Subordinate humor and leader-member exchange relationships: Laugh and the boss laughs with you?

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Abstract

This dissertation used a political lens to investigate humor in a leader-member exchange (LMX) framework to explore how subordinates can use humor to manage relationships with their superiors and the subsequent outcomes associated with the quality of these relationships. This dissertation linked humor to outcomes that had not previously been studied, such as political skill and employee guarding tactics. This dissertation uniquely contributes to the current body of research by 1) empirically investigating subordinate humor in an LMX framework, 2) exploring how political skill affects the relationship between humor and LMX relationship quality, and 3) examining an unexplored outcome of LMX quality, the use of managerial employee guarding tactics. I proposed a model of subordinate humor based on the literature and outline specific hypotheses derived from the model. I hypothesized that subordinate humor positively influences LMX quality as perceived by both parties. Furthermore, I hypothesized that subordinate political skill moderates that relationship. Finally, I hypothesized that LMX relationship quality and subordinate humor will be positively related to managerial use of employee guarding tactics. I employed a survey research design to test these topics. A reciprocal standard design was employed to investigate constructs from the perspectives of both subordinates and supervisors. Data was analyzed using PLS-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Results showed support for the proposed relationships between humor and LMX quality and with employee guarding tactics. These findings offer practical implications for employees and managers alike by empirically demonstrating that humor is a useful tool for subordinates to enhance their relationship quality with supervisors, and subsequently, managerial behaviors towards employees.

Keywords: humor, leader-member exchange theory, employee guarding tactics, PLS

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Humor is a complex multi-faceted social phenomenon (Martin, 2007) that naturally occurs in a variety of settings, including in the workplace (Obthani, Omar, & Bakri, 2012). Humor can be considered a type of mental play, a light-hearted nonserious attitude, or as a state of mind focused on play rather than a state of mind focused on goals (Martin, 2007; Apter, 2001). Humor brings a sense of lightheartedness to business and is worthy of serious study in the workplace (Duncan & Feisel, 1989) because it may impact the healthy growth of vital human resources (Obthani, et al., 2012), healthy employment relationships (Cooper, 2008), employee defection and attrition rates (Breeze, Dawson, & Khazhinsky, 2002). Duncan, Smeltzer, and Leap (1990) asserted that the study of humor in management has not really begun and subsequent research supports that academic research on humor has not maintained consistent interest (Cooper, 2002; Fredrickson, 1998). Although there is growing research concerning humor there remain considerable voids concerning empirical studies (Gkorezis, Hatzithomas, & Petridou, 2011). Thus, numerous questions relating to workplace humor remain unanswered. Humor has typically been investigated at the individual level, but it has implications for leadership at the dyadic, group, and organizational levels. The present study addresses gaps in the understanding of how humor functions to influence leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship quality. Specifically, this study explores such questions as how political skill affects the relationship between the use of humor and the LMX relationship quality, and how humor and leader member exchange quality are associated with managerial use of employee guarding tactics.

Humor is especially relevant to today's work environment. More and more members of the contemporary workforce are employed in complex unstructured jobs that require collaboration, teamwork, and problem solving skills to achieve goals. These workers, especially the younger members of the workforce, expect the work environment to be fun and relaxed (Romero & Pescosolido, 2008) and will leave when work is boring (Levine, 2005). Potentially, humor can be valuable for organizations in developing human and social capital and in creating fun and attractive work environments. Additionally, the ability to create and use humor is associated with intelligence and creativity (Isen, Daubman, & Nowicki, 1987; Martin, 2007) which are both necessary to succeed in today's collaborative work environments. Furthermore, humor is associated with positive affect (mirth), and there is a strong correlation between positive emotions and mood and workplace performance (Martin, 2007; Isen, et al., 1987). Consequently, humor may be a means to indirectly increase productivity.

Additionally, humor positively impacts organizations through facilitating employee interactions. For example, humor can flatten organizations and break down power structures between management and employees to foster employee loyalty and productivity (Romero & Pescosolido, 2008) by bringing out positive emotions within and between individuals (Frederickson, 1998), thus enhancing satisfaction and cohesion (Martin, 2007). Furthermore, humor can be used to alleviate boredom (Roy, 1960), smooth interactions (Bradney, 1957), and to socialize newcomers to the work environment (Collinson, 1988). Romero and Cruthirds (2006) discussed the multi-functionality of humor which points to the ability of humor to lighten moods, increase positive affect, and enhance cohesion. Thus, humor facilitates informal interpersonal interactions that could be relevant to workplace performance. Ultimately, I suggest that humor dynamics impact interpersonal relationships, which can help organizations sustain

competitive advantage through developing and sustaining human and social capital by helping develop high quality manager subordinate relationships.

Humor plays a role in developing healthy workplace relationships and in sustaining relational capital. Humor can potentially enhance an employee's ability to communicate well with supervisors and peers because the use of humor brings out positive emotions in others. For example, an employee may use self-enhancing humor to make light of and minimize mistakes to save face (Meyer, 1997). Moreover, the use of humor to communicate messages can potentially offer insight into understanding how employees and managers are thinking (Davis & Kleiner, 1989). Humor may potentially be the medium for messages people find difficult to share (Collinson, 1988; Duncan & Feisel, 1989). For example, a manager might attempt to communicate a difficult message subtly by indirectly criticizing an employee's performance with humor. Additionally, humor enables individuals to make comments that they might not otherwise make (Duncan & Feisel, 1989). For example, employees may express criticism or make socially risky comments about their jobs, peers, or supervisors using humor (Winick, 1976). This allows for people to disagree or deliver criticism or difficult messages in a playful way (Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, & Viswesvaran, 2012), without causing negative emotions such as anger and defensiveness in the other person (Kahn, 1989). Thus, the use of humor may enhance the effectiveness of the communication between supervisors, subordinates, and peers thereby helping develop high quality work relationships (Graen & Scandura, 1987).

Humor has a function in leadership, and the use of humor by leaders should continue to be explored. Malone (1980) cautioned that humor could be both constructive and destructive to employment relationships. The timely and appropriate use of humor can be an asset to any leader as a mechanism for increasing employee bonding (Davis & Kleiner, 1989). For example,

humor used positively and appropriately can help stimulate positive affect, cohesion, and satisfaction (Martin, 2007). Thus, it has been suggested that humor may be an effective tool for managers for reducing the emotional separation between themselves and employees (Davis & Kleiner, 1989). Additionally, a recent study found managers and executives who use self-deprecating humor appeared more approachable to subordinates (Vecchio, Justin, & Pearce, 2009). Conversely, negative, inappropriate, distasteful or ill-timed humor can be a significant liability for managers. Using humor negatively, such as to mock, belittle, or even attack an employee is not indicative of good leadership and can lead to morale issues (Martin, 2007). Thus, leaders can use humor in a positive manner to build relationships with subordinates or use humor negatively to undermine these work relationships. This warrants further study into the effects of humor on manager subordinate relationship quality.

The majority of research on humor and leadership has focused on the use of humor by the leader. Research, theory, and practice advocate that managers can use humor to be more effective interpersonally (Cooper, 2002). Results have found that a leader's frequency of humor use impacts member rated LMX (Cooper, 2002). While leaders have the formal authority, primary role and discretionary ability to set the tone for humor initiation in the dyadic relationship (Cooper, 2002), humor and LMX are both social constructs. Few studies have taken the dyadic perspective to examining the impact of humor on leader member relations, and no study has investigated the impact of member humor on leader member relations. Therefore, member humor remains relatively unexplored even though member humor and dyadic measurement are important components to understanding the role that humor plays in leader member relations. The present research will contribute to existing research by presenting a model of the role of member humor in leader member exchange relationships.

LMX theory describes the role-making process between leaders and individual subordinates (members) and the exchange relationships that develop between them over time (Yukl, 2006). The theory outlines the reciprocal exchange and influence process that occurs within the dyads (Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975). The basic premise of LMX theory is that leaders develop differentiated exchange relationships with each member as the member's role becomes mutually defined (Yukl, 2006). Over time, either a high exchange (IN group) or a low exchange (OUT group) relationship develops between the leader and member (Dansereau, et al., 1975). The quality of this relationship ultimately influences the affective, cognitive, and behavioral outcomes experienced by each member of the dyad (Dansereau, et al., 1975). It can be expected that humor dynamics may operate differently in the differentiated (high or low quality) exchange relationships. Exploring the effects of the use of humor from both perspectives in the exchange relationship has not been fully examined and deserves further exploration.

Because humor is a naturally occurring attractive interpersonal behavior (Martin, 2007), the use of it may be related to other naturally occurring behaviors in organizations: political behavior and employee guarding behaviors. Engaging in political behavior is assumed to be a natural occurrence by employees in organizations (Ferris, Treadway, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter, Kacmar, Douglas, & Frink, 2005). Political behavior in organizations is defined as "activities that are not required as part of one's organizational role but that influence, or attempt to influence, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization" (Froman, 1962). In fact, Gandz and Murray (1980) reported that 93% of the managers surveyed said politics plays a role in their organizations, and 70% felt that to be successful in the workplace, workers must engage in political behavior. Factors beyond performance, such as an individual's

political behavior, play a role in selection, performance evaluations and career progression (Ferris, Perrewe, Anthony & Gilmore, 2000). Leaders and members may vary on how effectively they utilize humor behaviors and political behaviors to manage healthy interpersonal relationships and to get ahead. Political skill, or "the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives," (Ahearn, Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, & Ammeter, 2004: 311) is suggested to contribute to behavioral flexibility (the ability to adapt behaviors based on the characteristics of the situation), which is necessary to be effective in today's dynamic work environment (Ferris et al., 2000). Political skill may influence the relationship between organizational humor and leader member relations. It is suggested that political skill makes influence behaviors more effective, thus enabling people to build social and reputational capital (Ferris et al., 2000). Exploring political skill alongside humor may shed light from a political perspective on healthy working relationships.

Similarly, we may gain additional understanding of the effects of humor on LMX relationship quality from exploring other naturally occurring interpersonal behaviors, such as employee guarding tactics. Brown and colleagues (Brown, Lawrence, & Robinson, 2005; Brown & Robinson, 2011) demonstrated that behaving territorially is a common occurrence in organizations. Employee guarding tactics are "territorial-like behaviors used by managers to retain valuable employees from voluntarily departing, quitting or being stolen by rivals, in order to preserve vital human resources" (Gardner, Munyon, Hom, & Griffeth, under review). These behaviors typically derive from feelings of ownership over valuable employees (Brown & Robinson, 2011; Gardner et al., under review) in an attempt to retain the valued employees. The only study that has investigated the intensity of employee guarding tactics defined valuable

employees based on subordinate job performance, mental ability, and political skill (Gardner et al., under review). Extending previous research to incorporate the social nature of work, I define valuable employees based on their humor and the relationship quality with their managers. Equivalently, exploring how member humor relates to the relationship between guarding tactics and LMX relationship quality may shed further insight into understanding how social capital is developed and maintained. This study will contribute to the existing body of research through initially empirically exploring the relationships between humor, political skill, LMX, and employee guarding tactics.

In summary, humor is a prevalent naturally occurring behavior that produces positive affect within and among individuals, which enhances social interactions. Research has shown that leader humor impacts member rated LMX (Cooper, 2002), but it remains unknown how member humor influences the LMX relationship and subsequent outcomes experienced by each dyad member (Sosik, 2012). Furthermore, political skill may influence the relationship between humor and LMX quality. Finally, the use of humor and the quality of the exchange relationship may be related to use of managerial employee guarding tactics. Thus, it is the purpose of the present dissertation to clarify and explore the relationships between member humor, political skill, LMX relationship quality, and managerial employee guarding tactics. Overall, I seek to contribute to the current body of literature by initially exploring member humor as an antecedent to LMX quality, political skill as moderator to the relationship, and managerial employee guarding tactics as a consequence of LMX quality.

In the following sections, I will: 1) discuss the perspectives and roles of humor, 2) review LMX theory, 3) discuss political skill and employee guarding tactics, 4) introduce a model to clarify the theoretical integrations, 5) introduce hypotheses to guide an empirical investigation of

the model put forth, 6) discuss methods, 7) share results, and finally 8) discuss results, implications, contributions, and conclusions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This chapter has multiple purposes. First, I will review the existing research on humor from a variety of perspectives, with the goal of understanding and integrating these varying perspectives taken to study this multi-dimensional construct. Next, I will review the existing research on LMX theory in order to lay the foundation for my proposed framework. Then, I will review the existing research on political skill and on managerial employee guarding tactics. Finally, I will present a framework for integrating humor, political skill, LMX relationship quality, and managerial employee guarding tactics, and then offer hypotheses to test the framework.

Humor

Humor is a multidimensional construct touted to improve interpersonal relationships both at work and outside of work (Gkorezis, Hatzithomas, & Petridou, 2011). Similar to leadership, humor can be conceptualized from either a trait or behavioral perspective. From the trait perspective, research and practice have found a sense of humor to be a favorable, attractive, positive personality trait involved in interpersonal attraction (McGee & Shevlin, 2009; Craik, Lampert, & Nelson, 1996) that enables a person to recognize and successfully use humor for coping or social purposes (Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, & Viswesvaran, 2012). From the behavioral perspective, humor can be described in terms of habitual differences in humor behavior (Ruch, 1996), and more recently as humor styles (Romero & Arendt, 2011; Martin, Puhlik-Doris, Larsen, Gray, and Weir, 2003). Researchers typically agree that a sense of humor is a relatively stable personality trait that creates a propensity to use and recognize successful humor, regardless of the humor style in which sense of humor is manifested.

The various perspectives taken and research questions used to explore humor substantiate that the multidimensional construct has multiple functions and multiple meanings (Cooper, 2008). The multidimensional phenomenon of humor does not readily lend itself to a single definition (Cooper, 2005; Chapman, 1976). Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, and Viswesvaran (2012) described that defining and operationalizing humor is complicated because "sense of humor" and "humor" are used interchangeably when they refer to different aspects of the construct, the construct has many diverse dimensions, and because humor and humor styles are quantified in various ways. Humor has been quantified in multiple ways. Eysenck (1972) outlined three unique perspectives for quantifying humor, which support the multidimensionality of the humor construct: conformist, quantitative, and productive perspectives. These perspectives emphasize the degree of similarity between humor appreciation, frequency of laughter/amusement, and the extent that individuals amuse others, respectively. Mesmer-Magnus and colleagues (2012) suggested that the various conceptualizations and quantifications might be tapping into different aspects of the same overarching construct. Furthermore, these perspectives of humor are not mutually exclusive and may operate simultaneously (Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, & Viswesvaran, 2012). Thus, multiple definitions of humor have been put forward.

Fundamentally, humor is a communication activity (Lynch, 2002). This activity consists of four components: social phenomenon, cognitive and perceptual processes, pleasant emotional response (mirth) resulting from perception, and laughter as an expression of mirth (Martin, 2007). Researchers are unclear whether humor is a stimulus, a cognitive process, an emotional, or a behavioral response, or all of these (Mesmer-Magnus, Glew & Viswesvaran, 2012). Additionally, researchers have disagreed when defining humor on whether humor is intentional (Cooper, 2005; Duncan & Feisel, 1989) or unintentional, further substantiating the variety of

definitions. Martineau (1972) defined humor as "any communicative event that was perceived as amusing." Romero and Pearson (2004) defined humor as "amusing communications that unite, direct, and energize people in ways that benefit the individual, group, or organization." Cooper (2005) defined humor as "any event shared by an agent with another individual that is intended to be amusing to the target and that the target perceives as an intentional act" (p. 767). Romero and Cruthird (2006) defined humor as "amusing communications that produce positive emotions and cognitions in the individual, group, and organization" (p. 59). For the current study, I define humor as "amusing communications intentionally shared among individuals in order to produce positive cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses in individuals, groups, and organizations."

Theoretical Perspectives

Humor has traditionally been investigated at the individual level, with an attempt to understand what motivates an individual to employ humor. There are three major theoretical perspectives for understanding why people express humor (Cooper, 2008) and what makes something funny (Duncan, Smeltzer, & Leap, 1990). These are superiority, incongruity, and relief theories (Morreall, 1987). Superiority theories of humor contend that humor originates in feelings of perceived superiority over others (Foot, 1991). Research on this form of humor has dealt with aggressive and disparaging aspects of humor as well as research concerning social status and distance within work group humor (Martin, Rich, & Gayle, 2004). Incongruity theories focus on humor arising from the unanticipated discovery of an inconsistency (Berger, 1976). The idea behind these theories is that for an object to be humorous some kind of incongruity must exist. Incongruity exists when expectations and actual occurrences are inconsistent, when incompatible frames of reference, or multiple meanings occur. These theories point to why punch lines are funny. Relief theories focus on humor as a means for discharging

built-up energy or tension (Giles, Bourhis, Gadfield, Davies, & Davies, 1976). The most popular relief theory can be attributed to Sigmund Freud (1950). He presented the idea of humor as a defense mechanism by the ego and superego to protect itself from suffering or to release sexual or aggressive tension. Thus relief theories point to the tension reducing function of humor (Vecchio, Justin, & Pearce, 2009). Together these theories explain why people choose to share humor and point to the intentional focus of humor. Similarly, the classical distraction hypothesis (Morgan, 1985) provides theoretical support that a brief distraction from an ongoing challenge results in psychological relief and improvement in affect. The classical distraction hypothesis suggests the idea that humor can be used to relieve tension in workplace conflict and stress in working relationships. Collectively, these theories offer different explanations for why people express humor, in other words what motivates humor use and appreciation at the individual level (Cooper, 2008). Taken together, these theoretical perspectives guide research on humor at the individual level and direct attention to the intentionality and multifunctionality of humor.

