

A Literature Review on Proactive Performance: Based on Proactive Behavior

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Abstract. Proactive behavior is considered one of the most important work behaviors for employees in the 21st century and is essential for modern enterprise management. While traditional management models required employees to follow specific instructions and task descriptions, the current organizational management environment has changed significantly. Organizations are becoming increasingly decentralized, facing rapid environmental changes, higher uncertainty, intense competition, and greater demands for innovation. Consequently, the need for proactive behavior among employees has become more prominent in modern enterprise management. However, there is a notable lack of proactive work behavior among employees in contemporary enterprises. In response to this, this paper systematically reviews relevant literature, first providing a comprehensive overview of the concept origin, core connotation, and distinctions and connections between proactive behavior and related concepts. Secondly, the paper analyzes the influencing factors of employee proactive behavior and elaborates on its positive and negative impacts on both employees and organizations. Finally, the paper suggests that future research should utilize both static and dynamic methods to thoroughly analyze the combined effects of individual capabilities, attitudes, values, as well as organizational culture and leadership styles, and how these factors interact to influence the outcomes of proactive behavior. Additionally, cross-cultural research will help us understand the differences in the outcomes of proactive behavior across various cultural contexts.

Keywords: Proactive performance, proactive behavior, influencing factors, impact outcomes.

1. Introduction

In the context of a globalized market economy, the flow of capital, management experience, and information on a global scale has led to lower barriers to entry, higher barriers to exit, and reduced switching costs for users. Consequently, market competition among companies is becoming increasingly intense, and both internal and external organizational environments are evolving in real-time, resulting in higher degrees of uncertainty in development. Furthermore, corporate human resources are exhibiting a trend towards increased diversity. In addition, the competitiveness of modern enterprises stems from the human quality and intellectual capital of their employees. The rapidly changing market dynamics require employees to actively and autonomously engage in their daily work, making timely and effective independent judgments, identifying potential development issues for the company, and enhancing the core competitiveness of the enterprise. Companies are increasingly hoping that employees can complete more tasks, assume more responsibilities and obligations, and take proactive measures to address various urgent and unexpected problems encountered in their work. Simply fulfilling job responsibilities is no longer sufficient for enterprises to keep up with market changes and meet corporate needs. Whether employees can timely and effectively demonstrate initiative and proactivity, and act in accordance with circumstances, determines whether an enterprise can survive and thrive in the intensely competitive market environment and gain a competitive advantage.

Individual proactive behavior, defined as future-oriented and change-oriented behavior initiated by individuals within an organization, has become an important topic in the field of organizational behavior research in recent years and has received significant attention from scholars and enterprises. However, proactive work behavior among employees in modern enterprises is insufficient. On one

hand, the effectiveness of management requires fully leveraging employee proactivity; on the other hand, the lack of employee proactivity has become a practical issue. In enterprises, the influence of traditional command-and-execution management models has led to employees being accustomed to passively and mechanically executing superior orders, lacking personal initiative in their work, such as innovation behavior, proactive learning behavior, and voice behavior—typical proactive behaviors. In positions with strong proactive demands, such as technology research and development and market expansion, employees often struggle to meet the company's requirements for work proactivity and related performance due to issues related to the demand for proactive behavior and self-awareness and motivation. In summary, the problem of insufficient proactive behavior among employees is widespread in enterprises. Given this, this paper, based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature, first systematically sorts out and summarizes the origins, core connotations, and distinctions and connections between the concept of proactive behavior and related concepts. Secondly, this paper analyzes the influencing factors of employee proactive behavior and elaborates on the impact of proactive behavior on employees and organizations from both positive and negative perspectives. Finally, based on the literature review of proactive behavior, this paper proposes future prospects.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Concept of Proactive Behavior

The concept of proactive behavior can be traced back to "Proactivity Behavior" in Western positive psychology. Later, scholars Bateman and Crant first introduced the concept of "proactive personality" in their research and provided its initial definition [1]. Subsequently, Frese and colleagues conducted in-depth research on a popular societal issue at the time, leading to the first academic definition of proactive behavior. They defined proactive behavior as a set of behaviors generated by employees in a self-motivated manner, rather than the interpretation of a single behavior [2]. This definition brought significant attention to the field of proactive behavior, prompting numerous scholars to conduct in-depth explorations. The definitions of proactive behavior proposed by various scholars are not entirely identical.

