

Flexible Role Orientation, Employee Proactivity and Moderating effect of Transformational Leadership from a Motivated Information Processing Model Perspective

조직원의 주도성과 선제행동의 관계에 관한 연구: Motivated Information Processing Model 관점에서 본 변혁적 리더십의 조절효과

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Despite increasing importance of proactive employees, who take initiatives to create change that benefit organizations, the understanding of the underlying motivational mechanisms behind how distal proactivity predisposition unfolds and results in the enactment of proactive work behaviors is less well-understood. Examining the interaction of individual characteristic and situation provides better understanding of the motivational mechanisms behind how employee proactivity unfolds. Specifically, I drew from motivated information processing model to propose prosocial motivation as an important mediating mechanism, which ultimately determines proactive work behaviors. I further identified transformational leadership as an important situational factor that can promote individual proactivity among employees with low FRO. Using three-wave source data from 114 employees, the key findings are (1) FRO is positively related to proactive work performance through mediation of prosocial motivation; (2) consistent with trait activation theory, in the absence of transformational leadership, FRO had stronger indirect effect on proactivity via prosocial motivation. This implies that for employees with low FRO, transformational leaders can have a greater role to play in enhancing prosocial motivation, leading to subsequent proactive work behaviors. Hence, the findings underscore the importance of the interplay of person and situation in shaping individual's motivation to engage in proactive work behaviors.

Key Words: individual proactivity, flexible role orientation, transformational leadership, prosocial motivation, proactive work performance

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1. Introduction

Individuals are active agents in creating changes in their work environment and themselves. According to Bandura (1982), humans are reflective and self-regulating agents who are not only products but also producers of their environment. In today's rapidly changing environment, where uncertainty is the prevalent feature of organizational environment, proactive employees who take initiatives to anticipate and create change, are highly valued and needed for organizational success. Proactive employees are willing to go beyond the fixed set of prescribed roles and take initiatives to bring about positive changes in themselves and their work environment (Ashford & Cummings, 1985; Bateman & Crant, 1993; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker & Collins, 2010).

Researchers have stressed the importance of considering the interactions of both individual differences and contextual factors in predicting proactive work behaviors (Bindl & Parker, 2010; Crant, 2000; Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006). Even with the most proactive employees, without the right situation or organizational factors, the organization may fail to reap the benefits of proactivity potentially residing in employees. One theory that explains this is trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003), which underscores the

importance of considering interactions of distal individual trait or dispositional tendencies with situational cues. Therefore, this study specifically tested the interplay of person and situation factors, namely flexible role orientation (FRO), the term first used and developed by Parker (2000) as a key precursor to individual proactivity and the interactive effects of transformational leadership on the actual enactment of proactive work behaviors. Also, consistent with distal-proximal theories of personality, scholars have argued that distal individual trait or tendencies are unlikely to directly affect behavior and that they are mediated by more proximal, situated cognitions (Barrick & Mount, 2005; Lanaj, Chang & Johnson, 2012). Accordingly, I also attempted to unveil the mediating motivational process behind how FRO unfolds and exerts indirect effects on proactive work behavior.

There are three major contributions of this study to proactivity research. First, as individuals do not operate in social vacuum, I explore the interplay of person and situation by incorporating individual dispositional tendency (FRO) and situational factor (transformational leadership) in one study to test their interactive effects on work outcomes. Although employees may differ in their proactivity dispositional tendencies, efforts to engage in proactive behaviors may vary as a function of motivations. The study highlights the importance of motivations, in addition to

individual proactivity that one is endowed with, and how these motivations may be shaped by specific situations, such as the extent of team leader's transformational leadership behaviors. I have thus identified an important boundary condition that can precipitate or hinder the activation of individual proactivity. Specifically, the finding that highly flexible role-oriented employees are less dependent on transformational leaders for proactivity implies that employees with high FRO should be given more autonomy, whereas employees with low FRO need more active role of leaders to motivate them. This is a cautionary tale for HR managers that merely building teams with highly proactive employees and transformational leaders do not guarantee the highest proactive performances because leaders may undermine employees' intrinsic motivations of engaging in proactive behaviors when employees feel that their actions are enforced, rather than self-initiated. In accordance with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), providing opportunities to be proactive under self-direction through greater autonomy and increased sense of competence are vital to capitalize on the employee individual proactivity. Second, answering the calls for more empirical studies to examine the intervening processes linking individual proactivity with proactive work performance, I drew on motivated information processing model to posit prosocial motivation as an important mediating

mechanism through which individual factor transmits its effect on the actual behavior. Whereas past research largely focused on the capability aspect of engaging in proactive behaviors (i.e., Role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE)), I shed light on the attitudinal and motivational aspects of proactivity. Lastly, finding evidence of significant positive relationship between prosocial motivation with proactivity offer promising prospects for building an organizational culture that nurtures and promotes benevolent forms of proactive behaviors.

II. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1 Proactive Work Behavior

Proactive behaviors are anticipatory, change-oriented, and self-starting action that employees take to impact themselves and their environments (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Proactive behaviors are somewhat similar to organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) as both are discretionary and voluntary act and generally seen to contribute to organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988). But they are also different from OCBs, because they are not only anticipatory and future-oriented, but also self-starting. There are many specific forms of proactive behaviors, such as seeking

feedback (Ashford & Cummings, 1985), taking personal initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001), taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999), expressing voice (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998) are just but a few. There are two approaches to measure proactivity: one is trait and the other is behavior. Trait approach views proactivity as a relatively stable individual disposition labeled 'proactive personality' (Bateman & Crant, 1993), whereas behavioral approach measures proactive behaviors related to workplace factors and organizational variables (Parker et al, 2006). Building on behavioral approach, one study divided proactive behaviors into three dimensions by the intended target of impact: internal organization environment (proactive work behavior), individual's fit within organizational environment (proactive person-environment fit behavior) and organizational fit with external environment (proactive strategic behavior) (Parker & Collins, 2010). According to the research, depending on the purpose of the motivation, individuals will engage in different types of proactive behavior. For example, employees will engage in proactive work behaviors like improving work methods to improve efficiency when their goal is toward improving one's own workplace, while employees will engage in proactive strategic behaviors, such as issue selling and voicing to top management if they are committed to causing change in broader organization's strategy. By distinguishing among the three

different domains, Parker and Collins uncovered that various proactive behaviors ranging from feedback-seeking to issue selling are indeed empirically distinct, and thus merits further research on its own (Parker & Collins, 2010). In this study, I use behavioral approach to assess proactive work behaviors, focusing on how employee proactivity is manifested or displayed in workplace. Next, I discuss contextual factors and individual differences that are antecedents to proactive work behaviors.

