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A Leader, a Follower, and Some Humor Walk into a Meta-Analysis: A Review of Positive and Negative Leader Humor

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A LEADER, A FOLLOWER, AND SOME HUMOR WALK INTO A META-ANALYSIS: A REVIEW OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE LEADER HUMOR

by

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ABSTRACT

A LEADER, A FOLLOWER, AND SOME HUMOR WALK INTO A META-ANALYSIS: A REVIEW OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE LEADER HUMOR

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Although leader humor is a growing research topic, there are still unaddressed issues surrounding this topic. In particular, there is disagreement surrounding the conceptualizations of positive and negative leader humor, conflicting theoretical predictions and empirical findings on the effects of leader humor, a dearth of research on the antecedents and correlates of leader humor, as well as a lack of research on the boundary conditions of these relationships. This qualitative and quantitative review of the nomological networks of positive and negative leader humor addressed these issues based on a meta-analysis of 67 empirical studies ($N = 21{,}121$). Results indicate that positive and negative leader humor are better conceptualized as separate constructs rather than opposites on a spectrum. Additionally, follower trait positive affect is significantly related to positive leader humor but not negative leader humor. Demographic correlates have small or nonsignificant relationships with leader humor, while leadership style correlates (i.e., transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership), as well as positive and negative follower humor have stronger relationships. Regarding outcomes, positive leader humor has desirable outcomes (e.g., follower organizational citizenship behaviors), but it increases follower counterproductive work behaviors, whereas negative leader humor only has undesirable outcomes. The response format of leader humor measures and the publication status of empirical studies did moderate some of the relationships between leader humor and other

variables. Practitioners should discourage negative humor and encourage positive leader humor while being cautious about increasing follower counterproductive work behaviors. Future researchers should consider utilizing longitudinal and experimental designs to better test the causal directions of the hypothesized relationships examined in this meta-analysis.

This thesis is dedicated to all the seen and unseen support that helped create it.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Leader humor, defined as follower-directed, leader communication that is intended to be amusing (Cooper, 2005), is growing as a research topic (Kong et al., 2019). Researchers have discovered that leader humor is associated with various important employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, task performance, creativity, organizational citizenship behavior, health, and wellbeing (Kong et al., 2019; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). Although previous reviews of leader humor have greatly added to our understanding, they have been solely focused on positive leader humor and thus there are several unaddressed issues in the literature.

The first issue is how to conceptualize positive and negative leader humor. Researchers define *positive* humor as benevolent and *negative* humor as harmful (Craik et al., 1996; Holmes & Marra, 2002; Martin et al., 2003; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). However, some researchers conceptualize positive and negative humor as opposite ends of the same continuum (Craik et al., 1996; Martin et al., 2003), whereas others conceptualize them as separate constructs (Cann et al., 2014; Decker & Rotondo, 1999). If they are opposite ends of the same construct, then they should have an absolute correlation higher than .70 (a convention standard, cf. Berry et al., 2007; Carlson & Herdman, 2012) and have opposite, similar-strength relationships with other variables. In contrast, if they are independent constructs, the absolute value of their correlation should not be greater than .70, and they should be associated with a different nomological network of antecedents, correlates, and outcomes. The conceptualization issue may prevent consensus defining leader humor (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012), and is considered a critical

issue in the leader humor literature (Kong et al., 2019). Indeed, the quality of research in a specific area is primarily determined by the conceptualizations and operationalizations of its core constructs (Zmud et al., 1994). Construct proliferation is a phenomenon whereby two or more constructs are redundant due to them being very strongly related to each other and exhibiting similar patterns of relationships with other variables (Le et al., 2010). Such redundancy violates the principle of parsimony, clouds conceptual understanding, and, ultimately, impedes theory building and advancement. Indeed, Schmidt et al. (2010, p. 6) have argued that "a science that ignores the mandate for parsimony cannot advance its knowledge base and achieve cumulative knowledge." Not surprisingly, scholars have called for research to "more cleanly articulate the humor construct" (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012, p. 176).

The second issue is conflicting predictions and empirical findings on the relationships between leader humor and other variables such as follower counterproductive work behaviors, job satisfaction, and work engagement. For example, positive leader humor may reduce follower counterproductive work behaviors because followers feel welcome and have a lower desire to harm the organization (e.g., Sobral & Islam, 2015). However, positive leader humor may also raise counterproductive work behaviors because humor signals acceptance of violating norms (e.g., Yam et al., 2018). Thus, some researchers predict that positive leader humor will reduce counterproductive work behaviors, whereas other researchers predict that positive leader humor will increase counterproductive work behaviors. Interestingly, empirical studies have supported both sides of this argument (e.g., Sobral & Islam, 2015; Yam et al., 2018). In general, conflicting arguments and empirical findings provide ambiguous explanations of phenomena and prevent researchers from developing a coherent theory (Schmidt & Hunter, 2003). Unsurprisingly, there

are calls for integrating the fragmented literature to address conflicting arguments and empirical findings in the humor literature (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012).

Third, researchers, historically, have focused on the outcomes of positive and negative leader humor, but little is known about their antecedents and correlates even though there are calls to investigate the causes of leader humor (e.g., Pundt & Venz, 2017). In other words, we have limited knowledge regarding the factors that drive leader humor and thus have limited understanding of why leader humor occurs and what its correlates are. Practically, without the knowledge of the antecedents of leader humor, we are unable to develop effective interventions to promote any potential benefits or control negative consequences of positive and negative leader humor. Similarly, although scholars have speculated that leadership styles (e.g., transformational leadership), or the different general methods that leaders employ with followers (Avolio & Bass, 1991), may be associated with positive and negative leader humor (Sarris, 2018), limited research has explored these relationships. Thus, a review of the relationships between positive and negative leader humor and leadership styles would open new areas for future research.

Fourth, it is not clear how measurement features, such as the response format of leader humor questionnaires, influence the relationships between leader humor and other variables. Kong et al. (2019) proposed that the response format of leader humor measures can be used to distinguish between leader humor expression and trait leader humor. Specifically, according to Kong et al. (2019), *agreement* response formats capture trait leader humor, whereas *frequency* response formats capture leader humor expression. Yet in the broad organizational research literature, researchers have used both agreement and frequency response formats for measuring behaviors, such as organizational citizenship behaviors and counterproductive work behaviors

(Spector et al., 2010). Spector et al. (2010) found consistent support that relationships between organizational citizenship behaviors and counterproductive work behaviors and their relationships with other variables (e.g., job satisfaction) depended on whether the response format was agreement or frequency. Thus, it is possible that the response format of leader humor measures moderates the relationships between leader humor and other variables. Investigating the impact of the response format is important, considering that researchers frequently change the response format of the original leader humor measure to suit their needs. For example, Pundt and Herrmann (2015) changed the Humor Styles Questionnaire response format (HSQ; Martin et al., 2003) from an agreement to a frequency response format and claimed that the new measure no longer captured the trait of leader humor but the expression.

To address the aforementioned issues, I meta-analyzed the nomological network of positive and negative leader humor, including the intercorrelation between these two constructs, as well as explored the response format of leader humor measures (and publication status to check publication bias) as potential moderators. In doing this, this meta-analysis contributes to the leader humor literature in five ways. First, this investigation helps address debates regarding the conceptualization of leader humor and thus contributes to leader humor construct definition and cleanup (see Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012; Scheel & Gockel, 2017). Second, this meta-analysis helps resolve conflicting predictions and empirical findings regarding the relationships between positive and negative leader humor and their relationships with other variables (see Kong et al., 2019; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012; Vinson, 2006). Third, this meta-analysis is the first systematic review of the antecedents and correlates of positive and negative leader humor (see Pundt & Venz, 2017). Fourth, by investigating leader outcomes (e.g., leader performance, leader effectiveness) of using humor, this study sheds light on how leader humor might impact

leaders (see Cooper et al., 2018). Finally, by exploring the response format of leader humor measures as a moderator, this meta-analysis contributes to the much-needed identification of boundary conditions for the relationships involving leader humor (Robert, 2017). Together, these impacts go further than previous meta-analyses of leader humor which focused only on positive leader humor and its outcomes.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE LEADER HUMOR

Leader humor can be conceptualized as either a trait or a behavior (Cooper, 2005; Kong et al., 2019; Martin, 1998). As a trait, leader humor refers to how likely a leader is to create or emphasize something incongruous to experience amusement for themselves or elicit amusement in others such as followers (Martin & Leftcourt, 1983). As a behavior, leader humor refers to the frequency and strength of how much a leader produces, emphasizes, or reacts to something incongruous for their or someone else's amusement (Eysenck, 1972). Consistently, leader humor measures capture either the frequency of leader humor behaviors (e.g., Use of Humor; Avolio et al., 1999; Leader's Use of Humor; Cooper, 2002) or a leader's trait humor (e.g., Humor Styles Questionnaire; HSQ; Martin et al., 2003; Multidimensional Sense of Humor Scale; MSHS; Thorson & Powell, 1993) (see Table 1).

Leader humor can also be categorized into positive leader humor and negative leader humor. Researchers define *positive* humor as benevolent, benign, or absent of harm and *negative* humor as harmful—to either the recipient or initiator(Craik et al., 1996; Holmes & Marra, 2002; Martin et al., 2003; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). An example of positive leader humor would be if a leader points out an amusing typo in their presentation while negative leader humor would be if the leader calls themselves worthless because they created the typo.

Therefore, drawing from the dispositional and behavioral conceptualizations of humor (Cooper, 2005; Kong et al., 2019; Martin, 1998), and the categories of positive and negative humor, I define positive leader humor as a leader's propensity for or frequency of creating or emphasizing incongruity for the purpose of harm-free amusement. While negative leader humor

is a leader's propensity for or frequency of creating or emphasizing incongruity for the purpose of amusement in a manner that is harmful to either the leader, follower, or a third party.

THE POSITIVE LEADER HUMOR – NEGATIVE LEADER HUMOR RELATIONSHIP

As mentioned, there is a debate regarding the conceptualizations of positive and negative leader humor. Some scholars conceptualize positive and negative leader humor as polar opposites (e.g., Craik et al., 1996; Martin et al., 2003; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). In this conceptualization, leader humor ranges along the continuum of positive to negative. That is, a high score of positive leader humor suggests a low level of negative leader humor, whereas a low score of positive leader humor indicates a high level of negative leader humor. However, other scholars argue that positive and negative leader humor are two separate constructs (e.g., Cann et al., 2014). If this were true, then the absolute correlation between positive and negative leader humor should not be higher than .70 (Carlson & Herdman, 2012). However, the literature review suggests that the correlation between positive leader humor and negative leader humor varies across studies. For instance, some empirical evidence reports that there is a moderate negative relationship between positive and negative leader humor (e.g., Lin, 2016), a weak negative relationship (e.g., Cooper et al., 2018; Gkorezis et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2019), no relationship (e.g., Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2018; Pundt et al., 2017; Pundt & Hermann, 2015; Yam et al., 2018), and even a positive relationship (e.g., Decker et al., 2011; Evans & Steptoe-Warren, 2018; Hu et al., 2017; Mesmer-Magnus et al, 2018). Therefore, a synthesis and review of the research is needed to address the relationship between positive leader humor and negative leader humor, and I ask the following:

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between positive and negative leader humor?

Examining the nomological networks of positive and negative leader humor will also help address the debating issue regarding the distinctiveness of positive and negative leader humor (see Figure 1). Specifically, if positive and negative leader humor were negatively related to each other but had similar relationships (with regard to relationship strength) to the same antecedents, outcomes, and correlates, then they may be opposites rather than two distinct constructs. However, if positive leader humor and negative leader humor had differential relationships with the same antecedents, outcomes, and correlates (e.g., differential relationship strength), then these two constructs may be distinct. In the following sections, I review the relationships of positive leader humor and negative leader humor with their antecedents, outcomes, and correlates.

