

**RE-EXAMINING THE  
LEADER-FOLLOWER RELATIONSHIP  
AND SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP:  
THE ROLE OF THE LEADER AS  
ATTACHMENT FIGURE**

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## DEDICATION

“Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them;

for the Lord your God,

**He is the one who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you.”**

Deuteronomy 31:6

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## SUMMARY

Organizational researchers have enriched our understanding of the leader-follower relationship using leader member exchange (LMX) theory, which has theoretical foundations built on principles of social exchange. I contend that we can enhance our understanding of leader-follower dynamics with an alternate lens - attachment theory. I argue that leaders serve as attachment figures in the organizational context, and that the extent to which they fulfill functions of attachment (proximity maintenance, safe haven, and secure base) results in followers forming different types of attachment bonds to them. Dynamics of attachment avoidance and anxiety—anchors for dismissing, fearful, and anxious-ambivalent orientations toward the leader—help us understand different types of low quality leader-member exchanges. Furthermore, dynamics of attachment security with respect to the leader help us understand the essence of high-quality leader-member exchange.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

There is a growing interest in the use of attachment theory to explain and understand leadership processes (Popper, Mayseless, & Castelnovo, 2000; Davidovitz, Mikulincer, Shaver, Izak, & Popper, 2007). Drawing on the metaphor of the leader as parent (Freud, 1939), social psychologists have, in recent years, attempted to apply knowledge of attachment dynamics in understanding the role of the leader as an attachment figure. However, this foray into understanding leadership through the perspective of attachment theory has focused its attention primarily on the leader. This is counter-intuitive because attachment theory research has primarily revolved around the child's attachment to the parent, but instead of examining the follower's attachment to the leader, research has concentrated on the leader's attachment style and its implications for him/her as an effective leader.

The starting point of this dissertation is my belief that we can benefit tremendously by taking a follower perspective to understanding attachment dynamics in the leadership process. Furthermore, while we attempt to bridge this gap in the literature, I contend that this approach can enhance our understanding of the leader-follower relationship. Specifically, I propose that we can describe the leader-follower relationship in terms of the quality of the attachment bond the follower forms with the leader. Our current knowledge of how leaders and followers relate is based primarily on principles of reciprocity and social exchange. Being able to re-iterate the leader-follower relationship by recognizing that the leader has a special role as attachment figure to the follower provides us with a complementary set of relationship mechanisms to understand leader-follower interactions.

#### **Research Context: The Leader-Follower Relationship**

The leader-follower relationship is an important one. A leader's words and actions can have profound effects on his/her followers, both positive and negative. In

a behind the scenes interview about the making of the Beijing Olympics Opening Ceremony, Sun Yupeng reflected on his experience choreographing the contemporary drum sequence involving 2008 Fou drummers. The performance was brilliantly executed, and not only showcased Chinese culture to the world, but also ranked high in its creativity. After countless months of futile search for an original style to hit the drums, he recounted that he had contemplated quitting the task. On the night that he was preparing his letter of resignation, he received a message from Zhang Jigang, deputy director of the Beijing Olympic Opening Ceremony. “Yupeng, I know you are all having a hard time. I know it is difficult for you. To come up with a unique style of hitting the drums is even more difficult, but I believe in all of you. You will definitely be able to discover that unique style of playing. I will forever be with you.” The message had a profound impact on Sun Yupeng, who remarked, “It was this message that made him persist till now.”

What exactly did Zhang Jigang do to bring about such a profound change in the attitude of Sun Yupeng? I contend that the leader in this incident created a sense of “felt security” in his follower. Felt security enables followers to be “mindful of whatever is actually happening to them and around them, to analyze problems more accurately and quickly, to mobilize effective coping strategies and positive emotions in the midst of stressful experiences” (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007: 461). The leader conveyed the message that he would be a “safe haven” for the follower in times of trouble, and that he would be a “secure base” for his creative explorations. This probably is the source of the follower’s newfound strength to persevere.

In organizational settings, leaders have the capacity and potential to fulfill these very important functions of *safe haven* and *secure base* for their followers. As leaders generally possess more resources and power to influence, they should be “natural” figures to turn to when employees encounter difficulties at work. Furthermore, leaders as authority figures, take on a parent-like role (Frued, 1939),

“guiding, directing, taking charge, and taking care of others less powerful than they and whose fate is highly dependent on them” (Popper & Mayseless, 2003: 42).

The quality of leader-follower relationships is related to performance ratings, objective performance, overall job satisfaction, satisfaction with supervisor, organizational commitment, turnover (Gerstner & Day, 1997) and organizational citizenship behaviors (Ilies, et al., 2007). Hence, it is of utmost importance that we understand how high quality relationships develop between leaders and followers, and the dynamics behind both functional and dysfunctional leader-follower relationships. Also, while leaders recognize the importance of empowerment, followers usually complain that micro-management often sets in, indicating that there is room for us to understand how leaders can empower more effectively. Effective followership also requires that followers practice independent critical thinking, and be actively involved in the organization’s life. I contend that understanding leader-follower relationship dynamics will provide valuable insights to these processes.

### **Conceptual Foundations: Attachment Theory**

Certainly, we have profited much from understanding workplace relationships through the lens of social exchange. However, social exchange theory cannot adequately address the psychological mechanisms and rationale for why employees seek to relate to people emotionally at work. Social exchange theory has fundamentally hedonistic principles, asserting that individuals are primarily motivated by “rewards” (Abrahamsson, 1970). This is contrary to the organismic theoretical foundations of self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan, Kuhl, & Deci, 1997), and converging empirical evidence that “the desire for interpersonal attachments is a fundamental human motivation” (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Just as there are contrasting perspectives for understanding human behavior—such as economic and social exchange (Blau, 1964), altruism and self-interest (Elster, 1990), mothering and contract (Held, 1990), the ‘ethic of rights’ and the ‘ethic of care’

(Held, 2005)—I contend that it is justifiable and beneficial to leverage attachment theory as an alternate, complementary perspective on human relations at work.

While organizational scholars have recognized the significance of relationships in the workplace, social psychologists have made tremendous advances in the domain of relationship science in the last two decades (Berscheid, 1999). What began as a study of the attachment bond between mother and child (Bowlby, 1969/1982) has evolved into one of the most intensely researched topic in psychology (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Compelling evidence suggests that developmental experiences with salient attachment figures during childhood have implications for the way people interact with relationship partners in adulthood. I contend that an attachment theoretical perspective to understanding workplace relationships complements the dominant social exchange approach currently enjoying the favor of organizational scholars. The strong theoretical framing of attachment theory allows us to examine the dynamics of both positive relationships, anchored in secure attachments, and dysfunctional relationships, caused by insecure attachments. It may seem like a substantial stretch to extend attachment theory to the study of interpersonal relationships at work. However, just as we have relaxed the parameters of economic exchange to establish social exchange theory (Homans, 1958), “expanding the applicability of the attachment style construct opens the door to important conceptual links between attachment theory and other topics of interest to psychologists” (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007: 99).

An important question to address is whether attachment dynamics have relevance in an organizational context, given that the attachment behavioral system is only triggered by experienced danger or threats (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). To argue that attachment theory is relevant in organizational settings, it is of utmost importance to demonstrate that organizations create sufficiently stressful situations that would prompt organization members to seek protection and care from attachment figures, triggering the behavioral mechanisms of attachment. On this particular note,

Kahn and Kram (1994) recognized that internal models of authority are triggered when organization members experience threat and anxiety at work. Indeed, Kahn and Kram identified “task and interpersonal demands, increasing competition, cost-reduction initiatives, speed and complexity of tasks, and demands of collaboration” (1994: 39) as sources of threat and anxiety in organizational settings. Abusive supervision, bullying, aggressions, trust violation, injustice, social uncertainty, and discrimination are further examples of the inevitable threats in modern organizational life. I contend that such stress and anxiety is comparable to that experienced in other domains of life. Though it can be argued that individuals’ rely on the support of attachment figures outside the work domain to deal with organizational distress, I argue that workplace-specific attachment figures, in particular leaders, are the immediate secondary attachment figures that employees turn to when experiencing organizational stress. It is also pertinent to note that Bowlby (1969: 207), in his seminal work, suggested that leaders “can come to constitute for many people a subordinate attachment figure.”

### **Research Objectives**

The purposes of this study are two-fold. Firstly, to provide a conceptual framework within which to situate the study of follower-leader attachment, including the dimensions of attachment, as well as initial insights into the factors influencing attachment formation and attachment effects. Secondly, to test core elements of the proposed attachment framework, including attachment functions (linkages from leader behavior to follower attachment, attitudes and behavior), transference processes (linkages from follower general attachment style to specific leader attachment), and the caregiving behavioral system (linkages from supervisor attachment style to leader behavior). Hypotheses regarding the relationships between the constructs, as illustrated in FIGURE 3, are developed in Chapter 3.

## **Overview Of Dissertation**

The remainder of this dissertation is structured in the following way. In Chapter 2, I review extant literature on attachment theory, focusing primarily on concepts, methodological issues, and key relationships with organization-relevant variables. I then discuss how attachment theory has been applied to the study of leadership, and show that the emphasis in this emerging field of research has been on attachment style differences of leaders and their leadership styles & motives, overlooking the follower's attachment to the leader. Subsequently, I discuss the importance of supportive behaviors in the leadership process, and argue that we can benefit from a deeper understanding of support processes, and what constitutes effective support from the leader. In Chapter 3, I develop a conceptual model and hypotheses, using attachment theory as an overarching framework, to illustrate the leadership process, by considering individual differences in attachment styles of leaders and followers, the leader's supportive behaviors, the leader-follower relationship, and follower outcomes. In Chapter 4, I explain the methods used to test the hypotheses developed in the previous chapter, and describe the development of the Specific Leader Attachment Measure (SLAM). In Chapter 5, I present results to validate scales used in this study. Chapter 6 describes the findings of hypotheses tests. In Chapter 7, I discuss the findings from the previous chapter, limitations of this dissertation, directions for future research, theoretical contributions of this dissertation, and the practical implications for leaders as attachment figures.



## 北京之路解密開幕式 《擊缶而歌》



我說我永遠記得，那句話

我都永遠記得。是這樣的，說：“育鵬，我知道你們很辛苦，我知道你很難，尋找到這種獨特的與眾不同的擊打方式難上加難，但我相信你們，你們一定也必將能找到這獨特的與眾不同的擊打方式。我和你永遠在一起。”— 孫育鵬《擊缶而歌》編導組組長

我可以告訴你是這個短訊讓我一直堅持到現在。



我說你們面對任何天大的困難，我永遠和你們在一起。我們並肩戰抖。我是負責上篇的一位導演。我對我所領導的所有編導，我不會讓他們感覺到我會袖手旁觀，不會的。— 張繼鋼 北京奧運會開幕式副總導演

## Behind-The-Scene Story of 2008 Beijing Olympics Opening Ceremony

### << Fou Drums Welcome Song >>



I say I will always remember. That message I will always remember. It goes like this: “Yupeng, I know you are all having a hard time. I know it is difficult for you. To come up with a unique style of hitting the drums is even more difficult, but I believe in all of you. You will definitely be able to discover that unique style of playing. I will forever be with you.”

I can tell you that it was because of that message I have persisted till now.

*Sun Yupeng << Fou Drums Welcome Song >> Choreographer Team Head*



No matter how large a challenge you face, I will forever be with you all. We will fight this battle together. I am a director in charge of the first half of the performance. To all the directors that I am leading, I won't let them have the feeling that I will stand by and just watch. I won't.

*Zhang Jigang, 2008 Beijing Olympics Opening Ceremony Overall Vice-Director*

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter I provide a brief overview of attachment theory, including key assumptions of the theory, and conceptual paradigms. Following this, I review work that applies attachment theory to the study of leadership, concluding that we have much to learn. Finally, I examine the role of supportive behaviors in the leadership process, contending that while we know that support from the leader is very important for the follower, we have much to gain from a deeper understanding of supportive processes and what really constitutes supportive behavior.

#### **Attachment Theory**

The basic premise of attachment theory is that human beings have an in-built attachment behavioral system adapted for survival purposes (Bowlby, 1969/1982). When faced with danger or when threatened, people seek help and protection from “wiser and stronger caregivers,” also known as attachment figures. Attachment figures serve functions of proximity maintenance (availability and accessibility), safe haven (providing support and relief), and secure base (allowing the individual to pursue nonattachment goals, such as exploration, in a safe environment). The goal of the attachment behavioral system is to attain a state of “felt security” (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). When attachment figures respond appropriately and consistently during times of distress, people experience ‘felt security’ and positive affect. Repetitive experiences of such interaction episodes lead to a “broaden and build” cycle of self-enhancement, facilitating exploration and creativity (Fredrickson, 2001). However, when attachment figures do not serve their attachment functions, people choose to either distance themselves (deactivating strategy) or anxiously seek attention (hyper-activating strategy), depending on their evaluation of whether proximity seeking is an option (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003).

Attachment theory was initially developed to understand how infant experiences with primary attachment figures have developmental implications for personality and future interactions with attachment figures. Observational studies of the interactions of infants with their mothers revealed secure versus insecure (anxious-ambivalent/avoidant) behavioral patterns in infants with responsive and non-responsive mothers respectively (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). From repeated interactions with primary caregivers during infancy, children form an understanding of whether they are worthy of attention (model of self) and whether others will be available to them for support (model of others) (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). The accumulation and consolidation of experiences with such significant others in childhood contributes to the development of working models, cognitive scripts for interacting with potential attachment figures.

It is crucial to note that people can have multiple attachment figures, and unique experiences with each of them, resulting in different specific attachment working models with different attachment figures. For instance, for infants, mothers and fathers are usually primary attachment figures. Depending on their availability and accessibility during times we feel threatened and seeking protection, we could develop secure or insecure patterns of attachment with them, which affects our general models of relating to future attachment figures, or even close relationship partners. As infants grow up and move through adolescence to adulthood, they likely encounter many secondary attachment figures, including school teachers, bosses, close friends, romantic partners, and spouses. Our specific experiences with each of them contribute to our beliefs about the availability of attachment figures in general and whether we are worthy for others to want to get close to us. The aggregate of these experiences, considered together with factors, such as the salience of attachment figures, result in enduring individual differences in generalized

attachment styles, which will affect the development of new relationships (Collins & Read, 1994).

Extension of attachment theory into the domain of adult attachment is premised on the understanding that differences in childhood experiences with attachment figures influence the development of enduring individual differences in the way adults bond with close others (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Romantic partners and close friends are theorized to serve the attachment functions of proximity maintenance, safe haven, and secure base in adulthood, gradually replacing the role of primary caregivers in childhood. While developmental psychologists are primarily concerned with the parent-child attachment bond, and social psychologists with close, intimate relationships, it is important not to forget Bowlby theorized that “schools, work groups, religious groups or political groups can come to constitute for many people a subordinate attachment figure and for some people a principal attachment figure” (Bowlby, 1969: 207).

When attachment theory was first extended to the study of adult romantic relationships, researchers drew on existing knowledge of childhood attachments in conceptualizing adult attachment styles (Hazan & Shaver, 1987). They proposed that three adult attachment styles - styles paralleling the infant attachment styles identified by Ainsworth et al (1978) - capture feelings and behavioral tendencies in close relationships: The *secure* attachment style would be characterized by comfort in getting close to others and depending on them, and not worrying about being abandoned or others getting close. Insecure attachments would be either *avoidant* (discomfort in being close to others and trusting them completely, and feeling nervous when others try to get too close), or *anxious* (worrying that others don't really love me or unwilling to get close to me, and wanting to get too close to others making them feel uncomfortable).

Researchers later realized that it was beneficial to distinguish between two categories of avoidant behaviors. That is, while some individuals *preferred* not to

engage in close relationships, others *feared* getting close and depending on others. The feelings and behavioral patterns of different attachment styles were theorized to be the result of working models of self and others that had been developed over repeated interactions with attachment figures (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). People construct beliefs about whether attachment figures are available when they need them (model of others) and whether attachment figures find them worthy to be given attention (model of self). The interaction of these two sets of mental models, results in the manifestation of four distinct attachment styles: secure, preoccupied, dismissing, fearful (see FIGURE 1).

It soon became apparent that individuals display varying degrees of each attachment style within the same relationship and across different relationships. Classifying a person into any of the four categories of attachment styles did not accurately capture the dynamic of interpersonal attachment. Also, researchers discovered that there were two underlying dimensions (See FIGURE 2) in the numerous attachment instruments being developed: *attachment avoidance* and *attachment anxiety* (Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, 1998; Fraley & Spieker, 2003a). These two dimensions map closely with Bartholomew & Horowitz's (1991) concept of models of others and self. That is, while people with negative models of others tend to avoid building close relationships and depending on others, those with negative models of self are likely to be anxious about others' acceptance of them. Individuals low on both dimensions of avoidance and anxiety are depicted as securely attached. Recent empirical findings support the use of dimensional over taxonomical models for conceptualizing attachment styles (Fraley & Spieker, 2003a; Fraley & Soieker, 2003b). TABLE 1 presents a chronological summary of the development of measures used to conceptualize both taxonomical and dimensional representations of attachment models, showing robustness and rigor in how the measure has been tested over time.

### **Attachment Theory and Leadership Research**

TABLE 2 presents a summary of studies that have applied attachment theory to understanding leadership. In particular, attachment theory has been applied in depth to the study of transformational leadership and leader's attributes. Popper and colleagues outlined conceptual grounds for associating leader attachment styles and transformational leadership behavior (Popper et al., 2000). They demonstrated that secure leader attachment was consistently positively associated with the charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation dimensions of transformational leadership. Insecure leader attachment styles were generally negatively associated with transformational leadership. The basic premise for this argument is that secure leaders are self-assured and have a positive model of self, and have a genuine interest in their follower because of a positive model of others. These are pre-requisites for leaders to be effective in transformational leadership. In a most recent study, Davidovitz and colleagues report convincing findings that demonstrate the effects of military officers' attachment styles had on their motives to lead, and the effects on the instrumental/socio-emotional functioning and mental health of soldiers reporting to them (Davidovitz et al., 2007). Results suggest that anxious leaders tend to adopt a personalized leadership style ("putting their own interests before the needs of their followers and practicing a dictatorial style of leadership which includes belittling followers and ascribing maximum importance to themselves" - Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007: 445) while avoidant leaders tend not to adopt a socialized leadership style ("using power to serve and empower others, aligning their vision with followers' needs and aspirations, and respecting the followers' rights and feelings – Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007: 445).

It is very important to note that attachment/leadership studies have focused exclusively on leaders' attachment styles and transformational leadership and effects on followers. Only two studies have examined individual differences in attachment styles of the follower. Berson, Dan & Yammarino (2006) were concerned with the

implications of followers' attachment styles for ideal leadership perceptions. They found that secure individuals viewed ideal leadership to be more relational in nature than insecure-ambivalent individuals. Davidovitz et al (2007) examined the interaction effects of leader's attachment style and follower's attachment style on change in follower's mental health. They found that avoidant officers had a detrimental impact to insecure soldiers' (both avoidant and anxious) mental health. The findings of these studies are important because they bring into focus the significance of leaders as attachment figures for followers.

### **Supportive Leadership**

The importance of supportiveness has been emphasized in theories of leadership. Beginning with the behavioral paradigm, researchers have identified consideration (Stodgill, 1950) and employee-oriented leadership behaviors (Kahn & Katz, 1960) as critical to follower success. Consideration has been defined as the degree to which a leader shows concern and respect for followers, looks out for their welfare, and expresses appreciation and support (Bass, 1990). It is suggested that considerate leaders, being more empathetic, are better able to detect and satisfy the needs of the followers. Though the behavioral paradigm seems to have fallen out of favor among organizational researchers, a recent meta-analysis demonstrated that consideration is strongly correlated to follower job satisfaction, satisfaction with the leader, follower motivation, and leader effectiveness (Judge, Piccolo & Ilies, 2004).

Recognizing weaknesses in the trait and behavioral approaches to leadership, contingency theorists maintain that there is an appropriate leadership style dependent on the situation: Fiedler's contingency model (1967) claims that relationship-oriented leaders perform best in situations when they have moderate control; Hersey & Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (1974) proposes use of supportive and participative leadership style when followers are able to perform tasks but unwilling to do so; House's Path-Goal Theory (1971) contends that friendly and approachable



leaders, who consider follower needs (supportive leadership style), are effective and bring out high employee performance and satisfaction when tasks are highly structured. Common to all three contingency approaches to leadership is the fact that a supportive leadership style is effective under the right mix of circumstances, what differs is how supportive leadership is actually measured. Fiedler's work had relied on the Least-Preferred-Coworker scale to identify whether a leader is relationship-oriented while empirical testing of Path-Goal Theory had used the LBDQ to capture the dimensions of initiating structure (directive leadership) and consideration (supportive leadership).

Beyond contingency theories of leadership, it is interesting to note individualized consideration is a sub-dimension of transformational leadership. Again, showing concern for the follower is deemed critical to the leadership process. However, Bass (1990) noted that consideration and individualized consideration are distinct. Individualized consideration focuses on the individual development of the follower. Consideration is based on relations-oriented behaviors of the leader, which arguably provides, in exchange, acceptance of the leader and satisfaction with him/her. Individualized consideration measures behavior that is transforming through its attention to the individual members and their development (Seltzer & Bass, 1990). It is noteworthy that Bass (1990) had attempted to differentiate between an exchange and developmental perspective to the provision of leadership support.