2.2 Flexible Role Orientation

In the seminal work on the antecedents and outcomes of proactivity, Parker identified two key precursors to proactivity, which are role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) and flexible role orientation (FRO) that are cognitive motivational variables positively related to proactive work behaviors (Parker et al, 2006). Parker (2000) argued that the two variables are deliberately designed to assess proactive and flexible aspects of performance outcomes, which are not dispositional but state-like, amenable to change in response to situations and interventions. The author further contended that they are two prerequisites for employees to behave proactively and carry out a range of integrative tasks. As a result, both variables are often studied as a set, but the effect of FRO alone was explored in this study. This is because although both tap into

individual's proactive cognitive states open to change with situation, FRO refers to the predisposition to view one's job as expandable and flexible (Parker, 2000), thus concerns 'cognition and motivation', whereas RBSE is self-efficacy in carrying out proactive behaviors, thus relates to 'capability'. The focus of the present study is to examine how individual proactivity factor ultimately manifests as behavioral work outcome from the motivational perspective, therefore FRO, which directly affects cognitions and motivations related to determination to engage in proactivity, is more pertinent to the research question at hand. Thus, is my reason for observing FRO effect alone in this study.

Borrowing from the concept of role orientation (Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997), which is concerned with meanings given by people about their specific roles in the work environment, role orientation focuses on the tasks, activities, problems, and competencies that are relevant to one's role that should be considered for effective performance in the given role. In other words, role orientation represents the psychological boundary for a role. Thus, having FRO would refer to the psychological boundary of the role extending beyond one's immediate technical goals (Parker et al., 2006). FRO consists of two elements: one is 'product ownership', which is the extent to which employees feel the ownership of work beyond their immediate operational tasks, and

the other is 'perceived importance of production knowledge', which measures the degree to which employees recognize the importance of acquiring and using a range of skills and knowledge to enable them to contribute at broader level (Parker et al., 1997; Parker, 2000). For example, an employee adhering strictly to job descriptions and performance requirements to perform tasks would have a narrow role orientation. In contrast, an employee, displaying personal initiatives to resolve problems in one's work area and working beyond the limits of job may have a flexible role orientation. Thus, FRO refers to individuals who define their roles broadly and take ownership of goals beyond their immediate responsibilities viewing them as "my job" rather than "not my job" (Parker et al., 1997). Therefore, individuals with high FRO adopt broader perspective of the range of knowledge and skills required for successful performance and view their roles and responsibilities as flexible. Consequently, they are more likely to proactively engage in broad and emergent work roles beyond their immediate ones when situations require of them. Many research results support that individuals with high FRO perform better and are more likely to perform tasks beyond their prescribed roles and engage in extra-role behaviors because for them, these are the appropriate forms of work conduct given that their roles are not only restricted to job descriptions but open to

change when situations require (Parker, 2000; Parker et al., 2006). Accordingly, I propose that:

Hypothesis 1: Flexible Role Orientation (FRO) is positively associated with proactive work behavior.

2.3 Prosocial Motivation as Mediator

Prosocial motivation is the desire to benefit others or expend effort out of concern for others (Bolino & Grant, 2016; Grant, 2008). Prosocially motivated individuals tend to make decisions based on the benefits for others, rather than for themselves, and focus attention on promoting and protecting the welfare of others (Grant, 2007; Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004). Empirical studies have shown that prosocial motivation is related to important outcomes of interest in the work setting. On the one hand, prosocial motivation is positively associated with help-giving and help-seeking behaviors (Rioux & Penner, 2001) and information sharing (Utz, Muscanell & Goritz, 2012). Specifically, proactive behaviors related to prosocial motivations include voice behaviors (Grant & Mayer, 2009), taking charge (Grant et al., 2009), taking change initiatives to improve current situations (De Dreu & Nauta, 2009). On the other hand, prosocial motivation is negatively associated job performance and well-being when the pur-

suit of prosocial goals competes with self-interested goals, and depletes personal resources (Gebauer, Riketta, Broemer & Maio, 2008; Lin, Savana & Ilies, 2019). Although empirical evidence supports both positive and negative effects of prosocial motivation, recent meta-analytic and replication studies provide strong evidence of overall positive effect of prosocial motivation on employee well-being and work performance (Hagger et al., 2016; Liao, Su, Ptashnik & Nielsen, 2022; Vohs et al., 2021). Particularly, the benefits of prosocial motivation include enhanced personal satisfactions from fulfillment of fundamental psychological needs of relatedness and growth, and improved interpersonal relationships at work, which facilitate and result in better task/job performances (Hui, Ng, Berzaghi, Cunningham-Amos & Kogan, 2020; Righetti, Sakaluk, Faure & Impett, 2020). Closely related concepts to prosocial motivation are personality traits like agreeableness and empathy (Bolino & Grant, 2016), but prosocial motivation is distinct from these trait-like personal factors, as it lies within the domain of motives (Liao et al., 2022). Importantly, I differentiate trait-like personality variables from motives, which in turn determine behaviors. Hence, I develop a research model using distal personality factor- FRO, representing a cognitive and habitual structures of individual proactivity, which I argue can only be transmitted through a more proximal motivational

variable- prosocial motivation, leading to an actual enactment of proactive work behaviors. This is in accordance with distal-proximal theories of personality and motivation, which posits that distal individual differences can only exert indirect effects on behavior and should be mediated by more proximal factors like motivations and cognitions (Barrick & Mount, 2005; Lanaj, Chang & Johnson., 2012). To date, we know little about the mediating mechanisms through which individual proactivity transmits its effect on the actual proactive work performance. At present, it is unclear whether in addition to the direct effect of FRO, there is also indirect effect through an intervening mechanism. If we refer to the definition of FRO, which is individual's dispositional tendency to view one's roles broadly and take ownership of goals beyond one's responsibilities (Parker et al., 1997), it directly assesses the individual's cognition aspect of proactivity. The story that is largely missing is the motivational aspect of proactivity. For example, individuals high on FRO are confident and capable of successfully carrying out proactive work behavior, but without the motivation or intention to engage in such act, we cannot be certain that this individual proactivity will manifest in the actual proactive behavior. Therefore, in this study, I aim to bring light on the motivational side of the proactivity research that has been largely neglected to date.