Humor research has typically addressed either humor initiation (sharing humor) or humor appreciation (the response of laughing at humor). Initial research focused on the effects of humor use for the humor initiator and later research focused on the recipient of the humor (Davis & Kleiner, 1989). Booth-Butterfield and Booth-Butterfield (1991) found that humor initiation is related to the perceived appropriateness of humor such that people who use humor will often use it in a variety of situations. Humor appreciation can be viewed as an individual difference. Humor is often considered a 'double edged sword' (Malone, 1980). Just because one person finds something funny, does not mean everyone else will. What is appropriate for some may be offensive to others (Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, & Viswesvaran, 2012). To date research has a typically attended to either initiation or reaction (appreciation). Therefore, there is a need to

expand the focus of the theory to include both initiation and reaction to humor, and any possible interactions from both initiator and receiver perspectives. It is necessary to consider the use and reactions to humor from the perspectives of both parties in the exchange to more fully understand how humor functions to influence LMX relationships.

Measurement / Operationalization

The majority of work on humor has been theoretical (Duncan & Feisel, 1989). Historically, humor has been explored using qualitative observational methods (Duncan et al., 1990) with results pointing to the prevalence of humor in workplace relationships. Humor is often expressed through the use of canned jokes (have a punch line), spontaneous conversational humor, and unintentional humor (including accidental/physical mishaps). Additional ways to express humor include sarcasm, teasing, practical joking, witty banter (Avolio, Howell, & Sosik, 1999), and sharing or displaying written and visual humorous stimuli (Cooper, 2005). Humor behavior has been operationalized as humor styles put forth in the literature (Martin et al., 2003). Moreover, Eysenck's (1972) multiple perspectives for quantifying humor reflect the diverse ways to conceptualize humor. Regardless of how humor has been conceptualized, operationalization has typically been at the individual level, with focus on the initiator of humor rather than from the perspective of the appreciator or target (Sosik, 2012). Humor is an interpersonal phenomenon that should be studied by taking the perceptions of all parties involved into account. Furthermore, because individuals perceive the effects of humor differently, researchers should take the perception of all parties into account when measuring humor.

Sosik (2012) outlined that an operational definition that fails to distinguish between levels of analysis may lead to misalignment and measurement problems. The multidimensionality of the construct has caused complications in the levels of analysis (Martin,

2007; Ruch, 1996). Regularly, humor is operationalized as an individual level construct in relation to other individual level outcomes, despite the interpersonal implications at higher (dyadic, group, and organizational) levels (Sosik, 2012). Klein and colleagues (1994) suggested *data-theory alignment*, which specifies that the measurement should be at the same level of analysis as the theory outlines. Krasikova and LeBreton (2012) substantiate that taking a nonreciprocal approach to studying dyadic phenomena is methodologically problematic and theoretically deficient because it fails to account for the relational and mutually influencing components of dyadic constructs. Thus, to align data with theory, research on humor should be approached using a reciprocal design taking into account the perspectives of both initiator and receiver and any possible interactions.

Nomological network

The multidimensionality of humor creates a diverse set of personal and organizational outcomes. The effects of humor have been investigated on personal outcomes such as burnout, stress, coping, and health (Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, & Viswesvaran, 2012). There are clinically proven physiological benefits: decreased blood pressure, endorphins are released, increased energy and fertility, faster recovery from illness, and improved sleep quality (Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, & Viswesvaran, 2012; Martin, 2007) and interpersonal benefits such as enhanced social support which help explain how humor serves to aid in personal outcomes. Individually, humor is positively correlated with extroversion (Ziv, 1984), self-esteem (Bell, McGhee, & Duffey, 1986), emotional intelligence (Hampes, 2001), stress management (Martin and Lefcourt, 1983), self-confidence during interpersonal interactions (Nezlek & Derks, 2001), and trust (Hampes, 1999). Interpersonally, humor is related to intimacy in relationships (Hampes, 1992) and attraction. At the organizational level, a culture of fun is thought to increase employee

satisfaction (Romero & Pescosolido, 2008), receptivity to feedback (Berg, 1990), and team creativity. Mesmer-Magnus, Glew, and Viswesvaran 's (2012) meta-analysis on positive humor found that employee humor was positively related to coping, work performance, satisfaction, group cohesion, and health, and negatively related to burnout, stress, and employee withdrawal. Furthermore, they found that supervisor humor was positively related to employee performance, job and supervisor satisfaction, group cohesion, and reduced employee withdrawal. Academics have suggested that humor plays a role in interpersonal relationships, by enhancing positive interactions, facilitating self-disclosure, defusing tension and saving face, all mechanisms used to regulate emotions (Martin, 2007). Together, these results point to positive humor, whether inwardly or interpersonally focused, is associated with physical and mental health, and buffers the effects of stress on personal outcomes, and effective workplace functioning.

Romero and Arendt (2011) explored the relationships between self-report humor styles using Martin and colleagues' (2003) four styles of humor and stress, satisfaction with coworkers, and group cohesion. They found that a positive relationship with aggressive humor (outward and negatively focused humor) and stress, a negative relationship with affiliative humor (outward and positively focused humor) and stress, a positive relationship with affiliative humor and satisfaction with coworkers, and a negative relationship with aggressive humor and satisfaction with coworkers, team cooperation, and organizational commitment. Additionally, they found positive relationships with affiliative and self-enhancing (inward and positively focused) humor and organizational commitment. These results provide empirical evidence to support the idea that specific humor styles should have differential effects on particular outcomes. Additional research should investigate the possible differential effects of humor styles on LMX relationship quality.

Yip and Martin (2006) took the perspective of humor as a social skill and explored humor intra-individually, from the behavioral and trait perspectives. They found both humor styles and humor as a trait (high cheerful and low bad mood) related to emotional intelligence. Specifically, they found self-enhancing humor and cheerfulness positively related to the emotional management dimension of emotional intelligence. Furthermore, aggressive and self-defeating (inward and negatively focused) humor and bad mood were negatively related to emotional intelligence. Self-report positive humor styles were positively related to an individual's self-reported ability to initiate relationships and self-disclosure. Individuals high in aggressive humor reported feeling less able to provide support and manage conflicts. Lastly, self-defeating humor was related to low self-esteem. These results suggest that individuals, who are more playful, and less serious, are better able to initiate relationships, provide support, control emotions, and manage conflicts in relationships. Additionally, these results suggest that the absence of negative humor may be equally important as the presence of positive styles (Yip & Martin, 2006), which should be explored inter-individually within a dyadic context.

Theoretical Support for Humor and LMX

Management theory has virtually neglected the investigation of humor (Davis & Kleiner, 1989) perhaps due to the belief that play, or informal interactions, interferes with work, considered a formal interaction. Morand (1995) differentiated between formal and informal interactions. He described that rules for how people should conduct themselves in situations arise from sustained interactions. Informal situations are characterized by behavioral casualness and familiarity whereas formal situations are characterized by impersonal, structured, and disciplined behavior. It was long thought that there was no room for informality in the goal-oriented workplace, and that interactions should be impersonal and objective (Morand, 1995).

Overtime research has shown how informality can fit into formal situations. For example, Roy (1960) noted how machine shop workers engaged in periods of both formal work and informal social interactions, which was suggested to relieve boredom and motivate less motivated employees (Duncan, 1985). Furthermore, Morand (1995) modeled how informal interactions positively influence the flow of information, creativity, affective involvement, and status leveling in organizations. I hypothesize that humor experiences shared between members and leaders will inject informality into this formal relationship to positively affect the perceived LMX relationship quality, which is deserving of further investigation.

In an attempt to provide theoretical support for my hypotheses and to connect the humor literature with the LMX framework, I draw from the field of psychology. Multiple theories of emotion have been outlined which provide rationale and background for exploring workplace humor in LMX relationships. Weiss and Cropanzano's (1996) Affective Events Theory (AET) is a model of intra-individual emotions and moods that does not differentiate between positive and negative emotions. Specifically, they take a within-individual perspective and propose that the emotions experienced by an individual while performing a task influences later emotions experienced and subsequent task performance. Other theories take an expanded perspective and consider the reciprocal influence process of emotions among individuals. The Emotion Cycle Theory (ECT) (Rafaeli and Hareli, 2009) discusses how positive and negative emotions cycle or ripple through social systems by shaping the thoughts, emotions, and behaviors of others, which ultimately shapes the larger social dynamics within dyads, groups, and organizations. This is explained using the sense making process proposed by Weick (1995). Individuals must interpret and make sense of the emotions of others. Rafaeli and Hareli (2009) specify that the emotions of one individual affect social influences through provoking the emotions of others, perception and

attribution of others, behaviors of others, and the relationship between the members. Specifically, members make inferences about a leader's competence, credibility, and power (Rafaeli & Hareli, 2009). Furthermore, these reactions provide feedback to the initiator and feed into the emotional cycle.

This is similar to the emotional contagion idea (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1993) that suggests emotions spread among individuals through a cycle of emotional mimicking. Positive emotions are likely to illicit feelings of attractiveness and willingness to engage by those who experience the emotion (observers also, not just targets) (Hareli & Rafaeli, 2009). Thus, people are likely to seek to be close to those who display positive emotions and avoid those who display unpleasant emotions (Watson, et al., 2005) supporting continued interactions. This idea has been empirically demonstrated in laboratory negotiations and customer service field studies (Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004; Barger & Grandey, 2006). In support, Sy, Cote, and Saavedra (2005) found that group leader moods, whether positive or negative, transferred to group members. Staw and colleagues (1994) longitudinally explored positive emotions and the work outcomes of social support from peers and superiors, supervisor evaluations, and pay increases. They found that positive emotions in Time 1 predicted improvements in all of the outcomes. Humor elicits positive affect intra-and inter-individually, thus should help sustain healthy employment relationships and work outcomes. Further empirical studies should investigate the how member humor can instigate this positive contagion process with leaders.

Relatedly, Fredrickson (1998, 2000) posited the Broaden-and-Build model of positive emotions. This model describes the form and functions of positive emotions in organizations. The theory discusses how positive emotions and moods spiral upwardly within social systems to transform individuals, groups, and organizations. Spiraling refers to the self-sustaining positive

effects experienced by the individual and those around, within the organization. The theory outlines how positive emotions build enduring social bonds and personal resources through broadening the range of individuals' habitual thoughts and actions. For example, positive emotions such as joy, curiosity, pride, and satisfaction all magnify and create lasting personal resources such as creativity, esteem, the desire to explore, and growth and development (Frederickson, 2000). Similarly, Davis and Kleiner (1989) substantiated that the pleasurable affective response produced by humor can be used as a motivating self-sustaining high. Further, they discussed how a getting person to laugh often creates a positive spiral of emotion, which can be channeled towards achievement. Furthermore, positive emotions reverberate positive emotions in other organizational members. Positive emotions propagate throughout organizations, creating and developing from meaningful positive social encounters. The upward spiral of positive emotions optimizes the functioning of individuals and organizations.

Additionally, the social psychology literature offers theoretical foundation for my position concerning humor and LMX relationship quality. A sense of humor or being humorous is considered an attractive trait and plays a role in interpersonal attraction (Murstein & Brust, 1985), and in the relationship quality of romantic couples (Cann, Zapata, & Davis, 2011) and manager subordinate dyads (Cooper, 2004). Research has suggested that frequency of interaction results in greater social attraction (Zajonc, Crandall, Kail, & Swap, 1974) and that humor produces positive affect (Carnevale & Isen, 1986). Individuals are attracted to others that use humor in a positive manner (Byrne & Neuman, 1992). As does humor, attraction works through cognitive, affective, and dispositional channels (Cooper, 2005; Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984). Thus, humor should influence attraction through cognitive and affective processes (Cooper, 2005).

The Comprehension-elaboration theory (Wyer & Collins, 1992) describes the cognitive processes involved in humor evaluation. These processes include a two-stage evaluation that determines how amusing the humor stimulus is found to be. First, how difficult the humor is to comprehend initially plays a role. Second, the cognitive elaboration performed after the initial evaluation plays a role. For example, the 'post-comprehension cognitive activities' (Wyer, 2004: 209) of thinking more about the humor may reduce the level of amusement the person experiences or may increase the level of amusement if the humor is particularly relevant and appropriate to the situation (e.g. the workplace). Specifically, people are motivated to engage in post-comprehension activities if there are concerns about issues such as: 1) the motives of the humor initiator, 2) the social (in) appropriateness of a situation and/or 3) whether the humor is offensive to the target or others. Humor should lead to attraction and liking between individuals, if the target perceives the humorous stimulus as both appropriate and enjoyable (Wyer & Collins, 1992). McGee and Shevlin (2009) found that having a good sense of humor rather than an average or no sense of humor related positively to interpersonal attractiveness and mate selection. Similarly, I hypothesize that positive humor should lead to increased ratings of LMX.

Taken together the inter-individual perspectives on emotional cycles and attraction provide background support for my hypothesis that subordinate humor would serve to influence leader member exchange relationships positively. The use of humor should produce a cycle of positive emotions amid workplace member dyads, enhancing relationship quality and employee guarding behaviors.

Humor, Communication, and LMX

Mesmer-Magnus and colleagues (2012) suggested that the positive outcomes of humor result from the enhanced communication and social interactions produced by positive humor.

Humor lightens the atmosphere and opens the channels of communication to allow people to discuss things that otherwise would go undiscussed, to clarify expectations (Avolio et al., 1999) and to enhance acceptance of messages (Greatbatch & Clark, 2002). Norton (1978) maintained that an individual's communication style influences how he or she will be perceived within the organizational context. Previous research has explored communication styles of managers and subordinates. Fairhurst (1993) investigated dyadic communication styles used by female leaders and members in organizations. She identified twelve communication patterns in leader-member interactions that successfully discriminated among high, medium, and low LMX relationships. The patterns were categorized into aligning, accommodating, and polarizing behaviors. Aligning behaviors refer to the communication behaviors representative of high quality relationships where leaders and members converge through the behaviors of value congruence, complex problem solving, and offering support. Accommodating behaviors refer to the interactive exchanges of role negotiation, choice framing, or polite disagreement. Lastly, polarizing behaviors refer to the monitoring, competitive conflict, and threatening behaviors reflective of lower quality relationships between leaders and members.

Furthermore, Norton (1978) identified ten different communication styles: impression leaving, precise, contentious, dominant, friendly, open, relaxed, animated, dramatic, and attentive, which can be used by both managers and subordinates to communicate meaning and understanding. To illustrate, managers may exhibit attentiveness by listening to subordinates, exhibit dominance by interrupting, display friendliness through pleasant interactions with subordinates, or show precision by giving specific direction. Subordinates may use animated nonverbal behaviors to illustrate important points, or leave a good impression through using humor to lighten spirits during conflict. Additionally, humor can be indicative of many of these

communication styles to influence the perception of others. Therefore, humor is a form of communication that may potentially differentiate lower quality relationships from higher quality relationship between leaders and members.

Buller and Buller (1987) established two general communication styles in organizations: affiliation or control behaviors. Affiliative behaviors refer to behaviors that help maintain positive workplace relationships through communicating interest, friendliness, and potentially humor (Buller & Buller, 1987). Conversely, control behaviors refer to behaviors used to establish control over the interactions that may negatively impact relationships. Buller and Buller (1987) found that physicians' use of affiliative behaviors was related to increased patient satisfaction. Researchers have also applied these two communication styles more specifically to humor. Martin and colleagues (2003) outlined four humor styles, which can be organized by whether the humor is used to enhance the self (intra psychic) or others (interpersonal) and based on whether the humor is positive or negative in tone. Affiliative and self-enhancing humor are positive humor styles are helpful in developing and maintaining relationships, and aggressive and self-defeating humor are considered negative humor styles that often result in degraded relationships (Gkorezis, Hatzithomas, & Petridou, 2011; Martin et al., 2003). Romero and Cruthirds (2006) outlined a fifth style, mild aggressive humor, which refers to humor used to reprimand or deliver a serious message with a humorous tone. Furthermore, researchers (Barsoux, 1993; Martin, 2001) presented three purposes of using humor at work. Humor can serve the purpose of the sword, to persuade others or to say things that normally would go unsaid (Martin, 2001). The second purpose of humor is to act as the shield, or as a defense mechanism, to enable others to cope and accept criticism (Martin, 2001). Humor also serves the values function of influencing and reinforcing organizational values and uniting employees (Obthani, et

al., 2012). The various humor styles each communicate a different purpose and should have differential effects on outcomes.

Similarly, Morand (1995) outlined elements of behavior that differentiate formal and informal interactions such as language differences (slang, colloquialisms, first names), conversational turn taking, topic selection (interruptions, topic shifts, conversational levity), emotional and proximic gestures (emotional and nonverbal expression), and differences in physical and contextual elements (clothing, noise, furniture). These elements guide future behavior, which further reinforces the formality or informality of the interaction. Humor behavior should reinforce elements of behavior that characterize informal interactions. Additionally, these differences should be seen between high quality and low quality LMX relationships, such that high quality LMX relationships will be characterized by more informal behaviors and low quality LMX relationships will be characterized by more formal interactions.

Humor in the Workplace

Despite limited empirical research, researchers seem to agree that humor is a pervasive behavior in organizations (Duncan, Smeltzer, & Leap, 1990) and can potentially provide insights into employee, managerial, and organizational behavior (Martin, Rich, & Gayle, 2004). Duncan and colleagues (1990) presented a conceptual framework to organize and integrate research and to explicate the value of workplace humor for leadership, group cohesion, culture, and communication researchers.

Humor plays an essential part of social and emotional functioning (Martin, 2007) that can translate into developing healthy workplace relationships. Humor has the potential to act as a social lubricant to facilitate interpersonal interactions and communication in the workplace (Morreall, 1991). Humor can promote self and interpersonal emotional management (Romero &

Arendt, 2011), reduce individual and interpersonal tension and conflict (Scogin and Pollio, 1980; Duncan & Feisel, 1989), alleviate boredom (Roy, 1960), bring people together to enhance group cohesion and belonging (Duncan & Feisel, 1989; Duncan et al., 1990), empower employees (Gkorezis, Hatzithomas, & Petridou, 2011), allow employees to save face (Meyer, 1997), and afford employees the opportunity to provide criticism or difficult feedback to managers (Duncan & Feisel, 1989). Additionally, researchers have examined the use of humor on motivation (Crawford, 1994), creativity (Brotherton, 1996), and culture (Lynch, 2002; Clouse & Spurgeon, 1995). The use of humor has implications for the quality of managerial employee relationships. Humor can be an important tool in relationship management, reducing stress, improving understanding in communication, and motivating employees (Davis & Kleiner, 1989).