In summary, it is undeniable that supportive leadership matters to effective leadership. However, critical questions remain to be answered:

1. What exactly is supportive leadership? There are variations in which supportive behaviors have been conceptualized and measured, and while there seems to be some commonalities among the different approaches, there are obvious differences too. There is also a lack of a strong theory to explain the process and mechanisms by which supportive leadership

operate. Is there an alternate perspective to social exchange that we can use to analyze the process by which supportive leadership operates?

2. Are there different types of supportive leader behaviors? If so, then what functions do these different behaviors serve, and when do they really matter?
3. How and when do followers perceive a leader's words and actions as being supportive? Why is it that, sometimes, a leader's benevolent attempts to support a follower are misconstrued or unappreciated?

## CHAPTER 3

### THEORY DEVELOPMENT AND HYPOTHESES

#### The Conceptual Model

In this chapter I use attachment theory as an overarching framework to develop a conceptual model to understand leader-follower dynamics. An overview of the model is illustrated in FIGURE 3. The following discussion follows closely the four boxes in the diagram, explaining components and processes that drive the relationships.

The Leader-Follower Relationship – Attachment theory provides a powerful lens for analyzing the leader-follower relationship, and this perspective is different from traditional social exchange analysis, as exemplified in Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory. Before proceeding further, I believe it is worthwhile to emphasize that the objective of this dissertation is not to dismiss what we have learned about Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), nor is it to question the importance of social exchange in leader-follower relationships. Norms of reciprocity definitely do operate within leader-follower relations, and social exchange dynamics are important. What I am proposing is a complementary perspective towards viewing the leader follower relationship, by recognizing the fact that the leader-follower relationship is a special one. In particular, leaders often do serve as an attachment figure in organizational settings, and we do need an appropriate vocabulary to describe the dynamics of attachment relationships that emerge. Followers do develop beliefs about whether the leader is available as an attachment figure (attachment avoidance), as well as about their own worthiness of leader acceptance (attachment anxiety). I further contend that attachment avoidance is strongly associated with social exchange dynamics, while attachment anxiety offers a completely different set of lenses for understanding the leader-follower relationship. The follower's

perception of self-worth and acceptance by the leader has important implications for work attitudes and behaviors.

Individual Differences (The Transference Process and Fit-Hypothesis) –

Employees come to work with pre-conceptions about authority figures. Experiences with significant others in their lives create relatively stable mental models of whether general others can be trusted or available when they need help, and whether they are worthy and will be accepted. Such beliefs are projected onto leaders as leader-follower relationships develop, and I posit that we need to recognize the role of individual differences in attachment style in the transference process. General attachment styles consisting of important beliefs of the self and others affect not only follower beliefs about their leaders, but also general interactions between leaders and followers. In particular, avoidant leaders who tend to shy away from building close relationships will be a bad “fit” for insecure followers: Avoidant followers who already believe that people around them are unlikely attachment figures will have their beliefs reinforced when coupled with an avoidant leader, while anxious followers will likely attribute the leader’s aloofness to their own unworthiness to be accepted by their leader.

Leadership Style and Behaviors – My assertion that leaders serve as attachment figures in organizational settings is bold, but not unreasonable. As argued in the previous chapter, this is a reasonable assumption given the many sources of threats in organizations that would invoke the attachment behavioral system of followers to seek help and assistance from stronger figures within the organization. Leaders, serving as authority figures in most organizational contexts should be natural targets for followers to alleviate their stress.

Given the role of leaders as attachment figures, we need to understand their functions as attachment figures. As is the case within other attachment contexts,

leaders fulfill their functions as attachment figures through the display of supportive behaviors towards their followers. And when leaders fulfill their functions as attachment figures, it helps to shape the specific leader attachment orientation of their followers. That is, leaders who function as a safe haven and secure base for followers inform their followers that they will be available when required, and that followers are accepted and worthy of the leader's attention.

Beyond the effects of leader behavior on the specific leader attachments of followers, it is important to note that a leader's generalized attachment style has implications for his or her ability to function as an effective attachment figure through the caregiving behavioral system. This effect of leader attachment style, through the caregiving behavioral system and attachment functions represents a pathway of leader influence that is distinct from the dynamics of fit between leader and follower attachment styles noted above.

Follower Attitudes and Behaviors – The qualities of a follower's specific leader attachment can be expected to influence his or her work attitudes and behavior. More specifically, beyond the dynamics of reciprocity and social exchange (LMX) that have been shown to explain some variance in follower attitudes and behavior, I argue that attachment dynamics can and should explain additional variance, providing us a control systems approach to understanding the follower's choice of strategy in handling leader-follower interactions. Whether followers view their leaders as possible targets for attachment, or themselves as worthy of their leaders' attention will affect their choice of deactivating or hyper-activating strategies in reacting to their leaders' behaviors. Such strategies are strongly associated with the followers' attributions of their leaders' intentions and motives, experience of thriving at work, and sense of affective commitment towards the organization.

## Hypotheses

Follower Mental Models of Attachment – Hypotheses H1 and H2 are focused on the “Individual Differences” and “Leader-Follower Relationship” components in the conceptual model (FIGURE 3). Specifically, I argue that attachment bonds better depict leader-follower relations than LMX, and that generalized attachment styles of the leader and follower jointly contribute to the nature of mental models of attachment that follower develops towards specific leaders.

Much of the current research in attachment theory has been focused on the effects of individual differences in attachment styles on interpersonal relationships. At the same time, there is a need to seriously explore the notion of “context-specific attachment” (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Compelling evidence suggests that specific models of attachment more strongly predict specific relationship outcomes than do general attachment models (Cozzarelli, Hoekstra, & Bylsma, 2000). We need to understand the attachment functions that leaders can serve, and how best to describe attachment anxiety and avoidance dynamics with respect to them. There is also a need to discover what specific relationship outcomes these relationship-specific attachments would predict. To undertake such an approach would require relationship-focused attachment measures that are distinct from generalized measures of attachment orientation (Rholes & Simpson, 2004).

Attachment theory is concerned with “the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others” (Bowlby, 1977: 201). Elaborating upon Freud’s (1961/1930) metaphor of the leader as a father, Popper & Mayseless (2003) proposed that leaders (e.g., managers, political and religious authorities, teachers, supervisors, and military officers) may occupy the role of “stronger and wiser” caregivers who provide a safe haven and secure base for their followers. As already observed, organizational settings pose a source of threat and stress to employees. And under conditions of threat and stress at work, leaders are the ones to whom followers naturally turn for support and help. As such, followers can develop

working models of attachment towards their leaders that are shaped both by experiences with leaders that highlight their availability and accessibility, and by salient experiences with other attachment figures. As a point of departure, it makes sense to consider the possibility that specific leader attachments have the same two dimensions—avoidance and anxiety—that have been shown in past research to characterize people’s general working models of attachment, as well as their specific working models of attachment to other attachment figures.

Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) - Avoidant individuals view closeness to the leader as unnecessary or undesirable, and tend to avoid dependence on the leader. They prefer to maintain a distance from the leader, try not to rely on the leader for assistance when they run into problems (either at work or in their personal life). They shy away from close relationships with the leader, and do not disclose much about themselves to the leader. In essence, avoidance to a specific leader is a reflection of one’s view of whether the leader would be available and serves as a good attachment figure during times of distress (Model of the other – leader).

Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) - Anxious individuals feel unworthy as followers, and they worry about the leader’s acceptance. They are concerned about how the leader views them as followers, and whether the leader would want to provide support to them during times of distress (Model of the self). They are easily affected by leaders’ behaviors towards them, and need constant reassurance from the leader that they are accepted and valued.

The next logical question to ask might be whether there is a relationship between LMX and my proposed operationalization of the leader follower relationship, and what “value added” might be derived from understanding of leader-follower dynamics in terms of attachment? People who are high in attachment avoidance in close relationships are uncomfortable with intimacy, self-disclosure, and interdependence (Mikulincer & Nachshon, 1991; Collins & Feeney, 2000). Thus, a

follower who has an avoidant attachment towards his or her leader is likely to feel it is unnecessary to get close to the leader, and have a tendency to avoid being dependent on the leader. Maintaining an arms-length distance from the leader would suggest that the follower likely adopt an “agentic” exchange orientation over a communal orientation to the leader, whereby in the former, the concern is for the self, with being assertive, self-enhancement, and self-protection (Bakan, 1966). Thus, the followers who have an avoidant attachment towards their leader would naturally not experience a high quality exchange relationship with their leaders. Understanding the follower’s attachment towards the leader provides another dimension to understanding the leader-follower relationship, which is the follower’s perception of whether the leader thinks the follower is someone worthy of providing support to (attachment anxiety). Essentially, I am proposing that LMX is synonymous with attachment avoidance with respect to the leader, while attachment anxiety deepens our understanding the complexity surrounding the leader-follower relationship, by considering the perception of the self in the eyes of the leader.

Research shows that there is the transference of working models of significant others in our lives onto new relationships (Maccoby, 2004; Anderson & Cole, 1990). Transference is defined as “a general phenomenon in which beliefs about significant others are transferred to other people” (Anderson & Cole, 1990: 385) or “the process by which existing mental representations of significant others resurface to influence new social interactions” (Brumbaugh & Fraley, 2006: 552). In particular, when we interact with a new person we just got to know, and if he/she resembles a significant other, we “interpret this new person in terms of the significant other by making related inferences about him or her accordingly” (Berk & Anderson (2000: 546). In a similar manner, leaders (as attachment figures) trigger in their followers mental representations of past attachment figures (significant others), and these mental representations affect the way they interact with their leaders. Brumbaugh & Fraley (2006) provided evidence for the transference mechanism in



attachment dynamics, by examining how general attachment orientation to past romantic partners affected their attachment to new romantic partners they were introduced to. The results of their experiment showed that people project their mental working models of attachment onto new romantic partners, regardless of whether the new partner resembled a past partner. However, the projection is greater if the new partner resembled a past partner for the participant.

Furthermore, attachment researchers have suggested that our mental models are structured in a hierarchical fashion, with general models of self and others at the top of the hierarchy, domain/relationship specific models in the middle of the hierarchy, and individual-specific models at the lower levels (Collins & Read, 1994; Klohnen, Weller, Luo, & Choe, 2005; Overall, Fletcher, & Friesen, 2003). General models are prototypes of what one has come to expect from key authority and attachment figures in different life domains, and these mental models help individuals deal with new relationships. When one believes that people in general are not available as attachment figures, it is harder to believe that the leader will be available in times of threat. Similarly, when one feels unworthy of others' acceptance in general, it is difficult to feel worthy of the leader's attention and acceptance. Hence, there is transference of follower general models of attachment to follower specific models of attachment towards the leader:

Hypothesis 1a: The follower's level of general attachment avoidance will be positively associated with the follower's level of specific attachment avoidance towards the leader.

Hypothesis 1b: The follower's level of general attachment anxiety will be positively associated with the follower's level of specific attachment anxiety towards the leader.

It has been theorized that the attachment styles of both partners in an attachment relationship contribute to the quality of the relationship and the functioning of each partner in the relationship (Collins & Feeney, 2000; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Taking this lead, Davidovitz et al (2007) examined how a

follower's attachment style interacts with a leader's attachment style to predict changes in followers' mental health over time. In particular, their findings suggest that the mental health of insecure followers is reduced when they are put into relationships with avoidant leaders who are "cool, distant, and emotionally unresponsive." Leaders who are avoidant are uncomfortable with close relationships, and I contend that the behavior of avoidant leaders will likely be interpreted by avoidant followers as unavailability for attachment, and by anxious followers as evidence of personal unworthiness for attachment. Hence, I propose that insecure followers reporting to avoidant leaders will intensify the transfer of negative mental models, and cause insecure followers to form even more insecure attachment bonds with their leaders:

Hypothesis 2a: The leader's general attachment avoidance moderates the relationship of the follower's general attachment avoidance with the follower's specific attachment avoidance towards the leader such that this positive relationship is stronger when the leader's general attachment avoidance is high rather than low.

Hypothesis 2b: The leader's general attachment avoidance will moderate the relationship of the follower's general attachment anxiety with the follower's specific attachment anxiety towards the leader, such that this positive relationship is stronger when the leader's general attachment avoidance is high rather than low.

Leaders As Safe Havens & Secure Bases – The next hypotheses (H3 and H4) focus on the "Leadership Style and Behaviors" of the leader (FIGURE 3). Specifically, I argue that it is possible to understand the supportive behaviors of the leader through the safe haven and secure base functions of attachment figures. I examine the security enhancing effects of leader attachment function fulfillment on follower perceptions of the leader-follower relationship. Finally, I suggest that a leader's attachment style can either enable or hamper his/her ability to function as an effective caregivers – to be a safe haven and secure base towards his/her followers.

Expanding on the premise that leaders can function as attachment figures in an organizational context, it is reasonable to suggest that they need to effectively perform their functions as caregivers. Collins & Feeney (2000: 1) noted “researchers know little about the specific ways in which social support processes are carried out in dyadic interactions or about the role that social support plays in the development and maintenance of close relationships.” This observation, coupled with my review of the supportive leadership literature, suggests that attachment theorists and management scholars will benefit from a systematic examination of how support processes operate. In doing so, it will illuminate our understanding of how leaders can provide effective supportive leadership to their followers. An important step in this direction would require that we carefully operationalize this construct.

Using attachment theory as a framework for exploring support-seeking and caregiving processes in adult intimate relationships, it has been proposed that there are two important types of general support – support provided in times of stress and support that facilitates another person’s growth and exploration (Collins & Feeney, 2000; Feeney, 2004). While safe haven behaviors support followers when they are “coming-in”, secure base behaviors support followers when they are “going-out.” These two distinct types of support behaviors serve different functions in the provision of support, but both are necessary for the effective functioning of the support-seeker. Taking this as a starting point, I contend that we can reconceptualize leader supportive behaviors in a similar manner. Definitions of the two types of supportive behaviors are as follows:

**Safe Haven Behaviors** – Safe haven behaviors are the supportive behaviors of leaders in response to follower distress, with the aim of restoring a follower’s felt security when it is needed (coming-in behaviors). In its optimum form, this requires a leader to be sensitive, responsive, and flexible in responding to a follower’s needs (Feeney, 2004).

Secure Base Behaviors – Secure base behaviors are leader behaviors that support follower personal growth and exploration (going-out behaviors). It requires the leader to be “available, ready to respond when called upon to encourage and perhaps assist, but to intervene actively only when clearly necessary” (Bowlby, 1988: 11).

The actions of attachment figures may facilitate modification of a person’s general and specific attachment working models. Popper & Mayseless (2003) suggested that transformational leaders are able to create a sense of attachment security in followers by “empowering them and increasing their self-esteem, autonomy, creativity, and well-being” (Popper & Mayseless, 2003). While transformational leadership have been used in past research as a proxy for the functioning of effective leaders as attachment figures, the more direct approach would be to examine whether leader fulfillment of safe haven and secure base functions is associated with the specific attachment bonds followers form with their leaders. That is, when leaders fulfill their safe haven and secure base functions, they inform the follower that they will be available and accessible for them if they run into trouble, and that the follower is worthy and accepted by the leader because the leader is genuinely interested in the growth and development of the follower:

Hypothesis 3a: The level of a leader’s performance of supportive behaviors will be negatively associated with the follower’s specific attachment avoidance towards the leader.

Hypothesis 3b: The level of a leader’s performance of supportive behaviors will be negatively associated with the follower’s specific attachment anxiety towards the leader.

Leaders’ general attachment styles have strong implications for their ability to function as transformational leaders (Popper et al., 2000), and their motives to lead (Davidovitz et al., 2007). It has been argued that attachment style differences affects a person’s capacity to become a transformational leader because a transformational leader needs not only to be self-assured (e.g., possess a positive model of self), but

also to have a keen and empathetic interest in others (e.g., a positive model of others) (Popper et al., 2000). Davidovitz et al. (2007) argued that attachment-anxious leaders had more personalized leadership orientations and attachment-avoidant leaders had less socialized leadership orientations. They also presented evidence that highly avoidant leaders are viewed by their followers as being less accepting, available, sensitive and responsive.

Following through with the argument of Davidovitz and colleagues, it is clear that attachment-anxious leaders are preoccupied with personal threats and unsatisfied attachment needs, and this preoccupation burns valuable mental resources that would otherwise be available for responding empathetically to follower needs in times of stress and attending to follower developmental needs. Also, an avoidant leader's lack of comfort with closeness and interdependence likely undermines his or her ability to assess accurately the needs of followers. Hence, I propose:

Hypothesis 4a: The level of a leader's general attachment avoidance will be negatively associated with the leader's performance of supportive behaviors.

Hypothesis 4b: The level of a leader's general attachment anxiety will be negatively associated with the leader's performance of supportive behaviors.

Attachment Security and Follower Outcomes – The remaining hypotheses (H5-H7) explore how specific models of attachment affect the “Follower's Attitudes and Behaviors” (FIGURE 3). I focus on variables that capture the follower's thoughts (sinister attribution of the leader's actions), feelings (sense of thriving at work), and behavioral intentions (affective commitment to the organization). It is crucial that we are able to understand the follower's thoughts, feelings, and behavioral intentions, because these are critical in helping us predict, and direct employee behavior. In this section, I examine how followers' specific attachment bonds to their leaders affects the way followers make sense of leader actions and words, the extent to which

followers are oriented towards vitality and learning at work, and the extent to which they have a sense of belonging and loyalty towards the organization.

As discussed in Chapter 2, most of the accumulated evidence in the attachment literature has been focused on differences in categorical attachment styles (e.g., secure, anxious, fearful, dismissing). Only recently have researchers used dimensional models of attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety. How then do we translate the findings we have accumulated using taxonomical models into our understanding based on the dimensions of attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety? How can we differentiate the effects of attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety? What are the processes that define the dynamics of avoidance and anxiety? We need to resolve these few questions before we can make further predictions about the effects of specific attachment bonds on attitudes and behaviors.

Mikulincer et al. (2003) have proposed a control systems framework to explain attachment dynamics in adulthood. When the attachment system is activated in times of threat, individuals low in both attachment avoidance and anxiety experience felt security and are able to effectively manage the distress. Dismissing avoidant individuals (high avoidance, low anxiety) know that proximity seeking is not an option and enact deactivating strategies. They seek to maintain distance and control, and are fiercely self-reliant, while denying the need for attachment and avoiding negative emotions tagged with absence of attachment availability. On the other end, preoccupied individuals (low avoidance, high anxiety) believe proximity is an option, but that the problem lies within. Hence, they adopt hyper-activating strategies, with the primary objective of gaining the attachment figure's acceptance. Finally, fearful avoidant individuals (high avoidance, high anxiety) "may enact both strategies in a haphazard, confused, and chaotic manner...their behaviors under stress may be an incoherent blend of contradictory approach/avoidance behaviors or perhaps paralyzed inaction or withdrawal" (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Considering the above framework, the translation of categorical differences in attachment styles on attitudes and behaviors could be addressed by considering the interaction between attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety. The interaction of these two attachment dimensions can be used to predict the use of deactivating and/or hyper-activating strategies during times of threat and distress, with attendant implications for attitudes and behaviors. Keeping this control systems framework in mind, I continue with the discussion.

Sinister attribution refers to tendency to attribute hostile intentions and malevolent motives to distrusted others (Kramer, 2001). The relationship between distrust and sinister attribution has been demonstrated in an empirical study of teams (McAllister, Pang, Tan & Ruan, 2006). Followers avoidantly attached to their leaders have negative models of their leaders, exemplified by low trust and high distrust, and they are more likely to make hostile attributions of leader actions and words.

Mikulincer and Shaver suggest that anxious hyper-activation of attachment anxiety is “sustained by making catastrophic appraisals, amplifying the threatening aspects of even minor troubles, maintaining pessimistic beliefs about one’s inability to manage distress, and attributing threatening events to uncontrollable causes and global personal inadequacies” (2007: 194). Followers with a negative model of the self find it hard to accept that attachment figures have benevolent intentions towards them because they see themselves unworthy of leader acceptance. In many instances, this sense of insecurity results in followers making negative attributions for leader words and actions. Furthermore, fearfully attached followers, who are high in attachment avoidance and attachment anxiety, have the most difficulty making rational assessments of leaders behaviors because their thought processes are confounded by both negative models of self and others:

Hypothesis 5a: The level of a follower’s specific attachment avoidance towards the leader will be positively associated with the follower’s sinister attribution of the leader’s actions.

Hypothesis 5b: The level of a follower's specific attachment anxiety towards the leader will be positively associated with the follower's sinister attribution of the leader's actions.

Hypothesis 5c: Followers who are high on specific attachment avoidance and high on specific attachment anxiety will have the highest levels of sinister attribution of the leader's action.

Spreitzer and colleagues (2005) conceptualized an individual's experience of thriving at work. Thriving at work is defined as the psychological state in which individuals experience both a sense of vitality and a sense of learning at work (Spreitzer, Sutcliffe, Dutton, Sonenshein & Grant, 2005). In turn, vitality refers to the positive feeling of having energy available, and learning refers to the sense that one is acquiring, and can apply, knowledge and skills. In their model, they argue that exploration and heedful relating are drivers for the experience of thriving at work. Little empirical work has been done to test the validity of this model. However, as discussed below, thriving at work is likely to be a potent consequence of secure attachment, and these effects merit careful consideration here.