Figure 1

Antecedents, Correlates, and Outcomes of Positive and Negative Leader Humor

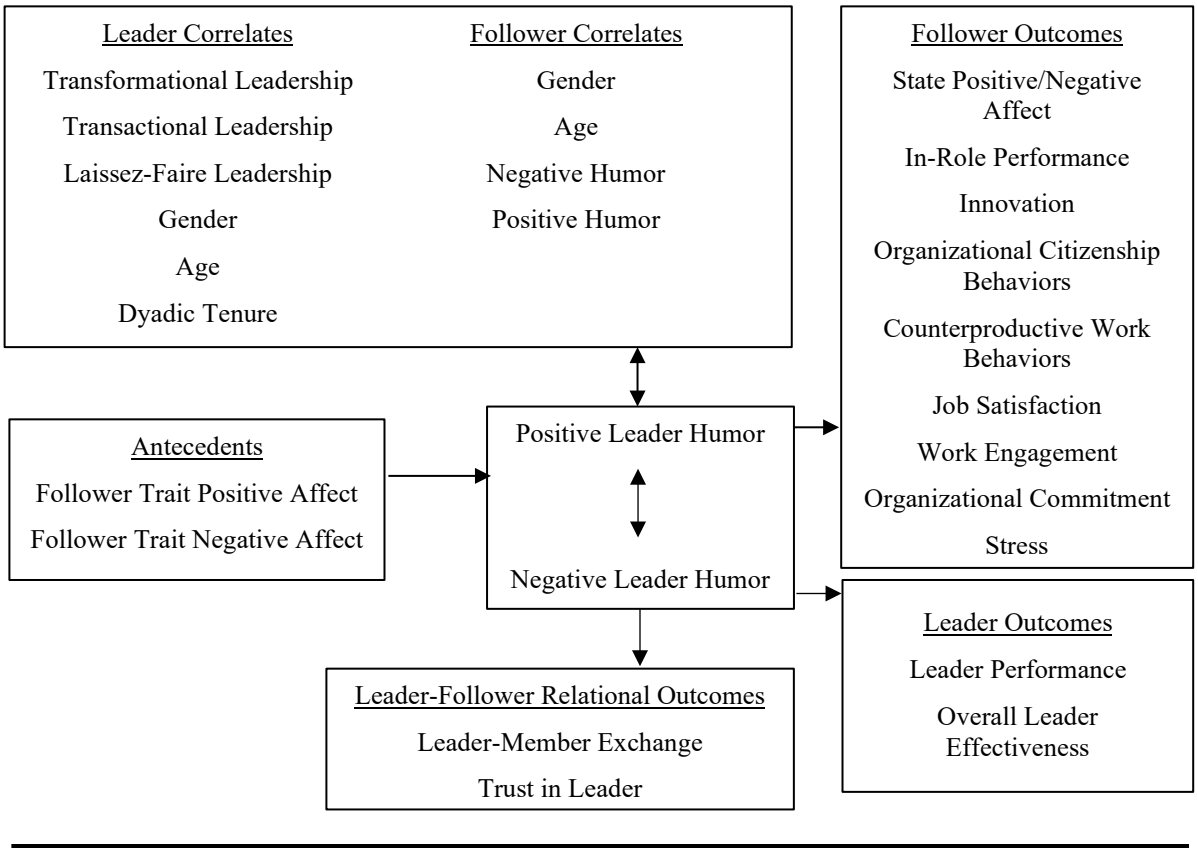

Table 1

Measurement Instruments of Positive and Negative Leader Humor

Scale	Conceptualization & Dimensionality	Sample Scale Items	Intended Response format	Response format count	Alternative response format count	Follower-reported count	Leader-reported count
Leader Use of Humor (Avolio et al., 1999)	The leader's humor in terms of frequency of occurrence.	"My leader uses humor to 'take the edge off' during stressful periods."	Frequency	6	8	14	0
Multidimensional sense of humor scale (MSHS; Thorson & Powell, 1993)	Assesses elements of the personal construct of sense of humor including: (1) humor production; (2) playfulness; (3) ability to use humor to achieve social goals; (4) recognition of humor; (5) appreciation of humor; (6) use of humor as an adaptive or coping mechanism.	"I can say things in a way as to make people laugh," "I can use wit to help adapt to many situations," & "I like a good joke."	Agreement	7	0	4	3
Supervisors' enjoyment and use of humor (Decker & Rotondo, 1999)	Positive humor gauges the manager's use of unoffensive humor.	"My supervisor has a good sense of humor."	Agreement	6	0	6	0
	Negative humor gauges the use of sexual and insult humor.	"My supervisor uses insult humor."	Agreement	4	1	3	0

Table 1

(Continued)

Scale	Conceptualization & Dimensionality	Sample Scale Items	Intended Response format	Response format count	Alternative response count	Follower-reported count	Leader-reported count
Humor Styles Questionnaire (HSQ; Martin et al., 2003)	Affiliative humor is used to enhance one's relationship with others in a way that is benign and self-accepting.	"I laugh and joke a lot with my closest friends."	Agreement	21	1	17	5
	Self-enhancing humor is used to enhance the self in a way that is tolerant and non-detrimental to others.	"If I'm by myself and I'm feeling unhappy, I make an effort to think of something funny to cheer myself up."	Agreement	12	0	7	5
	Aggressive humor is used to enhance the self at the expense or detriment of one's relationships with others.	"If someone makes a mistake, I will often tease them about it."	Agreement	23	1	19	5
	Self-defeating humor is used to enhance one's relationships with others at the expense or detriment of the self.	"I let people laugh at me or make fun at my expense more than I should."	Agreement	14	0	9	5

Table 1

(Continued)

Scale	Conceptualization & Dimensionality	Sample Scale Items	Intended Response format	Response format count	Alternative response format count	Follower-reported count	Leader-reported count
Leader's Use of Humor (Cooper, 2002)	Measures the subordinate perception of leader humor frequency.	"How frequently does your manager express humor with you at work, overall?"	Agreement	4	0	4	0

ANTECEDENTS OF LEADER HUMOR

Follower Trait Positive Affect

Trait positive affect is a person's disposition to feeling enthusiastic, active, and alert (Watson et al., 1988). People with high trait positive affect tend to have a positive outlook; they "tend to be lively, sociable, and often in a positive mood" (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996, p. 8). Follower trait positive affect may influence leader humor in two ways. First, according to the mood-as-information model, people use their mood to interpret and evaluate objects or events (Schwarz & Clore, 1983). Moreover, the comprehension-elaboration theory states that people will use available information to cognitively assess a stimulus (Wyer & Collins, 1992). Therefore, followers may use their frequent positive mood (due to trait positive affect) as information to judge leader humor in more of a positive manner—that is, absent of harm.

Additionally, affective events theory suggests that people will have affective reactions to events at work, and positive moods facilitate positive memory recall and inhibit negative memory recall (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Because followers with high trait positive affect are often in a positive mood, they may tend to recall more memories of positive leader humor and fewer negative memories. Therefore, followers who recall more positive leader humor but less negative leader humor might have biased responses and report high levels of positive leader humor but low levels of negative leader humor.

The majority of empirical studies suggest a positive relationship between follower trait positive affect and positive leader humor (e.g., Hu et al., 2017; Sobral & Islam, 2015; Liu et al., 2019), and one study indicates no relationship (Pundt & Venz, 2017). Empirical results suggest, however, that there is no relationship between follower trait positive affect and negative leader

humor (e.g., Hu et al., 2017; Sobral & Islam, 2015; Wang et al., 2020). Due to the theoretical arguments and the majority of empirical evidence, I hypothesize and ask the following:

Hypothesis 1: There will be a positive relationship between follower positive trait affect and positive leader humor.

Research Question 2: What is the corrected correlation between follower positive trait affect and negative leader humor?

Follower Trait Negative Affect

Trait negative affect is a person's disposition to feeling distressed or aversive mood states such as anger, contempt, and fear (Watson et al., 1988). People with high trait negative affect often have a negative outlook; they "tend to be more distressed and unhappy, focusing on the negative side of things" (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996, p. 8). Cognitive evaluation theory posits that after an initial comprehensive reaction to a humorous stimulus, people will then evaluate the event for its (in)appropriateness and potential offensiveness (Wyer & Collins, 1992). Because followers with high trait negative affect focus on negative information, they will likely focus on the potential offensiveness of humor and judge leader humor as negative. Also, drawing from mood-as-information theory (Schwarz & Clore, 1988), followers with high trait negative affect may evaluate leader humor as negative as they frequently experience negative affect.

Some empirical researchers report no relationship between follower negative trait affect and positive leader humor (Pundt & Venz, 2017; Sobral & Islam, 2015). However, more empirical studies find a positive relationship between follower negative trait affect and negative leader humor (Huo et al., 2012; Sobral & Islam, 2015). Based on theory and relevant empirical findings, I ask and hypothesize:

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between follower negative trait affect and positive leader humor?

Hypothesis 2: There will be a positive relationship between follower negative trait affect and negative leader humor.

FOLLOWER OUTCOMES OF LEADER HUMOR

State Affect

State positive affect is how much someone feels enthusiastic, active, and alert at a given time (Watson et al., 1988). In contrast, state negative affect is how much a person feels distressed or experiences aversive mood states such as anger, contempt, and fear (Watson et al., 1988) at a given time. Multiple theories suggest a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower state positive affect and a positive relationship between negative leader humor and follower state negative affect.

First, affective events theory posits that work events influence a person's affective state, and then they evaluate their affect in terms of their goals and well-being (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Researchers consider leader humor an emotion-provoking stimulus (Wijewardena et al., 2017), and, therefore, it may influence follower state affect. Thus, positive leader humor—a positive event—increases follower state positive affect, and negative leader humor—a negative event—raises follower state negative affect.

Second, benign violations theory states that an individual will experience positive affect when encountering something humorous (McGraw & Warren, 2010). People consider something humorous if it follows two rules: It violates something of importance to the receiver of humor—norms, threats, or taboos—and the violation is benign (McGraw & Warren, 2010). Because

positive leader humor is benign humor (Martin et al., 2003), the follower should consider it humorous and should react with positive emotions.

However, empirical researchers report mixed findings regarding the relationship between positive leader humor and follower state positive affect, with some reporting a positive relationship (Cooper et al., 2018; Goswami et al., 2016; Hu et al., 2017), and one reporting no relationship (Ünal, 2014). However, considering the presented theories and more evidence for a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower state positive affect, I developed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower state positive affect.

Similarly, empirical research reveals conflicting findings regarding the relationship between negative leader humor and follower state negative affect, with some reporting no relationship (Goswami et al., 2014) and others suggesting a positive relationship (Ünal, 2014). However, considering the theoretical support from affective events theory and benign violations theory, I developed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: There will be a positive relationship between negative leader humor and follower state negative affect.

Affective events theory also suggests that there will be a negative relationship between positive leader humor and follower state negative affect, and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower state positive affect. Because emotions can be conceptualized on a spectrum of hedonic tone from negative to positive (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), then a follower who experiences increased state positive affect due to positive leader humor would be experiencing reduced state negative affect. Likewise, a follower who

experiences increased state negative affect due to negative leader humor would have reduced state positive affect.

However, empirical research provides conflicting findings regarding these relationships. Some researchers report that there is no relationship between negative leader humor and state positive affect (Hu et al., 2017), one study demonstrates a negative relationship (Cooper et al., 2018), and one supports a positive relationship (Ünal, 2014). Regarding the relationship between positive leader humor and follower state negative affect, one study reports a positive relationship (Wijewardena et al., 2017), whereas some research demonstrates a negative relationship (Ünal, 2014). However, despite the conflicting findings, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 5: There will be a negative relationship between positive leader humor and follower state negative affect.

Hypothesis 6: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower state positive affect.

Follower In-Role Performance

Follower in-role performance is how well a follower completes their duties as outlined in their job description (Campbell, 1990). Multiple mechanisms explain the positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower in-role performance.

First, positive leader humor may improve in-role performance through follower state positive affect. Drawing from affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), positive leader humor can be an affective event that may result in follower state positive affect. According to broaden-and-build theory, people who are feeling positive emotions have a wider assortment of thoughts to develop more innovative ideas and are more engaged in problem-solving (Fredrickson, 2004). Therefore, follower state positive affect, elicited by positive leader

humor, increases follower in-role performance (Goswami et al., 2016; Hu et al., 2017; Lee, 2015; Pundt, 2015).

Second, positive leader humor may improve in-role performance via the leader-follower relationship. As positive leader humor helps develop the leader-follower relationship (Cooper, 2008), the relational process adds psychological safety (Pundt, 2015) and facilitates leader–member communications (Tang, 2008). Psychological safety enables followers to communicate their ideas or work problems to their leader without fear of negative consequences (Kim et al., 2016). Leaders, in turn, may be able to provide feedback and help followers with their tasks, leading to improved follower in-role performance (Kim et al., 2016). Indeed, empirical studies report a positive relationship between positive leader humor and in-role performance (Hu et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2016; Pundt, 2015). Considering both the aforementioned mechanisms and empirical evidence, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 7: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower in-role performance.

