

**A Communication Approach to Exploring Followers' Influence on Leaders':
A Quantitative Analysis**

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Dedication

This dissertation work is dedicated to all of those who have supported me throughout this enormous achievement.

For my grandfather, Bill Mellon Sr., who I promised I would make him proud and bring honor to his name just before Alzheimer's set in. Cheers.

For my loving parents, Hsin-Wen Chang and Bill Gray, who went from worrying about me being a total screw-up during my undergrad days to worrying that I studied too much throughout graduate school. You recently told me that I was your hero and God's little warrior. Well, your tiny warrior hero couldn't have done this without you, without your love and support.

I also dedicate this work to my committee chair, my hero, Dr. Michelle Violanti. I am proud of this work because I did this with you, to have gone through the thesis and now dissertation process with you as my chair. I could not have asked for a more remarkable mentor, advisor, academic mom, professor, and now friend over the past 5 years. You have gone above and beyond for me and so many others with your caring approach and beaming expertise. I am truly honored to have learned from you and shared the past five years of my growth and success with you (and/or credited you for that growth and success). Truthfully, you and our relationship has probably been the most important aspect of my success (and keeping my sanity at times) throughout my graduate school journey. You genuinely care and your tailored approach in advising and being a chair is second to none. Thank you beyond words.

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Abstract

In the past decade, followership has increasingly captured the attention of academics. More recently, followership has begun to gain momentum in capturing the attention of practitioners. By far, the questions and demands for understanding effective followership and the ways followers influence leaders outweigh answers and solutions. Because followership, leadership, and follower-leader relationships are intricately connected and an inherently communicative phenomenon, advancing understanding of followership requires examining followers' influence on leaders from a communication perspective. The purpose of this study was to understand follower effectiveness and followers' influence on leaders by examining hypothesized relationships among followership characteristics, leader-follower relationship context, followership behaviors, and leader behavior, as evaluated by followers from a communication perspective. Using structural equation modelling methods, the results of this study reveal followership characteristics (i.e., self-regulation, empathy, and positive implicit leadership theories) influence leader-follower relationship quality (i.e., leader-member exchange; LMX) as well as follower communication behaviors (i.e., promotive voice and prohibitive voice). Moreover, results indicate follower prohibitive voice and LMX influence leaders' attention to followers (as explored through leader feedback-seeking behavior). The results of this study also indicate a need for more rigorous testing in terms of scale validity and reliability.

Keywords: Effective Followership, Self-regulation, Empathy, Implicit Followership Theories, Implicit Leadership Theories, Leader-member Exchange, Promotive Voice, Prohibitive Voice, and Leader Feedback-seeking Behavior

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Chapter One: Introduction and Background

Followership is a ubiquitous experience and an indispensable feature of organizational contexts. The rising interest in followership has captured the attention of academics and practitioners alike. People are not only interested in what leaders can do for followers, but also what followers can do for leaders. Scholars have begun investigating how followers affect leaders on an interpersonal level, emphasizing the dynamic effects involved in leader-follower relationships (Oc & Bashshur, 2013). While the notion that followers influence leaders is not new, it has long remained understudied and, accordingly, inadequately understood. For example, 25 years ago research examining influence tactics found rational persuasion was the most effective and most-used strategy for followers' upward influence attempts on leaders, whereas inspirational motivation and consultation were most effective for leaders' influence on followers (Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). More recently, research investigating followers' influence on leaders shows follower communication behaviors (e.g., voice, upward delegation, candid feedback, and compliant feedback) influence leaders' attitudes and behaviors regarding resource allocation (Oc, Bashshur, & Moore, 2015), perceptions of followers' support and contribution to goal attainment, and leader motivation (Carsten, Uhl-Bien, & Huang, 2017). From this research, the focus on the way follower communication impacts leaders highlights an important aspect of the followership process currently missing in the literature: how does communication theory inform followership theory? Followership, leadership, and follower-leader relationships are intricately connected and an inherently communicative phenomenon. To advance followership theory, examining followers' influence on leaders, as evaluated by followers from a communication perspective, cannot be overlooked.

The current study integrates followership and communication, theory and research, to introduce a communication-based approach regarding the followership process as a guiding framework for investigating followers' influence on leaders. As such, this study contributes to Oc & Bashshur's (2013) call for filling three gaps within the followership literature relevant to the question of follower influence on leaders, including: a) distinguishing a set of characteristics that can make some followers more influential than others, b) investigating how followership behaviors influence leader behaviors, and c) understanding how the followership process influences the leadership process. First, using communication theory to distinguish a set of characteristics that makes some followers more influential than others provides insight for demarcating follower effectiveness. While interpersonal communication skills are among the top abilities sought by employers and within organizations (Waldeck, Durante, Helmuth, & Marcia, 2012), understanding what communication skills and mechanisms drive followers' ability to engage in effective communication with leaders from a followership perspective remains largely unexplored. The current study adds new understanding to this issue by exploring self-regulation, empathy, and implicit theories of followership and leadership as characteristics of effective followers.

A second, related contribution of this project involves capturing the dynamic effects of leader-follower interaction(s) on followership behaviors. Leader and follower behaviors are largely interpreted and shaped by both leaders and followers in terms of their relevance to the perceived quality of the leader-follower relationship (Dulebohn, Bommer, Liden, Brouer & Ferris, 2012). As such, the relationship context's importance is addressed based upon the followers' perceptions of leader-follower relationship quality (i.e., followers' leader-member exchange ratings). This provides context for better understanding why followers engage in

certain types of followership communication behaviors (voice, upward delegation, upward influence, etc.) and how leaders respond to these behaviors. Last, this study investigates leader feedback seeking behavior as an outcome of followership (i.e., follower characteristics, leader-follower relationship, and follower behaviors), offering new insights into how leaders experience the leadership process in response to followership (Carsten et al., 2017) and how follower effectiveness associates with their experience as a leader. Moreover, doing so shows the value of the proposed communication-based approach for exploring followers' influence on leaders.

The purpose of study is to examine the relationships among: followership communication characteristics, perceived leader-follower relationship quality, followership communication behaviors, and leader communication behaviors, as evaluated by followers. Followership scholars call for advancing followership across a range of paradigmatic assumptions and methodological approaches (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014). This study answers the call by introducing a communication-based followership approach guiding framework and applying structural equation modelling to test the hypothesized relationships.

Followership

While followership is no longer cast as being bound to the shadows of leadership, the origins of followership can be visibly traced throughout the leadership literature. Historically, leadership theory and research have mostly viewed followers as either passive or active recipients of leaders' behavior(s) or the leadership process (Carsten, Harms, & Uhl-Bien, 2014). Contemporary relational approaches to leadership (e.g., leader-member exchange, followership typologies) are somewhat of an exception, viewing followers as active participants in the leadership process; however, these are still more about leaders or leadership than followership (Uhl-Bien, Graen, & Scandura, 2000). Only in the past decade has followership gained

recognition as a relational process distinct from, yet complementary with, leadership (Riggio, 2014), positioning followers as being active agents in the leadership process (e.g., Fairhurst's discursive leadership; Fairhurst, 2008) or causal agents of leaders' behaviors and attitudes (i.e., followership theory; Uhl-Bien et al., 2014).

Advancing knowledge of the followership process contributes to a deeper understanding of the importance of both follower and leader experiences as well as follower-leader relationships for organizational outcomes impacting people at individual, relational, and collective levels. As a distinct process, followership knowledge gained at the individual level paves the path for dyadic and collective levels of analysis examining follower-leader interactions and relationships. As a complementary process, followership is one piece of a larger follower-leader relationship puzzle. That is, followership and leadership are two parts of a whole, transcending beyond both leader and follower characteristics and behaviors. While built upon individual characteristics and/or behaviors, dyadic follower-leader interactions dictate how followers and leaders communicate with one another and the interaction between followership and leadership creates follower-leader relationship processes and outcomes. Therefore, both followership and leadership become crucial for understanding the interpersonal dynamics and effects of follower-leader relationships: relationship processes (development, maintenance, and dissolution) and relationship outcomes (e.g., trust, intimacy, commitment).

Certainly, this line of reasoning is not novel, drawing its roots from systems theory. However, followership research significantly lags behind that of leadership; thus, emphasizing the need for theoretical and empirical expansion. Given the relatively small body of theoretical knowledge and even greater lack of empirical data within the domain of followership research, this study focuses on followership communication at the individual level as a pre-requisite

necessary for progressing followership theory and research. “Followership *is* the characteristics, behaviors and processes of people acting in relation to leaders” (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014, p. 96)

Adopting this followership conceptualization, this study emphasizes followership characteristics and behaviors relevant to advancing knowledge regarding effective follower communication and followers influence on leaders.

Theoretical Foundations

A brief overview of followership theory highlights the need for integrating followership with communication theory and research. Communication theory is then discussed to establish the role communication plays in the followership process. Uncovering how communication theory informs followership theory in this theoretical exploration lays the groundwork for a communication-based approach to followership. Thus, this section ends by introducing a communication-based approach to the followership process as a guiding framework used to propose the causal model guiding the current study.

Followership theory. Followership theory suggests two approaches, role-based and constructionist, for studying followership. The role-based approach focuses on how followers influence leader behaviors and outcomes, whereas the constructionist approach highlights how following behaviors and leading behaviors co-construct followership, leadership, and their respective outcomes (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014). While the role-based approach emphasizes the importance of hierarchical positions, the constructionist approach is more concerned with how leadership and followership are socially created as people enact behaviors distinctive of leading and following during interaction(s). Despite their founding ontological and epistemological differences, both approaches operate under the same conceptualizations for three followership constructs, including:

1) followership characteristics: characteristics that impact how one defines and enacts followership, 2) followership behaviors: behaviors enacted from the standpoint of a follower role or in the act of following, and 3) followership outcomes: outcomes of followership characteristics and behaviors that may occur at the individual, relationship and work-unit levels (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014, p. 96).

Based on these specifications, followership theory suggests two theoretical frameworks for using either the role-based approach or constructionist approach to study followership. Figure 1 represents the conceptual frameworks for the role-based and constructionist approaches, adapted from Uhl-Bien et al. (2014).

Followership theory scholars explicitly state “A basic assumption of a followership approach is that leadership cannot be fully understood without considering how followers and followership contribute to (or detract from) the leadership process” (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014, p. 89). However, there are two other assumptions implicit in followership theory’s role-based and constructionist approaches, including: a) followership involves a relational interactive role, whether formally imposed (e.g., assigned hierarchical position or rank) or informally assumed, and most importantly b) followership involves communication. The crux of any followership

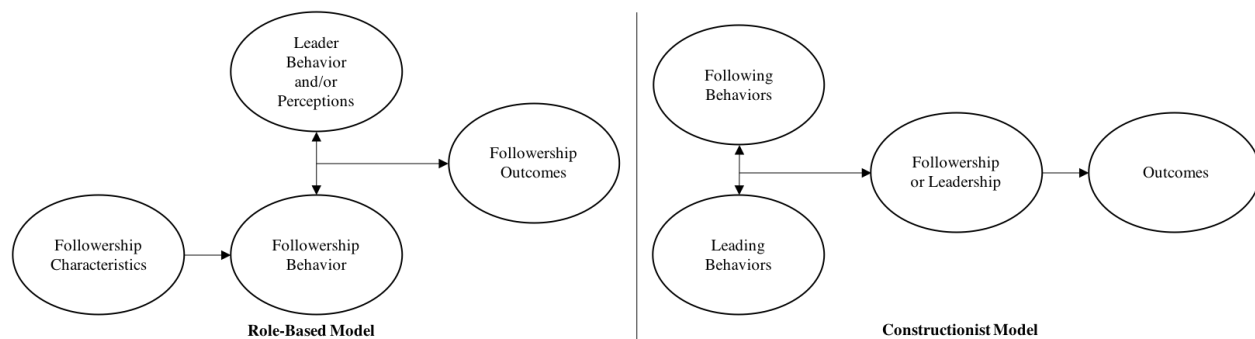


Figure 1. Followership Theory Frameworks

model is follower-leader interaction, yet followership theory falls short of clearly establishing the role of communication in either role-based or constructionist approaches. Thus, to advance followership, the current study turns to communication theory to inform followership theory.

Communication theory. Social and relational by nature, “communication involves an intentional, transactional, symbolic process” between at least two people (Miller & Steinberg, 1975, p. 34). By defining communication is this way, influence and communication are inextricably tied. Miller and Steinberg (1975, p. 35) contend, “intent to communicate and intent to influence are synonymous.” This notion echoes the works of philosophers and scholars focused on rhetoric dating as far back as Plato (Berlo, 1960; Burke, 1966; Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967). Moreover, it implies that the role of communication in the followership process is to affect the leader. As such, to understand followers’ influence on leaders requires understanding followers’ communication abilities and behaviors, specifically those of effective communicators. Accordingly, this study assumes that effective followers are effective communicators. Thus, the foundational assumptions and propositions of Miller and Steinberg’s (1975) communication theory pertinent to understanding follower effectiveness and the role communication plays in the followership process are presented in Table 1.

Essentially, the distinction between interpersonal and non-interpersonal communication is based on the type of predictions people make about their communication’s effects. Accordingly, the majority of people’s communication is non-interpersonal, which occurs at the two lowest levels of predictions: cultural level (predictions based on knowledge shared by a social group as a whole) and to a greater extent, sociological level (predictions primarily based on group membership of the other person). Interpersonal communication occurs when people make psychological-level predictions, which involve trying to understand how the other operates

Table 1

Miller & Steinberg (1975) Assumptions and Propositions

Assumptions	• When people communicate, they make predictions about the effects, or outcomes, of their communication behavior; that is, they choose among various communicative strategies on the basis of predictions about how the person receiving the message may respond (p. 7). • When predictions about communication outcomes are based primarily on a cultural or sociological level of analysis, the communicators are engaged in non-interpersonal communication; when predictions are based primarily on a psychological level of analysis, the communicators are engaged in interpersonal communication (p. 22). • Communication is goal-driven and social by nature; that is, communication is an intentional, transactional, and symbolic process at both non-interpersonal and interpersonal levels (p. 58). • The basic function of all communication, both non-interpersonal and interpersonal, is to control the environment so as to realize certain physical, economic, and social rewards from it (p. 86). • Situational and dispositional factors influence one's predictions. • People vary in their ability to communicate interpersonally (p. 11). • People vary in their approach for achieving environmental control (p. 91). • Interpersonal communication differs from interpersonal relationships, such that interpersonal relationships require at least two people be communicating interpersonally (p. 29). • When communicators operate at different levels of predictions, their relationship is defined as a mixed relationship (p. 57). • All interpersonal relationships maintain their non-interpersonal foundations, and few non-interpersonal relationships reflect a complete absence of interpersonal factors (p. 221). • Relationships may be characterized by symmetry in some situations and complementarity (asymmetry) in others because shifts occur (p. 239). • Any kind of communication relationship involves sharing space, time, and information (p. 202).
Propositions	• Effective communication involves the ability to interact interpersonally and achieve environmental control, where the former increased the potential for the latter (p. 86). • Individual characteristics impacting one's predictions and behaviors involve interpersonal communication skills and perceptions (p. 95). • Implicit perceptions of self and others impact the types of information people pick up on and how people interpret behaviors (p. 139). • Explicit perceptions of others' actual behaviors involve acquiring information, which impacts: 1) explicit perceptions and 2) understandings of messages others perceive as desirable and how we should communicate with a given individual. Sharing space and time is related to information

Table 1 Continued

	acquisition (p. 207). • Interpersonal social-cognitive skills and perceptions manifest in message behaviors through interaction (i.e., information exchanges). • In situations where goals necessitate cultural or sociological predictions, non-interpersonal communication is more likely to occur; conversely, in situations where goals necessitate psychological predictions, interpersonal communication is more likely to occur (p. 222). • Conditions under which communicators concentrate on control in transactions involve situations where: 1) the outcomes are uncertain, 2) it is important to them that particular outcomes occur, 3) they are not skilled in behaviors that will lead to rewarding outcomes, 4) they need to expend more effort to achieve rewarding outcomes, 5) the probability of a negative outcome is great, and 6) they feel they can be influential in bringing about rewarding outcomes (p. 137).
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based on unique individuality rather than culturally or sociologically constrained actions.

Because interpersonal communication is rare, most people experience a mix of interpersonal and non-interpersonal communication in their relationships. The salience of the asymmetric nature of follower-leader workplace communication particularly lends itself to this mix. Assuming the goal of any communication is to affect the other implies the essence of followers' influence on leaders resides in the extent to which followers are able and willing to communicate non-interpersonally, and to a greater degree, at the interpersonal level. As such, understanding the underlying communication skills and mechanisms guiding the ability to make accurate predictions and guide behavior comes to the forefront.

Effective communication hinges on the ability to communicate interpersonally (i.e., making psychological predictions), which involves both interpersonal communication skills and perceptions (Miller & Steinberg, 1975). Interpersonal communication skills involve individual characteristics linked to one's capacity to: a) pick up on meaningful cues, b) accurately interpret cues, and/or c) translate knowledge gained from cues into actual communication (Miller & Steinberg, 1975). This highlights the importance of social cognitive skills, such as self-regulation of attention and empathy, for effective communication; however, interpersonal skills do not act alone. Followers' implicit perceptions of who self (follower) and other (leader) should be also impact what information followers pay attention to and how they interpret messages. As such, followers' implicit perceptions of who they should be as a follower and who leaders should be contribute to both their own behaviors and explicit perceptions of the actual leader behaviors (Lord & Maher, 1993). Therefore, communication skills couple with one's implicit perceptions of self and other to shape inferences of the other's actual behavior and impact prediction accuracy, message production, and subsequent behavior. Aggregating communication skills and

perceptual dispositions as individual-level characteristics of effective communicators is of particular interest in this study. In addition, the importance of information exchange and relationship context is not overlooked.

Followers acquire information through mutual transactions (i.e., communication exchanges or information exchanges), direct interaction, and/or observation of verbal or nonverbal cues (Miller & Steinberg, 1975; Park, 1986). As followers acquire information through interaction, their conceptions of a leader (i.e., explicit perceptions), the nature of the relationship, and understanding of a leader's preferences and expectations develop. More specifically, the information acquired through interaction impacts: 1) perceptions of others' actual behaviors, and 2) understandings of what types of messages others perceive as desirable, "how we should communicate with a given individual to elicit rewarding responses" (Miller & Steinberg, 1975, p. 207). The information gained from the relationship context informs followers' understandings of the particular messages and behaviors a leader perceives as more favorable than others. Effective followers use this understanding to guide message behaviors predicted to appeal to the leaders' preferences, or perceptions, in a positive manner. The implication includes social-cognitive communication skills and implicit perceptions manifest in message behaviors through interaction (i.e., information exchanges) within the context of follower-leader relationships. Thus, follower-leader relationship context serves as a valuable source of information or motivation from which followers draw for making predictions and producing desirable messages to obtain goals; that is, to achieve control.

A foundational assumption of many social-cognitive theories is that the fundamental function of effective communication is achieving control over one's physical and social environment (i.e., environmental control; Bandura, 1991; O'Keefe, 1988; Parks, 1994; Roloff &

Berger, 1982). In asymmetric (e.g., follower-leader) relationships, each party relies on the other to control respective portions of the environment (completing tasks, fulfilling responsibilities). Followers' ability to achieve environmental control in relation to the leader(s) through effective message content and manner of approach based on accurate predictions (i.e., non-interpersonal and interpersonal communication) is of interest for this study. When followers and leaders communicate, followers have an impact on leaders and leaders have an impact on followers (Miller & Steinberg, 1975). When followers use interpersonal communication skills to tailor message behaviors toward the leaders' preferences, they enhance the possibility of leaders perceiving them reliably and maintaining effective environmental control. As a result, leaders are more likely to deem followers as credible, liked, similar, or trustworthy, all of which increase their potential influence on a leader's behavior, motivation, and attitudes. Therefore, the current study highlights an implicit proposition suggested by Miller & Steinberg's (1975) work: interpersonal communication and environmental control likely provoke others to make interpersonal communication moves.