Drawing on a motivated information processing model, I propose that FRO will transmit indirect effect on the enactment of proactive work behavior via prosocial motivation. The core premise of a motivated information processing model is that information that individuals choose and use in their judgments and decisions are not given, but contingent on individuals' motivation (De Dreu et al., 2008). De dreu and Nauta (2009) argued that employees differ in the strengths of self-interest and other-oriented motives that are independent and orthogonal, where individuals can be high/low on one or both dimensions. They posit that differences in these motives trigger differences in information processing tendencies, and concomitant implications for employee work behaviors. For example, individuals who view themselves as independent or/and high on achievement motivation are more likely to develop high self-concern, whereas individuals where job requires them to be interdependent or/and work in highly supportive and fair workplace are likely to develop high other-oriented motives. Grant and Berry (2011) also drew on motivated information processing model to argue that information search depends on group members' social motivation, which could be either pro-self or prosocial.

Given that FRO is a broad individual dispositional tendency with regard to proactivity, in accordance with distal-proximal theories

of personality and motivation (Barrick & Mount, 2005; Kanfer & Heggstad, 1997), its direct effect on behavior is inadequate to explain how distal personal attribute can be mobilized into concrete actions. Based on the above arguments and conforming to this distal-proximal relationships, I argue that FRO exerts indirect effects on behavior via more proximal situated cognitions, the prosocial motivation, which more directly affects and determines the actual enactment of proactive work behaviors. Because employees high on FRO have high levels of ownership of work beyond their immediate tasks with strong desire to initiate changes that benefit organizations, it becomes important for these individuals to acquire skills and knowledge that enable them to contribute at broader level. This is only possible when employees actively monitor their surrounding work environments and are sensitive to other members' needs. In the process of vigilantly looking for ways to help others and improve current situations, FRO develops prosocial motivation, which ultimately influences the individual propensity to engage in extra-role citizenship behaviors beyond their immediate operational tasks. Furthermore, consistent with the motivated information processing model, FRO hones employees to develop prosocial values and other-orientations, which is the desire to act in the best interests of team members and pursuit of collective goals. This in turn, makes

individuals to focus on information search and processing on group-serving cues, leading to prosocial motivation.

According to motivated information processing model, if motivations shape cognitive processing, where employees selectively notice, encode, and retain information that is consistent with their desires (Kunda, 1990), it can be inferred that prosocial motivation affects cognitive processing in individuals to seek for other-oriented prosocial information, which in turn encourages prosocially-motivated proactive behaviors. There is strong empirical evidence that prosocial motivation is associated with higher levels of persistence, work performance and productivity across various tasks and jobs (Liao et al., 2022). Display of prosocial behavior driven by prosocial motivation is often seen as a form of organizational citizenship behavior, because they are discretionary and voluntary, encompassing various helping behaviors that aim to benefit organization. Proactive behavior is also discretionary and voluntary, characterized as anticipatory, change-oriented and self-starting behaviors with intention to have impact on organizations. However, proactive behavior does not distinguish between the intent of the agent of the action, whether it is displayed with good intention to benefit and help others or not. Also, it does not distinguish between whether the outcome of such behavior is positive or not. Thus, proactive behavior is an

umbrella term for all types of change-oriented behavior that go above and beyond the call of duty to engage in proactive extra-role behaviors. Prosocial behavior, in this respect, can be considered as a specific type of proactive behavior with prosocial intent to benefit others. Therefore, building up on the above arguments, it can be asserted that FRO facilitates flexible use of multiple perspectives and reframing of situations, which in the process of searching for ways to understand others' needs and to initiate change that help or benefit organizations, also precipitates other-orientation and prosocial motivation. Subsequently, prosocially motivated employees feel increased connectedness to their members and stronger identification with the organizational goals through greater sense of work meaningfulness (Farmer & Van Dyne, 2017; Grant, 2007), thereby increasing focus on the well-being of others and collective success (De Dreu, 2006; Grant, 2008; Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004). This in turn leads to more proactive behaviors that positively impact the organization. Accordingly, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 2: The positive relationship between FRO and proactive work behavior is mediated by prosocial motivation.

2.4 Transformational Leadership as Moderator

Not all employees with similar or same levels

of FRO are motivated and behave identically. Extant studies have ignored the role of surrounding environments, either focusing on the person like the individual differences of a focal person engaging in the act or the situation like team culture, leader or organization structure and policy. Therefore, in this study, I explore the interplay of person- individual level of FRO with situation- team leader's transformational leadership. Specifically, I test the moderating effect of team leader's transformational leadership because they articulate future vision, instill work with meaning, stimulate followers intellectually and inspire people to perform beyond expectations (Bass, 1985). Based on Burns' (1978) categorization of leadership behavior and further developed by Bass (1985), transformational leadership is comprised of four different factors defined as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Idealized influence referred to as personal charisma, is an important leadership dimension that attracts followers to the leader and encourages individuals to adopt behaviors that leader commands. Inspirational motivation is when leaders use inspirational appeals and emotional talks to arouse follower motivations to transcend oneself for the benefit of the organization. Intellectual stimulation is when employees question assumptions, challenge the status quo and experiment with novel approaches, which helps to develop

employee ability and propensity to think about problems to improve their workplace. Lastly, individualized consideration refers to treating employees with discretion depending on one's personal needs, giving individualized support and attention for their initiatives (Bass et al, 2003). With the above attributes, transformational leadership is most frequently studied when studying the antecedents of employee proactivity.

There is also strong empirical evidence that shows that transformational leadership is positively related to various types of employee proactive behaviors (Belschak & Den Hartog, 2010, 2012; Griffin & Rafferty, 2009; Strauss et al, 2009). Existing research highlights the role of transformational leaders in motivating and inspiring employees to engage in proactive behaviors (Griffin, Parker & Mason, 2010; Strauss et al, 2009). Strauss and colleagues (2009) found that transformational leaders can facilitate employee proactivity through positive impacts on employee commitment and role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE). Griffin and colleagues (2010) examined how leader vision influence change-oriented behaviors and found high RBSE and openness to work role change predicted stronger link between leadership and proactivity. Belschak and Den Hartog (2010; 2012) also found positive effects of transformational leadership, RBSE and job autonomy on employee proactivity. Evidence from considerable research suggests

that transformational leadership relates positively to employee proactivity.