Negative leader humor may hurt follower in-role performance via state negative affect. Drawing from affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), people are likely to experience negative affect from negative leader humor. In addition, as stipulated by broaden-and-build theory (Frederickson, 2004), individuals experiencing negative affect have narrower, limited thoughts and are less engaged. Therefore, followers who experience negative emotions due to their leader's negative humor will have narrower thoughts and be less engaged at work, subsequently impairing in-role performance. Also, Kim et al. (2016) argued that followers may avoid leaders who use negative humor thus precluding leader feedback and support to solve job-related issues, and ultimately, poorer in-role performance. However, empirical researchers report

no relationship between negative leader humor and in-role performance (Hu et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2016; Lee, 2015). Drawing from theory, I ask the following:

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and follower in-role performance.

Follower Creative Performance and Innovation

Creative performance is the generation of novel ideas, products, or services that have value for the organization (Oldham & Cummings, 1996), whereas innovation is the implementation of such ideas (Rank et al., 2015). Because researchers consider creativity a part of the innovation process (Alves et al., 2007), I combine these constructs in their relationship with positive and negative leader humor under the term "innovation" for the purposes of this meta-analysis.

Positive and negative leader humor may be related to follower innovation. Drawing from affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), positive leader humor should increase follower state positive affect, whereas negative leader humor should increase follower negative affect. According to broaden-and-build theory (Frederickson, 2004), when someone is experiencing positive affect, their ideas are more expansive, whereas when experiencing negative affect, they have fewer ideas. Because idea generation is a key concept of innovation (Oldham & Cummings, 1996), it is likely that positive leader humor will increase follower innovation by increasing state positive affect, and negative leader humor will decrease follower innovation by increasing state negative affect.

Empirical findings suggest that there is a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower innovation (Pundt, 2015; Lee, 2015). Negative leader humor's impact on follower innovation is more equivocal—with one finding suggesting a negative relationship

(Lee, 2015) and another suggesting a positive relationship (Evans et al., 2018). Based on the theoretical rationale, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 8: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower innovation.

Hypothesis 9: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower innovation.

Follower Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Organizational citizenship behaviors are voluntary actions that a worker engages in to benefit the organization, and those actions are not listed in their job description (Organ, 1988). Multiple arguments posit a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower organizational citizenship behaviors.

First, positive leader humor may affect follower organizational citizenship behaviors through follower state positive affect (Cooper et al., 2018; Goswami et al., 2016; Hu et al., 2017; Lin, 2016). People experiencing positive emotions have stronger tendencies towards benevolent and sociable activities (Baron, 1997; Isen, 1984), and engaging in those activities sustains the positive emotion (Isen, 2000; Wegener & Petty, 1994). Also, as discussed earlier, positive leader humor may make followers feel good, raising the follower's state positive affect. Thus, Cooper et al. (2018) argue that followers who experience state positive affect from leader humor will engage in organizational citizenship behaviors to prolong positive affect.

Also, positive leader humor may affect follower organizational citizenship behaviors through leader–member exchange (Cooper et al., 2018; Lin, 2016; Liu et al., 2019). Positive leader humor may increase the relationship quality between the leader and the follower (Cooper, 2008). A high-quality leader–member relationship due to positive leader humor will, in turn,

cause a follower to do more organizational citizenship behaviors because they will be motivated to reciprocate the relationship benefits from the positive leader humor (Cooper, 2018).

Although some empirical researchers report no relationship between positive leader humor and follower organizational citizenship (Cooper et al., 2018; Goswami et al., 2016), more research suggests a positive relationship (Cooper, 2003; Hu et al., 2017; Lin, 2016; Liu et al., 2019; Thelen, 2019; Tremblay & Gibson, 2016; Wells, 2008). Based on the arguments and empirical support, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 10: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower organizational citizenship behaviors.

Negative leader humor may decrease follower organizational citizenship behaviors through leader–member exchange (Liu et al., 2019). Negative leader humor lowers the relationship quality between the leader and the follower (Cooper, 2008). Subsequently, due to having a poor relationship with the leader, the follower may feel alienated and retaliate against the leader by reducing their organizational citizenship behaviors (Liu et al., 2019).

Researchers report that there is a negative relationship between negative leader humor and organizational citizenship behaviors (Lin, 2016; Liu et al., 2019). However, there are also reports of a positive relationship (Thelen, 2019) and no relationship (Hu et al., 2017). Due to the arguments presented and the majority of research suggesting a negative relationship, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 11: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower organizational citizenship behaviors.

Follower Counterproductive Work Behaviors

There are conflicting theoretical predictions regarding the relationship between positive leader humor and follower counterproductive work behaviors. Counterproductive work behaviors are intentional actions that disrupt or prevent positive organizational functioning (Martinko, et al., 2002). Sobral and Islam (2015) argued that positive leader humor has a negative relationship with counterproductive work behaviors. Followers perceive positive leader humor as a signal that they are welcome at the organization, making them want to reduce behaviors that harm the organization. However, Yam et al. (2018) argued that positive leader humor may have a positive relationship with counterproductive work behaviors. This relationship occurs because positive leader humor raises the follower's perceived acceptability of norm violations (humor as a violation of a norm; McGraw & Warren, 2010), which subsequently increases follower counterproductive work behaviors. The social information processing approach posits that people use what others think and do as information to develop attitudes and adjust their behaviors (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Yam et al. (2018) argued that positive leader humor implies a leaders' acceptance of norm violation. Employees learn that violating norms at work is acceptable behavior that will go unpunished, resulting in more deviant behaviors. Consistent with the conflicting theoretical predictions, empirical researchers report conflicting findings, with some research indicating a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower counterproductive work behaviors (Yam et al., 2018), and some research supports a negative relationship (Sobral & Islam, 2015). Due to conflicting explanations and evidence, I ask the following research question:

Research question 5: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and follower counterproductive work behaviors?

Negative leader humor may have a positive relationship with follower counterproductive work behaviors. Like positive leader humor, Yam et al. (2018) argued that negative leader humor increases the follower's acceptance of norm violations and subsequent counterproductive work behaviors. To reiterate, negative leader humor may increase the follower negative affect, which then raises the follower counterproductive work behaviors. Thus, followers experiencing negative affect due to negative leader humor may look for opportunities to retaliate in the form of counterproductive work behaviors (Goswami et al., 2014).

Researchers report that there is a positive relationship between negative leader humor and counterproductive work behaviors (Goswami et al., 2014; Sobral & Islam, 2015). However, there is also a study demonstrating that there is no relationship between these constructs (Yam et al., 2018). On the basis of compelling theory and more evidence suggesting a positive relationship, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 12: There will be a positive relationship between negative leader humor and counterproductive work behaviors.

Follower Job Satisfaction

There may be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and job satisfaction and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction consists of the feeling that a person has about their job (Smith et al., 1969) and has a large affective component (Locke, 1969). Drawing from affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), positive leader humor should result in positive affect and raise job satisfaction, whereas negative leader humor should result in negative affect and lower job satisfaction. Empirical research suggests that there is a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower job satisfaction (Evans & Steptoe-Warren, 2018; Love, 2013;

Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2018; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012; Sobral & Islam, 2015). Research also reports a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower job satisfaction (Sobral & Islam, 2015; Susa, 2002). However, there are some reports of no relationship between negative leader humor and job satisfaction (Evans & Steptoe-Warren, 2018; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2018). Motivated by theory and empirical evidence, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 13: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 14: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower job satisfaction.

Follower Work Engagement

Work engagement is a positive, work-related state enacted with vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2011). There are theories and arguments that predict a positive relationship between positive leader humor and work engagement and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and work engagement.

First, positive and negative leader humor may influence work engagement through state affect. Drawing from affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), positive leader humor may increase positive affect and negative leader humor may increase negative affect. Also, according to broaden-and-build theory, people who are feeling positive affect are more engaged at work, while those experiencing negative affect are less engaged (Fredrickson, 2004). Thus, positive leader humor is likely to make the worker more engaged via raising follower state positive affect (Cooper et al., 2018), and negative leader humor is likely to lower engagement through raising follower state negative affect.

Second, the leader-follower relationship may also play a role in the leader humor and work engagement relationship. Positive leader humor may also increase the leader-follower relationship quality, while negative leader humor may reduce it (Cooper, 2008). A high-quality leader-follower relationship provides a safe environment for follower self-expression, allowing followers to invest in their work fully and increase their work engagement (Pundt & Venz, 2017; Yam et al., 2018). Additionally, high-quality leader-follower relationships provide social support, which reduces the negative effects of workplace stress on work engagement (Pundt & Venz, 2017; Yam et al., 2018). Finally, followers in high-quality leader relationships regard their leaders positively—potentially contributing to a more attractive view of the organization as a whole and perhaps increased work engagement (Pundt et al., 2017; Gkorezis et al., 2013).

Finally, both conservation of resources theory and the stress relief theory of humor are relevant when considering the potential positive relationship between positive leader humor and work engagement. Conservation of resources theory states that stress occurs when there is a loss or potential loss of resources (Hobfoll, 1989). Low work engagement may be a psychological reaction to chronic work stress (Halbesleben, 2006), and the stress relief theory of humor states that humor can be a stress reducer (Freud, 1950). Cooper et al. (2018) combined these ideas and argued that positive leader humor may be a resource that prevents low work engagement: as a follower receives more positive leader humor resources, they perceive work as less threatening and will be more optimistic and energized. Additionally, as positive leader humor increases, followers may be able to mobilize this extra resource to help prevent issues that would otherwise lead to low work engagement.

Most empirical studies suggest that there is a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower work engagement (Cemaloğlu et al., 2014; Goswami et al., 2016;

Pundt & Venz, 2017; Yam et al., 2018), with a few studies reporting no relationship (Cooper et al., 2018; Gkorezis et al., 2013). Applying both compelling theory and empirical support, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 15: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower work engagement.

Empirical research has reported mixed findings for the relationship between negative leader humor and work engagement. Research has suggested that there is a negative relationship (Cemaloğlu et al., 2014; Huo et al., 2012), a positive relationship (Cooper et al., 2018), and no relationship (Yam et al., 2018). Drawing from the theoretical arguments, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 16: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower work engagement.

Follower Affective Organizational Commitment

Affective organizational commitment is a person's attachment to the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Drawing from affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), researchers suggest that positive and negative leader humor create a place where there is visible display and engagement with positive and negative emotions, respectively (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2018). Subsequently, the positive emotions derived from positive leader humor help create environmental comfort, which would increase the follower's affective desire to stay, raising organizational commitment.

Positive and negative leader humor may also indirectly affect organizational commitment via the leader-follower relationship. Pundt and Venz (2017) posit that positive leader humor improves the leader-follower relationship because positive leader humor reveals more positive qualities about the leader. Followers attribute these positive qualities to the organization and may

exhibit increased commitment to organization. Using the same logic, negative leader humor would likely reveal negative aspects about the leader that followers may attribute to the organization, and they may lower their attachment to the organization.

Empirical research reports that there is a positive relationship between positive leader humor and affective organizational commitment (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2018; Pundt & Venz, 2017). Research has not found any empirical support for a positive or negative relationship between negative leader humor and affective organizational commitment (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2018). Due to the presented theory and mixed empirical findings, I hypothesize and ask:

Hypothesis 17: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower affective organizational commitment.

Research Question 6: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and follower affective organizational commitment.

Follower Stress

Stress is the physical and psychological pain that arises when a person cannot handle threats or demands by their environment (Lazarus, 1966). There may be a relationship between positive and negative leader humor and follower stress due to affective responses. Drawing from affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), positive leader humor increases positive emotion in the follower, whereas negative leader humor increases negative emotions. Kim et al., (2016) propose that positive emotions due to positive leader humor would work as a stress-reducer for the follower because positive emotion increases psychological well-being. Likewise, negative leader humor would function as a stressor, decreasing psychological well-being by increasing negative emotions.

Empirical investigations report a mixture of findings. Positive leader humor has been reported to have a negative relationship with follower stress (Guenzi et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2016) and no relationship (Evans & Steptoe-Warren, 2018). Negative leader humor has been found to have a positive relationship with follower stress (Guenzi et al., 2019; Huo et al., 2012) and no relationship with follower stress (Evans & Steptoe-Warren, 2018; Kim et al., 2016). Due to the proposed explanations and the empirical findings, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 18: There will be a negative relationship between positive leader humor and follower stress.