Consistent with the reasoning that management sets the tone for humor use in organizations (Cooper, 2004), most research has focused on managerial humor rather than subordinate humor. Crawford (1994) described humor as one of the most promising, but least understood communication strategies employed by leaders. Barbour (1998) discussed four potential functions of humor for leaders. Humor facilitates learning, helps change behavior, promotes creativity, and reduces fear of change. Decker (1987) explored managerial humor and subordinate job satisfaction and found that subjects who rated their supervisor as having high sense of humor reported higher job satisfaction. Furthermore, this relationship was more pronounced for younger employees, which is especially relevant because younger workers are more likely to withdraw or quit when work is boring (Levine, 2003). Leader humor influences employee withdrawal behaviors (Wells, 2008), morale, commitment, and performance (individual and unit) (Avolio, et al., 1999). Furthermore, managers that use positive humor effectively are thought to be more persuasive. Surveys by Robert Half International (Wilkie,

2013) suggest that 97 percent of employees feel it is important for managers to have a sense of humor. Research has pointed to a power/status differential in the use of humor, specifically that superiors and high status subordinates use more humor than subordinates and newcomers (Bradney, 1957; Coser, 1960), although other studies have found the opposite results (Martin, Rich, & Gayle, 2004). Thus, humor should be explored from the perspectives of both parties, in terms of both initiation and appreciation of humor.

Duncan and Feisel (1989) presented a framework for understanding joking behavior at work. They postulated culture, demographics, and perceived risk of communication as antecedents to humor use in work groups. Furthermore, they relied on social networking techniques to reveal patterns and relationships among managers and subordinates in work groups. They classified four positions within work group joking relationships: arrogant executives, benign bureaucrats, solid citizens and novice employees. These employees are differentially involved in joking relationships, in terms of humor initiation, involvement, and being the butt or target of a joke based on their characteristics and status position within the group. These differences highlight the importance of exploring humor from the perspectives of both leaders and members.

A sparse number of studies have investigated humor in a LMX framework (Martin, Rich, & Gayle, 2004). The most relevant study to the current research is Cooper's (2002) dissertation. Her research explored the role of manager humor expression in creating and maintaining subordinate relationships and the subsequent outcomes associated with the quality of these relationships. Cooper (2002) found that LMX relationships are multi-dimensional and that leader humor impacts certain aspects of the exchange but not others. Specifically, she found that leader humor behavior was positively and directly related to the affective and professional

respect dimensions of subordinate rated LMX, and indirectly related to the loyalty dimensions of subordinate rated LMX. The relationship between leader humor and exchange quality was moderated by the tone perceived by the subordinate.

Martin and colleagues (2004) found that both managers and subordinates consciously use positive humor more than negative humor. Additionally, they found that subordinates reported a higher use of humor than management, that participants with a positive communicator self-image used more humor than participants with negative communicator images, and participants with a dominant communication style used more negative humor than participants with a less dominant style (Martin, Rich, & Gayle, 2004).

Gkorezis, Hatzithomas, and Petridou (2011) investigated a leader's use of positive and negative humor in relation to employee's psychological empowerment. They found leader's positive humor to be positively related to employee psychological empowerment and their negative humor to be negatively related to employee psychological empowerment. Furthermore, they found that tenure moderated the impact of humor onto psychological empowerment. Specifically, the relation between positive humor and psychological empowerment was stronger for short-tenure employees (positive humor increases empowerment more for short-tenure employees), while the relation between negative humor and psychological empowerment was stronger for short-tenure employees (negative humor reduces empowerment more for long-tenure employees). These findings highlight the inter-individual effects of humor and show support for potential moderators.

Subordinate Political Skill and Influence

Organizations are social entities made up of individuals working towards a common goal (Katz, 1978). These social entities are inherently political. Individual influence has a direct

effect on organizational performance. Using power and politics are both ways of influencing others. Decker and Rotondo (2001) suggested that humor is an important social tool that reflects the social and power dynamics of the situation. Cooper (2008) described how humor influences and is influenced by power relations. Social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) describes how power is gained and lost as a reciprocal influence process between leaders and followers in small groups. Social interaction is the exchange of benefits or favors, including material and immaterial benefits, such as the expression of approval, respect, esteem, and affection (Gardner et al., under review). Friendship is a social exchange relevant to the leader member relations. The use of humor should be explored using a social exchange perspective, investigating how subordinate humor influences the quality of the exchange relationship.

Today's managers rely more on personal power to influence subordinates, and are more open to being influenced by followers with personal power than managers in the past (Cooper, 2005). The belief is that humor is a tool used to develop referent power and good working relationships (Martin, 2007). Thus, humor may be used to influence LMX quality. Humor may play a role in developing quality working relationships, job satisfaction, and performance evaluations. Researchers have discussed the potential for exploring ingratiatory humor as an antecedent to LMX quality (Cooper, 2005) but these models have not been tested empirically. Considering humor and power dynamics, and the feelings of the parties involved may help identify underlying processes involved between humor and relationship quality.

Research and theory provide evidence that organizations offer grounds for political behavior (Mintzberg, 1985). Political skill is an interpersonally-oriented construct, defined as "the ability to effectively understand others at work, and to use such knowledge to influence others to act in ways that enhance one's personal and/or organizational objectives" (Ahearn,

Ferris, Hochwarter, Douglas, and Ammeter, 2004; 311; Ferris, Treadway, Kolodinsky, Hochwarter, Kacmar, Douglas, and Frink, 2005). Researchers have suggested that individuals attempt to exercise influence using persuasion, manipulation, and negotiation techniques (Mintzberg, 1983). Politically astute individuals are able to effectively influence the behavior of others through being able to read the demands of changing situations and adjusting their behavior accordingly, in a fashion that is seen as sincere, trustworthy, and self-confident (Ferris et al., 2005). More recently, researchers have reoperationalized the construct using multiple dimensions to touch on these aspects: social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity (Ferris et al., 2005). Ferris and colleagues (2005) found that subordinate political skill correlated positively with supervisor rated performance. Additionally, they found political skill to be positively related to self-monitoring, emotional intelligence, and political savvy, negatively related to trait anxiety, and unrelated to general mental ability (Ferris et al., 2005). Because successful performance and career progression are determined in part by intelligence, persistence, and interpersonal skills (Luthans, Hodgetts, & Rosenkrantz, 1988), it is necessary to explore how political skills fit into developing quality working relationships. Kimura (2013) found in a Japanese sample, that LMX and political skill interact to moderate the relationship between perceived organizational politics and affective commitment, such that high LMX and political skill weaken the negative relationship between perceived organizational politics and affective commitment. Researchers view political skill as a potential moderator that should influence the effectiveness of influence tactics on performance (Ferris et al., 2005). Furthermore, leader political skill may operate to inspire trust and confidence in followers (Ferris et al., 2005). Previous research has found leader political skill to be related to objective team performance in a nonprofit setting (Ahearn et al., 2004). Therefore, my perspective is that

political skill should moderate the relationship between member humor and leader LMX. Politically skilled individuals should use humor effectively such that is received positively by the other member in the dyad. In summary, humor increases attractiveness through affective and cognitive channels (Martin, 2007). Humor that does not come across as manipulative should increase the member's (ingratiator's) attractiveness and would most likely ingratiate (Cooper, 2005) the target (leader) to increase leader LMX relationship quality.

Just as humor is prevalent in organizations, political moves and ingratiation are abundant in organizations (Cooper, 2005). Employees use political moves and influence tactics to increase their personal attractiveness and to facilitate achieving goals (Liden & Mitchell, 1988). Influence tactics, specifically ingratiation tactics, are the behavioral expression of the interpersonal influence dimension of political skill. Ingratiation is a behavioral attempt by individuals to increase their ability to influence the perception and behaviors of others (Cooper, 2005). Mesmer-Magnus and colleagues (2012) suggested that leaders who successfully use humor might appear more persuasive than their less-humorous counterparts.

The literature has identified four major categories of ingratiatory behaviors: favor doing, opinion conformity, self-presentation, and other enhancement (Tedeschi & Melburg, 1984). These types of ingratiation behavior are similar to the types of humor behaviors previously identified in the literature (Martin et al., 2003). Regardless of the behavior, ingratiation works through increasing the attractiveness or the liking of the ingratiator by producing positive affect in the target (leader) (Cooper, 2005). Humor works similarly in that humor produces positive affect or mirth (Martin, 2007). Cooper (2002) found that supervisor humor behavior was related to the affective dimension of subordinate rated LMX. Cooper (2005) postulated that the power

dynamics of a relationship, contextual factors, and the stage of the relationship all impact the effectiveness of ingratiatory humor. No studies have explored subordinate humor.

Cooper (2005) described how employee humor could express ingratiation. Ingratiation is a social influence attempt to makes oneself appear more attractive in the eyes of others, in turn influencing the behavior of others (Cooper, 2005). Humor has been suggested to be a mechanism for facilitating ingratiation and eliciting approval and liking (Cooper, 2005) but there has been no subsequent research. Humor, like political skill, may help the ingratiator seem trustworthy and sincere, assisting the ingratiatory affect, and effectively influencing the target. Humor with perceived utility and appropriateness, which in turn produces a positive affective response in the target, has the potential to influence. Davis and Kleiner (1989) suggested that humor could increase the receptiveness of messages because it gets people in relaxed and happy moods. Analogously, I suggest that humor can be an effective social influence attempt because humor works through affective channels. Specifically, I suggest that the use of humor is a purposeful manipulation into a social situation to accrue positive benefits for both the initiator and the target. Relatedly, political skill may relate to humor such that those with political skill will use humor more effectively. Vecchio and colleagues (2009) expounded that humor can be thought of as an expression of leader interpersonal power and influence. I extend this idea to include the perspective of the member. Specifically, that the expression of humor by members can impact member ability to develop quality LMX relations and that political skill impacts the relationship.

Additionally, there may be political ramifications of using humor at work. Humor may help smooth communication and increase the ability to influence others. Specifically, subordinates may use humor in positive manner to influence the relationship with management

positively. For example, a subordinate might use humor to praise the boss and in turn get included into the decision process or get leniency on a transgression (Duncan, Smeltzer, & Leap, 1990; Obthani, et al., 2012). Conversely, there may be consequences to making inappropriate or jokes targeted at individuals (Martin, Rich, & Gayle, 2004). Inappropriate humor may alienate others or may distract from productivity (Duncan, Smeltzer, & Leap, 1990). I suggest that individuals with political skill will use humor more appropriately to avoid potential political ramifications of inappropriate humor. Thus, it may be worthwhile to explore whether and how humor, political skill, and LMX relationships are connected. Ahearn and colleagues (2004) suggested that politically skilled leaders can effectively select and use socially and situational appropriate behaviors in a manner that inspires trust, confidence, and goal attainment. Politically skilled individuals may use humor to develop and maintain relationships, making it easier to influence others without appearing insincere and self-serving. I am suggesting that humor is a socially appropriate behavior potentially used by members to develop quality LMX relations. I hypothesize that members who use humor and have political skill will have higher quality LMX relationships than members that do not use humor or are not politically skilled.

In summary, political skill is a social skill characterized by the ability to effectively manage interpersonal relationships and influence others to achieve personal or organizational goals. I suggest that humor is a potential tool for enhancing LMX relationship quality. Political skill may enhance the effectiveness of organizational humor. Political skill may moderate the member humor perceived leader LMX relationship.

Employee Guarding Tactics

By nature, animals are territorial over resources necessary to achieve the goals of survival, reproduction, and growth (Brown, Lawrence, & Robinson, 2005; Brown & Brown,

2011). Human territoriality is an individual's behavioral expression of feelings of ownership or attachment toward physical or social objects (Brown et al., 2005). Pierce and colleagues (Pierce, Rubenfeld, & Morgan, 1991) extended attachment theory to the workplace by introducing the idea of psychological ownership. Essentially people establish possession or ownership of physical and non-physical items, such as a stapler, an idea, or a position. Brown and colleagues (Brown, et al., 2005; Brown & Brown, 2011) presented the sociological idea of territoriality to the workplace by suggesting people protect their territory by marking or defending from others what they consider theirs. This can be seen in acts such as a manager hanging a nameplate on an office door or labeling supplies to communicate messages to others over their territory (e.g., "That is my stapler and not yours.") Extending the concept, individuals may engage in territorial behavior over individuals that they feel are valuable and necessary to achieve goals and/or to meet psychological/social needs. For example, a manager may act territorial over their administrative assistant or subordinate, with the intention of establishing, communicating, or maintaining that relationship with respect to others (e.g., "That is my secretary and not yours.")

Territoriality is manifested in numerous guarding strategies used to prevent mates from defecting or rivals from encroaching on relationships (Buss & Shackelford, 1997). Human mate guarding, a form of human territorial behavior, is a behavioral strategy intended to maintain a romantic partnership by simultaneously (a) preventing the encroachment of romantic rivals, and (b) preventing a mate from defecting from the relationship (Buss & Shackelford, 1997). Managers may face the equivalent territorial issues including voluntary employee defection and competition from outside the firm. Specifically, based on anecdotal evidence managers may engage in territorial behaviors concerning employees (Brown et al., 2005). More specifically, researchers contend that managers may engage in territorial behaviors, known as "employee

guarding" behaviors to maintain employment relationships and to keep valuable, based on performance, general mental ability, and political skill, employees from defecting (Gardner et al., under review). Recent research has shown strong correlations between psychological ownership and employee guarding (Gardner et al., under review). This supports the notion that guarding behaviors typically derive from feelings of ownership over valuable employees (Brown & Robinson, 2011; Gardner et al., under review) in an attempt to retain the valued employees.

By extension, in recognizing the social and political context within organizations, I extend the view of what characteristics define valuable employees to include humorous and those that maintain quality relationships with their managers. As humor is considered a desirable and valuable trait and as employee guarding tactics may be functionally equivalent to mate guarding tactics (Gardner et al., under review), I suggest that humor may play a role into which employees are considered valuable enough to incite territorial behavior in managers. Specifically, I hypothesize that member humor is related positively to managerial employee guarding tactics.

In summary, managerial employee guarding tactics are the behavioral expression of territorial feelings over valuable employees. Both member humor and political skill are potential antecedents to LMX quality. Humor and political skill may help members manage relationships with leaders thus making them valuable members of the "IN GROUP" as perceived by the leader. In turn, leaders may attempt to guard employees with whom they have quality LMX relations and who they feel are humorous. Studying managerial territorial behavior may deliver valuable insights into the understanding additional outcomes of LMX relationship quality.

Framework

I put forth an integrated model of humor, political skill, managerial employee guarding, and perceived LMX relationship quality. Humor is believed to be an antecedent of LMX quality. Furthermore, I propose that political skill moderates the relationship, such that political skill will enhance the positive relationship between humor and LMX quality. Specifically, the relationship between member humor behavior and leader rated LMX will be stronger for politically skilled subordinates. Additionally, I propose that member humor will be related positively to the use of employee guarding behaviors by the leader.

[Insert figure 1]

In synopsis, the analysis of humor as an influence tactic within managerial and subordinate dyads offers intriguing possibilities for understanding workplace behavior. The present study contributes to the literature in three ways. A main purpose of the study is to explore the effects of member humor on member and leader perceptions of the quality of the exchange relationship. Furthermore, a main goal of the study is to investigate the effects of political skill on the relationship between member humor and LMX. The final objective of this study is to explore employee guarding tactics as consequence of humor and LMX quality. Overall, I investigate humor in a LMX framework through a political lens, exploring how subordinates use humor and political skill to impact LMX relationships and subsequent outcomes associated with the quality of these relationships.

Research Questions

Previous research reveals the effects of humor at the individual, group, and organizational levels (Martin, 2007). Humor can be used in the workplace to foster a sense of community, culture, and cohesion (Martineau, 1972; Duncan, 1984), and used by managers to impact leader

member relations and subsequent outcomes (Cooper, 2002). Expressing humor can have a positive or negative impact on an individual's relationship with other members of the organization, specifically and importantly on the relationship with one's direct subordinate (Cooper, 2002) or supervisor. What remains less clear is the *process* through which humor helps foster LMX relationships. Political skill and employee guarding tactics are variables that may shed light on how humor relates to LMX relationship quality.

Overall, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the effects of member humor on LMX relationship quality as perceived by the leader and the member. Secondly, to test the moderating role member political skill may have on this relationship. Finally, to investigate managerial employee guarding tactics as an outcome of LMX quality. In short, how does the expression of member humor play into the exchange relationships between leaders and members? How does political skill affect the relationship between humor and relationship quality? Does subordinate humor play a role into managerial use of employee guarding tactics? Is there a relationship between managerial employee guarding tactics, humor, and LMX?

To address these questions, I outline specific hypotheses:

- H1A: The expression of humor by the member will be positively related to the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship, as perceived by the leader.
- H1B: The expression of humor by the member will be positively related to the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship, as perceived by the member.
- H2: Subordinate political skill will moderate the relationship between humor and LMX quality. Specifically, the relationship between member humor and leader rated LMX will be stronger for politically skilled subordinates.
- H3A: Subordinate political skill will be positively related to the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship as perceived by the leader.
- H3B: Subordinate political skill will be positively related to the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship as perceived by the member.

- H4: The expression of humor by the member will be positively related to employee guarding tactics exhibited by the leader.

- H5: The quality of the leader-member exchange relationship, as perceived by the leader will be positively related to the expression of employee guarding tactics by the leader (managers will guard employees they have high quality relationships with).

Overall, these hypotheses investigate: 1) member humor behavior as an antecedent to leader perceived LMX, 2) a potential moderator of this relationship, and 3) whether humor functions through LMX to impact employee guarding behaviors.