Communication-based approach of followership. Communication theory informs followership theory by suggesting a communication-based approach of followership to explore how followers influence leader behavior, from a follower perspective. This approach differs from followership theory's role-based and constructionist approaches in three ways: 1) establishing a set of followership characteristics, 2) providing a conceptual framework guided by blending post-positivistic and social constructionist paradigmatic assumptions, and 3) encouraging a communication focus to identify and examine followership behaviors and outcomes. Each of these is discussed to introduce a guiding framework suggested by the communication-based approach. From this framework, a hypothesized model is proposed.

The first difference concerns the set of four followership characteristics suggested by Miller and Steinberg's (1975) communication theory, two of which involve implicit perceptions with the other two considering social-cognitive communication skills. Followers' perceptions of self and others (leaders) are captured by implicit followership theories and implicit leadership theories. Implicit theories of followership and leadership are individuals' personal beliefs about the characteristics and behaviors of followers and leaders, respectively (Sy, 2010). A related followership characteristic, based in perception, is follower role orientations, followers' beliefs about their responsibilities, activities, and behaviors as well as personal definitions of what is important and what it means to be effective while working with leaders (Carsten et al., 2014). According to Carsten et al. (2014), there are three common follower role orientations: 1) a passive role orientation occurs when people believe the follower role requires obedience, deference, and loyalty, 2) a co-production role orientation represents beliefs that the follower role involves being an actively engaged partner (e.g., solving problems, relaying information) of their leader, and 3) an anti-authoritarian role orientation develops when followers believe they should avoid, disregard, and/or oppose a leader's control or authority. While follower role orientations capture follower expectations about what followers should do (i.e., how followers should perform), implicit followership theories capture perceptions of who followers are, or should be (Epitropaki, Sy, Martin, Tram-Quon, & Topakas, 2013). Moreover, follower role orientations fail to capture followers' perceptions of how leaders are, or should be. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, implicit followership theories and implicit leadership theories are explored as followership characteristics, as both are theorized to be important aspects of the followership process.

The last two followership characteristics explored in this study are the social-cognitive communication skills of self-regulation and empathy. Self-regulation refers to the processes involved in exercising control over oneself to align or alter inner states with attaining and maintaining one's goals, internally represented desired outcomes (Carver & Scheier, 2004; Vancouver & Day, 2005). Empathy refers to the processes involved in accurately predicting (interpreting and understanding) another's experience and/or mindset to interact in preferable ways. This conceptualization of empathy points to the elusive nature of the empathy construct. Conceptualizing empathy in this way allows the current study to account for either global or local empathetic abilities and tendencies—perspective-taking, empathic concern, personal distress, self and other awareness, etc.—relevant to the experience of empathy in followership.

Second, the theoretical perspective of the communication-based approach, as studied here, generates a different conceptual framework for exploring the followership process. The transactional perspective of communication is based on a paradigmatic blend between post-positivism and social constructionism, assuming “reality is construed partially from the objective characteristics of external stimuli and partially by the way we perceive them” (Miller & Steinberg, 1975, p. 38). This perspective aligns with followership theory's role-based approach in assuming followers' characteristics and behaviors affect leaders' attitudes and behaviors. Similar to the social constructionist approach, it also considers the importance of mutual impact, suggesting relevant individual characteristics directly relate to follower-leader communication exchanges, which, in turn, indirectly affect other outcomes. As such, the communication-based approach generates a new followership framework, blending the role-based and social constructionist approaches. This model incorporates the constructs of followership theory within the framework of the transactional perspective of communication. Specifically, the proposed

framework emphasizes the importance of communication skills and relationship context in determining follower behaviors and subsequent behavioral responses from leaders. Figure 2 represents the conceptual framework of the communication-based approach introduced in this study.

For the purposes of this study, leader-member exchange from the perspective of the follower captures the follower-leader relationship context and is explored as a follower-leader communication exchange. Leader-member exchange (LMX) focuses on the leadership process from a relational perspective, suggesting leader-follower dyads engage in communication exchanges to foster mutual respect, trust, and obligation; as a result, partnerships are developed based on reciprocal interdependence (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). While leaders are assumed to be the primary driver of LMX development and follower-leader relationship quality (Dulebohn et al., 2012); including followers as focal recipients of leadership offers a wealth of knowledge about follower perceptions and different ways leaders influence followers. For example, followers report having higher quality relationships when leaders put more effort into the relationship (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001) and enact transformational leadership (Barbuto, Wilmot & Story, 2011). Followers benefit from high-quality relationships in relation to job performance, job satisfaction, career advancement, empowerment, and perceived organizational support (Pellegrini, 2016). At relational and collective levels, follower outcomes associated with high-quality relationships range from pro-leader (prosocial) to pro-organizational (Erokan & Bauer, 2016). Admittedly, LMX research is equipped with a robust body of literature largely supporting two of its primary propositions: 1) individual characteristics and behaviors of followers and leaders influence the development of leader-follower relationships and 2) high-quality exchange relationships have positive outcomes for followers, leaders, and organizations (Graen & Uhl-

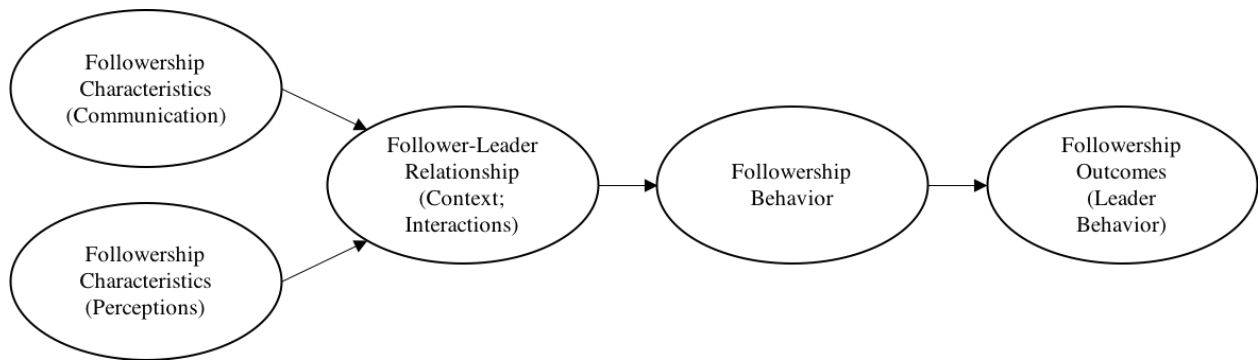


Figure 2. Communication-based Approach of Followership

bien, 1995). However, research has yet to establish followers' relative influence on LMX from a followership perspective (Dulebohn et al., 2012). The current study addresses this concern by proposing follower perceptions of leaders' actual behaviors guide subsequent followership behaviors and are captured in followers' LMX ratings.

Last, communication theory encourages maintaining a communication focus for selecting measurable variables to test. While followership behaviors such as obedience (the classic behavior associated with followers), proactive behaviors, and resistance are important to studying followership, they lack a central focus on communication; rather, their centrality rests more in performance. In this study, messages (message content and/or message behavior) related to the three concepts outlining the role of communication in followership focus attention on communication-based followership behaviors, including: voice, upward delegation, upward influence strategies, and feedback seeking. Voice refers to the extent to which a follower expresses constructive opinions, concerns, or ideas about work-related issues with a leader (Liang, Farh, & Farh, 2012). Feedback-seeking behavior is defined as "the conscious devotion of effort toward determining the correctness and adequacy of behavior for attaining valued end states" (Ashford 1986, p. 466). As such, follower voice is explored as a followership behavior

and leader feedback-seeking is explored as a leader behavior. Based on the communication-based approach of followership, Figure 3 represents the causal model proposed in this study.

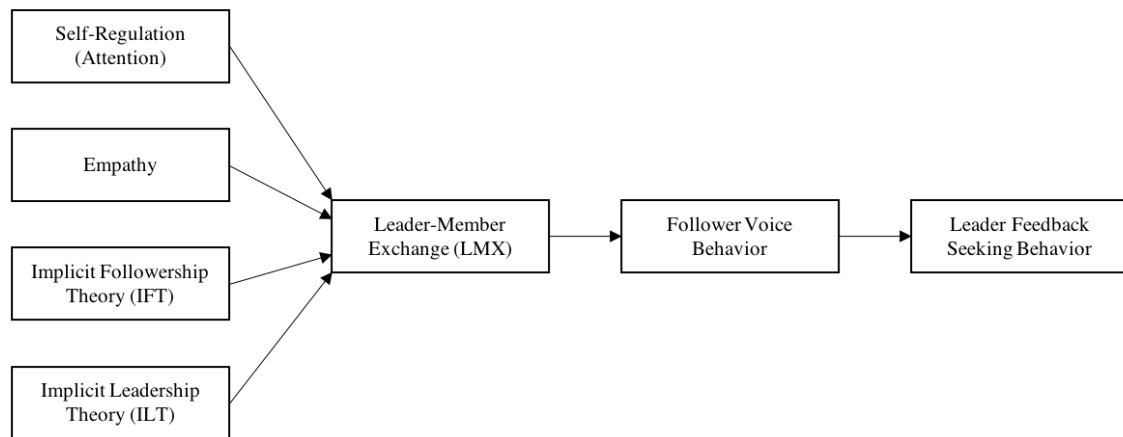


Figure 3. Hypothesized Theoretical Framework

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Chapter one lays the theoretical groundwork for examining followers' influence on leaders from a communication-based approach of followership by exploring the relationships among followership characteristics, leader-member exchange, followership behavior, and leader behavior. The following literature review focuses on research relevant to the proposed model's variables and hypothesized relationships.

Followership Characteristics

Implicit theories of followership and leadership. Implicit leadership theories (ILTs) and implicit followership theories (IFTs) are individuals' personal assumptions about the characteristics and behaviors of leaders and followers, respectively (Lord, Foti, & de Vader 1984; Sy, 2010). As social cognitive structures, ILTs and IFTs specify people's expectations of what attributes and behaviors leaders and followers have and how they ought to behave. Based in a connectionist perspective, the notion of ILTs and IFTs stem from Lord, Foti, and Phillips' (1982) leadership categorization theory, which asserts ILTs and IFTs guide behaviors as both stable and flexible schemas over time. That is, ILTs and IFTs are used in sense-making and sense-giving processes as consistent perceptual categories for comparing people's experiences of another's behavior; over longer periods of exposure, people may update and modify their IFTs and ILTs to integrate new characteristics or behaviors or create new categories of an implicit theory (e.g., business leader, military leader, educational leader, etc.) based on their experience (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Shen, 2018; Shondrick & Lord, 2010).

For followers, both IFTs and ILTs theoretically shape the way followers assess their leaders and behave toward them (Engle & Lord, 1993; Lord & Maher, 1991; van Gils, van Quaquebeke, & van Knippenberg, 2010). Research investigating IFTs addresses gaps in

understanding the interpersonal dynamics of follower-leader interactions explained by the way either: 1) leaders' conceptions of followers shape their judgments and behaviors toward their followers or 2) followers' conceptions of leaders shape their inferences and behaviors toward their leader (Junker & Dick, 2014; Whiteley, Sy, & Johnson, 2012). Some theoretical work has explored the interplay between ILTs and IFTs from the perspective of followers (van Gils et al., 2010; Shondrick & Lord, 2010); however, empirical efforts have largely devoted research energy to investigating congruence between followers' ILTs (i.e., FILT) and perceptions of their actual leaders' characteristics and behaviors (i.e., recognized implicit leadership theories; RILTs). For example, research has found FILT-RILT congruence positively affects leader-follower relationship quality, liking, and trust (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005), leading to positive performance outcomes (Khorakian & Sharifirad, 2018; Sharifirad & Hajhoseiny, 2018). Research examining leaders' IFTs (i.e., LIFTs) has found LIFTs relate to follower ratings of interpersonal relationship outcomes (relationship quality with leader, satisfaction with leader, trust in leader, and liking for the leader), and follower job performance (Sy, 2010; Whiteley et al., 2012). Further, in a recent review, LIFT-RIFT congruence relates to both leaders' and followers' views of relationship quality (Junker & Dick, 2014). At the dyadic level, FILT-RILT congruence and LIFT-RIFT (i.e., recognized implicit followership theories; RIFTs) congruence increases cooperation, which positively affects follower-leader relationship quality (Coyle & Foti, 2015).

Overall, the reviewed literature emphasizes the prominent implications of the association between implicit theories of followership and leadership and leader-follower relationship quality for positive individual, relational, and organizational outcomes. Indeed, it is significant to understand how followers' categorizations of leaders, leaders' categorizations of followers, and

the level of similarity between followers' and leaders' implicit theories impact leader-follower relationship quality. Understanding what is less known about followers' IFTs (i.e., FIFTs) and the interplay between followers' IFTs and ILTs (i.e., FIFTs and FILTs) for follower-leader relationship quality remains theoretically and practically intriguing. The gaps in followership research examining FIFTs and FILTs appears to be vast. Therefore, this study examines both ILTs and IFTs of followers (i.e., FIFTs and FILTs) as antecedents of follower-leader relationship quality and their indirect effect on subsequent follower and/or leader communication behaviors.

Self-regulation and empathy. Self-regulation accounts for both unconscious and conscious goal-driven processes operating to control a range of volitional mechanisms underlying communication behaviors, including: attention, motivation, affect, decision-making, intentions (self-monitoring), planning (regulating information), impulse, and failure control (Kuhl & Furhman, 1998). Of these, self-regulating attention is the most critical and encompassing for controlling one's environment to achieve personal or professional goals. In general, self-regulation involves three inputs within a closed feedback loop: 1) setting standards, using social cognition to set standards of behavior facilitating goals/expectations, 2) discrepancy detection, comparing the extent to which the standards set by one's self and/or others align with the current state, and 3) reflexive response behaviors (i.e., discrepancy enlarging and discrepancy reducing) serving to augment or eliminate and condense detected discrepancies (Carver & Scheier, 2000). Following these is a fourth control input, effortful control. Effortful control is a superordinate reflective process that can override reflexive reactions through deliberate (i.e., effortful) control of one's attention (Carver, Johnson, & Joormann, 2008).

Followers' attention self-regulation is needed to effectively fulfill job-related responsibilities (tasks or assignments), achieve physical control over one's environment. While

self-regulation has been theorized as an important characteristic of effective followers (Ray & Violanti, 2018), empirical support remains scant. What is known about follower self-regulation largely stems from work examining Manz's (1986) self-leadership theory. This area of research has found follower self-regulation increases engagement and performance (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2016). In addition, empowering leader behaviors increase follower self-regulation for followers with a strong desire for autonomy (Yun, Cox, & Sims, 2006). However, self-regulation of attention is also needed socially, in processes of perception (selecting, organizing, and interpreting information) and affect relevant to engaging in effective communication. For example, empathy has been found, theoretically and empirically, to be an important characteristic of effective communicators, especially in regard to interpersonal and intercultural communication competence (Redmond, 1985; Spitzberg & Chagnon, 2009; Wiemann, 1977), relational leadership (Goleman, 1995; Mahsud, Yukl, & Prussia, 2010), workplace performance outcomes (Kock, Mayfield, Mayfield, Sexton, & De La Garza, 2018), and organizational dynamics (Haynie, Baur, Harris, Harris, & Moates, 2019). However, little is understood about the relationship between self-regulation and empathy, and their interdependence in relation to followership and competent communication.

In theory, self-regulation relates to empathy—people control the extent to which empathy is experienced and displayed (Burch, Bennet, Humphrey, Batchelor, & Cairo, 2016). Recent neuroscience research found the interplay between self-regulation and empathy occurs when people make predictions (i.e., inferences) about others and engage in perspective-taking to guide behavior (Gilead, Boccagno, Silverman, Hassin, Weber, & Ochsner, 2016). Specifically, two regions of the brain, in which both inferences about others' states and traits (e.g., IFTs and ILTs) as well as simulations of their perspective on the world (i.e., perspective-taking), allow this to

occur in the anterior medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC) (Gilead et al., 2016); self-regulation of attention occurs in the anterior cingulate cortex (ACC) (Hyland, Lee, & Mills, 2015). Both mPFC and ACC regions have been shown to function to up- or down-regulate amygdala activity (e.g., affective response, emotion regulation) (Gilead et al., 2016; Wagner, Demos, & Heatherton, 2011). The implication is followers who are effective communicators self-regulate attention and empathetic abilities, while simultaneously engaging in a parallel regulatory process comparing or updating and modifying their IFTs and ILTs that guide subsequent assessments and behaviors. These implications offer some support for explaining the theoretically derived relationship among the proposed followership characteristics (self-regulation, empathy, IFTs, and ILTs) in this study. Theory and prior research suggest both self-regulation and empathy operate in tandem with followers' implicit theories of followership and leadership, which serve as the basis for followers' effective communication behaviors related to achieving environmental control (physical and social).

RQ1: What is the relationship between emotion regulation and: a) empathy, b) self-regulation, c) implicit followership theory, and d) implicit leadership theory?

Followership Characteristics, LMX, and Followership Outcomes

Followership characteristics and LMX. According to leader-member exchange theory, leader-follower interactions can foster relational outcomes—mutual respect, trust, and obligation based on reciprocal interdependence (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995)—indicative of higher quality leader-follower relationships. That is, leader-member exchange (LMX) quality refers to the extent to which leaders and followers show loyalty, support, and trust toward one another (Sparrowe & Emery, 2016). Currently, there is a growing interest in understanding follower (leader) antecedents of LMX and the role LMX plays in mediating relationships among

important workplace variables (Dulebohn et al., 2012). As indicated, scholars have theorized about the integration of ILT and IFT literature with LMX literature (Erdogan & Bauer, 2016b), which has increasingly received empirical support in studies examining ILTs, IFTs, and/or ILT-IFT congruence as antecedents of LMX (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Engle & Lord, 1997).

Taken together, this study expects followers ILTs and IFTs relate positively to follower-leader relationship quality (LMX). Further, follower competence positively associates with LMX (Dulebohn et al., 2012). Followers who have the interpersonal communication skills affording one the ability to engage in effective communication are more likely to interact with a leader in satisfying ways. As underlying mechanisms necessary for competence ability, self-regulation of attention and empathy are also expected to relate positively to LMX, as evaluated by followers.

Thus, theory and prior research are consistent with the following hypotheses:

- H1:** There is a significant positive relationship between follower ILT and LMX.
- H2:** There is a significant positive relationship between follower IFT and LMX.
- H3:** There is a significant positive relationship between self-regulation and LMX.
- H4:** There is a significant positive relationship between empathy and LMX.

Followership characteristics, LMX, and follower voice behavior. Followers' perceptual dispositions (e.g., ILTs and IFTs) and interpersonal communication skills (e.g., self-regulation and empathy) can influence their choice of relevant behaviors and the effective use of these behaviors with leaders based on perceived LMX quality. LMX has been found to mediate the relationship between antecedents (e.g., follower and leader characteristics) and work behaviors and attitudes (Erdogan & Bauer, 2016a). In a recent meta-analysis, Chamberlin, Newton, and Lepine (2017) provide evidence for the predictive utility of LMX as a mediator between individual-level characteristics and follower voice. Voice, specifically constructive

voice, is comprised of promotive voice (messages focused on suggesting new solutions) and prohibitive voice (messages focused on pointing out potentially harmful problems) (Liang, et al., 2012). While the focus in message content differs, both share the common core of constructive intent.

For followers who are effective communicators, LMX serves as a source of information and motivation for producing either promotive or prohibitive voice messages to achieve environmental control. For example, high LMX quality is characterized by mutual trust, reciprocal influence, respect, and felt obligation (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), which serve as reasons promoting followers' use of voice. The interactions from which high LMX is built privy followers' access to more information about the type of voice message content, promotive or prohibitive, leaders prefer. While low LMX can discourage the frequency of followers' use of voice (Huang, Xu, Huang, & Liu, 2018), it can also motivate followers to cognitively analyze and predict leaders' reactions to either promotive or prohibitive message content when using voice to protect or enhance one's felt psychological safety (Liu, Song, Li, & Liao, 2017), credibility, or self-image relevant to one's goals and obtaining more environmental control (Tangirala & Ramanujam, 2008). Therefore, effective followers draw on LMX to create and express voice messages tailored to a leader's preferences or interpersonal predictions made about which type of voice message a leader views as more favorable in a given situation. As a result, followers increase their potential influence on leader behaviors and goal attainment. Thus, LMX is predicted to mediate the relationship between followership characteristics and follower voice behavior.

