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VORWORT

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1 INTRODUCTION

Organizations are an integral part of our everyday life and their activities and outcomes influence economic and social debates to a great extent. They include not only private businesses, but also public institutions; each of them being faced with the challenge “*to coordinate the decisions and actions of individuals and groups to motivate these people to perform the needed activities.*” (Gibbons/Roberts, 2013: 56). Analyzing organizations’ various “black box production functions” (Lazear, 2000a) will not only help to better understand the decisions of and interactions between organizational members, but will also facilitate the design of contractual arrangements. Contracts are the basis for human cooperation and, thus, influence the functioning of organizations. Their relevance for economic activity was confirmed with the 2016 Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences being awarded to the theorists Bengt Holmström and Oliver Hart who provide formalizations to optimal contract designs (RSAS, 2016).

The overarching goal of this dissertation is to contribute new insights to organizational economics and the narrower field of personnel economics. Therefore, I will break down the thesis into three research strands and will present rigorous empirical analyses on the performance outcomes of (i) individuals, (ii) teams, and (iii) organizations. More precisely, the topical subjects of gender differences in promotion prospects, team composition effects, and biases in organizations’ sensemaking approaches will constitute the main focus of this dissertation – although this encompasses but a few of the many issues personnel and organizational economists deal with (Lazear, 2000a).

The economic approach used to address these organizational issues follows the basic principles of agency theory: It is assumed that the subjects involved in a transaction are rational individuals acting according to the concept of the “*homo oeconomicus*”. This implies that all individuals strive to maximize their own utility when responding to the actions of the respective counterpart. From an organization’s perspective, employees, for example, adapt their effort levels to work-specific circumstances (such as the opportunity of training or working conditions). In theory, a specific equilibrium is generated that is supposed to lead to an improvement for both actors (Lazear, 2000a). However, as an organization consists of many individuals whose interests do not typically coincide and whose actions cannot be entirely monitored, agency problems (for example conflicts of interest and moral hazard) are almost certain to occur (Jensen/Meckling, 1976). In order to

align individual goals and to motivate agents to work in the organization's best interest, contractual agreements must contain elaborated incentive schemes. As Lazear puts it, "*Incentives are the essence of economics*" (Lazear, 1987: 744), turning their effects into an integral part of today's research agenda and the thesis at hand.

Hierarchical promotions are a common incentive mechanism companies use to reward the organization's high performers (see for example Lazear/Rosen (1981) for the incentive effects of tournament models). Organizational environments are, however, usually characterized by work settings in which neither the marginal productivity of an employee nor the relative differences between two or more individuals can be unambiguously measured. As a consequence, promotion decisions depend on the subjective evaluations of employees' supervisors. Previous research supports the tendency of subjective appraisals to be prone to biases, in particular with regard to job-irrelevant attributes, such as gender (Joshi et al., 2015). In recent years, an intense public debate about women having lower chances of being promoted has emerged. The low representation of women in top positions¹ has become known as the "glass ceiling" phenomenon, i.e., the notion that women are unable to move beyond a certain hierarchical level due to vertical gender segregation. As a response to the argumentation of the invisible ceiling, which points to discrimination against women, various affirmative action policies, such as gender quotas on boards of directors, have been prompted. Nevertheless, from a research perspective, there is an ongoing debate on whether the lack of women in the upper echelons can be attributed to discrimination and a certain stereotype threat (Spencer et al., 1999) or whether the low representation of women in higher-paying jobs simply reflects their lower human capital endowments or even their unwillingness to occupy leadership positions. Despite potential discriminatory practices as an explanation for gender biases, there is large empirical evidence of the existence of gender-specific differences in risk aversion (Böheim/Lackner, 2015; Eckel/Grossman, 2008) and preferences for competition (Booth, 2009; Booth/Nolen, 2012; Niederle/Vesterlund, 2007). Such differences can explain the gender gap equally well and have been established in experimental (Azmat/Petrongolo, 2014; Croson/Gneezy, 2009), but also in (admittedly scarce) field experiments (Leibbrandt/List, 2014) or field data studies (Dohmen/Falk, 2011). In the first manuscript of this thesis, I contribute to the discussion on the persistent disadvantage of women in

