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# Fake It Until You Make It? Female Leaders' Emotional Expression Management and Subordinates' Gender Stereotypes

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**FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT? FEMALE LEADERS' EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION  
MANAGEMENT AND SUBORDINATES' GENDER STEREOTYPES**

by

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## ABSTRACT

### FAKE IT UNTIL YOU MAKE IT? FEMALE LEADERS' EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION MANAGEMENT AND SUBORDINATES' GENDER STEREOTYPES

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As part of their organizational role, leaders manage their emotional expressions for the purpose of maintaining influence over followers, a concept that has received far less attention than the impact of other leadership behaviors. Further, there is almost no existing research regarding an employees' reactions to the female supervisors' emotional expression management (EEM), or the influence of subordinates' underlying gender stereotypes on the relationship between leaders' EEM and subordinate outcomes. To gain a better understanding of how EEM and the followers' perception of gender roles interactively influence affective and attitudinal outcomes, this study used multi-source data from female leaders and their followers to examine the moderation effect of subordinates' sex-based stereotypes on the relationship between leaders' EEM and three dyadic outcomes: trust, satisfaction with communication, and commitment to goals set by the leader.

Results from hierarchical multiple regressions found mixed support for the proposed relationships. As predicted, the relationship between genuinely felt emotional expressions and both subordinate trust and goal commitment was more positive for followers with stronger nontraditional views of women than for those with lower levels of nontraditional views. Additionally, genuinely felt expressions had a weaker positive relationship with trust for subordinates who held stronger communal stereotypes than for employees with lower levels of communal stereotypes. Unexpectedly, the associations between faked positive and suppressed

negative EEM and the subordinate outcomes examined were not significantly affected by followers' stereotypes about how women should act in general. The hypotheses for employee satisfaction with communication were also not supported. Given these results, I speculate that that female leaders may be subject to different behavioral norms than their male counterparts and that employee stereotypes may only have an impact on attitudes toward the leader when she deviates from these norms by expressing genuinely felt emotions. Theoretical and practical implications of the findings are discussed.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Starting around the turn of the last century, women have entered the workforce at an increasing rate, resulting in shifting roles for both leader and gender. Why then do men continue to occupy the majority of leadership positions while women face the dreaded “glass ceiling” (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Ridgeway, 2001)? One of the most infamous victims of this double standard is Margaret Thatcher, or The Iron Lady. Although she held the same views as her male counterparts in the British government and was clearly competent enough to oversee a nation, she refused to act more “feminine” to conform to her constituents’ expectations (except when it suited her political agenda; Leung, 1997). The media punished the prime minister for utilizing the stereotypically male qualities required of a leader, but had she relied on stereotypically feminine traits she might not have ascended to her professional apex.

As this example demonstrates, contextual roles combined with gender stereotypes create expectations about sex-based behavior (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Ridgeway, 2001). Historically, an employee’s gender has had an influence on his or her company position, but over the past several decades the leader role has shifted from a male monopoly to a co-ed post. As organizations adapt to the presence of female leadership, professional women attempting to command the respect of those who have expectations for their superiors steeped in traditional workplace composition (Glomb & Tews, 2004) may benefit from emotional expression management (EEM), or regulation of behaviors for the purpose of generating acceptable emotional displays (Glomb & Tews, 2004; Wang & Groth, 2014).

There has been a substantial amount of research pertaining to the role of women in the leadership literature (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, Van Engen, 2003;

Lewis & Fagenson-Eland, 1998) but it has placed far greater emphasis on behaviors more directly related to initiating structure or consideration rather than on the emotional expression management (EEM) strategies. The research that does investigate gender stereotypes and EEM (e.g., Mangels, Good, Whiteman, Maniscalco, & Dweck, 2012) centers around stereotype threat, or an expectation that negative stereotypes will adversely affect others judgments of the target individual's performance, rather than the outcomes for observers of stereotyped group members. Further, relatively little is known about the factors that determine the extent to which leaders effectively convey emotions to followers (Ilies, Curseu, Dimotakis, & Spitzmuller, 2012), and the literature that does exist focuses on the consequences of emotion regulation on the actor (e.g., Fisk & Friesen, 2012) rather than the outcomes resulting from the influence of EEM on the perceiver. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to shrink these theoretical and empirical gaps by expanding our understanding of how leader EEM contributes to follower affect and attitudes, specifically in the context of the subordinate's gender expectations on this aspect of the leader-follower relationship.

To that end, this thesis first explains the role of gender in the workplace before analyzing emotional expression management in the context of the leader-member relationships. Next, I explain how subordinates' stereotypes regarding gender may influence the effects of EEM on trust, satisfaction with communication, and commitment to goals set by the leader. After detailing 18 hypotheses I describe and present the results of a field study testing the proposed relationships. Finally, the theoretical contributions, practical implications of these findings, and future research directions are discussed.

## Gender Stereotypes: A Primer

Sex-based stereotypes, or generalizations about particular qualities for members of groups as applied to gender (Eagly & Karau, 2002), are not new but are too simplistic an explanation for the current status of women in the workplace (Heilman, 2001). Gender schemata have existed along two fundamental dimensions (Schein, 1973; 2001) for millennia, based on the biological assumption that women nurture while men provide. The most basic outcome that arises from this distinction is that in general, women have a wider range of and more intense expressions (Scott & Barnes, 2011), while men benefit from stoicism. Further, women are inherently empathetic, modest, and service-oriented (*communal*) while society associates men with achievement-oriented, aggressive, and self-promotional (*agentic*) qualities (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001).

As gender is an essential piece of both intrapersonal and social identification, it follows that people carry distinct sex-based characteristics across contexts. Per role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), society positively judges those who conform to expected social norms, including with regard to gender-related attitudes so when individuals act inconsistently with gender traits, they risk violating social standards (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Vecchio, 2002). Two types of norms are especially relevant (Eagly & Karau, 2002): *descriptive*, or actual traits, thoughts, and feelings, and *prescriptive*, which society understands as how roles should be filled (i.e., expectations based on stereotypes; Prentice & Carranza, 2002).

Though it did not specifically focus on gender, one study by Kunda and Spencer (2003) proposed that the activation and application of stereotypes serve as a function of the individual's goals during interactions with members of minority groups. The authors also suggested that stereotype activation might result from strong comprehension goals, or the desire to simplify or

make sense of a situation, as well as the initial strength of one's prejudice. Finally, they found that the observer's desire to predict behavior they may prompt stereotype activation to determine a pattern based on prescriptive norms. In conjunction with role congruity theory, this suggests that for women in the workplace, stereotypes are activated automatically by cues (e.g., long hair, makeup), though they may dissipate during the course of an exchange (especially if the member of the stereotyped group does not exhibit behavior that furthers the content of the stereotype). I expand on the implications of such stereotype activation and application below.

### **The Influence of Gender Stereotypes for Women at Work**

The effort to reduce inconsistency between descriptive and prescriptive norms for women in the organizational world can create internal dissonance (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Glomb & Tews, 2004), especially because when a woman occupies a leadership position she often assimilates anticipated leader behaviors and communal attributes with greater frequency than her male counterparts (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Eagly et al., 2003; Ridgeway, 2001; Vecchio, 2002). As individuals evaluate descriptive and prescriptive norms in an organizational context, they access female attributions more easily than leadership characteristics (Kunda & Spencer, 2003); for example, observers register clothes or mannerisms before a woman has the chance to demonstrate personality (Eagly & Karau, 2002). One study (Cheng & Lin, 2012) examining leadership effectiveness as affected by the interaction between supervisor gender and leadership behaviors supported gender as a moderator of the relationships between both the type of emotional expression and leadership effectiveness, helping to demonstrate that employees have different affective and behavioral responses to female and male supervisors.

As previously noted, the ratio of men to women is often especially lopsided in management, inadvertently prompting colleagues to activate gender norms even more

automatically than in lower-level settings (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Kilminster, Downes, Gough, Murdoch-Eaton, & Roberts, 2007; Ritter & Yoder, 2004). According to Kunda and Spencer (2003) “any factor that diverts the perceiver’s attention from the person’s category membership can prevent the stereotype from getting activated in the first place” (pg. 523). This could work against women in management positions, as it may be more difficult for subordinates to focus on anything other than the difference between communal traits and the leadership role. For many this dissonance resolves as observers unconsciously assign one side of the gender norm spectrum as dominant for the woman in question (Petty & Miles, 1976; Scott & Brown, 2006).

It is important to underscore that individuals can simultaneously exhibit high levels of dimensions (e.g., a woman may be both ambitious and empathetic; Abele, 2003; Eagly et al., 2003; Schein, 2001). Eagly and Karau (2002) illustrate this point in their summary of several empirical studies in which employees perceived an overlap between actual women and successful middle managers because of their interpersonal orientation but persistently described leadership positions with agentic terminology. Unfortunately, female prescriptive traits (e.g., gentle, kind, sympathetic) conflict with traditional leader expectations, which previous research defines as requiring high levels of agency, persuasion, and self-promotion (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005). If these characteristics sound familiar it is because they all overlap with the masculine terms listed above. In fact, several studies show that coworkers assess male expressions of anger neutrally or even positively, while the same expression from a female executive inspires intense disapproval (Eagly et al., 2003; Petty & Miles, 1976; Ridgeway, 2001) due to friction among existing schemata. Eagly and colleagues (2003) further found that women’s organizational advancement could also be compromised by “relatively communal behaviors” (pg. 586), such as extensively consulting colleagues.

It is no wonder then that women are at a professional disadvantage: not only do they risk perceptions of decreased capability if they commit role violations (Lewis, 2000), but conventional wisdom also punishes women who eschew stereotypically feminine characteristics while simultaneously invalidating the contributions of those who do conform (Byron, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002).