H5: There is a significant positive relationship between follower LMX and promotive voice.

H6: There is a significant positive relationship between follower LMX and prohibitive voice.

H7: Follower ratings of LMX mediate the positive relationship between: a) self-regulation and prohibitive voice, b) empathy and prohibitive voice, c) follower IFT and prohibitive voice, and d) follower ILT and prohibitive voice.

H8: Follower ratings of LMX mediate the positive relationship between: a) self-regulation and promotive voice, b) empathy and promotive voice, c) follower IFT and promotive voice, and d) follower ILT and promotive voice.

LMX, follower voice, and leader feedback-seeking. By tailoring voice messages based on LMX (high or low), effective followers are more likely to be perceived as in control, trustworthy, and credible sources for providing feedback, which in turn encourages leaders to seek their feedback. However, the feedback-seeking literature primarily focuses on followers' feedback-seeking behaviors; little research has examined leader feedback-seeking behaviors. In a study of CEOs from the U.S. and Belgium, Ashford, Wellman, de Luque, de Stobbeleir, and Wollan (2018) found CEO feedback seeking had stronger effects on top-team management and organizational performance than articulating a vision and can substitute for a vision when leaders have not developed one. In a study of 151 matched leader-follower dyads, leaders' negative feedback seeking mediated the relationship between LMX and leader effectiveness (Chun, Lee, & Sosik, 2018).

The implications of follower voice on leader behavior are an important area of inadequately understood followership research. Follower voice predicts leaders' motivation, support for followers, and perceptions of follower contributions to goal attainment (Carsten et al., 2017). Beyond Carsten et al.'s. (2017) study, research investigating the impact of follower voice on leader behaviors remains largely unexplored. However, research examining leaders' reactions to follower voice (Carsten et al., 2017; Oc, Bashshur, & Moore, 2015) sheds light on

the current study's notion proposing followers use their perceptions of LMX quality as motivation or information to achieve control, increasing their potential influence on leaders and goal obtainment when they accurately predict, create, and express voice messages that leaders perceive as desirable or valuable.

Prior research reports mixed findings regarding how leaders react to the different types of constructive voice messages. Some have found leaders react positively to promotive voice and negatively to prohibitive voice (Burris, 2012; Chamberlin et al., 2017; Liang et al., 2012); others have found leaders react positively to prohibitive messages when leaders view the voiced issues as making positive contributions to the organization (i.e., constructiveness; Burris, 2012; Whiting, Maynes, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2012). The latter perspective has been supported more recently—leaders react positively to followers' use of both promotive and prohibitive voice messages when voice message content is desirable or valuable (Burris, Rockman, & Kimmons, 2017; Huang et al., 2018). Therefore, the literature suggests the influential power of voice message content revealed in follower voice that is specifically framed for leader favorability mediates the relationship between followers' LMX ratings and leaders' feedback seeking behaviors.

H9: There is a significant positive relationship between follower promotive voice and leader feedback-seeking behavior, as evaluated by followers.

H10: There is a significant positive relationship between follower prohibitive voice and leader feedback-seeking behavior, as evaluated by followers.

H11: Follower promotive voice mediates the positive relationship between LMX and leader feedback-seeking behavior, as evaluated by followers.

H12: Follower prohibitive voice mediates the positive relationship between LMX and leader feedback-seeking behavior, as evaluated by followers.

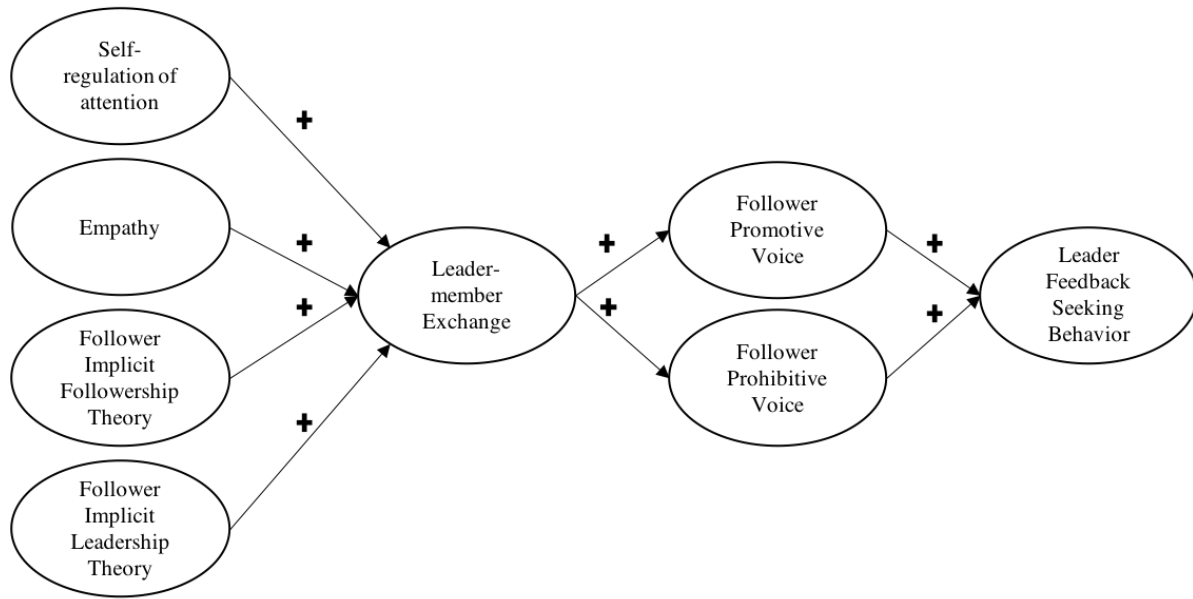


Figure 4. Hypothesized Model of Causal Relationships

Chapter Three: Methodology

This study used survey research and quantitative methods to explore followers' influence on leaders. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was applied to evaluate the hypothesized model of causal relationships. While SEM is largely seen as a confirmatory technique, it is arguably more reasonable to view it as a disconfirmatory technique, "one that can help us reject false models (those with poor fit to data), but it basically never confirms your particular model when the true model is unknown" (Kline, 2005, p. 16). Upon receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), participants were recruited to complete an online survey through convenience sampling.

Participants

Participants in this study included working professionals. All participants were at least 22 years of age, employed for at least 1 year (in a follower role) working with their current leader, worked at least 30 hours per week, and participated voluntarily. The researcher collected participant data from the general U.S. population using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk) online survey administration system, which has been shown to provide reliable quality data (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Buhrmester, Talaifar, & Gosling, 2018). While there are strengths and weaknesses of using MTurk data and samples, several studies examining MTurk data quality attest to the reliability and validity of results produced by MTurk participants from the general U. S. (Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2013; Sheehan, 2018; Smith, Roster, Golden, & Albaum, 2016).

In addition, this study took steps to minimize factors that could negatively affect data quality, including: a) restricting participation to participants within the U.S., b) restricting participation to participants with a 95% approval rate or higher, in lieu of attention checks, c)

implementing screening questions for meeting the study's demographic criteria, and d) explicitly encouraging honesty and thoughtful responses as a prescreening measure (Buhrmester et al., 2018). Further, data were evaluated for careless responding (e.g., responding with all fives to complete the survey) during data preparation. The goal to obtain a minimum of 350 participants to reach statistical power needed for SEM analysis was achieved ($N = 351$) (McQuitty, 2004). The sample contained the following demographic characteristics: sex, age, dyadic tenure, and level of education.

The sample consisted of 147 (41.9%) females and 204 (58.1%) males; their ages were 22 to 81 ($M = 34.31$, $SD = 10.17$). When participants were asked to indicate their highest level of education, over a third reported having a graduate degree ($n = 138$, 39.3%), the remaining participants reported having a bachelor's degree ($n = 101$, 28.8%), some college ($n = 49$, 14.0%), an associate's degree ($n = 32$, 9.1 %), high school diploma ($n = 20$, 5.7%), and some graduate school ($n = 11$, 3.1%). The majority of participants, as a follower, indicated having a leadership role (81.5%), whereas 16.2% did not and 2.3% chose not to answer. Over half reported working 40 to 49 hours per week (69.2%), the remaining participants reported working 30 to 39 hours per week (20.8%), and more than 50 hours per week (10.0%). In terms of dyadic tenure, over half reported working with their leader for at least 1 to 4 years (58.4%), and of the remaining participants 29.6% reported working with their leader in their current position for 5 to 9 years, whereas 12.0% reported 10 years or more of dyadic tenure.

Procedures

Participants completed a 103-item online questionnaire measuring their self-regulation, empathy, implicit followership theory perceptions, implicit leadership theory perceptions, leader-member exchange, voice, and leaders' feedback-seeking behavior perceptions. A copy of the

survey can be found in Appendix A. Descriptive statistics and reliability for all measures appear in Table 2.

Measures

Implicit followership theory scale. Sy's (2010) 18-item implicit followership theory measure was used to assess followers' implicit followership theories (IFTs). The original version asks participants to use a 10-point Likert-type response (0 = *not at all characteristic* to 9 = *extremely characteristic*) to rate the six dimensions comprising the IFT scale, including: industry, enthusiasm, good citizen, conformity, insubordination, and incompetence. Followership positive prototype can be represented by the first three dimensions (industry, enthusiasm, and good citizen) with three items each, whereas the remaining three dimensions capture followership negative prototype (i.e., anti-prototype; Sy, 2010; Whiteley et al., 2012). The current study, interested in positive prototypes (9-items), provided seven options based on level of agreement. The IFT scale has demonstrated adequate reliability and validity (Coyle & Foti, 2015; Sy, 2010; Tram-Quon & Sy, 2013; Whiteley et al., 2012).

Implicit leadership theory scale. Epitropaki and Martin's (2004) revised 21-item version of the original 41-item scale developed by Offermann, Kennedy, and Wirtz (1994) was used to measure follower implicit leadership theories (ILTs). The original version asks participants to use a 10-point Likert-type response (0 = *not at all characteristic* to 9 = *extremely characteristic*) to rate the six dimensions comprising the ILTs scale, including sensitivity, intelligence, dedication, dynamism, tyranny, and masculinity. Leadership positive prototype can be represented by the first four dimensions (sensitivity, 3-items; intelligence, 4-items; dedication, 3-items; and dynamism, 3-items), whereas the remaining two dimensions capture the leadership negative prototype (i.e., anti-prototype; Epitropaki & Martin, 2004; 2005). This study was

Table 2

Descriptives and Reliability Based on Original and Revised Scales

Measures	Measurement Groups									
	Original ^a					Revised ^b				
	M	SD	α	Skewness	Kurtosis	M	SD	α	Skewness	Kurtosis
SR	53.74	6.56	.59	.33	.68	27.56	4.33	.83	-.50	.02
EC	63.97	10.64	.85	.26	1.20	27.43	4.55	.85	-.83	.89
PT	43.16	6.03	.67	.59	1.74	21.96	3.38	.76	-.77	.99
INDS	16.76	2.90	.79	-.88	.84	16.76	2.90	.79	-.88	.84
ENTH	16.60	3.18	.77	-.60	-.14	16.60	3.18	.77	-.60	-.14
GCIT	17.18	2.73	.80	-.83	.36	17.18	2.73	.80	-.83	.36
SNST	16.85	2.93	.81	-.90	.96	16.85	2.93	.81	-.90	.96
INTL	22.77	3.69	.86	-1.04	1.32	22.77	3.69	.86	-1.04	1.32
DED	17.28	2.94	.83	-1.14	1.44	17.28	2.94	.83	-1.14	1.44
DYN	17.11	2.85	.82	-.96	.99	17.11	2.85	.82	-.96	.99
LMX	39.22	6.15	.90	-1.08	1.78	33.62	5.34	.89	-1.04	1.54
PMV	27.72	4.27	.87	-1.3	3.16	22.46	3.51	.85	-1.29	2.99
PHV	26.61	4.67	.83	-.89	1.33	21.46	3.74	.80	-.88	1.44
LFBS	31.34	6.10	.87	-.88	1.31	21.14	4.03	.81	-.83	1.27
DWB	23.72	14.15	.97	.03	-1.64	16.77	10.28	.97	.06	-1.64
ER	26.82	4.51	.59	-.83	.621	26.82	4.51	.59	-.83	.621

Note. SR = self-regulation; PT = perspective-taking; EC = empathic concern; INDS = industry; ENTH = enthusiasm; GCIT = good citizen; SNST = sensitivity; INTL = intelligence; DED = dedication; DYN = dynamism; LMX = leader-member exchange; PMV = promotive voice; PHV = prohibitive voice; FBS = feedback-seeking; ER = emotion regulation; and DWB = deviant workplace behavior.

a = Original estimates are based on original operationalizations of measures with no revisions.

b = Revised estimates are based on CFA measurement model specifications, except for ER (ER revisions based on original CFA results).

interested in leadership positive prototype (13-items) and provided 7 options based on level of agreement. The ILT scale has demonstrated adequate reliability and validity (Epitropaki & Martin, 2004, 2005; Tram-Quon & Sy, 2013).

Self-regulation scale. Followers' self-regulation of attention was measured using Diehl, Semegon & Schwarzer's (2006) 10-item self-regulation scale (SRS). Sample items include: "After an interruption, I don't have any problem resuming my concentrated style of working" and "I stay focused on my goal and don't allow anything distract me from my plan of action." The original SRS used a five-point Likert-type response (0 = not true at all to 4 = completely true) and reported alpha reliability of approximately $\alpha = .75$ (Diehl et al, 2006; Yeow, & Martin, 2013). This study provided seven options (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). The validity of this measure was assessed by Diehl et al. (2006).

Empathy scale. Followers' empathy was measured using Davis's (1980) 28-item interpersonal reactivity scale (IRI) consisting of four subscales, labeled: perspective-taking scale, empathic concern scale, personal distress scale, and fantasy scale. This study utilized the perspective-taking subscale (9-items) and empathic concern subscale (14-items) from the IRI. Sample items include: "I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision" (perspective-taking scale), and "When someone gets hurt in my presence, I feel sad and want to help them" (empathic concern). The IRI uses a 5-point Likert-type response (0 = does not describe me well to 4 = describes me very well). This study provided seven options (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). The IRI has been assessed in a variety of contexts, including cross-cultural research, with adequate reliability and validity (De Corte, Buysse, Verhofstadt, Roeyers, Koen & Davis, 2007; Fernández, Dufey, & Kramp, 2011; Pulos, Lennon, & Elison, 2004; Siu & Shek, 2005).

Emotion regulation scale. The individual perception of emotion regulation (iER) scale developed by Curseu, Boros, and Oerlemans (2012) was used to measure emotion regulation (Berg, Curseu, & Meeus, 2014). The iER is a 7-item scale measuring individual perceptions of emotion regulation utilizing a 5-point Likert-type response (1= strongly agree to 5= strongly disagree) with a reported reliability $\alpha = .77$ (Berg, et al., 2014). The validity of this measure was assessed by Curseu et al. (2012). Sample items include: “generally have good control of my emotions” and “sometimes throw criticisms without considering other people’s feelings.” In this study, respondents could choose among seven levels of agreement with each statement.

Leader-member exchange scale. Follower perceptions of leaders’ actual behavior was measured using the modified version of Graen and Uhl-bien’s (1995) 7-item LMX-7. Sample items include: “I can count on my supervisor to ‘bail me out,’ even at his or her own expense, when I really need it” and “Regardless of how much power he/she has built into his/her position, my supervisor would use his/her power to help me solve problems in my work.” The LMX-7 uses a 5-point Likert-type response (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) with adequate reliability reported ranging from $\alpha = .85$ to $\alpha = .90$ (Furunes, Mykletun, Einarsen, & Glasø, 2015; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Zhou, & Schriesheim, 2010). This study provided seven options based on level of agreement. The validity of this measure has been assessed in the organizational context, including cross-cultural research (Furunes et al., 2015; Hooper, & Martin, 2008; Zhou, & Schriesheim, 2009).

Voice scale. Liang et al.’s (2012) constructive voice measure (5-items measuring promotive voice and 5-items measuring prohibitive voice) was used to measure follower promotive voice and prohibitive voice. Sample items include: “I raise suggestions to improve the unit’s (e.g., team’s, department’s) working procedure” (promotive voice) and “I dare to point out

problems when they appear in the unit, even if that would hamper relationships with other colleagues” (prohibitive voice). These scales use a 5-point Likert-type response (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree), reporting adequate reliability ranging from $\alpha = .84$ to $\alpha = .90$ (Su, Liu, & Hanson-Rasmussen, 2017; Song, He, Wu, & Zhai, 2018). This study provided seven options based on level of agreement. The validity of this measure was assessed by Liang et al. (2012).

Feedback-seeking behavior scale. Followers’ perceptions of leader feedback-seeking behavior were assessed using Ashford and Tsui’s (1991) 9-item active feedback-seeking measure. This measure consists of three subscales: direct inquiry (3-items), direct monitoring (3-items), and indirect monitoring (3-items). Sample items include: “directly asks for information concerning his or her performance” (direct inquiry), “pay attention to how you acted toward him or her” (direct monitoring), and “observe how often you went to him/her for advice” (indirect monitoring). This scale uses a 7-point Likert-type response (1 = never to 7 = always), reporting adequate reliability ranging from $\alpha = .70$ to $\alpha = .90$ (Ashford et al., 2018; Williams & Johnson, 2000). The current study provided seven options based on level of agreement (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Research has reported content and construct validity for this measure (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Tsui, Ashford, St. Clair, & Xin, 1995).

Deviant workplace behavior scale. Bennett and Robinson’s (2000) deviant workplace behavior measure was used to measure followers’ perceived deviant workplace behavior to assess possible common-method variance (i.e., common-method bias). The deviant workplace behavior-interpersonal scale consists of 7-items. Sample items include: “made fun of my supervisor at work” and “acted rudely toward my supervisor at work.” This scale uses a 7-point Likert-type response (1 = never to 7 = always), reporting adequate reliability ranging from α

= .81 to α = .84 (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Colbert, Mount, Harter, Witt, & Barrick, 2004).

Research has reported content and construct validity for this measure (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Lee & Allen, 2002).

Construct Validity

This study conducted separate CFAs for each measure included in the hypothesized model to assess construct validity prior to examining the measurement model and structural model. For self-regulation, empathic concern, perspective-taking, and emotion regulation reverse coded items appeared to be particularly problematic for achieving acceptable fit (standardized estimates shown in Figure 5.1, Figure 5.2, Figure 5.3, and Figure 5.4). However, each of these measures demonstrated adequate fit after omitting reverse coded items (see Table 3). The reverse coded items may reflect what has been referred to as a second false factor in older measures with negatively worded items; all of the negatively worded items load together as if they were related by content instead of just by the fact that they were negatively worded (Kotowski, Levine, Baker, & Bolt, 2009). Additionally, assessments of inter-item convergence showed cogeneric and tau-equivalence measurement assumptions were achieved for each measure—self-regulation, empathic concern, and perspective-taking—indicators measure the same latent variable with differing amounts of error; however, they lack the same degree of precision (Graham, 2016).