Some scholars define proactive behavior based on the characteristic of "anticipation." Parker, Williams, and Turner defined proactive behavior as: a spontaneous, anticipatory action aimed at changing or improving a situation or oneself [3]. Griffin and colleagues' definition of proactive behavior in their research essentially aligns with Parker's definition, but Griffin emphasized the anticipatory nature of proactive behavior more explicitly. He noted that proactive behavior includes employees predicting an outcome from the current state and taking forward-looking actions to change this anticipated result [4]. Parker and colleagues further explored the domain of proactive behavior and defined it as future-focused, spontaneous actions taken by employees to change their situation, which can benefit both the individual and the organization. This definition remains largely consistent with their initial research and is one of the most widely accepted definitions in current academic studies on proactive behavior [5]. Zhang et al. identified proactive behavior as a spontaneous, future-oriented, change-oriented behavior that employees undertake to improve their current environment or the organization's status quo [6].

Some scholars define proactive behavior based on the characteristic of "initiative." Grant, from the perspective of personality traits, posited that proactive employees will actively challenge rather than merely passively adapt to their current, less-than-satisfactory environment [7]. In the same year, Grant and Ashford emphasized that the focus of proactive behavior is on "initiative," treating proactive behavior more as an adverbial modifier of behavior [7]. Pan et al. in their research on the Chinese cultural context, defined "positive organizational behavior" as behavior initiated by employees that brings benefits to the organization or individual, or behaviors that enhance organizational or individual effectiveness [8]. Xu et al. considered proactive behavior as a series of actions in which employees actively seek opportunities in the work environment [9]. Liu, Zhu, and Zhao, in their study

on the impact of leadership styles on employee proactive behavior, defined proactive behavior as the voluntary contributions made by employees towards achieving organizational goals or completing tasks [10].

Some scholars define proactive behavior based on the characteristic of "innovativeness." Zhao et al. integrated the Oxford Dictionary's explanation of the word "proactive" to present their understanding of proactive behavior [11]. They argued that proactive behavior by employees is characterized by a certain degree of innovation aimed at ensuring success, but it is not synonymous with innovative behavior. That is, proactive behavior may intersect with innovative behavior, but they are not inclusive of each other. In summary, this paper defines coworker proactive behavior as: spontaneous actions initiated by the "coworker" subject in the workplace, aimed at future-oriented changes to improve their current environment or the organization's status quo.

Related concepts to proactive behavior include spontaneous behavior, voluntary work behavior, and organizational citizenship behavior. Spontaneous behavior was introduced by Katz in the 1960s and refers to the actions of organizational members that go beyond the necessary activities required to join and maintain organizational membership and fulfill specific role requirements [12]. Fay and Sonnentag referred to extra-role behavior as voluntary work behavior, which includes voluntary and proactive behaviors such as organizational citizenship behavior, voice behavior, dedication, and prosocial behavior, as well as behaviors that can threaten or harm the organization and its members, such as counterproductive behavior, deviant behavior, and silence behavior [13]. Organizational citizenship behavior was proposed by Bateman and Organ in 1983, and it refers to discretionary behaviors and attitudes that are beneficial to the organization. These behaviors are voluntary and are often not directly and explicitly recognized by the formal reward system of the organization, yet they effectively enhance the overall efficiency of the organization [14]. Therefore, it is evident that proactive behavior, spontaneous behavior, voluntary work behavior, and organizational citizenship behavior all emphasize the spontaneity of behavior. The differences lie in the following: spontaneous behavior emphasizes proactive behavior outside of one's role, whereas proactive behavior includes both in-role and extra-role behaviors; voluntary work behavior emphasizes extra-role behavior and includes both positive and negative behaviors, while proactive behavior emphasizes positive behaviors within or outside of the role; organizational citizenship behavior emphasizes discretionary behaviors that benefit the organization outside of one's role, whereas proactive behavior emphasizes behaviors that benefit the organization within or outside of one's role. Proactive behavior is a multifaceted behavior that places greater emphasis on initiative and spontaneity, and the motivation for this behavior ultimately stems from employees' recognition and expectations of their work. Task performance behavior, contextual performance behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, role behavior, and extra-role behavior can all be considered components of proactive behavior [4].