In examining the interactive effects of FRO and transformational leadership, trait-activation theory (Tett & Guterman, 2000) provides a good theoretical reasoning to explain how individual dispositional tendencies are translated into actual behavior. According to trait activation theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003), individual dispositional tendencies like FRO relates to proactive work behavior when situation provides cues for the expression of trait-relevant behavior. Integrating the interactionist approach and trait activation theory, I propose transformational leadership as an important situational factor that can elaborate the relationship of FRO to proactivity. In general, employees with low levels of FRO will show less openness to change and a preference for status quo. On the other hand, employees with high levels of FRO will be more positive about taking new initiatives and open to change if needs arise. In this process, I assert that team leader's display of transformational leadership can provide important psychological cues for the expression of trait-relevant behavior. In the case of employees with low levels of FRO, transformational leaders play a crucial role in transforming followers' beliefs and values by providing shared vision and meaning to work, making followers perform beyond expectations (Yukl, 1999). With transformational leader's individualized con-

sideration, which includes coaching and providing support for employees to grow and develop, employees are encouraged to take new initiatives that improve organizations without risks of personal harm when one fails. In return, followers feel obligated to reciprocate by being more dutiful toward their organizations, which may heighten their prosocial behaviors (Lee, Willis & Tian, 2018). Hence, transformational leaders create supportive work environment for employees to maximize their potentials to develop personal careers and facilitate organizational success by enhancing prosocial motivations in employees that transcend self-serving purposes. Particularly, the leaders' prosocial motivations and helping followers to grow while sacrificing one's self-interests should also inspire employees to follow the example of their ideal leaders, whom one can look up to and learn from (Bass et al., 2003; Griffin et al., 2010; Liu, Li & Xu, 2022).

However, an important caveat to this anticipated relationship is that transformational leadership positively impacts employees with low FRO by enhancing prosocial motivations, but I argue it has little effect on employees with high FRO. In other words, for employees already endowed with high propensity to proactivity, the presence or the absence of transformational leadership do not matter as much as for employees with low FRO. This reasoning is consistent with trait activation theory (Tett

& Burnett, 2003), which posits that the relationship between traits and manifestation of trait-relevant behaviors should be stronger in weak situations. In the context of the present study, the weak situation represents low level of leader's display of transformational leadership, when individual's innate proactivity propensity such as FRO becomes more relevant to proactive work performance. On the contrary, strong situation would be a situation where transformational leaders actively promote and reward prosocial and proactive work behaviors. In this situation, expression of employees' FRO in the form of prosocial motivation leading to subsequent proactive work behaviors should be less reliant on situational pressures (i.e., transformational leadership). Transformational leadership is generally believed to have positive effects on employee work behavior and favorable organizational outcomes but in parallel to this, is increasing empirical evidence of dark sides of transformational leadership. It was noted by many scholars that the effects of effective leadership on positive work outcomes are actually more complex and nuanced (Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009), which is suggestive of the existence of a dark side or the two faces of the positive leadership (Cheong, Spain, Yammarino, & Yun, 2016). For example, undesirable effects include increased dependency on the leaders and giving too much autonomy can also backfire, if unchecked. Recent studies

revealed that transformational leaders promote two desirable but sometimes conflicting outcomes that are driven by distinct mechanisms: one is dependency on leader, who conforms to commands and rules by leaders, the other is creativity and proactive behaviors, by encouraging self-initiated changes that benefit organizations (Kark et al. 2003; Li, Chiaburu, & Kirkman, 2017; Zhang, Liao, Li, & Colbert, 2020). Building up on the arguments above, for employees with high FRO, I argue that transformational leaders can weaken intrinsic motivations toward engaging in prosocially motivated proactive behaviors, while strengthening the perceptions that these values are instrumental means to an end. It may appear highly flexible-oriented employees would respond more favorably to transformational leaders because their views match with leader's collective visions and prosocial values. On the contrary, the strong situation represented by presence of highly transformational leaders would lessen the effect of innate dispositional tendency to find expression and manifest as the more proximal prosocial motivation. Thus, transformational leaders have little effect on enhancing prosocial motivations in employees endowed with high FRO. On the other hand, employees with low FRO, who are unsure of and uncertain about one's roles and responsibilities actively monitor their environments for social cues provided by their team leaders and members

and are more susceptible to the external influences. This is also supported by the basic premises of behavioral plasticity theory (Brockner, 1988; Pierce, Gardner, Dunham, & Cummings, 1993), which argues that individuals vary in the extent to which they react to external factors. Specifically, the more behaviorally plastic individual trait, the more severely it is affected by the external factors. For example, previous studies tested individuals with low self-esteem and/or self-efficacy and found that they were more easily and severely affected by negativity at work than their higher counterparts (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998; Schaubroeck & Merritt, 1997). Recent study also examined and confirmed the behavioral plasticity of FRO and found that despite abusive leadership, employees with high FRO, who are behaviorally less plastic, overcame the barriers to proactivity and maintained their drive to be proactive via felt responsibility. In contrast, employees with low FRO, who are behaviorally more plastic, were severely and negatively affected by their leaders and less likely to be proactive (Lebel & Patil, 2018). Consistent with this view, I argue that with low transformational leadership that does not promote or reward prosocial values, employees with low FRO may have difficulty developing prosocial motivation because given their narrow view of their work, there is no incentive to engage in discretionary behaviors at the expense of personal risks. However,

they are nonetheless highly susceptible to influence by strong situations, such as high transformational leadership because leaders provide strong signals that being prosocial is norm and non-compliance would otherwise be penalized. In contrast, situational factors (i.e., leadership) are less salient for employees with high FRO, who have internalized their roles as flexible and expandable, are less 'plastic', which suggests that their innate tendencies will prevail and strengthen despite absence of or weak transformational leadership. Highly flexible role-oriented employees, in search of ways to expand their tasks to better one's surrounding environment, naturally hone in on others' needs, which facilitates prosocial motivation, particularly more so when they feel that prosocial acts are discretionary rather than obligatory. Furthermore, in the absence of such strong leadership, social determination theory implies that employees are able to maintain their reason to be prosocial and proactive, exert more effort to fill this void for positive change. In this case, they are only slightly influenced by the situations in affecting their prosocial motivation leading to subsequent proactive behaviors.