For the second-order positive implicit followership theory construct, a standardized value over one was revealed (see Figure 6.1; standardized estimates), reflecting one type of “Heywood Case” (Bentler & Chou, 1988). Upon further examination of inter-item convergence, cogeneric measurement assumptions were achieved for the good citizen factor, both cogeneric and tau-equivalence were achieved for the industry and enthusiasm factors; however, the industry and good citizen factors failed to show discriminant validity. While there are strengths and

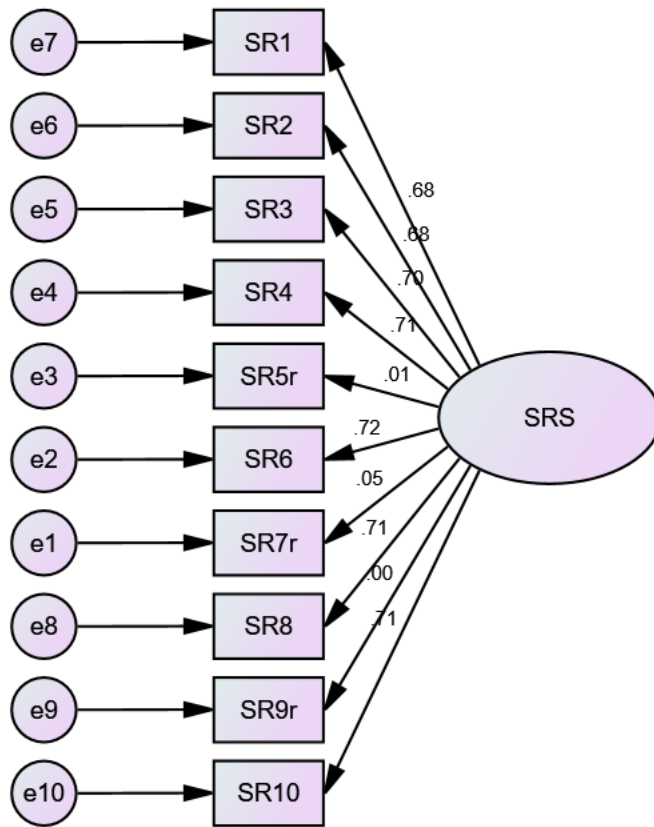


Figure 5.1. Unmodified Self-regulation Factor

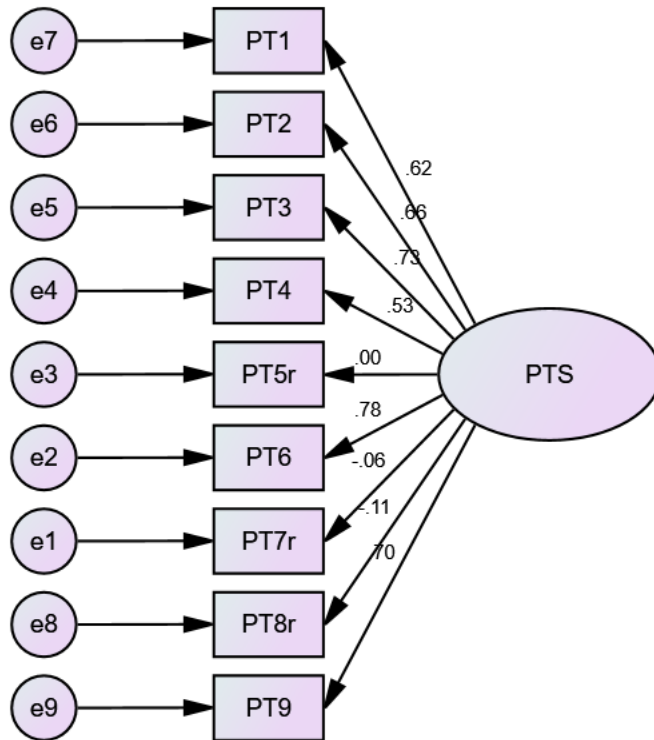


Figure 5.2. Unmodified Perspective-taking Factor

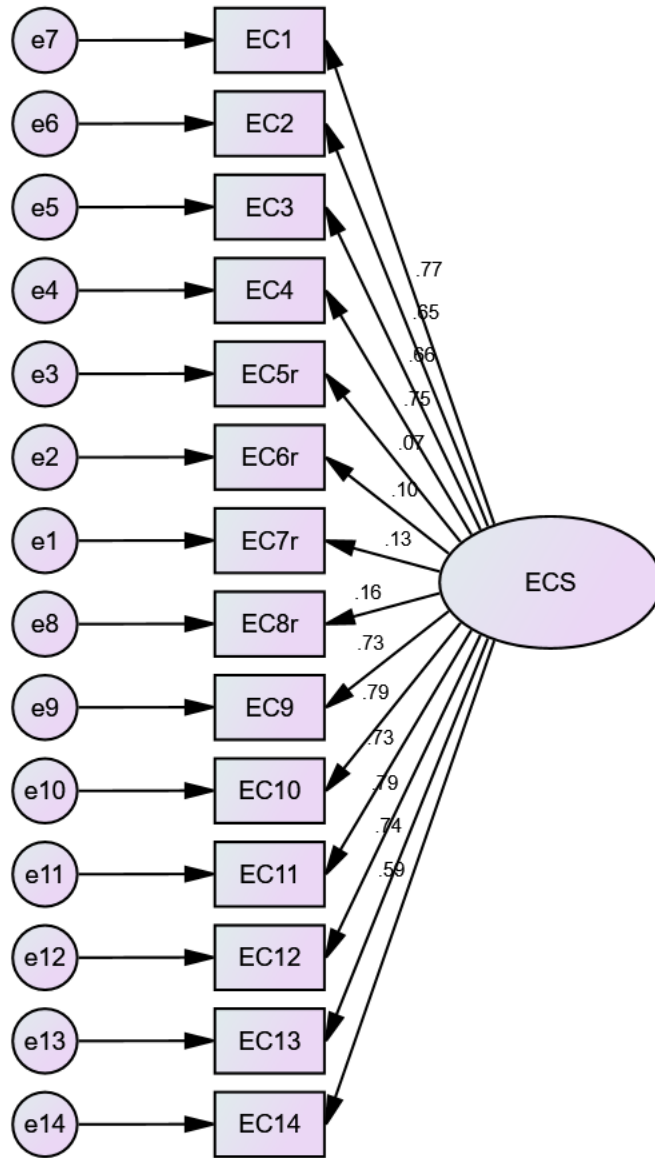


Figure 5.3. Unmodified Empathic Concern Factor

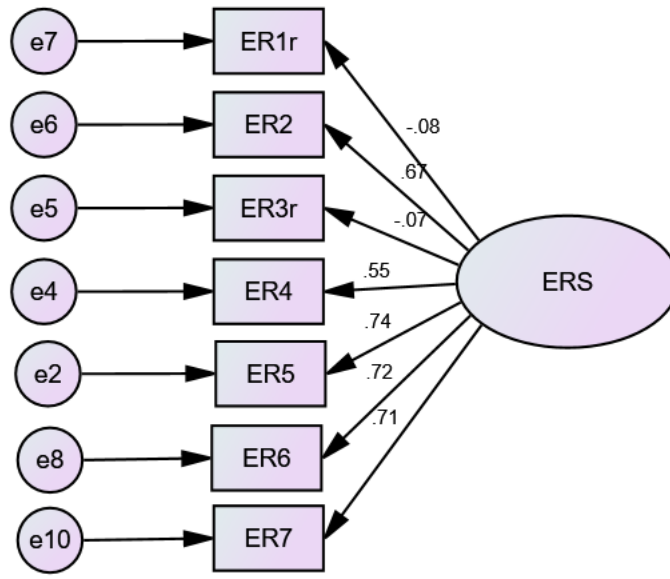


Figure 5.4. Unmodified Emotion Regulation Factor

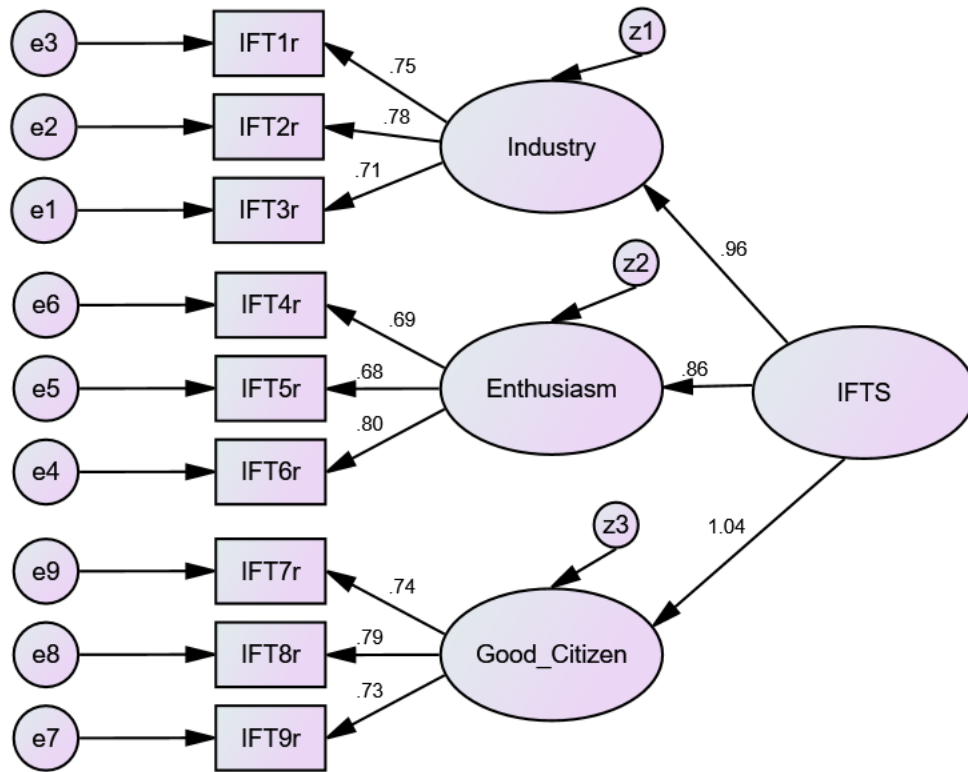


Figure 6.1 Unmodified IFT Second-order Factor

weaknesses for any of the ways to handle this type of Heywood case, the current study chose to constrain the variance of each factor to be equal (see Figure 6.2; standardized estimates). Fit indices are reported in Table 3. An advantage of this constrained approach is that it avoids inadmissible estimates, whereas a major disadvantage involves the inability to diagnose possible causes (e.g., model misspecification, sample size, outliers, etc.) of the improper solution (Salvarelli & Kolenikov, 2008). Because the data of this study were restricted to implicit theory prototypes (i.e., positive implicit theories), rather than both implicit prototypes and anti-prototypes there was a greater possibility of misdiagnosing possible model misspecification on the basis of omitted variables. Therefore, the constrained approach was believed to be the most methodologically sound method for this study.

In contrast, the CFA conducted to assess the positive implicit leadership theory construct evidenced discriminant validity among each of the four factors, in which inter-item convergence meeting cogeneric assumptions were achieved for the sensitivity factor, both cogeneric and tau equivalence assumptions were achieved for the intelligence, dedication, and dynamism factors. However, the variances of the residuals associated with intelligence and dedication factors were constrained to be equal upon examining critical ratio for differences indicating that their estimated values were approximately of the same magnitude and both were non-significant (Byrne, 2016). Figure 7 depicts standardized estimates of this constraint and fit indices are reported in Table 3.

For the leader feedback-seeking behavior construct, this study measured both the inquiry and monitoring dimension (indirect and direct monitoring) of the feedback-seeking behavior construct; however, this study focuses on the monitoring dimension. In a recent meta-analysis, Anseel, Beatty, Shen, Lievens, and Sackett (2015) suggest it may be important to measure both

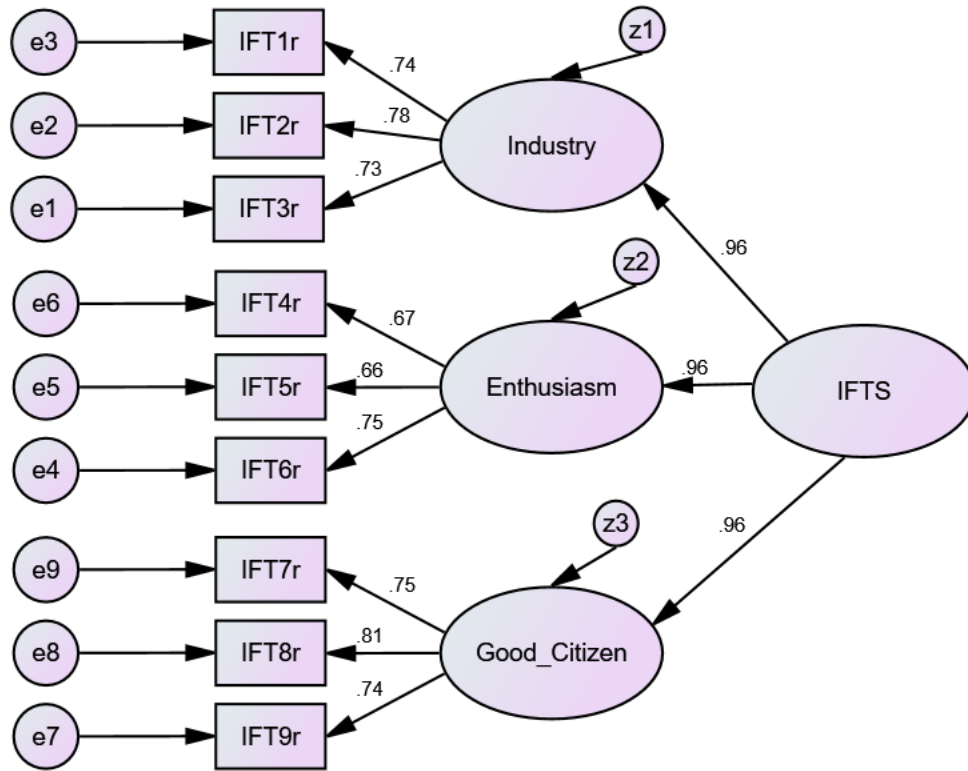


Figure 6.2. Constrained IFT Second-order Factor

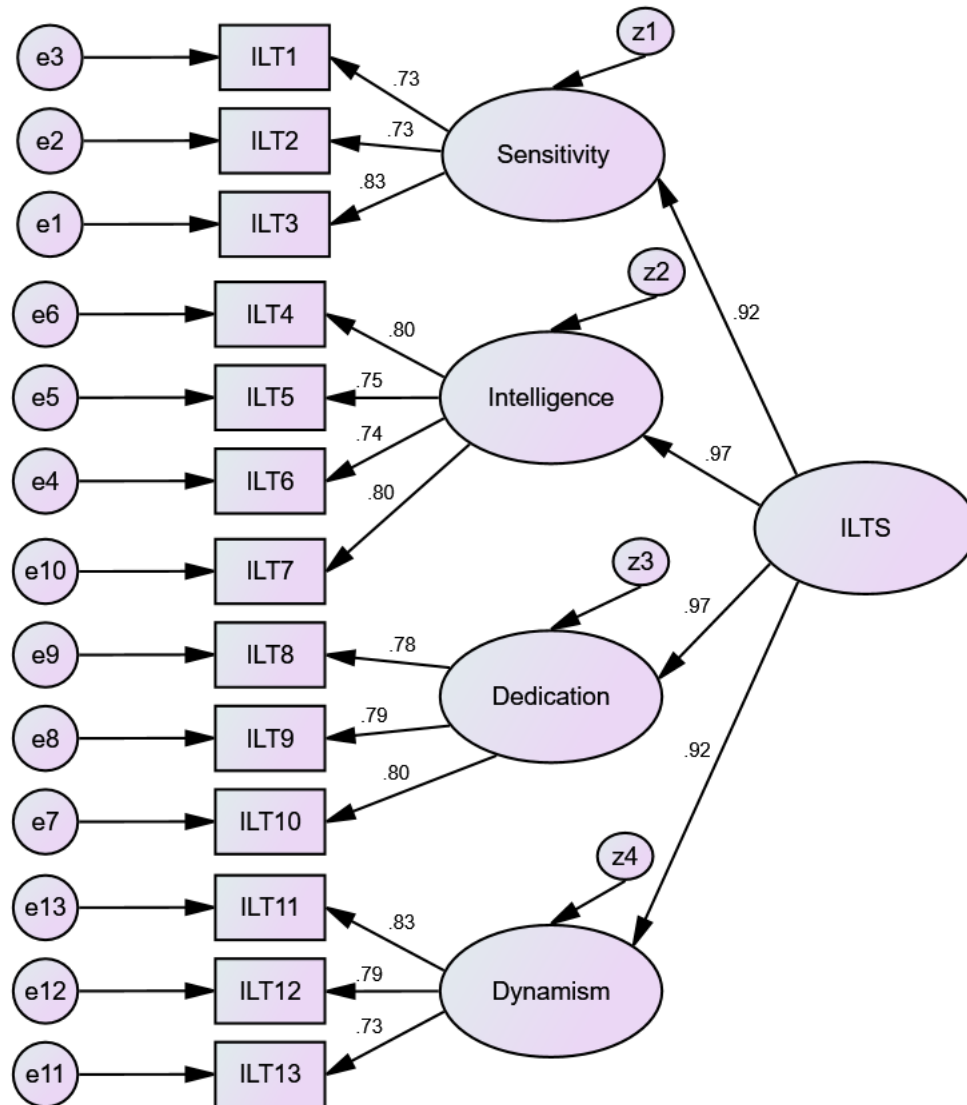


Figure 7. Constrained ILT Second-order Factor

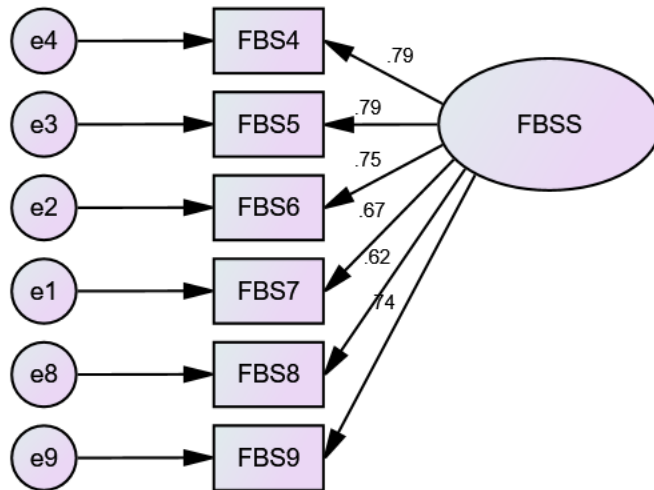


Figure 8. Unmodified Feedback-seeking Monitoring Factor

Table 3

Fit Indices of Separate CFAs Based on Study Measures in the Hypothesized Model

Measure	χ^2	<i>df</i>	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
SR	30.56	14	.98	.06	.03
EC	124.33	35	.95	.09	.04
PT	22.59	27	.98	.07	.03
IFT	81.95	24	.96	.08	.04
ILT	98.68	62	.99	.04	.03
LMX	36.78	14	.98	.07	.03
PMV	19.46	5	.98	.09	.03
PHV	32.746	5	.96	.12	.04
LFBS	37.02	9	.97	.09	.04
DWB	34.31	14	.99	.06	.01
ER	11.17	5	.99	.06	.03

Note. SR = self-regulation; EC = empathic concern; PT = perspective-taking; IFT = implicit followership theory second-order (industry, enthusiasm, good citizen); ILT = implicit leadership theory second-order (sensitivity, intelligence, dedication, dynamism); LMX = leader-member exchange; PMV = promotive voice; PHV = prohibitive voice; LFBS = leader feedback-seeking; DWB = deviant workplace behavior; and ER = emotion regulation.

dimensions of feedback-seeking yet focus on and draw conclusions regarding one specific dimension only. Their findings indicated that despite being highly correlated, the inquiry and monitoring dimensions of feedback-seeking are not interchangeable; however, both dimensions can be influenced by individual and situational factors specific to followers, leaders, and leader-follower relationships. As such, the CFA conducted to assess the first-order feedback-seeking measure (see Figure 8; standardized estimates) indicated the monitoring dimension of the feedback-seeking construct demonstrated acceptable fit (see Table 3). In terms of inter-item convergence, cogeretic assumptions were met.