Chapter 3

Method

Participants

The sample for the study was drawn from employed students and their supervisors. Participants were recruited from undergraduate programs at a large Southeastern University to voluntarily participate and given extra credit at the discretion of the faculty instructors.

Confidence in statistical tests is heightened with increased sample size, and samples sizes greater than 100-200 are recommended when using PLS-SEM techniques (Chin, Marcolin, & Newsted, 2003). Power analysis is important for the confidence of the research findings. Following general conventions in the literature, the power of a statistical test should be at least .80 (Cohen, 1988). The required sample size was calculated A-priori using G*Power 3.1.9 software (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). Calculations used linear multiple regression: Fixed model, single regression coefficient with 3 predictors, two-tail, α error probability of .05 (likelihood of making a Type 1 error), power of .80, and a .15 effect (medium) size. The calculation suggested a minimum sample size of 81 dyads to meet power requirements. Although, to meet suggestions from the literature, the target sample size was 150 dyads (Gu, Tang, & Jiang, 2013).

The final sample consisted of 501 dyads, after removing duplicate and unengaged responses. Duplicate responses occurred when multiple subordinates provided the same supervisor email and when the same subordinate responded to the questionnaire more than once. In both cases, all responses were removed. Unengagement was determined by examining the standard deviation (SD) of all Likert scale items per respondent (Almakrami, 2015). Three respondents had SDs below .5 and were removed (participants responded “3” or “5” to every

item). Among the member respondents, the average age was 20 years old, 60% were female, and 83% Caucasian. Among the leader respondents, the average age was 40 years old, 54% were female, 85% Caucasian, 38% had a bachelor's degree, and 26% had some form graduate education (some /master/doctoral). On average, dyads had worked together for an average of 20.3.months, ranging from 1 month to 8 years. They worked in a variety of industries including retail, manufacturing, restaurant, and hospitality. When asked if their or their subordinate's (leader's) humor affected their relationship, 45% of leaders responded that it did impact the relationship, similarly 55% of members responded that humor affects the relationship. Example member replies included "It allows us to relate to each other on another level" and "It lightens the mood and brings about fun and light interactions." Sample leader replies included "It allows us to meet the demands of our service business in a friendly positive atmosphere" and "It allows the team to enjoy work during stressful periods"

Procedure

Participants voluntarily signed up for the study in their classes or through the SONA online research participation system. Online surveys were administered using the Qualtrics program. Participants were provided a link through email to the online surveys. Data was collected from employee participants and their supervisors. Employee participants were asked to provide supervisor email addresses prior to accessing the survey. Participants read through the informed consent and clicked for consent to begin the surveys. Data from the supervisor surveys was linked to the participant employee surveys using an alphanumeric code. Subordinates rated their own humor, LMX quality, their own political skill, and demographic variables. Managers rated subordinate humor, and their own LMX quality, use of managerial employee guarding tactics, and demographic variables.

Measures

Demographics. Common demographic information, such as age, gender, race, and work experience was collected from leaders and members (Rentsch, Delise, Mello, Staniewicz, Scott, 2012). As typical in the LMX literature (e.g., Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993; Wayne & Liden, 1995), I controlled for demographic similarity between the supervisor and the subordinate. Demographic similarity between dyad members has been shown to potentially impact affective outcomes such as supervisor liking of subordinates and subordinate job satisfaction (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989; Turban & Jones, 1988). Additionally, research points to gender differences in humor appreciation (Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Vecchio, Justin, Pearce, 2009). Highest level of education was used as a proxy for cognitive ability (e.g., Gu, et al., 2013). Previous research has suggested that cognitive ability may impact the use of humor (Martin, 2007) and LMX relationship quality with supervisors (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001). I believe the similarity in cognitive ability may impact the humor LMX relationship. Difference scores were computed to reflect demographic similarity between dyad members. In line with previous research (Cooper, 2004), I followed Turban and Jones (1988) recommended formula for aggregating demographic variables. Gender and race of supervisor and subordinates were coded as same (0) or different (1). Similarity in age and level of education (code 1-7) was calculated as the absolute value of the difference between the supervisor and subordinate. After each of the four difference scores were computed, I divided each by their standard deviations, and then summed the four values. This summed value was reverse coded so that a larger score reflects a higher degree of demographic similarity. I included this measure as a control to demonstrate that subordinate humor impacts LMX relationship quality even when taking demographic similarity into account.

I also controlled for supervisor subordinate relationship tenure. The amount of time they have worked together should influence how familiar they are (Cooper, 2004) with one another and potentially each other's humor styles. Relationship tenure was assessed by asking the subordinate, in months, the amount of time they have worked together. I included this measure as a control to demonstrate that subordinate humor impacts leader-member exchange quality even when taking relationship tenure into account.

Trait affect. Trait affect was assessed for leaders and the members using the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark. & Tellegen. 1988; 1999). The scale consisted of ten adjectives that assess positive affectivity and ten adjectives that assess negative affectivity. Participants rated the extent to which the adjectives generally describe themselves on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 *(not at all*) to 5 *(extremely). R*eported alphas include .88 for the positive scale and .85 for the negative scale (Day & Crain, 1992). Consistent with previous research showing that affect influences exchange quality ratings and group process (Day & Crain, 1992; Richter, West, van Dick, & Dawson, 2006), I included this measure as a control to demonstrate that subordinate humor impacts relationship quality even when taking affect into account. The reported alpha in the present study was .94/.93 for the positive scale and .93/.94 for the negative scale for leaders and members, respectively.

Humor style. Humor style was assessed by members using the Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ) (Martin, et al., 2003). This 32-item scale contained four 8-item subscales rated on a 7-point Likert scale 1 *(totally disagree)* to 7 *(totally agree)*. The subscales represent affiliative, self-enhancing, aggressive, and self-defeating humor. Reported ICC reliabilities range from .77 to .81 and reported test-retest correlations range from .80 to .85 (Martin, et al., 2003). Member humor was assessed by leaders using an adapted version of the HSQ. Following

prescription, items were adapted to reflect the perspective of the receiver rather than just the initiator (Sosik, 2012). The Cronbach's alpha for the HSQ in the present study was .799 for members and .781 for leaders. The Cronbach's alphas for the subscales for members were: .787 for affiliative, .778 for self-enhancing, .684 for aggressive, and .803 for self-defeating. Respectively, for leaders the Cronbach's alphas were .731, .693, .762, and .777.

LMX. The literature on LMX has shown low correlations between leader and member measures of LMX. Thus, previous research has suggested that LMX should always be measured from both leader and member perspectives (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Scandura & Schriesheim, 1994). LMX was assessed by both leaders (LLMX) and members (MLMX) using the LMX-7 (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Items were rated on a 7-point scale with anchors 1 *(Strongly disagree*) to 7 *(Strongly agree*). The scale has a reported alpha of .90 (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001). The Cronbach's alpha in the present study was .83 for members and .85 for leaders.

Employee guarding. Employee guarding (LEG) was assessed from the leader perspective using the 17-item Employee Guarding Tactics Scale by Gardner, Munyon, Hom, and Griffeth (under review). The scale consisted of a Nurturing guarding tactics subscale and a Persuasion guarding tactics subscale. Items were rated on a 5-point scale with anchors 1 (*Never*) to (*Often*) 4. The Persuasion subscale has a reported alpha of .96, and the Nurturing subscale an alpha of .84 (Gardner et al., under review). In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha for the scale was .883, .918 for the persuasion subscale, and .870 for the nurturing subscale.

Political skill. Subordinate political skill was assessed by members using the multidimensional Political Skill Inventory (PSI) (Ferris et al., 2005). The scale contained 18 items rated using a seven-point Likert scale with anchors 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Ferris and colleagues (2005) reported an internal consistency reliability of .89 for the

total scale and for the dimensions as follows: networking ability (.87), interpersonal influence (.87), social astuteness (.80), and apparent sincerity (.58). In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha was .954 for the total scale and for the dimensions as follows: networking ability (.929), interpersonal influence (.887), social astuteness (.909), and apparent sincerity (.927).

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using Partial Least Squares (PLS) based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) (Wold, 1985). The reasons for using this technique were related to the research goals, model design, and potential data characteristics in this study. My model and the hypotheses were theoretically derived but were not confirming existing models of humor. My models proposed both moderation and mediation effects. The present study also utilized more than 50 variables in the measurement model. Additionally, because analysis required responses from subordinates and supervisors alike, low response rates (especially supervisor) could have limited sample size. PLS-SEM had several advantages over Covariance based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) in regards to the present study. PLS-SEM is favorable for research goals directed toward developing new theory or extending existing theory (Sarstedt, Ringle, Smith, Reams, & Hair, 2014) where relationships between some variables in the model have not been previously tested (Ainuddin et al., 2007). PLS-SEM is more suitable for exploratory analysis and for models that include more than 40 observed variables, where CB–SEM may have issues with model non-convergence with models that contain a high number of indicator variables (>6 per construct) (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014; Sarstedt et al., 2014). PLS does not require multivariate normal data whereas CB-SEM's maximum likelihood estimation does. Also, PLS is suitable for the analysis with relatively low sample sizes (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011), while CB-SEM techniques require substantially larger sample sizes (Fornell & Bookstein,

1982). Additionally, moderation and mediation analysis is more easily tested in PLS-SEM as it is designed for models with interaction effects (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). Taken together, for this study, PLS-SEM seemed to be an appropriate data analytic approach.

PLS-SEM (Wold, 1982) was conducted using the SmartPLS 3.0 software program developed by Ringle, Wende, and Becker (2015). PLS-SEM is similar to CB-SEM in that both structural and measurement models can be tested using a 2 stage process. First, the reflective measurement model in figure 2 was tested (paths between the latent variables were not examined). Testing the measurement model using PLS was equivalent to conducting a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) in CB-SEM (using AMOS/LISREL programs) or a Principal Components Analysis (PCA) in regression analysis. Here the focus was on reliability and validity of the measures used as the indicators of the latent constructs.

[Insert figure 2]

Evaluating the reliability and validity of models using reflectively measured constructs was a multistep process. First, the individual item reliability was assessed (Yoo & Alavi, 2001). Here, indicator (factor) loadings were examined. Loadings above .70 are acceptable, in that they indicate that the construct explains approximately 50% of the variance in the indicator variable. In exploratory studies, loadings above .60 are acceptable (Yoo & Alavi, 2001). Next, internal consistency reliability was evaluated. Internal consistency reliability in PLS-SEM is evaluated using Fornell and Larcker's (1981) composite scale reliability index (CR), which is similar to Cronbach's alpha. The recommended (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) cutoff is .70. The literature suggests a small downward bias in Cronbach's alpha thus it is considered the lower bound estimate of composite reliability (Cronbach, 2004). Recent research has suggested the differences between the two reliability measures are inconsequential (Peterson & Kim, 2013).

Next, the measurement model's convergent and discriminant validity was assessed. Convergent validity measures the extent that a latent construct converges in its observed variables by explaining the items' variances (scale items all measure the same construct) (Sarstedt et al., 2014). PLS-SEM assesses convergent validity using the average variance extracted (AVE) for all of the items associated with each construct. The AVE measures the amount of variance that a latent variable captures from its indicators relative to the amount from measurement error. Ideally, AVE values should be greater than 0.50, meaning that 50% or more variance in the indicators is accounted for by the construct (Hair et al., 2014).

Discriminant validity (the items differentiate between distinct underlying constructs) is tested in PLS-SEM using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion. This uses the AVE of each construct, and compares the AVE value to the squared inter-construct correlation of each construct with all constructs in the model (a measure of shared variance). Guidelines suggest that each constructs' AVE should be larger than its shared variance with any other construct (Yoo & Alavi, 2001) (i.e., the diagonal elements must be greater than the off diagonal elements in the table output). Additionally, discriminant validity evidence comes from examining the cross loadings. Indicator variables should have higher loadings with their own construct than with any other construct (Yoo & Alavi, 2001). As Chin (1998) noted, analysis should show, going down each construct column, that item loadings are higher than the cross loadings. Similarly, across each item row, an item should be more strongly related to its construct than any other construct. Thus, not only should each item be strongly related to the construct it reflects, but this relationship should be stronger than any connection with other constructs. Otherwise, the ability of the measure to discriminate between the construct it was intended to measure and

other constructs comes into question (i.e., discriminant validity problem). Any items with properties outside of the guidelines were dropped.

Following the establishment of construct validity, I accounted for common methods variance (CMV) (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). The research was designed to help minimize bias due to items by separating predictor and criterion measures and by using negatively wording items in scales when possible (Podsakoff, et al., 2003). Additionally, where possible, data was collected from separate sources for the predictor (member humor) and criterion (leader LMX) variables to avoid some possible CMV effects in this study. CMV may have been an issue in my study because some variable paths involved single source data (e.g., leader LMX to leader guarding; member humor to member LMX). CMV is also a possible threat to the validity of my research findings due to common rater, common measurement contexts, or common item characteristics (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). I followed suggestions from the literature to handle the CMV issue in two steps. First, I used the single-factor test (Harman, 1960) to diagnose the extent to which CMV might have been a problem. Significant CMV may exist if a single factor emerges that accounts for the majority of variance in the measures. Specifically, in the factor analysis, I expected to see multiple separate factors with eigenvalues greater than one that accounted for majority of the total variance rather than the emergence of a single factor that accounted for most of the variance, which would suggest that CMV might not have been a major issue. To go beyond diagnosing the possibility of CMV, I attempted to control for it through including an unlabeled and unmeasured latent factor (CMV factor) to the measurement model. Items were allowed to load onto their hypothesized latent construct and on the CMV factor. This model controlled for CMV through the factor loadings between the CMV factor and the indicators (Meade, Watson, & Kroustalis, 2007). Then, I compared the indices of the

measurement model with the addition of an unmeasured latent CMV factor to the proposed measurement model (without the CMV factor). The factor loadings were not significantly improved with this addition to the measurement model, enriching confidence in testing my hypotheses (Cheung and Rensvold 2002) using the proposed measurement model.

Once reliability and validity evidence for the measurement model was established and CMV was accounted for (i.e., measurement model provided satisfactory results), I moved to Stage 2: examining the underlying causal structure of the model. In this step, the structural model was tested by comparing my baseline model with alternative models (only paths between latent variables were examined). The model was tested separately for both perspectives (member and leader rated member humor).

[Insert figure 3]

Unlike CB-SEM, assessment of model quality does not include goodness-of-fit statistics, but rather, focuses on the ability to predict the endogenous (DV) constructs. Thus, collinearity, predictive relevance (R^2 and Q^2), and the significance and relevance of path coefficients were examined. Because a series of regressions serves as the basis for computing path coefficients in PLS-SEM, collinearity was tested prior to the assessment of model quality. A variance inflation factor (VIF) was computed using the scores of the exogenous latent variables as inputs. Higher VIF values (>5) indicate greater levels of collinearity.

Next, the coefficient of determination (R^2), or the significant amount of variance explained in each of the endogenous (DV) constructs was examined. R^2 values range from 0 to 1, with higher levels suggesting greater degrees of predictive accuracy. From the literature, rules of thumb indicate that .75, .50, .25 suggest substantial, moderate, and weak predictive accuracy (Sarstedt et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2001). Then, the relationships between latent variables were

examined for the strength and significance of the path coefficients. This technique calculates t-values for the path coefficients by bootstrapping standard errors. Path coefficient values range from strong negative (-1) to strong positive (1) relationship. The coefficients along the structural paths were examined for significance ($p < .05$). Additionally, the cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) was examined to offer support for the proposed model's predictive accuracy. This measure is considered an out-of sample prediction, in that it is based on the blindfolding procedure (which omits part of the matrix and then estimates it based on the previously computed estimates). Q^2 values larger than zero for each endogenous variable indicate the path model's predictive ability.

Finally, I tested the proposed interaction effects of the model. To test for mediation and moderation, the baseline model was compared to a series of nested models. To test for moderation, I used the product-indicator (PI) approach proposed by Chin and colleagues (2003). Specifically, the moderation of the humor LMX relationship was examined by the addition of an interaction factor (humor X political skill) to the baseline model. Changes in R^2 (leader LMX/employee guarding) and path (beta) coefficients were examined using a T statistic. Additionally, models were run excluding and including the mediator (leader LMX) variable (Hair, et al., 2014). Running multiple models in PLS parallels the three models in Baron and Kenny's classic mediation test (Sarstedt et al., 2014). The resulting path coefficients and R^2s were compared using T statistics. The variance accounted for (VAF) formula was used to identify the level (full/partial) of mediation (Sarstedt et al., 2014). Lastly, how well the final model explained variance in the DVs was examined by evaluating the path coefficients and R^2s in the model in comparison to rules of thumb. Rules of thumb advise that high R^2s and significant (>.20-.30) structural paths suggest the model has meaningful predictive power (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014).

Chapter 4

Results

Tests of the Measurement Model

To examine the measurement model in Figure 2, the first step involved validating the reflective measurement model by conducting a principal components analysis (PCA) in SPSS. Factor analysis was conducted for each measure and subscale. I set to extract 16 factors in order to validate the subscales. With the exception of three questions on the member HSQ (1 loaded onto the PSI, and 2 did not load on any factor) and three questions on the leader HSQ (2 loaded by themselves and 1 loaded on two factors), no items loaded or cross-loaded onto other factors. Inspection of the factor loadings for the leader HSQ items showed 2 factors rather than 4. It appeared that the factors differentiated between positive and negative humor but did not separate between internal and external focused humor. Reliability analysis was conducted for the scales and subscales. All scales exhibited Cronbach's alphas above .70 (Refer to Tables 1 and 2) indicating preliminary support for the measurement model.

