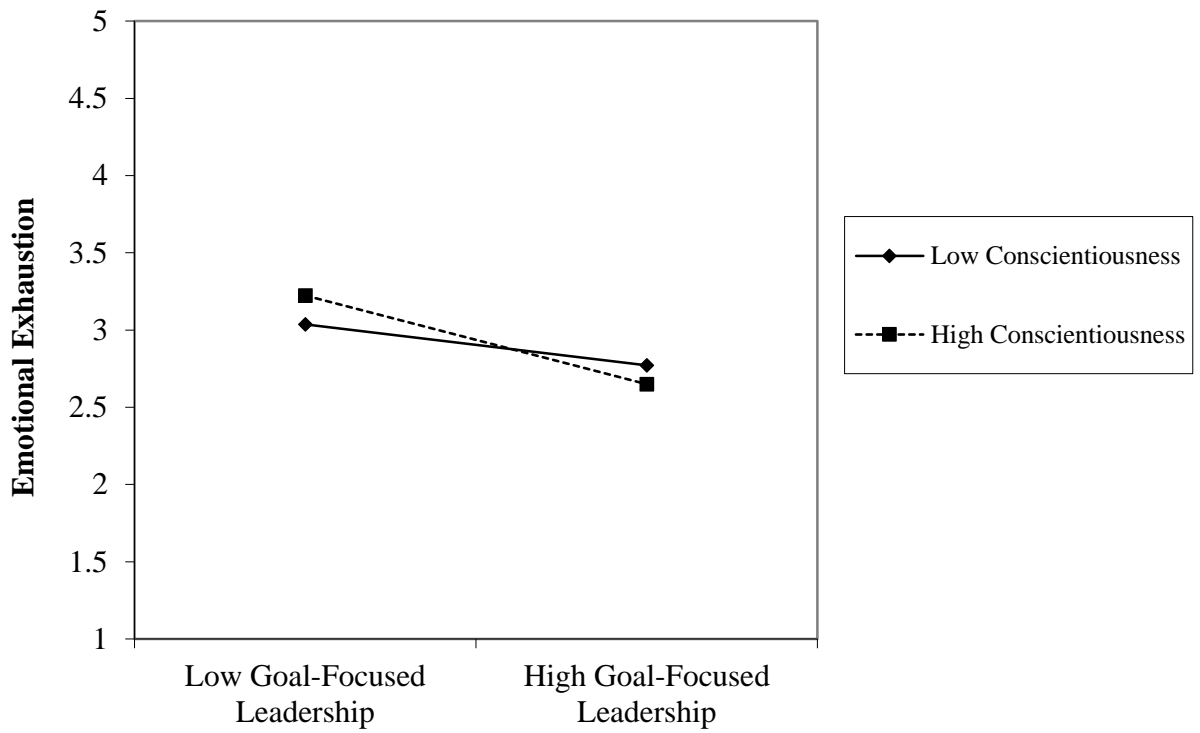


Figure 2. Sample 1 interaction plot of goal-focused leadership and conscientiousness predicting emotional exhaustion (*path a*).