Modifications were not necessary for the remaining study measures—deviant workplace behavior, leader-member exchange, promotive voice, and prohibitive voice— to demonstrate reasonable fit (see Table 3). Assessments of inter-item convergence evidenced cogeretic and tau-equivalence assumptions were met for each of the promotive voice, prohibitive voice, and leader-member exchange measures. The CFA conducted to assess deviant workplace behavior indicated cogeretic assumptions were met.

Overall, these assessments offered some evidence of construct validity for the measures of this study, and to a greater extent, forecasted possible revisions during data preparation and the need for further validity analyses while assessing the measurement model. One example involves the constrained factor variances for the second-order factor structures of both the positive implicit followership theories and implicit leadership theories measures, which contradicts previous findings establishing discriminant validity among IFT and ILT factors (Whiteley et al., 2012; Sy, 2010). More specifically, in the case of IFT, evidencing a Heywood case warrants special attention moving into testing the measurement model. Additionally, given the theoretical grounding of this study conceptualizes empathy as a second-order factor

comprised of empathic concern and perspective-taking, the results from the separate CFAs conducted were expected to benefit in the evaluation of the empathy construct in measurement model testing.

Data Analysis

Prior to data analysis (including the previously discussed construct validity assessments of each measure), the researcher examined the data for missing data; expectation maximization in SPSS 23 was used to replace missing data (Kline, 2005). This study followed Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) two-step process to structural equation modeling using maximum likelihood (ML) method in AMOS 25. Step one involved confirmatory factor analyses to test the measurement model. Prior to evaluating the measurement model, normality, error covariances, and kurtosis were assessed (Byrne, 2016; Goodboy & Kline, 2017; Hunter & Gerbing, 1982) and the researcher documented omissions/reasons. Therefore, model evaluation and specification of the measurement model followed data preparation. This study assessed χ^2 and associated degrees of freedom, CFI, RMSEA, and SRMR fit indices to examine the measurement model (any refinements appear in the results). In addition, measurement invariance was evaluated for the measurement model prior to moving on to step two. Between steps one and two, all revised scales were tested for reliability and bivariate correlations addressed the majority of the hypotheses.

To assess measurement invariance, prior to assessing the structural model in step two, this study drew upon Vandenberg & Lance's (2000) ME/I approach, involving testing between groups for: configural invariance, metric invariance, invariant factor variances, scalar invariance, and invariant uniqueness. Common-method bias (i.e., common-method variance; CMV) was also assessed using phase one of Williams, Hartman, and Cavazotte's (2010) method prior to

evaluating the hypothesized structural model. Step two involved structural equation modelling to test the hypothesized relationships in the proposed structural model.

Chapter Four: Results

Results from CFA

Data preparation. This study used AMOS 25 to perform a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) assessing the measurement model as well as to examine the structural model using maximum likelihood (ML) estimation. Model specification and evaluation of the *a priori* measurement model followed data preparation. During data preparation, normality and error variances of items were assessed (Goodboy & Kline, 2017; Hunter & Gerbing, 1982). Kurtosis values indicating non-normal items lead to the omission of PT item (“I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective”) (Byrne, 2016). Additionally, the data revealed that out of 388 participants, 37 cases of multivariate outliers were detected, which were omitted leaving $N = 351$. Next, parameters were assessed for non-significant items. A total of 10 non-significant items were omitted (see Table 4). As expected, all of these items were reverse coded items. Then, parameters were assessed for items representing error covariance due to “communalities” with other items (Hunter & Gerbing, 1982, p. 274). A total of 15 items were omitted due to communalities (see Table 4).

Two themes emerged in assessing the omission of these items. Primarily, there appears to be large amounts of overlap among items from the same measures. Dropping the poor items or items showing communalities resulted in a set of items consistent with the conceptualization of each variable. That is, omitting several items may be more advantageous than harmful to measuring what is intended to be tested, adding more meat to the bone or cutting out the fat. Also, item wording for those items that do not appear to overlap with retained items appear to be either double-barreled or worded to measure different constructs. However, the LMX item that was removed is the exception to this assessment. The remaining items for leader feedback-

Table 4

Omitted and Retained Scale Items Based on Study Variables

Scale	Item	Omitted in Original CFA (non-significance or non-normal)	Omitted in Measurement Model CFA (communalities)	Retained in Final Analyses
SR	It is difficult for me to suppress thoughts that interfere with what I need to do	X		
	When I worry about something, I cannot concentrate on an activity	X		
	I usually have a whole bunch of thoughts and feelings that interfere with my ability to work in a focused way	X		
	I can concentrate on one activity for a long time, if necessary		X	
	I stay focused on my goal and don't allow anything to distract me from my plan of action		X	
	If I am distracted from an activity, I don't have any problem coming back to the topic quickly			X
	If an activity arouses my feelings too much, I can calm myself down so that I can continue with the activity soon			X
	If an activity requires a problem-oriented attitude, I can control my feelings			X
	I can control my thoughts from distracting me from the task at hand			X
	After an interruption, I don't have any problem resuming my concentrated style of working			X
PT	I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the 'other person's' point of view	X		
	If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments	X		

Table 4 Continued

Scale	Item	Omitted in Original CFA (non-significance or non-normal)	Omitted in Measurement Model CFA (communalities)	Retained in Final Analyses
	It's often harmful to spend lots of time trying to get everyone's point of view--some decisions have to be made quickly	X		
	I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective	X (non-normal)		
	I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both"		X	
	When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while			X
	I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision			X
	It's rare that some issue is ever black and white -- usually the truth is somewhere in between			X
	Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place			X
EC	Occasionally I am not very sympathetic to my friends when they are depressed	X		
	Usually I am not extremely concerned when I see someone else in trouble	X		
	Sometimes I don't feel sorry for other people when they are having problems"	X		
	When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them	X		
	I am often quite touched by things that I see happen		X	
	Seeing warm, emotional scenes melts my heart and makes me teary-eyed		X	

Table 4 Continued

Scale	Item	Omitted in Original CFA (non-significance or non-normal)	Omitted in Measurement Model CFA (communalities)	Retained in Final Analyses
	When I watch a sad, 'tear-jerke' movie, I almost always have warm, compassionate feelings for the characters		X	
	I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person		X	
	When someone gets hurt in my presence, I feel sad and want to help them		X	
	When a friend tells me about his good fortune, I feel genuinely happy for him			X
	When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them			X
	I care for my friends a great deal			X
	I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me			X
	I feel sad when I see a lonely stranger in a group			X
IFT	Hardworking			X
	Productive			X
	Above and Beyond			X
	Excited			X
	Outgoing			X
	Happy			X
	Loyal			X
	Reliable			X
	Team Player			X
ILT	Helpful			X
	Understanding			X
	Sincere			X
	Intelligence			X
	Educated			X
	Clever			X
	Knowledgeable			X
	Dedicated			X
	Motivated			X

Table 4 Continued

Scale	Item	Omitted in Original CFA (non-significance or non-normal)	Omitted in Measurement Model CFA (communalities)	Retained in Final Analyses
	Hardworking			X
	Energetic			X
	Strong			X
	Dynamic			X
LMX	My supervisor understands my job problems and needs		X	
	Regardless of how much power he/she has built into his/her position, my supervisor would use his/her power to help me solve problems in my work			X
	I can count on my supervisor to “bail you out,” even at his/her expense when I really need it			X
	My supervisor recognizes my potential			X
	My supervisor has enough confidence in me that she/he would defend and justify my decisions if I were not present to do so			X
	I usually know where I stand with my supervisor			X
	My working relationship with my supervisor is effective			X
PMV	I raise suggestions to improve the unit’s working procedure		X	
	I proactively suggest new projects which are beneficial to the work unit			X
	I proactively develop and make suggestions for issues that may influence the unit			X
	I proactively voice out constructive suggestions that help the unit reach its goals			X
	I make constructive suggestions to improve the unit’s operation			X

Table 4 Continued

Scale	Item	Omitted in Original CFA (non-significance or non-normal)	Omitted in Measurement Model CFA (communalities)	Retained in Final Analyses
PHV	I dare to voice out opinions on things that might affect efficiency in the work unit, even if that would embarrass others		X	
	I advise other colleagues against undesirable behaviors that would hamper job performance			X
	I speak up honestly with problems that might cause serious loss to the work unit, even when/though dissenting opinions exist			X
	I dare to point out problems when they appear in the unit, even if that would hamper relationships with other colleagues			X
	I proactively report coordination problems in the workplace to the management			X
FBS	To obtain feedback, my supervisor observes how often I go to her/him for advice		X	
	To obtain feedback, my supervisor observes how long he/she was kept waiting when my supervisor and I had a set appointment		X	
	To obtain feedback, my supervisor observes how quickly I return his/her phone calls or emails			X
	To obtain feedback, my supervisor pays attention to how I act toward her/him			X
	To obtain feedback, my supervisor pays attention to informal, unsolicited feedback			X
	To obtain feedback, my supervisor pays attention to casual remarks I make			X
DWB	I make fun of my supervisor at work		X	

Table 4 Continued

Scale	Item	Omitted in Original CFA (non-significance or non-normal)	Omitted in Measurement Model CFA (communalities)	Retained in Final Analyses
	I have acted rudely toward my supervisor at work		X	
	I have said something hurtful to my supervisor at work			X
	I have made an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work			X
	I curse at my supervisor at work			X
	I have played a mean prank on my supervisor at work			X
	I have publicly embarrassed my supervisor at work			X
ER	I sometimes throw out criticism without consideration for my co-worker's feelings	X		
	It is difficult for me to calm down quickly when I get mad	X		
	When I am feeling down, I can make myself feel better			X
	I am generally able to influence how individual members feel			X
	During group tasks, I compliment my co-workers when they do something well			X
	I generally have good control of my emotions			X
	When I experiences positive emotions, I know how to make them last			X

Note. SR = self-regulation; EC = empathic concern; PT = perspective-taking; IFT = implicit followership theory; ILT = implicit leadership theory; LMX = leader-member exchange; PMV = promotive voice; PHV = prohibitive voice; LFBS = leader feedback-seeking; DWB = deviant workplace behavior; and ER = emotion regulation.

seeking reflect the direct monitoring function of feedback-seeking behavior. Leader feedback-seeking behavior results should be interpreted in terms of capturing leader attention for this study.

Convergent and discriminant validity. The measurement model demonstrated acceptable fit $\chi^2(351, 1611) = 2531.59$, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .04, and SRMR = .05. Further assessment of inter-item convergence and discriminant validity among the study variables were evaluated following Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) approach. Convergent validity was assessed from the measurement model by determining whether each indicator's factor loading on its posited underlying construct was significant (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). All factor loadings were significant ($p < .001$), offering evidence for convergent validity among the hypothesized constructs. Inter-item convergence and parallelism were assessed to address content validity. As such, the differences in fit indices and change in χ^2 for congeneric, tau-equivalent, and parallel nested measurement models were compared (Graham, 2016). All factor indicators of the measurement model achieved congeneric equivalence. Nested model comparisons revealed tau-equivalence was achieved for the following: self-regulation scale, empathic concern subscale, perspective-taking subscale, implicit followership theory scale, implicit leadership theory scale, leader-member exchange scale, prohibitive voice scale, leader-member exchange, and leader feedback-seeking scale.

Critical ratio differences indicated the estimated values for empathic concern and perspective-taking factors were approximately of the same magnitude and both were non-significant (Byrne, 2016). As such, variances of the residuals associated with empathic concern and perspective-taking factors were constrained to be equal (Byrne, 2016), making empathy a second-order factor as supported by theory. Discriminant validity among all of the pairs of

constructs showing moderate to high covariance (.40 and above) were also assessed. Nested model comparisons revealed all factors were distinct—there were significant differences ($p < .001$) between the values of each pair of constructs that were constrained to 1.0 and the unconstrained values of the same pairs of constructs—providing evidence of discriminant validity among the study variables. Taken together, these analyses offer reasonable evidence for convergent and discriminant validity among the hypothesized constructs.

Measurement invariance. Next, measurement invariance was assessed by following Vandenberg & Lance's (2000) ME/I approach, involving testing between groups for: configural invariance, metric invariance, scalar invariance, invariant uniqueness, invariant factor variances, and invariant factor covariances. In this study, χ^2 , CFI, RMSEA, SRMR, chi-square difference test, and change in CFI test were used to examine measurement invariance (Byrne, 2016; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). Results for configural invariance showed unacceptable fit: $\chi^2(351, 3227) = 4833.63$, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .04, and SRMR = .06. Moving forward to test metric invariance, subsequently followed by scalar invariance and residual invariance, requires first satisfying configural variance (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). Therefore, the data failed to evidence measurement invariance between females and males. In sum, the results (as emphasized in Table 5) do not support inferences of measurement invariance with respect females and males.

Common method variance. Prior to evaluating the structural model, common-method variance was assessed. This study included a measure that was not expected to relate to the hypothesized constructs (i.e., deviant workplace behavior; DWB) using phase one of Williams et al., (2010) CFA marker approach. This study followed a series of steps following Williams et al., (2010) outlined methods. In the CFA model, exogenous variables were allowed to freely covary with the marker variable (DWB) to obtain factor loadings and error variance estimates to use for

the five DWB indicators in subsequent models. The baseline model allowed exogenous variables to covary while fixing the DWB factor loadings and error variance to the unstandardized estimates obtained from the CFA model. The method C model was the same as the baseline model with the addition of factor loadings, forced to be equal, from the DWB factor to each of the exogenous indicators in the model. Results of the method C model and the baseline model were then compared as a test for the presence of method variance associated with the DWB marker variable Williams et al., (2010). The difference between model U and model C is factor loadings were not forced to be equal in the method U model. Next, method U and method C models were compared as a test of the difference between common method variance and unrestricted method variance (UMV) (Williams et al., 2010). Results supported the latter, leading the method R model to be built based on the method U model, which was used as a test for the biasing effects of DWB on substantive relations (Williams et al., 2010).

The results (see Table 6) indicated that: a) common-method bias was not a serious problem in this study, and b) marker variable (DWB) common-method variance (CMV) was not a substantial explanation for the covariances between this study's substantive variables. Therefore, the DWB variable was dropped prior to assessing measurement invariance and structural model fit. In dropping the DWB variable, the refined measurement model showed acceptable fit: $\chi^2(351, 1344) = 2147.12$, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .04, and SRMR = .05.

Results from SEM

Moving forward, the structural model was evaluated. Despite showing adequate fit, $\chi^2(351, 1358) = 2391.82$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .05, and SRMR = .05, two non-significant paths (see Figure 9) led to the rejection of the hypothesized structural model. The lack of significance for the path coefficients from implicit followership theories (IFT) to leader-member exchange

Table 5

Measurement Invariance: Model Statistics and Fit Indices

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	Δdf	$\Delta\chi^2$	χ^2 C.V. (.01)	ΔCFI
Model 1	4833.63	3227	.891	.04	.06	—	—	—	—
1 versus 2	—	—	—	—	—	50	77.93*	76.15	.002
Model 2	4911.56	3277	.889	.04	.07	—	—	—	—
2 versus 3	—	—	—	—	—	59	73.38	87.17	.001
Model 3	4984.94	3336	.888	.04	.07	—	—	—	—
3 versus 4	—	—	—	—	—	105	205.93*	141.62	.007
Model 4	5190.87	3441	.881	.04	.07	—	—	—	—
4 versus 5	—	—	—	—	—	61	119.30*	89.59	.004
Model 5	5071.57	3380	.885	.04	.07	—	—	—	—
5 versus 6	—	—	—	—	—	36	76.36*	58.62	.002
Model 6	4995.21	3344	.887	.04	.07	—	—	—	—

Note. Model 1 = configural variance; Model 2 = metric invariance; Model 3 = scalar invariance; Model 4 = invariant uniqueness (measurement residuals); Model 5 invariant factor covariances (structural covariances); Model 6 = invariant factor means (structural weights); *df* = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean-square error of approximation; SRMR = squared root mean error; $\Delta\chi^2_{(df)}$ = change in chi-square_(change in degrees of freedom); χ^2 C.V. (.01) = chi-square critical value at .01 level; ΔCFI = change in CFI.

* $p < .01$

Table 6

Common-method Bias Test Based on the CFA Marker Approach

Model	χ^2	df	CFI
1. Default (CFA)	2892.31	1629	.909
2. Baseline	2893.83	1638	.909
3. Method C	2886.32	1637	.910
4. Method U	2738.43	1602	.918
5. Method R	2738.55	1608	.918
Chi-square Model Comparison Tests			
Δ Models	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	χ^2 Critical Value; 0.05
1. Baseline vs. Method C	7.51	1	3.84
2. Method C vs. Method U	147.89	35	49.80
3. Method U vs. Method R	.120*	6	12.59

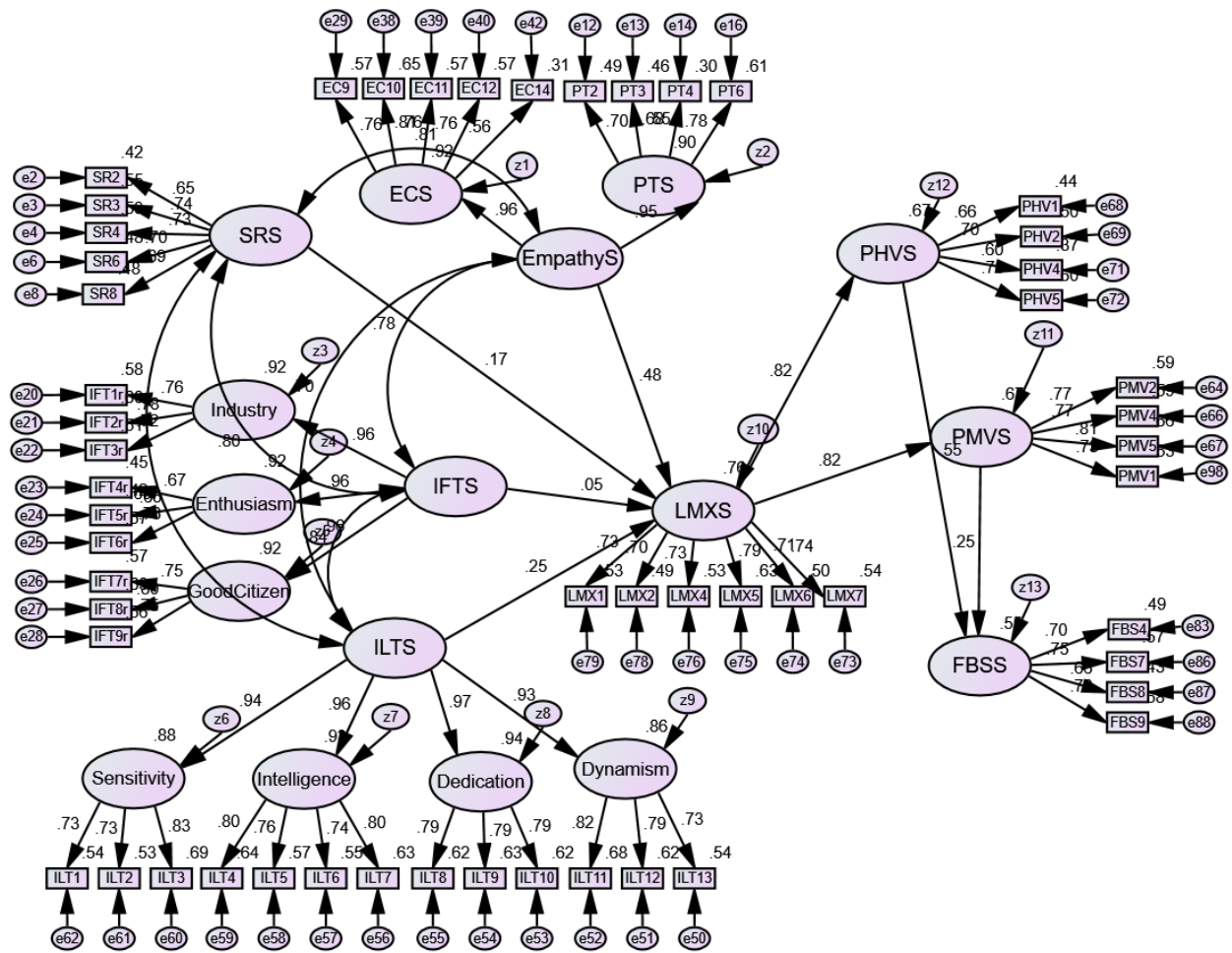


Figure 9. a priori Structural Model

(LMX) and self-regulation (SR) to LMX was unexpected given the strength of their correlations. This finding indicated there may be a suppression effect or suppression variable, referring to “a variable that increases the predictive validity of another variable (or set of variables) by its inclusion in a regression equation” (Conger, 1974, p. 36). Taken together, the SEM results showed the data failed to fit the hypothesized model, suggesting model modifications make theoretical sense and results be interpreted with caution as estimates may be overestimated or underestimated (Tzelgov & Henik, 1981). Thus, a review of the steps involved in assessing the suppression situation and the process of model respecification follow.