Table 1. The Concept of Proactive Behavior

Characteristics of proactive behavior	definition	Representative author
anticipation	A spontaneous, anticipatory action aimed at changing or improving a situation or oneself	(Parker et al., 2006) [3]
	Employees predicting an outcome from the current state and taking forward-looking actions to change this anticipated result	(Griffin et al., 2007) [4]
	Future-focused, spontaneous actions taken by employees to change their situation	(Parker et al., 2019) [5]
	Spontaneous, future-oriented, change-oriented behavior that employees undertake to improve their current environment or the organization's status quo	(Zhang et al., 2022) [6]
initiative	An adverbial modifier of behavior	(Grant, 2008) [7]
	Behavior initiated by employees that brings benefits to the organization or individual, or behaviors that enhance organizational or individual effectiveness	(Pan et al., 2012) [8]
	A series of actions in which employees actively seek opportunities in the work environment	(Xu et al., 2015) [9]
	The voluntary contributions made by employees towards achieving organizational goals or completing tasks	(Liu et al., 2016) [10]
innovativeness	Proactive behavior by employees is characterized by a certain degree of innovation aimed at ensuring success, but it is not synonymous with innovative behavior	(Zhao et al., 2011) [11]

2.2. Dimensions and Measurement of Employee Proactive Behavior

2.2.1. Dimensions of employee proactive behavior

As a critical organizational behavior, the dimensions of proactive behavior are crucial for understanding how employees exhibit proactivity in different contexts. Crant divided proactive behavior into general proactive behavior and context-specific proactive behavior based on the context in which it occurs. General proactive behavior refers to an individual's consistent display of proactivity across various environments, such as self-initiation and self-management, while context-specific proactive behavior refers to proactivity displayed in specific contexts, such as active participation in organizational change or taking a leadership role in a team project [15]. Park and Collins, through empirical investigation and factor analysis, further distilled three higher-order constructs: personal environment proactive fit behavior, proactive work behavior, and proactive strategic behavior. Personal environment proactive fit behavior refers to employees' proactive behaviors aimed at better aligning themselves with the organizational environment by changing themselves or improving the organizational environment, involving feedback, information seeking, relationship building, etc.; proactive work behavior aims at changing the internal organizational environment, including personal innovation, responsibility, voice behavior, etc.; proactive strategic behavior refers to employees' proactive behaviors in investigating the external environment of the organization and offering suggestions for strategic adjustments to help the organization better adapt to the external environment and maintain its competitive advantage [16]. Frank and Deann categorized proactive behavior into three types based on the outcome goals of the actors: pro-organizational, prosocial, and self-oriented. Pro-organizational behavior focuses on organizational efficiency,

prosocial behavior focuses on interpersonal relationships and team collaboration, while self-oriented behavior focuses on personal career success [17].

2.2.2. Measurement of employee proactive behavior

In the study of employee proactivity, the development of scales is a critical tool for measuring and assessing this concept. Based on different understandings of proactivity, scales can roughly be divided into two categories: one that views proactivity as a behavioral style and another that sees it as a behavioral pattern. From the perspective of behavioral style, Bateman and Crant developed a scale for proactive personality, consisting of 17 items aimed at assessing individuals' tendencies toward proactivity. Representative items include "If I see something I don't like, I change it," "I enjoy facing and overcoming obstacles to my ideas," and "I can spot good opportunities before others do" et al., reflecting individuals' self-awareness of proactive tendencies [1]. Frese et al. based on situational interviews, developed a self-report scale concerning personal characteristics of proactive behavior, comprising seven items. Representative items include "I actively solve problems" and "Whenever something is wrong, I immediately look for ways to fix it" et al., aiming to assess individuals' proactive behavior characteristics when facing problems [2].