¹ In Germany, 29 percent of employees in leading positions (i.e., the management of small businesses, CEOs or divisional management of large enterprises, and leading administrative positions) were female as of 2014 (Destatis, 2014a).

terms of career success by exploring employees' subjective career potential assessments that, in turn, directly influence their chances for promotion. Chapter 2.1 aims to answer the first research question:

- (i) *Are there systematic biases in the subjective promotability appraisals of men and women and how can these biases be explained?*

Apart from the individual, the analysis of team-level outcomes is equally important, since members of an organization do not typically work in isolation, but rather have an impact on their peers and, thus, on group outcomes (Azmat/Petrongolo, 2014). Due to the increasingly specified demands of the organization's global customer base, most of the work is completed in teams nowadays (Hamilton et al., 2003). Using teams is assumed to be efficient when the whole is greater than the sum of the parts (Lazear/Gibbs, 2014). In other words, a team is supposed to accomplish more than if one would add the individual outcomes of the single team members. As an illustration, employees who work in teams can benefit from skill diversity due to knowledge spillover effects (Boning et al., 2007; Falk/Ichino, 2006; Hamilton et al., 2003; Mas/Moretti, 2009). The challenge, however, is to set up the "right", i.e., the most efficient team composition that enhances team processes and, consequently, their outcomes (Campion et al., 1996). As a matter of fact, both practitioners and politicians support the "business case for diversity". This philosophy emphasizes the beneficial effects of diversity that are supposed to lead to an enhancement of the organizational performance and, thus, to a competitive advantage. Diversity, however, is a broad concept encompassing "*the distribution of differences among the members of a unit with respect to a common attribute X*" (Harrison/Klein, 2007: 1200). "X" is a placeholder for all possible traits of an individual's human capital endowment – from job-related attributes (such as educational attainment) to demographic characteristics (such as gender, ethnicity, or age). In organizations, demographic characteristics in particular are of utmost relevance: Women's increasing labor force participation, the continuing globalization of product and labor markets, and better medical care provide organizations with a more diverse workforce than ever (LePine et al., 1997). Even though an exhaustive strand of theoretical and empirical literature dwells on the link between socio-demographic team diversity and team performance, results remain ambiguous so that – at least from the research perspective – diversity still is a "*double-edged sword*" (Milliken/Martins, 1996: 403) and "*an active area of research with little progress*" (Stewart, 2010: 802). In order to resolve this deadlocked situation, it is

important to break the construct of diversity down into single dimensions. Therefore, this dissertation focuses on two major diversity dimensions in two separate studies: gender and cultural diversity. Both attributes are important, since not only women's labor force participation has increased steadily in recent decades², but also cross-national border migrations and demographic transitions within nations have constantly risen. According to Lazear (1999), the global corporation actually is a multicultural team itself. The results of whether work group composition (in terms of demographic diversity) has an effect on in-group behavior and decision-making processes at all and, if so, in which direction are relevant for practitioners, politicians, and researchers. Chapters 2.2 and 2.3, therefore, highlight the following research question:

(ii) *Does socio-demographic team diversity have an effect on team processes and, thus, on team performance?*

While the first two research questions focus on individual and team outcomes, respectively, the third part of the thesis examines performance outcomes on the organizational level. As organizations operate in highly diverse and competitive environments, performance is the key driver for either the success or failure of a company. Hence, in order to explain variations that occur even among seemingly similar enterprises, organizational performance has become a prominent dependent variable in the organizational literature (March/Sutton, 1997). Independent of the true outcome the organization has to present itself to stakeholders at its best to ensure growth, progress, and control – in particular during economic downturns. Therefore, organizations use annual reports to communicate important corporate performance outcomes to internal and external stakeholders. The manager's dual role of being both the principal (for example towards employees) and the agent (for example towards shareholders) complicates the organization problem further. Given this situation, corporations may be tempted to exploit annual reports for self-serving purposes. While successes are predominantly explained by internal productivity factors, failures seem to be attributed to external influences (Merkl-Davies/Brennan, 2007). Productivity factors that can be directly influenced by organizations include management practices (see for example Bloom/Van Reenen, 2007; MacDuffie, 1995), the corporate culture (see for example Martinez et al., 2015), or ownership structures (see for example Forbes/Lederman, 2011). Performance drivers that