Hypothesis 19: There will be a positive relationship between negative leader humor and follower stress.

LEADER OUTCOMES OF LEADER HUMOR

Overall Leader Effectiveness

Overall leader effectiveness is a general measure of how well the leader facilitates task performance, develops relationships with follower, and considers the wellbeing of followers (Derue et al., 2011). As previously mentioned with regard to affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), positive leader humor may increase follower state positive affect, and negative leader humor may increase follower state negative affect. According to mood-as-information theory, people use their affect as an evaluator for judging an object, such as their leader (Schwarz & Clore, 1983). Thus, it is likely that followers who have these positive or negative affective reactions to leader humor are using their affective state to evaluate the effectiveness of the leader as positive or negative, respectively.

Further, positive leader humor may benefit other outcomes, such as leader–member exchange and follower in-role performance (Avolio et al., 1996; Decker & Rotondo, 2001),

which followers may use as impressions to create an overall judgment of their leader's effectiveness (Derue et al., 2011). Therefore, because positive leader humor likely enhances other outcomes in its nomological network, it will also enhance overall effectiveness.

Empirical reports indicate that there is a positive relationship between positive leader humor and overall leader effectiveness (Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Mascolo, 2014; Rizzo et al., 1999) and also no relationship (Hoendervoogt, 2015; Jacoub, 2014). Because of the theory and empirical findings, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 20: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and overall leader effectiveness.

Researchers have reported that there is no relationship between negative leader humor and overall leader effectiveness (Decker & Rotondo, 2001), a negative relationship (Mascolo, 2014), and a positive relationship (Gkorezis & Bellou, 2016). Based on strong theoretical and empirical support, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 21: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and overall leader effectiveness.

Leader Performance

Leader performance consists of the task, innovative, and relationship-oriented behaviors of a leader that contribute to an effective workplace (Yukl, 1998). There may be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and leader performance and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and leader performance.

As previously mentioned, positive leader humor may lead to positive affect, whereas negative leader humor may lead to negative affect. Also, according to broaden-and-build theory, a positive affective state precipitates relationship and task-oriented behaviors, whereas a negative

affective state restricts and limits them (Fredrickson, 2004). Therefore, positive leader humor can be considered a leader behavior that helps the workplace by improving the affective state of the follower. In contrast, negative leader humor would be detrimental to the workplace by worsening follower state affect.

Researchers have reported a positive relationship between positive leader humor and leader performance (Avolio et al., 1999; Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Decker et al., 2011; Ho et al., 2011) and also no relationship (Promsri, 2017). Researchers have also reported a negative relationship between negative leader humor and leader performance (Decker et al., 2011), no relationship (Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Promsri, 2017), and even a positive relationship (Ho et al., 2011). Based on strong theoretical and empirical support, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 22: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and leader performance.

Hypothesis 23: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and leader performance.

LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONAL OUTCOMES

Leader–Member Exchange

Leader–member exchange is a relationship-based approach to leadership that contends that a leader has a unique relationship with each subordinate, and the relationship moves through the stages of trust, respect, and mutual obligation (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 2005). Leader–member exchange captures the quality of the relationship between the leader and the follower. Considering the relational process model (Cooper, 2008), there may be positive relationship between positive leader humor and leader–member exchange and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and leader–member exchange.

The relational process model describes how humor affects a workplace relationship, such as leader–member exchange (Cooper, 2008). The foundation for the relational process model is the reinforcement-affect model of attraction by Clore and Byrne (1974). The reinforcement-affect model of attraction states that social communications can elicit positive or negative affective states that act as reinforcing or punishing mechanisms, respectively. Drawing from the relational process model, leader humor is a form of social communication that elicits positive or negative affective responses, which, in turn, reinforce or punish the follower and raise or lower the follower's attraction to the leader (Cooper, 2008). The attraction between the leader and follower is a dimension of leader-member exchange (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). So, it is expected that positive leader humor will promote leader–member exchange, and negative leader humor will decrease leader–member exchange.

Unfortunately, the literature is replete with many conflicting findings concerning the relationship between positive leader humor and leader–member exchange. Most empirical researchers report a positive relationship between positive leader humor and leader–member exchange (Cooper et al., 2018; Pundt, 2015; Pundt & Herrmann, 2015; Pundt & Venz, 2017; Yam et al., 2018), but some researchers report no relationship (Robert et al., 2016; Wisse & Rietzschel, 2014). However, considering the presented theory I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 24: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and leader–member exchange.

Similarly, empirical studies reveal conflicting findings concerning the relationship between negative leader humor and leader–member exchange—some researchers report no relationship (Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Robert et al., 2016; Wisse & Rietzschel, 2014; Yam, 2018), some indicate a negative relationship (Liu et al., 2019; Pundt & Herrmann, 2015; Wang et

al., 2020), and some demonstrate a positive relationship (Ford, 2011). Considering the strong theoretical background, I hypothesize the ensuing:

Hypothesis 25: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and leader–member exchange.

Follower Trust in Leader

Trust in leader is the willingness of a follower to be vulnerable to their leader even though they have no control over their leader (Mayer & Gavin, 2005). Additionally, affect-based trust is defined by the good intentions and benevolence of the trustee toward the trustor and is a central attribute of follower trust in their leader (McAllister, 1995). Once again, drawing from affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1995), it is likely that positive leader humor helps the follower feel positive affect, which, in turn, would help them gain affect-based trust in their leader. Further, negative leader humor may increase follower negative affect, thus lowering their trust in their leader.

Empirical findings largely suggest that there is a positive relationship between positive leader humor and leader trust (Hughes, 2009; Karakowski et al., 2019; Kim et al., 2016). Researchers have, however, reported mixed findings for the relationship between negative leader humor and trust in leader. Some empirical evidence supports a positive relationship (Gkorezis, 2016), whereas other researchers have observed a negative relationship (Kim et al., 2016). Due to the explanatory theory and empirical findings for the relationships of positive and negative leader humors with trust in leader, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 26: There will be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and trust in leader.

Hypothesis 27: There will be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and trust in leader.

FOLLOWER CORRELATES

The following section pertains to positive and negative leader humor's relationships with correlates including follower demographics and follower humor. Because there is little theoretical guidance and empirical support regarding these relationships, the conjectures detailed below are largely exploratory.

Follower Gender

Empirical studies have conflicting findings regarding the relationship between follower gender and positive leader humor. Most empirical evidence suggests that there is no relationship between follower gender and positive leader humor (Arendt, 2009; Gkorezis et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2016; Lee, 2015; Love, 2013; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2018; Pundt et al., 2017; Yam et al., 2018), and one study suggests that male followers report higher levels of positive leader humor than female followers (Tang, 2008).

Similarly, empirical research has mixed findings for the relationship between follower gender and negative leader humor. Some empirical data suggest no relationship (Arendt, 2009; Gkorezis et al., 2013; Lee, 2015; Love, 2013; Kim et al., 2016; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2018; Pundt et al., 2017; Yam et al., 2018), and other researchers report that male followers perceive more negative leader humor (Decker & Rotondo, 2001; Decker et al., 2011).

Research Question 7: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and follower gender?

Research Question 8: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and follower gender?

Follower Age

There is little to no research surrounding the relationship between positive or negative leader humor and follower age. Researchers have reported no relationship between follower age and positive leader humor (Goswami et al., 2016; Yam et al., 2018), and no relationship between follower age and negative leader humor (Gkorezis & Bellou, 2016; Gkorezis et al., 2011; Yam et al., 2018).

Research Question 9: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and follower age?

Research Question 10: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and follower age?

Follower Organizational Tenure

There may be a relationship between follower organizational tenure and positive leader humor. Follower organizational tenure is how long the follower has been a member of the current organization (Steffens et al., 2014). Gkorezis et al. (2011) argued two reasons why newer employees would report higher levels of positive leader humor and lower levels of negative humor. First, new employees tend to emphasize the positive aspects of the workplace; thus, they may focus on positive leader humor and filter out negative leader humor. Second, leaders may exhibit more positive leader humor and less negative leader humor to help newcomers adjust to the environment.

However, empirical research does not unanimously support the proposed positive relationship between follower organizational tenure and positive or negative leader humor. Some studies report a negative relationship between follower organizational tenure and positive leader humor (Gkorezis et al., 2011; Pundt & Herrmann, 2015), whereas others find no relationship

(Buford 1985; Love, 2013; Thelen, 2019). Additionally, only one study reports that less tenured employees perceive less negative leader humor (Gkorezis et al., 2011). However, other empirical studies report no relationship between employee organizational tenure and negative leader humor (Kim, 2016; Lee, 2015; Thelen, 2019).

Research Question 11: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and follower organizational tenure?

Research Question 12: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and follower organizational tenure?

Follower Positive and Negative Humor

There is currently no theoretical guidance for the relationships between positive and negative leader humor and positive and negative follower humor. Empirical evidence reports that there is a positive relationship between positive leader humor and positive follower humor (Arendt, 2006; Decker & Rotondo, 1999; Wisse & Rietzschel, 2014). However, there have been mixed findings regarding the relationship between negative leader humor and positive follower humor with some findings suggesting a positive relationship (Decker & Rotondo, 1999; Wisse & Rietzschel, 2014) and others suggesting a negative relationship (Decker et al., 2011).

Research Question 13: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and positive follower humor?

Research Question 14: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and positive follower humor?

Empirical evidence has reported a positive relationship between positive leader humor and negative follower humor (Decker & Rotondo, 1999; Decker et al., 2011) and no relationship (Wisse & Rietzschel, 2014). Researchers have observed a positive relationship between negative

leader humor and negative follower humor (Decker & Rotondo, 1999; Decker et al., 2011) as well as no relationship (Wisse & Rietzschel, 2014).

Research Question 15: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and negative follower humor?

Research Question 16: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and negative follower humor?

LEADER CORRELATES

The following section pertains to positive and negative leader humor's relationships with correlates including leader demographics and leadership styles. Because there is little theoretical guidance and empirical support regarding these relationships, the conjectures detailed below are largely exploratory.

Gender

As far as I can find, no literature draws upon theory to explain the relationship between leader gender and positive or negative leader humor. There is, however, empirical support that male leaders use more positive and negative leader humor compared to female leaders (Decker & Rotondo, 1999; 2001). But other research suggests that there is no relationship between gender and positive leader humor (Goswami et al., 2016; Mao et al., 2017; Pundt & Venz, 2017) or negative leader humor (Goswami et al., 2016; Mao et al., 2017; Pundt & Venz, 2017).

Research Question 17: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and leader gender?

Research Question 18: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and leader gender?

Age

I cannot find any research that uses theory to connect positive or negative leader humor with leader age. Researchers report no relationship between leader age and positive leader humor (Arendt, 2006; Goswami et al., 2016) or negative leader humor (Hu et al., 2017; Pundt et al., 2017).

Research Question 19: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and leader age?

Research Question 20: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and leader age?

Dyadic Tenure

There is currently no literature that I can find which discusses the association between dyadic tenure and positive or negative leader humor. Empirical research suggests conflicting findings for the relationship between dyadic tenure and positive leader humor. Some studies report a negative relationship between dyadic tenure and positive leader humor (Kim et al., 2016; Robert et al., 2016), whereas some research has indicated no relationship (Cooper et al., 2018; Lee, 2015). Additionally, existing empirical research reports that there is no relationship between dyadic tenure and negative leader humor (Cooper et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2016; Robert et al., 2016).

Research Question 21: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and dyadic tenure?

Research Question 22: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and dyadic tenure?

Leadership Styles

There is currently no theoretical guidance concerning the relationships between leader humor and transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. According to Avolio and Bass (1991), leadership style entails the different general behavioral patterns that leaders employ with followers and consists of three unique styles: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire.

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that involves encouraging followers to reframe the future, showing care and concern for followers, and coaching followers to develop their full abilities (Avolio & Bass, 1991). Empirical research reports a positive relationship between positive leader humor and transformational leadership (Arendt, 2009; Avolio et al., 1999; Cooper et al., 2018; Goswami et al., 2016), and no relationship (Hoffman, 2007). Empirical studies also suggest that there is a negative relationship between negative leader humor and transformational leadership (Cooper et al., 2018) and no relationship (Mascolo, 2014; Sarris, 2018).

Research Question 23: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and transformational leadership?

Research Question 24: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and transformational leadership?