From the perspective of behavioral patterns, Morrison and Phelps introduced an element of extra-role behavior into proactive behavior, proposing the concept of taking responsibility for proactive changes in work processes. They developed a colleague-rated scale with 10 items, using MBA students as samples. Representative items include "Often tries to change the way work is done to increase efficiency," "Regularly tries new methods of work to increase company efficiency," and "Frequently tries to correct errors in processes or practices" et al., focusing on individuals' proactive behaviors in the workplace and their impact on work processes [18]. Griffin et al. categorized proactive behavior into nine types based on the dimensions of proficiency, adaptability, and proactivity, and combined individual, group, and organizational levels to develop assessment questionnaires for these types. Representative items include "In the past month, I have found better ways to do my job," "In the past month, I have made suggestions to make my department more efficient," and "In the past month, I have integrated into changes that enhance the overall efficiency of the unit" et al., aiming to assess individuals' proactive behaviors at different levels [4]. Bindl and Parker developed a measurement questionnaire from the perspective of dynamic behavioral processes, consisting of four dimensions: setting goals, making plans, implementing behaviors, and receiving feedback on results. Representative items include "I think about how to do my work better" and "I use more efficient ways of working in my job" et al., focusing on individuals' proactive behaviors in the process [19]. Fu developed a Chinese version of the Employee Proactivity Scale, consisting of three dimensions and 17 questions, namely, proactive work behavior, proactive behavior adapting to people and environment, and proactive strategic behavior, commonly used to measure individual, team, and organizational proactivity [20].

Through these different scales, researchers can assess and understand individuals' proactivity from various perspectives, whether as a behavioral style or a behavioral pattern. The development and application of these scales provide important tools for the study of proactivity, helping organizations better understand and promote employee proactivity, thereby enhancing overall organizational performance and competitiveness.

2.3. Factors Influencing Employee Proactive Behavior

2.3.1. Individual factors

Employee proactivity is influenced by various individual factors, including but not limited to personality traits, cognitive abilities, values, and emotional experiences et al. Research indicates that individuals with proactive personalities are more inclined to seize opportunities, actively manage social relationships at work, propose suggestions for the organization, or take initiative in tasks assigned by the organization, and even engage in proactive innovative actions [21]. Additionally, employee proactivity is affected by psychological resilience and curiosity. Individuals with strong

psychological resilience are better able to cope with workplace stress and actively seek breakthroughs. This trait of reverse thinking enables them to actively explore breakthroughs in work, uncover knowledge and opportunities that others may not discover, and thus overcome challenges and achieve higher performance. On the other hand, curiosity also serves as an underlying motivation that contributes to fostering employee proactive behavior. Furthermore, numerous scholars have conducted in-depth research on the interaction between self-efficacy and proactive behavior and have drawn corresponding conclusions. When individuals demonstrate higher self-efficacy, they are more inclined to challenge themselves, exhibit stronger proactivity to overcome environmental obstacles, and improve environmental conditions. Conversely, when self-efficacy is low, they are more likely to choose withdrawal, avoidance, or even resignation [3]. Job competency has a positive impact on employee proactivity, enhancing employees' sensitivity to the work environment and their ability to control their work, thereby inspiring employees to exhibit more proactive behavior [22, 23]. Employee proactivity is influenced by values and emotional experiences, shaping their behavior. Among them, values are the most important factor influencing employee proactivity. Positive emotional experiences can enhance employees' emotional states, inspire their enthusiasm and creativity, and strengthen their self-efficacy, thereby encouraging employees to more actively demonstrate self-awareness and behavior. Negative emotional experiences may lead to employees feeling tired and a decrease in work efficiency, and may even lead to their resignation. Therefore, to foster employee proactivity, organizations should create a positive work environment, emotional atmosphere, and value guidance to promote employee enthusiasm.