### **Emotional Expression Management**

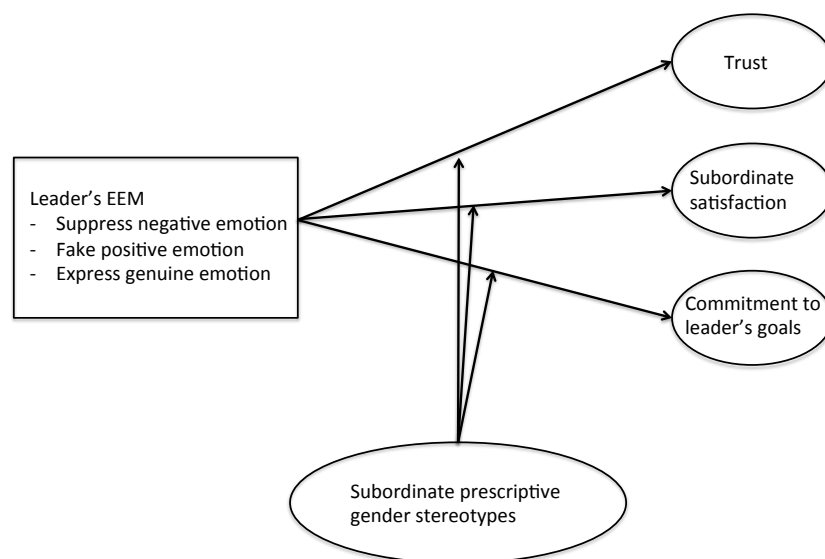
To combat the issues discussed many women actively alter their approach to professional interpersonal interactions (Simpson & Stroh, 2004), including affective displays (Eagly et al., 2003). One avenue for this is emotional expression management (EEM), as emotions are a “communication medium that coordinates social interactions and guide interpersonal behavior” (Wang & Groth, 2014; pg. 342). Such adjustments are important because per the Emotion as Social Information (EASI) model (Van Kleef, 2009), the experience and observation of emotion sparks both an inferential process and affective response from which observers deduce information about the actor’s attitudes, values, or behaviors that inform their overall opinion. Both reactions influence outcomes through different processes (Van Kleef, 2009) but inferences take precedence when individuals are motivated to process information (e.g., when one party holds more power; Van Kleef, de Dreu, & Manstead, 2010), thus are likely to be the dominant process for leaders and subordinates. Of note, the EASI model focuses on discrete emotions rather than moods, as the authors found in studies using negotiation that the former provided more complete information in ambiguous social decision making settings.

EEM is a subcategory of emotion regulation, or the attempt to align emotions with either internalized norms or job requirements. Emotion regulation may refer to either felt or expressed emotions (Zammuner & Galli, 2005) but this study focuses on the latter, as they are more

proximal drivers of subsequent interactions (Glomb & Tews, 2004). There are three common strategies for engaging in EEM, which occurs after the emotions relevant to the interaction are fully formed (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). One may suppress negative emotional expressions, in which distressing emotions are felt but not displayed or fake positive emotions, in which one may feel negative or neutral but convey positivity (Glomb & Tews, 2004). One distinction between faking positive and suppressing negative affective expressions is that for the latter the actor avoids articulating the felt sentiment rather than actively conveying an emotion of the opposite valence; I expand upon the importance of this difference in the following section. The final strategy for engaging in EEM involves expressing genuinely felt emotional displays, in which external and internal acknowledgements of a stimulus are in accord with one another (Wang & Groth, 2014).

**EEM and leader-member dynamics.** The subjectivity and nuances of interactions surrounding gender stereotypes and EEM imply many relevant consequences. However, the three dyad-level outcome variables examined in this study (i.e., trust, satisfaction with communication, and commitment to goals set by the leader) are important components of leader-member relationships. Given the current dearth of literature regarding the influence of leaders' emotional expressions on subordinate outcomes, the current research also benefits from the comparatively discrete nature of each of these variables (e.g., as opposed to general LMX).





*Figure 1.* Proposed model of the moderating effect of subordinate gender stereotypes on the relationship between leaders' EEM and subordinate outcomes.

Specifically, trust is a fundamental building block of positive relationships (Lau & Liden, 2008; Wong & Cummings, 2009) and strengthens interpersonal bonds. To complement this exchange-based outcome, satisfaction's well-documented relationship with performance and overall well-being (Spector, 1997) makes it another critical affective and attitudinal outcome to consider in the context of relational dynamics. Finally, commitment to goals set by the leader will expand our understanding of the roles of gender stereotypes and EEM on task-related variables and attitudes. To fully appreciate the implications of all three outcomes, however, it is imperative to first recognize the influence of gender stereotypes on the reception of the leader's management of emotional expression (see Figure 1).

### **Moderation of Gender Stereotypes**

As a representative of organizational values, apprehension caused by the leader's type of EEM may intensify when the woman also exists outside the confines of the subordinate's prescriptive gender norms (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). At the most basic level, a supervisor's

failure to follow gender norms can cause a rift that prompts the subordinate to question the value of the relationship. However, different levels of communal and agentic beliefs (referred to hereafter as nontraditional views) may have varying degrees of influence on the direct effects of EEM on subordinate outcomes. Since people rely on emotional cues to steer them in social interactions (Van Kleef et al., 2010) any deviation on the leader's part means that employees may entrench their existing stereotypes (Heilman, 2001). Kunda and Spencer (2003) found that once activated, stereotypes may influence impressions for the observer, so those who employ stronger communal stereotypes or lower nontraditional views (and thus face difficulty integrating female and leader traits) might fail to assimilate the leader's emotional expressions into the context of her organizational role (Eagly et al., 2003; Grandey, 2000). To make sense of the situation subordinates may thus focus on more easily accessed gender stereotypes (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987), especially since this is already more likely to happen in situations where there is a lower ratio of women to men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). If male supervisors are expected to produce outcomes via agentic traits while women prescriptively excel in fostering interpersonal community, women displaying agency (e.g., anger) call to mind male characteristics (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Conversely, those who do not subscribe as strongly to such stereotypes may excuse EEM as necessary for the leader as part of her organizational role without considering the emotional expressions from a gender-related perspective to the same extent. Put differently, they may not expect leaders to display communality but do desire sincerity in emotional expression, in which case subordinate's stereotypes will still alter the strength of the relationship between faked positive EEM and all three outcomes, albeit to a lesser degree. Of note, Bono and colleagues (2007) stated that norm violations (e.g., gender-related) are negatively influential and suggested

that even if most exchanges are positive, perceived negative moments have a greater impact on the employee. In other words, initial observations of leader EEM may be colored by the strength of stereotypes, in which case the combination of EEM and gender stereotypes is more important than either variable alone.

The moderation effects of these stereotypes may also differ based on the type of EEM strategy. As noted, if one considers emotions as important signals, deviating from expected expressions as a woman can make the follower question the relationship quality with the individual as a supervisor (Ayman & Korabik, 2010). Moreover, as women are more likely to show happiness (Hess, Adams Jr., & Kleck, 2004), faking positive emotions may also lead to negative outcomes because they align with prescriptive communal norms. People tend to associate perceived faked expressions from women as cattiness or “mean girl” behavior (Abele, 2003; Heilman, 2001; Schein, 2001), perhaps because women engage in emotional expression management more often than men (Grandey, 2000). If followers see their boss in the context of traditional (i.e., communal) gender stereotypes, they may expect her to naturally express emotions of that type (Rudman & Glick, 1999) and may thus be especially disconcerted by faked positive emotional expressions, resulting in negative relationships between constructs.

Suppressed negative and genuinely felt emotions may not create as much cognitive dissonance for subordinates because leaders using these strategies for EEM are not exaggerating insincere emotions. Emotional expressions are more effective when they are sincere (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Ilies et al., 2012), and even though suppressed negative emotions are still surface acting they temper authentic internal feelings rather than attempt to convince observers of the presence of a non-existent feeling. In other words, targets are less likely to experience negative outcomes if they fail to register an inauthentic display (Glomb & Tews, 2004). Such

logic is supported by previous research findings (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Van Kleef et al., 2010) that authentic (as opposed to inauthentic) emotional expressions provide social cues to a greater extent than when the actor is trying to elicit a positive response simply to accomplish a goal (e.g., salesmen are more likely to sell products when they believe in the item's value). This point suggests that although the positive relationships will be weaker as the strength of communal stereotypes increase (or nontraditional views decrease), displays of genuinely felt emotions or suppression of negative emotions in conjunction with gender stereotypes may be interpreted as professionalism as opposed to a breach of social contract (Fisk & Friesen, 2012).

In summary, observers are more likely to interpret faked positive emotional expressions as manipulative (Grandey et al., 2005) while suppressed negative and expressed genuine felt emotions may still culminate in a positive relationship despite stronger communal stereotypes.

The next sections detail how these interactions affect each subordinate outcome.

**Trust.** To gain a deeper understanding of how the complex interplay between gender and EEM may affect subordinate reactions this proposal turns first to the concept of trust, since it plays an indispensable role in all supervisory relationships. Followers desire closeness with leaders for multiple reasons and emotional honesty acts as a bonding agent (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Bono et al., 2007). To foster such a relationship, the trustee must feel vulnerability (Mayer & Gavin, 2005), communicate openness to the other party, and share information (Chang & Chuang, 2011). To that end, if employees take emotional expressions into account while considering the leader's social proclivity as a woman (Ayman & Korabik, 2010), straying from the anticipated emotional spectrum may drive the former to question the security of the relationship (Lau & Liden, 2008). The conflicting assumptions could interfere with the subordinate's trust in his or her supervisor (Lau & Liden, 2008) because agency as a woman may

indicate a lack of interpersonal or other socially desirable skills as a leader (Eagly et al., 2003; Rudman & Glick, 1999).