Transactional leadership is mostly comprised of the apportionment of rewards or punishments based on performance (Avolio & Bass, 1991). Empirical research suggests that there is a positive relationship between positive leader humor and transactional leadership (Avolio et al., 1999; Mascolo, 2014; Tremblay & Gibson, 2016; Vecchio et al., 2009) and no relationship (Hoffman, 2007; Sarris, 2018). Researchers have also reported that there is a

negative relationship between negative leader humor and transactional leadership (Mascolo, 2014), no relationship (Sarris, 2018), and a positive relationship (Tremblay & Gibson, 2016).

Research Question 25: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and transactional leadership?

Research Question 26: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and transactional leadership?

Finally, laissez-faire leadership can be considered non-leadership as the leader does not engage with followers and avoids accepting responsibilities regarding their followers (Bass & Avolio, 1991). Empirical findings suggest that there is a negative relationship between positive leader humor and laissez-faire leadership (Avolio et al., 1999; Mascolo 2014; Sarris, 2018; Tremblay & Gibson, 2016), no relationship (Hoffman, 2007). Empirical research reports that there is a positive relationship between negative leader humor and laissez-faire leadership (Sarris, 2018) and no relationship (Mascolo, 2014; Tremblay & Gibson, 2016).

Research Question 27: What is the relationship between positive leader humor and laissez-faire leadership?

Research Question 28: What is the relationship between negative leader humor and laissez-faire leadership?

MODERATION

Another issue relevant to the conceptualization of leader humor as a trait and a behavior is the response format of leader humor measures. Specifically, Kong et al. (2019) argued that the agreement response format captures leader humor trait, while the frequency response format assesses leader humor behaviors. However, in organizational research, researchers have used both agreement and frequency response formats to capture behaviors (e.g., Spector et al., 2010).

Therefore, it may be that frequency format and agreement format responses for leader humor are both capturing behaviors. There has been no investigation if response format moderates the relationships between positive and negative leader humor with their other variables. To help fill this gap in the literature, I created the following research question:

Research Question 29: Does the response format of leader humor measure moderate the relationships examined in this meta-analysis?

To check for publication bias, I also explore publication status as the moderator. Publication bias refers to stronger reported relationships being over-represented in published research compared to non-published research (Schmidt & Hunter, 2003). It is common practice for meta-analyses to check for publication bias (e.g., Kong et al., 2019) to help identify where relationship over-representation may occur in the literature, and is recommended by researchers (Rothstein et al., 2005). Therefore, I developed the following research question to investigate publication bias for both positive and negative leader humor:

Research Question 30: Does publication status moderate the relationships examined in this meta-analysis?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

LITERATURE SEARCH

First, I conducted an extensive literature search for relevant articles. On PsycINFO, ABI/Inform, ISI Web of Science, ProQuest Dissertation Abstracts, and Google Scholar, I did a keyword search for the terms *leader* and *humor* as well as their synonyms. The leader keywords included leader, supervisor, manager, and boss. The humor keywords were humor, joke, tease, and fun. Second, I examined the reference sections of the existing meta-analyses on leader humor (i.e., Kong et al., 2019; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012) to identify relevant studies. Third, I checked the 2010–2020 conference programs for the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology and the Academy of Management for unpublished studies. Fourth, I contacted the authors of meta-analyzable studies that were missing relevant information. Finally, I checked the reference section of each relevant paper for any potential additional study.

INCLUSION CRITERIA

There were several criteria for a study to be included in this meta-analysis. Participants must be employees in an organization—no student samples. Also, the study must measure and report a correlation—or statistic that can be transformed into a correlation (e.g., Cohen's *d*)—between positive leader humor and other variables or negative leader humor and other variables.

CODING

Two raters coded each study independently for correlations, reliabilities, sample sizes, leader tenure, follower tenure, dyadic tenure, leader age, follower age, percent of female leaders, the response format of the leader humor, and the percent of female followers. The average

interrater agreement for these variables was 85.60%. All mismatches were reviewed and resolved between the two coders.

The same two raters coded leader humor dichotomously into either positive or negative leader humor. Reported leader humor was coded as negative by its indication that the humor is harmful in some way (e.g., hurtful, insulting, teasing). Reported leader humor was coded as positive when it has no indication of harm. This coding scheme was in accordance with the idea that positive humor is benign and is characterized by its absence of harm (Craik, et al., 1996; Holmes & Marra, 2002; Martin, et al., 2003; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). The interrater reliability for positive and negative leader humor coding was 99.29%. The one mismatch was reviewed and resolved by the coders.

Composite theory was used to combine correlations when a study provided multiple accounts of positive leader humor (e.g., affiliative leader humor and self-enhancing leader humor) or when providing facets of another variable of interest (e.g., five facets of transformational leadership) (Schmidt & Hunter, 2003). For the few longitudinal studies, either only the first wave of data was used or, if that was not possible, only the first instance of the time-lagged relationship was used. For example, if positive leader humor was measured at T1 and follower stress was measured at T2 and T3, the relationship between T1 positive leader humor and T2 follower stress (but not T1 positive leader humor and T3 follower stress) was coded. No study provided more than one correlation for the same relationship in this meta-analysis.

To examine the possible moderating role of response format for relationships involving positive leader humor, the coders noted whether the positive leader humor measures used in primary studies involved frequency-based responses or agreement-based responses (as response

format may differ from that of the measure when it was first published). The interrater agreement for response format was 100%. There were not enough papers to examine the moderation of response format for relationships involving negative leader humor.

DATA ANALYSES

I employed Hunter and Schmidt's (2004) method to meta-analyze the relationships between leader humor and other variables by correcting correlations for the unreliability for the predictor and criterion variables using the individual correction method.

As recommended by Rothstein et al., (2005), I also checked for publication bias by assessing whether publication status moderated positive and negative leader humor's relationships with their antecedents, outcomes, and correlates.

FEATURES OF THE ANALYZED STUDIES

The literature search yielded 67 distinct samples of participants (Follower N = 18,446; Leader N = 2,675; Total N = 21,121) with an average follower sample size of 293.93 (SD = 226.76) and leader sample size of 100.86 (SD = 81.45). The average percentage of female participants was 50.43% (SD = 19.65) for followers and 33.22% (SD = 22.23) for leaders. The average age of participants was 38.41 years (SD = 22.91 years) for followers and 45.47 years (SD = 7.58 years) for leaders. The mean organizational tenure of followers was 7.60 years (SD = 5.74 years), whereas the mean organizational tenure of leaders was 9.06 years (SD = 5.14 years). The average dyadic tenure was 3.57 years (SD = 1.45 years). The distribution of industries for the studies was mixed (52.3%), education (12.1%), non-profit (6.1%), financial (3.0%), healthcare (3.0%), sales (3.0%), technology (3.0%), security (1.5%), manufacturing (1.5%), and unreported (13.6%).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

ANTECEDENTS

Follower Trait Positive and Negative Affect

Table 2 presents the mean corrected correlations between leader humor and follower trait positive affect and trait negative affect along with standard errors, and 95% confidence intervals. There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower trait positive affect (ρ = .17, 95% CI [.12, .22]). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported. However, there was no significant relationship between positive leader humor and follower trait negative affect (ρ = -.06, 95% CI [-.14, .02]), no significant relationship between negative leader humor and follower trait positive affect (ρ = -.01, 95% CI [-.08, .06]), and no significant relationship between negative leader humor and follower trait negative affect (ρ = .05, 95% CI [-.03, .13]). Therefore, Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4 were not supported.

Table 2

Meta-Analytic Relationships Between Positive and Negative Leader Humor and Follower Trait Affect

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
TPA – PLH	10	2118	.13	.14	.17	.14	-.01	.36	.12	.22	21.75	
TNA – NLH	6	1234	-.005	.13	-.01	.14	-.19	.16	-.08	.06	28.41	4.29***
TPA – PLH	4	791	-.05	.09	-.06	.06	-.14	.02	-.14	.02	64.42	
TNA – NLH	5	1034	.04	.21	.05	.25	-.26	.36	-.03	.13	11.06	-1.93

Note. PLH = positive leader humor; NLH = negative leader humor; TPA = follower trait positive affect; TNA = follower trait negative affect; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts; Z = z-score for testing whether there was a significant difference between positive leader humor and negative leader humor in relation to a specific variable in terms of the association strength;

* p <.05; ** p <.01; *** p <.001.

FOLLOWER OUTCOMES

Table 3 displays the relationships between leader humor and follower outcome variables.

State Affect

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower state positive affect (ρ = .35, 95% CI [.31, .41]), supporting Hypothesis 5. However, there was no significant relationship between leader positive humor and follower state negative affect (ρ = -.03, 95% CI [-.01, .04]), providing no support for Hypothesis 6. There was a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower state positive affect (ρ = -.16, 95% CI [-.24, -.09]) and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower state negative affect (ρ = -.12, 95% CI [-.21, -.03]). Therefore, Hypothesis 7, but not Hypothesis 8, was supported.

In-Role Performance

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower in-role performance (ρ = .21, 95% CI [.14, .27]) and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower in-role performance (ρ = -.08, 95% CI [-.18, -.02]), supporting Hypotheses 9 and 10.

Innovation

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower innovation (ρ = .21, 95% CI [.19, .28]) and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower innovation (ρ = -.10, 95% CI [-.18, -.02]), supporting Hypotheses 11 and 12.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower organizational citizenship behaviors (ρ = .36, 95% CI [.32, .40]) and a negative relationship

between negative leader humor and follower organizational citizenship behaviors (ρ = -.30, 95% CI [-.35, -.26]). Therefore, Hypotheses 13 and 14 were supported.

Counterproductive Workplace Behaviors

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower counterproductive workplace behaviors (ρ = .11, 95% CI [.03, .19], Research Question 1). There was a positive relationship between negative leader humor and follower counterproductive workplace behaviors (ρ = .13, 95% CI [.05, .22]), supporting Hypothesis 15.

Job Satisfaction

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower job satisfaction (ρ = .29, 95% CI [.25, .32]) and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower job satisfaction (ρ = -.26, 95% CI [-.32, -.20]), supporting Hypotheses 16 and 17.

Work Engagement

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower work engagement (ρ = .23, 95% CI [.19, .27]) and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower work engagement (ρ = -.08, 95% CI [-.16, -.004]), supporting Hypotheses 18 and 19.

Affective Organizational Commitment

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower affective organizational commitment (ρ = .22, 95% CI [.16, .28]) and no relationship between negative leader humor and follower affective organizational commitment (ρ = -.10, 95% CI [-.22, .02]), supporting Hypotheses 20 but not 21.

Stress

There was a negative relationship between positive leader humor and follower stress (ρ = -.20, 95% CI [-.25, -.15]) and a positive relationship between negative leader humor and follower stress (ρ = .17, 95% CI [.11, .23]), supporting Hypotheses 22 and 23.

Table 3

Meta-Analytic Results for Follower Outcomes of Positive and Negative Leader Humor

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
PLH – SPA	7	1697	.30	.19	.35	.19	.11	.61	.31	.41	10.95	
NLH – SPA	5	999	-.13	13	-.16	.13	-.34	.01	-.24	-.09	27.19	4.24***
PLH – SNA	4	1011	-.03	.02	-.03	0	-.03	-.03	-.01	.04	100	
NLH – SNA	4	783	-.09	.15	-.12	.17	-.35	.11	-.21	-.03	21.04	-1.45
PLH – IP	5	1145	.18	.03	.21	0	.21	.21	.14	.27	100	
NLH – IP	4	910	-.08	.12	-.10	.13	-.26	.06	-.18	-.02	29.73	2.01*
PLH – IN	8	2209	.21	10	.24	.10	.10	.37	.19	.28	27.70	
NLH – IN	4	895	-.10	.12	-.12	.19	-.28	.04	-.20	-.04	28.30	2.50*
PLH – OCB	10	3227	.31	.25	.36	.27	.01	.70	.32	.40	4.32	
NLH – OCB	6	1978	-.26	.39	-.30	.46	-.89	.28	-.35	-.26	1.78	1.80
PLH – CWB	4	774	.09	.15	.11	.15	-.08	.30	.03	.19	23.62	
NLH – CWB	4	794	.11	.13	.13	.13	-.03	.30	.05	.22	31.35	-0.30
PLH – JS	12	3540	.25	.11	.29	.10	.16	.52	.25	.32	26.71	
NLH – JS	6	1317	-.22	.13	-.26	.13	-.42	-.09	-.32	-.20	25.38	0.76
PLH – WE	9	2701	.21	.06	.23	.03	.19	.27	.19	.27	78.49	
NLH – WE	4	851	-.06	.22	-.08	.23	-.38	.22	-.16	-.004	10.23	3.39***

Table 3

(Continued)

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
PLH – OC	7	1401	.18	.18	.22	.19	-.03	.46	.16	.28	15.33	
NLH – OC	2	391	-.09	.07	-.10	.04	-.15	-.06	-.22	.02	85.7	1.66
PLH – Stress	8	1810	-17	.18	-.20	.19	-.45	.06	-.25	-.15	12.81	
NLH – Stress	7	1673	.12	.26	.17	.31	-.23	.57	.11	.23	6.40	0.77

Note. PLH = positive leader humor; NLH = negative leader humor; SPA = state positive affect; SNA = state negative affect; IP = in-role performance; IN = innovation; OCB = organizational citizenship behaviors; CWB = counterproductive work behaviors; JS = job satisfaction; WE = work engagement; OC = organizational commitment; Stress = stress; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts. Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

LEADER OUTCOMES

Overall Leader Effectiveness

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and overall leader effectiveness (ρ = .57, 95% CI [.54, .60]) and no significant relationship between negative leader humor and overall leader effectiveness (ρ = .03, 95% CI [-.02, .09]). Therefore, Hypothesis 24 was supported, but Hypothesis 25 was not supported.