Hazan and Shaver's (1990) seminal work on love and work provided a direct test of the assertion of attachments that when individuals feel "safe" in the presence of an attachment figure, they are able to explore their environment optimally. More recently, Elliot and Reis (2003) reported the findings of a set of studies examining the link between adult attachment styles and achievement motives and achievement goals. Findings from both of these studies provided strong evidence that attachment dynamics are crucial to the understanding of exploration mechanics. As such, I argue that followers who are securely attached to their leaders (low avoidance, low anxiety) will be able to engage in effective exploratory behaviors at work, which will contribute to learning and vitality.

Furthermore, it is theorized that anxiously attached people are "guided by an unfulfilled wish to get attachment figures to pay attention and provide more reliable protection, which causes them to intensify emotions that call for attention and care,



such as jealousy and anger, or emotions, that implicitly imply vulnerability and neediness, such as sadness, anxiety, fear and shame” (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007: 193; Cassidy, 1994). As such, anxiously attached followers can often experience negative emotions in their encounter with their leaders at work. These negative emotions are detrimental to the follower’s experience of vitality and positive energy. It has also been argued that followers who are securely attached have better emotional coping mechanisms, and often experience positive emotions, resulting in a “broaden and build” cycle of attachment security, creating positive energy for the follower.

Taking into consideration all of the above arguments, I propose:

Hypothesis 6a: The level of a follower’s specific attachment anxiety towards the leader will be negatively associated with the experience of thriving at work.

Hypothesis 6b: The level of a follower’s specific attachment avoidance towards the leader will be negatively associated with the experience of thriving at work.

Hypothesis 6c: Followers who are low on specific attachment avoidance and low on specific attachment anxiety will experience the highest levels of thriving at work.

Affective commitment refers to an employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization (Meyer & Allen, 1984). Understanding the antecedents of affective commitment is important to our understanding of workplace behaviors because of its strong negative linkages with withdrawal cognition, turnover intention, and turnover, and strong positive association with attendance, job performance, and OCB (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnytsky, 2002). Extant studies have examined the relationship between satisfaction with supervision and organizational commitment, and a meta-analysis of the correlates of organizational commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) provides evidence of a strong relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Satisfaction with supervision is an important facet of overall job satisfaction. (Mathieu & Zajac, 1999). Individual differences in attachment avoidance and anxiety have repeatedly been shown to have negative effects on partner perceptions of relationship quality in romantic couple settings (Shaver, Schachner & Mikulincer, 2005; Sumer & Cozzarelli, 2004). It is not difficult to argue that specific leader attachment bonds would significantly predict follower satisfaction with the leader. More specifically, I contend that followers with low avoidance attachment experience higher satisfaction with the leader's supervision compared to followers with high avoidance attachment, as they perceive a more communal relationship orientation with their leaders. Also, I contend that followers who worry about being accepted by their leaders will experience a less satisfactory leader-follower relationship.

Hypothesis 7a: The level of a follower's specific attachment avoidance towards the leader will be negatively associated with the follower's level of affective commitment towards the organization.

Hypothesis 7b: The level of a follower's specific attachment anxiety towards the leader will be negatively associated with the follower's level of affective commitment towards the organization.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter, I describe the sample, procedures, forms, and measures used in this study. Furthermore, I explain the strategies used to assess the measurement scales and conduct hypothesis tests. Finally, I discuss how I handle missing item responses and suspect data, and the issue of common method bias.

#### **Research Methodology Overview**

The sample chosen for this research consisted of male and female shop-floor employees of retail establishments in two suburban malls, reporting on supervisor-subordinate work relationships. Much of the empirical research applying attachment theory to the study of leadership has been conducted using military samples, and there is a clear need for studies conducted in less extreme and demanding settings (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). However, because the attachment behavioral system is activated primarily in times of stress and threat, the context selected for the study needs to take this factor into consideration. A retail sample has been selected for this study because employees working on the shop floor face multiple sources of stress originating from customers, supervisors, the organization, and work demands. Furthermore, the retail industry is an important sector in Singapore's economy, with 19,969 establishments, employing a total of 106,983 workers, and collected \$37.3 billion in operating receipts in the year 2006.

Several shopping malls were identified and invited to participate in the study. After getting approval from two of the malls to be involved in the study, two research assistants and the researcher approached retail outlet supervisors and employees in the malls to participate in the study. Participants were rewarded with two movie tickets as an incentive for participation. There were two important criteria for inclusion in the study: (i) Supervisors needed to have at least two subordinates directly reporting to them as I wanted to examine whether leader-follower

relationships differ between the same supervisor and different subordinates, and whether leadership supportive behaviors is perceived similarly by subordinates reporting to the same supervisor; (ii) Both supervisors and subordinates had to agree to participate in the study as the surveys required matched responses of the supervisor and subordinates.

Data collection was accomplished by means of self-report surveys. Retail supervisors completed a two-part form. The first part focused on themselves as supervisors (their personality, leadership style, and working style); the second part focused on their subordinates (aspects of follower behavior and work performance). Subordinates participating in the study completed three-part surveys, with questions about personality, leader behavior, leader-follower interaction, and work-related attitudes. Completed surveys were collected by the research assistants and researcher. All forms of identification and matching information were removed from the envelopes and survey instruments upon collection.

### **Sample**

The sample for this study consisted of male and female shop-floor employees of retail establishments, reporting on supervisor-subordinate work relationships. The source of participants for this study was two suburban shopping malls in Singapore, whose management agreed to allow the researcher to administer a self-report questionnaire with employees of the tenants in the shopping mall. There were a total of about 381 retail establishments in the two malls (excluding the banks which we were not granted permission to approach), yielding an accessible population of at least 381 supervisors and their subordinates. After excluding retail establishments that did not meet the selection criteria, a total of 96 retail outlets participated in the final study, representing a response rate of 25.2% of the total accessible population of retail establishments. Several retail establishments had more than one supervisor participating in the survey. TABLE 2 presents a breakdown of the type of retail

establishments that participated in the study. A total of 283 supervisor-subordinate matched surveys were completed and returned.

Supervisors in charge of the retail outlets who agreed to participate in the study nominated two or more direct reports to participate in the study. The number of subordinates for each supervisor who eventually participated in the study ranged from 2 to 9. TABLE 3 presents descriptive statistics of the demographic attributes of study participants. The sample obtained represents a good mix of age groups and levels of tenure, genders, races and nationalities.

### **Procedures**

An initial assessment was made regarding the choice of a suitable research context for the study and it was decided that supervisor-subordinate relationships in the retail and hospitality industry was appropriate. Letters of intent (APPENDIX 3) detailing our research objectives, scope of project, expectations from participants, and resources required were sent to potential organizations including chain superstores, telecommunication companies and shopping malls. I received favorable responses from a couple of organizations but decided on conducting our study in a shopping mall as we would be sampling diverse companies which makes the results of our studies more generalizable. The data collection process was also assessed to be more efficient as we can concentrate our efforts at one site. The initial scope of the project was to conduct the study at one mega mall. However, because the initial number of suitable participants who agreed to participate in the study did not meet the required sample size, I extended the study to retail establishments in the immediate neighborhood of the mall, and retail outlets in another similar suburban mall managed by the same organization.

I trained two research assistants to help me in the data collection. We divided up the retail establishments between the three of us, and approached every shop to seek employee participation in the study. Using the guidelines of a standardized

briefing protocol (APPENDIX 4), we explained the purpose of the study and the requirements expected of the participants. At the same time, we checked if the retail establishment met our criteria of having at least two direct reports for each supervisor. We strongly encouraged the retail supervisors to participate in the study, yet at the same time emphasized that they were free to opt out. A pair of movie tickets was given to every participant who agreed to participate in the study. While we initially intended to present one movie ticket for agreeing to take part in the survey and another for returning a completed survey, we gave out both tickets once they accepted the survey. We took the risk of participants taking the movie tickets and not completing the survey, but in the midst of the study, we realized that this was a non-issue, and in fact this act of trust resulted in participants putting in more effort to fulfill their responsibility of completing and returning the survey.

Next, supervisors agreeing to participate nominated two or more of their direct reports to participate in the study. Most supervisors had only two or three subordinates reporting directly to them, and we tried to include all of them in the study. Subordinates were also briefed using the same protocol as their supervisor, and it was emphasized to them that participation was voluntary, and that the surveys would be anonymous and confidential. The names of subordinates who agreed to participate were written on removable sticker labels on the Supervisor's Envelope (APPENDIX 5), which would contain the supervisor's survey. These labels were removed when the surveys were returned to ensure that the identity of the participants would remain anonymous. No names were written on any other part of the survey. Subsequently, matched supervisor and subordinate surveys were handed out to supervisors and subordinates respectively. Supervisors were briefed on the two sections of the supervisor survey, with special emphasis on the second section of the survey where they were to report on the behaviors of specific subordinates based on the names written on their envelope. Subordinates were handed their surveys and briefed on the different sections. It was emphasized that when they were answering

questions on their supervisor, they were to focus their attention on the supervisor who nominated them. Movie tickets were then handed out to all participants and a date was fixed for the researcher to return to collect completed surveys. For subordinates who were working on shifts and not present at the initial meeting, multiple visits were made to the shop to hand out the surveys and brief the participants. Researchers returned to pick up the completed surveys on the pre-arranged dates, and removed the sticker labels on the supervisors' envelopes upon collection, if the supervisors had not yet removed them. Alternate arrangements were made with participants who either forgot to bring or complete the survey to collect them at a later date. The entire data collection process took two weeks, and all, except two, of the surveys handed out were successfully collected back.

### **Instrumentation**

Two separate instruments were constructed for data collection in this study – the Employee Survey (APPENDIX 6) distributed to each subordinate participant, and the Supervisor Survey (APPENDIX 7), which was handed out to supervisors who participated.

The Employee Survey used in the study was designed to capture information from each subordinate on the working relationship with his or her supervisor at work. Each survey had an alphanumeric code (e.g. 110-B) on the cover page, which is matched that of a removable sticker label on the Supervisor's Envelope (APPENDIX 5), on which the subordinate's name was written for the reference of the supervisor when he or she is completing the survey.

The Supervisor Survey was designed to capture information on (i) the personality and working style of the supervisor, and (ii) his or her assessment of the performance of specific subordinates reporting directly to him or her. An alphanumeric code (e.g. S110) on the front cover of each supervisor survey was used to match it with corresponding employee surveys. Each set of supervisor surveys

allowed the supervisor to complete assessments of up to three subordinates, who were identified as Employee (A), Employee (B), and Employee (C).

Overall, the two instruments developed for this study, and the data collection procedure employed, allowed supervisor and subordinate forms to be matched while maintaining complete anonymity of the responses.

### **Operationalization of Variables**

Whenever possible, established measures used in previous research and found to be reliable were used. Minor modifications were made to some measures to adapt them to the study context. For three of the constructs (supportive leadership behaviors, specific leader attachment bond, and sinister attribution), there were no adequate measures available, and new measures were developed. Factor analysis was used to examine the distinctiveness of all constructs measured. Cronbach's alpha was computed as an index of measure reliability. All constructs, with the exception of demographic variables, were measured with multiple-item, Likert-like scales.

Supervisor and Subordinate Attachment Style – Individual differences in attachment style was measured using the Revised Experiences in Close Relationships questionnaire (ECR-R; Fraley, Waller, & Brennan, 2000). Participants were asked to think about their close relationships, without focusing on any specific relationships. They rated the extent of their agreement with statements describing how they generally feel in close relationships, on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). There were eighteen items that tapped attachment anxiety and eighteen that tapped attachment avoidance. The ECR-R questionnaire is a revised version of the ECR questionnaire (Brennan, et al., 1998). It is unclear at this time if there are significant advantages in using the ECR-R over the ECR because the items selected for the ECR-R come from the same item pool as those of the ECR. However, items for the ECR-R were selected using Item Response Theory techniques and are deemed an improvement over the original measure (Fraley, et al., 2000).



Supportive Leadership Behaviors – To measure Safe Haven and Secure Base behaviors of the leader, I created five items for each of these two types of supportive behavior based on the work of Collins & Feeney (2000) and Feeney (2004). Five statements were developed to capture the essence of Safe Haven behaviors – supportive behaviors that occur in response to a follower’s distress, with the aim of restoring a follower’s felt security when it is needed (in its optimum form, this requires the leader to be sensitive, responsive, and flexible in responding to a follower’s needs). Another five items were developed to capture the essence of Secure Base behaviors – behaviors that support a follower’s personal growth and exploration (requiring the leader to be available, ready to respond when called upon to encourage and perhaps assist, but to intervene actively only when clearly necessary). Subordinates rated the extent to which their supervisors exhibited such behaviors towards them, on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). To validate the scale, a pretest survey (APPENDIX 2) was conducted on a group of 94 MBA students who reported on the leadership supportive behaviors of both an existing and previous leader they had worked for, resulting in a total of 178 valid responses for the final analysis. The ten items measured the Supportive Leadership construct with high reliabilities, having a Cronbach alpha of .94.

Specific Leader Attachment Bond – I developed new scales to measure the follower’s specific attachment bond with the leader, based on the theoretical distinction between attachment avoidance and anxiety. Given that these are key constructs in the study, care was taken in development and pretesting. A two-step procedure was used to develop these measures.

First, based upon a review of the attachment theory literature, as well as available measures of attachment styles, and a few select interviews, a pool of 48 items was created. Fifteen experts were provided (APPENDIX 1) with definitions of specific leader attachment avoidance and anxiety and asked to classify items into one

of four categories: (1) tapping attachment avoidance, (2) tapping attachment anxiety, (3) tapping both attachment avoidance and anxiety, or (4) not tapping either attachment avoidance or anxiety. Experts were also encouraged to provide comments where the wording of items was unclear. From this pool of items, a subset of twenty-two items was selected. There was 91.3 percent agreement that the ten items selected to measure attachment avoidance assessed the construct exclusively. There was 87.8 percent agreement that the twelve items selected to measure attachment anxiety assessed the construct exclusively. Expert feedback on item wording helped in refining the items.

In the second stage of the measure development process, the twenty-two items were included in a pretest data collection (APPENDIX 2) and subjected to factor analysis and reliability testing. The pretest survey was the same one as that conducted for Supportive Leadership. Our guiding theory suggested two dimensions of attachment to the leader, and hence, we used a principal axis factoring procedure with oblique rotation to impose a two-factor solution (Ford, MacCallum, & Tait, 1986; Kim & Mueller, 1978). A factor weight of .40 was the minimum cutoff for keeping an item as representative of the construct underlying each factor. To ensure that each item is clearly defined by only one factor, the difference between weights for any given item was .10 across factors. The two factors accounted for 38.8% of the total variance explained. The results of the exploratory factor analysis and reliability testing are reported in TABLE 4. Based upon the factor analysis and reliability testing results, the number of items was further reduced to fifteen, with eight items tapping attachment avoidance, and seven items tapping attachment anxiety. This final collection of fifteen items was used in this study. Subordinates indicated on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), the extent to which they agreed with statements describing their relationship with their supervisor.

**Sinister Attribution** – In order to capture the subordinate's attributions of the supervisor's actions, I developed a measure patterned after that reported in Kramer

(1994) and McAllister, et al. (2007). Subordinates were presented with six scenarios of situations featuring the employee's interactions with his or her supervisor occurring in a retail setting. They are asked to assess the likelihood that the intentions of their supervisor in each of the scenarios were sinister or benevolent on a 5-point scale from 1 (extremely unlikely) to 5 (almost certain).

Thriving At Work – Eleven items developed and validated by Porath, Spreitzer, Gibson, Cobb & Stevens (working paper) were used to measure the construct of thriving at work. Five items captured the second-order factor of learning, while another five factors captured the second-order factor of vitality. Another item “I am really thriving” was included with the ten items to create a single index, denoting the follower's overall experience of thriving at work. Subordinates were asked to describe how they felt at work, using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Affective Commitment – I measured the employee's affective commitment to the organization using three items from Allen & Meyer's (1990) scale. Subordinates responded on a 7-point agreement scale the extent to which statements described the way they feel towards the organization. The responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The three items selected were the highest loading items in the original study: “I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization (R)”, “I do not feel emotionally attached to this organization (R)”, “This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me”. The third item was dropped from the scale because of low item-to-total correlation.

Control Variable – Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) was included in the study as a control variable in models examining the effects of follower's specific attachment bonds on attitudes and behavior. To assess LMX, I used the seven-item measure (LMX7) developed by Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995). The items reflect the quality of the exchange relationship anchored in the dimensions of trust, respect, and obligation. The centroid item in the LMX7 scale is the question “How effective is

your working relationship with your leader?" (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Subordinates reported their agreement with statements describing their relationship with their supervisor on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

### **Analysis of Measurement Scales**

I used AMOS 17 (Analysis of Moment Structure; Arbuckle, 2003) to conduct confirmatory factor analysis for the purpose of (1) confirming the factor structure of Specific Leader Attachment Measure and Supportive Leadership Behaviors, and (2) validating the overall measurement model. To assess the overall fit of the models, I used several criteria.

To assess the overall fit of the models, I used several criteria: (1) chi-square test statistic, (2) root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Browne & Cudek, 1993), (3) normed fit index (NFI; Bentler-Bonett, 1980), and (4) comparative fit index (CFI, Bentler, 1990). The chi-square statistic represents the deviation of the covariance matrix reproduced by the estimated model from the sample covariance matrix. A chi-square value that is statistically not significant is considered an indicator of good fit. RMSEA estimates the discrepancy per degree of freedom between the original and reproduced covariance matrices. Values of RMSEA between 0 and .05 reflect a close fit, while values of .08 or less reflects a reasonable fit. The NFI and CFI represent the relative improvement in fit of the hypothesized model over the null model, in which all observed variables are specified as uncorrelated. Values of .90 for these two indices can be interpreted as an indication of adequate fit.

In assessing the fit of the measurement model, because of the large number of items in some of the measures, I created "composite" indicators for all the latent variables in the model, following procedures set out by Bagozzi and Heatherton (1994). For scales with 4 or fewer items, I used the individual scale items as observed indicators of the latent constructs. For the remaining scales, I created 3 composite

indicators for each latent construct. Composites were created by randomly combining between 2 to 6 items from the original scale.

### **Hypothesis Tests**

Hierarchical linear regression was used to test the hypotheses, and SPSS 17 was used to run the regression models. To test the interactions of moderator variables with the independent variables on the dependent variables, I used the procedure recommended by Aiken and West (1991). That is, after entering the single terms of the moderator and independent variables into the regression equation, I entered the product term of the independent variable and its moderator variable into the regression. In assessing whether Supportive Leadership behaviors should be aggregated to the group (supervisor) level, I calculated  $r_{wg}$ , ICC(1), and ICC(2) values for Supportive Leadership behaviors as we have a hierarchically nested dataset, whereby each supervisor has at least two subordinates reporting directly to him or her.

### **Handling Of Missing Item Responses**

In order to maximize the use of the survey responses, in terms of statistical power, I used item mean substitution to deal with missing item responses. The advantage of using mean substitution is that it is a conservative approach (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). I used the MEANSUBSTITUTION option of the REGRESSION procedure in SPSS 17 to replace missing values.

### **Handling Of Suspect Data**

In dealing with suspect data, a combination of two procedures was used to delete suspect cases. Firstly, during the data entry process, suspect cases with unusual responses (e.g. one response throughout the survey, conflicting comparison with reverse coded items) were noted down. In addition, multivariate outliers were

identified using the Mahalanobis distance statistic. Cases are classified as multivariate outliers if the Mahalanobis distance is greater than the  $\chi^2$  value, for  $p < .001$ . Matching pairs of supervisor-subordinate data were removed from the study if they are both suspect and have been classified as multivariate outliers. 13 suspect cases were dropped from the study, which represented 4.6% of the original sample size. Four of the cases removed came from the same supervisor. The rest of the cases dropped were not localized within any specific organization. The final sample size consisted of 270 subordinates, and 97 supervisors, giving us a total of 367 participants who took part in the study.

### **Common Method Bias**

Harmon's single factor test (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) was conducted by including all items from all the constructs (self-reported by the subordinate) in the study into a factor analysis to determine whether the majority of the variance can be explained by one general factor. If a one-factor model is not a good fit, it explains that common method bias is not a serious problem in the study.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESULTS OF ANALYSIS OF MEASUREMENT SCALES

#### Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Specific Leader Attachment Measure

I performed a CFA on the study sample data to cross-validate the two-factor solution of the proposed Specific Leader Attachment Measure (SLAVO; SLANX) (TABLE 5). The CFA showed a poor fit for the two-factor model,  $\chi^2(89, N=270) = 422.8, p < .05, RMSEA = .12, CFI = .81, NFI = .78$ . Similarly, I performed a CFA to compare the results with a one-factor solution. The results of the one-factor analysis yielded an even poorer fit than the two-factor solution,  $\chi^2(90, N=270) = 578.2, p < .05, RMSEA = .14, CFI = .73, NFI = .70$ .