Relatedly, if one party is hiding her true feelings by faking positive emotions (especially when appraised in comparison with more easily accessed gender stereotypes) the other may not experience trust in subsequent exchanges (Mayer & Gavin, 2005; Wong & Cummings, 2009). Per the EASI model, an actor's emotional display alters observers' evaluations of competence if they are confused by the emotions displayed (Schein, 2001; van Kleef, 2009). This is especially problematic for subordinates with stronger communal or weaker nontraditional views since they are quicker to deem women as incompetent in the context of the workplace (Eagly et al., 2003). As such, leaders' faked positive emotional expressions may delay or prohibit the evolution of a trusting relationship, especially when followers are more influenced by communal stereotypes.

*H1a: Faked positive emotions have a stronger negative relationship with trust for subordinates who have higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

*H1b: Faked positive emotions have a weaker negative relationship with trust for subordinates who have higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

Conversely, when they have stronger nontraditional views subordinates may feel positively towards a supervisor expressing genuinely felt emotional displays and see them as a sincere attempt to establish a trusting relationship. This is due in part to the common expectation that inauthenticity is reserved for strangers or those with whom one is uncomfortable (Fisk & Friesen, 2012), which is off-putting to employees who expect to build a relationship with a direct supervisor. That same logic applies for a leader who suppresses negative emotional expressions, as followers may not register the discrepancy between displayed and felt emotion because the supervisor is not actively faking an emotion; when employees hold weaker communal stereotypes (or stronger nontraditional views) and leadership is not considered in the context of

gender the relationship between these two types of EEM and trust will be amplified. Lower levels of agentic expectations about women may weaken this relationship since the follower must still reconcile the differences between “woman” and “leader”, but this should not preclude a positive relationship.

*H1c: Suppressed negative emotions have a stronger positive relationship with trust for subordinates who have higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

*H1d: Suppressed negative emotions have a weaker positive relationship with trust for subordinates who have higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

*H1e: Expressed genuinely felt emotions have a stronger positive relationship with trust for subordinates who have higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

*H1f: Expressed genuinely felt emotions has a weaker positive relationship with trust for subordinates who have higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

**Satisfaction with communication.** In addition to establishing a trusting relationship, effective leaders may manage emotional expressions to motivate workers by increasing their satisfaction (Bono et al., 2007; Lewis, 2000; Meglino, Raviln, & Adkins, 1991; Rubin, Munz, & Bommer, 2005). Job satisfaction, both an affective and attitudinal variable (Spector, 1997), refers to one’s contentment with his or her job or any facets therein; one of its more important components regards satisfaction with how information is conveyed (Spector, 1997). As EEM helps observers understand and adapt to the organizational environment, the leader may utilize emotional expressions that result in higher satisfaction for her followers.

For the purposes of this proposal dissatisfaction is most likely to occur as observers attempt to incorporate “feminine” qualities with the agentic traits required of a leader (Eagly & Karau, 2002). In this context once the leader uses a faked positive emotional expression her employees may be less likely to connect with her (Bono et al., 2007), especially when the

influence of communal stereotypes is stronger. Subordinates are also more likely to experience negative outcomes when they fail to identify with their leader (Bono et al., 2007), and because the participants in this study direct report to the female supervisor one may assume a high level of dependency in the relationship. The supervisor's EEM may be interpreted as manipulative or impersonal (Fisk & Friesen, 2012) and as previously noted society expects women to act cattier than men (Heilman, 2001). Thus, the association between the leader's faked positive EEM and subordinate satisfaction with communication will be negative; and if the latter party is more susceptible to communal stereotypes (and believes that the supervisor should show communal emotions because she is a woman) the strength of this relationship will increase.

*H2a: Faked positive emotions have a stronger negative relationship with communication satisfaction for subordinates who have higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

*H2b: Faked positive emotions have a weaker negative relationship with communication satisfaction for subordinates who have higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

In the context of the proposed moderation effects discussed earlier, this also implies that expressing genuine emotions and suppressed negative emotional displays have a positive impact for subordinates (i.e., both those who are instinctively inclined to endorse communal gender stereotypes and those who prescribe to nontraditional views to a greater degree). An employee expects his or her leader to reflect organizational ideals (Ayman & Korabik, 2010), and perceived authenticity of agentic expressions (or lack of inauthentic communality) may induce the employee to feel sufficiently satisfied with the supervisor's leadership ability. For this reason, the supervisor may benefit from using genuinely felt emotions or suppressing negative emotional expressions to attain more positive relationships, especially when subordinates subscribe to higher levels of nontraditional views for women in general. As gender forms an integral part of one's identity, employees who feel that women should express communal

emotions to a greater degree may question her ability as a supervisor and consequently experience more dissonance (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

*H2c: Suppressed negative emotions have a stronger positive relationship with communication satisfaction for subordinates who have higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

*H2d: Suppressed negative emotions have a weaker positive relationship with communication satisfaction for subordinates who have higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

*H2e: Expressed genuinely felt emotions have a stronger positive relationship with communication satisfaction for subordinates who have higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

*H2f: Expressed genuinely felt emotions have a weaker positive relationship with communication satisfaction for subordinates who have higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

**Commitment to the leader's goals.** Finally, another central supervisory task is the delegation of authority to accomplish organizational goals, and it is important for the leader to keep subordinates committed to completing assignments. Commitment to goals set by the leader refers to “the extension of effort, over time, toward the accomplishment of an original goal and emphasizes an unwillingness to abandon or to lower the original goal” (Hollenbeck & Klein, 1987; pg. 212). As emotions help followers register important behavioral and attitudinal cues that influence one's level of goal commitment (O'Neill, Harrison, Cleaveland, Almeida, Stawski, & Crouter, 2009) observations of leader's emotions might have the same effect depending on the content of that expression.

In order to reach employees, female supervisors may have to adopt intrinsically masculine expressions (Eagly et al., 2003), which could be disconcerting for those who hold higher levels of communal stereotypes. If the follower detects management of emotions through faked positive expressions he or she may feel disinclined to execute the leader's directions, particularly as trying to avoid unpleasantness in decision-making can lead to a de-escalation of



commitment (O'Neill et al., 2009). Subordinates may react especially negatively if they believe the leader's faked positive emotional expression is inappropriate because of the existence of communal expectations for women in general, as the discrepancy between roles may entrench existing stereotypes (Heilman, 2001).

*H3a: Faked positive emotions have a stronger negative relationship with commitment to leader's goals for subordinates who have higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

*H3b: Faked positive emotions have a weaker negative relationship with commitment to leader's goals for subordinates who have higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

On the other hand, if the leader suppresses negative affect or conveys genuinely felt emotions to bond with her employees, the positive feedback loop could incur a better relationship when followers' underlying communal stereotypes do not interfere. Expressions of genuinely felt emotions or suppressed negative emotional displays might resonate more strongly with subordinates than those that are perceived as inauthentic, enhancing relationship development and an increased sense of obligation for the follower (Ilies et al., 2012; O'Neill et al., 2009). However, when more heavily influenced by assumptions that women should behave communally, subordinates may question the leader based on her gender, weakening the relationship. As Eagly and Karau (2002) noted, "prejudice can arise when perceivers judge women as... occupants of leader roles because of inconsistency between the predominantly communal qualities that perceivers associate with women and... qualities they believe are required to succeed as a leader" (pg. 575). Thus, unlike managing emotional behaviors through faked positivity, expressing genuinely felt or suppressed negative displays may have a positive impact on commitment to the leader's goals in the presence of stronger nontraditional views.

*H3c: Suppressed negative emotions have a stronger positive relationship with commitment to leader's goals for subordinates who have higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

*H3d: Suppressed negative emotions have a weaker positive relationship with commitment to leader's goals for subordinates who have higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

*H3e: Expressed genuinely felt emotions have a stronger positive relationship with commitment to leader's goals for subordinates with higher levels of nontraditional views than for subordinates who have lower levels of nontraditional views.*

*H3f: Expressed genuinely felt emotions have a weaker positive relationship with commitment to leader's goals for subordinates with higher levels of communal stereotypes than for subordinates who have lower levels of communal stereotypes.*

## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

#### Participants and Procedure

**Participants.** Data were obtained from 74 independent supervisor-subordinate dyads from multiple American organizations, including restaurants, universities, non-profit organizations, consulting companies, legal firms, county-level law enforcement offices, and outpatient doctors' offices. The aim is to capture attitudes across several fields, increasing the generalizability of the results to a greater extent than would be accomplished in a laboratory setting. Among followers, 65 were women (89%). The mean age of leaders was 44.59 (SD = 12.82) and mean age of followers was 39 years (SD = 13.14). This study defines leaders as direct managers or supervisors. Followers are defined as members of an organization who directly report to the participating leader. Because new employees may not have had enough time to fully learn about specific organizational attributes (e.g., norms, policies, politics; Morrison, 2002), followers who have less than 3-months tenure were excluded to control for the stability of the dyadic relationship over time.

**Procedure.** During the recruiting process an initial email assessing willingness to participate was sent to organizations with which the primary researcher has had a professional affiliation; recipients were encouraged to forward the message to others who may be interested in participating. For data collection, those female leaders who expressed interest received a follow up email containing a brief description of the study, a link to the online Qualtrics survey, and a request to respond with contact information for a subordinate of their choice (Appendix G; see Appendix H for the email sent to followers). In order to minimize the concern that followers were not coerced into completing their version of the questionnaire, leaders were asked to

respond with contact information for followers. The email further informed them that they would not know the status of the follower regarding participation, and although participants would receive aggregated results at the end of the study, individual evaluative statements by followers would remain confidential. Followers were subsequently contacted and invited to participate directly by the researcher. All respondents had to acknowledge an informed consent form preceding the Qualtrics survey.