Leader Performance

Hypothesis 26 predicted that there would be a positive relationship between positive leader humor and leader performance. The results supported this hypothesis: ρ = .60, 95% CI [.54, .65]. Hypothesis 27 predicted that there would be a negative relationship between negative leader humor and leader performance. The results supported this hypothesis: ρ = -.17, 95% CI [-.25, -.09].

Table 4

Meta-Analytic Results for Leader Outcomes of Positive and Negative Leader Humor

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
PLH – LE	10	2820	.51	.09	.57	.09	.45	.68	.54	.60	23.18	
NLH – LE	6	1466	.02	.32	.03	.36	-.43	.50	-.02	.09	3.93	15.94***
PLH – LP	5	1033	.50	.13	.60	.12	.44	.75	.54	.65	21.51	
NLH – LP	4	918	-.14	.08	-.17	.06	-.25	-.09	-.25	-.09	59.19	8.60***

Note. PLH = positive leader humor; NLH = negative leader humor; LMX = leader-member exchange; LE = overall leader effectiveness; LP = leader performance; TIL = trust in leader; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts. Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIP OUTCOMES

Table 5 displays the relationships between leader humor and leader-follower outcome variables.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and LMX (ρ = .52, 95% CI [.50, .55]) and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and LMX (ρ = -.29, 95% CI [-.33, -.25]), supporting Hypotheses 28 and 29.

Trust in Leader

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and trust in leader (ρ = .45, 95% CI [.41, .50]), supporting Hypothesis 30. However, there was no significant relationship between negative leader humor and trust in leader (ρ = .01, 95% CI [-.06, .08]), providing no support for Hypothesis 31.

Table 5

Meta-Analytic Results for Leader-Follower Relational Outcomes of Positive and Negative Leader Humor

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
PLH – LMX	16	4717	.47	.15	.52	.15	.33	.72	.50	.55	10.08	
NLH – LMX	11	3740	-.23	.29	-.29	.35	-.74	.15	-.33	-.25	3.31	10.05***
PLH – TIL	6	1516	.40	.09	.45	.08	.35	.56	.41	.50	36.56	
NLH – TIL	5	1086	-.01	.37	.01	.45	-.56	.58	-.06	.08	3.09	10.26***

Note. PLH = positive leader humor; NLH = negative leader humor; LMX = leader-member exchange; LE = overall leader effectiveness; LP = leader performance; TIL = trust in leader; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts. Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

FOLLOWER CORRELATES

Table 6 shows the relationships of positive and negative leader humor with follower correlates.

Follower Gender

There was no significant relationship between positive leader humor and follower gender (ρ = -.01, 95% CI [-.04, .01], Research Question 2), suggesting there was no difference in reported positive leader humor between female followers and male followers. There was a negative relationship between negative leader humor and follower gender (ρ = -.05, 95% CI [-.09, -.02], Research Question 3), supporting that there was less negative leader humor when the follower was female.

Follower Age

There was a negative relationship between positive leader humor and follower age (ρ = -.04, 95% CI [-.07, -.01], Research Question 4). There was no significant relationship between negative leader humor and follower age (ρ = -.02, 95% CI [-.06, .02], Research Question 5).

Follower Organizational Tenure

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and follower organizational tenure (ρ = .09, 95% CI [.04, .14], Research Question 6), and no significant relationship between negative leader humor and follower organizational tenure (ρ = -.004, 95% CI [-.06, .05], Research Question 7).

Positive Follower Humor

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and positive follower humor (ρ = .28, 95% CI [.23, .33], Research Question 8) and a positive relationship between

negative leader humor and positive follower humor (ρ = .11, 95% CI [.05, .18], Research Question 9).

Negative Follower Humor

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and negative follower humor (ρ = .12, 95% CI [.03, .21], Research Question 10) and a positive relationship between negative leader humor and negative follower humor (ρ = .57, 95% CI [.49, .64], Research Question 11).

Table 6

Relationship Between Positive and Negative Leader Humor and Follower Correlates

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
PLH – FG	24	5651	-.01	.07	-.01	.005	-.02	-.01	-.04	.01	99.54	
NLH – FG	16	3831	-.05	.11	-.05	.10	-.18	.07	-.09	-.02	34.90	-1.15
PLH – FA	20	4502	-.04	.08	-.04	.05	-.11	.02	-.07	-.01	65.60	
NLH – FA	12	2911	-.02	.07	-.02	.04	-.07	.03	-.06	.02	79.13	-0.78
PLH – OT	8	1514	.09	.21	.09	.21	-.18	.36	.04	.14	11.76	
NLH – OT	7	1744	-.005	.06	-.004	0	-.004	-.004	-.06	.05	100	1.68
PLH – PFH	8	2010	.26	.23	.28	.29	-.09	.65	.23	.33	5.54	
NLH – PFH	7	1519	.09	.12	.11	.14	-.06	.29	.05	.18	29.67	3.87***
PLH – NFH	4	912	.09	.07	.12	.05	.06	.18	.03	.21	75.31	
NLH – NFH	4	912	.41	.28	.57	.38	.08	1.00	.49	.64	3.77	-7.71***

Note. PLH = positive leader humor; NLH = negative leader humor; FG = follower gender; FA = follower age; OT = organizational tenure; PFH = positive follower humor; NFH = negative follower humor; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts; Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

LEADER CORRELATES

Table 7 shows the relationships of positive and negative leader humor with leader correlates.

Leader Gender

There was a negative relationship between positive leader humor and leader gender (ρ = -.09, 95% CI [-.12, -.05], Research Question 12), suggesting that there was less positive leader humor reported when the leader was female. There was a negative relationship between negative leader humor and leader gender (ρ = -.12, 95% CI [-.18, -.06], Research Question 13), suggesting that there was less negative leader humor when the leader was female.

Leader Age

There was a negative relationship between positive leader humor and leader age (ρ = -.08, 95% CI [-.15, -.005], Research Question 14) and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and leader age (ρ = .05, 95% CI [-.05, .18], Research Question 15).

Dyadic Tenure

There was a negative relationship between positive leader humor and dyadic tenure (ρ = -.06, 95% CI [-.12, -.01], Research Question 16) and no significant relationship between negative leader humor and dyadic tenure (ρ = -.02, 95% CI [-.07, .03], Research Question 17).

Transformational Leadership

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and transformational leadership (ρ = .45, 95% CI [.43, .48], Research Question 18) and a negative relationship between negative leader humor and transformational leadership (ρ = -.29, 95% CI [-.37, -.20], Research Question 19).

Transactional Leadership

There was a positive relationship between positive leader humor and transactional leadership (ρ = .31, 95% CI [.24, .37], Research Question 20) and no significant relationship between negative leader humor and transactional leadership (ρ = -.03, 95% CI [-.13, .06], Research Question 21).

Laissez-Faire Leadership

There was a negative relationship between positive leader humor and laissez-faire leadership (ρ = -.34, 95% CI [-.43, -.26], Research Question 22) and a significant positive relationship between negative leader humor and laissez-faire leadership (ρ = .29, 95% CI [.20, .39], Research Question 23).

Table 7

Relationship Between Positive and Negative Leader Humor and Leader Correlates

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
PLH – LG	12	2926	-.08	.08	-.09	.05	-.15	-.02	-.12	-.05	66.08	
NLH – LG	5	1196	-.11	.09	-.12	.07	-.21	-.03	-.18	-.06	51.35	0.96
PLH – LA	4	856	-.07	.06	-.08	0	-.08	-.08	-.15	-.005	100	
NLH – LA	2	377	.05	.11	.06	.09	-.05	.18	-.05	.18	44.85	0.18
PLH – DT	5	1415	-.06	.09	-.06	.08	-.16	.04	-.12	-.01	38.37	
NLH – DT	7	1715	-.02	.07	-.02	.02	-.05	.01	-.07	.03	91.75	-1.03
PLH – TFL	14	4260	.40	.19	.45	.20	.19	.71	.43	.48	6.50	
NLH – TFL	5	787	-.23	.14	-.29	.14	.47	-.10	-.37	-.20	30.47	3.71***
PLH – TSL	7	1233	.23	.21	.31	.22	.03	.59	.24	.37	14.63	
NLH – TSL	4	767	-.02	.05	-.03	0	-.03	-.03	-.13	.06	100	4.47***
PLH – LFL	5	922	-.25	.14	-.34	.16	-.54	-.14	-.43	-.26	25.89	
NLH – LFL	4	767	.21	.10	.29	.09	.17	.41	.20	.39	52.61	0.83

Note. PLH = positive leader humor; NLH = negative leader humor; LG = leader gender; LA = leader age; DT = dyadic tenure; TFL = transformational leadership; TSL = transactional leadership; LFL = laissez-faire leadership; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts; Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

THE POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE LEADER HUMOR RELATIONSHIP

Table 8 shows the relationship between positive and negative leader humor. The results indicate that there was no correlation between positive and negative leader humor ($\rho = .03$, 95% CI [-.0005, .05]). Further, z-tests indicated (see Tables 2-7) that positive leader humor had a stronger association than negative leader humor with follower trait positive affect, follower-state positive affect, follower in-role performance, follower innovation, follower work engagement, leader effectiveness, leader performance, leader-member exchange, trust in leader, positive follower humor, transformational leadership, and transactional leadership. In contrast, negative leader humor had a stronger relationship than positive leader humor with only follower negative humor. Additionally, there was no significant difference between positive and negative leader humor in relation to follower outcomes of state negative affect, organizational citizenship behaviors, counterproductive work behaviors, job satisfaction, and stress. Nor were there differences for the correlates of gender and age (both follower and leader), dyadic tenure, or laissez-faire leadership.

Table 8

The Relationship Between Positive and Negative Leader Humor

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.
PLH – NLH	26	7842	.03	.35	.03	.42	-.51	.56	-.0005	.05	2.76

Note. PLH = positive leader humor; NLH = negative leader humor; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

MODERATION

Response Format

The response format of leader humor measures moderated the relationships between positive leader humor and other variables (see Tables 9 and 10; Research Question 24). Specifically, positive leader humor had stronger associations with follower state positive affect and organizational commitment, and transformational leadership when the leader humor measure used a frequency response format than an agreement response format. In contrast, positive leader humor had stronger associations with gender (both follower and leader), positive follower humor and organizational citizenship behaviors when the leader humor measure used an agreement response format than a frequency response format. There were no significant differences for all other relationships between different response formats of leader humor measures.