The data best fit an alternative model, in which model re-specification was driven by modification indexes and *post-hoc* analyses that made theoretical sense. The first major sign of a suppression situation was two-fold: a) the unexpected and near zero path coefficient of IFT to LMX ($\Gamma = .05, p > .001$) and b) the unexpected non-significant path coefficient ($\Gamma = .17, p > .001$) of self-regulation to LMX. Research has shown how models with multiple predictors that are highly correlated (Tzelgov & Henik, 1981) or complex mediation models (Mackinnon, Krull, & Lockwood, 2000), as is the case in the current study, are more likely to encounter suppression effects. These cases, as noted by Tzelgov and Henik (1981), are more vulnerable to “suppression situations that cannot be stated in terms of some specific characteristic of the suppressor variable” (p. 528). The current study is likely an example of such, a suppression situation, in which at least two suppression relationships occur rather than having a single suppressor variable in the hypothesized model. For example, using AMOS 25 nested models, controlling for the predictor–criterion paths incrementally led to a negative path coefficient for the IFT to LMX path, more indicative of classical or net suppression situations (Cohen & Cohen, 1983; Conger, 1974). However, a linear multivariate regression was conducted in SPSS 23, indicating the near

zero path coefficient for IFT to LMX in the structural model reflected IFT's semi-partial correlation (i.e., part correlation), indicative of non-suppression redundancy or a cross-over suppression effect (Paulhus, Robins, Trzesniewski, & Tracy, 2004; Tzelgov & Henik, 1981).

According to Maassen and Bakker (2001, p. 267), a “suppressor variable may substantially correlate with the dependent variable but also shares with the other explanatory variable much information that is irrelevant to the dependent variable.” For reasons of parsimony IFT was dropped, leading to a more parsimonious model with slight improvement in fit, $\chi^2(351, 931) = 1640.19$, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .05, and SRMR = .06; however, the path from self-regulation to LMX remained non-significant and evidence of suppression relationships remained. Two additional assessments were taken to investigate the suppression situation concern. First, an assessment of multicollinearity was conducted in SPSS 23 to examine variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics of the exogenous variables. Results showed VIF estimates did not exceed 2.0 for self-regulation, perspective-taking, and empathic concern. VIF estimates for each of the IFT and ILT factors did not exceed a threshold of approximately 3.5. Given these results, collinearity may be a potential issue, specifically in terms of IFT and ILT.

Second, for diagnosis purposes, exogenous variables were analyzed separately or in smaller sets in alternative models specifically to assess whether predictions regarding the relationship between implicit followership theories and self-regulation with LMX held with less (or without) the presence of other predictors. The exogenous variables were separated across three models (see Figure 10.1; Figure 10.2; Figure 10.3, standardized estimates), each model demonstrated reasonable fit showing support for the theoretically hypothesized model.

Although this approach appeared to mitigate the suspected suppression situation, none of these alternative models were pursued further as they each violate a key condition of conducting

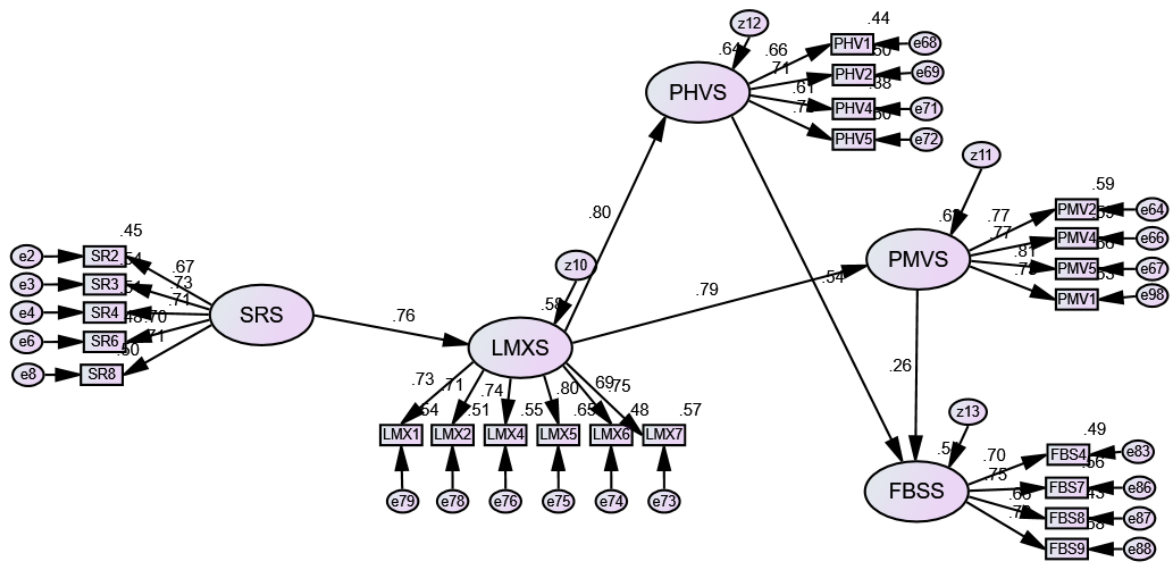


Figure 10.1. Self-regulation as Only Predictor of the Hypothesized Model [$\chi^2(351, 225) = 582.06$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .07]

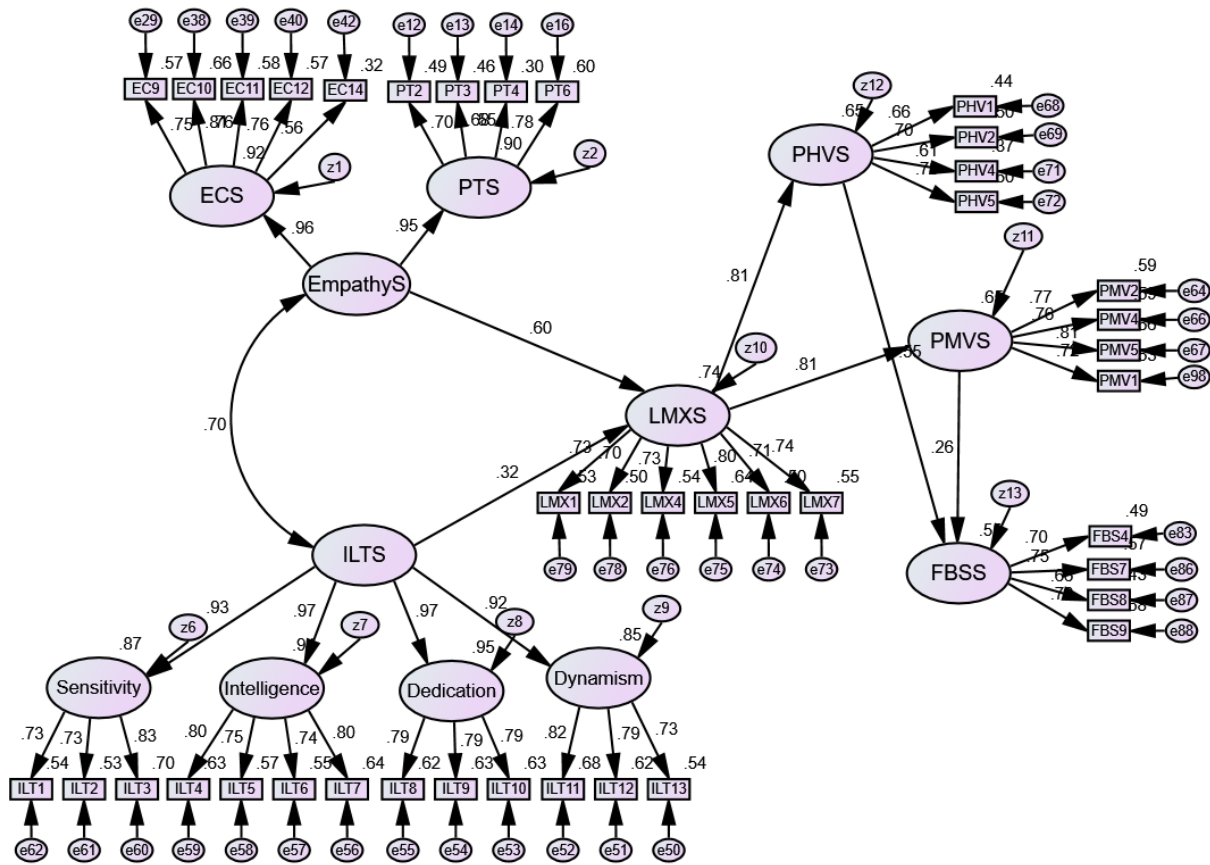


Figure 10.2. Empathy and ILT as Only Predictors of the Hypothesized Model [$\chi^2(351, 729) = 1389.73$, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .06]

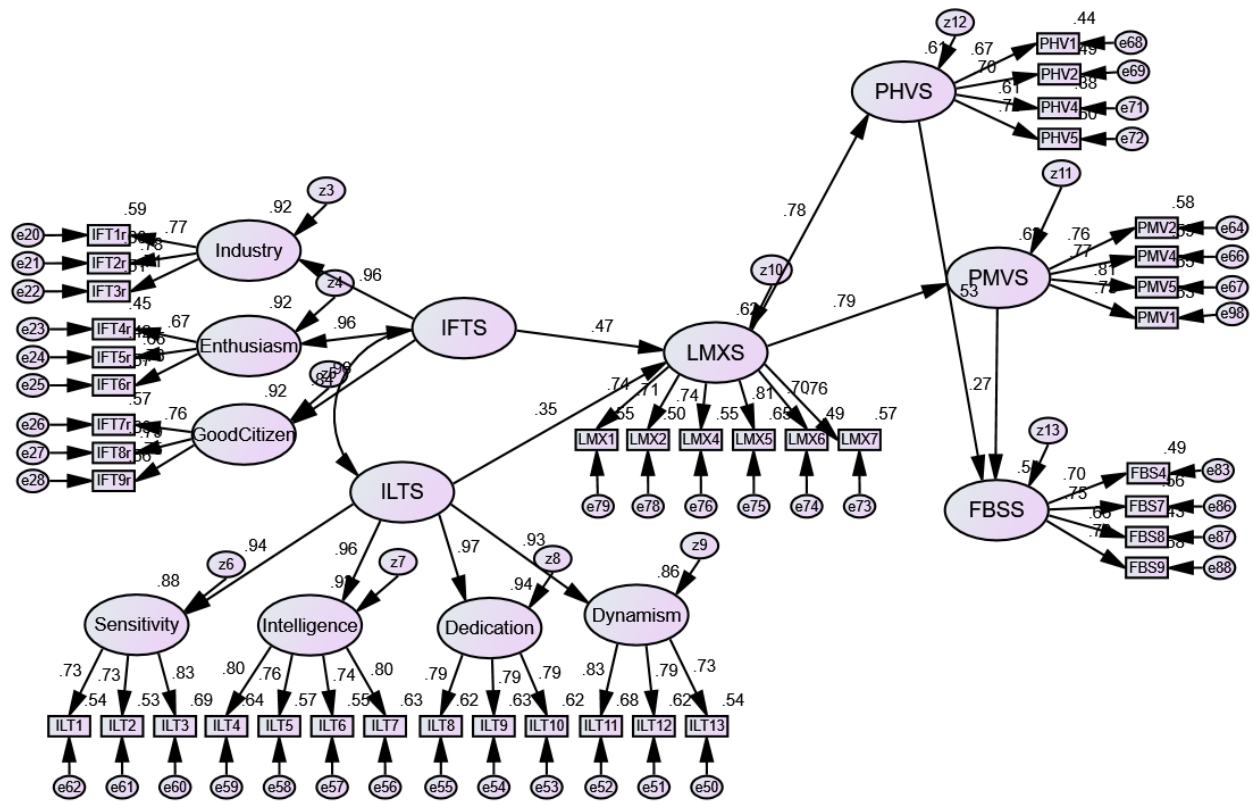


Figure 10.3. IFT and ILT as Only Predictors of the Hypothesized Model [$\chi^2(351, 729) = 1491.78$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .06]

SEM, including all theoretically relevant variables in the model. Mulaik (2009) referred to this as condition five in presenting his 10 conditions for causal inference. Instead, following Maassen and Bakker's (2001) guidelines for reporting suppression situations, this study notes the theoretically hypothesized model was not retained because of the occurrence of a suppressor phenomenon. As such, the data best fit a final re-specified model (see Figure 11) that demonstrated adequate fit: $\chi^2(351, 930) = 1416.97$, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .04, and SRMR = .05, in which all paths were significant ($p < .001$) and all but one of the original predictors (i.e., IFT) were retained.

Maximum likelihood bootstrap analyses using the corrected-bias percentile method for estimating direct and indirect effects was conducted in AMOS 25. This analysis showed the best fitting re-specified model suggested both expected and unexpected findings for direct and indirect effects. The standardized bootstrapping estimates and corresponding confidence intervals are reported. For direct effects, empathy positively predicted, LMX ($\Gamma = .53$, 95% CI [.40, .63]), prohibitive voice ($\Gamma = .48$, 95% CI [.27, .69]), and promotive voice ($\Gamma = .36$, 95% CI [.19, .51]). Implicit leadership theories positively predicted LMX ($\Gamma = .35$, 95% CI [.24, .48]). Self-regulation positively predicted prohibitive voice ($\Gamma = .37$, 95% CI [.14, .56]). For indirect effects, both implicit leadership theories and empathy with leader feedback-seeking behaviors were mediated by LMX ($\beta = .52$, 95% CI [.39, .64]). Prohibitive voice mediated the relationships between empathy and leader feedback-seeking behaviors as well as self-regulation and leader feedback-seeking ($\beta = .37$, 95% CI [.22, .47]). Unexpectedly, prohibitive voice partially mediated the relationship between empathy and promotive voice and fully mediated the relationship between self-regulation and promotive voice ($\beta = .59$, 95% CI [.45, .76]).

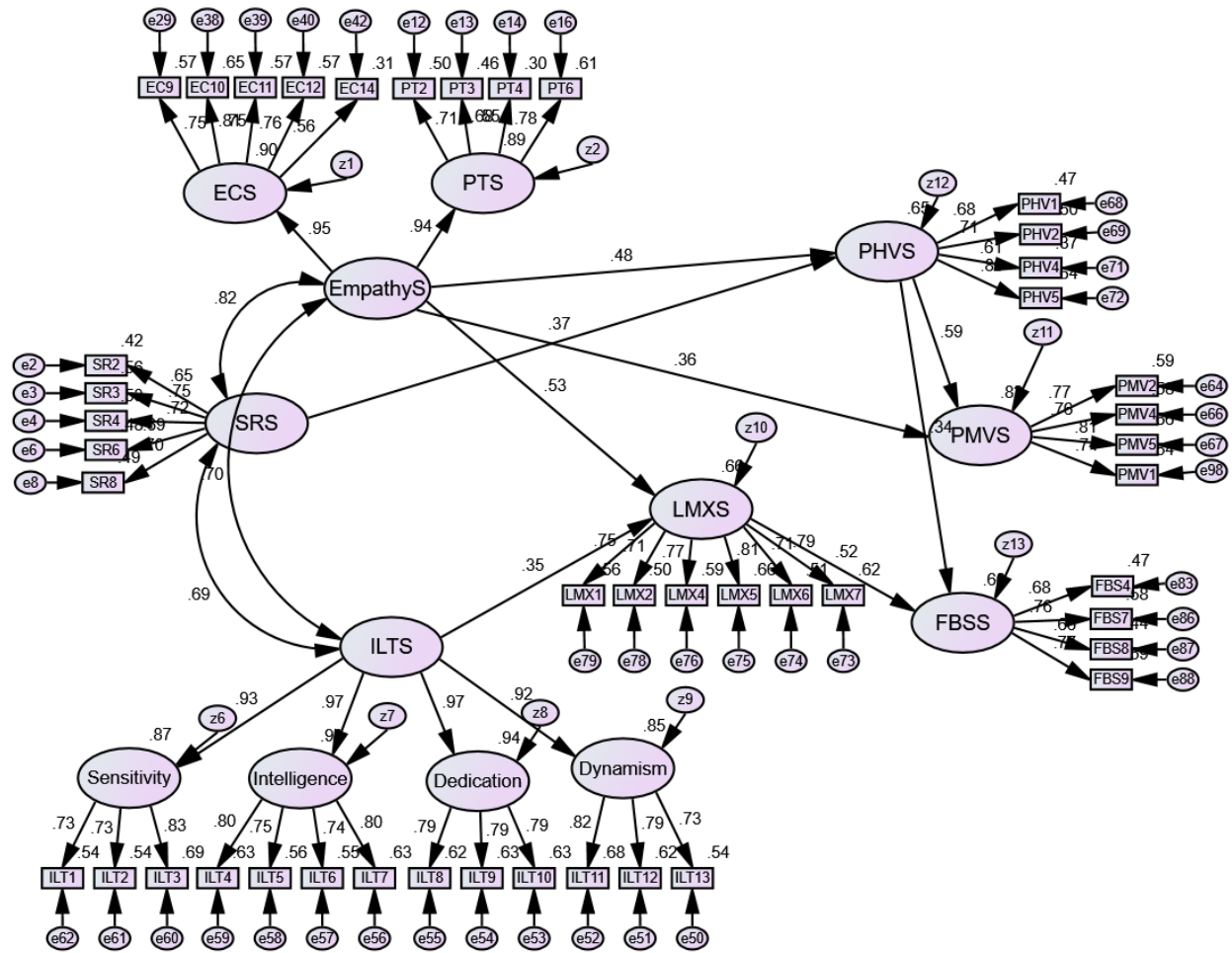


Figure 11. Re-specified Final Structural Model

In retrospect, IFT appeared to be a source measurement non-invariance between females and males in previously assessing the measurement model. Had IFT been dropped from the measurement model, results for configural invariance would have showed acceptable fit: $\chi^2(351, 1842) = 2719.42$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .04, and SRMR = .06. Nested model comparisons would have shown (see Table 6) support for factorial invariance of the measurement model. This is seen in the non-significant difference χ^2 ($\Delta\chi^2$) and the very small change in CFI (Δ CFI) between models one and two as well as models two and three, which would have offered support to the viability of these constraints (Lance & Vandenberg, 2000). However, the test for invariant uniqueness would have failed to support residual invariance, indicating that at least one item residual is different across the two groups (Putnick & Bornstein, 2016). In sum, the results (as shown in Table 7) support inferences of measurement invariance with respect to three aspects of measurement equivalence/invariance (ME/I), including: configural invariance, metric invariance, and scalar invariance.

Hypothesis Testing

Reliabilities and correlations were assessed by conducting reliability analyses and bivariate correlation tests in SPSS 23 to address research question one (RQ1) as well as hypotheses one through four (H1–H4), hypotheses five through six (H5–H6), and hypotheses nine through ten (H9–H10). Reliability and correlations among all the measures in the study are reported in Table 8.