As data were collected in one wave this study employed multi-source data collection to minimize common method bias. Per Institutional Review Board (IRB) feedback, survey items use layman's terms and refer to leaders as "supervisor" and followers as "subordinate(s)" in order to avoid confusion among respondents.

## Measures

**Emotional expression management.** EEM was measured using an adapted version of Glomb and Tews (2004) Discrete Emotions Emotional Labor Scale (DEELS) as it focuses on the operationalization of the expression including genuine, faked positive, and suppressed negative emotional displays. Although the original scale includes 14 discrete emotions, for the purposes of this study it should be sufficient to only incorporate 6 common feelings representing positive (i.e., happiness, interest, and amusement) and negative (i.e., sadness, anger, and frustration) valences. The subsequent 9-item measure uses items such as, "How often do you express feelings of happiness in interactions with your subordinate when you really do not feel that way?" for faking positive expressions ( $\alpha=.82$ ), "How often do you keep feelings of anger to yourself in interactions with your subordinate when you really feel that way?" for suppressing negative expressions ( $\alpha=.73$ ), and "How often do you express feelings of happiness in

interactions with your subordinate when you really feel that way?” for genuinely felt expressions ( $\alpha=.82$ ). The full measure is located Appendix A.

**Gender stereotypes.** Participants assessed agentic and communal characteristics as applied to “women in general” using the Schein Descriptive Index (Schein, 1973). This measure examines the perceived extent to which each gender possesses specific characteristics (Duehr & Bono, 2006). Although this measure was established in 1973, research has continued to regularly use it to assess perceptions between gender stereotypes and managerial characteristics (e.g., Abele, 2003; Berkery, Tiernan, & Morley, 2014; Boyce & Herd, 2003; Duehr & Bono, 2006; de Pillis, Kernochan, Meilich, Prosser, & Whiting, 2008). There are other measures available to measure gender stereotyping (e.g., the Bem Sex Role Inventory, Women as Managers Scale), but the SDI is the most widely used and has been repeatedly empirically validated throughout the years (Boyce & Herd, 2003; Schein, 2001) and thus is the preferred instrument for this context. This study only requires that the agentic ( $\alpha = .84$ ) and communal characteristic ( $\alpha = .70$ ) adjectives are included, though the original scale contains 92-items. Responses are rated on a scale from (1) *not at all characteristic* to (5) *extremely characteristic* and the scale, which is included in Appendix B, contains traits such as “aggressive”, “analytical”, “creative”, and “sympathetic”.

**Trust.** Trust between supervisor and subordinates was captured using a measure created by Podsakoff and colleagues (1990) to assess trust in and loyalty to leaders.

Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree with statements such as, “I have complete faith in the integrity of my supervisor.” on a scale ranging from (1) *strongly disagree* to (7) *strongly agree*. The full measure is included in Appendix C ( $\alpha=.72$ ).

**Satisfaction with communication.** While there are numerous existing measures for satisfaction, this study used 3 items adapted from Park and Raile's (2010) work due to the focus on communication as related to satisfaction. These items align most closely with one of the theoretical bases of the hypotheses proposed is that the expression of emotion provides social information to subordinates. Cronbach's alpha is .88 and includes items such as "I like to have face-to-face communication with my supervisor". The complete measure can be found in Appendix D.

**Commitment to leader's goals.** Huber and Neale's (1986) measure uses 4-items adapted to specify commitment to goals set by the leader; for example, the original item, "How committed are you to achieving the assigned goal?" to "How committed are you to achieving the goal assigned by your leader?" as rated on a Likert scale from (1) *not at all* to (7) *to a great extent*. The measure has a Cronbach's alpha of .91. The wording of the questions to focus on the effort put toward accomplishing goals and made this measure ideal for the purpose of this study; the complete list of items is located in Appendix E.

**Control variables.** In order to capture individual information about each participant in the sample captures relevant demographic information, including age, follower gender, and organizational tenure (see Appendix F). Follower gender (i.e., "Are you male or female?") responses were coded 0 (men) or 1 (women).

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

I used IBM SPSS Statistics Version 21 software to analyze descriptive statistics, intercorrelations, and reliability estimates for all study variables as well as to conduct hypothesis testing.

#### **Preliminary analyses**

Prior to analyze all raw survey data were cleaned by removing outliers and the assumptions of regression were tested. Specifically, there were two outliers missing at random for goal commitment. To test the assumption of linear relationships between the independent and dependent variables, scatterplots using raw data for the independent variable on the x-axis and the unstandardized residuals of the full regression model on the y-axis were examined for each independent variable. Loess lines of fit for each scatterplot did not substantially deviate from zero on the y-axis across the spectrum of x-values, indicating no relationship. Normality was determined by examining histograms for each variable. With the exception of goal commitment, which displayed a slight positive skew, all variables were normally distributed.

Missing data were analyzed for all variables using SPSS missing values analysis (MVA). The integrity of the data comes into question when patterns of missing data are systematic (rather than random; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), which was not an issue. Additionally, as missing data for each study variable was five percent or less, they were addressed by using pairwise deletion. This is an acceptable approach as different strategies for this amount of missing data are unlikely to affect the overall results (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003).

Multicollinearity was addressed by examining Tolerance and VIF statistics for all variables, for which values below .1 or above 10 (respectively) indicate unacceptable collinearity. This assumption was satisfied as all of the Tolerance values were  $\geq .773$ , and VIF values did not exceed 1.310.

Homoscedasticity requires the error variance to remain constant across all values of the independent variables. Plotting the residuals for predictor variables indicated that the data had approximately equally distributed errors for all variables, satisfying this assumption.

Additionally, to test the assumption that residuals must be normally distributed around the regression line (Cohen et al., 2003), Q-Q plots were examined and found this to be the case for all variables. Finally, hierarchical multiple regression also assumes that residuals are independent across all study participants. Sampling from preexisting groups may result in clustering, which would violate this assumption. However, using dyads as the unit of analysis for this study nullified potential issues regarding this matter.

To address the possibility that the sample size could incur low statistical power (and thus increase the likelihood of Type II error; Cohen, 1992), power analyses were conducted using G\*Power. Specifically, given the input parameters of a total sample size of  $N = 77$ ,  $\alpha = .05$ , and the number of predictors tested, and a medium effect size of  $f^2 = .15$ , the achieved power was calculated to be .80. This signals that the likelihood of detecting significant effects (if they exist) is acceptable as prescribed by conventional standards of .80 (Cohen, 1992).

### **Hypothesis Testing**

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among variables are presented in Table 1. Hierarchical regression analysis was determined to be the appropriate test for evaluating moderation effects because it assesses the effects of multiple independent variables while



reducing the influence of confounding or spurious relationships (Cohen et al., 2003). The first step of the regression included subordinate gender, age, and organizational tenure. The second step included standardized supervisor-rated EEM and subordinate-rated stereotypes for how communally or agentially women should act in general as regressed onto each outcome. Because they are two separate dimensions rather than opposite ends of a single continuum (Schein, 1973; 2001) communal and agentic traits were entered separately. The third step added the interaction terms for the relevant type of EEM and subordinate stereotypes to the model. Prior to creating the interaction term the independent and moderator variables were standardized as this reduces multicollinearity and generally makes the results more interpretable (Cohen et al., 2003). There was not enough power to examine 3-way interactions, but for all analyses described below, there were no significant differences when the stereotype subscales were combined into a single scale for each interaction variable.

As indicated, supervisors assessed EEM while subordinates reported prescriptive stereotypes and all outcome variables to minimize common method bias. Hypotheses 1a, 2a, and 3a predicted that faked positive EEM has a stronger negative relationship with trust, satisfaction with communication, and commitment to leader's goals for subordinates who hold stronger communal gender stereotypes. As seen in Table 2, the main effect of faked positive expressions failed to account for a significant relationship between EEM and subordinates' trust toward their female leaders ( $\beta = -.09, p = .43$ ), satisfaction with communication ( $\beta = -.21, p = .07$ ), and commitment to her goals ( $\beta = .11, p = .35$ ). After controlling for the three control variables, hierarchical regression showed nonsignificant effects for both the interaction effects, meaning that the hypotheses were not supported (trust,  $\beta = -.11, p = .53$ ; satisfaction,  $\beta = -.09, p = .59$ ; goal commitment,  $\beta = .19, p = .26$ ).

Hypotheses H1b, H2b, and H3b predicted that faked positive EEM has a weaker negative relationship with trust, satisfaction with communication, and commitment to leader goals respectively for subordinates who hold higher levels of nontraditional views. Again, the main effect of this type of EEM failed to account for a significant amount of the variance for subordinates' feelings of trust, satisfaction, and goal commitment. The results from the hierarchical regression also showed nonsignificant moderation effects of nontraditional views on the relationship between suppressed negative expressions and trust ( $\beta = -.09, p = .57$ ), communication satisfaction ( $\beta = -.04, p = .79$ ), and commitment to goals set by the leader ( $\beta = -.01, p = .94$ ), so these hypotheses were not supported.

Table 1.  
Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Study Variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Gender	.86	.34										
2. Age	39.49	13.13	-.01									
3. Org. tenure	6.99	7.79	-.09	.54**								
4. FP	2.45	.77	-.09	-.11	-.03							
5. SN	3.17	.91	.14	0.10	-.10	.01						
6. Genuinely felt emotions	3.86	.62	-.11	0.03	-.08	.07	-.19					
7. Nontraditional views	3.54	.55	-.10	-.07	-.06	-.06	.12	-.06				
8. Communal stereotypes	3.62	.32	-.11	-.04	-.08	-.08	.18	.01	.26*			
9. Trust	4.07	.58	-.15	-.03	-.08	-.09	-.01	.30**	.05	.16		
10. Satisfaction	4.31	.77	-.04	-.11	-.19	-.19	-.02	-.04	-.08	.03	.42**	
11. Goal Commitment	6.41	.66	-.10	.01	-.17	.10	-.13	.25*	.14	.12	.24*	.13

Note. N = 80 dyads for trust and satisfaction analyses, N = 77 dyads for goal commitment analyses. Men = 0, Women = 1. Variables: FP = Faked positive, SN = Suppressed negative. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

Table 2.

*Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses for Faked Positive Emotions*

Predictor	Trust		Satisfaction with communication		Commitment to leader's goals	
	$\Delta R$	$\beta$	$\Delta R$	$\beta$	$\Delta R$	$\beta$
<b>Step 1</b>	.03		.04		.07	
Gender		-.16		-.06		-.09
Age		.04		-.01		.09
Org. tenure		-.11		-.19		-.27*
<b>Step 2</b>	.06		.09		.10	
Faked positive		-.09		-.21		.11
Nontraditional views		-.02		-.13		.12
Communal stereotypes		.13		.03		.16
<b>Step 3</b>	.09		.10		.01	
FP x Agentic		-.06		-.07		-.05
FP x Communal		-.13		-.03		-.01
Total R <sup>2</sup>	.18		.23		.18	
<i>n</i>	80		80		77	

Note. FP = Faked positive emotions. \*  $p < .05$ .

Hypotheses 1c, 2c, and 3c predicted that suppressed negative EEM has a stronger positive relationship with (respectively) trust, satisfaction with communication, and commitment to leader's goals for subordinates who hold higher levels of nontraditional views. The second step of the regression assessed the main effects of suppressing negative expressions on subordinate outcomes and showed nonsignificant results for each outcome, meaning that leaders' EEM did not account for a significant amount of variance for followers' trust ( $\beta = .01, p = .99$ ), satisfaction ( $\beta = -.03, p = .81$ ), or goal commitment ( $\beta = -.20, p = .10$ ). Table 3 displays that moderation effects were nonsignificant for trust ( $\beta = .10, p = .41$ ), satisfaction with communication ( $\beta = .05, p = .71$ ), and commitment to the leader's goals ( $\beta = -.01, p = .98$ ).

Hypotheses 1d, 2d, and 3d stated that suppressed negative EEM would have a weaker positive relationship with perceptions of the leader for subordinates who hold communal stereotypes. As reported above, the regression failed to show significant main effects for all three subordinate outcomes. Further, the data revealed that nontraditional views did not significantly influence the relationships between suppressed negative EEM and trust ( $\beta = .21, p = .11$ ), satisfaction with communication ( $\beta = .13, p = .30$ ), or commitment to leader goals ( $\beta = .07, p = .58$ ). As such, Hypotheses 1d, 2d, and 3d were not supported.

Table 3.

*Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses for Suppressed Negative Emotions*

Predictor	Trust		Satisfaction with communication		Commitment to leader's goals	
	$\Delta R$	$\beta$	$\Delta R$	$\beta$	$\Delta R$	$\beta$
<b>Step 1</b>	.03		.04		.06	
Gender		-.18		-.06		-.09
Age		-.01		-.01		.09
Org. tenure		-.05		-.19		-.27*
<b>Step 2</b>	.06		.05		.14	
Suppressed negative emotions		.01 -.03		-.03		-.20
Nontraditional views		.16		-.11		.13
Communal stereotypes				.05		.18
<b>Step 3</b>	.15		.09		.15	
SN x Agentic		.16		.07		-.19
SN x Communal		.25		.20		.95
Total R <sup>2</sup>	.23		.19		.34	
<i>n</i>	80		80		77	

Note. SN = Suppressed negative emotions. \*  $p < .05$ .

Table 4.

*Moderated Multiple Regression Analyses for Expressing Genuinely Felt Emotions*

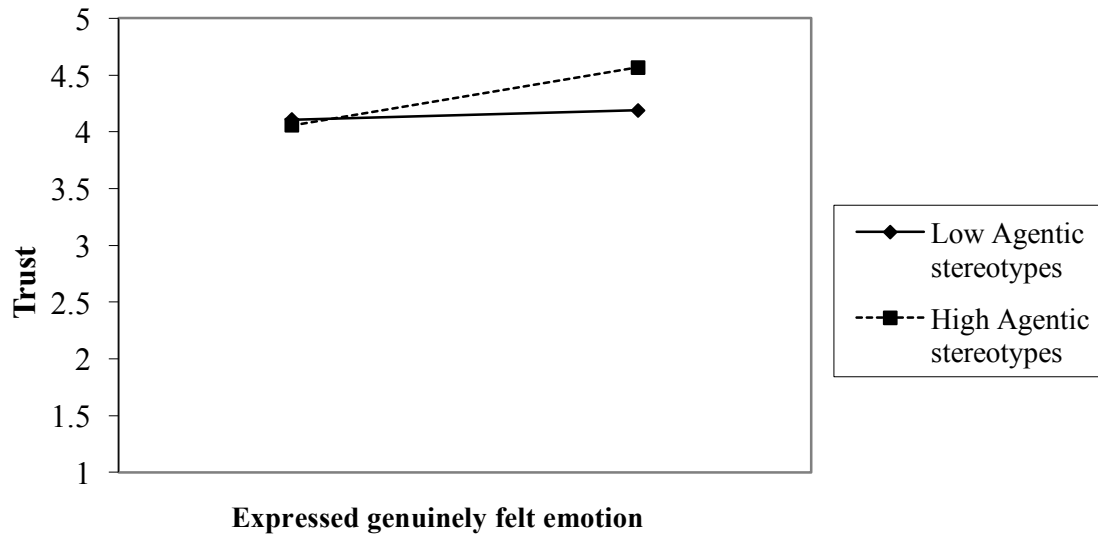
Predictor	Trust		Satisfaction with communication		Commitment to leader's goals	
	$\Delta R$	$\beta$	$\Delta R$	$\beta$	$\Delta R$	$\beta$
<b>Step 1</b>	.03		.04		.03	
Gender		-.16		-.06		-.11
Age		.04		-.01		.20
Org. tenure		-.11		-.19		-.19
<b>Step 2</b>	.09		.02		.09	
Genuinely felt emotions		.27**		-.07		.23*
Nontraditional views		.01		-.12		.05
Communal stereotypes		.14		.04		.15
<b>Step 3</b>	.10		.05		.08	
GF x Agentic		.24*		.14		.20*
GF x Communal		-.32**		-.14		-.19
Total R <sup>2</sup>	.22		.10		.20	
<i>n</i>	80		80		77	

Note. GF = Genuinely felt emotions. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

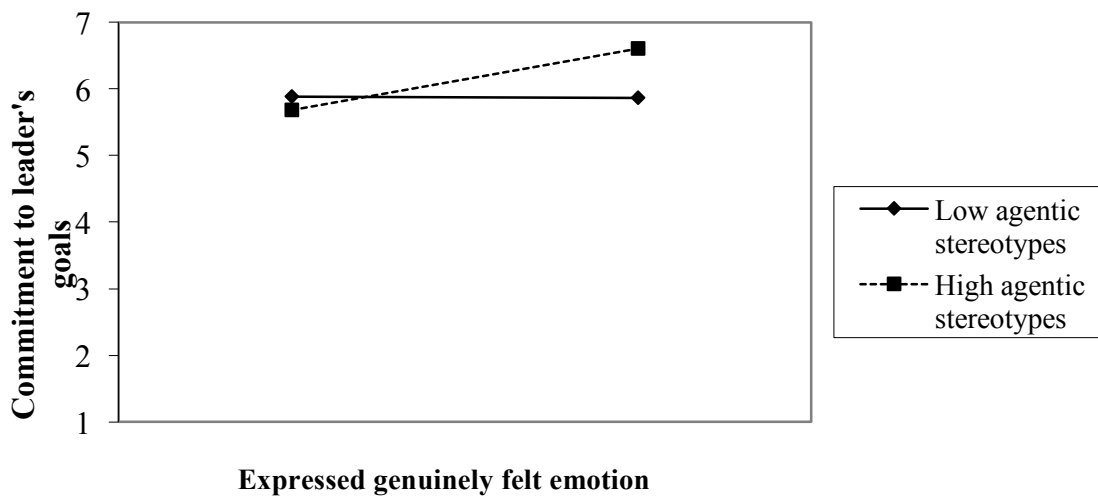
Hypotheses 1e, 2e, and 3e predicted that expressing genuinely felt emotions has a stronger positive relationship with trust, satisfaction with communication, and commitment to leader's goals for subordinates who hold stronger agentic gender stereotypes. In contrast with the results for faked positive and suppressed negative expressions, leaders' expressions of genuine emotions accounted for a significant amount of variance beyond the control variables for subordinates' trust and commitment to the leader's goals. The second step of the regression analyses found statistically significant relationships between genuinely expressed emotions and trust ( $\beta = .27, p < .01$ ) and goal commitment ( $\beta = .23, p < .05$ ), but not satisfaction ( $\beta = -.07, p = .54$ ). In other words, genuinely felt expressions had a significant impact on how much subordinates trust and feel committed to the goals set by leaders who used this type of EEM. The data from the third step of the hierarchical regression showed that subordinate stereotypes affected the relationships between leader EEM and two of the three outcomes (Table 4) such that followers who have higher levels of nontraditional views experience more trust ( $\beta = .24, p < .05$ ) and commitment to leader goals ( $\beta = .20, p < .05$ ) than those who are more heavily influenced by communal stereotypes. Simple slopes tested the relationship for the main effect of genuinely felt EEM and trust at low (-1 SD below the mean) and high (1 SD above the mean) levels of nontraditional views, with significant results ( $\beta = .73, p < .01$ ) for the former test. Thus, as the strength of subordinates' nontraditional views increase, the relationship between expressions of genuinely felt emotions and trust increases. As such, Hypothesis 1e was supported. Similarly, simple slopes tests revealed that as the level of subordinates' nontraditional views increase, the relationship between expressing genuine feelings and commitment to goals set by the leader also increases ( $\beta = .81, p < .001$ ), supporting Hypothesis 3e. However, this was not reflected in the



data gathered regarding communication satisfaction ( $\beta = .14, p = .29$ ), so Hypothesis 2e was not supported.