In SmartPLS, the model was tested from the perspective of the member and then from the perspective of the leader. Going forward, these will be referred to as the leader and member models. The models were initially tested using all items and then retested after removing items based on measurement properties. The item reliability, internal consistency, convergent and discriminate validity were evaluated each test. First, the individual item reliability was assessed by examining the loadings of the measures on their respective constructs (Yoo & Alavi, 2001). The factor loadings were compared to the .60 the rule of thumb for suggesting adequate reliability in exploratory research (Yoo & Alavi, 2001). Additionally, throughout testing,

internal consistency reliability was examined using the composite scale (CR) reliability (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Next, I assessed the convergent validity of the measurement model. PLS-SEM assesses convergent validity using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all of the items associated with each construct. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measure reflects the average variance shared between a construct and its measures. AVE values were compared to the 0.50 suggested cut off (Hair et al., 2014; Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Then, I assessed the discriminant validity of the measurement model similarly to criteria used in multitrait/multimethod analysis (Yoo & Alavi, 2001), using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion. Specifically, I compared the square root of each AVE (shown on the diagonal in Tables 3 & 4) to the related inter-construct correlations (shown off the diagonal in Tables 3 & 4) as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). This value should have been larger than other correlation values among the latent variables. Item cross loadings were also examined to provide additional discriminant validity evidence. Indicator variables were dropped that did not have higher loadings with their own construct than with any other construct (Yoo & Alavi, 2001).

Each time the models were retested, item loadings, convergent and discriminant validity, and cross loadings were examined. Items exhibiting insufficient measurement properties were dropped to produce the final models. These included the problematic HSQ items seen in the factor analysis, 4 items from the PSI, 1 item from the leader and member LMX7, and 5 items from the LEG scale. For each model, the Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) of constructs are shown in Tables 1 & 2. For all scales, the Cronbach's alphas and CR values were greater than 0.70, indicating acceptable reliability. With the exception of the humor scale, all scales exhibited satisfactory properties. The item loadings

were greater than the 0.60 guideline for exploratory research, and AVE values were greater than 0.50, suggesting convergent validity for all constructs except humor (Hair, et al., 2014). The humor scale did not exhibit sufficient AVE values or adequate individual item reliability. This is likely related to the fact that the four humor styles comprising the scale focus on diverse/competing styles (inward/outward/positive/negative) of humor and may be distinct constructs. Additionally, the comparisons of the AVE in the construct correlation matrix indicated adequate discriminant validity for all of the constructs (Refer to Tables 3 and 4).

Following the establishment of construct validity, I accounted for CMV (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). I followed suggestions from the literature to handle the CMV issue in two steps. First, to diagnose the extent to which CMV may have been a problem, I examined the unrotated factor analysis using all of the latent constructs to find the results of Harman's single-factor test. The objective of the test is to determine if a single factor emerges that explains the majority of the variance in the model, which would suggest common method bias likely significantly exists. The factor analysis results produced 30 distinct factors, the largest of which accounted for only 13.49% of the variance of the model. This suggested that CMV might not have been a major issue. I then conducted a PCA set to extract only one factor. Evidence of a CMV problem would be seen with the single factor explaining over 50% of the variance (Harman, 1960). The one factor explained 14.8% of variance, suggesting CMV might not have been a large threat. I also conducted a PCA set to extract an additional factor (17 factors); items did not load onto the additional factor, suggesting a low threat for CMV. Additionally, I substantiated the results from Harman's single-factor test by examining the correlation matrix of the constructs (using Pearson's correlations) to determine if any of the correlations were above the 0.80 guideline

(Lowry & Gaskin, 2014; Bagozzi et al., 1991). There were no correlations that high, providing evidence for a low likelihood of common methods bias.

To go beyond diagnosing the possibility of CMV, using AMOS, I attempted to control for CMV by including an unlabeled and unmeasured latent factor (CMV factor) to the measurement model. Comparing the indices of the measurement model with the addition of an unmeasured latent CMV factor to the proposed measurement model (without the CMV factor) did not significantly change the factor loadings over the proposed measurement model (see Table 11), enhancing confidence in testing the hypotheses (Cheung & Rensvold, 2002) using the proposed measurement model.

Tests of the Structural Models

Once establishing the reliability and validity evidence for the measurement model and accounting for CMV, I moved to examine the underlying causal structure of the leader and member models.

[Insert figures 4 & 5]

First, I assessed the structural model for multicollinearity by examining the variance inflation factor (VIF) values. All VIF values in the models were < 5 indicating that multicollinearity was not an issue (refer to Tables 5 and 6). To test my hypotheses in the structural model, I employed a three-step approach. First, I ran the model shown in Figure 3 from the perspective of the member (member model), and then from the perspective of the leader (leader model). I assessed the significance and relevance of the structural relationships using path coefficients, R^2, and bootstrapping to generate t-statistics (using the resampling option of 500 subsamples). The relationships between latent variables were examined for the strength and significance of the path coefficients. This technique calculated t-values for the path coefficients

by bootstrapping standard errors. The coefficients along the structural paths were examined for significance ($p < .05$). Next, the models were tested for moderation and mediation (see Table 9). Finally, a blindfolding procedure was applied to assess the predictive relevance (Q^2). Tables 7 and 8 summarize the results of the PLS analysis. I controlled for demographic similarity, supervisor subordinate relationship tenure, and trait affect by attaching them to the endogenous variables (leader LMX and member LMX).

Hypothesis 1A received full support. Hypothesis 1A predicted that member humor would be positively related to the quality of the LMX relationship, as perceived by the leader. Supporting Hypothesis 1A, in the leader model, member humor was significantly and positively related to leader LMX (path coefficient = .20, $p < .001$). Additionally, in the member model, member humor was also in the hypothesized direction and significant (path coefficient = .10, $p = .01$).

Hypothesis 1B received full support. Hypothesis 1B predicted that the expression of humor by the member would be positively related to the quality of the LMX relationship, as perceived by the member. Supporting Hypothesis 1B, member humor was significantly and positively related to member LMX (path coefficient = .17, $p < .001$) in the member model. Additionally, the use of humor was related to member LMX in the leader model (path coefficient = .18, $p < .001$).

Hypothesis 3A/3B predicted that subordinate political skill would be positively related to the quality of the LMX relationship as perceived by the leader/member. Although in the predicted direction, Hypothesis 3A was not supported in the leader (path coefficient = .05, p = ns) or member models (path coefficient = .01, p = ns). Partially supporting Hypothesis 3B, subordinate political skill was positively related to member LMX in the leader (path coefficient =

.13, $p < .05$) and the member (path coefficient = .09, $p < .10$) models. However, this relationship was only significant (.05 level) in the leader model.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that the expression of humor by the member would be positively related to employee guarding tactics exhibited by the leader. The relationship between member humor and employee guarding tactics was significant (member path coefficient = -.14, $p <.001$) in both models (leader path coefficient = -.35, $p <.05$). Contrary to expectations, the significant relationship between member humor and employee guarding tactics was negative rather than positive. The use of humor by members did not predict more guarding behaviors from the leader, but in fact, predicted less guarding behaviors.

Hypothesis 5 predicted that the quality of the LMX relationship, as perceived by the leader would be positively related to the expression of employee guarding tactics by the leader (managers will guard employees they have high quality relationships with). Contrary to expectations, Hypothesis 5 was not supported in the leader model (path coefficient = -.005, $p <$ ns). In the member model, the relationship between leader LMX and employee guarding behaviors was significant (path coefficient = -.17, $p < .001$). However, the direction of the relationship was not as predicted. In fact, the negative path coefficient indicates that leaders engage in less persuading guarding behaviors with employees with whom they have higher quality relationship.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that subordinate political skill would moderate the relationship between humor and LMX quality. Specifically, the relationship between member humor and leader rated LMX will be stronger for politically skilled subordinates. I tested for moderation using the product-indicator (PI) approach proposed by Chin and colleagues (2003). Specifically, the moderation of the humor LMX relationship was examined by the addition of an interaction

factor (humor X political skill) to the baseline model. Changes in R^2 for leader LMX and path (beta) coefficients were examined using a T statistic. Hypothesis 2 was not supported in either model. There was no evidence of moderation in the member (path coefficient = -.14, p = .40) or the leader (path coefficient = -.07, p = .47) model.

Following the tests for moderation, the member and leader models were tested for mediation using the Variance Accounted For (VAF) formula and the Sobel test statistic (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). The models were run excluding and including the mediator (leader LMX) variable (Hair, et al., 2014). Running multiple models in PLS parallels the three models in Baron and Kenny's classic mediation test (Sarstedt et al., 2014). The resulting path coefficients and R^2s were compared using T statistics. The VAF formula was used to identify the level (full/partial) of mediation (Sarstedt et al., 2014). Due to the fact that the direct and indirect effects had opposite signs, the Sobel test was also used. The test was done by comparing the path coefficients and standard errors between models (with and without the leader LMX latent variable). Leader LMX was not a significant mediator (p = .20) in the leader model or in the member model (p = .20). See Table 9 for the results of mediation tests.

Finally, I evaluated the predictive relevance of each model using the Stone-Geisser's Q^2 value (Stone, 1974; Geisser, 1974). In the structural model, Q^2 values larger than zero indicate the path model's predictive relevance for each construct (Hair et al., 2014). The cross-validated redundancy (Q^2) offered support for the proposed leader and member models' predictive accuracies. Q^2 values were all above zero indicating sufficient predictive relevance for each model's ability to predict leader LMX (Q^2 = .20/.18), member LMX (Q^2 = .16/.17), and employee guarding tactics (Q^2 = .03/.06), reported for the member/leader models, respectively. See Table 10 for summary of results.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The present study was a preliminary investigation into the relationship between member humor, political skill, LMX relationship quality and employee guarding tactics. A primary purpose of this study was to explore the effects of member humor on leader and member LMX. This represents a move from exploring leader humor, which is typical in past research, to member humor, which had not been examined. A secondary purpose was to examine the direct and moderating effects of subordinate political skill. A final purpose was to examine antecedents of employee guarding tactics. As predicted, results indicated that the use of humor had a positive, direct relationship with leader LMX (in both models) and member LMX (in both models). This inaugural investigation into member humor supports the continued investigation into the role of humor and affect in the workplace.

Examination of the direct and moderating effects of political skill indicated the relationship between subordinate humor, and LMX may be more complex than was initially conceived. In the present study, I examined the direct and moderating effects of political skill on LMX relationship quality. As hypothesized, political skill had a direct positive effect on member LMX relationship quality (in the both models), but did not have a direct effect on leader LMX (in either model). This directs attention to intra-individual benefits of political skill. Additionally, without controlling for affect, the direct effects of political skill on leader and member LMX were significant (in both models). Interestingly, affect explained the effects of political skill on leader LMX relationship quality. These unintended results strongly support the role of emotions and affect in the workplace. Future research should tease out the relationships between humor, affect, and political skill by exploring affect as a potential moderator.

Finally, the relationships between employee guarding tactics and leader LMX and member humor were examined. As hypothesized, leader LMX was related to employee guarding behaviors by the leader, but the relationship was more complex than hypothesized. Contrary to prediction, leader LMX was negatively related to persuasion guarding tactics in the member model. This suggests that leaders will engage in employee guarding behaviors based on the quality of the exchange relationship they have with employees. Specifically, as leader LMX quality increases, the use of persuasion guarding tactics decreases. Perhaps leaders do not use more guarding tactics because they have quality relationships with those employees and feel there is no need to persuade those employees to stay. Potentially, they do not feel the need to persuade because they understand the employee and value the employee based on the exchange relationship. Additionally, in the leader and member models, member humor was negatively related to persuasion guarding tactics by the leader. This suggests that leaders will engage in employee guarding behaviors based on member humor. Specifically, leaders use of guarding tactics decreases as member humor increases. It may be plausible, that if members use humor at work, then leaders do not feel the need to persuade employees to stay. Perhaps leaders interpret the use of humor by members as the member being satisfied or happy at work, thus they do not feel that the member is a threat to leave, reducing the need to persuade them to stay. Future research should work to explore and explain these unexpected results. In summary, although the present study did not find support for all of the hypothesized relationships, other interesting relationships were uncovered that add to or support the humor, LMX, and employee guarding literatures.

The anticipated moderating effect of political skill on the member humor leader LMX relationship was not supported in the present study. There are several possible explanations for

the lack of anticipated findings in the present study. First, political skill was measured using a self-report measure. Although the self-report measure used in the present study (Ferris et al., 2005) has a long history of use in research, the member participants may not have been very accurate judges of their own political skill. The member participants were employed, but based on their average age (20 years), limited work experience, and role as students, it is possible that they did not have enough experience within organizations to be fully aware of their political skill/behavior at work. Perhaps, future research should measure member political skill using other methods and use more seasoned workers within organizations. Additionally, the present study utilized the HSQ as the measure of humor, but there are other established scales in the literature that may offer additional insights into the relationships between humor, political skill, and LMX. A final possible explanation for the lack results found between political skill and LMX may relate to the role that affect played. In the present study, affect appeared to drive the LMX quality rather than political skill. A component of humor is that it elicits affect (Martin, 2007). Perhaps humor/affect is the moderator in the political skill LMX relationship. In summary, the lack of member experience may have overwhelmed members' awareness of their own political skill, contributing to the lack of expected relationships. In the same way that the affect contributed to the findings with respect to LMX, it may have altered the expected relationships for political skill.

Finally, perhaps the various humor styles and dimensions of political skill have different effects on LMX and employee guarding tactics that may be better captured using a more complicated model. For example, maybe self-enhancing humor effects member LMX but has no effect on leader LMX, whereas member aggressive humor reduces leader LMX while affiliative humor enhances leader LMX. Potentially, the dimensions of political skill may influence the

humor LMX relationship differently. For example, maybe the interpersonal influence dimension of political skill affects the relationship whereas the networking dimension does not influence the relationship. It is possible that in a more complicated model (separates all subscales) the effects of humor and political skill are clearer than in this model, although this model does offer preliminary support for the effects of humor on LMX relationships.

The .36 and .31 correlations found in the present study between member humor controlling for affect, tenure, and similarity, and leader LMX/ member LMX, respectively, is consistent with correlations found in the literature. A recent meta-analysis of positive humor (Mesmer-Magnus, et al., 2012) found that employee humor was positively correlated with work performance ($p = 0.36$) and that supervisor humor was positively related to subordinate perceptions of supervisor performance ($p = 0.45$), subordinate work performance ($p = 0.2$), and subordinate satisfaction with supervisor ($p = 0.14$). Additionally, Cooper (2002) found a .42 correlation between supervisor humor and LMX after controlling for tenure, similarity, and positive/negative tone. Therefore, the direction and magnitude of these relationships between member humor and LMX (leader and member) was expected. Thus, the findings in the present study regarding the relationships between humor, affect, and LMX are consistent with those found in past research.

In summary, although the present study did not find support for all of the hypothesized relationships, other interesting relationships were uncovered that add to or support the literature on workplace humor, LMX, and employee guarding tactics.

Alternative Causal Explanations

Alternative explanations for the results found may be possible. Conversely, humor may moderate the relationship between political skill and LMX quality. Specifically, the relationship between political skill and LMX will be stronger for individuals that use humor. Future research

should address the alternative possible explanation that politically skilled subordinates who use humor will have better relationship with leaders and have better outcomes than politically skilled subordinates who do not use humor. Additionally, the possibility exists that LMX relationship quality influences member humor and for reciprocal effects that were not addressed in the model. Also, a curvilinear relationship between humor and LMX may exist that was not assessed with the model.

Contributions

The study was conducted to extend current research by examining the hypothesized relationships using member humor rather than leader humor. The literature from several disparate areas was combined in the conceptual framework of member humor shown in Figure 1. The framework offered a cross-disciplinary perspective and advanced theoretical understanding of interrelatedness amongst the research in humor, psychology, and management. The framework contributed to these literatures by illustrating how LMX research can be extended to include additional antecedents and consequences. It also addressed the calls in the management literature to move to explore humor from the perspective of the initiator and receiver (Sosik, 2012). Additionally, the previously unrecognized role of employee guarding tactics was integrated into the framework.

The present study also contributed to future humor studies by departing from previous studies of leader humor to initially explore member humor, and the preliminary results offer support for continuing this stream of research. This study found that member humor was related to member and leader LMX. This finding contributed to the growing body of evidence supporting the connection between informality in the formal workplace (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012; Morand. 1995). The findings from this study also contributed to the budding research on employee guarding tactics. Specifically, this study uncovered the unanticipated findings

concerning the negative relationships between subordinate humor, leader LMX, and managerial use of employee guarding tactics, which may spur future research.

Finally, although not all of the hypothesized relationships were supported in the present study, notable and interesting findings emerged. For example, contrary to predictions, the present study uncovered inverse relationships between employee guarding tactics and subordinate humor and leader LMX. Although unexpected, these findings may develop the employee guarding and LMX literatures. Additionally, if in fact the lack of anticipated findings in the present study can be in part explained due to differences in the initiator and receiver's perception of humor, this may have implications for future research on the role of similarity and perception of humor styles between leaders and members. Perception and similarity may change the capabilities of leaders and members to understand and appreciate the other's humor styles.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the results provide some support for the hypothesized relationships, although the cross-sectional nature of the study's design limits the interpretation of casual relationships among member humor and political skill, LMX quality, and employee guarding behaviors. To attempt to extend the current findings, as suggested by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003), future researchers should collect data longitudinally, sample dyads at various stages in their relationships (Cooper, 2005), or use an experimental design to strengthen the interpretation of causation. Second, the leader and member models do not explain all of the effects of humor. This study did not explore the specific styles of humor separately. Future research should explore the possible differential effects the different styles may have on LMX and employee guarding tactics by separating the humor styles rather than looking at them simultaneously. Additionally, the models do not address the possible curvilinear relationship between the constructs. For example, the models do

not address too much or too little humor or positive but failed humor, which may not have a linear relationship with LMX relationship quality. A third limitation is that the sample consisted of students, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Another limitation is the low average variance extracted (AVE) in the humor measure, which indicates that the results are possibly based on more than 50% unique error variance in the humor variable. It is possible that the low AVE of the humor variable suggests that the four humor styles comprising the scale focus on diverse/competing styles (inward/outward/positive/negative) of humor and may be distinct constructs as mentioned above. Another explanation could be that the results arise from an artifact of the study (Lowry & Gaskin, 2014), such as self-selection of respondents, which has been suggested for similar research designs (Ping, 2009; de Leeuw & Hox, 1988). In any event, and owing to the exploratory nature of this study, additional research and replication is needed to further support the relationships between these constructs. Finally, to address common methods variance, a useful addition to the present study's methodology would be to include multiple methods for measuring constructs and or using the Marker Variable technique (Lindell & Whitney, 2001) prior to collecting data.