Building on all of the arguments above, I argue that when employees with low FRO interact with transformational leaders, they can develop other-orientations and prosocial motivations through social learning. Moreover, employees can confidently internalize the

goals and values of leaders without personal risks, while leaders mutually promote and reward these work motivations. Therefore, in organizational context where transformational leadership is low or absent, the effect of FRO operates stronger on prosocial motivations, whereas in the presence of high transformational leaders, because leaders can supplement what employees lack in terms of proactivity, FRO becomes less relevant for determining ensuing prosocial motivations. Accordingly, I hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 3: Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between employee FRO and prosocial motivation such that the relationship is stronger when transformational leadership is low rather than high.

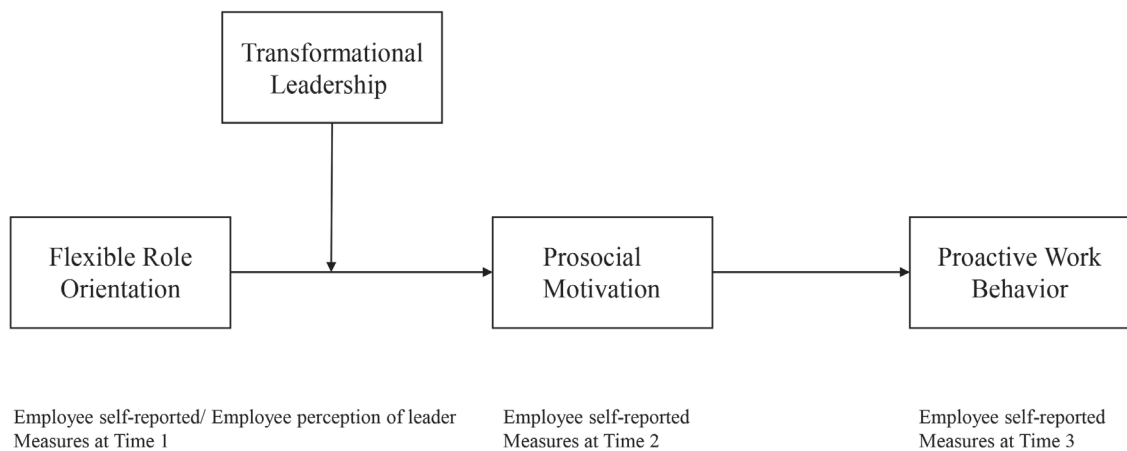
Finally, building up on the previous arguments, I draw from a motivated information processing model to assert that FRO interacts with transformational leadership, which shapes prosocial motivation. This in turn affects information processing in employees (self- vs. other- orientations), which ultimately determines the enactment of proactive work behaviors. Specifically, strong transformational leadership represents a strong situation, where leader inspires them to think and act beyond self-interests in pursuit of greater collective goals. For low FRO employees, whose characteristics are behaviorally more plastic

than employees with high FRO, more readily accept the positive influence of transformational leadership's other-orientation and become more prosocially motivated. For high FRO employees having internalized their own proactive and prosocial values, are less behaviorally plastic, may feel pressured to comply and that their decisions enforced. As self-determination theory suggests (Deci & Ryan, 1985), for employees with high FRO under transformational leadership, being prosocial and proactive suddenly become obligatory, rather than discretionary, thus feel that their autonomy has been thwarted, resulting in negative reactions (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, transformational leaders have small or no influence on employees with high FRO. But in the absence of transformational lead-

ership, representing a weak situation, being prosocial and proactive becomes discretionary and autonomous, resulting in even higher prosocial motivation and more proactive behaviors as implied by self-determination theory. The full hypothesized model is shown in Figure 1. In line with these arguments, I make the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Transformational leadership moderates the indirect effect of employee FRO on proactive work behavior via prosocial motivation, such that the relationship is stronger when transformational leadership is low, rather than high.

The proposed theoretical model is depicted in Figure 1.



〈Figure 1〉

III. Methods

3.1 Participant and Procedures

In this study, data were randomly collected from a diverse group of employees from different industries and professional backgrounds to increase the representativeness. Using a database of company in Korea, I randomly chose 45 companies that include retail, finance, manufacturing, and consultancy. I then contacted each HR departments to ask for contacts to voluntarily participate in this study about employee proactivity. A total of 150 invitations to participate were sent out, out of which 134 agreed to participate with a final sample of 114 participants completed all three surveys. To minimize same source response biases, the data were collected online through three waves of web-based surveys. The first survey, which was conducted upon agreement to participate, included items on demographic information (age, gender, organizational tenure), individual FRO and team leader's transformational leadership. Second survey was conducted with the same group of participants, approximately 2 weeks after the first survey to assess individual prosocial motivation. The third survey was conducted after 2 weeks from the second survey, where participants were asked to evaluate their proactive work behavior. Each participant was

assigned a unique code number to match surveys of each wave. Of the surveys distributed to the employees who agreed to participate, 132 were returned in the first survey (98.5%), 126 in the second (94%) and in the final survey a total of 114 were returned, yielding a final response rate of 85%. The sample comprised 43% male, the average age of respondent was 33.5 years, and the average organizational tenure was 4.4 years.

3.2 Measures

All data were collected as perceptions of focal employees. Questionnaires were administered in English, provided that all participants are proficient in the language.

3.2.1 Flexible role orientation (FRO)

For measuring FRO, I adopted measure developed by Parker et al (1997), both using 5-point likert-type scale. FRO consists of 2 dimensions, where one is the extent to which one feels the ownership of the production/product, and the other is the importance of product knowledge in doing job effectively (Cronbach alphas = .92, and .79, respectively). An example item for product ownership included 'to what extent is it of personal concern to you when the quality of output from your work area was not as good as it could be', and answers ranged from 1 (to no extent)

to 5 (to a very large extent). For measure of importance of knowledge, question such as 'how important is knowing the root causes of production problem for you to do your job effectively', responses given on a 5-point scale, from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (extremely important). The scale had Cronbach alpha of .86.