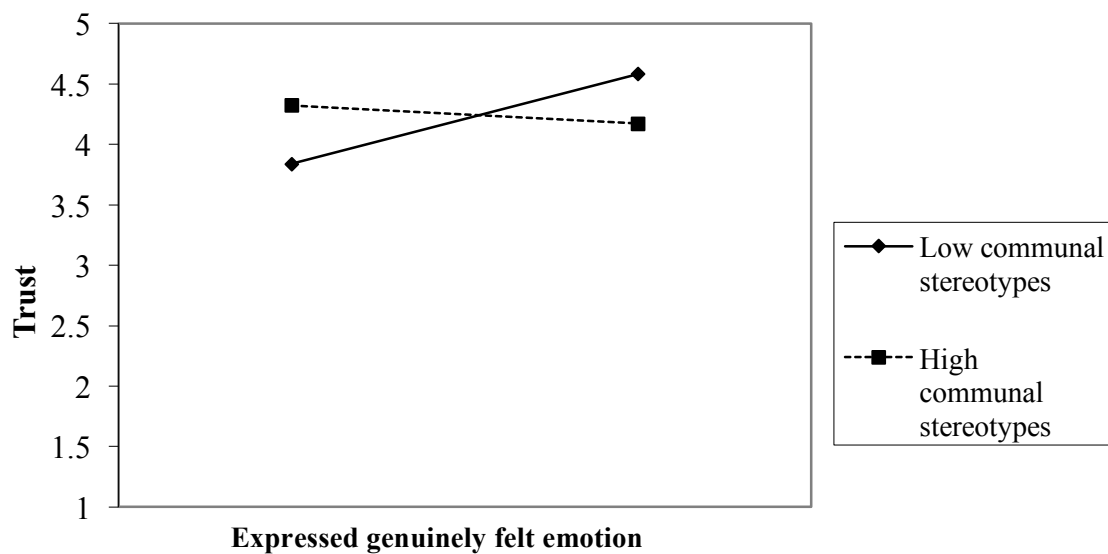


*Figure 2.* Interaction graph for Hypothesis 1e. Shows the moderating effect of nontraditional views on the relationship between expressing genuinely felt emotions and trust such that the positive relationship between genuinely felt emotions and trust is enhanced when individuals have higher levels of nontraditional views. Nontraditional views are referred to in the legend as agentic stereotypes.



*Figure 3.* Interaction graph for Hypothesis 3e. Shows the moderating effect of nontraditional views on the relationship between expressing genuinely felt emotions and goal commitment such that the positive relationship between genuinely felt emotions and commitment is enhanced when individuals have higher levels of nontraditional views. Nontraditional views are referred to in the legend as agentic stereotypes.

Finally, Hypotheses 1f, 2f, and 3f predicted that expressed genuinely felt emotions would have a weaker positive relationship with trust, satisfaction with communication, and commitment to leader's goals for subordinates who hold communal stereotypes. As reported in Table 4, the data showed significant interaction effects between EEM and trust ( $\beta = -.32, p < .01$ ), but not for satisfaction ( $\beta = -.25, p = .06$ ) or commitment to the leader's goals ( $\beta = -.19, p = .39$ ). Subsequent simple slopes tests found a significant association between genuinely felt emotional expressions and trust with communal stereotypes, but the relationship was stronger as the strength of the stereotypes decreased ( $\beta = .64, p < .001$ ). As such, Hypothesis 1f was supported.



Figure

4. Interaction graph for Hypothesis 1f. Shows the moderating effect of communal stereotypes on the relationship between genuinely felt emotions and trust such that the positive relationship between genuinely felt emotions and trust is enhanced when individuals have lower levels of communal stereotypes.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Employees' management of emotional displays, commonly referred to as surface acting in the organizational literature (Hochschild, 1983), has drawn increasing attention from researchers in recent years. Although a large body of literature exists examining the role of women in leadership (e.g., Eagly & Karau, 2002; Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Rudman & Glick, 2001), there is far less research pertaining to gender stereotypes and the use of emotional regulation in leadership positions. Indeed, as compared to expressions of discrete emotions there is very little existing research about the influence of leader emotion regulation on subordinate attitudes in general (Fisk & Friesen, 2012). The current research addressed these gaps by attempting to expand our understanding of how leader EEM, or the modification of any facial expression that communicates an individual's internal affective state, contributes to followers' affect and attitudes, specifically in the context of the subordinate's gender expectations on this aspect of the leader-follower relationship.

The results show that while female supervisors did exhibit all three types of EEM, not only did follower stereotypes fail to influence relationships between faked positive and suppressed negative EEM for all three outcomes, but there were also no main effects for the relationships between these types of leader EEM and follower trust, satisfaction, or goal commitment. Previous research has shown some inconsistencies in effect sizes and direction for direct relationships between emotion regulation and subordinate outcomes such as motivation (Lewis, 2000), satisfaction (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011; Ozcelik, 2013) or perceptions of leader effectiveness (Ilies et al., 2012) but there is overall support for their existence. For example, Kafetsios and colleagues (2014) demonstrated that leaders' suppressed negative emotions

positively influenced subordinate satisfaction, while Fisk and Friesen (2012) found significantly negative relationships between leader surface acting and follower perceptions of job satisfaction. Other empirical findings show that employees tend to think of leaders more positively when their emotional displays were congruent with gender stereotypes (Bono et al., 2007; Lewis, 2000), but these studies do not address how employees feel about leaders' *management* of emotional expressions in the context of gender stereotypes. Modern organizational culture expects emotion management (Grandey, 2000; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011) because employees at all levels believe that suppressing negative and faking positive emotions are the most effective way to achieve desired outcomes in certain situations (Kafetsios et al., 2012). For leaders, this includes using EEM to maintain order, motivate followers, and prevent anxiety among subordinates (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011; Kafetsios et al., 2012). Perhaps for women in managerial positions this is expected to be accomplished through faked positive and suppressed negative emotions.

Regarding subordinates' reactions to supervisors' EEM then, "it is possible that general competence is signaled by expressed emotion that conforms to socially sanctioned expectations of emotional displays" (Zawadzki, Warner, & Shields, 2013; pg. 220). This does not suggest that EEM's influence should be minimal in modern organizations, but rather extends the literature by suggesting that the nature of that influence may take on different properties as a function of the actor. Organizational display rules for female leaders may be different than for their male counterparts (Ayman & Korabik, 2010; Prentice & Carranza, 2002). By conforming to these rules they align with subordinate expectations and thus fail to influence employees' attitudes in either a positive or negative direction.

If that is the case, expressions of genuinely felt emotions may provoke increased positive attitudinal outcomes because their expressions deviated from those which are expected from them as part of their leadership role (i.e., faked positive or suppressed negative expressions). Whether it is because they conform to the display rules discussed earlier or because the intensity of followers' responses to surface acting may diminish due to its observable nature (Ekman & Friesen, 1982; Grandey et al., 2005), this falls in line with previous research suggesting that authenticity evokes different responses than those that are faked or suppressed (Grandey et al., 2005; Ilies et al., 2012; Wooley et al., 2011).

Shifting to the hypotheses tested, the lack of support for the moderation effects of gender stereotypes on the relationships between faking positive and suppressing negative emotions and follower outcomes was initially disappointing, but the pattern of the results has potentially more interesting implications for women in the workplace. Although this was not expected to be the case for the current research, empirical evidence (e.g., Heilman & Eagly, 2008) does support the rationale that in organizations the basis of evaluative bias is due to a lack of fit to job roles. Thus, the nonsignificance of the two kinds of stereotypes in the presence of faking positive or suppressing negative emotional expressions could imply that for subordinates, gender is less salient as a factor in their assessments of satisfaction, trust, and goal commitment *because the leader fulfills her organizational role* (Eagly et al., 2003). To fully appreciate the implications of this point for the current study, I return to the concept of stereotype activation. Stereotype activation may be applied or repressed by individuals interacting with members of a minority group depending on the context (Kunda & Spencer, 2003), which is partially determined by the saliency of competing stereotypes (Macrae et al., 1994). The hypotheses in this study were generated based on role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), in which women are positively

evaluated when their actions align with expected social roles. However, the results suggest that perhaps gender stereotypes are only activated when the leader's EEM does not conform to organizational display rules for female leaders, leaving followers to fall back on assumptions about gender to explain the leader's behavior.

The pattern of results also emphasizes the importance of expressing genuinely felt emotions in supervisor-subordinate relationships. Although three of the six hypotheses for this type of EEM were not supported, the general presence of interactions shows that the reception of EEM by followers is based on a combination of perceived sincerity and underlying assumptions about how women should act in general. The genuine expressions of supervisors do not distort or exaggerate the information they present (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2008) and thus build more intimate relationships. Because there is no discrepancy between the internal and external emotion followers may feel closer to leaders (Wang, 2011) because they can better anticipate reactions to work-related issues (Gardner et al., 2005). In turn, they are more likely to open themselves up to trust. Additionally, since perceived authentic expressions are more persuasive than faked expressions (Grandey, 2000), employees' may be more inclined to commit to goals set by the leader because they have a clearer understanding of their purpose or utility, especially when they hold stronger nontraditional views.