Future Research

Significant potential exists to integrate humor into management research. Humor is a social dynamic that requires individuals to take risks and engage in self-disclosing communication (Cooper, 2008). Similarity of communication behaviors among managers and subordinates is related to effective communication (Montgomery & Norton, 1981). Results from the study suggest that perception and similarity may influence the relationships between humor and LMX. Perceived humor similarity between leaders and followers may minimize the risks of humor and positively impact the use of humor by employees on employment relationships. Research investigating relationships among supervisor-subordinate similarity, humor, and the

quality of LMX is limited. For example, the use of humor between leaders and members may be influenced by the perceived humor similarity between the dyad members. In particular, the perceived humor similarity between members of the dyad may be an antecedent to the quality of the exchange relationship that develops and an antecedent to the expression of humor by members of the dyad. Additional studies are needed to clarify the contribution of supervisor-subordinate humor similarity to LMX quality, performance and process outcomes. Exploring humor by both parties (use and appreciation simultaneously) to get at similarity and perception issues may offer insights in the antecedents of humor use and/or appreciation.

Results of this study point to the role of affect on leader and member LMX. Forgas (1995, 2002) presented the Affective Infusion Model (AIM) and discussed how emotions and moods become incorporated into thinking and judgment to negatively influence decision-making. Conversely, Staw and Barsade (1993) found in a sample of MBA students, that individuals who reported positive emotions were more accurate and conscientious in making decisions. These contradictory findings point to an important direction for integrating humor into management research. Humor can potentially influence decision making through inducing emotion into the decision making process (Kincy, & Crook, 2014). Future research should explore the potential that the emotions resultant from humor has to bias decision making, potentially in a good way (rather than just negative like AIM theorizes). This could be explored, using a laboratory setting. Further empirical studies should investigate how member humor can instigate this positive contagion process with leaders. Similarly, Mesmer-Magnus and colleagues (2012) suggested exploring how positive humor contributes to information sharing and affect management in teams.

Additionally, unexpected findings in how humor influences LMX and employee guarding were found in the present study. Causes behind these discrepancies should be explored. Possible explanations behind these differences may be related to the specific humor styles used by subordinates or by personality differences between leaders and members. As previously discussed, future research is needed to tease out the effects of each humor style on LMX quality and employee guarding tactics. Similarly, future research is needed to explore individual differences in order to better understand the interpersonal effects of humor. Specifically, personality offers a possible direction. Personality differences between leaders and members may impact the types of humor exchanged, and more importantly enjoyed by dyad members, ultimately impacting relationship quality. Additionally, the present study found that leader and member affect both significantly influenced relationship quality. Future research should explore differences in personality (extraversion/introversion and positive/negative affect) to see how those differences impact the effects of humor. For example, personality differences may impact the use and enjoyment of certain types of humor. Few studies, with the exception of Martin and colleagues (2003), have explored the relationship between humor styles and personality. They found that affiliative humor was positively related to extraversion and openness, and that aggressive and self-defeating humor was negatively related to extraversion but positively related to neuroticism. Future research should validate these results using non-self-report methods to explore the interpersonal effects of humor. The relationships between humor, personality/affect and subsequent outcomes such as burnout (Mesmer-Magnus, et al., 2012) offer unexplored avenues for research.

The present study explored the effects of humor on subjective interpersonal outcomes. Future research can explore the correlation between workplace humor and objective measures,

such as attrition rates, individual performance metrics, productivity rates, and sick days, especially in light of member humor having a greater impact on LMX relationship quality for members. Additionally, this sample in the present study was not very racially diverse. Future studies should investigate humor styles in diverse samples to replicate and advance the present study. For example, future research can explore cultural differences in use and response to humor styles. Decker, Yao, and Calo (2011), used a Chinese sample, to replicate Decker and Rotondo's (2001) study, which investigated gender differences in leadership and positive and negative humor using an American sample. Interestingly, and in contrast to the U.S. sample, they found that male leaders, rather than female leaders were hurt more by negative humor use and helped more by positive humor use. Future research can continue to explore cross-cultural differences, specifically, exploring the effects of humor in multicultural managerial subordinate dyads.

The present study highlights the impact of member humor in LMX relationships. When asked if humor affects the quality of the relationships, 10% more members responded that humor impacts their relationship quality (55% v 45%). This is interesting in light of the age differences between the leader and members (20 year average age difference). Together, these bring light to potential generational differences in humor, which are particularly relevant due to changing demographics of the workforce. Future research should investigate age differences in humor and communication as the workforce continues to change and as members gain experience (get promoted/move up over time).

Lastly, humor has the potential to produce negative consequences. For example, humor may be used to suppress, oppress, and alienate (Cooper & Sosik, 2012). A limited number of studies have explored the destructive side of humor or the political ramifications (Smeltzer &

Leap, 1988) of using humor at work (Martin, Lastuk, Jeffery, Vernon, & Veselka, 2012; Veselka, Schermer, Martin, & Vernon, 2010). In fact, in this study, a number of leaders voluntarily commented about the nature of the negative side of humor. Reporting comments such as "Sometimes he or she has dark humor that I don't find as funny." Research should explore the dark side and counterproductive effects of humor. For example, future research can explore the consequences of informality in the workplace to answer questions such as what personal ramifications (Duncan, et al., 1990) exist when the work environment is too informal (Morand, 1995), or what happens when humor is perceived as manipulative or inappropriate, or what happens when the line between positive and destructive humor is crossed? These connect to the question of how does dark or unsuccessful humor influence LMX relationship quality?

Implications

The current study advanced the humor and management literatures in several ways. First, this study expanded the LMX framework to include a new antecedent and consequence. Similarly, this study helped develop the nomological network of employee guarding tactics by introducing two unexplored antecedents. Additionally, this was the first study to look at the relationship between member humor and LMX quality.

From exploring both perspectives in this study, we learn that member humor is significantly positively related to member and leader LMX and significantly negatively related to employee guarding tactics. These results help develop and connect disparate literatures and offer support for theories of emotion in the workplace, such as the Emotion Cycle Theory (Rafaeli and Hareli, 2009). Furthermore, these results have implications for the role of perception and similarity in understanding unexplored antecedents to leader and member humor. The unanticipated directions of the relationships between humor, LMX and guarding tactics have

implications for developing the employee guarding and psychological ownership literatures. Future research should continue to explore how guarding behaviors manifest from relationships, affect, and emotions in the workplace.

Additionally, these results have implications for future humor research. As societal trends continue to develop, the role and effects of humor in the workplace may change. In lieu of this, it is imperative to reevaluate our perspective on how humor can be utilized to attain camaraderie in the workplace. While, the age differences between leaders and members in this study parallel the current demographic trends seen in the contemporary workforce, with the emergence of millennials and the prolonged presence of boomers. Future research should consider the implications of humor as the workforce matures overtime and the peer-to-peer workforce dynamics change. As an example, the role and style of humor may be different in leader member relationships that involve managing employees older or younger than oneself. Fundamentally, humor research may evolve as the generations evolve which will further complicate the already complicated role of humor in the workplace.

Another theoretical implication from this study concerns the results from including the controls (member and leader affect). Results point to significant effects of member and leader affect on LMX relationship quality, strongly supporting theories of positive emotions such as the Broaden and Build theory (Fredrickson, 2000). Additionally, controlling for affect significantly weakened the effects of political skill. These results imply that attitudes and emotions can be very powerful at work. The connections between political skill, affect, and emotional management should be explored to develop theory and understanding. Future research should explore both the positive and counterproductive effects of affect at work.

This study offers important practical implications for managers and employees alike. Results from this study strongly suggest that member humor is related to LMX quality. One implication of this study is for people within organizations to recognize the power of emotions and humor in leader member relations. Leaders should work to create climates for members to feel comfortable sharing a laugh. Yet, because the possible differential effects of the different humor styles were not explored in the current study, members should recognize that others might not view their humor the same way they do. Humor is considered a tool to be used selectively (Cooper, 2004; Avolio, 1999; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). In light of leaders commenting on the dark side of member humor, members should make sure to use caution and appropriate humor at work. Humor, if used appropriately, can improve intra and inter-personal outcomes (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012) including relationships at work. Humor dynamics can facilitate or distract from the development of new relationships and strengthen or weaken existing relationships (Cooper, 2008). An additional practical implication would be that organizations could train employees to use humor in positive ways. Past researchers (Davis & Kleiner, 1989) have offered guidance for managers in using humor at work, including, keeping humor brief and connected to main message, and using humor to show humility and to poke fun at themselves. Breeze, Dawson, and Khazhinsky (2004) suggested employers need to recognize that a sense of humor in as an asset to employees and to give special notice to upbeat, positive, good natured, humorous employees. I extend these suggestions to members (subordinates). The proper use of humor can contribute to effective management, and if applied correctly can be a serious tool for leaders and members in organizations, to use selectively. Members can use humor as tool to develop quality relationships with their leaders. Members should recognize the role that humor

plays in developing quality relationships and use it to manage relationship quality with their leaders.

Conclusion

Prior research has investigated leader humor as a direct antecedent of LMX relationship quality (Cooper, 2004). However, this study is the first to explore member humor and the mechanisms (i.e., LMX) through which it affects managerial behavior towards subordinates. Preliminary support was offered for member humor as an antecedent to LMX quality and to employee guarding behaviors exhibited by managers. Evidence from this study suggests that emotion and humor in the workplace deserve serious attention. I hope this study stimulates further exploration into the connection between informality and the formal workplace.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Table 1

Means, SD, Internal Consistencies, Variance explained – Member model

	# Items	M	SD	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Employee Guarding	12	1.65	.882	.54	0.93	0.92
Leader LMX	6	4.17	.791	.55	0.88	0.84
Member LMX	6	4.24	.786	.53	0.87	0.82
Humor	12	4.39	1.56	.27	0.78	0.77
Political Skill	14	5.35	1.27	.57	0.95	0.94

Table 2

Means, SD, Internal Consistencies, Variance explained –Leader perspective

	# Items	M	SD	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Employee Guarding	12	1.650	.882	0.533	0.918	.902
Leader LMX	6	4.169	.791	0.522	0.884	.849
Member LMX	6	4.239	.786	0.531	0.872	.823
Humor	12	4.042	1.49	0.278	0.729	.772
Political Skill	14	5.313	1.27	0.566	0.948	.941

Table 3

Discriminant Validity Evidence – Member model

Fornell-Larcker Criterion	Member Humor	Employee Guarding	Leader LMX	Member LMX	Political Skill
Humor	0.517				
Employee Guarding	-0.175	0.734			
Leader LMX	0.197	-0.207	0.742		
Member LMX	0.341	-0.213	0.410	0.729	
Political Skill	0.454	-0.192	0.187	0.337	0.752

Table 4

Discriminant Validity Evidence – Leader model

Fornell-Larcker Criterion	Employee Guarding	Leader LMX	Member LMX	Member humor	Political Skill
Employee Guarding	0.730				
Leader LMX	-0.150	0.723			
Member LMX	-0.187	0.403	0.729		
Member humor	-0.348	0.412	0.253	0.527	
Political Skill	-0.176	0.180	0.337	0.208	0.752

Table 5

Collinearity Assessment - VIF Factors – Member model

First Set		Second Set		Third Set	
Constructs	VIF	Constructs	VIF	Constructs	VIF
Humor	1.026	Humor	1.276	Leader LMX	1.039
Political Skill	1.004	Political Skill	1.004	Humor	1.039
Similarity	1.015	Similarity	1.016		
Tenure	1.007	Tenure	1.013		
Leader Affect	1.023	Member Affect	1.272		

Note: Interpreting VIF values has been debated among statisticians. Stevens (2002) argued that VIF values greater than 10 are problematic, and Lin (2008) argued that values greater than 5 are problematic. Additionally, Hair and colleagues (2014) argued for PLS-SEM analysis, VIF values should be below 5. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) suggested minimum tolerance ($1-R^2$) values of .10. According to Chatterjee and Hadi (2006), mean VIF values greater than 1 indicate variables are likely multicolinear. In social science research, it is rare to yield results that simultaneously achieve all of these conditions (Bohon, forthcoming). Bohon (forthcoming) stresses meeting two of the conditions mentioned above. The present study adheres to the Stevens (2002), Lin (2008) standards, and Hair et al. (2014) standards.

Table 6

Collinearity Assessment - VIF Factors – Leader model

First Set		Second Set		Third Set	
Constructs	VIF	Constructs	VIF	Constructs	VIF
Humor	1.049	Humor	1.172	Leader LMX	1.032
Political Skill	1.007	Political Skill	1.006	Humor	1.032
Similarity	1.012	Similarity	1.008		
Tenure	1.014	Tenure	1.051		
Leader Affect	1.053	Member Affect	1.176		

Note: Interpreting VIF values has been debated among statisticians. Stevens (2002) argued that VIF values greater than 10 are problematic, and Lin (2008) argued that values greater than 5 are problematic. Additionally, Hair and colleagues (2014) argued for PLS-SEM analysis, VIF values should be below 5. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) suggested minimum tolerance ($1-R^2$) values of .10. According to Chatterjee and Hadi (2006), mean VIF values greater than 1 indicate variables are likely multicolinear. In social science research, it is rare to yield results that simultaneously achieve all of these conditions (Bohon, forthcoming). Bohon (forthcoming) stresses meeting two of the conditions mentioned above. The present study adheres to the Stevens (2002), Lin (2008) standards, and Hair et al. (2014) standards.

Table 7

Summary PLS Analyses – Member Model

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Error	T Statistics	P Values	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Humor -> Employee Guarding	-0.142	-0.15	0.052	2.734	0.006		
Humor -> Leader LMX	0.102	0.105	0.041	2.465	0.014		
Humor -> Member LMX	0.169	0.177	0.045	3.8	0.000		
Leader LMX -> Employee Guarding	-0.173	-0.182	0.049	3.521	0.000		
Leader Affect -> Leader LMX	0.575	0.579	0.031	18.328	0.000		
Member Affect -> Member LMX	0.412	0.414	0.041	9.994	0.000		
Political Skill -> Leader LMX	0.008	0.008	0.037	0.204	0.838		
Political Skill -> Member LMX	0.094	0.101	0.055	1.717	0.087		
Similarity -> Leader LMX	0.020	0.018	0.038	0.514	0.607		
Similarity -> Member LMX	-0.041	-0.043	0.039	1.039	0.299		
Tenure -> Leader LMX	0.066	0.068	0.031	2.135	0.033		
Tenure -> Member LMX	0.092	0.092	0.033	2.795	0.005		
Interaction effect	-0.139	-0.007	0.166	0.835	0.404		
Leader LMX						.372	.366
Member LMX						.302	.300
Employee Guarding						.059	.056

Table 8

Summary PLS Analyses – Leader Model

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Error	T Statistics	P Values	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Leader LMX -> Employee Guarding	-0.005	0.002	0.06	0.083	0.934		
Leader Affect -> Leader LMX	0.497	0.498	0.04	12.60	0.000		
Member Affect -> Member LMX	0.432	0.435	0.04	10.15	0.000		
Member Humor-> Employee Guarding	-0.346	-0.355	0.06	5.988	0.000		
Member Humor-> Leader LMX	0.197	0.204	0.04	5.436	0.000		
Member Humor-> Member LMX	0.181	0.184	0.04	4.943	0.000		
Political Skill -> Leader LMX	0.026	0.029	0.03	.819	0.413		
Political Skill -> Member LMX	0.135	0.131	0.05	2.764	0.006		
Similarity -> Leader LMX	-0.005	-0.003	0.04	0.126	0.9		
Similarity -> Member LMX	-0.046	-0.045	0.04	1.137	0.256		
Tenure -> Leader LMX	0.069	0.066	0.03	2.121	0.034		
Tenure -> Member LMX	0.091	0.088	0.03	2.928	0.004		
Interaction Effect:	-0.072	-0.085	0.10	0.717	0.474		
Leader LMX						.387	.381
Member LMX						.318	.311
Employee Guarding						.121	.118

Table 9

Mediation tests

	Member Model	Leader Model
Sobel test statistic:	-1.2915	0.0351
Two-tailed probability:	0.197	0.972
Significance:	NS	NS
*VAF:	.09	.01

Note. *The interpretation of VAF values is questionable when direct and indirect effects have different signs (Hair, et al., 2014) such as in the present study. The Sobel test was also used to test for mediation.