A closer examination of the items revealed that four of the eight avoidance (SLAVO) items reflected preference to keep a distance, avoiding closeness, and a lack of desire to disclose more of oneself to the leader. The other four avoidance items reflected reluctance to rely on the leader. With this distinction in mind, I contend that an avoidant attachment to the leader might be manifested either by discomfort in disclosure to (SLAVO-D) or reliance on (SLAVO-R) the leader. Moving forward, I performed a CFA to validate the second-order two-factor solution revealed by this closer examination. The second-order two-factor model demonstrated good fit with the data,  $\chi^2(87, N=270) = 243.0, p < .05, RMSEA = .08, CFI = .91, NFI = .87$ . The results of this CFA provide support that indeed followers develop distinct dimensions of attachment towards their leaders. Though the data does not support a clean two-factor solution of attachment avoidance and anxiety, it provided us a richer understanding of the attachment avoidance construct, suggesting that followers view distance from the leader as involving dynamics of both reluctance to rely and disclose. The final factor loadings for items, and correlations between the latent variables for the second-order two-factor model, can be found in FIGURE 4. Factor loadings of the individual items can be found in TABLE 6.

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Supportive Leadership Behaviors**

The second-order one-factor model of supportive leadership behaviors was tested using CFA. Results of the factor analysis (TABLE 7) indicate a good fit with the data,  $\chi^2(34, N=270) = 93.4$ ,  $p < .05$ , RMSEA = .08, CFI = .96, NFI = .94. A further CFA was conducted using a first-order one-factor model of supportive behavior to check if the first-order model would yield a better fit to the data as compared to the second-order model. Results indicate that the first-order solution is a poor fit to the data,  $\chi^2(35, N=270) = 275.2$ ,  $p < .05$ , RMSEA = .16, CFI = .84, NFI = .83. The final item factor loadings, and correlations between the latent variables for the model can be found in FIGURE 5.

### **Discriminant Validity Analysis**

Because most of the variables were assessed via self-reports from a single questionnaire, I conducted a first-order confirmatory factor analysis to assess discriminant validity of the 8 follower self-report variables before testing hypotheses. As there were 77 items reflecting the 8 constructs and a sample size of only 270, it would have been extremely difficult to fit a measurement model (Bentler & Chou, 1987; Harris & Schaubroeck, 1991). To reduce the number of observed variables, I followed procedures delineated by Bagozzi and Heatherton (1994), which I outlined in the Methodology section. The final number of observed indicators was reduced to 22 representing 8 latent constructs. Results of the CFA (TABLE 8) demonstrated that the 8-factor model provided a good fit with the data,  $\chi^2(181, N=270) = 374.3$ ,  $p < .01$ , RMSEA = .06, CFI = .94, NFI = .89. As a comparison, a one-factor model indicated a bad fit with the data,  $\chi^2(209, N=270) = 1752.4$ ,  $p < .01$ , RMSEA = .17, CFI = .51, NFI = .49.



## CHAPTER 6

### RESULTS

TABLE 9 presents the means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients, and zero-order correlations of all the studied variables. TABLE 17 presents a summary of hypotheses results.

#### **Follower Mental Models Of Attachment**

Hypotheses H1 and H2 addressed how individual differences in attachment styles of the follower and leader contribute to follower mental models of attachment towards specific leaders. The transference hypothesis put forth in Hypothesis H1 received strong support (TABLE 10: Model 1). I regressed the follower's specific attachment towards the leader (SLAVO; SLANX) on both dimensions of the follower's attachment style (EAVO; EANX). Although Hypothesis H1 contends that only attachment avoidance (anxiety) will predict specific leader attachment avoidance (anxiety), both dimensions of the follower's attachment style were used in the regression analysis as predictors because it will be useful to understand the complete effects of the transference process contributed by both dimensions, which together represent an individual's attachment style. Both the follower's attachment avoidance ( $\beta = .31, p < .001$ ) and attachment anxiety ( $\beta = .25, p < .001$ ) predicted follower's preference to keep a distance from and not to rely on their leader (SLAVO). Also, the follower's attachment anxiety ( $\beta = .44, p < .001$ ) predicted follower concern about acceptance by the leader (SLANX). The effects of individual differences in attachment style explained significant variance of Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) ( $R^2 = .23$ ) and Anxiety (SLANX) ( $R^2 = .22$ ).

Hypothesis H2 addressed the moderating effects of the leader's attachment style on the transference effects discussed in the previous paragraph. Specifically, I hypothesized that insecure followers with avoidant leaders would experience a more

negative transference effect as it validates and strengthens their beliefs that either the leader would not be available when needed or that the leader does not accept them. However, I was also interested in examining any possible effects the leader's attachment anxiety might have on followers. Hierarchical linear regression was used to test the moderation hypothesis (Baron & Kenny, 1986). The two dimensions of the follower's attachment style (EAVO; EANX) were entered first, followed by the leader's attachment style dimensions (SAVO; SANX), and finally all the possible two-way interactions. The regression results do not show any support for Hypothesis H2 (TABLE 10: Model 3). The regression coefficient for the hypothesized interaction of leader's general attachment avoidance (SAVO) and follower's general attachment avoidance (EAVO) on Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) ( $\beta = -.56$ , n.s.) was not significant. Similarly, the interaction of leader's general attachment avoidance (SAVO) and follower's general attachment anxiety (EANX) on Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) ( $\beta = .10$ , n.s.) was not significant. Additionally, including all possible interaction terms into the model did not explain any additional variance.

However, it is interesting to note that supervisor attachment style had direct main effects on follower specific attachment bond with the leader (TABLE 10: Model 2). Specifically, anxious supervisors had a positive association with the follower's concern about being accepted by the leader (SLANX) ( $\beta = .10$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ,  $p < .10$ ). This suggests that the leader's attachment style might have caused them to behave in certain manners that directly affected the follower's mental models of attachment towards the leader. The mediation of this process by the leader's ability to exhibit effective supportive behaviors is examined in the next section.

### **Leaders As Safe Havens & Secure Bases**

Hypotheses H3 and H4 addressed the leader's role as an attachment figure and his or her behavior as a safe haven and secure base. Specifically hypothesis H3 examined the effects of supportive leadership behaviors on follower mental models of attachment. Before continuing with the analysis, it was necessary to examine if there are multi-level effects as the study sample has a nested structure, with multiple followers reporting to the same leader.  $r_{wg}$ , ICC(1) and ICC(2) statistics were calculated for supportive leadership behaviors. It is important to note that the construct was operationalized as the follower's perception of the leader's support towards himself or herself, akin to individualized support. Thus, there is no original intention to aggregate such behaviors to the group level. However, it was still necessary to examine if there were group-level effects on follower attitudes and behaviors.

For follower reports of supportive leadership behaviors, the median within-group interrater agreement value ( $r_{wg}$ ; James, Demaree, & Wolf, 1993) was .82, indicating reasonable agreement. ICC(1) is significantly different from zero (.23), suggesting reasonable variance due to supervisor level variability (Bliese, 2000). Finally, ICC(2), an index of between-group variance, was .47, which is relatively low (Bliese, 2000). In light of the initial operationalization intentions and the low ICC(2) values, I concluded that it was not necessary to test for multi-level effects of supportive behaviors. However, given the reasonably high agreement between subordinates' ratings of their supervisor's behavior, I proceeded to aggregate supportive leadership to the group level. Aggregation of this measure added a degree of robustness to hypotheses tests, and helped in addressing the effects of single source variance.

Results from the regression analysis demonstrated strong support for Hypothesis H3 (TABLE 11). Supportive leadership behaviors had negative relationships with the follower's Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) ( $\beta$

= -.44,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .19$ ) and Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) ( $\beta = -.38$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $R^2 = .14$ ).

Hypothesis H4 addressed caregiving behavioral system dynamics—specifically, whether a leader’s attachment style was associated with his or her ability to function as a safe haven and secure base (TABLE 12). Hypothesis H4a was not supported. Leaders’ avoidance did not predict their ability to function as safe havens and secure bases ( $\beta = -.14$ , n.s.). However, there was strong support for Hypotheses H4b. Anxious leaders were perceived as less effective providers of support ( $\beta = -.23$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $R^2 = .10$ ) by their followers.

As a follow-up to the analysis in the previous section, I tested whether leader behavior mediated the relationship between the leader’s attachment style and the specific leader attachment bonds of followers. Following Baron & Kenny (1986), I tested the mediation model by demonstrating there is a relationship between (i) the predictor & dependent variables, (ii) the predictor and mediating variables, and after controlling for the effects of the predictor variable while testing for the effectors of the mediating variable, the effects of the predictor variable becomes insignificant. The effects of the leader’s attachment orientation on supportive leadership behaviors have been demonstrated in Hypotheses H4. The other conditions were analyzed by running a two-step hierarchical regression on the dependent variables (SLAVO; SLANX). In step one, the leader’s attachment style dimensions (SAVO; SANX) were entered into the equation. In the next step, supportive leadership behaviors were added.

There was considerable support for the mediation proposition (TABLE 13). Anxious leaders had a positive relationship with the follower’s Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and this relationship became insignificant when supportive leadership behaviors ( $\beta = -.43$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were added into the equation. Similarly, the effects of avoidant ( $\beta = .10$ ,  $p < .10$ ) and anxious ( $\beta$

= .17,  $p < .01$ ) leaders on the follower's Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) were also wiped out with the entry of supportive leadership behaviors ( $\beta = -.34$ ,  $p < .001$ ). There was also a significant increase in variance explained of the dependent variables Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) ( $\Delta R^2 = .16$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) ( $\Delta R^2 = .10$ ,  $p < .001$ ) when supportive leadership behaviors were entered into the second step of the regression equation.

### **Attachment Security and Follower Outcomes**

Hypotheses H5 to H7 addressed the relationship of Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety and Avoidance dimensions with follower's attributions of leader intentions (Hypothesis H5), experience of thriving at work (Hypothesis H6), and affective commitment to the organization (Hypothesis H7). All three hypotheses were tested with hierarchical linear regression. In the first step, supportive leadership behaviors were entered as controls into the regression analysis. Supportive leadership behaviors were added as controls as it has been hypothesized in the conceptual model (FIGURE 3) that supportive leaderships works through both processes of social exchange, and creating a sense of "felt security" in the followers. In the second step, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) was added into the equation to control for the effects of social exchange, and calculate the additional variance that can be explained by the Specific Leader Attachment Measure (SLAM). Finally, the two factors of Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO), and Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) were entered into the equation. In testing Hypothesis H5 and H6, an additional fourth step of regression was conducted to test the interaction effects between the dimensions of Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance and Anxiety, on sinister attributions and the experience of thriving at work.

Hypothesis H5 was fully supported (TABLE 14). Support was demonstrated when Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) ( $\beta = .13, p < .10$ ) and Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) ( $\beta = .20, p < .01$ ) were both positively related to the follower's sinister attributions of the leader's behaviors after controlling for supportive leadership behaviors and LMX ( $\Delta R^2 = .07, p < .001$ ). Also, there was a significant interaction between Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) and Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) on sinister attribution ( $\beta = .59, p < .05, \Delta R^2 = .02$ ) and the plot of the interaction (FIGURE 6) demonstrated strong support for Hypothesis H5b, that followers who were fearfully attached to their leaders were most likely to have sinister attributions of their leader's behaviors.

There is much general support for Hypothesis H6 (TABLE 15), helping us understand the follower's experience of thriving at work. It is interesting to note that supportive leadership behaviors contributed significantly to the follower's experience of thriving ( $\beta = .36, p < .001, R^2 = .13$ ). After controlling for LMX, the follower's Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) was found to be negatively associated with thriving ( $\beta = -.26, p < .001, \Delta R^2 = .05$ ) but there was no relationship of Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) with thriving. However, there was no significant interaction of Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) with Anxiety (SLANX) ( $\beta = .29, n.s.$ ) and hence no support for the hypothesis that followers who were securely attached with their leaders will experience the highest levels of thriving at work.

Finally, Hypothesis H7 was concerned with the follower's affective commitment to the organization. Partial support was found for this hypothesis (TABLE 16), whereby a follower's comfort with being close to and reliant on the supervisor was strongly negatively related to his/her affective commitment to the organization ( $\beta = -.28, p < .001$ ). The results suggest that Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) is a much better predictor of affective commitment than LMX

( $\Delta R^2 = .09$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety (SLANX) was not significantly related to affective commitment ( $\beta = -.09$ , n.s.).

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

I began this dissertation with a conviction that the desire to explore and do well in life is a fundamental intrinsic drive. However, the way this drive can be maximized requires individuals to have a sense of “felt security”. Recourse to attachment figures who are stronger, wiser caregivers who are available in times of threat, and the belief that such attachment figures will be accessible when necessary, provides that sense of “felt security” which gives them confidence in making bolder steps to explore, create, and do well. The ideas developed in this dissertation, therefore, are very different from the social exchange-based frameworks that have been proposed for understanding the leader-follower relationship, its antecedents and consequences. Most hypotheses were either fully or partially supported, lending support to the proposed model. In this final chapter, I will discuss the results and outline major contributions of the work, and in the process, suggest directions for future research.

#### **Follower Mental Models Of Attachment**

The results show that followers maintain distinct mental models of self and other in how they conceptualize their relations with their leaders. At a more fine-grained level, the findings show that followers further separate out suitability for reliance and self-disclosure as distinct facets of the model of other. Further research is needed to understand the antecedents and consequences of these two sub-dimensions of attachment avoidance. The fact that the two factors are moderately highly correlated helps us make sense why a follower generally labels a leader-follower relationship as either “good” or “bad”, as their perceptions of self and the leader often are related. However, CFA results showed that a one-factor model of specific leader attachment provides a bad fit to the data, suggesting that it is necessary to examine qualitatively what makes a “good” or “bad” leader-follower relationship. In the



conceptualized model, a “good” relationship exists when a follower is securely attached to the leader, while “bad” relationships are typified by various insecure attachments (dismissing-avoidant, anxious-ambivalent, and dismissing-fearful). Different insecure attachments elicit different follower behaviors, and it behooves leaders to understand the different ways followers might attach themselves to and respond accordingly.

The strong support for the transference hypothesis is very important for two reasons. First, it highlights one important basis upon which follower mental models of the leader-follower relationship are formed. Relatedly, it highlights the fact that stable individual differences have determining effects on follower attachments to leaders, which determines the quality of the leader-follower relationship. Research on the antecedents of relationship quality is still emerging, and progress has been limited by the lack of integrative theoretical frameworks that can guide inquiry. Current understanding of the antecedents of LMX is informed by principles of fit and similarity of the leader-follower attributes (Phillips & Bedeian, 1994; Graen & UhlBien, 1995). The potential to incorporate attachment dynamics, and our understanding of how individual differences shape internal views of the leader and of the self into the study of how leader-follower relationships develop, is a significant theoretical advancement.

Beyond follower mental models of attachment figures, my findings showed that followers have specific mental models for particular leaders, and these mental models are shaped directly by leader behavior and indirectly by the general attachment orientations of leaders. I had hypothesized interactions between follower and leader generalized attachment orientations. The findings suggest, however, that the dynamics of transference from follower generalized mental models to specific mental models are distinct from those associated with the caregiving behavioral system and attachment functions.

### **Leaders as Safe Havens and Secure Bases**

My results highlight the central role of supportive leadership in developing effective leader-follower relationships. Supportive leader behaviors appear to be essential for the formation of secure attachments towards their leaders. Such supportive behaviors create in followers a sense of “felt security” which enables them to “flourish” at work. It is important to note that secure “attachment” is neither “unhealthy” nor does it signify over-dependence on the leader, such that without the leader, the follower lands himself or herself in a state of helplessness. On the contrary, a secure attachment to the leader provides a sense of “felt security” in the follower: The knowledge that there is someone to support himself or herself in times of threat and exploration frees the follower from unnecessary worry that he needs to protect himself, or worry about his or her acceptance by the leader. As argued in the introductory chapter, I reinforce the notion that felt security enables followers to be “mindful of whatever is actually happening to them and around them, to analyze problems more accurately and quickly, to mobilize effective coping strategies and positive emotions in the midst of stressful experiences” (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007: 461).

Attachment theory provides new lenses for understanding the different supportive roles that leaders play, and my findings provide initial empirical support for this distinction within an organizational setting. The evidence supports the fact that supportive leadership comprises of two very important but distinct functions, that of “coming in” (safe haven) behaviors in times of threat, and “going out” (secure base) behaviors that facilitate exploration and learning. Being able to distinguish important sub-facets of what supportive leadership behavior encompasses is going to offer very useful insight for leaders in learning how to provide effective support. Empirical evidence, such as that reported in this study, provides an appropriate renewed impetus to explore this domain. Importantly, this framework provides needed conceptual framing that can guide empirical work on supportive leadership.

As a final note concerning the safe haven and secure base roles that leaders play, my results show that leaders are best able to perform these caregivers roles when they themselves are not anxious. The results indicate that the attachment anxiety of leaders is negatively related to their performance of supportive leadership behaviors. This has important implications for our understanding of leader development because it suggests that people with a poor model of self may be preoccupied with gaining acceptance, and this could interfere with their ability to function effectively as supportive leaders. This is in line with Davidovitz and colleagues' (2007) finding that anxious leaders are more likely to display a personalized leadership style, putting their own interests before the needs of their followers.

#### **Attachment Security and Follower Outcomes**

The remaining hypotheses, H5 to H7, examine a small set of variables closely related to the follower's thoughts, feelings and behavioral intentions, and are focused on showing that specific leader attachments can predict important organizational outcomes. General support for the hypotheses presented in this section, plus the fact that Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) and Anxiety (SLANX) predicts significantly more variance in the examined dependent variables than Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) suggests that specific leader attachment bonds should be considered in future organizational research. I have argued that attachment dynamics affect the follower's sense of "felt security" which influences their attitudes and behaviors. This is a complementary process to social exchange dynamics, and the results reflect this understanding.

Results indicate that Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance (SLAVO) and Anxiety (SLANX) are the primary drivers behind the follower's negative appraisals of the intentions behind the leader's behaviors, suggesting that followers who prefer a distance from the leader, and followers who do not see themselves as being

“accepted” by the leader might have problems making rational assessments of the leader’s intentions. This is in line with my hypothesis that followers with poor assessments of the leader as an attachment figure, or difficulty seeing themselves as worthy, will attribute negative intentions to leader behaviors.

The results concerning the follower’s experience of thriving at work suggest that followers who maintain a distance from their leaders and prefer not to rely on them may have difficulties experiencing learning and vitality at work. The inability of followers to have a secure relationship with leaders might hinder the follower’s ability to communicate effectively with the leader. This might make it difficult for followers to understand how their jobs fit in with other co-workers because of a “poor” quality relationship with the leader that is primarily “agentic” in nature”.

The last dependent variable is affective commitment, which captures an employee’s sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the organization. The results offer fascinating insight into why employees might find themselves “attached” to the organization. While LMX explains significant variance in the follower’s level of affective commitment to the organization, including Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance and Anxiety in the analysis results in a substantial increase in the variance explained. This suggests that a follower’s secure emotional attachment with the leader is critical in understanding why employees develop “emotional bonds” with the organization. Followers are emotionally attached to an organization not just because the organization provides useful resources and support towards them, but also because they find a safe haven and secure base in the leader that they are securely attached to.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This research is not without limitations, which suggest directions for future research. Firstly, while data were collected from both followers and leaders, it was often the case that independent and dependent variables were reported by a single

source, and this suggests that common method bias might be present. I endeavored to remove some common method variance from the hypothesis tests by using an aggregated measure of subordinates' report of their supervisor's supportive leadership behaviors. A confirmatory factor analysis of all follower-reported constructs (reported in Chapter 4) revealed that a single factor yields a bad fit to the data, and that the variables used in the study are distinct. And though certain variables are moderately correlated, many of these relationships were expected. A close examination of the study procedure and supervisor survey will reveal that I collected supervisor-appraised behaviors of their direct reports. However, data analysis revealed that there is very little variance in these behaviors reported by the supervisor, making it difficult to find any results when running the analysis. The reason for this lack of variance is probably because some of the behaviors assessed were not relevant across all the retail outlets studied, making it difficult for the supervisor to provide an accurate and relevant assessment of their employees. This is a limitation that has to be overcome in future studies, and probably best resolved by conducting the study in a single organization, with measures of behavioral outcomes that are clearly relevant to the group of employees involved in the study. Though this is a limitation of the current study, it also poses tremendous future research potential. Building on the proposed conceptual model (FIGURE 3), we can investigate the effects of specific leader attachment bonds on other important organizational outcomes, particularly in the understanding of actual follower behaviors.

Secondly, while the retail context for this research was chosen in response to calls for research on attachment within non-military settings (Mikulincer et al., 2007), and thus provides needed evidence concerning the generalizability of follower-leader attachment dynamics to business organizations, I acknowledge that further research is needed to more firmly establish the generalizability of my findings. Clearly the multi-organizational approach taken provides some degree of assurance that no single organizational factor had undue influence on study findings, and that they are robust

across a spectrum of retail organizations. Nevertheless, efforts to replicate the work within other organizational settings (e.g., manufacturing and professional organizations) and within other national or cultural settings would serve to enhance the external validity of the study's findings.

Also, it will be interesting to understand the moderating effects of specific leader attachment avoidance and anxiety in many organizational situations involving the leader and the follower. By adopting the control systems framework, and the follower's choice of hyper-activating or de-activating strategies to behave differently in different situations, it allows us to better predict the follower's attitudes and behaviors across different situations.

Lastly, while I have developed a measure of safe haven and secure base behaviors, I contend there needs to be extra effort put into ensuring that the measure accurately captures the *functions* of leaders as safe havens and secure bases, and not just the *forms* of behaviors leaders do. Upon doing so, it will be possible to establish discriminant validity of these two constructs, and examine the differential effects they have on attitudes and behaviors of followers. It will also be worthwhile to integrate our conceptualization of supportive leader behaviors into the larger framework of transformational leadership, which also focuses on follower development.