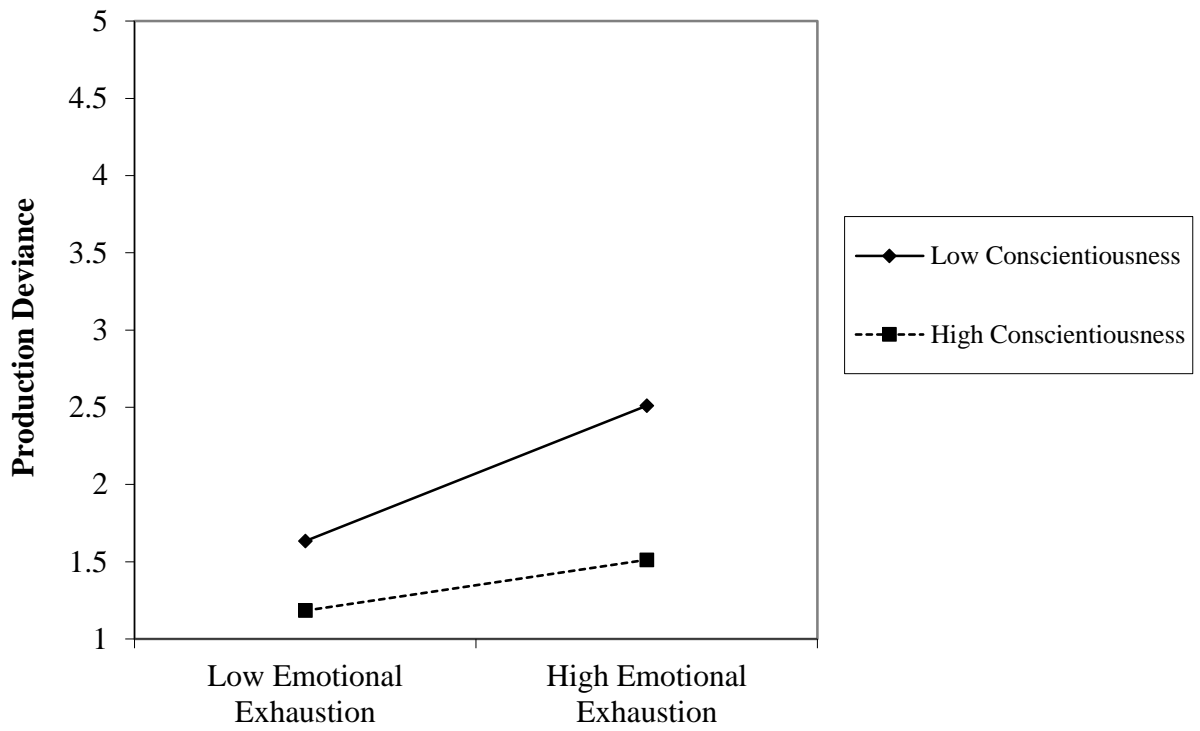


Figure 3. Sample 1 interaction plot of emotional exhaustion and conscientiousness predicting production deviance (*path b*).

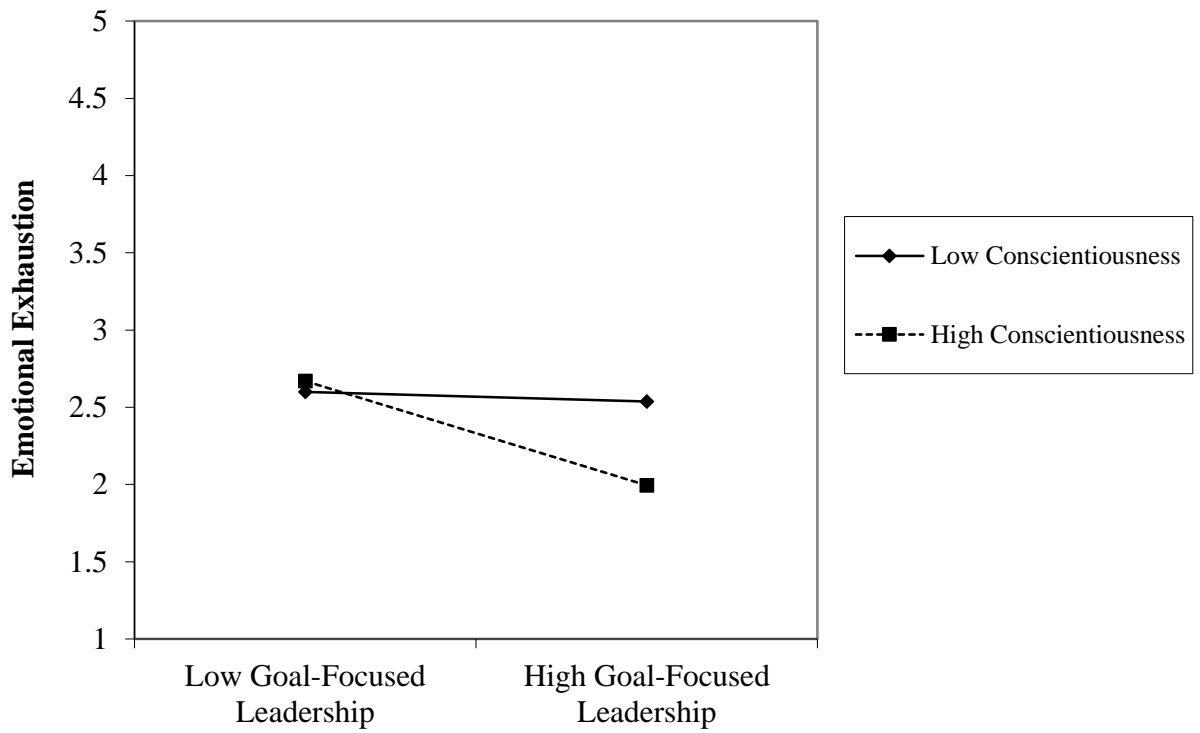


Figure 4. Sample 2 interaction plot of goal-focused leadership and conscientiousness predicting emotional exhaustion (*path a*).