² In 2014, 47 percent of the German working population were female. This is an increase of 5 percentage points throughout the preceding two decades (Destatis, 2014b).

are usually externally determined comprise competition (see for example Foster et al., 2001) or regulatory frameworks (see for example Knittel, 2002).³ The remaining question is whether such self-serving tendencies pursue ego-enhancing and ego-defensive objectives or whether they are legitimate given the actual corporate performance. Having taken into account the legitimacy aspect in the context of subjective evaluations of employees in the first manuscript of this dissertation, it is notable to study how organizations evaluate their own corporate performance. Throughout chapter 2.4, I will address the following research question:

(iii) *Do organizations engage in ego-enhancing and/or ego-defensive attributions in order to strategically deceive their stakeholders?*

³ These lists aim at providing examples and do not claim to be exhaustive.

2 STUDIES OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation explores the three research questions dealing with individual-, team-, and organization-level outcomes in four empirical studies. These studies are separate works and are prepared for submission to peer-reviewed scholarly journals in the field of organizational and personnel economics.

2.1 Subjective Appraisals of Career Potential: Do Gender and Managerial Level Matter?

Working Paper No. 22:2017-01, Working Paper Series Dissertations, Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, Paderborn University, Paderborn.

Link: <http://econpapers.repec.org/paper/pdndisap/22.htm>.

The paper “*Subjective Appraisals of Career Potential: Do Gender and Managerial Level Matter?*” is single-authored. Preliminary versions of this paper were presented at the “18th Colloquium on Personnel Economics” (Vienna, Austria), the “15th Annual Conference of the Scottish Economic Society” (Perth, Scotland), and the “International Ph.D. Student Workshop” (Augsburg, Germany).

Throughout the paper, I focus on the first research question dealing with individual-level differences in labor-market outcomes – career potential assessments in particular. While a growing number of empirical studies have analyzed gender differences at various career stages, there is a lack of studies about formal appraisals of men’s and women’s career potential, i.e., their promotability. I will empirically analyze whether female employees’ promotability assessments are systematically inferior to their equally qualified male colleagues. In doing so, I use detailed personnel data of a large global German company that has a formal promotability evaluation process in place. In addition to micro-level field data I can draw on insider knowledge. This insider econometrics approach facilitates the analysis of the organizational black box and, thus, complements traditional survey studies that are typically limited to employees’ and managers’ stated preferences (Ichniowski et al., 1997; Ichniowski/Shaw, 2013; Lazear, 2000b; Shaw, 2009). Including a rich set of employee-, rater-, and team-specific controls, I find women’s promotability assessments at non-managerial levels to be less favorable than those of their male counterparts, in particular at around the age of 30. Furthermore, gender gaps persist at managerial levels,

which points to the existence of systematic gender differences in formal promotability evaluation processes.

2.2 Gender Diversity is Detrimental to Team Performance: Evidence from a Field Experiment

Working Paper No. 23:2017-02, Working Paper Series Dissertations, Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, Paderborn University, Paderborn.

Link: <http://econpapers.repec.org/paper/pdndispap/23.htm>.

The paper “*Gender Diversity is Detrimental to Team Performance: Evidence from a Field Experiment*” is joint work with Dr. André Kolle and my Ph.D. supervisor Prof. Dr. Bernd Frick. While André Kolle initiated the project, collected the data and was involved in first data analyses as well as a first draft of the manuscript, I was primarily responsible for data processing, literature review, first drafts of the working paper, re-estimations, robustness and sensitivity checks as well as revisions. Bernd Frick provided essential feedback and elaborated revised versions. Preliminary versions of this manuscript were presented at the “Fakultätsforschungsworkshop” of the Paderborn University (Paderborn, Germany), the “17th Colloquium on Personnel Economics” (Cologne, Germany), the “XV. Symposium zur ökonomischen Analyse der Unternehmung” of the German Economic Association of Business Administration e.V. (Regensburg, Germany), and the “39th Workshop der Kommission Organisation im Verband der Hochschullehrer für Betriebswirtschaft” (Zurich, Switzerland).