### **Theoretical and Methodological Contributions**

The most important theoretical contribution of this dissertation is in extending the discourse on leader-follower relationships well beyond the dynamics of social exchange. More than exchange partners, followers often see their leaders as attachment figures, and desire to be securely attached to them. A healthy secure attachment to the leader provides that sense of "felt security" to the follower, which enables them to pursue exploration at work more competently. Social exchange principles cannot adequately explain this observed dynamic. This dissertation provides a conceptual model to explore the influence of follower and leader

attachment styles, and supportive behaviors can affect the sense of “felt security” in the follower. The model has considered the role of both person and situation effects in affecting the follower’s development of attachment bonds towards the leader.

On a different front, this dissertation clarifies the nature of supportive leadership behaviors, based on a solid theoretical understanding of social support processes in intimate relationships (Feeney, 2000). Beyond mapping out two very different types of support that leaders provide, this conceptualization places the emphasis on support *function* rather than *form*. By this, I mean that leaders can exhibit a variety of support behaviors that fulfill their function as safe havens and secure bases. It is not based on exact behaviors that leaders need to exhibit towards their followers, but rather any behavior that might convey the message to the follower that they will be available and accessible in times of trouble, that the follower is worthy of their attention and is accepted by them. This is evident when followers believe that leaders can be counted on when there is trouble, and when leaders are genuinely concerned about their personal interests and supportive of their endeavors.

### **Practical Implications**

Although I have taken a follower’s perspective to understanding the leader follower relationship, the lessons learnt from this study have relevance for leaders. Followers who are informed by this research can increase their level of self-awareness and better understand how they interact with their leaders. For leaders however, there are more important practical implications. First and foremost, by appreciating the fact that followers have mental models of self and others, it tells the leader that they should be concerned not only about being seen by followers as available and accessible to them in time of threat, but also about ensuring that followers see themselves as accepted by them. This is particularly relevant when dealing with anxious followers, who are concerned with acceptance by the leader, and how the leader views him or her. Extra care needs to be taken by leaders when

managing their relationships with such followers, as they probably need more individualized attention to build that sense of worthiness and acceptance.

Also, by having a better understanding the functions of leaders as safe havens and secure bases, it provides a clear framework for leaders to understand how to provide effective support for their followers. From a very simple perspective, supportive behaviors is perceived as “support” to the follower when (i) he or she is firmly established in the belief that the leader will be there for him or her when trouble comes along, and (ii) the leader demonstrates concern for the follower’s needs for growth which is evidenced by showing genuine interest in the follower and respect for his or her concerns. All this probably requires the leader to be sensitive and empathetic to the follower to be able to fulfill his or function as a safe haven or secure base.



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**TABLE 1 – Measurement and Methods for Assessing Attachment Styles**

Measure	Measure	Description	Remarks
George, Kaplan, & Main (1985)	Adult Attachment Interview	Solicit memories of childhood experiences with primary caregivers, and identify current attachment styles	Extensive training required
Hazan & Shaver (1987)	Single Item Measure	Secure, Anxious-ambivalent, Avoidant	Ignore within-person variability in attachment style differences
Simpson (1990)	Single Item Measure	Added Likert-scale rating to each dimension of Hazan & Shaver (1987)	No instrument reliability
Simpson, Rholes, & Philips (1996)	Adult Attachment Questionnaire	Decomposition of Hazan & Shaver (1987) + Added items - Attachment anxiety - Attachment avoidance	Improved instrument reliability + New dimensions
Collins (1996)	Adult Attachment Scale	Decomposition of Hazan & Shaver (1987) + Added items - Discomfort with closeness - Discomfort with depending on others - Anxious concern about being abandoned or unloved	Improved instrument reliability + New dimensions
Feeney, Noller, & Hanrahan (1994)	Attachment Style Questionnaire	Back to literature to generate new items - Lack of confidence (in self and others) - Discomfort with closeness - Need for approval and confirmation by others - Preoccupation with relationships - Viewing relationships as secondary	Improved instrument reliability + New dimensions
Bartholomew & Horowitz (1991)	Relationship Questionnaire	Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissing, Fearful	Based on model of self and others
Griffin & Bartholomew (1994)	Relationship Styles Questionnaire	Secure, Preoccupied, Dismissing, Fearful + Model of Self and Others	Captured indices for model of self and others
Brennan, Clark, & Shaver (1998)	Experiences with Close Relationships scale (ECR)	Attachment avoidance, Attachment anxiety	Dimensional prototype
Fraley, Waller, & Brennan (2000)	Revised Experiences with Close Relationships scale (ECR-R)	Attachment avoidance, Attachment anxiety	Improved with item-response analysis

**TABLE 2 – Studies Using Attachment Theory to Examine Leadership (1/6)**

Study	Context & Participants	Attachment Construct	Outcome Measure	Results
Popper, Maysel & Castelnovo (2000)	<u>Study 1:</u> 86 male officer cadets in the Israel Police	Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Ambivalent</li> <li>• Fearful</li> <li>• Dismissing</li> </ul>	Transformational leadership assessed using Hebrew version of Bass's (1985) MLQ (Abraham, 1992) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charisma (<math>\alpha = .96</math>)</li> <li>• Individual consideration (<math>\alpha = .95</math>)</li> <li>• Intellectual stimulation (<math>\alpha = .95</math>)</li> </ul> * Self-report leadership style	<u>Correlation analysis</u> <u>Secure:</u> Significant positive correlations with all three profiles of transformational leadership, and total score. <u>Ambivalence:</u> Significantly negatively correlated with charisma, intellectual stimulation, and total mean score. <u>Fearful:</u> Significantly negatively correlated with all three profiles of transformational leadership, and total score. <u>Dismissing:</u> Significantly negatively correlated with individual consideration.
	<u>Study 2:</u> 85 male officer cadets in a border guard unit of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)	Relationship Style Questionnaire (RSQ; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994: 30 items) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure (<math>\alpha = .56</math>)</li> <li>• Ambivalent (<math>\alpha = .78</math>)</li> <li>• Fearful (<math>\alpha = .73</math>)</li> <li>• Dismissing (<math>\alpha = .60</math>)</li> </ul>	Transformational leadership assessed using Hebrew version of Bass's (1985) MLQ (Abraham, 1992) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charisma</li> <li>• Individual consideration</li> <li>• Intellectual stimulation</li> </ul> * Assessed at two time points (one month interval) by platoon commanders and course commander for test-retest stability and interjudge reliability	<u>Correlation analysis</u> <u>Secure:</u> Significant positive correlations with all three profiles of transformational leadership, and total score. <u>Ambivalence:</u> Significantly negatively correlated with intellectual stimulation. <u>Fearful:</u> No significant associations. <u>Dismissing:</u> Significantly negatively correlated with intellectual stimulation, and the mean score of transformational leadership.
	<u>Study 3:</u> 39 male squad commanders in IDF infantry units	Relationship Style Questionnaire (RSQ; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994: 30 items) & (Mikulincer et al, 1990: 15 item) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure (<math>\alpha = .68</math>)</li> <li>• Ambivalent (<math>\alpha = .84</math>)</li> <li>• Fearful (<math>\alpha = .80</math>)</li> <li>• Dismissing (<math>\alpha = .72</math>)</li> </ul>	Leadership Style assessed using short, updated MLQ (Bass & Avolio, 1996) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Charisma (<math>\alpha = .98</math>)</li> <li>• Individual consideration (<math>\alpha = .93</math>)</li> <li>• Intellectual stimulation (<math>\alpha = .93</math>)</li> <li>• Contingent reward (<math>\alpha = .74</math>)</li> <li>• Management by exception (<math>\alpha = .62</math>)</li> </ul> * Evaluated by the squad commanders' soldiers (each squad comprised 6-12 soldiers)	<u>Correlation analysis</u> <u>Secure:</u> Significant positive correlations with all three profiles of transformational leadership, and total score. But no significant relationship with transactional leadership (contingent reward and management by exception). <u>Ambivalence:</u> No significant correlation with leadership style <u>Fearful:</u> No significant correlation with leadership style. <u>Dismissing:</u> No significant correlation with leadership style.

**TABLE 2 – Studies Using Attachment Theory to Examine Leadership (2/6)**

Study	Context & Participants	Attachment Construct	Outcome Measure	Results
Popper (2002)	<u>Study 2</u> : 384 male cadet squad commanders in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)	Hazan & Shaver (1987) and Mikulincer et al (1990): Combination of 15 items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Anxious-ambivalent</li> <li>• Avoidant (<math>\alpha</math> from .71 to .84)</li> </ul>	Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin & Hall, 1979)  Social desirability (Marlowe & Crowne, 1964; $\alpha = .83$ )	<u>One-way ANOVA analysis</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalized charismatic leaders were found to have a more avoidant attachment pattern than socialized charismatic leaders (Low narcissism <math>X=2.79</math>, High narcissism <math>X=3.51</math>, <math>p&lt;.001</math>).</li> <li>• Avoidant attachment pattern and social desirability are negatively correlated (<math>r=-.43</math>, <math>n=183</math>, <math>p&lt;.001</math>).</li> <li>• Secure attachment pattern and social desirability are positively correlated (<math>r=.26</math>, <math>n=183</math>, <math>p&lt;.001</math>).</li> </ul>
Popper, Amit, Gal, Mishkal-Sinai & Lisak (2004)	96 soldiers from the armored and infantry corps of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) – (63 leaders, 33 non-leaders)	Mikulincer, Florian & Tomacz (1990: 15 items) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure (<math>\alpha = .67</math>)</li> <li>• Anxious (<math>\alpha = .73</math>)</li> <li>• Avoidant (<math>\alpha = .77</math>)</li> </ul>	Locus of control scale (Rotter, 1966: 29 items; $\alpha = .66$ )  Trait anxiety inventory (Spielberger et al, 1970: 20 items, $\alpha = .89$ )  General Self-Efficacy scale (Chen & Gully, 1997: 14 items, $\alpha = .92$ )  Optimism index (Scheier & Carver, 1985: 6 item; $\alpha = .73$ )	<u>Correlation statistics &amp; MANOVA analysis</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaders are characterized by higher levels of secure attachment and lower avoidant and anxious attachment</li> </ul> <u>Secure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locus of control (<math>r=-.17</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>) Anxiety (<math>r=-.40</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>) Self-efficacy (<math>r=.37</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>) Optimism (<math>r=.38</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>)</li> </ul> <u>Avoidant</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locus of control (<math>r=.12</math>, <math>p&lt;.05</math>) Anxiety (<math>r=.41</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>) Self-efficacy (<math>r=-.31</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>) Optimism (<math>r=-.32</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>)</li> </ul> <u>Anxious</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locus of control (<math>r=.25</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>) Anxiety (<math>r=.53</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>) Self-efficacy (<math>r=-.29</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>) Optimism (<math>r=-.25</math>, <math>p&lt;.01</math>)</li> </ul>

**TABLE 2 – Studies Using Attachment Theory to Examine Leadership (3/6)**

Study	Context & Participants	Attachment Construct	Outcome Measure	Results
<p>Grosvenor (2005) Dissertation</p>	<p>121 employees from three organizations in the Montreal area (large local hospital, medium sized investment banking firm, large manufacturing company) and 20 leaders</p>	<p>Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Griffin &amp; Bartholomew, 1994)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure</li> <li>• Fearful</li> <li>• Preoccupied</li> <li>• Dismissing</li> </ul> <p>* Leader attachment from the follower perspective</p>	<p>Transformational leadership style (MLQ; Bass &amp; Avolio, 1995, <math>\alpha = .94</math>)</p> <p>Leader-member exchange (LMX-7; Graen &amp; Uhl-Bien, 1995, <math>\alpha = .91</math>)</p> <p>Benevolence (Mayer &amp; Davis, 1999, <math>\alpha = .92</math>)</p> <p>Trust (Mayer &amp; Davis, 1999, <math>\alpha = .67</math>)</p>	<p><u>Correlation statistics &amp; Regression analysis</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LMX fully mediated the relationship between secure attachment and follower perceptions of leader benevolence (Sobel z-value = 4.32, <math>p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Secure</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TFL (<math>r = .40</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) LMX (<math>r = .38</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) Benevolence (<math>r = .40</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) Trust (<math>r = .39</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Fearful</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TFL (<math>r = -.47</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) LMX (<math>r = -.43</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) Benevolence (<math>r = -.41</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) Trust (<math>r = -.35</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Preoccupied</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TFL (<math>r = -.38</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) LMX (<math>r = -.26</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) Benevolence (<math>r = -.29</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>) Trust (<math>r = -.35</math>, <math>p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Dismissing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TFL (<math>r = -.21</math>, <math>p &lt; .05</math>) Benevolence (<math>r = -.19</math>, <math>p &lt; .05</math>)</li> </ul>
<p>Riggs &amp; Bretz (2006)</p>	<p>86 interns under the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (66 women, 20 men)</p>	<p>Relationship Questionnaire (RQ; Bartholomew &amp; Horowitz, 1991)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure (50.6%)</li> <li>• Fearful (12.6%)</li> <li>• Dismissing (19.5%)</li> <li>• Preoccupied (12.6%)</li> </ul> <p>* Perceived supervisor attachment style by intern</p>	<p>Supervisory working alliance (Working Alliance Inventory; Horvath &amp; Greenberg, 1986, 1989, 1994)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task (<math>\alpha = .74</math>)</li> <li>• Bond (<math>\alpha = .93</math>)</li> <li>• Goal (<math>\alpha = .66</math>)</li> </ul>	<p><u>MANOVA analysis</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants who perceived their supervisors to have a secure attachment style rated the supervisory task and bond significantly higher than participants who perceived their supervisors to be preoccupied or dismissing.</li> <li>• Secure-secure dyads had significantly higher scores on supervisory task and supervisory bond than secure participant-insecure supervisor dyads</li> </ul>

TABLE 2 – Studies Using Attachment Theory To Examine Leadership (4/6)

Study	Context & Participants	Attachment Construct	Outcome Measure	Results
Berson, Dan & Yammarino (2006)	162 undergraduate management students in a large public university in the Northeastern United States	Adult Attachment Style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987: single item) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure (64%)</li> <li>Anxious-ambivalent (15%)</li> <li>Avoidant (21%)</li> </ul>	Ideal-leadership perceptions (Prototypicality Score; Lord et al, 1984: 52 attributes)  Emergent leadership (ranking ordering)  Individualized leadership (Dansereau et al, 1995)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Securely attached individuals viewed ideal leaders as more considerate than anxious-ambivalent individuals.</li> <li>Securely attached individuals viewed ideal leaders as more sociable than avoidant individuals.</li> <li>Team members ranked the leadership of secure fellow team members higher than insecure team members.</li> <li>Securely attached team members viewed themselves as more effective than they did insecurely attached individuals.</li> </ul>
Davidovitz, Mikulincer, Shaver, Izsak & Popper (2007)	<u>Study 1</u> : 84 officers in the Israeli Defence Forces, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel or higher, 31 managers from the public sector, 85 managers from the private sector	Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR; Brennan et al, 1998) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoidance (<math>\alpha = .82</math>)</li> <li>Anxiety (<math>\alpha = .92</math>)</li> </ul>	<p>Motives to lead (New: 34 items, <math>.73 &lt; \alpha &lt; .93</math>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-enhancing motives</li> <li>Pro-social motives</li> <li>Control-related motives</li> <li>Task-oriented motives</li> <li>Self-reliance motives</li> </ul> <p>Leadership style (New: 30 items)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Socialized leadership (<math>\alpha = .93</math>)</li> <li>Personalized leadership (<math>\alpha = .95</math>)</li> </ul> <p>Perceived self-efficacy (New: 18 items)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Task-focused situation (<math>\alpha = .84</math>)</li> <li>Emotion-focused situation (<math>\alpha = .89</math>)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Regression analysis</u></p> <p><u>Attachment anxiety</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-enhancing motives (<math>\beta = .41, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>Control-related motives (<math>\beta = .26, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>Self-reliance motives (<math>\beta = .18, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>Personalized orientation (<math>\beta = .31, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>Task-focused self-efficacy (<math>\beta = -.23, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Attachment avoidance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pro-social motives (<math>\beta = -.26, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>Task-oriented motives (<math>\beta = -.29, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>Self-reliance motives (<math>\beta = .21, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>Socialized orientation (<math>\beta = -.23, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>Emotion-focused self-efficacy (<math>\beta = -.22, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul>

**TABLE 2 – Studies Using Attachment Theory to Examine Leadership (5/6)**

Study	Context & Participants	Attachment Construct	Outcome Measure	Results
Davidovitz, Mikulincer, Shaver, Izsak & Popper (2007) – cont'd	Study 2: 549 soldiers in regular military service from 60 military units and 60 of their direct officers during a leadership workshop at the IDF School for Leadership Development	<p>Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR; Brennan et al, 1998)</p> <p><u>Soldiers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoidance (<math>\alpha = .84</math>)</li> <li>• Anxiety (<math>\alpha = .90</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Officers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoidance (<math>\alpha = .81</math>)</li> <li>• Anxiety (<math>\alpha = .87</math>)</li> </ul>	<p>Leadership style (Study 1: 30 items)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socialized leadership (<math>\alpha = .94</math>)</li> <li>• Personalized leadership (<math>\alpha = .78</math>)</li> </ul> <p>Leadership efficacy (Study 1: 18items)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Task-focused situation (<math>\alpha = .89</math>)</li> <li>• Emotion-focused situation (<math>\alpha = .93</math>)</li> </ul> <p>Group unit cohesion (Stoke, 1983; Rosenfeld &amp; Gilbert, 1989: 10 items, <math>\alpha = .89</math>) – Checked criteria for group-level construct</p> <p>Soldier self-report (Barry &amp; Stewart, 1997: 14 items)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instrumental functioning (<math>\alpha = .70</math>)</li> <li>• Socioemotional functioning (<math>\alpha = .76</math>)</li> </ul>	<p><u>Hierarchical linear modeling analysis</u></p> <p><u>Officer attachment anxiety</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalized leadership style (<math>\beta = .20, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Officer's task-focused efficacy (<math>\beta = -.34, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Soldier's instrumental functioning (<math>\beta = -.45, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Soldier's socioemotional functioning (<math>\beta = .29, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Officer attachment avoidance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socialized leadership style (<math>\beta = -.35, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Officer's emotion-focused efficacy (<math>\beta = -.42, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Group unit cohesion (<math>\beta = -.41, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Soldier's socioemotional functioning (<math>\beta = -.40, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Soldier attachment anxiety</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group unit cohesion (<math>\beta = -.12, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p><u>Soldier attachment avoidance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalized leadership style (<math>\beta = .21, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Socialized leadership style (<math>\beta = -.23, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Officer's emotion-focused efficacy (<math>\beta = -.26, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Officer's task-focused efficacy (<math>\beta = -.23, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Group unit cohesion (<math>\beta = -.16, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Soldier's instrumental functioning (<math>\beta = -.10, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Soldier's socioemotional functioning (<math>\beta = -.10, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <p>* No officer-soldier attachment style interaction effect</p>

**TABLE 2 – Studies Using Attachment Theory to Examine Leadership (6/6)**

Study	Context & Participants	Attachment Construct	Outcome Measure	Results
Davidovitz, Mikulincer, Shaver, Izsak & Popper (2007) – cont'd	541 male Israeli soldiers from 72 different military units of the IDF and 72 of their direct officers	Adult Attachment Style (Hazan & Shaver, 1987) <u>Soldiers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoidance</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> </ul> <u>Officers</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoidance</li> <li>• Anxiety</li> </ul>	<u>T1: First three days of combat training</u> Soldier's mental health (Mental Health Inventory; Florian & Drori, 1990; Veit & Ware, 1983: 15 items, $\alpha = .93$ )  <u>T2: Two months later</u> Soldier's mental health ( $\alpha = .94$ ) Officer's provision of sense of security during training (New: 20 items, $\alpha = .93$ )	<u>Hierarchical linear modeling analysis</u> <u>Officer attachment avoidance</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer functioning as secure base (<math>\beta = -.52, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• Change in soldier's mental health (<math>\beta = -.16, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <u>Soldier attachment anxiety</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officer functioning as secure base (<math>\beta = -.06, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> <li>• T1 Soldier's mental health (<math>\beta = -.07, p &lt; .01</math>)</li> </ul> <u>Soldier attachment avoidance</u> (weak effects)  * O-AVO & S-ANX, and O-AVO & S-AVO interaction on change in soldier's mental health.