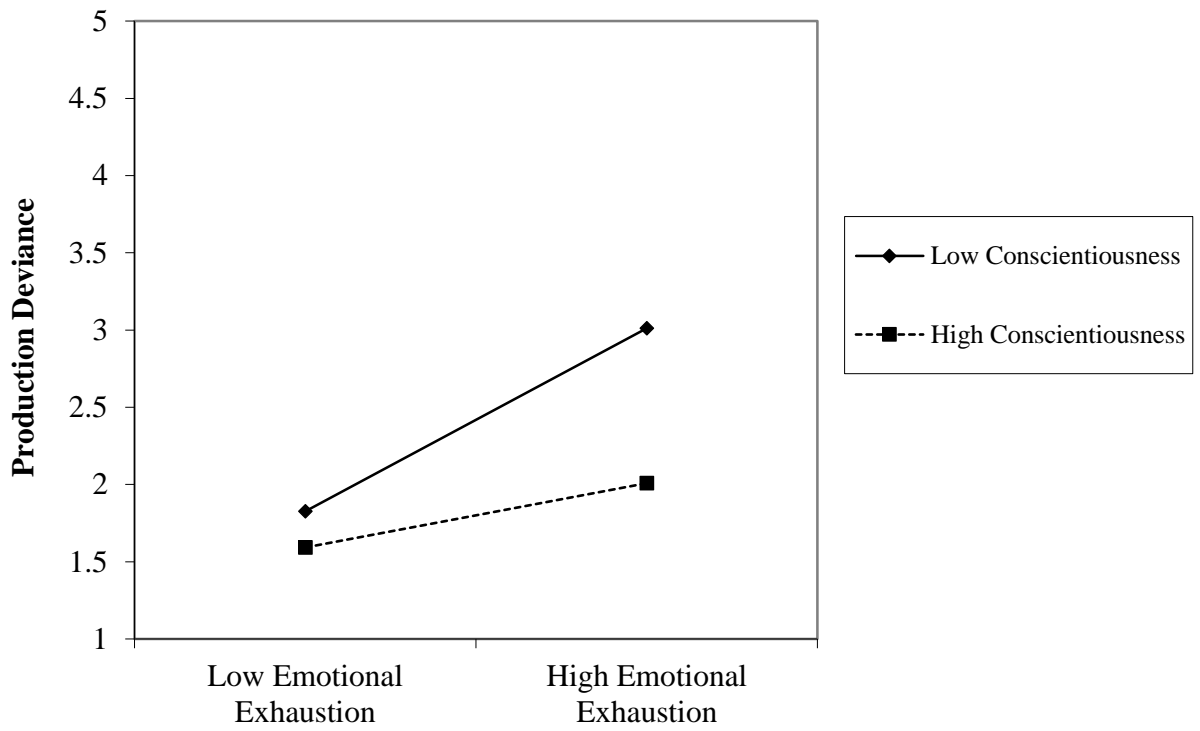


Figure 5. Sample 2 interaction plot of emotional exhaustion and conscientiousness predicting production deviance (*path b*).

Appendix A
Goal-Focused Leadership

1. My supervisor provides clear priorities
2. My supervisor makes responsibilities clear
3. My supervisor clearly communicates plans so that people know what to do
4. My supervisor links the work unit's goals to the goals of the organization

Appendix B

Emotional Exhaustion

1. I feel emotionally drained from my work
2. I feel used up at the end of the workday
3. I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job
4. Working all day is really a strain for me
5. I feel burned out from work

Appendix C

Job-Related Affective Well-Being Scale (JAWS)

1. My job has made me feel depressed
2. My job has made me feel discouraged
3. My job has made me feel frustrated
4. My job has made me feel gloomy
5. My job has made me feel fatigued
6. My job has made me feel miserable

Appendix D

Production Deviance

1. I have purposely failed to follow instructions
2. I purposely worked slowly when things needed to get done
3. I purposely did work incorrectly

Appendix E

Personality (Goldberg, 1992)

1. I pay attentions to details
2. I am almost always prepared
3. I am precise in my work
4. I get stressed out easily
5. I am relaxed most of the time
6. I change my mood a lot

Items 1-3 assess conscientiousness, and items 4-6 assess emotional stability.

Appendix F

Personality (Saucier, 1994)

1. Inefficient
2. Disorganized
3. Sloppy
4. Efficient
5. Systematic
6. Organized
7. Careless
8. Practical
9. Fretful
10. Touchy
11. Relaxed
12. Unenvious
13. Jealous
14. Moody
15. Envious
16. Temperamental

Items 1-8 assess conscientiousness and items 9-16 assess emotional stability.