3.2.2 Transformational leadership

I used 5-point likert-type scale measure developed by Rafferty and Griffin (2004), and employees were asked to rate their immediate supervisor/leader. The questionnaire measures five sub-dimensions of high order transformational leadership which are (1) vision, (2) inspirational communication, (3) supportive leadership, (4) intellectual stimulation, and (5) personal recognition. (Cronbach alphas = .78, .81, .88, .88, and .87, Overall = .93). The five sub-dimensions comprised of three items and responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). I chose to use this questionnaire rather than the most commonly used measure the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) by Bass & Avolio (2000). MLQ has been criticized for assessing transformational leadership in terms of its effects on followers, rather than describing what transformational leaders do (Van Knippenberg & Sitkin, 2013). In this regard, Rafferty and Griffin's better suits our

purpose because its measure excludes any effects of transformational leadership and focuses on the distinct behaviors displayed by transformational leaders. For example, the items under 'idealized influence' in MLQ measure charisma of a leader, are rather broad and vague. Rafferty and Griffin's instead assess the concrete behavioral manifestations of transformational leadership, such as how the leader articulates a vision and internalizes organizational values and goals. Overall, Rafferty & Griffin's assesses the more concrete behavioral aspects of transformational leadership, which I judged to be more appropriate for this study.

3.2.3 Prosocial Motivation

Prosocial motivation measure was composed of four items developed by Grant (2008) and alpha reliability was .90. An example item was 'I get energized by working on tasks that have the potential to benefit others', response scale ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

3.2.4 Proactive work behavior

For proactive work behavior, the measure developed by Parker & Griffin (2010) was used, which examines four dimensions of proactive work behavior at individual level, which are (1) taking charge, (2) voice, (3) individual

innovation and (4) problem prevention. This is appropriate for this study as it intends to measure proactive behaviors that focus on taking control of and bringing about change within the internal organizational environment. (Cronbach alphas = .73, .83, .82, and .81, respectively). Overall scale reliability was .92.

3.2.5 Control variables

I controlled for gender (0=female, 1=male) and organizational tenure (in years) because each relates to citizenship and proactive behaviors (Organ, 1988; Van Dyne & LePine, 1988). I also included age that may impact individual's tendencies to proactivity, thus affecting proactive output. For example, individuals with longer tenure and job seniority may have more important responsibilities that involve higher levels of proactivity. Age was measured in years, organizational tenure as the number of years that employee worked

for the current organization. Thus, including these three control variables in the model, the study effectively controlled for demographic variables that may systematically influence the hypothesized relationships to account for alternative explanations.

IV. Results

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics and correlations for all key variables. As expected, FRO, transformational leadership and prosocial motivation were all positively related to the outcome variable- proactive work behavior ($r = .31, p < .01, r = .32, p < .01, r = .36, p < .01$, respectively). Also, FRO and transformational leadership had no significant correlation ($r = .13, n.s$), which minimizes concerns with causality, specifically the issues regarding whether transformational leaders affect FRO

<Table 1> Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

	Mean	s.d	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	33.50	5.77							
2. Gender	0.43	0.50	0.05						
3. Tenure	4.42	3.60	.389**	.498**					
4. Flexible Role Orientation	3.82	0.54	0.10	0.18	0.05	(.86)			
5. Transformational Leadership	3.46	0.67	-0.11	-0.04	-0.02	0.13	(.92)		
6. Prosocial Motivation	5.69	1.03	-0.03	0.02	-0.11	.349**	.212*	(.90)	
7. Proactive Work Behavior	3.67	0.64	0.15	0.13	0.03	.309**	.323**	.360**	(.92)

n= 114, Scale reliabilities are shown in parentheses on the diagonal.

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

or vice versa.

I assessed discriminant validity with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Table 2 shows the results of Confirmative Factor Analysis suggests that the 4-factor model fits the data better than the alternative models. The hypothesized 4-factor model of self-reported focal individual level variables (i.e., FRO, transformational leadership, prosocial motivation and proactive work behavior) showed a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 (df = 98) = 137.630$ ($p < .01$; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = .954; Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) = .937 and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .061), satisfying all cutoff value criteria for multiple fit indices and all factor loadings were significant. I compared the fit with other theoretically plausible alternative models. Comparison with a 3-factor model (prosocial motivation and proactive work behavior combined and FRO and prosocial motivation combined) produced significantly worse fit ($\chi^2 (df = 101) = 151.791$ ($p < .01$, CFI = .941, TLI = .937, RMSEA = .069) and ($\chi^2 (df = 101) = 313.435$ ($p < .01$, CFI = .755, TLI = .670,

RMSEA = .140) respectively. Comparisons with a 2-factor model fit (Focal person's personal factors: FRO, prosocial motivation and proactive work behavior combined ($\chi^2 (df = 103) = 323.498$ ($p < .01$, CFI = .746, TLI = .665, RMSEA = .141) and single-factor model fit and ($\chi^2 (df = 104) = 535.981$ ($p < .01$, CFI = .502, TLI = .349, RMSEA = .197) also revealed that the baseline model fit the data best, supporting the discriminability of the measures. Table 2 shows the results of the model fit comparisons.

Test of hypotheses were conducted using the PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) on SPSS. The hypotheses 1 and 2 involve test of the main effect of FRO and mediation by prosocial motivation on employee proactive work behavior. I estimated indirect effect within mediation model based on 10,000 randomly selected subsamples and with 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). Hypothesis 1 proposed that FRO is positively associated with employee proactive work behavior. As predicted, FRO was positively related to proactive work be-