To test research question one, hypotheses one through hypothesis four, and hypotheses nine through hypothesis ten, a bivariate correlation analyses was conducted. Research question one (RQ1) concerned the relationships between emotion regulation and effective followership characteristics. Results indicated statistically significant moderate to strong correlations between

Table 7

Measurement Invariance: Model Statistics and Fit Indices Without IFT

Model	χ^2	<i>df</i>	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	Δdf	$\Delta\chi^2$	χ^2 C.V. (.01)	ΔCFI
Model 1	2719.42	1842	.908	.04	.06	—	—	—	—
1 versus 2	—	—	—	—	—	39	47.35	64.43	.001
Model 2	2766.77	1881	.907	.04	.06	—	—	—	—
2 versus 3	—	—	—	—	—	45	46.97	69.96	.000
Model 3	2813.74	1926	.907	.04	.06	—	—	—	—
3 versus 4	—	—	—	—	—	74	126.73*	105.20	.005
Model 4	2940.47	2000	.902	.04	.06	—	—	—	—
4 versus 5	—	—	—	—	—	47	73.88*	72.44	.003
Model 5	2866.59	1953	.905	.04	.07	—	—	—	—
5 versus 6	—	—	—	—	—	21	44.76*	38.93	.002
Model 6	2821.83	1932	.907	.04	.06	—	—	—	—

Note. Model 1 = configural variance; Model 2 = metric invariance; Model 3 = scalar invariance; Model 4 = invariant uniqueness (measurement residuals); Model 5 invariant factor covariances (structural covariances); Model 6 = invariant factor means (structural weights); *df* = degrees of freedom; CFI = comparative fit index; RMSEA = root mean-square error of approximation; SRMR = squared root mean error; $\Delta\chi^2_{(df)}$ = change in chi-square_(change in degrees of freedom); χ^2 C.V. (.01) = chi-square critical value at .01 level; ΔCFI = change in CFI.

* $p < .01$

Table 8

Correlations for All Study Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. SR	—															
2. EC	.62**	—														
3. PT	.61**	.75**	—													
4. INDS	.62**	.57**	.57**	—												
5. ENTH	.58**	.52**	.50**	.65**	—											
6. GCIT	.63**	.60**	.58**	.79**	.69**	—										
7. SNST	.55**	.52**	.51**	.68**	.58**	.58**	—									
8. INTL	.51**	.55**	.49**	.65**	.58**	.58**	.74**	—								
9. DED	.54**	.54**	.50**	.62**	.53**	.53**	.75**	.80**	—							
10. DYN	.56**	.49**	.46**	.60**	.62**	.62**	.68**	.76**	.74**	—						
11. LMX	.59**	.63**	.61**	.58**	.52**	.59**	.61**	.58**	.61**	.59**	—					
12. PMV	.61**	.64**	.65**	.57**	.56**	.59**	.54**	.49**	.47**	.49**	.61**	—				
13. PHV	.61**	.58**	.56**	.50**	.52**	.51**	.49**	.41**	.40**	.45**	.55**	.71**	—			
14. FBS	.47**	.54**	.53**	.39**	.46**	.43**	.42**	.42**	.39**	.50**	.62**	.53**	.54**	—		
15. ER	.69**	.69**	.69**	.68**	.60**	.64**	.62**	.62**	.63**	.60**	.66**	.69**	.59**	.56**	—	
16. DWB	.05	.01	.05	-.04	.17**	-.47	.02	-.02	-.05	.11*	.06	.15**	.33**	.35**	.13*	—

Note. SR = self-regulation; PT = perspective-taking; EC = empathic concern; INDS = industry; ENTH = enthusiasm; GCIT = good citizen; SNST = sensitivity; INTL = intelligence; DED = dedication; DYN = dynamism; LMX = leader-member exchange; PMV = promotive voice; PHV = prohibitive voice; FBS = feedback-seeking; ER = emotion regulation; and DWB = deviant workplace behavior.

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

emotion regulation and a) empathy, b) self-regulation, c) implicit followership theory, and d) implicit leadership theory, with the strongest relation between emotion regulation and empathy. Therefore, to answer RQ1, follower emotion regulation was related to followers' self-reported ratings of a) empathy, b) self-regulation, c) implicit followership theory, and d) implicit leadership theory.

Hypotheses one through four (H1–H4), predicted positive relationships between LMX and effective followership characteristics: a) implicit followership theory, b) implicit leadership theory, c) self-regulation, and d) empathy, respectively. The results showed moderate to strong statistically significant correlations between LMX and each followership characteristic. Thus, H1, H2, H3, and H4 were supported; followers' LMX ratings were related to ratings of followers': a) implicit followership theory, b) implicit leadership theory, c) self-regulation, and d) empathy.

Next, the fifth (H5) and sixth hypotheses (H6) predicted significant positive relationships between LMX and promotive voice as well as LMX and prohibitive voice. The results supported both H5 and H6; followers' LMX ratings were statistically significantly positively related to followers' promotive and prohibitive voice. Notably, there appears to be a slightly stronger statistically significant correlation between LMX and promotive voice compared to LMX and prohibitive voice.

Hypotheses nine (H9) and hypotheses ten (H10) were concerned with the relationship between follower promotive and prohibitive voice and leader feedback-seeking behavior, as evaluated by followers. H9 predicted a significant positive relationship between follower promotive voice and leader feedback-seeking behavior. For prohibitive voice, H10 predicted a significant positive relationship between follower prohibitive voice and leader feedback-seeking

behavior. The results showed a moderately strong statistically significant correlation between follower promotive voice and followers' ratings of leader feedback-seeking behavior; thus, H9 was supported. Follower promotive voice was related to leader feedback-seeking behavior. Similarly, the results revealed a moderately strong statistically significant correlation between follower prohibitive voice and followers' ratings of leader feedback-seeking behavior; thus, H10 was supported. Follower prohibitive voice was related to leader feedback-seeking behavior.

In assessing the hypothesized structural model, results failed to confirm statistical or practical significance of two paths showing that the model failed, and causation cannot be inferred from a failed model. In other words, the model violated condition 9 of Mulaik's (2009) 10 conditions for causal inference. As such, results indicated the data best fit an alternative model, the re-specified final structural model. However, because results failed to evidence support for the initially hypothesized structural model, the data failed to offer support for the following mediation hypotheses.

- Hypothesis seven (H7a, H7b, H7c, and H7d), predicting follower ratings of LMX mediate the positive relationship between: a) self-regulation and prohibitive voice, b) empathy and prohibitive voice, c) follower IFT and prohibitive voice, and d) follower ILT and prohibitive voice;
- Hypothesis eight (H8a, H8b, H8c, and H8d), predicting follower ratings of LMX mediate the positive relationship between: a) self-regulation and promotive voice, b) empathy and promotive voice, c) follower IFT and promotive voice, and d) follower ILT and promotive voice;

- Hypothesis eleven (H11), which predicted follower promotive voice mediates the positive relationship between LMX and leader feedback-seeking behavior, as evaluated by followers; and
- Hypothesis twelve (H12), which predicted follower prohibitive voice mediates the positive relationship between LMX and leader feedback-seeking behavior, as evaluated by followers.

The full double-mediation hypothesized model could not be tested due to the suspected suppression situation. While diagnostic analyses indicated LMX was a mediator between the relationship followership characteristics and followership voice behaviors, promotive voice was not evidenced to mediate the relationship between LMX and leader feedback-seeking behavior. Analyses of the final re-specified model suggested neither promotive voice nor prohibitive voice mediate the relationship between LMX and leader feedback-seeking behavior. Taken together, analyses suggested a rigorous testing process has not been properly addressed. That is, these results may not be comparable to previous research where all scales were left in-tact based on achieving acceptable reliability estimates despite a lack of validity testing.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to understand follower effectiveness and followers' influence on leaders by examining hypothesized relationships among followership characteristics, leader-follower relationship context, followership behaviors, and leader behavior, as evaluated by followers from a communication perspective. Specifically, this study sought to advance theoretical and empirical understanding of the followership process and followership theory by investigating followership characteristics—self-regulation, empathy, implicit followership theories, and implicit leadership theories—and analyzing their relationships with a leader-focused outcome (feedback-seeking behaviors) as mediated by leader-member exchange and follower prohibitive voice behavior. Results provided support for the plausibility of a model (see Figure 12) in which followership characteristics (i.e., self-regulation, empathy, and positive implicit leadership theories) influence leader-follower relationship quality (i.e., leader-member exchange; LMX) as well as follower communication behaviors (i.e., promotive voice and prohibitive voice), and in which prohibitive voice and LMX then influence leader feedback-seeking behavior.

In leader-follower relationships that have been developed for at least one year, it appears followers with more empathy and self-regulation abilities engage in more prohibitive voice behaviors, which leaders pay attention to; however, leaders appear to respond more, with their attention, to followers with whom they have stronger relationships. This chapter discusses important findings, implications, limitations, and ends by outlining three key contributions of this study.

Follower Characteristics, Leader-follower Relationships, and Leader Outcomes

Results supported hypotheses one through four, predicting significant positive

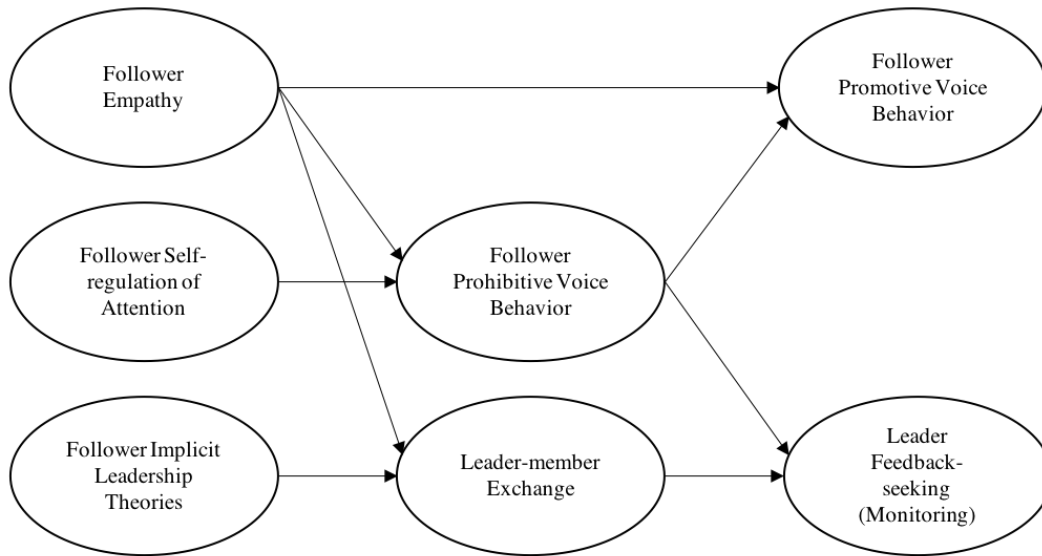


Figure 12. Final Model of SEM Results

associations between LMX and self-regulation, empathy, implicit followership theories, and implicit leadership theories. From a follower's perspective, these findings suggest followers with more empathy, self-regulation, positive implicit followership theories, and positive implicit leadership theories are likely to have stronger quality leader-follower exchange relationships. Further analyses showed followers with more empathy and more positive implicit leadership theories are more likely to have higher quality leader-follower relationships. In addition, leader-follower relationship quality fully mediated the relationships between follower empathy and leader feedback-seeking behavior as well as follower implicit leadership theories and leader feedback-seeking behavior.

Taken together, these findings offer support for the LMX differentiation proposition of leader-member exchange theory, suggesting that leaders treat followers differently—they do not develop high-quality relationships with each of their subordinates—and the development of high-quality relationships is influenced by the characteristics of the leader and follower (Graen & Uhl-bien, 1995). One explanation can be derived from previous research investigating the positive affect of followers' positive ILTs on LMX as theorized by leadership categorization theory (Engle & Lord, 1997; Epitropaki & Martin, 2005; Lord & Maher, 1993). The implication of such an effect for LMX differentiation is followers who perceive higher levels of a match between their positive ILTs and observed leader behaviors and/or characteristics are likely to invest more energy in fostering good relationships with that leader (Epitropaki, et al., 2013). Another explanation emphasizes the impactful nature of empathy, as an interpersonal skill and characteristic of effective follower communication, on relationship quality. Leader empathy has been found to encourage followers to engage in interpersonal facilitation and lead to higher quality leader-follower exchanges (Haynie et al., 2019). This study suggests follower empathy

may have a similar impact on the leader contributing to higher relationship quality (e.g., LMX differentiation) followed by increased attention from the leader. Consistent with interpersonal communication theory, this could be because empathy is a likely characteristic of effective communicators (followers or leaders)—affording one the ability to communicate interpersonally, in ways others find rewarding, and provoking others to interact at an interpersonal level—for successfully achieving environmental control (Miller & Steinberg, 1975). As such, this implies leaders respond more favorably to competent followers.

Hypothesis five (H5) and hypothesis six (H6) predicted significant positive relationships between LMX and promotive voice as well as LMX and prohibitive voice. Results provided support for both H5 and H6. Followers who engage in promotive and prohibitive voice behaviors are likely to have higher quality leader-follower relationships. However, further analyses disconfirmed hypotheses predicting causal links from LMX to follower promotive and prohibitive voice behaviors (i.e., H7, H8, H11, and H12). While unexpected, it is not surprising that followers' influence on leaders is not restricted to flowing through the leader-follower relationship as the only avenue for impacting leader behavior. Followers' message behavior can be a key source of influence. However, analyses highlighted a need to tease out the extent to which implicit followership theories are generally established, this study may have been before its time in assessing IFTs. In 5 to 10 years it may be more commonplace for people to have better developed IFTs as followership gains momentum in both academia and, to a greater extent, practice where followership information is becoming more widely dispersed and established. Further, analyses highlighted that self-regulation of attention and empathy may be more connected to each other than they are distinct entities in the Miller and Steinberg theory (1975).

Follower Characteristics and Behaviors, and Leader Outcomes

Hypothesis nine (H9) and hypothesis ten (H10) were concerned with the relationships between leader feedback-seeking behavior and follower promotive voice behavior as well as follower prohibitive voice behavior. Results showed support for both H9 and H10, indicating both follower promotive voice and follower prohibitive voice were related to leader feedback-seeking behaviors. Interestingly, the relationships between follower empathy and leader feedback-seeking behavior as well as follower self-regulation and leader feedback-seeking behavior were fully mediated by follower prohibitive voice behavior, but not follower promotive voice. Rather, analyses indicated that follower prohibitive voice also fully mediated the relationship between self-regulation and promotive voice, whereas it partially mediated the relationship between empathy and promotive voice. Analyses of these relationships suggested followers with more empathy and more self-regulation are likely to engage in prohibitive voice behavior, which then leads to two subsequent outcomes for followers, including: 1) engaging in more promotive voice behavior and 2) receiving more attention from the leader.

One way to interpret these results is that leaders likely pay more attention to followers who engage in prohibitive voice behaviors when these messages are guided by competent communication abilities, implying support for the importance of social cognitive skills, such as self-regulation of attention and empathy, for effective follower communication. Further, the results align with previous literature suggesting leaders may react positively to prohibitive messages when leaders view the message source positively or when voice message content is perceived as desirable or valuable (Burris, et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2018). Alternatively, leaders may pay more attention to followers who engage in prohibitive voice behaviors because leaders perceive these followers' voice behaviors as problematic to the viability of organizational functioning or threaten the security, authority, or image of their own leadership position.

Whether leaders' attentional response is motivated by follower effectiveness or follower destructiveness highlights a limitation in the current study design warranting a level of caution in interpreting this result as it pertains to leader response. Despite this limitation, the results evidencing that followership characteristics predict followership behaviors, among others discussed, offer important theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretical Implications

Results of this study provide evidence for a revised communication-based followership framework, specifically aligned with the blended paradigmatic approach as informed by communication theory. It would emphasize the impactful nature of followership communication characteristics on both followership behaviors and leader-follower relationship context for subsequent outcomes. While still consistent with the implicit assumption of Miller and Steinberg's (1975) interpersonal communication theory that interpersonal communication and environmental control likely provoke others to make interpersonal communication moves, it suggests theoretical modifications for communication theory, followership theory, and to a greater extent, the voice literature. For communication theory, the results indicated effective communicator characteristics are more impactful than individual perceptual dispositions for achieving environmental control; however, individual perceptions remain important to the process. Although the initially hypothesized theoretical model was not able to be retained in this study, it should be tested in future research efforts. A competing-model study between the final revised model and the originally hypothesized model could be an attractive direction for such an effort.

For followership theory, both followership behavior and contextual constructs are inherently involved in the followership process. The inclusion of both in a theoretical framework

is paramount for theoretical progression and empirically based understanding of the followership process. That is not to say the role-based approach and constructionist approach frameworks of the existing followership theory are inferior in advancing followership research and theory; rather, an alternative model informed by communication theory capturing a blend of paradigmatic approaches, such as the revised conceptual model presented in this study, should be incorporated into future efforts to extend followership theory. Notably, a conceptualized framework of the revised final communication-based framework (see Figure 13) appears more similar to the role-based approach framework than the constructionist framework.

The implications of the current study's findings for the voice literature echo Carsten et al. (2017, p. 17) by pointing out the mixed findings regarding leader responses to voice from the voice literature "could benefit from framing in followership theory." The voice literature suggests a strong relationship between LMX and voice would hold for predictions hypothesizing the relationship between LMX and follower or leader outcomes will be mediated by voice behaviors (Burris, Detert, & Chiaburu, 2008; Chamberlin et al., 2017; Van Dyne, Kamdar, & Joireman, 2008). While this notion remains valuable, the results suggest the voice literature, theory, and research would benefit from the inclusion of other voice antecedents in relation to LMX in further testing this proposition. This implication is particularly supportive of the direction of more recent voice research (Burris et al., 2017; Liu, Tangirala, & Ramanujam, 2013; Mowbray, Wilkinson, & Tse, 2014). Additionally, the unexpected finding that prohibitive voice predicted promotive voice, mediating the relationship between follower characteristics and promotive voice behavior is worthy of theoretical attention.

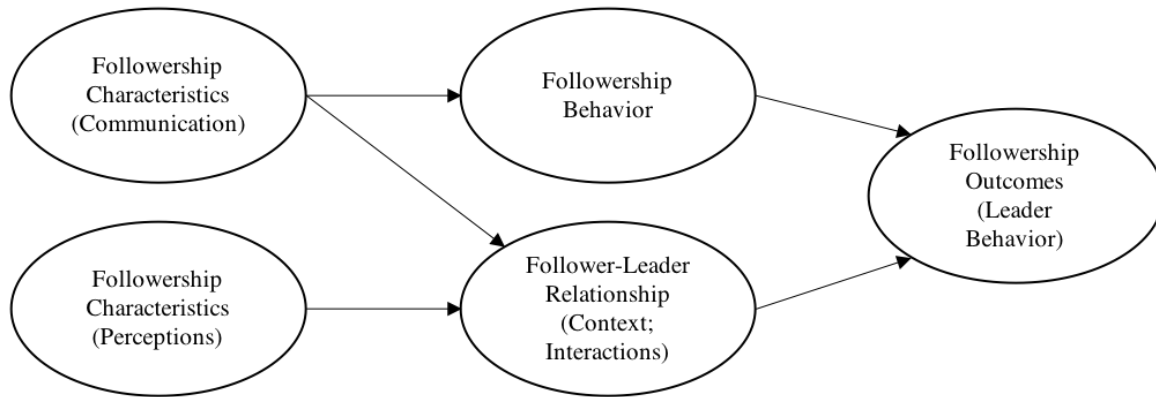


Figure 13. Conceptual Revised Communication-based Framework

Practical Implications

For business communication, this study has important implications for followers and leaders, especially within the realm of organizational management and training practices. This study was interested in understanding follower effectiveness and followers' influence on leaders. A major practical implication of the results points to organizations investing in followership training and development. Unlike leadership training, followership training focuses on what followers can do for leaders, how to interact with leaders in ways that enhance leadership and organizational outcomes (Carsten et al., 2017). Depending on the organization, followership development training can occur at the individual, leader-follower (co-worker-co-worker), small group, and/or large-group levels with a range of activities (e.g., assessments, team building exercises, role plays) and events (e.g., work retreats, workshops, company outings) tailored to target the specific goals of a particular organization's followers and leaders. The results highlight the importance of followers' voice behavior and interpersonal skills.