Along those lines, the current results support the roles that context and gender differences play in using emotions to communicate information as stated in the EASI model. As mentioned in the introduction, observations of emotion help individuals make judgments about the expresser and the surrounding environment via a combination of inferential processing and affective reactions (van Kleef et al., 2009). Since EEM is a communication medium (Wang & Groth, 2014), and because displaying genuine emotions helps communicate social information to

a greater degree (van Kleef, 2014; Zawadzki et al., 2013), female leaders utilizing these expressions may resonate more positively with employees irrespective of the content of the expression. This logic is supported by the significance of the main effects of genuinely felt emotional expressions on subordinate trust and commitment to the leader's goals. Existing literature has shown that the relative strength of these interpretation mechanisms depends in part on whether the observer holds less power than the actor (van Kleef et al., 2010), the presence of certain personality traits (van Kleef, 2014), and socio-contextual factors (van Kleef & Coté, 2007). The findings from this study (and how they differ from similar previous research) suggest that the nature of the social information conveyed by emotions is, to some degree, a function of gender and context. More specifically, I propose that the gender of an actor with more power (i.e., supervisor) may affect how emotions provide information to subordinates above and beyond their higher ranking.

However, when influenced by assumptions about how women should generally behave to a greater degree, subordinates are more likely to question the leader based on her gender, weakening the relationship. For these followers, deviating from emotional expressions expected from a female leader may make them question the individual as both a woman and a supervisor (Ayman & Korabik, 2010), especially because situational ambiguity increases employees' reliance on stereotypes to make sense of another organizational member's behavior (Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Heilman & Haynes, 2008). Even though leaders' genuinely expressed emotions culminated in positive relationships, subordinates with stronger nontraditional views face less of a challenge reconciling "leader" and "female" behaviors, as reflected in the interactional hypotheses for trust and goal commitment. This pattern was the strongest for the relationship between expressed genuine emotions and trust, which implies that followers with stronger

stereotypes keep their guard up to some degree (i.e., do not allow themselves to feel vulnerable) around their female supervisors.

The only outcome that did not correlate with genuinely felt emotional expressions or support the proposed hypotheses was satisfaction with communication. This is surprising given the significance of these emotional expressions for the other two outcomes, and the strong correlation between communication satisfaction and trust. However, the affective component of satisfaction may be the culprit for this unexpected result. Although all three outcomes have affective components, satisfaction may reflect the quality (and desirability) of the leader's potential resources (Huber & Neale, 1986), whereas trust captures subordinates' positive expectations that the leader provide resources in a predictable manner (Gardner, Fischer, & Hunt, 2009). Per Ng and Wyrick (2011) commitment to goals set by the supervisor do not necessarily reflect evaluations of the leader's personality but rather may be grounded in the perceived personal utility of achieving said goals (e.g., seeking a promotion) or belief in the importance of the goal itself (e.g., serving client needs). In contrast, satisfaction "is the extent to which people like (satisfaction) or dislike (dissatisfaction) their jobs or its facets" (Spector, 1997; pg. 2). Given this definition, it is feasible that employees would feel comfortable following their supervisor based on her perceived abilities for the purpose of achieving goals without liking her interpersonally.

Zooming out from specific hypotheses to the results as a whole, the implications of these findings require the reader to consider the results of the expressed genuine emotion hypotheses in the context of the rest of the data. More specifically, the fact that only relationships involving this type of emotional expression were significant poses a conundrum for female leaders. On one hand, as previously mentioned, the nonsignificance of the main effects for both faked



positive and suppressed negative EEM demonstrates that subordinates appreciate female supervisors who display genuinely felt emotions. At the same time, the moderation effects suggest that subordinates only fall back on stereotypes when they are not distracted by the “noise” of surface acting. Followers may expend more resources trying to interpret the true meaning behind leaders’ expressions when faced with insincere emotional displays, leaving them with fewer opportunities to evaluate the role the leaders’ gender plays in the interaction. Conversely, the cognitive space freed by removing this analysis allows subordinates to compare (dis)similarity of the leader’s behavior with how they expect her to act as a woman. As a result, the positive attitudes incurred by leader’s expression of her true feelings may be mitigated by perceived role incongruity.

### **Practical Implications**

Hopefully, the main practical takeaway for female leaders is that they best serve their subordinates by expressing their true feelings rather than regulating their expressions to conform to organizational or gender roles. Women may experience conflict about which emotions to show as a leader (Fishbach, Lichtenthaler, & Horstmann, 2015), but this study suggests that expressing how they truly feel may encourage more trust and task dedication from employees. Female leaders can attempt to increase the frequency of expressing genuinely felt emotions by completing training in which employees learn to use emotion regulation strategies designed to encourage deep acting (Hülshager & Schewe, 2011) as well as identifying which situations trigger surface acting. It may seem like a tall order for female leaders who engage in faked positive or suppressed negative EEM to completely adapt their expressions to convey genuinely felt emotions. Instead, and in order to build positive relationships for employees who are

influenced more strongly by communal stereotypes, female supervisors could focus on genuinely expressing emotions that best overlap with those that are often factors of effective leadership in general. As an example, the current results found that 69.6% of participants rated “assertiveness”, a common characteristic for the initiating structure dimension of leadership (Ilies et al., 2012), as “very characteristic” or “extremely characteristic” of how women should act in general; that number increased to 90% when asking about how women should act as leaders. Expressing genuine emotions in this vein may be a good starting place for female leaders who want to move away from EEM.

Although this study only examined a small piece of female leaders’ behaviors at the interpersonal level, facilitating female supervisors’ expressions of genuinely felt emotions in interactions with subordinates can benefit the organization as a whole. More specifically, organizations may increase the quality of employees’ relationships by selecting female leaders who demonstrate relational transparency, or “a commitment to helping close others see both positive and negative aspects of their true selves” (Gardner et al., 2005; pg. 357). Relationally transparent supervisors avoid hiding their true feelings and tend to build more trusting relationships and inspiring increased levels of commitment to the goals they set for their subordinates (Ilies et al., 2012). Actively focusing on this construct when considering women for supervisory positions can thus increase the likelihood of higher quality dyadic relationships.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

An additional explanation for the lack of significant results for faking positive and suppressing negative emotional expressions may lie in the leader’s selection of which subordinate to nominate as a participant. In designing the study, one of the requirements was a minimum organizational tenure of three months. The purpose of this was to ensure that the

subordinate had a foundation for his or her responses based on more interactions than newcomers to the organization. However, this may have backfired in that the established relationship meant that subordinates had time to reconcile themselves to the leader's preferred style of emotional expression. In other words, the subordinate might be so used to faked positive or suppressed negative EEM that it no longer impacts his or her assessments of trust or communication satisfaction, regardless of the existence of underlying stereotypes.

Relatedly, enlisting employees recommended by the leader means that subordinates might have been nominated because of the relationship quality or preexisting knowledge that they would respond to the questions in a way that was kind to the leader. Future research should control for this potential confound and may also benefit from including previous experience with female managers as an additional moderator. Subordinates who have already worked with female supervisors may have held gender stereotypes at one point but adjusted their schema during the dyadic tenure. Application and activation of stereotypes decrease as exposure to the member of a minority group increases (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Kunda & Spencer, 2003). Along those lines, because I could not randomly select followers it is possible that leaders chose employees with whom they have high-quality relationships, resulting in biased subordinate responses regarding leader EEM perceptions.

To further investigate the different consequences of EEM as a function of the leader's gender in leader-follower interactions, future research could use multi-level to measure the relationships proposed in the hypotheses for the purpose of uncovering other boundary conditions or factors influencing the relationship between different types of EEM and subordinate outcomes. To my knowledge, no studies have been conducted to date using this approach. Organization-level data about display rules and organizational culture could add to the

conclusion that there are different norms for male and female leaders. Additionally, Post (2015) demonstrated that gender differences in leaders may manifest in the quality of team-level relationships, suggesting that the impact of subordinates' gender stereotypes may emerge if examined in a multilevel context.

Researchers should also contemplate testing the influence of descriptive gender stereotypes about female leaders on the relationships between EEM and attitudinal outcomes. The measures used in this study asked subordinates to assess how they believe women *should* act, rather than asking how they currently act. Even though this is the most direct way to assess self-reported stereotypes, the responses may be confounded by social desirability. In order to avoid seeming sexist or politically incorrect, participants may have downplayed the importance of some communal characteristics (or conversely, emphasized agentic characteristics) whether or not they actually subscribe to the beliefs. For example, most adults have some awareness that modern U.S. culture discourages "submissive" women. This is supported by previous research findings (Vinkenbergh, van Engen, Eagly, & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2011) that descriptive stereotypes are more accurately reported. Relatedly, it is also possible that EEM is not an important aspect of female leadership behavior. The results certainly support the notion that regulating emotional expressions is not relevant for understanding leader-member dynamics in the context of gender. Future research should consider leader's EEM and gender stereotypes in an incremental manner.

A final limitation concerns the gender make-up of the subordinates in this study. Since the majority of the respondents were women, range restriction may have influenced the findings revealed in the current study. For example, previous research has shown that subordinates paired with supervisors of the same gender experienced greater interpersonal attraction than those in

mixed-gender dyads (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989), and that perceived similarity influences relationship quality (Dulebohn et al., 2012).

## **Conclusions**

One of the dominant focuses among I-O psychologists is to understand and explain how organizational members' behaviors shape the work environment through social interactions. The current research adds depth to this area by identifying the extent to which perceptions of leaders' affective behaviors depends upon the extent to which employees are influenced by their underlying beliefs about gender characteristics. Although only a few of the hypotheses were supported, the pattern of results suggesting that employees' attitudes towards female leaders generated by EEM may differ from previous research as a function of both gender and organizational position. When supervisors deviate from display norms by expressing genuinely felt emotions, employees react positively while activating gender stereotypes to explain her behavior, which affects the relationships between the emotional expression employees' trust and goal commitment. Women continue to tap at the glass ceiling rather than break it, but this is neither due to the influence of female leaders' surface acting on employees nor the moderating effect of employee stereotypes. As such, the findings provide numerous avenues for future studies while helping researchers more efficiently investigate properties of female leaders.