**TABLE 3 – Descriptive Statistics of Retail Establishments and Study Participants**

<u>Retail Establishments</u>		
Retail Type (%)	Products (Fashion, Electronics, Miscellaneous)	72.90
	Service (Beauty & Spa, Customer Service)	13.50
	Food & Beverage	13.50
<u>Supervisor</u>		
Age (years)	Average	31.59
	Standard Deviation	7.96
Gender (%)	Male	38.50
	Female	61.50
Race (%)	Chinese	76.00
	Malay	7.30
	Others (Indian, Arab, Boyanese, Eurasian)	8.30
	Missing	8.30
Nationality (%)	Singaporean	66.70
	Malaysian	21.90
	Others (Filipino, China, Indonesian)	6.20
	Missing	5.20
Organizational Tenure (years)	Average	4.71
	Standard Deviation	3.77
No. of Direct Subordinates	Average	6.24
	Standard Deviation	4.73
<u>Employee</u>		
Age (years)	Average	26.05
	Standard Deviation	8.62
Gender (%)	Male	32.60
	Female	66.70
	Missing	0.40
Race (%)	Chinese	78.50
	Malay	10.70
	Others (Indian, Filipino, Javanese, Burmese, Hui, Boyanese, Myanmar, Eurasian)	7.50
	Missing	3.30
Nationality (%)	Singaporean	62.60
	Malaysian	28.10
	Others (Filipino, China, Myanmar, Indian)	8.50
	Missing	0.70
Organizational Tenure (years)	Average	1.91
	Standard Deviation	2.36
Length of Work Relationship with Supervisor (years)	Average	1.12
	Standard Deviation	1.58
No. of Work Hours Per Week	Average	43.39
	Standard Deviation	18.05

**TABLE 4 - Principal Axis Factor Analysis with Oblimin Rotation of Specific Leader Attachment Measure (Pre-Test Sample)**

Item	Factor loadings	
	SLAVO	SLANX
I try to avoid having too close a relationship with him/her.	<b>.73</b>	.20
I prefer not to disclose too much about myself to him/her.	<b>.71</b>	.19
It is best to keep a distance from him/her.	<b>.70</b>	.13
I prefer not to let him/her know my 'true' thoughts and feelings.	<b>.66</b>	.21
When I'm feeling stressed at work, I prefer to handle it on my own rather than letting him/her know what's wrong.	<b>.59</b>	-.02
I will not approach him/her for help until I have exhausted all other options.	<b>.57</b>	.19
I prefer not to rely on him/her when I run into problems at work.	<b>.55</b>	.01
It is not necessary to depend on him/her for emotional support.	<b>.53</b>	-.04
I need a lot of reassurance from him/her that I am doing an adequate job.	.06	<b>.71</b>
If he/she disapproves of something I do, I get very upset.	.24	<b>.67</b>
I get anxious or frustrated when he/she does not have enough time for me.	.04	<b>.62</b>
I tend to get upset, anxious or angry if he/she is not there when I need him/her.	-.02	<b>.53</b>
If he/she criticizes my work, I feel rejected.	.11	<b>.51</b>
I worry about being able to gain his/her approval.	.20	<b>.50</b>
I try hard to get him/her to notice me at work.	.05	<b>.49</b>
Eigenvalue	3.55	2.16
% variance explained (unrotated factors)	27.52	18.60
% variance explained (rotated factors)	23.68	14.41

*Note.* Numbers in boldface indicate dominant factor loadings.

SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety)

**TABLE 5 - Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis of  
Second-Order Two-Factor Measurement Model of  
Specific Leader Attachment Measure**

Model	$\chi^2$ (N = 270)	df	CFI	NFI	RMSEA	Model Comparison	$\chi^2$ diff (N=270)	df diff.	p <
First-order one-factor model	578.2	90	0.725	0.695	0.142	1 & 2	155.4	1	0.01
First-order two-factor model (SLAVO:SLANX)	422.8	89	0.812	0.777	0.118	2 & 3	179.8	2	0.01
Second-order one-factor model (SLAVO [SLAVO-R:SLAVO-D]:SLANX)	243.0	87	0.912	0.872	0.082				

SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety); SLAVO-R (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance-Reliance); SLAVO-D (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance-Disclosure)

**TABLE 6 – Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis of  
Second-Order Two-Factor Measurement Model of  
Specific Leader Attachment Measure (Factor Loadings)**

Item	Factor loadings		
	SLANX	SLAVO-R	SLAVO-D
I need a lot of reassurance from him/her that I am doing an adequate job.	<b>.52</b>		
If he/she disapproves of something I do, I get very upset.	<b>.62</b>		
I get anxious or frustrated when he/she does not have enough time for me.	<b>.73</b>		
I tend to get upset, anxious or angry if he/she is not there when I need him/her.	<b>.75</b>		
If he/she criticizes my work, I feel rejected.	<b>.65</b>		
I worry about being able to gain his/her approval.	<b>.73</b>		
I try hard to get him/her to notice me at work.	<b>.53</b>		
When I'm feeling stressed at work, I prefer to handle it on my own rather than letting him/her know what's wrong.		<b>.71</b>	
I will not approach him/her for help until I have exhausted all other options.		<b>.71</b>	
I prefer not to rely on him/her when I run into problems at work.		<b>.72</b>	
It is not necessary to depend on him/her for emotional support.		<b>.66</b>	
I try to avoid having too close a relationship with him/her.			<b>.77</b>
I prefer not to disclose too much about myself to him/her.			<b>.75</b>
It is best to keep a distance from him/her.			<b>.87</b>
I prefer not to let him/her know my 'true' thoughts and feelings.			<b>.86</b>

*Note.* Data are from the final study sample (n=270).

All factor loadings are completely standardized lambda loadings and are significant at  $p < .01$

SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety); SLAVO-R (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance-Reliance); SLAVO-D (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance-Disclosure)

**TABLE 7 - Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis of  
Second-Order One-Factor Measurement Model of  
Supportive Leadership Behaviors**

Model	$\chi^2$ (N = 270)	df	CFI	NFI	RMSEA	Model Comparison	$\chi^2$ diff (N=270)	df diff.	p <
First-order two-factor model	275.2	35	0.843	0.827	0.160	1 & 2	181.8	1	0.01
Second-order one-factor model (SAFE-SECURE)	93.4	34	0.961	0.941	0.081				

SAFE (Supportive Leadership-Safe Haven); SECURE (Supportive Leadership-Secure Base)

**TABLE 8 - Results of Discriminatory Validity Analysis**

Model	$\chi^2$ (N = 270)	df	CFI	NFI	RMSEA	Model Comparison	$\chi^2$ diff (N=270)	df diff.	p <
One-factor model	1752.40	209	0.513	0.488	0.166	1 & 2	1379.88	28	0.01
Eight-factor model (EAVO-EANX-LMX-SLAVO-SLANX- SINATT-THRIVING-COMM)	374.32	181	0.939	0.891	0.063				

EAVO (Follower General Attachment Avoidance); EANX (Follower General Attachment Anxiety); LMX (Leader-Member Exchange); SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety); SINATT (Sinister Attribution); THRIVING (Thriving at Work); COMM (Affective Commitment)

**TABLE 9 - Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations and Reliability Statistics**

Variables	Means	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1 Employee ECR-AVO	3.34	0.90	(.87)										
2 Employee ECR-ANX	3.30	1.06	.53***	(.90)									
3 Supervisor ECR-AVO	3.25	0.78	.06	.14*	(.81)								
4 Supervisor ECR-ANX	3.18	0.86	.16*	.20**	<sup>a</sup> .35***	(.85)							
5 Supportive Leadership	5.57	1.06	-.24***	-.22***	<sup>a</sup> -.23*	<sup>a</sup> -.29***	(.91)						
6 SLAVO	2.99	1.51	.44***	.41***	.07	.19**	-.41***	(.86)					
7 SLANX	3.00	1.17	.29***	.47***	.15*	.19**	-.38***	.63***	(.83)				
8 LMX	4.78	1.21	-.39***	-.28***	-.12*	-.25***	.55***	-.37***	-.26***	(.87)			
9 Sinister Attribution	1.98	0.72	.35***	.39***	.04	.27***	-.34***	.38***	.37***	-.44***	(.80)		
10 Thriving At Work	3.41	0.73	-.41***	-.26***	-.05	-.13*	.35***	-.40***	-.26***	.47***	-.41***	(.88)	
11 Affective Commitment	4.69	1.53	-.35***	-.34***	.07	-.12*	.23***	-.39***	-.30***	.25***	-.40***	.42***	(.69)

Coefficient alphas are reported within the parenthesis on the diagonals where appropriate

N = 260, <sup>a</sup>N = 96 (supervisor only) \*\*\* p < 0.001 level; \*\* p < .01 level; \* p < .05 level; <sup>†</sup> p < .10 (2-tailed)

ECR-AVO (General Attachment Avoidance); ECR-ANX (General Attachment Anxiety); SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety); LMX (Leader-Member Exchange)

**TABLE 10 - Results of Regression Analysis for Follower Mental Models of Attachment**

	SLAVO			SLANX		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Follower Attachment Style</i>						
Attachment Avoidance (EAVO)	.31***	.30***	.52 <sup>†</sup>	.06	.06	-.32
Attachment Anxiety (EANX)	.25***	.23***	.15	.44***	.41***	.38
<i>Leader Attachment Style</i>						
Attachment Avoidance (SAVO)		-.01	.20		.07	-.23
Attachment Anxiety (SANX)		.10 <sup>†</sup>	.01		.10 <sup>†</sup>	.03
<i>Interaction Terms</i>						
EAVO x SAVO			-.56			.38
EAVO x SANX			.28			.18
EANX x SAVO			.29			.10
EANX x SANX			-.21			-.07
Model F Statistics	40.47***	21.07***	10.86***	38.45***	20.91***	10.74***
R <sup>2</sup>	.23	.24	.25	.22	.24	.25
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.23	.23	.23	.22	.23	.23
Δ R <sup>2</sup>		.01	.01		.02 <sup>†</sup>	.01

N= 270. \*\*\* p < 0.001 level; \*\* p < .01 level; \* p < .05 level; <sup>†</sup> p < .10 (2-tailed)

EAVO (Follower General Attachment Avoidance); EANX (Follower General Attachment Anxiety); SAVO (Leader General Attachment Avoidance); SANX (Leader General Attachment Anxiety); SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety)



**TABLE 11 - Results of Regression Analysis for Supportive Leadership and Follower Mental Models of Attachment**

	SLAVO	SLANX
Supportive Leadership	-.44***	-.38***
Model F Statistics	62.74***	44.91***
R <sup>2</sup>	.19	.14
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.19	.14

N= 270. \*\*\* p < 0.001 level; \*\* p < .01 level; \* p < .05 level; † p < .10 (2-tailed)

SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety)

**TABLE 12 - Results of Regression Analysis for  
Leader Attachment Style and Supportive Leadership**

	Supportive Leadership
<i>Leader Attachment Style</i>	
Attachment Avoidance (SAVO)	-.14
Attachment Anxiety (SANX)	-.23*
Model F Statistics	4.97**
R <sup>2</sup>	.10
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.08

N= 96. \*\*\* p < 0.001 level; \*\* p < .01 level; \* p < .05 level; † p < .10 (2-tailed)

SAVO (Leader General Attachment Avoidance); SANX (Leader General Attachment Anxiety)

**TABLE 13 - Results of Regression Analysis for Leader Attachment Style, Supportive Leadership, and Follower Mental Models of Attachment**

	SLAVO		SLANX	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
<i>Leader Attachment Style</i>				
Attachment Avoidance (SAVO)	.02	-.02	.10 <sup>†</sup>	.08
Attachment Anxiety (SANX)	.18**	.04	.17**	.06
<i>Leader Supportive Behavior</i>				
Supportive Leadership		-.43***		-.34***
Model F Statistics	4.87**	20.94***	7.34***	16.18***
R <sup>2</sup>	.04	.19	.05	.15
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.03	.18	.05	.15
Δ R <sup>2</sup>		.16***		.10***

N= 270. \*\*\* p < 0.001 level; \*\* p < .01 level; \* p < .05 level; <sup>†</sup> p < .10 (2-tailed)

SAVO (Leader General Attachment Avoidance); SANX (Leader General Attachment Anxiety); SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety)

**TABLE 14 - Results of Regression Analysis for Sinister Attribution**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Controls</i>				
Supportive Leadership	-.34***	-.13*	-.02	-.01
Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)		-.37***	-.33***	-.34***
<i>Specific Leader Attachment Bond</i>				
SLAVO			.13 <sup>†</sup>	-.17
SLANX			.20**	-.15
<i>Interaction Terms</i>				
SLAVO x SLANX				.59*
Model F Statistics	35.37***	35.26***	25.54***	22.17***
R <sup>2</sup>	.12	.21	.28	.30
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.11	.20	.27	.28
Δ R <sup>2</sup>		.09**	.07***	.02*

N= 270. \*\*\* p < 0.001 level; \*\* p < .01 level; \* p < .05 level; <sup>†</sup> p < .10 (2-tailed)

SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety)

**TABLE 15 - Results of Regression Analysis for Thriving at Work**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
<i>Controls</i>				
Supportive Leadership	.36***	.13 <sup>†</sup>	.05	.05
Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)		.41***	.35***	.35***
<i>Specific Leader Attachment Bond</i>				
SLAVO			-.26***	-.41**
SLANX			.01	-.16
<i>Interaction Terms</i>				
SLAVO x SLANX				.29
Model F Statistics	38.95***	41.97***	27.13***	22.07***
R <sup>2</sup>	.13	.24	.29	.30
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.12	.23	.28	.28
Δ R <sup>2</sup>		.11***	.05***	.00

N= 270. \*\*\* p < 0.001 level; \*\* p < .01 level; \* p < .05 level; <sup>†</sup> p < .10 (2-tailed)

SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety)

**TABLE 16 - Results of Regression Analysis for Affective Commitment**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Controls</i>			
Supportive Leadership	.24***	.14*	.02
Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)		.17*	.11
<i>Specific Leader Attachment Bond</i>			
SLAVO			-.28***
SLANX			-.09
Model F Statistics	16.02***	10.92***	13.11***
R <sup>2</sup>	.06	.08	.17
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	.05	.07	.15
$\Delta R^2$		.02*	.09***

N= 270. \*\*\* p < 0.001 level; \*\* p < .01 level; \* p < .05 level; † p < .10 (2-tailed)

SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety)

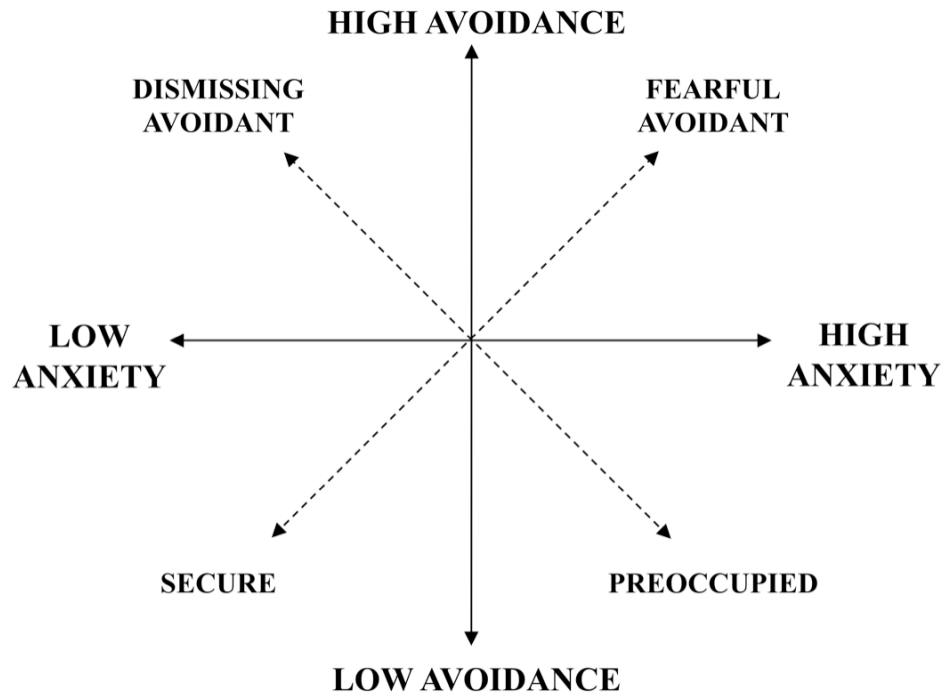
**TABLE 17 – Summary of Hypotheses Results**

	<u>Hypothesis</u>	<u>Support</u>
H1a	The follower's level of general attachment avoidance will be positively associated with the follower's level of specific attachment avoidance towards the leader.	Full
H1b	The follower's level of general attachment anxiety will be positively associated with the follower's level of specific attachment anxiety towards the leader.	Full
H2a	The leader's general attachment avoidance moderates the relationship of the follower's general attachment avoidance with the follower's specific attachment avoidance towards the leader such that this positive relationship is stronger when leader attachment avoidance is high rather than low.	None
H2b	The leader's general attachment avoidance will moderate the relationship of the follower's general attachment anxiety with the follower's specific attachment anxiety towards the leader, such that this positive relationship is stronger when leader general attachment anxiety is high rather than low.	None
H3a	The level of a leader's performance of supportive behaviors will be negatively associated with the follower's specific attachment avoidance towards the leader.	Full
H3b	The level of a leader's performance of supportive behaviors will be negatively associated with the follower's specific attachment anxiety towards the leader.	Full
H4a	The level of a leader's general attachment avoidance will be negatively associated with the leader's performance of supportive behaviors.	None
H4b	The level of a leader's general attachment anxiety will be negatively associated with the leader's performance of supportive behaviors.	Full
H5a	The level of a follower's specific attachment avoidance towards the leader will be positively associated with the follower's sinister attribution of the leader's actions.	Full
H5b	The level of a follower's specific attachment anxiety towards the leader will be positively associated with the follower's sinister attribution of the leader's actions.	Full
H5c	Followers who are high on specific attachment avoidance and high on specific attachment anxiety will have the highest levels of sinister attribution of the leader's action.	Full
H6a	The level of a follower's specific attachment anxiety towards the leader will be negatively associated with the experience of thriving at work.	Full
H6b	The level of a follower's specific attachment avoidance towards the leader will be negatively associated with the experience of thriving at work.	Full
H6c	Followers who are low on specific attachment avoidance and low on specific attachment anxiety will experience the highest levels of thriving at work.	None
H7a	The level of a follower's specific attachment avoidance towards the leader will be negatively associated with the follower's level of affective commitment towards the organization.	Full
H7b	The level of a follower's specific attachment anxiety towards the leader will be negatively associated with the follower's level of affective commitment towards the organization.	None

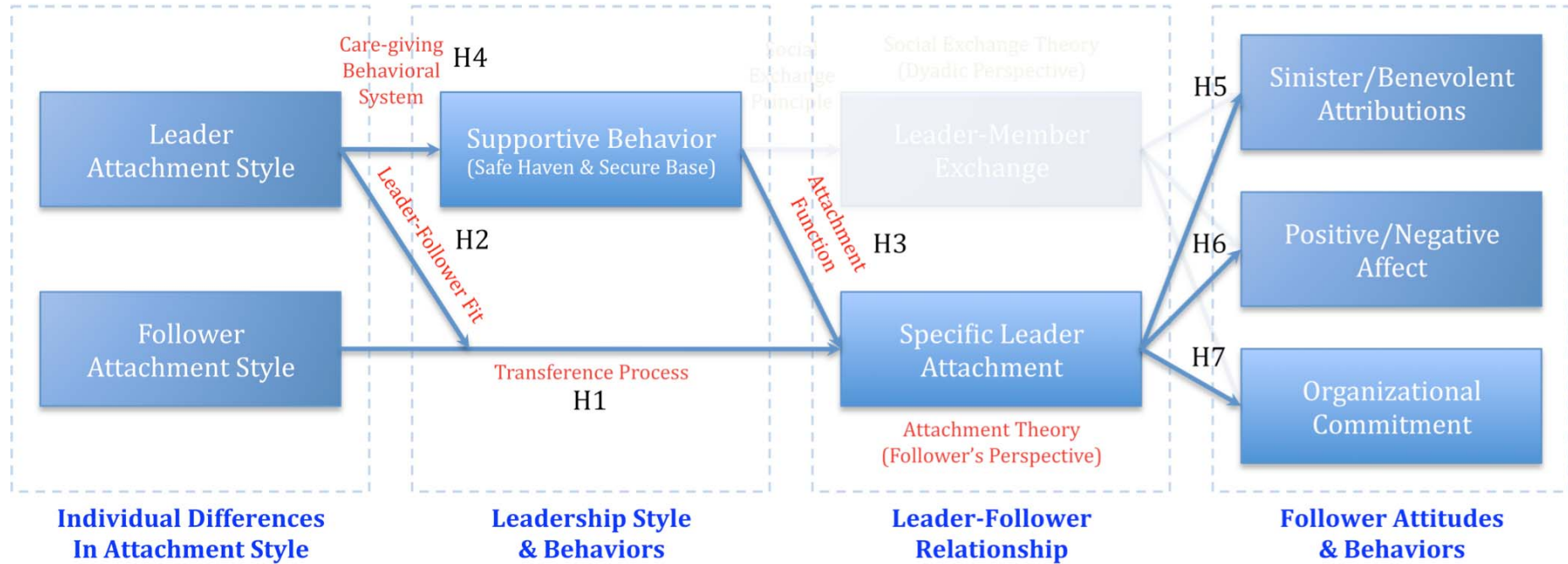
**FIGURE 1 - Model of Adult Attachment (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991)**

		<b>MODEL OF SELF</b> (Dependence)	
		<b>Positive</b> (Low)	<b>Negative</b> (High)
<b>MODEL OF OTHER</b> (Avoidance)	<b>Negative</b> (High)	<p><b>DISMISSING</b> Dismissing of intimacy Counter-dependent</p>	<p><b>FEARFUL</b> Fearful of intimacy Socially avoidant</p>
	<b>Positive</b> (Low)	<p><b>SECURE</b> Comfortable with intimacy and autonomy</p>	<p><b>PREOCCUPIED</b> Preoccupied with relationships</p>