Additionally, working in a technology-driven world, any and all followership training activities and events could benefit from offering a media platform to engage virtually. Many

organizations today provide social collaboration tools for employees to connect, why not capitalize on this resource? If there's not already an app for that, one can be made. The option to engage in followership training by expanding on virtual interactive activities to connect, learn, and improve is likely to appeal to the mass majority of people.

The results suggest followers can benefit from training in developing their use of prohibitive voice behavior. If leaders pay more attention to those who offer constructive suggestions focused on preventing harmful outcomes, then encouraging followers to develop their ability to engage in prohibitive voice behavior can be advantageous for optimal organizational functioning. The results also suggest followers can support leaders by utilizing interpersonal skills to manage their own job environment well. Interpersonal skills can help followers not only effectively manage responsibilities and co-worker relations but also support their leaders by identifying potential problems and offering solutions (Carsten et al., 2017). Interpersonal skills can also heighten ways for followers to support their leaders in equipping them with the tools needed to be able to better support themselves and understand their leaders' perspective in contributing to stronger leader-follower relationships. Interpersonal skills, like empathy and self-regulation of attention, can be taught, learned, and improved upon, even if these abilities come less naturally. In addition, followership training and development can also benefit talent management processes, and this can be another direction for future followership research.

Another aspect of followership training could include awareness exercises or practices, with particular focus on increasing awareness of how one's own evaluations of who a leader should be or what a leader should be doing (i.e., follower implicit leadership theories) impacts ways in which one's subjective reality compares to actuality. This can be the difference between

thinking “my boss isn’t understanding” compared to “my boss isn’t understanding my message(s) or situation,” with the latter offering more room for introspection and solutions, rather than falling victim to one’s own attribution biases. That is, followers can support their leaders by understanding their own implicit perceptions. Certainly, both followers and leaders could greatly benefit by learning what characteristics compose their own as well as the others’ implicit leadership and followership perceptions (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005).

A second major practical implication of the results highlights the importance of organizations implementing and leaders utilizing social media platforms—social feedback systems or social collaboration tools—for acquiring and listening to follower voice messages as well as managing feedback. The results suggest leaders treat followers differently given they have stronger relationships with some over others. Differentiated relationships can benefit performance and competition when the differentiation is moderate and followers feel the leader has created a climate of fairness (Erdogan & Bauer, 2010; Liden, Erdogan, Wayne, & Sparrowe 2006; Sui, Wang, Kirkman, & Li, 2016). Even so, the risk of missing out on important problems or improvements voiced by followers on the lesser end of differentiation remains; thus, emphasizing the utility and importance of actively encouraging and using continuous feedback systems and/or social collaboration tools. Such technology may also benefit leaders in asking for followers’ help on extra-role activities or newer projects. This doesn’t mean some kind of follower free-for-all like handing over the budget, but it does mean opportunity to ask, accept, and discover help from interested followers to create teams and bring an idea to life that may otherwise take longer or never happen.

Limitations and Future Research

One limitation of this study is that the use of self-report measures potentially lends itself to bias. Future research would benefit from designs collecting data from multiple sources (followers and leaders). Beyond common-rater effects, this study attempted to control for other potential causes of bias (e.g., item characteristic effects, measurement context effects) due to common method variance (CMV) by randomizing items and including a marker variable expected to be unrelated to the hypothesized constructs of this study. Despite results suggesting CMV was unlikely to pose a large threat to the covariances between this study's substantive variables, it is acknowledged that the influence of CMV cannot be ruled out as it may be impossible to eliminate all forms of common method biases (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003).

Another limitation concerns the suspected suppression situation discovered during analyses. As noted, the results and interpretations of this study should be treated with caution. Future replication efforts are needed, which should invest energy in determining whether the issue found here may be related to sample size or the effect of confounding, mediational, and/or suppression variables and/or situations (Mackinnon et al., 2000; Paulhus et al., 2004). In addition, a retest of the refined CFA measurement model as well as further testing of the factor structures and validity of the instruments is needed. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of using CFA to cross-validate existing measures, "research results are no more valid than the measures used to collect the data" (Levine, 2005, p. 335). More specifically, results regarding the implicit followership theory construct (i.e., Heywood case evidence, measurement non-variance, lack of inter-item convergence and discriminant validity) and omission of several items that appeared to overlap during analyses should be immediate next steps for future

research. The factor structure of the monitoring dimension of feedback-seeking behavior should also garner researchers' attention.

A third limitation concerns generalizability in terms of the validity of the MTurk sample and cross-cultural validation. Given this study collected data from participants located only within the U.S., cross-cultural validation and cross-validating the MTurk sample with a separate non-MTurk second sample is needed as an immediate next step for future research. In addition, beyond quantitative survey methodology, content analysis and other forms of qualitative methodology (e.g., interviews, focus groups, and leader-follower observation) are attractive avenues for future followership research to gain greater depth in the meaning of the follower experience and better understanding of the followership process.

Moving forward, future research would benefit from exploring other characteristics, behaviors, and outcomes of effective followers (i.e., effective communicators) beyond those explored in this study to further test the refined communication-based framework. For example, characteristics such as cognitive complexity and cognitive style, compared to self-regulation of attention, should be explored. While results indicated self-regulation of attention is important, self-regulatory mechanisms and abilities (including emotion regulation, failure regulation, impulse regulation, etc.) may serve as antecedents of empathy and other characteristics of competent communicators, especially as it is theorized to play a fundamental role in the process of successfully achieving environmental control (Miller & Steinberg, 1975). Further, exploring characteristics, behaviors, and outcomes unique to followership will be an important move for advancing followership literature.

Future followership research would also benefit from extending the framework to include antecedents such as followers' desire for upward mobility and demographic factors. For

example, not all followers want to be leaders; not all leaders want to be leaders. It is possible followers who are effective communicators may be propelled into leadership despite their lack of desire for the leadership role (e.g., temporarily fulfilling a position you've refused the promotion for, yet replacements are not actively being pursued). Equally likely is effective followers being launched into leadership for demographic-related reasons (e.g., promoting Susan would add some needed diversity given her Spanish heritage). Evidence of such phenomena may reflect an illusionary-ceiling or an open-ceiling effect, the opposite of the glass-ceiling effect. This line of research may compliment the emergent leadership literature as well as tap into the less investigated area of toxic followership (Thomas, Gentzler, & Salvatorelli, 2017) or the dark side of followership.

Exploring antecedents specific to the leader-follower relationship context, in line with research investigating leader-follower congruence, should also be beneficial for future testing and help to better explain construct interactions associated with the communication-based followership perspective. Research investigating ILT-IFT congruence in leaders and followers is one area that is becoming more established, specifically what has been labeled as "relationship science" looking into relationship level implicit theories (e.g., implicit theories of leader-follower relationships; ITLFR) of both leaders and followers compared to implicit theories at the individual or person-based level (Thomas, Martin, Epitropaki, Guillaume, & Lee, 2013). However, other areas of congruence research like this should be equally impactful. For example, Tsai, Dionne, Wang, Spain, Yammarino, and Cheng (2016) examined how leader-follower relational schema congruence/incongruence informs follower-rated LMX. They found leader-follower relational schema congruence impacts followers' ratings of LMX, illuminating how

leader-follower cognitive similarity is likely an important explanatory mechanism for understanding leader-follower relationships and dynamics.

Contributions

One of the key take-aways from this study is the importance of interpersonal communication skills, empathy and self-regulation of attention as studied here, for follower effectiveness and followers' influence on leaders. That is, the results suggest followers' ability to influence leaders rests in their message behaviors and relationship with the leader, as guided by their effective communication characteristics. Like one rock on a miles-long gravel road, this study contributes to the long journey ahead for theory and research to better understand what, when, and how communication skills and mechanisms drive followers' ability to engage in effective communication with leaders. A point echoing Carsten et al., (2017, p. 17) in that "there is a need for more theory and research regarding the ways in which followers engage more (and less) effectively with leaders." Investigating leaders' responses to follower message behaviors and how followers' communication characteristics contribute to leader-follower relationships, as evaluated by both followers and leaders, is critical for the theoretical and empirical progression of the followership construct.

Another key take-away from this study is the need to replicate, re-examine, and cross-validate the CFA measurement model and the structural model findings for the originally hypothesized and revised framework presented here in addition to re-examining the factor structures and validity of measures. A related, third key take-away is the need to more carefully examine measures and engage in more rigorous methods. Followership scholars pushed research to avoid leadership mistakes, instead encouraging rigorous methods and different paradigms to cultivate the literature (Uhl-bien et al., 2014). That was over five years ago. Now, followership

has captured the attention of scholars and practitioners alike, just as much if not more than leadership. Followership's time is now. The importance of the role communication plays in the followership process and the time for sound empirical works for the future of the followership construct is always, important but especially now.

Overall, this study demonstrated two ways followers may exert influence on leaders lie in engaging in constructive voice behaviors, and to a greater extent, developing healthy leader-follower relationships guided by effective communication characteristics. Also, this study addressed important issues for investigating followership using complex models and SEM methods. Above all, this study emphasizes how communication, followership, leadership, and leader-follower relationships are inextricably connected.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Survey

PART ONE

Implicit Followership Theory

Instructions: Below, please rate how characteristic or not characteristic the following traits are of business followers. Please indicate **YOUR** level of **agreement** with each trait from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree.

Strongly Disagree	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Strongly Agree
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Hardworking

Productive

Above and Beyond

Excited

Outgoing

Happy

Loyal

Reliable

Team Player

Implicit Leadership Theory

Instructions: Below, please rate how characteristic or not characteristic the following traits are of business leaders. Please indicate **YOUR** level of **agreement** with each trait from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree.

Strongly Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Strongly Agree

Helpful

Understanding

Sincere

Intelligence

Educated

Clever

Knowledgeable

Dedicated

Motivated

Hardworking

Energetic

Strong

Dynamic

PART TWO

Self-regulation of Attention

Instructions: Below is a list of statements concerning attention. Please indicate **YOUR** level of **agreement** with each statement from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree.

1. I can concentrate on one activity for a long time, if necessary.
2. If I am distracted from an activity, I don't have any problem coming back to the topic quickly.
3. If an activity arouses my feelings too much, I can calm myself down so that I can continue with the activity soon.
4. If an activity requires a problem-oriented attitude, I can control my feelings.
5. It is difficult for me to suppress thoughts that interfere with what I need to do.
6. I can control my thoughts from distracting me from the task at hand.
7. When I worry about something, I cannot concentrate on an activity.
8. After an interruption, I don't have any problem resuming my concentrated style of working.
9. I usually have a whole bunch of thoughts and feelings that interfere with my ability to work in a focused way.
10. I stay focused on my goal and don't allow anything to distract me from my plan of action.

Emotion regulation

Instructions: Below is a list of statements concerning communication. Please indicate **YOUR** level of **agreement** with each statement from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree.

1. I sometimes throw out criticism without consideration for my co-worker's feelings.
2. When I am feeling down, I can make myself feel better.
3. It is difficult for me to calm down quickly when I get mad.

4. I am generally able to influence how individual members feel.
5. During group tasks, I compliment my co-workers when they do something well.
6. I generally have good control of my emotions.
7. When I experiences positive emotions, I know how to make them last.

Empathy

Instructions: Below is a list of statements concerning empathy. Please indicate **YOUR** level of **agreement** with each statement from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree.

1. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.
2. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while.
3. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.
4. It's rare that some issue is ever black and white -- usually the truth is somewhere in between.
5. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the "other person's" point of view.
6. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.
7. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.
8. It's often harmful to spend lots of time trying to get everyone's point of view--some decisions have to be made quickly.
9. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.
10. I am often quite touched by things that I see happen.

11. Seeing warm, emotional scenes melts my heart and makes me teary-eyed.
12. When I watch a sad, "tear-jerker" movie, I almost always have warm, compassionate feelings for the characters.
13. I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.
14. Occasionally I am not very sympathetic to my friends when they are depressed.
15. Usually I am not extremely concerned when I see someone else in trouble.
16. Sometimes I don't feel sorry for other people when they are having problems.
17. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them.
18. When a friend tells me about his good fortune, I feel genuinely happy for him.
19. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them.
20. I care for my friends a great deal.
21. I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.
22. When someone gets hurt in my presence, I feel sad and want to help them.
23. I feel sad when I see a lonely stranger in a group.

PART THREE

Leader-member Exchange

Think of your current supervisor and answer the following questions about that person. Place his or her initials here_____.

Instructions: Below is a list of statements concerning your leader's communication. Please indicate **YOUR** level of **agreement** with each statement from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree.

1. Regardless of how much power he/she has built into his/her position, my supervisor would use his/her power to help me solve problems in my work.
2. I can count on my supervisor to "bail you out," even at his/her expense when I really need it.
3. My supervisor understands my job problems and needs.
4. My supervisor recognizes my potential.
5. My supervisor has enough confidence in me that she/he would defend and justify my decisions if I were not present to do so.
6. I usually know where I stand with my supervisor.
7. My working relationship with my supervisor is effective.

Leader Feedback Seeking Behaviors

Instructions: Below is a list of statements concerning your leader's communication. Please indicate **YOUR** level of **agreement** with each statement from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree.

1. To obtain feedback, my supervisor directly asks for information concerning his/her performance.
2. To obtain feedback, my supervisor directly asks me "how am I doing?"
3. To obtain feedback, my supervisor directly asks for an informal appraisal.

4. To obtain feedback, my supervisor observes how quickly I return his/her phone calls or emails.
5. To obtain feedback, my supervisor observes how often I go to her/him for advice.
6. To obtain feedback, my supervisor observes how long he/she was kept waiting when my supervisor and I had a set appointment.
7. To obtain feedback, my supervisor pays attention to how I act toward her/him.
8. To obtain feedback, my supervisor pays attention to informal, unsolicited feedback.
9. To obtain feedback, my supervisor pays attention to casual remarks I make.

PART FOUR

Follower Voice

Instructions: Below is a list of statements concerning communication. Please indicate **YOUR** level of **agreement** with each statement from 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree.

Promotive Voice

1. I proactively develop and make suggestions for issues that may influence the unit.
2. I proactively suggest new projects which are beneficial to the work unit.
3. I raise suggestions to improve the unit's working procedure.
4. I proactively voice out constructive suggestions that help the unit reach its goals.
5. I make constructive suggestions to improve the unit's operation.

Prohibitive voice

1. I advise other colleagues against undesirable behaviors that would hamper job performance.
2. I speak up honestly with problems that might cause serious loss to the work unit, even when/though dissenting opinions exist.

3. I dare to voice out opinions on things that might affect efficiency in the work unit, even if that would embarrass others.
4. I dare to point out problems when they appear in the unit, even if that would hamper relationships with other colleagues.
5. I proactively report coordination problems in the workplace to the management.

Deviant Workplace Behaviors- Interpersonal

Instructions: Thinking about your current position, based on the following statements, please rate how often you engage in the following activities at work using the following scale: 1-never to 7-always.

1. I make fun of my supervisor at work.
2. I have said something hurtful to my supervisor at work.
3. I have made an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work.
4. I curse at my supervisor at work.
5. I have played a mean prank on my supervisor at work.
6. I have acted rudely toward my supervisor at work.
7. I have publicly embarrassed my supervisor at work.

PART FIVE

Demographic Questions

Please provide the following demographic information.

1. Biological Sex: ___ Male

☐ Female

☐ Prefer not to answer

2. Age: _____

3. What is your highest level of education?

☐ High School Diploma (or GED)

☐ Some College

☐ Associate's Degree

☐ University Degree (Bachelor's)

☐ Some Graduate School

☐ Graduate Degree

☐ Other

4. Have you maintained continuous employment in your current position with the same boss for at least one year?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Please indicate how many hours per week that you work, on average: _____

6. Do you currently maintain a leadership role (supervisor, manager, or boss) at work?

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Do you currently work in a position that a leader (supervisor, manager, boss) oversees?

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Type in below, how long you have been working with your current supervisor in your current position.

Appendix B

Research Study Title: Followers Influence on Leaders: A Quantitative Analysis

Researcher(s): Cassandra Ray, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Michelle Violanti, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

We are asking you to be in this research study about followership and leadership in the workplace. If you participate, you must fulfill the following:

- You must be 22 years or older to participate.
- You must currently work an average of 30 hours per week.
- You must have maintained continuous employment in your current position with the same boss for at least one year.
- You must currently fulfill a position that a leader (manager, supervisor, boss) oversees.

If you do not meet these criteria, please close your browser and discontinue participation in this survey.

The information in this consent form is to help you decide if you want to be in this research study. Please take your time reading this form and contact the researcher(s) to ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

Why is the research being done?

The purpose of the research study is to examine the perceptions of followers about how followers' characteristics and behaviors influence leaders.

What will I do in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, you will complete an online survey. The survey includes basic demographic questions, questions about your perceptions towards leadership and followership in the workplace, and questions about both your own and your leaders' (supervisor, manager, or boss) behaviors in the workplace. The survey should take you about 15-30 minutes to complete. You can skip questions that you do not want to answer. You will be aware of the end of the study as you will be thanked for your time and cooperation as the study has reached an end.

Can I say "No"?

Being in this study is up to you. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You can stop up until you submit the survey. After you submit the survey, we cannot remove your responses because we will not know which responses came from you.

Are there any risks to me?

We don't know of any risks to you from being in the study.

Are there any benefits to me?

We do not expect you to benefit from being in this study. However, your participation will help broaden current literature regarding followership and leadership as well as increase information known about the communication characteristics that are being investigated by us, the researchers.

What will happen with the information collected for this study?

The survey is anonymous, and no one will be able to link your responses back to you. Your responses to the survey will not be linked to your computer, email address or other electronic identifiers. Information collected for this study will be published and possibly presented at scientific meetings.

Will I be paid for being in this research study?

As an MTurk worker, you will receive \$.75 compensation if you are found to be eligible and complete the survey in full with thoughtful responses through your MTurk worker account. In the survey link instructions on the MTurk website, you were made aware in the HIT preview that the HIT has a series of qualification questions and that acceptance to the study is contingent upon answering these questions satisfactorily. The qualification questions concern fulfilling the above criteria. At the end of the survey, you will be thanked and given an MTurk code to submit on the HIT preview site. This code will be approved by the researchers within 3 days of completing the survey to provide compensation. Each code is unique and randomly generated by Qualtrics to ensure your anonymity is not compromised.

Who can answer my questions about this research study?

If you have questions or concerns about this study, or have experienced a research related problem or injury, contact the researchers, Cassandra Ray at cmellon2@vols.utk.edu, and (865) 314-0578 OR Michelle Violanti at violanti@utk.edu and (865) 974-7072.

For questions or concerns about your rights or to speak with someone other than the research team about the study, please contact:

Institutional Review Board

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

1534 White Avenue

Blount Hall, Room 408

Knoxville, TN 37996-1529

Phone: 865-974-7697

Email: utkirb@utk.edu

Statement of Consent

I have read this form, been given the chance to ask questions and have my questions answered.

If I have more questions, I have been told who to contact. By clicking the “I Agree” button below, I am agreeing to be in this study. I can print or save a copy of this consent information for future reference. If I do not want to be in this study or do not meet the criteria above, I can close my internet browser.

Vita

Cassandra Ann Ray is an organizational communication scholar. Her research interests include followership (and leadership), communication competence, intercultural communication, and data analysis. In 2012, Cassandra earned her Bachelor of Arts in Communication with a business minor from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She earned a Master of Science degree (2016) and Doctor of Philosophy degree (2019) in Communication and Information with a concentration in Communication Studies and minor in Statistics. While working toward her degrees, she worked as a Graduate Teaching Associate/Lecturer for the School of Communication Studies and adjunct instructor for King University, Knoxville's Communication Studies department.