The paper contributes to the debate on socio-demographic team diversity effects from a gender perspective. Although research on the relationship between team gender diversity and team performance has proliferated in the past decades, the available evidence remains inconclusive. The paper contributes to the empirical literature by investigating the returns to team gender diversity in academia. This is important, since the rise in women’s labor force participation is driven by their simultaneous increase in education.⁴ Using a unique sample with 164 randomly formed undergraduate student teams, we show that gender heterogeneity adversely affects team performance in a business strategy game. Both all-men and all-women teams outperform gender-heterogeneous groups in terms of financial

⁴ In Germany, the percentage of women graduating from an institution of tertiary education has increased from 39 to more than 50 percent between 1992 and 2014 (Destatis, 2014c).

success. This effect remains robust when controlling for various team characteristics (such as team ability, team size and market size) and when using alternative estimation techniques. Moreover, the detrimental gender diversity effect increases with task complexity. Moreover, our findings suggest that all-male and all-female teams do not differ in their strategic management behavior.

2.3 Over the Top: Team Composition and Performance in Himalayan Expeditions

Working Paper No. 24:2017-03, Working Paper Series Dissertations, Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, Paderborn University, Paderborn.

Link: <http://econpapers.repec.org/paper/pdndisap/24.htm>.

The paper “*Over the Top: Team Composition and Performance in Himalayan Expeditions*” is co-authored by Bernd Frick. While Bernd Frick developed the key idea and gave valuable support by commenting and editing working paper versions, I was in charge of the literature review, the data collection and processing, estimations, robustness and sensitivity checks, re-estimations, and revisions. Preliminary versions of this article were presented at the “International Ph.D. Student Workshop” (Wolfsburg, Germany), the “14th Annual Conference of the Scottish Economic Society” (Perth, Scotland), the “89th Annual Conference of the Western Economic Association International” (Denver, USA), and the “6th Annual Conference of the European Sports Economics Association” (Antwerp, Belgium).

Using a large sub-sample of expeditions from the “Himalayan Database”, the paper addresses culture as a further essential diversity attribute. Irrespective of an already large (and still growing) body of theoretical and empirical research on the diversity-performance link, the direction of the influence of the multifaceted concept “culture” remains unexplained. The impact of (beneficial) information processing and (detrimental) social-categorization effects seems to depend on a number of contextual moderators (such as team task) as well as the econometric tools employed. Often, researchers observe settings that either do not offer a sufficient range of cultural diversity or that do not trigger individuals’ cultural peculiarities, for example due to a lack of required intra-group interaction (Timmerman, 2000). We contribute to the literature of cultural diversity and apply real-life data from a highly competitive and culturally diverse setting, i.e., climbing

teams and expedition outcomes. We test our hypotheses using data from 1,168 Himalayan expeditions that took place between 1990 and 2014 involving mostly “amateur” climbers from all over the world. We find that the probability of team success is positively influenced by a culturally more heterogeneous team composition. Individual-level analyses further reveal that an increase in a team member’s cultural distance increases the probability of individual success, but also the probability of experiencing an injury or death.

2.4 Causal Reasoning in Corporate Annual Reports: The Truth and Nothing But the Truth?

Working Paper No. 25:2017-04, Working Paper Series Dissertations, Faculty of Business Administration and Economics, Paderborn University, Paderborn.

Link: <http://econpapers.repec.org/paper/pdndisap/25.htm>.

The paper “*Causal Reasoning in Corporate Annual Reports: The Truth and Nothing But the Truth?*” is joint work with Prof. Dr. René Fahr who gave the decisive impetus for this research project. Besides, his essential feedback and comments must be acknowledged. I was responsible for data collection and processing, estimations, the literature review, first drafts, and revisions.