Table 10

Summary of Results

Hypothesis	IV	Prediction	DV	Actual	Member Model Results	Leader Model Results
1A	Member Humor	+	Leader LMX	+	Supported	Supported
1B	Member Humor	+	Member LMX	+	Supported	Supported
3A	Member Political Skill	+	Leader LMX		Not Supported	Not Supported
3B	Member Political Skill	+	Member LMX		Not Supported	Supported
4	Member Humor	+	Employee Guarding	-	Partial Support	Partial Support
5	Leader LMX	+	Employee Guarding	-	Partial Support	Not Supported
2	Humor*Political Skill	+	Leader LMX		Not Supported	Not Supported

Table 11

Common Methods Factor

Regression Weights: (Full model)				Regression Weights: (CMV model)			
			Estimate				Estimate
LLMX1	<	LLMX	1	M_HSQ_11	<	cmv	0
LLMX2	<	LLMX	1.061	M_HSQ_23	<	cmv	0
LLMX3	<	LLMX	0.918	M_HSQ_15	<	cmv	0
LLMX4	<	LLMX	0.903	M_HSQ_19	<	cmv	0
LLMX5	<	LLMX	1.019	M_HSQ_27	<	cmv	0
LLMX6	<	LLMX	0.838	M_HSQ_31	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_21	<	MAFF	1.428	M_HSQ_7	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_17	<	MAFF	1.376	M_HSQ_3	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_13	<	MAFF	1.479	LLMX1	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_30	<	MSE	1	LLMX2	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_26	<	MSE	1.09	LLMX3	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_22	<	MSE	0.184	LLMX4	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_18	<	MSE	1.213	LLMX5	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_14	<	MSE	1.188	LLMX6	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_10	<	MSE	1.202	LLMX7	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_6	<	MSE	1.024	LEG_1	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_2	<	MSE	1.255	LEG_2	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_23	<	MAGG	0.689	LEG_3	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_19	<	MAGG	1.949	LEG_4	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_15	<	MAGG	1.3	LEG_5	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_11	<	MAGG	1.542	LEG_6	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_32	<	MSD	1	LEG_7	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_28	<	MSD	0.71	LEG_8	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_24	<	MSD	0.919	LEG_9	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_20	<	MSD	1.006	LEG_10	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_16	<	MSD	0.517	LEG_11	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_12	<	MSD	1.034	LEG_12	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_8	<	MSD	1.107	LEG_13	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_4	<	MSD	1.052	LEG_14	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_9	<	MAFF	0.983	LEG_15	<	cmv	0
PSI_1	<	PSINET	1	LEG_16	<	cmv	0
PSI_2	<	PSINET	1.091	LEG_17	<	cmv	0
PSI_3	<	PSINET	1.117	MLMX7	<	cmv	0
PSI_4	<	PSINET	1.126	MLMX6	<	cmv	0
PSI_5	<	PSINET	1.088	MLMX5	<	cmv	0

Table 11 Continued

Regression Weights: (Full model)				Regression Weights: (CMV model)			
			Estimate				Estimate
PSI_6	<	PSINET	1.031	MLMX4	<	cmv	0
PSI_10	<	PSISOC	1	MLMX3	<	cmv	0
PSI_11	<	PSISOC	1.133	MLMX2	<	cmv	0
PSI_12	<	PSISOC	1.096	MLMX1	<	cmv	0
PSI_13	<	PSISOC	1.062	M_HSQ_32	<	cmv	0
PSI_14	<	PSISOC	1.158	M_HSQ_28	<	cmv	0
PSI_15	<	PSISOC	1.094	M_HSQ_24	<	cmv	0
PSI_7	<	PSIAS	1	M_HSQ_20	<	cmv	0
PSI_8	<	PSIAS	1	M_HSQ_16	<	cmv	0
PSI_9	<	PSIAS	0.994	M_HSQ_12	<	cmv	0
PSI_16	<	PSIII	1	M_HSQ_8	<	cmv	0
PSI_17	<	PSIII	1.049	M_HSQ_4	<	cmv	0
PSI_18	<	PSIII	0.872	PSI_16	<	cmv	0
MLMX7	<	MLMX	1	PSI_17	<	cmv	0
MLMX6	<	MLMX	0.834	PSI_18	<	cmv	0
MLMX5	<	MLMX	0.948	PSI_9	<	cmv	0
MLMX4	-	MLMX	0.947	PSI_8	<	cmv	0
MLMX3	<	MLMX	0.971	PSI_7	<	cmv	0
MLMX2	<	MLMX	1.047	PSI_15	<	cmv	0
MLMX1	<	MLMX	1.021	M_HSQ_2	<	cmv	0
LEG_1	<	LEGP	0.998	M_HSQ_6	<	cmv	0
LEG_2	<	LEGP	1.015	M_HSQ_10	<	cmv	0
LEG_3	<	LEGP	1.044	M_HSQ_14	<	cmv	0
LEG_4	<	LEGP	0.927	M_HSQ_18	<	cmv	0
LEG_5	<	LEGP	1	M_HSQ_22	<	cmv	0
LEG_6	<	LEGP	0.724	M_HSQ_26	<	cmv	0
LEG_7	<	LEGP	0.838	M_HSQ_30	<	cmv	0
LEG_8	<	LEGP	1.088	PSI_14	<	cmv	0
LEG_9	<	LEGP	1.019	PSI_13	<	cmv	0
LEG_13	<	LEGN	1.149	PSI_12	<	cmv	0
LEG_14	<	LEGN	1.311	PSI_11	<	cmv	0
LEG_15	<	LEGN	1.253	PSI_10	<	cmv	0
LEG_16	<	LEGN	1.109	PSI_1	<	cmv	0
LEG_17	<	LEGN	1	PSI_2	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_27	<	MAGG	1.684	PSI_3	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_31	<	MAGG	1	PSI_4	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_7	<	MAGG	0.892	PSI_5	<	cmv	0

Table 11 Continued

Regression Weights: (Full model)				Regression Weights: (CMV model)			
			Estimate				Estimate
M_HSQ_3	<	MAGG	1.749	PSI_6	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_5	<	MAFF	1.104	M_HSQ_29	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_1	<	MAFF	0.863	M_HSQ_25	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_25	<	MAFF	1.166	M_HSQ_21	<	cmv	0
M_HSQ_29	<	MAFF	1	M_HSQ_17	<	cmv	0
L_LMX7	<	LLMX	0.893	M_HSQ_13	<	cmv	0
LEG_10	<	LEGP	1.058	M_HSQ_9	<	cmv	0
LEG_12	<	LEGP	1	M_HSQ_5	<	cmv	0
LEG_11	<	LEGP	1.117	M_HSQ_1	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_1	<	LAFF	1.202	L_HSQ11	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_2	<	LSE	1.024	L_HSQ12	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_3	<	LAGG	1.255	L_HSQ_3	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_4	<	LSD	1.019	L_HSQ_4	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_5	<	LAFF	0.838	L_HSQ_5	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_6	<	LSE	1.428	L_HSQ_6	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_7	<	LAGG	0.517	L_HSQ_7	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_8	<	LSD	1.213	L_HSQ_8	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_9	<	LAFF	1	L_HSQ_9	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_10	<	LSE	1.061	L_HSQ_10	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_11	<	LAGG	0.918	L_HSQ_11	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_12	<	LSD	0.903	L_HSQ_12	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_13	<	LAFF	1.107	L_HSQ_13	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_14	<	LSE	1.052	L_HSQ_14	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_15	<	LAGG	0.983	L_HSQ_15	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_16	<	LSD	1.376	L_HSQ_16	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_17	<	LAFF	1.479	L_HSQ_17	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_18	<	LSE	1	L_HSQ_18	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_19	<	LAGG	1.09	L_HSQ_20	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_20	<	LSD	0.184	L_HSQ_19	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_21	<	LAFF	1.034	L_HSQ_21	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_22	<	LSE	1.188	L_HSQ_22	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_23	<	LAGG	0.919	L_HSQ_23	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_24	<	LSD	1.006	L_HSQ_24	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_25	<	LAFF	0.71	L_HSQ_27	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_26	<	LSE	0.689	L_HSQ_28	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_27	<	LAGG	1.949	L_HSQ_29	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_28	<	LSD	1.3	L_HSQ_25	<	cmv	0
L_HSQ_29	<	LAFF	1.542	L_HSQ_26	<	cmv	0

Note: Refer to the following key:

Table 11 key

Abbreviation	Meaning
CMV	Common methods variance factor
L_HSQ	Leader Humor Styles Questionnaire
M_HSQ	Member Humor Styles Questionnaire
L_LMX	Leader LMX7
M_LMX	Member LMX7
PSI	Political Skill Inventory
LEG	Employee Guarding
LLMX	Leader LMX factor
MLMX	Member LMX factor
LEGP	Employee Guarding Persuasion factor
LEGN	Employee Guarding Nurturing factor
MAGG	Member Aggressive humor factor
MSD	Member Self Defeating humor factor
MAFF	Member Affiliative humor factor
MSE	Member Self Enhancing humor factor
LAGG	Leader Aggressive humor factor
LSD	Leader Self Defeating humor factor
LSE	Leader Self Enhancing humor factor
LAFF	Leader Affiliative humor factor
PSINET	Political Skill Networking factor
PSISOC	Political Skill Social Astuteness factor
PSIAS	Political Skill Apparent Sincerity factor
PSIII	Political Skill Interpersonal Influence factor

Table 12

Measures contained in Leader and Member surveys

Subordinate surveys	# items	Leader surveys	# items
Multidimensional Sense of Humor Questionnaire (MSHS)	24	Multidimensional Sense of Humor Questionnaire (MSHS) revised	10
Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ)	32	Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ) revised	29
Humor Usage	5	Humor Usage	5
LMX-7	7	LMX-7	7
Political Skill Inventory	18	Employee guarding	17
Demographics	10	Demographics	6
PANAS-X	20	PANAS-X	20
Total	106		94