Table 9

Moderation of Response Scale on Positive Leader Humor Nomological Network Outcome Relationships

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
F.PLH – SPA	4	1108	.38	.18	.44	.17	.22	.66	.38	.49	10.47	
A.PLH – SPA	3	589	.17	.13	.20	.12	.05	.36	.11	.30	30.72	4.22***
F.PLH – IN	4	1336	.21	.03	.23	0	.23	.23	.18	.29	100.00	
A.PLH – IN	5	1423	.21	.13	.23	.15	.05	.42	.18	.29	16.61	-0.03
F.PLH – OCB	5	1531	.21	.15	.24	.14	.06	.42	.19	.29	15.78	
A.PLH – OCB	7	2225	.36	.27	.41	.31	.02	.81	.37	.45	3.25	-4.99***
F.PLH – JS	6	2376	.27	.08	.30	.06	.22	.38	.26	.34	39.16	
A.PLH – JS	8	1618	.20	.15	.24	.14	.06	.43	.19	30	24.32	1.44
F.PLH – OC	3	784	.28	.07	.33	0	.33	.33	.26	.41	100.00	
A.PLH – OC	3	445	.15	.16	.20	.15	-.0003	.40	.09	.31	29.06	2.02*
F.PLH – Stress	4	933	-.04	.10	-.04	.09	-.16	.07	-.12	.03	42.19	
A.PLH – Stress	4	877	-.05	.34	-.06	.41	-.59	.46	-.15	.02	3.96	0.39

Table 9

(Continued)

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
F.PLH – LMX	11	2321	.45	.09	.51	.07	.43	.60	.48	.55	44.60	
A.PLH – LMX	7	2736	.43	.23	.49	.24	.18	.79	.45	.52	3.46	1.16

Note. F.PLH = frequency-rated positive leader humor; A.PLH = agreement-rated positive leader humor; SPA = follower state positive affect; IN = follower innovation; OCB = follower organizational citizenship behavior; JS = follower job satisfaction; OC = follower organizational commitment; Stress = follower stress; LMX = leader-member exchange; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts. Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

Table 10

Moderation of Response Scale on Positive Leader Humor Nomological Network Correlate Relationships

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
F.PLH – FG	9	2218	.01	.05	.01	0	.01	.01	-.03	.06	100.00	
A.PLH – FG	15	3633	-.04	.11	-.04	.10	-.17	.08	-.08	-.01	32.60	-3.87***
F.PLH – FA	8	2076	-.03	.07	-.03	.02	-.07	.003	-.08	.01	84.30	
A.PLH – FA	12	2920	-.07	.09	-.07	.07	-.16	.01	-.11	-.03	48.83	1.31
F.PLH – PFH	4	1098	.15	.04	.16	0	.16	.16	.10	.23	100.00	
A.PLH – PFH	4	743	.43	.30	.54	.44	-.02	1.11	.46	.62	3.23	-7.24***
F.PLH – LG	4	967	-.01	.05	-.01	0	-.01	-.01	-.07	.05	100.00	
A.PLH – LG	7	1678	-.14	.05	-.15	0	-.15	-.15	-.20	-.10	100.00	3.21**
F.PLH – DT	3	742	.002	.02	.002	0	.002	.002	-.07	.07	100.00	
A.PLH – DT	3	843	-.05	.12	-.05	.11	-.19	.10	-.17	.03	24.40	-0.83
F.PLH – TFL	5	2377	.53	.02	.58	0	.58	.58	.55	.61	100.00	
A.PLH – TFL	6	816	.41	.15	.49	.16	.28	.69	.42	.55	22.33	2.47*
F.PLH – NLH	7	1385	-.002	.28	-.01	.32	-.43	.40	-.08	.05	6.71	
A.PLH – NLH	20	8364	.05	.31	.06	.37	-.42	.53	.03	.08	2.47	-1.00

Table 10

(Continued)

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
F.PLH – FG	9	2218	.01	.05	.01	0	.01	.01	-.03	.06	100.00	
A.PLH – FG	15	3633	-.04	.11	-.04	.10	-.17	.08	-.08	-.01	32.60	-3.87***

Note. F.PLH = frequency-rated positive leader humor; A.PLH = agreement-rated positive leader humor; PFH = positive follower humor; TFL = transformational leadership; LG = leader gender; FG = follower gender; FA = follower age; DT = dyadic tenure; NLH = negative leader humor; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts. Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

Publication Status

The moderation effects of publication status are contained in Tables 11-13 (Research Question 25). The relationships between positive leader humor and follower organizational citizenship behaviors, positive leader humor and follower stress, negative leader humor and stress, and positive leader humor and transactional leadership were stronger for published than unpublished samples. Interestingly, the direction of the relationship between negative leader humor and stress was different between published and unpublished samples such that this relationship was negative for unpublished samples (ρ = -17, 95% CI [-.27, -.07]) and positive for published samples (ρ = .35, 95% CI [.28, .42]). Further, the relationships between negative leader humor and job satisfaction, positive leader humor and leader-member exchange, and positive leader humor and transformational leadership were stronger for unpublished than published samples. Finally, there were no significant differences between published and unpublished studies for all other relationships.

Table 11

Moderation of Publication Status on Positive and Negative Leader Humor and Follower Antecedent and Outcome Relationships

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
P.PLH – PA	4	873	.14	.07	.15	.03	.11	.20	.08	.22	82.78	
U.PLH – PA	6	1245	.16	.17	.18	.19	-.06	.43	.12	.25	14.66	0.66
P.PLH – IN	5	1341	.20	.13	.22	.13	.05	.39	.16	.28	19.23	
U.PLH – IN	3	868	.23	.02	.27	0	.27	.27	.19	.34	100.00	0.96
P.PLH – OCB	6	2012	.38	.27	.44	.28	.06	.82	.40	.48	3.22	
U.PLH – OCB	4	1215	.20	.16	.24	.16	.04	.43	.17	.30	13.64	-5.41***
P.PLH – JS	5	1251	.23	.11	.26	.10	.13	.39	.20	.32	32.01	
U.PLH – JS	7	2289	.26	.12	.30	.10	.17	.42	.25	.34	24.5	0.85
P.NLH – JS	3	756	-.11	.01	-.13	0	-.13	-.13	-.21	-.04	100.00	
U.NLH – JS	3	561	-.37	.01	-.43	0	-.43	-.43	-.51	-.34	100.00	-5.00***
P.PLH – WE	3	582	.18	.10	.19	.08	.08	.29	.10	.27	44.22	
U.PLH – WE	6	2119	.21	.04	.25	0	.25	.25	.20	.29	100.00	1.21
P.PLH – OC	4	846	.18	.20	.21	.21	-.07	.48	.13	.28	10.81	
U.PLH – OC	3	555	.18	.13	.29	.08	.18	.39	.17	.40	61.49	1.16

Table 11

(Continued)

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
P.PLH – Stress	3	823	-.33	.11	-.41	.11	-.55	-.26	-.48	-.33	26.81	
U.PLH – Stress	5	987	-.05	.11	-.05	.09	-.17	.06	-.13	.02	43.91	6.61***
P.NLH – Stress	4	1066	.27	.14	.35	.15	.16	.54	.28	.42	19.20	
U.NLH – Stress	3	607	-.13	.21	-.17	.26	-.51	.17	-.27	-.07	10.71	-2.75**

Note. P.PLH = published positive leader humor; U.PLH = unpublished positive leader humor; P.NLH = published negative leader humor; U.NLH = unpublished negative leader humor; PA = follower trait positive affect; IN = follower innovation; OCB = follower organizational citizenship behavior; JS = follower job satisfaction; WE = follower work engagement; OC = follower organizational commitment; Stress = follower stress; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts. Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

Table 12

Moderation of Publication Status on Positive and Negative Leader Humor Leader Outcome and Leader-Follower Relational Outcome Relationships

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
P.PLH – LMX	9	1880	.42	.17	.47	.17	.25	.69	.42	.51	12.08	
U.PLH – LMX	7	2937	.50	.13	.56	.12	.41	.72	.53	.59	10.49	3.67***
P.NLH – LMX	6	1481	-.21	.24	-.26	.28	-.62	.10	-.32	-.20	6.66	
U.NLH – LMX	5	2259	-.23	.32	-.31	.39	-.81	.19	-.36	-.26	2.061	-1.07
P.PLH – LE	4	1093	.53	.09	.60	.07	.51	.69	.55	.65	32.80	
U.PLH – LE	6	1727	.50	.10	.55	.09	.43	.66	.51	.58	21.75	-1.79

Note. P.PLH = published positive leader humor; U.PLH = unpublished positive leader humor; P.NLH = published negative leader humor; U.NLH = unpublished negative leader humor; LMX = leader-member exchange; LE = leader efficacy; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts. Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

Table 13

Moderation of Publication Status on Positive and Negative Leader Humor Nomological Network Correlates

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
P.PLH – FG	16	3951	-.02	.07	-.02	.03	-.05	.02	-.05	.01	86.40	
U.PLH – FG	8	1700	-.002	.06	-.002	0	-.002	-.002	-.05	.05	100.00	0.57
P.NLH – FG	11	2829	-.04	.12	-.05	.11	-.20	.10	-.09	-.01	26.9	
U.NLH – FG	5	1002	-.06	.07	-.07	0	-.07	-.07	-.14	.004	100.00	-0.47
P.PLH – FA	12	2802	-.05	.09	-.05	.06	-.13	.03	-.09	-.01	56.23	
U.PLH – FA	8	1700	-.02	.07	-.02	.01	-.04	-.01	-.07	.03	97.09	0.97
P.NLH – FA	8	2120	-.03	.07	-.03	.05	-.09	.03	-.08	.02	67.58	
U.NLH – FA	4	791	.01	.06	.01	0	.01	.01	-.07	.09	100.00	-0.46
P.PLH – LG	8	1751	-.11	.07	-.12	.03	-.16	-.08	-.17	-.07	84.27	
U.PLH – LG	4	1175	-.04	.07	-.04	.03	-.08	.001	-.01	.02	79.40	0.09
P.PLH – TFL	9	3478	.40	.20	.44	.21	.17	.72	.41	.47	4.69	
U.PLH – TFL	6	1878	.48	.10	.54	.08	.43	.65	.50	.58	24.63	3.77***

Table 13

(Continued)

Relationships	*K*	*N*	$\bar{r}$	SD_r	ρ	SD_ρ	CV_{10}	CV_{90}	CI_L	CI_U	% var.	Z
P.PLH – TSL	4	750	.32	.15	.38	.16	.17	.58	.30	.45	19.23	
U.PLH – TSL	3	483	.09	.21	.15	.25	-.16	.47	.03	.28	16.46	-2.97***

Note. P.PLH = published positive leader humor; U.PLH = unpublished positive leader humor; P.NLH = published negative leader humor; U.NLH = unpublished negative leader humor; FG = follower gender; FA = follower age; LG = leader gender; TFL = transformational leadership; TSL = transactional leadership; $\bar{r}$ = mean sample size-weighted correlation; SD_r = sample size-weighted observed standard deviation of correlation; ρ = mean sample size-weighted correlation corrected for unreliability in the predictor and the criterion; SD_ρ = standard deviation of ρ; CV_{10} and CV_{90}: 10% and 90% credibility intervals, respectively; CI_L and CI_U: lower and upper bounds, respectively, of the 95% confidence interval around the corrected mean correlation; % var. = percentage of variance attributable to sampling error and other statistical artifacts. Z = z-score between positive and negative leader humor correlation with a variable in terms of the association strength.

*p <.05; **p <.01; ***p <.001.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This meta-analysis addresses several important issues in the leader humor literature: (1) the conceptual distinctiveness of positive leader humor and negative leader humor (Kong et al., 2019), (2) conflicting predictions and empirical findings regarding the effects of leader humor (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012), (3) limited research on the antecedents and correlates of leader humor (Pundt & Venz, 2017), and (4) the unclear influence of the response format of leader humor measures on the relationships between leader humor and other variables (Robert, 2017). By addressing these issues, this meta-analysis has several important findings. First, there is no significant relationship between positive and negative leader humor. Second, positive and negative leader humor have differential relationships with most correlates, antecedents and outcomes. Third, positive leader humor is beneficially related to various follower and leader positive outcomes (e.g., task performance, creativity, job satisfaction, work engagement) and leader-follower relationship quality (e.g., leader-member exchange), whereas negative leader humor exhibits detrimental effects on these positive outcomes (or, in some cases, a lack of thereof). Interestingly, positive and negative leader humor both positively associate with follower counterproductive work behaviors. Fourth, follower trait positive affect is related to positive, but not negative, leader humor, whereas trait negative affect has no association with either positive or negative leader humor. Fifth, (both follower and leader) demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, tenure) have weak or null relationships with both positive and negative leader humor. Interestingly, male leaders engage in more negative and positive leader humor than female leaders. Transformational leadership and transactional leadership have positive

associations with positive leader humor while laissez-faire has a negative association. Transformational leadership is negatively associated with negative leader humor while laissez-faire leadership has a positive association with negative leader humor. Finally, the response format of leader humor measures and publication status moderate some of the relationships between leader humor and other variables. However, there are no clear patterns regarding their moderation effects; both frequency and agreement format increase some of the relationships between positive leader humor with other variables and both published and unpublished studies increase some of the relationships between positive and negative leader humor with other variables.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings from this meta-analysis have several important theoretical implications. First, I contribute to the leader humor literature by addressing the debating issue concerning the distinctiveness of positive and negative leader humor (Kong et al., 2019; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012). The leader humor literature is confusing and contradictory, because some researchers conceptualize positive leader humor (absent of harm) and negative leader humor (harmful) as two different sides of the same coin (Craik et al., 1996; Martin et al., 2003), whereas other scholars suggest that positive and negative leader humor are different coins (Cann et al., 2014; Decker & Rotondo, 1999). This meta-analysis suggests that there is a null relationship between positive and negative leader humor, and that positive and negative leader humor have differential relationships with correlates, antecedents, and outcomes which is strong evidence that positive and negative leader humor are separate constructs (Cann et al., 2014; Decker & Rotondo, 1999) rather than opposite ends of one conceptual spectrum (Craik et al., 1996; Martin et al., 2003). Therefore, researchers should better separate *positive leader humor* from *negative leader humor*.