In the paper, the third research question on the strategic presentation of organizational outcomes is addressed by examining the causal reasoning patterns in corporate annual reports. On the basis of the well-explored self-serving attribution bias in publicly available but unaudited documents, the question remains whether the tendency to take personal credit for positive outcomes (acclaiming attributions) but to assign blame for negative outcomes to external circumstances (defensive attributions) also holds for legally regulated management reports. Beyond that, it remains to be clarified whether acclaiming and defensive attribution patterns are determined either by surrounding conditions (i.e., cognitive information-processing explanation) or by impression management strategies (i.e., motivational explanation). A unique panel dataset of Germany’s largest blue-chip corporations provides evidence of the existence of self-serving attribution patterns in the explanations provided for cause-consequence relations in corporate management reports. With regard to acclaiming attributions, our findings support motivational intentions. With

regard to the defensive attributions, however, the cognitive information-processing explanation dominates.

3 CONCLUSION

3.1 Summary and Discussion

The present dissertation provides new insights into the organizational understanding by presenting four comprehensive empirical analyses regarding the performance of (i) individuals, (ii) teams, and (iii) organizations. Each study focuses on a specific set of organizational challenges in the motivation and coordination of (human) activities in order to enhance processes and performance outcomes. In particular, the thesis brings forward important contributions to professionals, policymakers, and scientists interested in the following topical research questions:

- (i) *Are there systematic biases in the subjective promotability appraisals of men and women and how can these biases be explained?*
- (ii) *Does socio-demographic team diversity have an effect on team processes and, thus, on team performance?*
- (iii) *Do organizations engage in ego-enhancing and/or ego-defensive attributions in order to strategically deceive their stakeholders?*

The analysis of the subjective promotability appraisals that employees receive from their direct supervisors reveals that gender biases, in fact, exist (chapter 2.1). Women's likelihood of receiving an evaluation that qualifies them as promotable is around 5 percentage points lower than for their male counterparts. This finding confirms the results of previous research on gender biases along employees' careers. Yet, the case-study approach allows a more detailed analysis of the relationship between gender and subjective promotability appraisals. In other words, I contribute to the field of organizational and personnel economics and take forward the debate of the gender gap. I consider a wide range of contextual variables that have been neglected in the past, such as information on employees' demographic (i.e., gender, age, tenure) and job-related characteristics (i.e., pay grade, working hours, performance assessment), additional information on the employees' direct supervisors, and the composition of their departments. The estimated gender gap of 5 percentage points is alarming particularly when considering that the probability of receiving an outstanding assessment is only 20 percent per se. At the age of around 30 – i.e., the average childbearing age in Germany

(Destatis, 2015a) – the gender gap even widens to more than 6 percentage points. Male supervisors in particular are responsible for the disadvantages in women's promotability appraisals. The inclusion of both the employees' contract status (part-time versus full-time) as well as prior promotions (non-managerial versus managerial level) controls for women who do not – or to a lesser extent – intend to be promoted due to their preference for the household market rather than the labor market. The results show that the gender gap persists in all of these sub-groups. This finding is highly topical: It shows that gender differences alone cannot account for the observed disadvantages in women's career paths, but that stereotypical behavior of supervisors should not be neglected. Still, there might remain differences between men's and women's behavior or their preferences that cannot be controlled for. Hence, a combination of both vertical segregation by gender and gender-specific differences seems to be most likely to explain the reported gender gap.

Chapters 2.2 and 2.3 shed light on the second research question, which deals with the effects of demographic team heterogeneity on team outcomes. The diverging results of past studies point to the complexity of this research field. Hence, researchers have called for more fine-grained analyses that consider potential moderating variables (Van Knippenberg/Schippers, 2007). As each team operates in a specific environment, it is crucial to not only account for particular team-level characteristics (i.e., task interdependence and complexity or team type and size), but also for occupation-level (i.e., training participation, organizational culture, or human resource practices) and industry-level moderators (i.e., national culture, market competition, customer base demography, or levels of technological change) when generalizing results (Joshi/Roh, 2009; Van Knippenberg/Schippers, 2007). Apart from these contextual influences, past discrepancies in the results might also be attributed to different methodological approaches. Different databases (project teams versus top-management teams), study settings (field studies versus laboratory experiments), the use of different diversity concepts, dimensions and measures as well as inconsistencies in the measurement of the outcome variables (self-assessed versus externally observed) are found to be crucial moderating factors (Harrison/Klein, 2007; Horwitz/Horwitz, 2007). It is, thus, of pivotal importance to discuss these potential moderators before generalizing empirical results and discussing implications. In order to ensure controlling for this broad range of moderators, the relationship of team heterogeneity and team outcomes was analyzed in two different settings and studies.