**FIGURE 2 - Model of Adult Attachment (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007)**

**FIGURE 3 - Theoretical Model Outlining the Role of Attachment Theory in the Leadership Process**

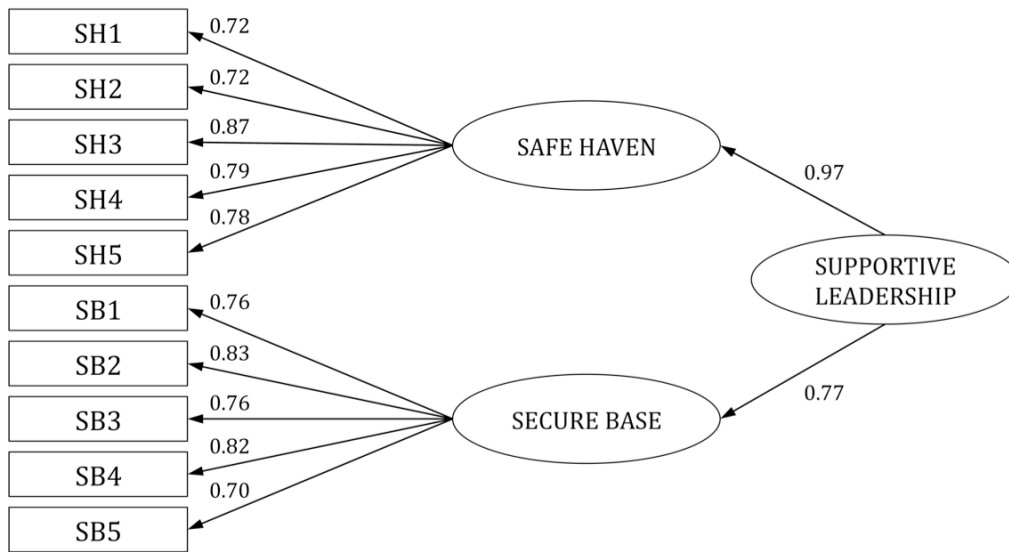


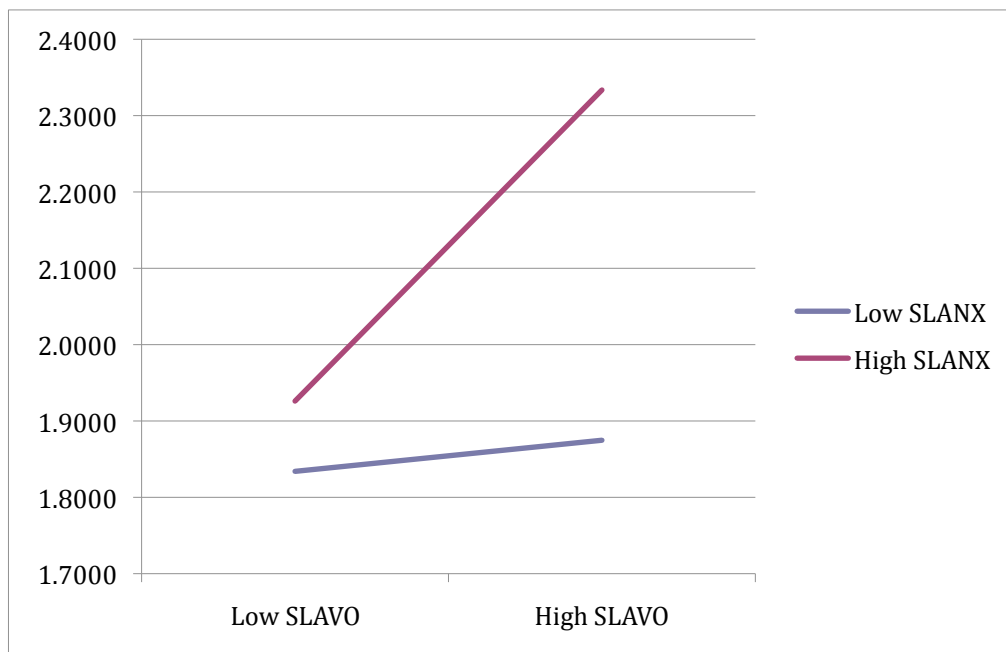
**FIGURE 4 - CFA Results for Second-Order Two-Factor Model of Specific Leader Attachment Measure**



SLAVO (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance); SLANX (Specific Leader Attachment Anxiety); SLAVO-R (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance-Reliance); SLAVO-D (Specific Leader Attachment Avoidance-Disclosure)

**FIGURE 5 - CFA Results for Second-Order One-Factor Model of Supportive Leadership Behaviors**



**FIGURE 6 – Moderation Plot of SLAVO x SLANX on Sinister Attribution**

## APPENDIX 1 – Expert Evaluation Questionnaire (1/7)

001

### Expert Evaluation of Items for the ‘Specific Leader Attachment Measure’ (SLAM)

Dear Colleagues: Thank you very much for providing your ‘expert advice’ on an instrument that I am developing for my dissertation. The 48 items below are designed to capture aspects of a followers’ attachment bond to his/her leader. Theoretical foundations suggest the existence of two underlying attachment dimensions—**Avoidance** and **Anxiety**.

In this exercise I provide you with definitions of these two constructs and ask you to classify items each of the 48 items in terms of whether they tap (1) Attachment Avoidance, (2) Attachment Anxiety, (3) both Attachment Avoidance and Anxiety, or (4) neither Attachment Avoidance nor Anxiety. Respond by placing a check in the appropriate cell. Note that ® denotes reverse-coded items.

If the wording of an item is unclear or can be improved, please indicate your comments in the space provided below each item. At the end of this form, I have also provided space if you have any suggestions for items that can capture these two dimensions of leader-follower attachment.

Thanks once again. If you have any questions, please contact me by email at [kelvin\\_pang@nus.edu.sg](mailto:kelvin_pang@nus.edu.sg). I will come by to collect forms in a few days. If you’d like to return forms more quickly, drop them off at Dan McAllister’s office (BIZ2, #03-14) and he will direct them to me.

Kelvin Pang

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#### Definitions:

- **Attachment Avoidance (AVO):** Avoidant individuals view closeness to the leader as unnecessary or undesirable, and tend to avoid dependence on the leader. They prefer to maintain a distance from the leader, try not to rely on the leader for assistance when they run into problems (either at work or in their personal life). They shy away from close relationships with the leader, and do not disclose much about themselves to the leader. In essence, avoidance to a specific leader is a reflection of one’s view of whether the leader would be available and serves as a good attachment figure during times of distress (Model of the other – leader).
- **Attachment Anxiety (ANX):** Anxious individuals feel unworthy as followers and worry about the leader’s acceptance. They are concerned about the leader’s perceptions of themselves as a follower that the leader would want to provide support to them during times of distress (Model of the self). They are easily affected by leaders’ behaviors towards them, and need constant reassurance from the leader that they are accepted and valued.

#### Important Note:

This is a *specific* leader attachment scale. It is to capture follower’s specific attachment to a particular leader, and not measure their attachment tendencies towards leaders in general. The final instrument will require respondents to focus their attention to a specific leader, and replace the words “the leader” with “him or her” in the measure.

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## APPENDIX 1 – Expert Evaluation Questionnaire (2/7)

001

Definitions:

- **Attachment Avoidance (AVO):** Avoidant individuals view closeness to the leader as unnecessary or undesirable, and tend to avoid dependence on the leader.
- **Attachment Anxiety (ANX):** Anxious individuals feel unworthy as followers and worry about the leader's acceptance.

Item	Measure	Attachment Avoidance	Attachment Anxiety	Both AVO & ANX	Neither AVO nor ANX
1	I prefer not to rely on my leader for help when I run into problems at work.				
2	It is not necessary to depend on my leader for emotional support.				
3	It is best to stay an arm's length from my leader.				
4	If my leader criticizes my work, I will feel rejected.				
5	I worry about getting my leader's approval.				
6	I get anxious when my leader does not have enough time for me.				
7	I prefer not to discuss matters other than work with my leader.				
8	My leader need not know much about me as a person.				
9	I am comfortable discussing personal matters with my leader. ®				

**APPENDIX 1 – Expert Evaluation Questionnaire (3/7)**

001

Definitions:

- **Attachment Avoidance (AVO):** Avoidant individuals view closeness to the leader as unnecessary or undesirable, and tend to avoid dependence on the leader.
- **Attachment Anxiety (ANX):** Anxious individuals feel unworthy as followers and worry about the leader’s acceptance.

Item	Measure	Attachment Avoidance	Attachment Anxiety	Both AVO & ANX	Neither AVO nor ANX
10	I need a lot of reassurance from my leader that I am a competent follower.				
11	I worry that the effort I put in at work gets unnoticed by my leader.				
12	I wish my leader showed me more care and concern.				
13	It is difficult to imagine being friends with my leader.				
14	If my leader shows me too much concern, I feel uncomfortable.				
15	I try to let my leader know me better as a person. ®				
16	My leader makes me doubt myself.				
17	People around me tell me I try too hard to please my leader.				
18	I do not feel anxious when my leader gives special attention to another coworker. ®				



## APPENDIX 1 – Expert Evaluation Questionnaire (4/7)

001

Definitions:

- **Attachment Avoidance (AVO):** Avoidant individuals view closeness to the leader as unnecessary or undesirable, and tend to avoid dependence on the leader.
- **Attachment Anxiety (ANX):** Anxious individuals feel unworthy as followers and worry about the leader's acceptance.

Item	Measure	Attachment Avoidance	Attachment Anxiety	Both AVO & ANX	Neither AVO nor ANX
19	I try to avoid getting too close to my leader.				
20	I prefer not to disclose too much about myself to my leader.				
21	I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my leader. ®				
22	I find it hard to forget negative remarks my leader made about me.				
23	My leader seems to get upset with me easily.				
24	I doubt my leader genuinely cares about me.				
25	If possible, I will not approach my leader for help, unless I have exhausted all options.				
26	I prefer not to let my leader know my 'true' thoughts and feelings.				
27	It helps to turn to my leader in times of need. ®				

**APPENDIX 1 – Expert Evaluation Questionnaire (5/7)**

001

Definitions:

- **Attachment Avoidance (AVO):** Avoidant individuals view closeness to the leader as unnecessary or undesirable, and tend to avoid dependence on the leader.
- **Attachment Anxiety (ANX):** Anxious individuals feel unworthy as followers and worry about the leader’s acceptance.

Item	Measure	Attachment Avoidance	Attachment Anxiety	Both AVO & ANX	Neither AVO nor ANX
28	I feel my work is never good enough for my leader.				
29	I try hard to get my leader to notice me at work.				
30	I know my leader accepts me as part of the team ®				
31	I find it difficult to depend on my leader.				
32	I don't feel comfortable opening up to my leader.				
33	I find it easy to depend on my leader for support with problems or difficult situations. ®				
34	I tend to get upset, anxious or angry if my leader is not there when I need him or her.				
35	If my leader disapproves of something I do, I get very upset.				
36	I believe my leader genuinely cares about me. ®				

## APPENDIX 1 – Expert Evaluation Questionnaire (6/7)

001

Definitions:

- **Attachment Avoidance (AVO):** Avoidant individuals view closeness to the leader as unnecessary or undesirable, and tend to avoid dependence on the leader.
- **Attachment Anxiety (ANX):** Anxious individuals feel unworthy as followers and worry about the leader's acceptance.

Item	Measure	Attachment Avoidance	Attachment Anxiety	Both AVO & ANX	Neither AVO nor ANX
37	I find it hard to accept help from my leader when I have problems or difficulty.				
38	When I'm, feeling stressed at work, I prefer being on my own to letting my leader know what's wrong.				
39	I feel comfortable sharing my thoughts and feelings with my leader. ®				
40	I find it hard to believe my leader will be there for me if I need him or her.				
41	I believe that my leader will never be concerned about me.				
42	I am confident my leader finds me worthy of his or her attention. ®				
43	I try to cope with stressful situations without approaching my leader for help or support.				
44	I prefer not to accept favors from my leader.				
45	I talk things over with my leader. ®				

## APPENDIX 1 – Expert Evaluation Questionnaire (7/7)

001

Definitions:

- *Attachment Avoidance (AVO)*: Avoidant individuals view closeness to the leader as unnecessary or undesirable, and tend to avoid dependence on the leader.
- *Attachment Anxiety (ANX)*: Anxious individuals feel unworthy as followers and worry about the leader's acceptance.

Item	Measure	Attachment Avoidance	Attachment Anxiety	Both AVO & ANX	Neither AVO nor ANX
46	I'm afraid that I will lose my leader's regard.				
47	I get anxious if I find out my leader is keeping things from me.				
48	I don't question whether my leader values me as a follower. ®				
Suggestions for New Items		Attachment Avoidance	Attachment Anxiety		
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

## APPENDIX 2 – Pre-Test Survey (Exploratory Factor Analysis) – 1/4

### I – Relationship With Current Supervisor

**Instructions:** The objective of this study is to understand interpersonal relationships between leaders and followers at the workplace. I need you to focus your attention on your **current supervisor** whom you directly report to at work. If you are a full-time MBA student, I would like you to focus your attention to your direct supervisor at the job just before you joined the MBA program. The questions address your interactions with this specific supervisor you have identified. Using the scale provided, respond to each question by circling the number which best represents your response.

#### *My supervisor's leadership style...*

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
He/she assures me that I can approach him/her when I run into problems.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she speaks up for me if he/she knows I have been unfairly criticized by my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she backs me up in my actions.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she listens to me when I talk to him/her about my stresses at work.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she finds time to listen to my goals and personal development needs.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she would forgive an honest mistake on my part.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she encourages me to explore new ways of doing my work.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she seriously considers my opinions before implementing any changes.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she guides me to discover how I can improve in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
If necessary, he/she will intervene to help me if I run into problems in new projects.	1	2	3	4	5

#### *My relationship with my supervisor...*

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer not to rely on him/her for help when I run into problems at work.	1	2	3	4	5
It is not necessary to depend on him/her for emotional support.	1	2	3	4	5
If he/she criticizes my work, I feel rejected.	1	2	3	4	5
I worry about being able to gain his/her approval.	1	2	3	4	5
It is best to stay an arm's length from him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to avoid having too close a relationship with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
I get anxious or frustrated when he/she does not have enough time for me.	1	2	3	4	5
I need a lot of reassurance from him/her that I am doing an adequate job.	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer not to disclose too much about myself to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
I will not approach him/her for help until I have exhausted all other options.	1	2	3	4	5
I worry that the effort I put in at work isn't fully noticed by him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not feel anxious when he/she gives special attention to another coworker.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX 2 – Pre-Test Survey (Exploratory Factor Analysis) – 2/4

### ***My relationship with my supervisor...***

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer not to let him/her know my 'true' thoughts and feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
It helps to turn to him/her in times of need.	1	2	3	4	5
I find it hard to forget negative remarks he/she made about me.	1	2	3	4	5
I try hard to get him/her to notice me at work.	1	2	3	4	5
I find it easy to depend on him/her for support with problems or difficult situations.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to let him/her know me better as a person.	1	2	3	4	5
I tend to get upset, anxious or angry if he/she is not there when I need him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
If he/she disapproves of something I do, I get very upset.	1	2	3	4	5
When I'm feeling stressed at work, I prefer to handle it on my own rather than letting him/her know what's wrong	1	2	3	4	5
I find it hard to accept help from him/her when I have problems or difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident that he/she finds me worthy of his/her attention.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm afraid that I will lose his/her respect and positive regard.	1	2	3	4	5
I know how satisfied he/she is with what I do.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she understands my job problems and needs.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she recognizes my potential.	1	2	3	4	5
Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, he/she will use his/her power to help me solve my problems at work.	1	2	3	4	5
Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, he/she will bail me out at his/her expense.	1	2	3	4	5
I have enough confidence in him/her that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
We have an effective working relationship.	1	2	3	4	5

### ***A few final general questions about you and your relationship with your supervisor:***

1. Is he/she your current supervisor, or most recent supervisor? Current / Most Recent
2. How long have you worked with him/her? \_\_\_ Years \_\_\_ Months
3. How frequently do you interact with him/her at work?
  - a. Once or twice in the last six months
  - b. Once every two months
  - c. About once a month
  - d. Once or twice a week
  - e. Once a day
  - f. Many times daily

## APPENDIX 2 – Pre-Test Survey (Exploratory Factor Analysis) – 3/4

### II – Relationship With Previous Supervisor

**Instructions:** Now, I need you to focus your attention on a **different supervisor from the one in Section I** whom you have had directly reported to at work previously. **If it is possible, choose a supervisor whom you have had experienced different working dynamics from your existing/most recent supervisor.** The questions address your interactions with this specific supervisor you have identified. Using the scale provided, respond to each question by circling the number which best represents your response.

#### *My supervisor's leadership style...*

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
He/she assures me that I can approach him/her when I run into problems.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she speaks up for me if he/she knows I have been unfairly criticized by my colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she backs me up in my actions.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she listens to me when I talk to him/her about my stresses at work.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she finds time to listen to my goals and personal development needs.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she would forgive an honest mistake on my part.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she encourages me to explore new ways of doing my work.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she seriously considers my opinions before implementing any changes.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she guides me to discover how I can improve in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
If necessary, he/she will intervene to help me if I run into problems in new projects.	1	2	3	4	5

#### *My relationship with my supervisor...*

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer not to rely on him/her for help when I run into problems at work.	1	2	3	4	5
It is not necessary to depend on him/her for emotional support.	1	2	3	4	5
If he/she criticizes my work, I feel rejected.	1	2	3	4	5
I worry about being able to gain his/her approval.	1	2	3	4	5
It is best to stay an arm's length from him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to avoid having too close a relationship with him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
I get anxious or frustrated when he/she does not have enough time for me.	1	2	3	4	5
I need a lot of reassurance from him/her that I am doing an adequate job.	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer not to disclose too much about myself to him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
I will not approach him/her for help until I have exhausted all other options.	1	2	3	4	5
I worry that the effort I put in at work isn't fully noticed by him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
I do not feel anxious when he/she gives special attention to another coworker.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX 2 – Pre-Test Survey (Exploratory Factor Analysis) – 4/4

### *My relationship with my supervisor...*

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I prefer not to let him/her know my 'true' thoughts and feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
It helps to turn to him/her in times of need.	1	2	3	4	5
I find it hard to forget negative remarks he/she made about me.	1	2	3	4	5
I try hard to get him/her to notice me at work.	1	2	3	4	5
I find it easy to depend on him/her for support with problems or difficult situations.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to let him/her know me better as a person.	1	2	3	4	5
I tend to get upset, anxious or angry if he/she is not there when I need him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
If he/she disapproves of something I do, I get very upset.	1	2	3	4	5
When I'm feeling stressed at work, I prefer to handle it on my own rather than letting him/her know what's wrong	1	2	3	4	5
I find it hard to accept help from him/her when I have problems or difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident that he/she finds me worthy of his/her attention.	1	2	3	4	5
I'm afraid that I will lose his/her respect and positive regard.	1	2	3	4	5
I know how satisfied he/she is with what I do.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she understands my job problems and needs.	1	2	3	4	5
He/she recognizes my potential.	1	2	3	4	5
Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, he/she will use his/her power to help me solve my problems at work.	1	2	3	4	5
Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, he/she will bail me out at his/her expense.	1	2	3	4	5
I have enough confidence in him/her that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so.	1	2	3	4	5
We have an effective working relationship.	1	2	3	4	5

### ***A few final general questions about you and your relationship with your supervisor:***

1. How long have you worked with him/her? \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months
2. How frequently do you interact with him/her at work?
  - a. Once or twice in the last six months
  - b. Once every two months
  - c. About once a month
  - d. Once or twice a week
  - e. Once a day
  - f. Many times daily
3. In what way was the working relationship different from the supervisor you had reported on in Section I?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX 3 – Proposal for Data Collection (1/2)

NUS Business School  
Department of Management & Organization



### Understanding Leader-Follower Relationships: How healthy relationships develop, and their implications for the workplace

Kelvin Pang T.L. and Daniel J. McAllister  
NUS Business School

#### Research Overview:

Interpersonal relationships in the workplace can be either a source of strength during times of stress, or a source of strain by themselves. In particular, positive leader-follower relationships provide a healthy environment so employees can thrive and contribute, while negative relationships often mean conflict and pain for leaders and followers alike. Leaders often wonder why followers respond to them in such different ways, especially when they strive to be consistent and impartial to all. This is the focus of our research.

Our research objective is to test a framework to understand "how" and "why" followers form different types of emotional bonds with their leaders, and the effects of such bonds on followers' work attitudes, behaviors, and performance. The findings of this research should provide insights into how leaders can improve their effectiveness in working with followers with different backgrounds, requirements and needs.

#### Opportunities to Participate:

We seek to partner with organizations that would benefit from better understanding the nature of leader-follower relationships, and its impact in the workplace. We have chosen, as the focus of our study, the leader-follower relationships of customer service employees from various retail industries. We need several large retail organizations that have multiple chain outlets. Our commitment is to keep the demands of our research reasonable, with minimal interruption. We are also committed to protecting the privacy of participating organizations and their employees. Participating organizations will receive summary report of the overall study findings, together with feedback on current organizational practices.

#### About the Researchers:

**Kelvin Pang T.L.**, PhD Candidate and Research Scholar, Department of Management & Organization, NUS Business School, National University of Singapore. Mr Pang's research is focused on leadership and the dynamics of secure attachments in organizational settings. His teaching interests are in the areas of Organizational Behavior, Human Resource Management, and Negotiations & Conflict Management.