Second, negative leader humor has detrimental effects on both follower and leader outcomes, whereas positive leader humor has beneficial effects on follower and leader outcomes. However, there is a dark side of using positive leader humor (i.e., increasing followers' engagement in deviant behaviors). Therefore, there are only dark sides of negative leader humor, while there are both bright and dark sides of positive leader humor. The bright and dark sides of positive leader humor are consistent with Yam et al.'s (2018) argument that leader humor is a mixed blessing. Although positive leader humor may promote follower positive emotions and therefore positive performance and relationship quality, it also signals that a leader will approve of norm violations at the workplace, which may encourage follower deviant behaviors.

Third, this study suggests that follower trait positive affect is an antecedent of positive leader humor. Drawing upon affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), follower trait positive affect may increase the follower's likelihood of evaluating leader humor as free from harm (positively) and facilitates recall of positive, rather than negative, leader humor. Another possibility is that followers with positive affectivity may be more liked by leaders; facilitating leaders to use more positive humor around those followers. However, there are no significant associations between follower trait positive affect and negative leader humor, nor between follower negative trait affect and positive or negative leader humor. However, due to the smaller number of studies for examining these relationships, researchers should interpret these findings with caution.

Fourth, the response format of leader humor measures only moderates some of the relationships between leader humor and other variables. Specifically, positive leader humor has a stronger correlation with follower state positive affect when leader humor is measured by a frequency than agreement response format, whereas positive leader humor has a stronger a

relationship with follower organizational citizenship behaviors when leader humor is measured by an agreement than frequency response format. In other words, most of the findings do not support the moderation role of the response format of leader humor measures. These findings seem to suggest that in most situations, it is not a big issue if the researchers change the response format of the leader humor measure. However, researchers should interpret the findings regarding the moderation role of the response format with caution for at least two reasons. First, there are not enough studies available for testing the moderation effect of the response format for all the relationships examined in this meta-analysis. For instance, the relationship between positive leader humor and follower state negative affect is not examined, nor are any negative leader humor and other variable relationships. Second, even for the relationships with sufficient samples for testing the moderation effect of the response format, the number of samples are all relatively small. Therefore, these moderation analyses suffer from second-order sampling error (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004) and researchers should cautiously interpret these findings.

In addition, publication status moderates some of the relationships of positive and negative leader humor with other variables. Although there are three relationships stronger for published studies compared to unpublished studies, there are also three relationships stronger for unpublished studies. Publication bias—the idea that published papers report stronger relationships (Schmidt & Hunter, 2003)—seems to explain why published reports of the associations of positive leader humor with follower organizational citizenship, follower stress, and transactional leadership as well as the relationship between negative leader humor and follower stress exhibited stronger relationships. However, inconsistent with "publication bias," there are stronger relationships for unpublished studies involving positive leader humor in relation to transformational leadership and leader-member exchange, and the relationship

between negative leader humor and job satisfaction. Due to a low number of studies, more sampling error would be present that can produce more extreme values even around a true correlation of zero. Thus, it is likely that some relationships from published studies would be stronger, while others from unpublished studies would be stronger.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The current findings have several practical implications. First, positive leader humor is associated with mostly beneficial outcomes while negative leader humor has only detrimental effects on follower and leader positive outcomes. Thus, organizations should encourage leaders to engage in more positive leader humor and less negative leader humor. For example, organizations can hire humor consultants and provide workshops to help train leaders to exert more positive and less negative leader humor. Humor researcher and consultant Roberts (2016) details how leader humor training is growing in organizations and is readily accessible.

However, positive leader humor is associated with high levels of follower counterproductive work behaviors. Therefore, organizations should employ measures to alleviate the potential dark side of promoting positive leader humor. Yam et al. (2018) suggest that followers interpret leader humor as an approval to break norm violations. Therefore, when communicating humor to followers, leaders should warn followers that breaking norms (engaging in deviant behaviors, such as being late for work) is not acceptable in the organization. Additionally, because the approval signal to violate norms may originate from the leader who communicates humor, it may be effective to combat counterproductive work behaviors by having the leader, as the role model, strictly follow the rules and regulations of the organization, such as always being on time and dressing appropriately. One final method may be to institute organizational policies that endorse and encourage the use of "appropriate" humor. Thus, leader

humor would then become the norm and may not signal approval to break the rules. High-profile, real-world examples include the policies of companies like Southwest Airlines (Freiberg & Freiberg, 1996) and Zappos (Hsieh, 2010), which explicitly encourage employees to use humor so long as doing so does not endanger or decrease productivity.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

One of the considerations regarding the interpretation of some results presented in this meta-analysis is the relatively small number of primary studies identified for some relationships (e.g., negative leader humor and follower in-role performance had a *k* of 4). Although each relationship, with the exceptions of negative leader humor with organizational commitment and leader age, meets the common practice standard of having three or more studies ($k \geqslant 3$, e.g., Berry et al., 2002), there may be second-order sampling error (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004), which may reduce the validity of findings. Therefore, I also present credibility intervals alongside corrected correlations, which provide insight into the consistency of effects reported across studies (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). Nonetheless, the corrected meta-analytic correlation estimates, although they were based on small *ks*, are still better than estimates based on single studies (Hunter & Schmidt, 2004). Additionally, future researchers should conduct more studies to investigate the nomological network of negative leader humor, which has relatively fewer empirical findings compared to positive leader humor.

A second consideration is that the primary studies included in this meta-analysis used cross-sectional designs. Cross-sectional designs are limited in that they do not allow for solid causal inference. For example, leader-member exchange is conceptualized as an outcome of leader humor. However, it is also possible that the reverse relationship is true. That is, leader-member exchange may facilitate leader humor rather than the other way around. With this

limitation in mind, the relationships presented in this study do provide a valuable snapshot of the current theoretical underpinnings of leader humor—even if the causal direction of these relationships should be examined by utilizing rigorous methods, such as longitudinal and experimental designs. I encourage future researchers to buttress the nomological network and theoretical underpinnings of leader humor by adopting longitudinal and experimental designs.

Third, although this meta-analysis helps address the distinctiveness of positive and negative leader humor, there are still more conceptualization issues to address. Echoing the calls of previous researchers (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2012), a leading issue is disentangling the differences of the *intention* of humor, which may have several avenues for future research. As brought up by Martin et al. (2003), negative humor that is intended for harm toward the humor receiver (aggressive humor) should have different outcomes than negative humor that the initiator directs toward themself. Another avenue of intention regards *failed* humor. Bell (2015) proposed that negative humor is underneath the higher-order construct of failed humor whereby the humor recipient had a different response to the humor than the humor initiator intended. For example, a leader may make a joke that they intend to be positive and free from harm, however, a follower may find the joke offensive and consider it to be negative. Humor intention is an important area for future researchers to investigate. Such an inquiry would be a boon to leader humor researchers and would help reveal how intention moderates the antecedents, correlates, and outcomes of both positive and negative leader humor.

Fourth, the credibility intervals and percentage of variance explained by sampling error and statistical artifacts also indicate where moderation may be influencing the relationships of positive and negative leader humor with other variables. First, credibility intervals refer to the distribution of parameter values and is based on the idea that those parameters can vary across

studies (Schmidt & Hunter, 2003). Wider credibility intervals, especially those that include zero, indicate that there may be a moderation taking place such that for some of the participants there is a positive relationship while for others there is a negative. In this meta-analysis, many of the relationships have credibility intervals that included zero (e.g., all the relationships between leader humor and follower trait affect), implying moderation may be taking place. Second, many of the relationships have less than 75% their percentage of variance explained by sampling error and statistical artifacts (Schmidt & Hunter, 2003), suggesting that much of their variance may be due to moderators. Taken together, the credibility intervals and percentage of variance accounted for by sampling error and statistical artifacts in this meta-analysis help point the way for future research to investigate possible moderation.

Fifth, this study does not investigate the possible mechanisms of the relationships between positive leader humor and counterproductive work behaviors. While I agree with Yam et al. (2018) that positive leader humor is a signal of acceptance to break norm violations and thus encourage counterproductive work behaviors, it is possible that positive leader humor can reduce counterproductive work behaviors as well. As proposed by Sobral & Islam (2015), positive leader humor is a signal that the leader—the representative of the organization—cares about the follower, and therefore engenders a reciprocation to the organization in the form of reduced counterproductive work behaviors (Sobral & Islam, 2015). Both proposed pathways are signal-based, yet they work through different mechanisms and thus may exist simultaneously with one attenuating the effects of the other. Therefore, I encourage researchers to further investigate the black box between positive leader humor and counterproductive work behaviors.

Finally, this meta-analysis could not further explain the finding that there were no associations between negative leader humor and overall leader effectiveness and trust in leader,

even though positive leader humor has strong associations with these outcome variables. The toxic leadership literature suggests that followers may use escape strategies—such as cognitive and behavioral avoidance—when facing with harmful leadership such as negative leader humor, and therefore resulting in null effects of negative leader humor (Skinner et al., 2003). Thus, perhaps followers use coping strategies to prevent negative leader humor from harming their perceptions of leader effectiveness or how much they trust the leader. Researchers should further investigate the potential mechanisms through which followers cope with negative leader humor.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

To conclude, leader humor is a growing research topic, but the literature was lacking a comprehensive review that covers and compares both leader humor that is harmful (i.e., negative leader humor) and leader humor that is not harmful (i.e., positive leader humor). The present meta-analysis fills this gap and provides a more nuanced understanding of leader humor. The results suggest that positive and negative leader humor are better conceptualized as separate constructs rather than opposites; thus, researchers should carefully specify which type of leader humor they are measuring. Additionally, positive leader humor is largely beneficial for other variables, whereas negative leader humor is largely detrimental. Thus, it would be prudent of organizations to take steps to increase positive leader humor while decreasing negative leader humor. Future research should adopt longitudinal and experimental designs to corroborate the causal directions specified in the nomological network presented in this study and to develop and test leader humor models that include leaders' intention for using humor.

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Education

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Experience

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    - Led research projects.
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    - Wrote and edited research manuscripts
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- Owner/Manager; Brazilian Capoeira Dance Studio. February 2010-March 2018

Research

- Xu, X., Zhao, P., **Hayes, R**., & Jimenez, W. (2019) Fighting for time: Spillover and crossover effects of long work hours among dual-earner couples. *Stress and Health, 35*, p. 491-502.
- Zhao, P., Xu, X., **Hayes, R**., & Le, N. (2020, August). *Which comes first, the chicken or the egg?: Organizational commitment and job satisfaction*. Paper presented at the 80th annual conference of the Academy of Management, Vancouver, BC, Canada.
- Xu, X., Peng, Y., Zhao, P., **Hayes, R. J.,** & Wang, H. (2019, April). Fighting for time: Health and well-being among dual-earning couples. *Poster presented at the 34th annual meeting of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Washington, DC.*
- **Hayes, R., J.,** Varner, S., Ranby, K. (2018) Differences in expectations of health behavior changes between cohabiting and not cohabiting engaged couples. *Poster presentation at Rocky Mountain Psychology Association Conference.*
- Varner, S., Ranby, K., **Hayes, R. J.** (2018) Are couples who participate in research together healthier and more satisfied in their relationship? *Poster presentation at Society of Behavioral Medicine Annual Meeting.*