2.3.2. Organizational factors

As one of the significant social relationships, leadership style also has a certain influence on employee proactivity. Transformational leaders can provide employees with psychological support and a sense of psychological safety, thereby making employees more certain and proactive in their approach to the organization, leading to higher levels of employee proactivity [24]. Furthermore, research has found that different leadership styles have varying degrees of influence on employee proactivity. Leadership styles can be categorized into proactive and passive types. For instance, an inclusive leadership style respects subordinates, communicates with an open mind, and enables employees to feel more approachable and communicate more effectively, which has a positive impact on employee proactivity [25]. Ethical leadership conveys organizational norms through proactive interactions, encouraging individuals to take more initiative in their work and exhibit proactive behavior [26]. Additionally, through research on new-generation employees, scholars have found that distributed leadership under the three-stage management model can effectively promote employee proactivity [27]. Conversely, passive leadership styles have a negative impact on employee proactivity. Destructive leadership, for example, may cause psychological and physiological harm to subordinates through verbal or non-verbal means, leading to a loss of work enthusiasm and a negative attitude, thereby reducing proactive behavior [28]. Authoritarian leaders primarily focus on their own status and authority, adopting an autocratic leadership style. Once subordinates question their words and actions, they may refuse and suppress employees, causing frustration and reducing employee proactivity [29].

At the organizational level, research mainly focuses on job characteristics, situational atmosphere, and systems. There is a close relationship between job characteristics and proactive behavior. For example, work pressure may make employees feel fatigued and burdened, thus employees usually cannot perform more proactive behavior, resulting in reduced proactive behavior characteristics [30]. However, some studies suggest that when work pressure becomes a challenging stressor, employees can be motivated to exhibit more autonomous innovative behaviors and other proactive behaviors [31]. Meanwhile, organizational atmosphere significantly influences employee proactivity. For example, the fairness of organizational decision outcomes and processes has a significant impact on employee proactivity. When employees perceive organizational environment fairness, high self-efficacy increases their sense of work control. Therefore, under the positive influence of organizational atmosphere, employees are more likely to enhance proactive behavior spontaneously

[32]. This perception of fairness not only involves material aspects such as compensation and promotion but also includes fairness in job task allocation and transparency in decision-making processes. When organizations can provide employees with sufficient respect and fair treatment in these aspects, employees are more likely to feel valued and recognized, thus exhibiting more proactive behavior at work. Additionally, the design of organizational systems is also an important factor influencing employee proactivity. Well-designed organizational systems can provide employees with clear career development paths and abundant learning opportunities, enabling them to have clearer goals and directions in their work. In this supportive institutional environment, employees are more likely to actively seek improvement and innovation, continuously enhancing their job performance. However, organizational systems can also lead to a decrease in employee willingness to exhibit proactive behavior. For example, Grant and Ashford found that employees may feel pressure when implementing proactive behavior, some of which originates from organizational systems and some from self-initiated changes, leading to a decrease in employee willingness to exhibit proactive behavior [33]. The perceived level of organizational support and organizational ethics positively influences proactive behavior [34, 35].