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## APPENDIX A

### DISCRETE EMOTIONS EMOTIONAL LABOR SCALE (DEELS)

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#### Items

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1. How often do you express feelings of happiness in interactions with your subordinate when you really do not feel that way?
2. How often do you express feelings of interest in interactions with your subordinate when you really do not feel that way?
3. How often do you express feelings of amusement in interactions with your subordinate when you really do not feel that way?
4. How often do you keep feelings of sadness to yourself in interactions with your subordinate when you really feel that way?
5. How often do you keep feelings of anger to yourself in interactions with your subordinate when you really feel that way?
6. How often do you keep feelings of frustration to yourself in interactions with your subordinate when you really feel that way?
7. How often do you genuinely express feelings of happiness in interactions with your subordinate when you really feel that way?
8. How often do you genuinely express feelings of interest in interactions with your subordinate when you really feel that way?
9. How often do you genuinely express feelings of amusement in interactions with your subordinate when you really feel that way?

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*Note.* From Glomb and Tews (2004).. Responses range from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*very often*).



**APPENDIX B**  
**SCHEIN DESCRIPTIVE INDEX (SDI)**

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Items

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For the following question you will find a series of descriptive terms commonly used to characterize people in general. Some of these terms are positive in connotation, others are negative, and some are neither very positive nor very negative.

We would like you to tell us what you think *women in general* are like. In making your judgments, it may be helpful to imagine that you are about to meet a person for the first time and the only thing you know in advance is that the person is (i.e., an adult female). Please rate each word or phrase in terms of how characteristic it is of women in general.

1. Aggressive
2. Ambitious
3. Analytical
4. Assertive
5. Dominant
6. Forceful
7. Self-confident
8. Aware of the feelings of others
9. Creative
10. Helpful
11. Kind
12. Passive
13. Submissive
14. Sympathetic

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*Note.* From Schein (1973). Responses range from 1 (*not at all characteristic*) to 5 (*extremely characteristic*). Items 1-7 refer to agentic traits; items 8-14 are coded as female characteristics.

## APPENDIX C

### TRUST

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#### Items

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1. I feel quite confident that my supervisor/subordinate will always try to treat me fairly.
2. My supervisor would never try to gain an advantage by deceiving workers.
3. I have complete faith in the integrity of my supervisor.
4. I feel a strong loyalty to my supervisor.
5. I would support my supervisor in almost any emergency.
6. I have a divided sense of loyalty toward my supervisor. (Reverse coded)

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*Note.* From Podsakoff , MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fetter (1990). Responses range from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

**APPENNDIX D****SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATION**

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**Items**

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1. Overall, I am very satisfied in my conversations with my supervisor/this subordinate.
2. Conversations with my supervisor/this subordinate flow well.
3. I like to have face-to-face communication with my supervisor/this subordinate.

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*Note.* From Park and Raile (2010). Responses range from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

**APPENDIX E**  
**GOAL COMMITMENT**

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Items

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1. How committed are you to achieving goals assigned by your supervisor?
2. How important is achieving goal assigned by your supervisor to your feelings of accomplishment?
3. How hard will you work to achieve goals assigned by your supervisor?
4. How motivated do you believe you will be in trying to complete all transactions as specified?

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*Note.* From Huber and Neale (1986). Responses range from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*a great extent*).

## APPENDIX F

### DEMOGRAPHICS

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Items

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1. In what type of industry do you work?
  2. How long have you worked at your current company?
  3. How long have you worked with your current supervisor/subordinates?
  4. What is your gender?
  5. What is your age?
  6. What is your ethnicity?
- 

*Note.* Item 4 included in follower survey only.

## APPENDIX G

### SUPERVISOR RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well. I am a graduate student at Old Dominion University working on my Master's Thesis in Industrial-Organizational Psychology research. My research examines how an employee's stereotypes about how women *should* act affects how they respond to female leaders. Women continue to "hit the glass ceiling" more often than their male counterparts, and I would like to study how employee perceptions may affect this imbalance.

In order to ensure that my study applies to the real world I need the participation of actual employees and their female supervisors. The survey takes approximately 10 minutes for both supervisors and direct reports. As a woman in a leadership role, would you be willing to participate and distribute this survey to your employees/reports? Your experiences, and theirs, can help to shape women leaders in the future. You can access the survey at

[https://odu.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_56kPiRXV6aK5b2l](https://odu.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_56kPiRXV6aK5b2l).

**PLEASE DO NOT FORWARD THIS LINK TO YOUR EMPLOYEE AS THE SUPERVISOR AND SUBORDINATE SURVEYS CONTAIN DIFFERENT QUESTIONS!**

To maintain confidentiality per the university's Institutional Review Board guidelines, if you are willing to participate in this study kindly fill in the e-mail contact information below for each of your subordinates who will be answering the questionnaire. ***All responses including whether employees chose to participate are totally confidential; supervisors will not be able to see the responses of the subordinates, and vice versa.*** All future correspondence regarding this matter will be directly through me.

Direct report/Subordinate: *[contact information]*

Thank you very much for taking the time to help with this research and feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best wishes,

## APPENDIX H

### SUBORDINATE RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Hello,

I hope this email finds you well. I am a graduate student in psychology at Old Dominion University and am conducting a study about how certain behaviors affect the experience of female leaders at work. Women continue to "hit the glass ceiling" more often than men, and I would like to study how their employees' stereotypes about how women should act may affect this imbalance.

In order to ensure that my study applies to the real world I need the participation of both employees and their female supervisors-- you were nominated by your supervisor at XXXXX to participate! Your experiences can help to shape the dynamic between employees and women leaders in the future. The survey takes approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and can be accessed at [https://odu.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV\\_6DPC8PuETeDLujH](https://odu.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6DPC8PuETeDLujH). ***PLEASE ONLY USE THIS LINK; THE LINK INCLUDED IN THE SUPERVISOR EMAIL CONTAINS DIFFERENT QUESTIONS!***

To maintain confidentiality per the university's Institutional Review Board guidelines, ***all responses (including whether you choose to participate) are totally confidential; supervisors will not be able to see the responses of subordinates, and vice versa.*** I want you to feel that you can be honest, so all correspondence regarding this matter will be directly through me.

Thank you very much for taking the time to help with this research and feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best wishes,

## APPENDIX I

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**Dear Participant,**

**Thank you for participating in this project. You will need approximately 10 minutes in a quiet place to complete this survey. Your participation in this study is completely confidential. All of your responses will be used for research purposes only. This description is presented so that you are aware of what this study is about before you decide to participate. The two purposes of this form are to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participation in this research project, and to record the consent of those who say YES. This is a required form for any research conducted by Old Dominion University researchers. You may discontinue your participation at any time by closing your web browser window.**

#### **RESEARCHERS**

Xiaoxiao Hu, Faculty Advisor, Responsible Project Investigator  
Rebecca Garden, Graduate Research Assistant

#### **DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY**

**This research study examines the emotional expressions and relationships between employees and their female supervisors. About 200 subjects will be participating in this research and approximately 15-20 minutes will be required. If you decide to participate, you will complete a survey. This survey will collect some descriptive information about you and ask you to reflect on the adjustment of new employees at your organization.**

#### **RISKS AND BENEFITS**

RISKS: There is a risk of release of confidential information. The researchers will minimize this risk by keeping all survey information in private lab space and on secured computers. No one outside the research team will have access to the participants' survey responses. Participants' names will not appear on any of the questionnaires.

BENEFITS: There are no direct benefits for participation in this project. By participating in this project, you may receive a greater understanding of your experiences working in this organization.

#### **COSTS AND PAYMENTS**

The researchers want your decision about participating in this project to be absolutely voluntary. There will be no costs to you. Your participation in this research will contribute to a broader understanding of how to best accommodate new employees as they transition into their organization.

#### **NEW INFORMATION**

If the researchers find new information during this project that would reasonably change your decision about participating, they will provide it to you.

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The researchers will take reasonable steps to keep private information, such as your survey responses, confidential. The researchers will keep all information in private lab space and on secured computers. The results of this project may be used in reports, presentations, and publications; but the researchers will not



identify you. Of course, your records may be subpoenaed by court order or inspected by government bodies with oversight authority.

#### **WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE**

It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the project -- at any time. Your decision will not affect your relationship with Old Dominion University or your organization, or otherwise cause a loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled.

#### **COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY**

If you say YES, then your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of illness arising from this project, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participation in any research project, you may contact the responsible principal investigator, Xiaoxiao Hu, at [x1hu@odu.edu](mailto:x1hu@odu.edu), the Office of Research at 757-683-3460, or Dr. George Maihafer, the current IRB chair at 757-683-4520 at Old Dominion University, who will be glad to review the matter with you.

#### **VOLUNTARY CONSENT**

**By clicking "NEXT" below, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research project, and its risks and benefits. The researchers should have answered any questions you may have had about the research. If you have any questions now or later on, then the researchers should be able to answer them. Their contact information is below:**

Dr. Xiaoxiao Hu  
[x1hu@odu.edu](mailto:x1hu@odu.edu)  
 757-683-4235

Rebecca Garden  
[rgard016@odu.edu](mailto:rgard016@odu.edu)  
 215-850-0021

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. George Maihafer, the current IRB chair, at 757-683-4520, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460.

**And importantly, by clicking "NEXT", you are telling the researchers YES you agree to participate in this project. If you do not want to participate, please close this browser window. Please feel free to print a copy of this page for your records.**