<Table 2> Model Fit Results for Confirmatory Factor Analyses

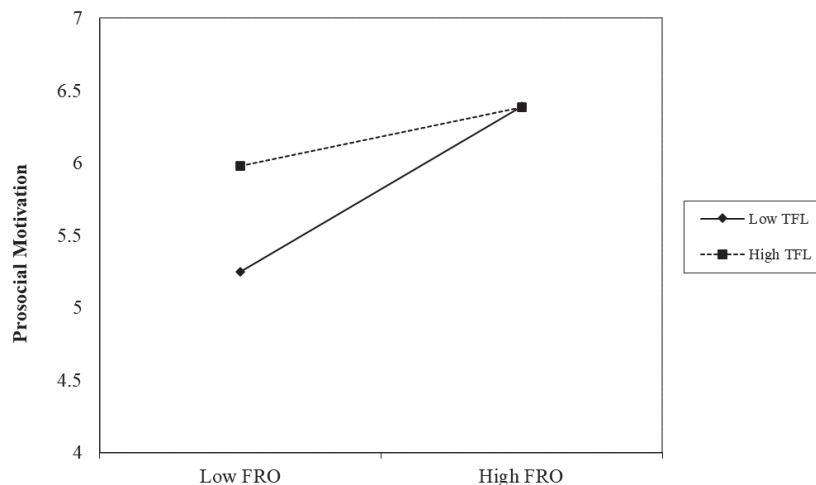
Models	$\chi^2 (p)$	df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
1. Hypothesized four-factor model	137.639 (.005)	98	0.954	0.937	0.061
2. Three-factor model (FRO & Prosocial Motivation combined)	151.791 (.001)	101	0.941	0.921	0.069
3. Three-factor model (Prosocial Motivation & Proactive Behavior combined)	313.435 (.000)	101	0.755	0.670	0.140
4. Two-factor model (FRO, Prosocial Motivation & Proactive Behavior combined)	323.498 (.000)	103	0.746	0.665	0.141
5. Single-factor model	535.981 (.000)	104	0.502	0.349	0.197

havior ($\beta = .35$, $SE = .11$, $95\% CI = [.141, .564]$) thus, hypothesis 1 was supported. Hypothesis 2 tests the mediation effect of prosocial motivation on the relationship between FRO and proactive behavior. Prosocial motivation was positively related to proactive work behavior ($\beta = .19$, $SE = .06$, $95\% CI = [.069, .303]$). After controlling for prosocial motivation as a mediator, the relationship between FRO and proactive work behavior became non-significant ($\beta = .21$, $SE = .11$, $95\% CI = [-.007, .436]$, *ns*). Using unstandardized coefficients and a bootstrapping procedure, the indirect effect of FRO on proactive work behavior was significant at $\beta = .14$ and 95% confidence ranging from .039 to .262, which excludes zero. Overall results provide support for hypothesis 2 that FRO exerts an indirect effect on proactive work behavior

through prosocial motivation.

Next, I tested the moderating effect of transformational leadership on the relationship between FRO and prosocial motivation (Hypothesis 3). Following Aiken and West (1991), I plotted the interactions at one standard deviation above and below the mean of the moderator. Simple slope analysis in Figure 2 shows a positive relation between FRO and prosocial motivation when transformational leadership is low ($\beta = .58$, $CI = [.243, .912]$) but not when it is high ($\beta = .35$, $CI = [-.084, .782]$, *ns*). The result suggests there is greater positive effect from transformational leadership on employee prosocial motivation when employees are endowed with low levels of FRO than higher level counterparts.

Given the support for hypothesis 3, I proceeded to test the full moderated mediation



〈Figure 2〉 Interactive effects of transformational leadership with FRO on prosocial motivation (H3)

model. As shown in Table 3, the conditional indirect effect of interaction of FRO with transformational leadership on proactive work behavior through prosocial motivation was positively significant at low (effect = .184, 95% CI [.044, .368]), but not-significant (effect = .065, 95% CI [-.016, .158], *ns*) at high levels of transformational leadership. Consistent with Hypothesis 4, results of moderated mediation tests supported a stronger conditional indirect effect of FRO on individual proactivity through prosocial motivation for low levels of transformational leadership, but not when it is high. This interesting finding suggests that highly flexible-oriented employees endowed with high propensity to engage in proactive work behaviors compensate for the absence of the motivational drive that transformational leaders provide for employees with low levels of FRO.

V. Discussion

This research aimed to enhance our understanding of the motivational processes behind how individual difference related to propensity toward proactivity manifest as the actual proactive work behavior. Following the logic of distal-proximal theories of personality and motivation, I argued that FRO must be mediated through a more proximal motivational mechanism to impact the enactment of work behaviors. Here, I posited prosocial motivation as the key mediating mechanism that links FRO more directly to employee proactivity. This study contributes to both theoretical and practical domains by providing evidence that under different circumstances, personal proactivity tendencies may strengthen or weaken the motivation to engage in proactive behaviors.

〈Table 3〉 Regression Results for Conditional Indirect Effect

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Constrant	5.994	0.5386	11.1287	<i>p</i> < 0.01
FRO	0.646	0.1651	3.9115	<i>p</i> < 0.01
Transformational Leadership (TFL)	0.290	0.1341	2.1656	<i>p</i> < 0.05
FRO x TFL	-0.491	0.2307	-2.129	<i>p</i> < 0.05
TFL	Boot indirect effect	Boot SE	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
Conditionl indirect effect of FRO at TFL = M ± 1 SD				
- 1SD	0.184	0.083	0.044	0.368
M	0.107	0.047	0.027	0.212
+ 1SD	0.065	0.044	-0.016	0.158

Indirect effect of FRO and Transformational Leadership (TFL) on employee proactive work behaviors via prosocial motivaion

Based on the motivated information processing model, I made a new claim that prosocial motivation serves as a potentially strong mediating mechanism that facilitates proactive personal factor (FRO) to find its expression and foster proactive behaviors. To the best of knowledge, this is the first study to propose prosocial motivation as one of the important mediating mechanisms linking personal proactivity factor (FRO) with proactive work behavior. This finding has important implications for individual proactivity research because it suggests that proactive behaviors may also be enhanced by eliciting prosocial motivation, even for individuals with low proactivity tendencies. I assert that prosocial motivation, which refers to desire to protect and promote the well-being of others, (Batson, 1987; De Dreu, Weingart, & Kwon, 2000) orients one to monitor one's environment and focus on others' needs in search of ways to become helpful and useful to others. Moreover, being prosocially motivated facilitates adoption and integration of multiple perspectives in making judgements and decisions, which in turn results in proactive work outcomes (Kunda, 1990; Nickerson, 1998). Furthermore, transformational leadership was also identified as an important boundary condition under which personal proactivity tendencies may strengthen or weaken the motivation to engage in proactive behavior. In particular, I found that individuals high on FRO were less

dependent on leaders to engage in proactive behaviors, but for individuals low on FRO, transformational leaders played significant role in developing prosocial motivation in employees by setting an example of putting others' interests first before pursuing self-interests. This underscores the importance of leaders to inspire followers to perform beyond their roles and think of proactive ways of solving problems that positively impact others, particularly for individuals who are pro-self and less flexibly oriented.