3. Impact of Employee Proactive Behavior

3.1. Positive Effects

3.1.1. Individual factors

Proactive employees not only exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors but are also more likely to achieve higher salaries and career success. Firstly, research suggests that proactive employees demonstrate higher levels of satisfaction across various aspects of work, career, or life. For instance, a study by Seibert et al. indicates that employees displaying proactive behavior typically experience higher satisfaction when confronted with daily work tasks and career challenges [36]. Besides higher career satisfaction, research by Ashforth et al. also points out that such employees not only exhibit higher job satisfaction but also have stronger organizational identification [37]. For newly hired employees, the impact of proactive behavior is even more evident. Specific manifestations of proactive behavior include actively solving work-related problems, proposing innovative suggestions, and actively participating in team cooperation and communication, among others. These behaviors can assist new employees in adapting to new environments more quickly, establishing effective interpersonal relationships, thereby enhancing their overall happiness in new positions. Research by Cooper-Thomas et al. also suggests that proactive behavior positively predicts the happiness of new employees [38]. Secondly, employee proactivity not only enhances job performance and engagement but also improves employees' innovation and learning capabilities. Studies indicate that proactive behavior enables employees to seek areas for improvement through self-negative feedback and learn from others' successful experiences, thereby positively impacting performance [39]. For example, Ashforth et al. found a significant correlation between proactive behavior and job performance [37, 40]. Meanwhile, different researchers, based on theories such as social resource theory [38] and social cognitive theory [41], suggest that proactive behavior increases employees' job engagement. Additionally, proactive behavior promotes individual innovation. Specifically, individuals with proactive behavior, through continuous attempts to improve work processes, ultimately benefit individual innovation. Based on social exchange theory, Gong et al. found that proactive employees establish stronger trust relationships with supervisors and colleagues through more information exchange [42]. These trust relationships, in turn, enhance employee creativity, enabling them to exhibit more innovative behaviors at work. Lastly, proactive employees typically achieve higher career success and salaries. When the values of these employees align with the organization's values and their job skills meet the requirements of the position, they also achieve greater career success. Additionally, due to the higher productivity of proactive employees, such as efficiently completing daily tasks, they often receive more rewards and higher salaries [43]. Further research suggests that

using social capital theory, employees who actively seek guidance and establish contacts with colleagues early in their careers are more likely to earn higher incomes and achieve higher positions two years later [44].

3.1.2. Organizational level

At the organizational level, employee proactive behavior contributes to establishing positive relationships between employees, leaders, and colleagues, thereby enhancing team and organizational performance. Most studies suggest that high-quality leader-member exchange fosters employee proactive behavior by providing guidance and support [45], creating a trusting atmosphere. However, some scholars argue that it's not high-quality leader-member exchange that triggers employee proactive behavior; rather, it's the proactive behavior of employees that creates good superior-subordinate relationships. Sychala and Sonnentag proposed that individual proactive behavior is not necessarily consistently positive or negative [46], it varies based on different types, including "problem prevention-oriented individual proactive behavior," which aims to prevent obstacles and sources of stress from reoccurring, going beyond formal job descriptions but focusing on addressing current and future issues. Colleagues and supervisors are likely to appreciate employees who take preventive measures to solve problems [47]. Additionally, proactive individuals, by actively seeking performance feedback, can clarify their understanding of job roles, leading to better task performance and high-quality exchange relationships with superiors [48]. Moreover, proactive employees are more likely to engage in effective interpersonal communication, generating valuable information or gaining more effective political positions [49]. They are likely to establish high-quality social exchange relationships with leaders to fulfill their duties better, especially in obtaining information related to emerging problems and opportunities [50].

Employee proactive behavior not only enhances employee job enthusiasm and performance but also promotes organizational innovation and change, improving organizational operational efficiency [51]. For example, Kirkman et al. empirically found that employee proactive behavior significantly positively affects team productivity, work efficiency, job satisfaction, and team commitment. Proactive employees are more likely to seize job opportunities, creatively solve organizational problems, and have a positive impact on the organization [48].

3.2. Positive Effects

3.2.1. Individual factors

At the individual level, there are also a few studies focusing on the negative outcomes of employee proactive behavior. Proactive employees may exhibit negative attitudes and behaviors, such as irritability, emotional exhaustion, withdrawal behaviors, and job rumination, due to resource depletion. Additionally, after demonstrating proactive behavior, individuals may face rejection from leaders and colleagues.

Employee proactive behavior demands extra actions at work, requiring more time, energy, and advocating for change and adapting to new work methods within the organization. Although these behaviors can enhance work efficiency and innovation, they may also lead to increased psychological stress due to continual resource consumption [53]. Moreover, when employees feel highly controlled and lack sufficient intrinsic motivation in their work, their proactive behavior can further deplete personal resources [54]. At this point, employees may feel fatigue and pressure due to a lack of intrinsic interest or identification [55]. For instance, research based on the self-regulatory resource depletion theory suggests that continuous proactive behavior, when employees lack strong work motivation, negatively affects their daily lives, exacerbating the conflict between work and life [56]. This implies that while proactive behavior can enhance work performance to some extent, without adequate intrinsic motivation and support, it can instead lead to resource depletion and increased psychological burden, affecting overall quality of life and job satisfaction. In such cases, sustaining proactive behavior becomes challenging and may have adverse effects on employees' overall mental

health. Existing research has also confirmed that persistent proactive behavior leads to higher levels of fatigue, thereby reducing subsequent proactive behavior by individuals [57].