Due to the importance of academia as a pre-stage of the professional life as well as its increasingly diverse structure, the performance of temporary business-student teams was used as a first research setting (chapter 2.2). In more detail, we observed teams that manage a fictitious company over the course of eight weeks with the aim to maximize firms' share prices. In this educational context, gender diversity has detrimental effects on teams' performance outcomes: A 0.1-unit increase in gender diversity leads to a decrease in teams' final share prices by 16 percent and increases their bankruptcy probability by 2.7 percentage points. Both all-male and all-female teams perform equally well, while gender-balanced teams perform the worst. This non-linear relation indicates that knowledge transfer is decreasing with each additional member of the opposite gender. As there is no evidence on task-related gender differences (i.e., all homogeneous teams were found to pursue efficient strategies independent of their gender), conflicts in intra-group cooperation are most likely to have caused diverse teams to fail to reap the benefits of their potential. This is particularly striking when task complexity increases and intra-team cooperation becomes most important. Hence, our first study analyzing the relationship between team heterogeneity and team performance shows that the "business case for diversity" does not necessarily hold true in every organizational team setting.

This implication similarly applies to the second environment we look at to study team heterogeneity effects, i.e., Himalayan expedition teams (chapter 2.3). Even though this setting deviates from prototypical team settings, the extremely challenging high-pressure context is, for example, comparable to the high working pressure put on managing directors during crises. Beyond that, "extreme" environments trigger behavioral traits that are related to culture but that are typically not revealed under more "ordinary" circumstances. Although we find that cultural diversity leads to positive team outcomes, this result cannot necessarily be attributed to an increase in variety, but rather to an increase in intra-group competition. While the probability of team and individual success increases in culturally more heterogeneous teams, the accident probability simultaneously increases. In other words, an increase in an individual's cultural distance from the remaining team members (i.e., belonging to the out-group) might lead to an excessive exposure to risk and can, thus, have severe negative consequences. These results show that team composition – and demographic diversity in particular – matters and can lead to unintended (side) effects. These conclusions should not discourage managers from using diverse teams, yet they should point to the necessity of a careful team composition. The

econometric analyses reveal an additional noteworthy finding: An increase in a team leader's level of experience decreases the effects of cultural diversity and cultural distance. Hence, experienced team leaders seem to play an essential role in counteracting adverse processes in heterogeneous teams (i.e., the formation of sub-groups and excessive intra-group competition).

Apart from these individual- and team-level perspectives, chapter 2.4 provides insights into the attribution patterns of German corporations in the annual statements they publish to report on their past financial year. The aim of the study is to analyze whether companies recognize their strengths (such as the effective coordination and motivation of human resources) for positive outcomes, but do not acknowledge their weaknesses for poor performance. Although the evidence clearly points to such a self-serving attribution pattern, there seem to be two distinct explanations for the acclaiming pattern (internally attributed successes) on the one hand, and the defensive pattern (externally attributed failures) on the other hand. In order to differentiate between cognitive information processing and strategic impression management, we control for economic conditions (non-crisis versus crisis year) as well as companies' subjective performance expectations published in the years prior to our observation period. As indicated by the findings, companies use impression management strategies to explain positive outcomes: Directly controllable causes, such as the corporate structure or personnel strategies, are held responsible for successes in general – independent of the circumstances. Externally attributed failures, however, match the environment, i.e., the economic background as well as companies' prior expectations are used to justify negative outcomes. Accordingly, even though companies predominantly report internal strengths for their successes, which positively biases the addressees' impressions towards companies, adverse consequences seem to be less serious. In contrast to that, being misled about negative outcomes would be much more severe. Hence, knowing that stakeholders are not strategically deceived throughout the management reports with regard to failures, indicates the relevance of the auditor's certificate. This is important to know for investors who aim to prevent capital misallocations, but also for the society at large, which would otherwise give unwarranted support.