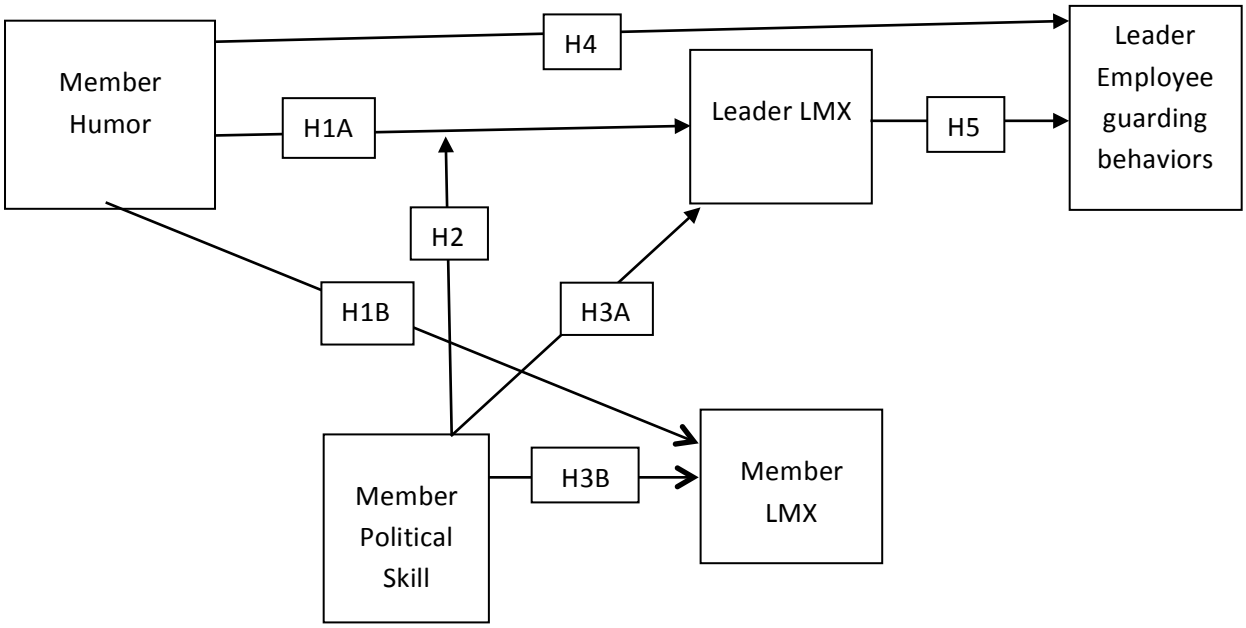


Figure 1. Model of Member Humor

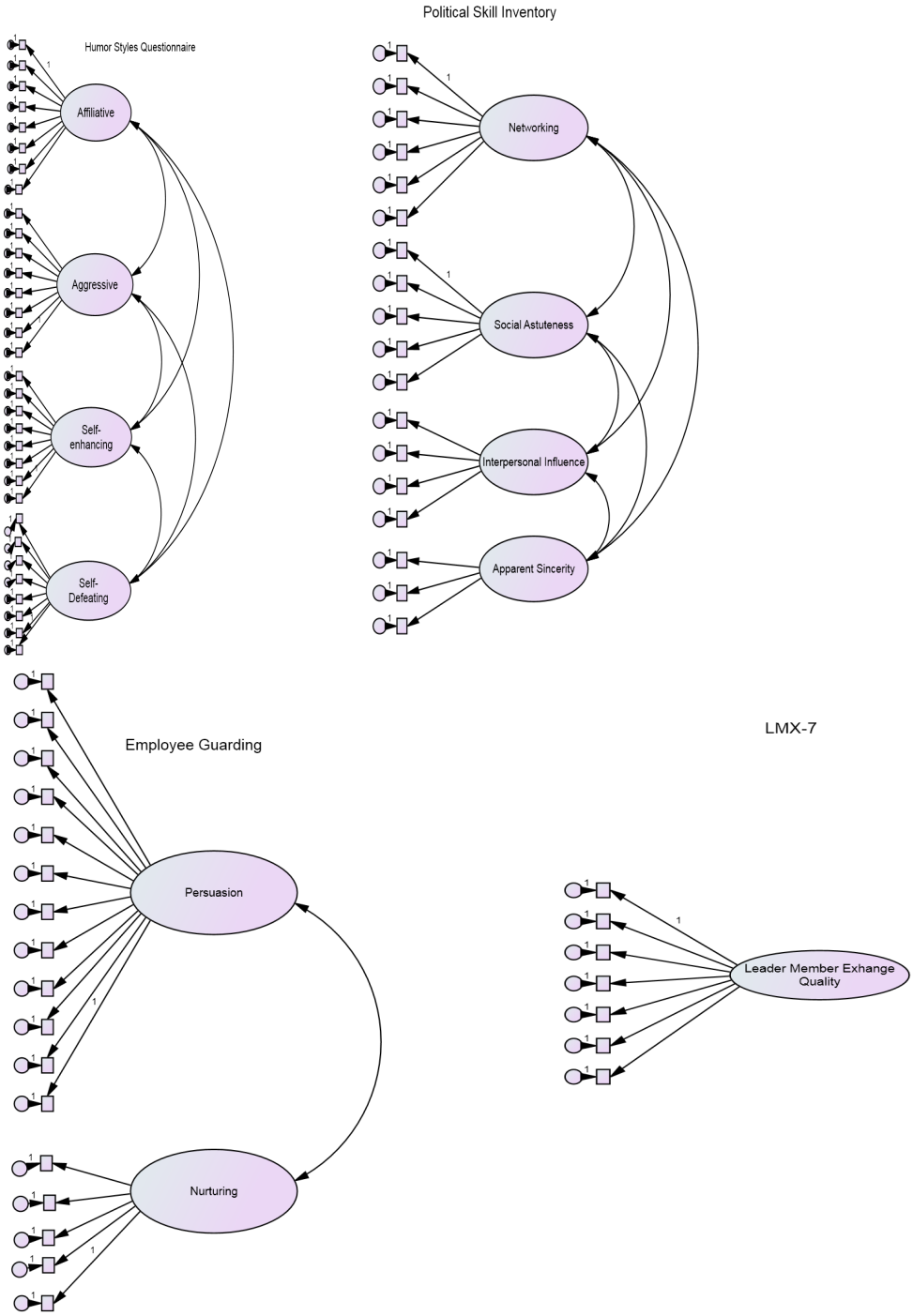


Figure 2. Measurement Model

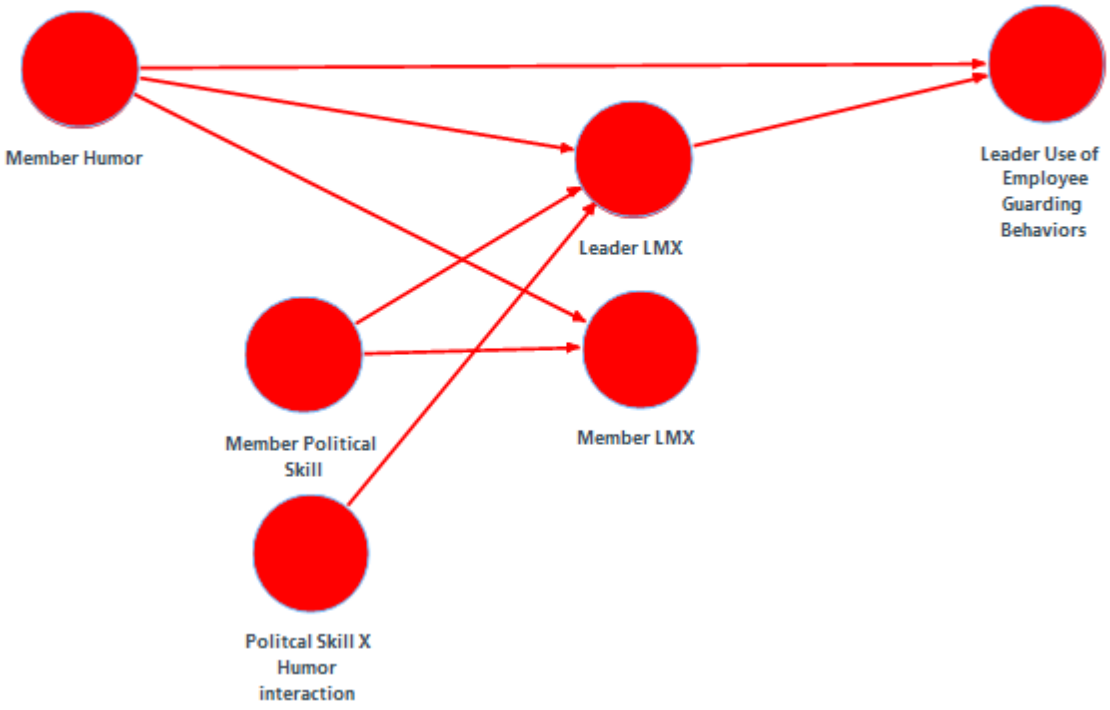
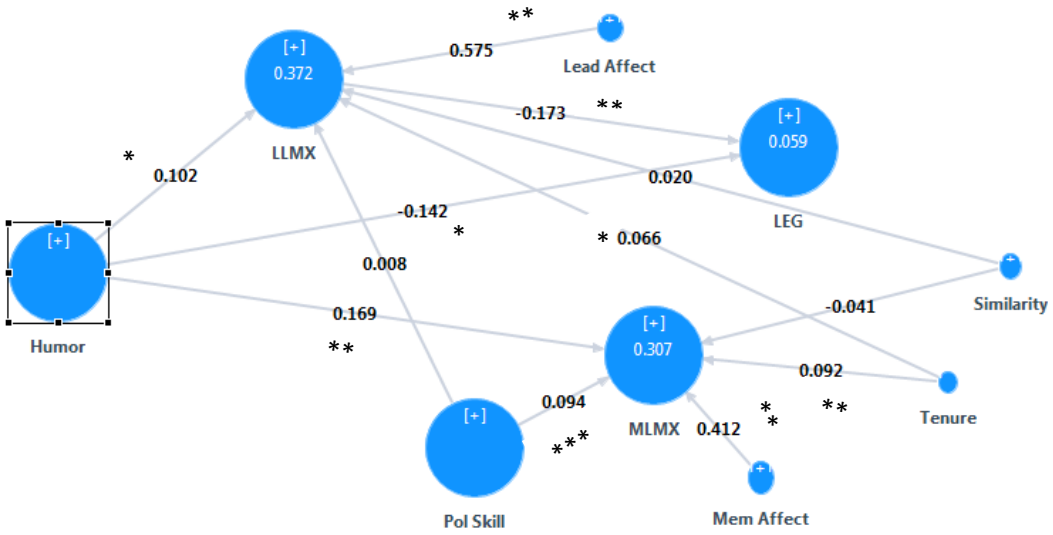
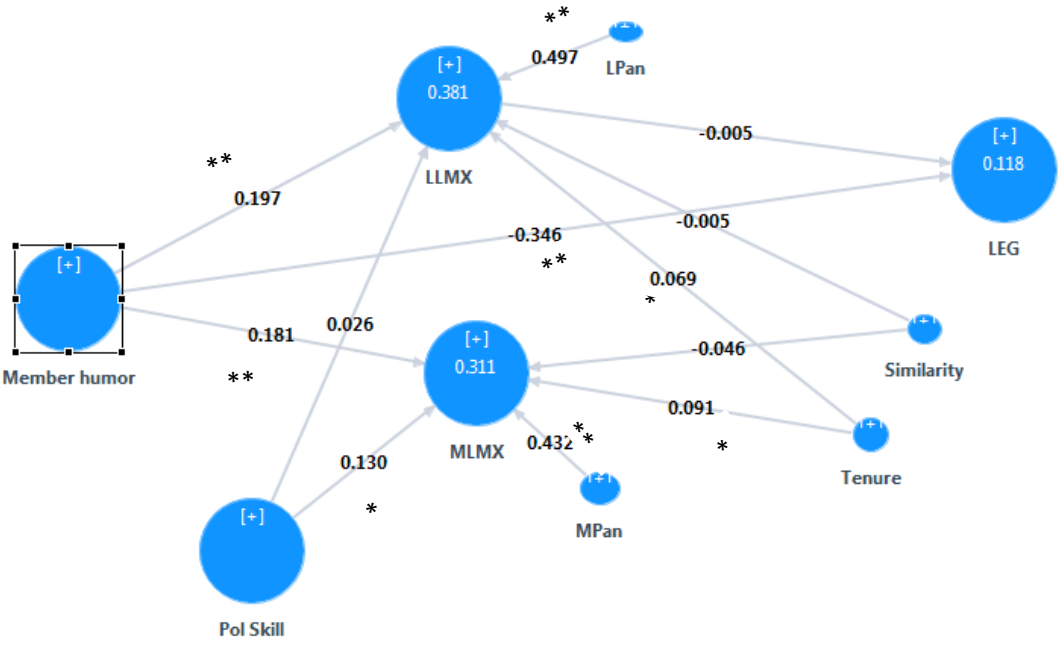


Figure 3. Structural Model



*significant at the .05 level
**significant at the .001 level
***significant at the .10 level

Figure 4. Results Member Model



*significant at the .05 level
**significant at the .001 level

Figure 5. Results Leader Model

Appendix B

SURVEYS COMPLETED BY LEADER AND MEMBER: LMX 7

Instructions: This questionnaire contains items that ask you to describe your relationship with either your leader or one of your subordinates. For each of the items, indicate the degree to which you think the item is true for you by circling one of the responses that appear below the item.

1. Do you know where you stand with your leader (follower) . . . [and] do you usually know how satisfied your leader (follower) is with what you do?

Rarely Occasionally Sometimes Fairly often Very often
1 2 3 4 5

2. How well does your leader (follower) understand your job problems and needs?

Not a bit A little A fair amount Quite a bit A great deal
1 2 3 4 5

3. How well does your leader (follower) recognize your potential?

Not at all A little Moderately Mostly Fully
1 2 3 4 5

4. Regardless of how much formal authority your leader (follower) has built into his or her position, what are the chances that your leader (follower) would use his or her power to help you solve problems in your work?

None Small Moderate High Very high
1 2 3 4 5

5. Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority your leader (follower) has, what are the chances that he or she would "bail you out" at his or her expense?

None Small Moderate High Very high
1 2 3 4 5

6. I have enough confidence in my leader (follower) that I would defend and justify his or her decision if he or she were not present to do so.

Strongly disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly agree
1 2 3 4 5

7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader (follower)?
Extremely ineffective Worse than average Average Better than average Extremely effective
1 2 3 4 5

Trait Affect Scale (PANAS)

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word.

Indicate to what extent you have felt this way during the past year. Use the following scale to record your answers.

1- very slightly or not at all
2- a little
3- moderately
4- quite a bit
5- extremely

Positive Affect

__. interested
__. excited
__ . strong
__. enthusiastic
__ . proud
__. alert
__ . inspired
__. determined
__. attentive
__. Active

Negative Affect

__. distressed
__ . upset
__. afraid
__ . guilty
__. scared
__. hostile
__. irritable
__. ashamed
__. nervous
__ . jittery

MEASURES COMPLETED BY MEMBER:

Humor Styles Questionnaire

1 (Totally Disagree) 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Totally Agree)

1. I usually don't laugh or joke around much with other people.*
2. If I am feeling depressed, I can usually cheer myself up with humor.
3. If someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it.
4. I let people laugh at me or make fun at my expense more than I should.
5. I don't have to work very hard at making other people laugh—I seem to be a naturally humorous person.
6. Even when I'm by myself, I'm often amused by the absurdities of life.
7. People are never offended or hurt by my sense of humor.*
8. I will often get carried away in putting myself down if it makes my family or friends laugh.
9. I rarely make other people laugh by telling funny stories about myself.*
10. If I am feeling upset or unhappy I usually try to think of something funny about the situation to make myself feel better.
11. When telling jokes or saying funny things, I am usually not very concerned about how other people are taking it.
12. I often try to make people like or accept me more by saying something funny about my own weaknesses, blunders, or faults.
13. I laugh and joke a lot with my closest friends.
14. My humorous outlook on life keeps me from getting overly upset or depressed about things.
15. I do not like it when people use humor as a way of criticizing or putting someone down.*
16. I don't often say funny things to put myself down.*
17. I usually don't like to tell jokes or amuse people.*
18. If I'm by myself and I'm feeling unhappy, I make an effort to think of something funny to cheer myself up.
19. Sometimes I think of something that is so funny that I can't stop myself from saying it, even if it is not appropriate for the situation.
20. I often go overboard in putting myself down when I am making jokes or trying to be funny.
21. I enjoy making people laugh.
22. If I am feeling sad or upset, I usually lose my sense of humor.*
23. I never participate in laughing at others even if all my friends are doing it.*
24. When I am with friends or family, I often seem to be the one that other people make fun of or joke about.
25. I don't often joke around with my friends.*
26. It is my experience that thinking about some amusing aspect of a situation is often a very effective way of coping with problems.
27. If I don't like someone, I often use humor or teasing to put them down.
28. If I am having problems or feeling unhappy, I often cover it up by joking around, so that even my closest friends don't know how I really feel.

29. I usually can't think of witty things to say when I'm with other people.*
30. I don't need to be with other people to feel amused – I can usually find things to laugh about even when I'm by myself.
31. Even if something is really funny to me, I will not laugh or joke about it if someone will be offended.*
32. Letting others laugh at me is my way of keeping my friends and family in good spirits.

* Items marked with an asterisk are reverse keyed.

Use of humor scale.

Rate your use of humor in terms of frequency of occurrence. I use humor at work (0 = "not at all" and 4 = "frequently, if not always")

"use humor to take the edge off during stressful periods,"
"use a funny story to turn an argument in my favor,"
"make colleagues laugh at ourselves when we are too serious,"
"use amusing stories to defuse conflicts,"
"use wit to make friends of the opposition."

Multidimensional Sense of Humor Scale (MSHS)

Please indicate your reaction to each of the statements below using the following scale.

1 (Strongly Disagree) 2 (Disagree) 3 (Neither) 4 (Agree) 5 (Strongly Agree)

1. My clever sayings amuse others.
2. I can say things in such a way as to make people laugh.
3. Other people tell me that I say funny things.
4. I'm regarded as something of a wit by my friends.
5. I'm confident that I can make other people laugh.
6. People look to me to say amusing things.
7. Sometimes I think up jokes or funny stories.
8. I use humor to entertain my friends.
9. I can often crack people up with the things I say.
10. I can ease a tense situation by saying something funny.
11. Uses of wit or humor help me master difficult situations.
12. Coping by using humor is an elegant way of adapting.
13. Humor helps me cope.
14. Uses of humor help put me at ease.
15. Humor is a lousy coping mechanism.
16. I can use wit to help adapt to many situations.
17. Trying to master situations through uses of humor is really dumb.
18. Calling somebody a "comedian" is a real insult.
19. I dislike comics.
20. People who tell jokes are a pain in the neck.
21. Getting people to lighten up by joking around is useless.
22. 1 like a good joke.
23. I appreciate those who generate humor.
24. I'm uncomfortable when everyone is cracking jokes
25. I can actually have some control over a group because of my uses of humor
26. Laugh and the world laughs with you
27. I love it when I can think of a good line in time to use it
28. I can find something funny in most situations

*To be completed by the member

Political Skill Inventory

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement concerning yourself at work, using a 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

1. I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others.
2. At work, I know a lot of important people and am well connected.
3. I am good at using my connections and networks to make things happen at work.
4. I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work who I can call on for support when I really need to get things done.
5. I spend a lot of time at work developing connections with others.
6. I am good at building relationships with influential people at work.
7. It is important that people believe I am sincere in what I say and do.
8. When communicating with others, I try to be genuine in what I say and do.
9. I try to show a genuine interest in other people.
10. I always seem to instinctively know the right thing to say or do to influence others.
11. I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to others.
12. I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others.
13. I pay close attention to people's facial expressions.
14. I understand people very well.
15. It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people.
16. I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me.
17. I am able to communicate easily and effectively with others.
18. I am good at getting people to like me.

*To be completed by the member

Demographics Member

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: __M/F__
3. Race: ___African American/Asian/Hispanic/Native American/Caucasian/Other
4. Highest level of education (check one): __Some high school/High school diploma/Some college/Bachelor's degree/Some graduate education/Master's degree/Doctorate
5. In what industry is your organization?
6. How long have you worked with this supervisor (the supervisor you asked to complete the other surveys)? __years __months__weeks__days
7. On average, approximately how many hours per week AT work do you interact with this supervisor? __0, __1-2 hours/week , __3-5 hours/week, __6-10 hours/week __11-15 hours/week __16-20, __21-25, __more than 25 hours/week
8. On average, approximately how many hours per week do you have contact OUTSIDE of work with your supervisor (i.e., do you socialize with this supervisor) outside of work? __ O hours/week __1-2 __3-5 __6-10 __ 10+
9. How well do you know this supervisor? __1_Not well __7_Very well
10. Does your or your manager's use of humor affect your relationship with him or her in any way? If so, how? Y __ N __

SURVEYS COMPLETED BY THE SUPERVISOR

MSHS Revised

Please respond to the following items with the subordinate who asked you to complete these surveys in mind. Indicate your reaction to each of the statements below using the following scale.

1 (Strongly Disagree) 2 (Disagree) 3 (Neither) 4 (Agree) 5 (Strongly Agree)

1. His/Her clever sayings amuse others.
2. He/She can say things in such a way as to make people laugh.
3. Other people tell me that he/she says funny things.
4. He/She is regarded as something of a wit around the office.
5. I'm confident that he/she can make other people laugh.
6. People look to him/her to say amusing things.
7. Sometimes he/she thinks up jokes or funny stories.
8. He/She uses humor to entertain coworkers.
9. He/She can often crack people up with the things he/she says.
10. He/She can ease a tense situation by saying something funny.

Use *of humor.*

Rate the employee's use of humor in terms of frequency of occurrence. This employee uses humor (0 = "not at all" and 4 = "frequently, if not always")

"uses humor to take the edge off during stressful periods,"
"uses a funny story to turn an argument in his or her favor,"
"makes us laugh at ourselves when we are too serious,"
"uses amusing stories to defuse conflicts,"
"uses wit to make friends of the opposition."

Humor Styles Questionnaire Revised

1 (Totally Disagree) 2 3 4 5 6 7 (Totally Agree)

1. He/She usually doesn't laugh or joke around much with other people.*
2. He/She can usually cheer him/herself up with humor.
3. If someone makes a mistake, he/she will often tease them about it.
4. He/She lets people laugh at him/her or make fun at him/her at his/her expense more than he/she should.
5. He/She doesn't have to work very hard at making other people laugh—they seem to be a naturally humorous person.
6. He/She is often amused by the absurdities of life.
7. People are never offended or hurt by his/her sense of humor.*
8. He/She will often get carried away in putting themselves down if it makes others laugh.
9. He/She rarely makes other people laugh by telling funny stories about themselves.*
10. He/She usually tries to think of something funny about the situation to make him/herself feel better.
11. When telling jokes or saying funny things, he/she is usually not very concerned about how other people are taking it.
12. He/She often tries to make people like or accept him/her more by saying something funny about his/her own weaknesses, blunders, or faults.
13. He/She often laughs and jokes a lot with their coworkers.
14. He/She has a humorous outlook on life keeps him/her from getting overly upset or depressed about things.
15. He/She does not like it when people use humor as a way of criticizing or putting someone down.*
16. He/she doesn't often say funny things to put him/herself down.*
17. He/She usually doesn't like to tell jokes or amuse people.*
18. He/She sometimes uses humor that he/she thinks is funny, even if it is not appropriate for the situation.
19. He/She often goes overboard in putting him/herself down when he/she is making jokes or trying to be funny.
20. He/She appears to enjoy making people laugh
21. When he/she is feeling sad or upset, he/she usually loses his/her sense of humor.*
22. He/She never participates in laughing at others even if others are doing it.*
23. When he/she is with others, he/she often seems to be the one that other people make fun of or joke about.
24. He/She often thinks of amusing aspects of a situation as an effective way to cope with problems
25. He/She doesn't often joke around with their coworkers
26. If he/she doesn't like someone, they often use humor or teasing to put them down.
27. He/She usually can't think of witty things to say when they're with other people.*
28. Even if something is considered funny by others, he/she will not laugh or joke about it if someone will be offended.*
29. He/She lets others laugh at him/her as a way of keeping others in good spirits

* Items marked with an asterisk are reverse keyed.

Employee Guarding Tactics

Think of the employee that you received this survey from.

Response options: I have 1 (NEVER, RARELY, SOMETIMES, or OFTEN) 4 used this practice to prevent this employee from quitting their job to join another company

1 Never 2 Rarely 3 Sometimes 4 Often

I told this employee that another employer was not a "good place to work."
I told this employee that another employer was not truly committed to their employees.
I told this employee that another employer was not well-managed.
I asked this employee if he or she was seriously seeking outside job opportunities.
I asked this employee to make a long-term commitment to the company.
I gave this employee a significant reward.
I asked this employee to explain their time away from the workplace.
I assigned a long-term project to this employee to maintain their commitment to this company.
I rewarded other employees to show this employee this company is generous.
I gave this employee special treatment when it came to company perks.
I told this employee the disadvantages of working elsewhere.
I expressed concern to this employee I suspected of engaging in job search activities.
I purposefully tried to be a better manager to this employee.
I went out of my way to be kind and caring toward this employee.
I worked hard to create a positive and professional work environment for the benefit of this employee.
I publicly praised this employee for their work.
I tried to be very helpful to this employee.

LEADER DEMOGRAPHICS

1. AGE: _____
2. GENDER: __M/F__
3. RACE: ___African American/Asian/Hispanic/Native American/Caucasian/Other
4. Highest level of education (check one): __Some high school/High school diploma/Some college/Bachelor's degree/Some graduate education/Master's degree/Doctorate
5. How well do you know this subordinate (the subordinate that asked you to complete these surveys)? __1_Not well __7_Very well
6. Does your or your employee's use of humor affect your relationship with him or her in any way? If so, how? Y __ N __

VITA

Nancy Scott was born in Mobile, AL to proud parents, Tina and Alan Scott. She is the older sister to awesome brother, Richard Scott. She attended Plano East Senior High School in Plano, Texas. After high school, she attended Henderson State University. She played intercollegiate softball and was a member of Honors College before graduating with a Bachelor's in Business Administration in 2004. In 2007, she received a Master's of Business Administration from the University of Central Arkansas. While pursuing a PhD in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from the University of Tennessee she has served as research assistant in Dr. Joan Rentsch's Organizational Research Laboratory, worked as an assessor for the Leadership Development Program in the Haslam College of Business Graduate and Executive Education program, and taught 14 classes for the Department of Management. Additionally, in 2015, she received the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching. She is joining the Business and Management faculty at Wheaton College beginning fall 2015 and will graduate in December 2015.