Employee proactive behavior can also result in absenteeism, tardiness, early departure, or even turnover. While proactive behavior can bring about positive work outcomes to some extent, the continual investment of personal time, energy, and emotional resources may cause employees to become irritable and prone to work-related rumination. This sustained pressure and psychological burden may eventually lead to employee withdrawal behaviors [54]. Additionally, proactive behavior can negatively impact employee performance when inappropriate feedback is received. For example, when employees actively seek self-positive feedback, if this feedback is not objective enough, it may negatively affect their performance. Specifically, seeking self-positive feedback is negatively correlated with employee performance because this type of feedback often serves self-enhancement rather than genuine improvement suggestions [39]. Such feedback does not promote employee learning and improvement but instead leads to self-satisfaction, stagnation, and an inability to genuinely enhance their abilities and work performance.

3.2.2. Organizational level

At the organizational level, employee proactive behavior is not always positively evaluated due to people's tendency to resist change. Supervisors may give lower performance evaluations to proactive individuals [1, 58]. This phenomenon is not uncommon in the workplace. Firstly, leaders may experience a "proactivity paradox." In this paradox, leaders may perceive employee proactive behavior as ingratiating attempts [59] or even see these behaviors as threats to their authority and position [3, 22, 54]. This perception may lead to leaders not giving high evaluations of employee proactive behavior and may even result in negative views. Research by Fast et al. found that leaders with low self-efficacy are more likely to react negatively to employee suggestions because they perceive this behavior as challenging, triggering a self-defensive state characterized by negative evaluations and reluctance to adopt suggestions [60]. Secondly, leaders may use different labels to describe employee proactive behavior, attaching negative labels that lead to negative evaluations. For example, leaders may label employees with low pro-social values and high levels of aversive emotion as "poor timing, poor execution, or selfish"[61]. Furthermore, employees motivated by image enhancement may be seen as pursuing selfish interests rather than the collective interests of the team [62]. In such cases, leaders are unlikely to give these employees positive performance evaluations.

In addition to evoking dislike from leaders, employee proactive behavior may also provoke resentment from colleagues. Individual proactive behavior often challenges existing role boundaries and introduces new, potentially more exhausting ways of task execution, impacting colleagues' tasks and workflows [61]. Surrounding colleagues may not appreciate adapting to these new changes, especially when these changes force them to abandon previous habits, leading to dissatisfaction or even resentment among colleagues. For instance, proactive behavior on assembly lines is often unwelcome because assembly lines are based on standardization, while individual proactive behavior often implies some degree of non-standardization [22]. In non-assembly line organizations, employee proactive behavior may similarly have negative effects, with colleagues providing negative feedback on these behaviors [58, 63], and may even lead to retaliatory actions from colleagues [63]. Further research suggests that highly proactive employees often have better leader-member exchange relationships and relatively high rankings of job performance, which may breed jealousy among colleagues [5]. Jealousy represents an unpleasant and painful upward social comparison, reflecting negative emotions among colleagues when facing these highly proactive employees. Research by Sun et al. utilizing social comparison theory found that employees with high levels of proactivity not only tend to be envied by colleagues but also receive less help from them [64]. When leaders and colleagues hold negative views of an employee's proactive behavior, trust and support relationships within the team are disrupted, leading to problems in task allocation and cooperation among team members, ultimately undermining organizational performance.