As demonstrated throughout the preceding summary, the economic insights are valuable for theory development, but also have far-reaching managerial and societal implications. This dissertation demonstrates inefficiencies between principals and agents, analyzes why

inefficiencies occur, and explains what can be done to overcome agency problems. Worth reminding, this thesis contributes to the understanding of complex organizational processes, since it builds on rigorous econometric modeling of hitherto unavailable or unused real-world data drawn from highly competitive environments.

3.2 Limitations and Outlook

Despite the extensive implications of the findings and the valuable contributions to professionals and researchers alike, some limitations – in particular with regard to the research designs – will be addressed in the remainder of this concluding section.

First, one might question the suitability of the datasets used in the studies. In chapter 2.1, gender biases in employees' promotability assessments are analyzed in the specific setting of an individual company. Researchers often criticize the case-study character, since it tends to limit the generalizability of the results. Although I take this objection seriously, the focus on one company guarantees a high internal validity of the results. Even though the findings might not be readily applicable to any organization, they can neither be rationalized away, as they are based on the organization's whole population instead of a reduced sample. Similarly, student or expedition teams (as in chapter 2.2 and 2.3) might not seem to be the most suitable teams for studying diversity effects at first sight. Due to data limitations, however, there is hardly any business setting in which team demographics and team output can be observed in such great detail. Moreover, both settings are characterized by some fundamental requirements for diversity effects to emerge, such as a significant level of time pressure and competition, which moderates the need for intra-group interaction (Timmerman, 2000). Thus, although one has to consider the study-specific peculiarities when applying results to other environments (such as the relatively young university students or the adventurous individuals in expedition teams), both academia and sports provide promising "labs" to study individual and group behavior. Moreover, the content analysis presented in chapter 2.4 is a subjective procedure. The pre-determined rules for the identification and coding procedures, however, allow other researchers to replicate our study with similar datasets and to identify why certain similarities or differences in their research findings might occur.

A second noteworthy limitation is that my data does not allow to explain all underlying mechanisms that might moderate the results. As an illustration, it remains challenging to unambiguously identify demand- and supply-side effects of gender biases (chapter 2.1). In

other words, disentangling the exact effect sizes of actual discrimination against female employees from the effect sizes of individual behavioral differences between men and women – even though both are not mutually exclusive – would shed more light on both employers’ and employees’ impact on gender discrimination. Similarly, so far we can only speculate about the reasons why intra-group cooperation seems to be hindered in demographically diverse teams (chapters 2.2 and 2.3). In line with that, no conclusions about a manager’s or a company’s exact motives to engage in self-serving attributions can be drawn from our analyses so far (chapter 2.4).

These limitations lead to fruitful avenues for future research that have been specified in more detail throughout the respective chapters. Taking all aspects together, it seems most promising to focus further on the organizations’ various “black box production functions” in order to improve our understanding of individual behavioral patterns that influence performance outcomes of other individuals, teams, and the organization as a whole. In order to make innovative contributions to existing research, it will be useful to tap more into hitherto unexplored organizational settings that allow for a wide range of data. In the same vein, the combination of various complementary methodological approaches should be encouraged. This includes econometric case studies, field data, surveys, and laboratory experiments. As an example, while insider data provides information on a large amount of employee- and employer-specific variables, the underlying preferences of both actors remain hidden. Missing information on the subjects’ social identities, such as the employees’ motivation of being promoted, could be added by using laboratory experiments in addition to field data. This approach allows to link outcomes from the field to different types of individuals that can be identified in the lab and, thus, strengthens the argumentation concerning the implication of the results (see as an example Burks et al., 2016).

As a final conclusion, the readers of this dissertation should take away that both intra-organizational outcomes and, consequently, the more salient overall organizational performance are highly influenced by biases in the cooperation between individual members at multiple levels, such as superiors and subordinates or between peers and colleagues. Even though the thesis at hand is not able to find unequivocal reasons for all the revealed biases, the empirical evidence presented promotes promising discussions.

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