The study makes two unique contributions to previous research on proactivity. First, past studies on proactivity largely focused on developing efficacy in proactivity, emphasizing the importance of constructs such as creative self-efficacy and role breadth self-efficacy, which are confidence of carrying out self-initiated creative change. This study redirects proactivity scholars' attentions towards the motivational perspective, a relatively overlooked aspect for proactivity, by highlighting prosocial motivation as one important channel through which individual proactivity can unfold. Second, I reason that absence of transformation leadership represents a weak situation, where there is greater room for individual proactivity to be expressed and translated into trait-relevant behaviors. Through the exemplary act of self-sacrifice and change-orientation, transformational leaders can motivate employees with low FRO to become prosocially motivated, but

limited effect for employees with high FRO. The findings here imply the importance of considering the interactive effects of person and situation.

In addition to theoretical implications, this research offers important managerial implications for practitioners. It is important to understand the factors that drive proactivity, such as proactive personal factors, team environment or climate conducive to proactivity and influence of leaders or/and team members. In this regard, I assert that transformational leaders can serve as role models to motivate employees to create positive change in their work environments, particularly for employees with low propensity for proactivity. Thus, along with individual proactivity characteristics, the leader has a pivotal role in cultivating work environment that support prosocial motivation. For example, leaders may spur proactivity by increasing employee connectedness with its stakeholders, thereby increasing work meaningfulness, and felt responsibility for one's potential beneficiaries (Farmer & Van Dyne, 2017; Grant, 2008). Additionally, a cautionary note for personnel managers is that proactive individuals should also be given greater autonomy to prove that their proactive behaviors are indeed self-motivated rather than enforced because the feelings of effectiveness to exercise their capabilities out of their own will is as important to these individuals as guidance provided by

leaders. In hiring processes, organizations should strive to hire employees with high proactivity personal tendencies (i.e., FRO, RBSE) and/or prosocial motivations. Proactivity personality and prosocial motivation should synergistically help foster employees to positively impact organization. As such, prosocial role requirements are now becoming an essential part of employees' role expectations for organizations.

VI. Limitations & Future Research Directions

This study is subject to a number of limitations. First, the data in this study are all self-reported. Since the purpose of the present study is to explore the internal phenomena consisting of self-perceptions and motivations that are not directly accessible to external observers, they are best measured by self-assessment (Spector, 2006). However, using same source data does not rule out the possibility of inflated social desirability issues. Thus, I took measures to minimize these biases by conducting three waves of surveys 2 weeks apart. Future research should test whether these results may be generalized using alternative methods, such as longitudinal research and laboratory experiments. The study demonstrated that with the intervention by trans-

formational leaders, employees can develop other-orientations that transcend self-serving purposes and grow positive attitude towards change. I also revealed that employees with high FRO may benefit less from transformational leaders than their lower-level counterparts. However, there is possibility that transformational leaders can instead of triggering more prosocial motivations, also heighten self-efficacy and mastery in carrying out proactivity. Therefore, future studies should test whether there are other distinct motivational mechanisms that transmits transformational leaders' impact on employee proactivity. Another promising avenue for expansion of this model is to test prosocial motivation and self-oriented motivation together as the two paths representing the key mediating mechanisms to see whether each path leads to different forms of proactive work outcomes, future-focused change behaviors ranging from more self-directed and affiliative types, such as improving one's own work processes and helping coworkers improve to more other-oriented and challenging types, such as voicing, selling issues and taking charge. In this way, we may have better understanding of the different underlying mediating mechanisms behind individual proactivity that uniquely explain distinct types of proactive behaviors at work. Lastly, the study only looked at the positive sides of proactive work behavior and assumed that proactive behaviors involve positive change in organizations.

However, there are likely to be dark sides to proactivity, less well studied. Not all proactive work behavior leads to the best results as intended, or some may even be destructive. Developing on this model, I believe that it will be fruitful for future researcher to explore whether there are different motivational mechanisms at play behind the destructive form of proactivity.

VII. Conclusion

Using distal-proximal theories of personality and motivation, and motivated information processing model as the two overarching frameworks, I attempted to develop a model that integrates proactivity and prosociality literatures, clarifying the steps of proactivity from states, cognitions, and motivations, ultimately leading to proactive behavioral outcomes. Specifically, based on motivated information processing model, I made a new claim that prosocial motivation serves a potentially strong mediating mechanism that facilitates proactive personal factor (FRO) to find its expression and foster proactive behaviors that positively impact others and the organization. The proposed relationships between prosocial motivation and proactivity may at first appear irrelevant, yet if we look closer at the nature of and the process behind proactivity, it is

not difficult to see why prosocial motivation may be one such important forces driving proactivity. Proactive work behavior is self-initiated, with purpose of improving and positively changing one's work environment (Grant & Ashford, 2008). In the process of carrying out proactive behaviors, prosocial motivation facilitates individuals to think and act proactively by helping them to become more attentive to and focus on the needs of others because they place more value on the welfare of others than on self-interest (Meglino & Korsgaard, 2004). Therefore, the study's empirical evidence of significant relationship between proactivity and prosociality points to a new outlet for the two research streams to collaborate on exploring ways to increase prosocial forms of proactive behaviors that serve the greater good. Moreover, this study makes contributions to the research on employee proactivity and transformational leadership by bringing in motivational perspective into light. Drawing from motivated information processing model, I argued that an individual's self-perception with regard to proactivity interacts with transformational leadership to predict more proximal motivational factor, prosocial motivation. In accordance with distal-proximal personality theory and trait activation theory, the impact of FRO on proactive work behaviors was mediated by a more proximal prosocial motivation. In this process, transformational leadership had a pivotal role

in enhancing prosocial motivations in employees with low levels of FRO, but only a limited effect for highly flexible role-oriented employees. Thus, organizations seeking to increase proactivity in employees should not only care about hiring highly proactive individuals but also consider their interactive effects with organizational policies and leadership to fully capitalize on these individual proactive potentials.

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