4. Research Prospect

In terms of the factors influencing and outcomes of employee proactive behavior (EPB), as research progresses, scholars are gradually realizing that individual EPB can yield positive, forward-looking outcomes, such as enhancing innovative capabilities and boosting teamwork, while it can also potentially lead to negative, adverse consequences, such as increasing work pressure and triggering work conflicts. The existence of these positive and negative effects necessitates a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying individual EPB in future research. Future studies can utilize static research methods to delve deeply into analyzing the factors affecting the outcomes of individual EPB, thereby revealing their inherent mechanisms. This includes the object factors of EPB, such as personal capabilities and knowledge levels, the subject factors of EPB actors and observers, such as individual attitudes and values, and organizational situational characteristics, such as organizational culture and leadership styles. The combined effects of these factors determine the outcome effects of individual EPB. Future research can delve further into exploring the interaction between individual factors and situational factors, and how this interaction influences the outcomes of proactive behavior.

Additionally, future research needs to go beyond static observations of the outcomes of individual employee proactive behavior (EPB) and instead focus on its dynamic influence processes. Factors such as individual motivation, attributions, and affect continuously influence the entire process of employee proactive behavior, which may lead to increases or decreases in proactive behavior, thus resulting in positive or negative impacts. Therefore, future research should also explore the dynamic research directions of individual EPB to gain a clearer understanding of the trajectory of its changes and influencing mechanisms. For example, over time, employees may go through different stages of their careers, and these stages may have different effects on their proactive behavior. Among them, new employees entering the workplace may exhibit stronger curiosity and exploration, while as their careers progress, they may become more focused on practical experience and outcomes. Furthermore, with organizational changes and developments, employees' work environments and tasks may change, thereby influencing their proactive behavior. Therefore, future research can track employees' proactive behavior at different time points, career stages, and organizational change processes to better understand the trajectory of its development and influencing factors. Additionally, future research can also explore the dynamic relationship between employee proactive behavior and organizational feedback, and how this cycle affects employees' sustained proactivity. Organizational feedback can be positive, such as praise and recognition, or negative, such as criticism and blame. The feedback received by employees will influence their perception of organizational goals and expectations, thereby affecting their proactive behavior. For example, positive organizational feedback may motivate employees to participate more actively in work, while negative organizational feedback may reduce their work enthusiasm. Conversely, employees' proactive behavior may also influence the content and manner of organizational feedback. For example, employees' proactive behavior may attract the attention and appreciation of leaders, thereby receiving positive feedback, which in turn encourages them to continue demonstrating proactive behavior. Therefore, future research can further explore the dynamic relationship between employee proactive behavior and organizational feedback, and how this cycle affects employees' sustained proactivity, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the dynamic development process and influencing mechanisms of employee proactive behavior.

Finally, the outcome effects of individual proactive behavior may vary across different cultural backgrounds. Future research can compare the outcomes of individual proactive behavior in different cultural contexts to better understand the influence of cultural factors on proactive behavior. Particularly in cultural backgrounds like China, individual proactive behavior may be influenced by some unique cultural factors. Chinese culture emphasizes collectivism and family values, which may impact individual proactive behavior. In Chinese culture, individuals typically prioritize collective interests and teamwork over individual pursuits. Therefore, individuals may focus more on the interests of the team and overall goals rather than personal achievements and performance when

exhibiting proactive behavior. Additionally, traditional values in Chinese culture, such as filial piety and loyalty, may also influence individuals' behavioral tendencies and choices, thereby affecting their proactive behavior. On the other hand, in Chinese culture, the status of leaders and authority figures is often highly regarded, which may influence employees' demonstration of proactive behavior. Employees may be more inclined to follow the guidance and instructions of leaders rather than making their own decisions and taking actions. Therefore, studying individual proactive behavior in the context of Chinese culture requires considering the role of culture in shaping individuals' values and behavioral patterns, as well as the interaction between culture and organizational structures. Future research can explore the mechanisms of cultural influence on individual proactive behavior by comparing the outcomes of individual proactive behavior in different cultural contexts. This will help us better understand the impact of cultural factors on proactive behavior and provide more scientifically guided recommendations for cross-cultural management and organizational practices. By delving into the characteristics and patterns of individual proactive behavior in Chinese culture, organizations can better harness employees' enthusiasm and creativity, thus promoting organizational innovation and development.

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