**Daniel J. McAllister**, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Management & Organization, NUS Business School, National University of Singapore. Dr. McAllister's research is focused on the dynamics of trust and distrust within and between organizations, and their implications for performance. He teaches Executive MBA and Undergraduate courses in the areas of Management, Organizational Behavior, and Leadership.

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## APPENDIX 3 – Proposal for Data Collection (2/2)

NUS Business School  
Department of Management & Organization



### Understanding Leader-Follower Relationships: How healthy relationships develop, and their implications for the workplace

#### Project Summary:

The purpose of this study is to investigate leader-follower relationships in the context of shop-floor employees in the retail and hospitality industry. We have chosen this context because of (i) the growing importance of the retail and hospitality sector in Singapore's economy, (ii) the close supervisory relationship of retail supervisors and their subordinates, and (iii) the high level of stress faced by shop-front employees who have to deal not only with work pressures but also with customer demands.

#### Scope of Project:

We target to survey 100-150 retail supervisors, and 300-450 sales and/or customer service executives who report directly to them, and collect matched supervisor-subordinate information. We plan to sample across organizations representing different segments of the industry. It is important to bear in mind that only one organization from each industry segment will be selected to participate in this study. Our approach will allow us to discuss trends within the industry as a whole, and also to look at trends for specific organizations. Participating organizations will be the first to have access to this data and reap the benefits of having participated.

#### Participant Expectations:

Retail supervisors will be briefed individually on the purpose of the study (at their outlet). They will then be guided in nominating up to three subordinates to participate in the study. Retail supervisors will also be required to complete a two-part survey. The first part of the survey will be focused on themselves as supervisors—their personality, leadership style, and working style. The second part of the survey will be focused on their subordinates, including aspects of their behavior and work performance.

Subordinates participating in this study will complete a three-part survey, with questions about personality, leader behavior, leader-follower interaction, and work-related attitudes. This form should be completed by employees on personal time, and returned through the mail.

#### Resources Required:

We will require a short interview with human resource representative and/or branch manager to understand the nature of work operations at the retail outlets. This will help us to identify the appropriate level of analysis, retail supervisors to survey, and possibly customize some questions in the instrument. We will need also a letter of authorization from the organization affirming your support for the study, when we speak to the relevant persons at the retail outlets.

At the retail outlets, we will only need 5-10 minutes of the employees' time to introduce them to the study and pass them the survey to take home to complete. The survey will take about 30 minutes to fill in. Completed surveys will be sealed and mailed back to NUS in a pre-stamped envelope to ensure confidentiality. We would like to show our appreciation to the participants by rewarding them with movie vouchers each.

#### Timeline:

We plan to start data collection in the month of August, and target to wrap up all work by the second week of October.

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**APPENDIX 4 – Briefing Protocol****Workplace Social Relations Study  
- *Briefing Protocol* -****Benefits of the Study**

Understand how to build effective  
work relationships between  
retail supervisors and front-line staff

**Confidentiality & Anonymity**

Removable stickers on supervisor envelope to ensure  
anonymity of individual responses

**Voluntary Participation**

Emphasize that it is all right to opt out

**Token of Appreciation**

Pair of Cathay movie vouchers as incentives  
One to be given out now,  
the second after return of completed survey

**Survey Overview**

Explanation of different sections of the survey,  
and what is required for each section

**After Completing the Survey**

Surveys to be sealed in envelopes and returned to  
Survey Administrator ONLY

Survey Administrator: Kelvin Pang (Contact: 9144-1344)

**APPENDIX 5 – Matched Supervisor-Employee Envelopes**

**Supervisor Survey: 110**

**Workplace Social Relations Study**

Employee A

Employee B

Employee C

**Employee Survey: 110-B**

**Workplace Social Relations Study**

**APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (1/10)**



***A Study of Working Relationships Among  
Supervisors and Front Line Staff in Retail Organizations***

**- Employee Survey -**

**Kelvin Pang  
NUS Business School  
National University of Singapore  
(65) 9144-1344**

## APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (2/10)

### *A Study of Working Relationships Among Supervisors and Front Line Staff in Retail Organizations*

Thank you for participating in this study. The purpose of this study is to help us understand how to build effective work relationships between retail supervisors and front line service staff. Since we need **frank and honest answers**, we want to assure you of complete confidentiality. Your survey is anonymous, and will not be shared with anyone.

#### I – About Your Supervisor

**Instructions:** Focus your attention on your supervisor and what he/she does.

##### *My supervisor...*

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Assures me that I can approach him/her if I run into problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2 Speaks up for me if he/she knows I have been unfairly criticized by customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3 Stands up for me during difficult times.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4 Listens to me when I talk to him/her about my stresses at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5 Would be forgiving if I made an honest mistake.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6 Seeks new opportunities for the department.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7 Inspires others with his/her plans for the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Is able to get others committed to his/her vision of the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9 Leads by "doing" rather than simply by "telling".	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10 Is a good role model.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11 Leads by example.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12 Develops a team attitude and spirit among his/her employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13 Gets the group to work together for the same goal.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14 Encourages employees to be "team players".	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15 Shows us that he/she expects a lot from us.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16 Insists on only the best performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17 Never settles for second best.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18 Does not consider my personal feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19 Shows respect for my personal feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20 Behaves in a manner that is thoughtful of my personal needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21 Provides me with new ways of looking at things.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22 Challenges me to rethink some of my own ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23 Stimulates me to think about old problems in new ways.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (3/10)**

**My supervisor...**

	Strongly disagree							Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	Always gives me positive feedback when I perform well.													
25	Gives me special recognition when I perform at a high level.													
26	Praises me when I exceed performance expectations.													
27	Frequently does not acknowledge my good performance.													
28	Would express disapproval if I performed at a low level.													
29	Lets me know about it when I perform poorly.													
30	Points it out to me when my performance is not up to standard.													
31	Finds time to listen to my goals and personal development needs.													
32	Encourages me to explore new ways of doing my work.													
33	Seriously considers my opinions before implementing any changes.													
34	Guides me to discover how I can improve in my work.													
35	Gives me space to perform new tasks on my own.													

**Instructions:** How often does your supervisor engage in the following behaviors?

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Seldom	Occasionally	Often	Frequently

36	Ridicules me.				1	2	3	4	5
37	Tells me my thoughts or feelings are stupid.				1	2	3	4	5
38	Gives me the silent treatment.				1	2	3	4	5
39	Puts me down in front of others.				1	2	3	4	5
40	Invades my privacy.				1	2	3	4	5
41	Reminds me of my past mistakes and failures.				1	2	3	4	5
42	Doesn't give me credit for jobs requiring a lot of effort.				1	2	3	4	5
43	Blames me to save himself/herself embarrassment.				1	2	3	4	5
44	Breaks promises he/she makes.				1	2	3	4	5
45	Expresses anger at me when he/she is mad for another reason.				1	2	3	4	5
46	Makes negative comments about me to others.				1	2	3	4	5
47	Is rude to me.				1	2	3	4	5
48	Does not allow me to interact with my coworkers.				1	2	3	4	5
49	Tells me I'm incompetent.				1	2	3	4	5
50	Lies to me.				1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (4/10)

### II – About You and Your Supervisor

**Instructions:** Focus on your relationship with your supervisor...

*How I feel about my supervisor...*

	Strongly disagree							Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	I try to avoid too close a relationship with him/her.													
2	I prefer not to disclose too much about myself to him/her.													
3	I need a lot reassurance from him/her that I am doing an adequate job.													
4	If he/she disapproves of something I do, I get very upset.													
5	It is best to keep a distance from him/her.													
6	I prefer not to let him/her know my 'true' thoughts and feelings.													
7	I get anxious or frustrated when he/she does not have enough time for me.													
8	I tend to get upset, anxious or angry if he/she is not there when I need him/her.													
9	When I'm feeling stressed at work, I prefer to handle it on my own rather than let him/her know what's wrong.													
10	I will not approach him/her for help until I have exhausted all other options.													
11	If he/she criticizes my work, I feel rejected.													
12	I worry about being able to gain his/her approval.													
13	I prefer not to rely on him/her when I run into problems at work.													
14	It is not necessary to depend on him/her for emotional support.													
15	I try hard to get him/her to notice me at work.													
16	I know how satisfied he/she is with what I do.													
17	He/she understands my job problems and needs.													
18	He/she recognizes my potential.													
19	He/She will use his/her power to help me solve my problems at work.													
20	He/She will go out of his/her way to support me, even at his/her expense.													
21	I have enough confidence in him/her that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so.													
22	We have an effective working relationship.													



## APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (5/10)

**Instructions:** The following scenarios describe events that **could possibly happen** in your interactions with your supervisor. For each scenario you are asked two questions about how you would interpret such an event if it happens. Answer the questions using the scale provided.

23	Scenario: You applied for leave on your birthday but your supervisor rejects your leave, and tells you that he/she does not have enough staff to man the store on that day.	Extremely Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat Likely	Almost Certain
		1	2	3	4	5
(A)	Your supervisor has rejected your leave intentionally.	1	2	3	4	5
(B)	Your supervisor has tried his/her best to re-arrange the work schedule but really cannot make alternate arrangements.	1	2	3	4	5

24	Scenario: You need just one more transaction to hit your sales target. However, your supervisor referred a potential customer to a colleague who has just joined the team.	Extremely Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat Likely	Almost Certain
		1	2	3	4	5
(A)	Your supervisor does not know you have yet to hit your individual sales target.	1	2	3	4	5
(B)	Your supervisor does not want you to hit your sales target.	1	2	3	4	5

25	Scenario: In a most recent meeting, your supervisor brought up the case of you mishandling a customer's complaint for discussion and team learning.	Extremely Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat Likely	Almost Certain
		1	2	3	4	5
(A)	Your supervisor wants to put you down in front of your other co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5
(B)	Your supervisor wants the team to learn from your mistake.	1	2	3	4	5

26	Scenario: You requested your supervisor's permission to handle a task which you believe you are capable of doing, but your supervisor chose to give the task to someone else.	Extremely Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat Likely	Almost Certain
		1	2	3	4	5
(A)	Your colleague is more suitable to handle the task.	1	2	3	4	5
(B)	Your supervisor is not concerned about your personal development and your needs.	1	2	3	4	5

27	Scenario: You already have a lot of work on hand, but your supervisor still tasked you to mentor a new colleague who has joined your team.	Extremely Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat Likely	Almost Certain
		1	2	3	4	5
(A)	Your supervisor is not pulling his weight, and passing on his/her responsibilities to you.	1	2	3	4	5
(B)	Your supervisor believes you will be a good role model for the new colleague.	1	2	3	4	5

28	Scenario: Your supervisor made you "lose face" in front of an angry customer by apologizing to him/her for a mistake which you did not commit.	Extremely Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Neutral	Somewhat Likely	Almost Certain
		1	2	3	4	5
(A)	Your supervisor knows that you have not done any wrong and was just trying to pacify the angry customer.	1	2	3	4	5
(B)	Your supervisor believes you must have done something wrong to make the customer so angry.	1	2	3	4	5

### APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (6/10)

#### III – Your Job and Your Organization

**Instructions:** The following words refer to ways people can describe themselves at work. Using the scale provided, indicate the extent to which each statement describes how you generally feel this way.

1	2	3	4	5
Very Slightly or Not At All	A Little	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Extremely

_____ 1	Interested	_____ 6	Guilty	_____ 11	Irritable	_____ 16	Determined
_____ 2	Distressed	_____ 7	Scared	_____ 12	Alert	_____ 17	Attentive
_____ 3	Excited	_____ 8	Hostile	_____ 13	Ashamed	_____ 18	Jittery
_____ 4	Upset	_____ 9	Enthusiastic	_____ 14	Inspired	_____ 19	Active
_____ 5	Strong	_____ 10	Proud	_____ 15	Nervous	_____ 20	Afraid

**Instructions:** When a stressful situation or problem happens at the workplace, how do you cope?

1	2	3	4	5
Hardly Ever Do This				Almost Always Do This

21	Try to see the situation as an opportunity to learn and develop new skills.	1	2	3	4	5
22	Try to think of myself as a winner – as someone who always comes through.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Tell myself that I can probably work things out to my advantage.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Give it my best effort to do what I think is expected of me.	1	2	3	4	5
25	Devote more time and energy to doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5
26	Think about the challenges that I can find in this situation.	1	2	3	4	5
27	Tell myself that time takes care of situations like this.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Try to keep away from this type of situations.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Remind myself that work isn't everything.	1	2	3	4	5
30	Separate myself as much as possible from the people who created the situation.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Try not to get concerned about it.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Accept this situation because there is nothing I can do to change it.	1	2	3	4	5

## APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (7/10)

**Instructions:** How you feel about your job and your organization...

*How I feel at work...*

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33 I find myself learning often at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34 I am not learning at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35 I see myself continually improving at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36 I continue to learn more and more as times goes by at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37 I have developed a lot as a person at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38 I feel emotionally drained from my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39 I feel exhausted at the end of the work day.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40 I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41 I feel burned out from my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42 I do not feel 'emotionally attached to this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43 This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44 I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45 I feel alert and awake at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46 I am looking forward to each new day at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47 I have energy and spirit at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48 I don't feel very energetic at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49 I feel alive and vital at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50 I am really thriving at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51 Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52 I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53 I frequently think of quitting this job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

## APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (8/10)

### IV – About Yourself in Close Relationships

**Instructions:** The statements below concern how you feel in **close relationships**. We are interested in how you **generally** experience close relationships, not just what is happening in a specific relationship. Indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

*How I generally feel in relationships with people close to me...*

		Strongly disagree				Strongly agree		
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	I prefer not to show them how I feel deep down.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I feel uncomfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I'm afraid that I will lose their love.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I often worry that they will not want to stay with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I am very comfortable being close to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I often worry that they don't really love me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I worry that they won't care about me as much as I care about them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I don't feel comfortable opening up to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I prefer not to be too close to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I often wish that their feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	I worry a lot about my relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	I get uncomfortable when they want to be very close.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	I find it relatively easy to get close to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	When my romantic partner is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	When I show my feelings for them, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	It's not difficult for me to get close to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18	I usually discuss my problems and concerns with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19	I rarely worry about them leaving me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20	They make me doubt myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21	It helps to turn to them in times of need.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22	I tell them just about everything.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23	I do not often worry about being abandoned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24	I find that they don't want to get as close as I would like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (9/10)**

*How I generally feel in relationships with people close to me...*

	Strongly disagree							Strongly agree						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25 I talk things over with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
26 I am nervous when they get too close to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
27 Sometimes romantic partners change their feelings about me for no apparent reason.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
28 My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
29 I feel comfortable depending on them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
30 I find it easy to depend on them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
31 I'm afraid that once they get to know me, they won't like who I really am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
32 It makes me mad that I don't get the affection and support I need from them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
33 It's easy for me to be affectionate with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
34 They really understand me and my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
35 I worry that I am not good enough for them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
36 They only seem to notice me when I am angry.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							

**V – Personal Characteristics**

- 1 What is your gender?  Male  Female
- 2 What is your age as of your last birthday? \_\_\_\_\_ Years
- 3 What is your race? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 What is your nationality? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 How many hours are you scheduled to work a week? \_\_\_\_\_ Hours
- 6 How long have you worked in this organization? \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months
- 7 How long have you worked with the supervisor you evaluated? \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months

Do you have any comments about this survey?

**APPENDIX 6- Employee Survey (10/10)****CONGRATULATIONS!**

**YOU HAVE COME TO THE END OF THE SURVEY.**

**FINAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- **PLEASE CHECK THAT YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE QUESTIONS.**
- **NEXT, SEAL THE SURVEY IN THE ENVELOPE.**
- **DO NOT RETURN THE ENVELOPE TO YOUR SUPERVISOR. THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR WILL PICK UP THE SURVEY ONCE IT IS READY.**

If you have any questions regarding the survey,  
please contact the Survey Administrator

*Kelvin Pang @ 91441344*

**APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (1/12)**



***A Study of Working Relationships Among  
Supervisors and Front Line Staff in Retail Organizations***

**- Supervisor Survey -**

**Kelvin Pang  
NUS Business School  
National University of Singapore  
(65) 9144-1344**

**APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (2/12)**

***A Study of Working Relationships Among Supervisors and Front Line Staff in Retail Organizations***

Thank you for participating in this study. The purpose of this study is to help us understand how to build effective work relationships between retail supervisors and front line service staff. Since we need **frank and honest answers**, we want to assure you of complete confidentiality. Your survey is anonymous, and will not be shared with anyone.

**I – About Your Working Style**

**Instructions:** For the scenarios below, how appropriate is each of the possible responses?

1	Scenario: Jim, an employee for several years, has generally done work on par with others in his branch. However, for the past couple of weeks he has appeared preoccupied and listless. The work he has done is good but he has closed fewer sales than usual. The most appropriate thing for Jim's supervisor to do is:	Very Inappropriate	Moderately Appropriate				Very Appropriate
		1	2	3	4	5	6

- (A) Emphasize to Jim how important it is to keep up with his work for his own good. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (B) Talk to Jim and try to help him work out the cause of his listlessness. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (C) Warn him that if he continues to work at a slower rate, some negative action might be taken. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (D) Let him see how his productivity compares with that of his coworkers and encourage him to catch up. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2	Scenario: Nancy, one of your employees, has been going to night school working toward her degree. She has been working hard at it, doing extremely well and is proud of her accomplishments. However, you are concerned, because she is very hard to work with whenever the pressure at school is high. You decide the best thing to do is:	Very Inappropriate	Moderately Appropriate				Very Appropriate
		1	2	3	4	5	6

- (A) Ask her to tell you how she plans to handle the situation. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (B) Tell her that she ought to watch the balance between work and school, and suggest she put more of her energies into her job. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (C) Point out how other working "students" have handled the problem and see if that helps her handle the situation better. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (D) Insist that she cut down on the studying or take fewer courses; you can't allow it to interfere with work. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3	Scenario: One of the work teams in another branch has been doing more poorly than the other groups all year. The appropriate way for that manager to handle the situation would be to:	Very Inappropriate	Moderately Appropriate				Very Appropriate
		1	2	3	4	5	6

- (A) Tell them that performance has to improve and offer them tangible incentives to improve. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (B) Let them know how the other teams are performing so they will be motivated to do as well. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (C) Have some discussions with the team as a whole and facilitate their devising some solutions for improving output. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
- (D) Keep a record of each individual's productivity and emphasize that it is an important performance index. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7



**APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (3/12)**

4	<b>Scenario:</b> Recent changes in the operation have resulted in a heavier work load for all the employees. Evelyn, the manager, had hoped the situation would be temporary, but today she learned that her branch would need to continue to work with the reduced staff for an indefinite period. Evelyn should:	Very Inappropriate	Moderately Appropriate				Very Appropriate	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(A)	Point out that her employees will keep their own jobs only if they can remain productive at the current rate, and then watch their output carefully.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(B)	Explain the situation and see if they have suggestions about how they could meet the current demands.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(C)	Tell all of her employees that they should keep trying because it is to their advantage to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(D)	Encourage her employees to keep up with the work load by pointing out that people are doing it adequately in other branches.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5	<b>Scenario:</b> One of your customers has told you that he is not very satisfied with the attitude of one of your staff. The thing for you to do would be to:	Very Inappropriate	Moderately Appropriate				Very Appropriate	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(A)	Raise the matter with your subordinate to see what has been going on for him in dealing with that customer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(B)	Point out that customer satisfaction is important and that he should work on relating better to the customer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(C)	Show him some ways that others relate to their customers so he can compare his own style to others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(D)	Tell him to see to it that the customer is more satisfied and let him know you will be checking up on him.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**II – About Yourself in Close Relationships**

**Instructions:** The statements below concern how you feel in close relationships. We are interested in how you generally experience close relationships, not just what is happening in a specific relationship. Indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

*How I generally feel in relationships with people close to me...*

		Strongly disagree			Strongly agree			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	I prefer not to show them how I feel deep down.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	I feel uncomfortable sharing my private thoughts and feelings with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	I'm afraid that I will lose their love.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	I often worry that they will not want to stay with me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	I find it difficult to allow myself to depend on them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	I am very comfortable being close to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	I often worry that they don't really love me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	I worry that they won't care about me as much as I care about them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	I don't feel comfortable opening up to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	I prefer not to be too close to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	I often wish that their feelings for me were as strong as my feelings for them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	I worry a lot about my relationships.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (4/12)**

*How I generally feel in relationships with people close to me...*

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13 I get uncomfortable when they want to be very close.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14 I find it relatively easy to get close to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15 When my romantic partner is out of sight, I worry that he or she might become interested in someone else.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16 When I show my feelings for them, I'm afraid they will not feel the same about me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17 It's not difficult for me to get close to them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18 I usually discuss my problems and concerns with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19 I rarely worry about them leaving me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20 They make me doubt myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21 It helps to turn to them in times of need.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22 I tell them just about everything.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23 I do not often worry about being abandoned.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24 I find that they don't want to get as close as I would like.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25 I talk things over with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26 I am nervous when they get too close to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27 Sometimes romantic partners change their feelings about me for no apparent reason.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28 My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29 I feel comfortable depending on them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30 I find it easy to depend on them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31 I'm afraid that once they get to know me, they won't like who I really am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32 It makes me mad that I don't get the affection and support I need from them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33 It's easy for me to be affectionate with them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34 They really understand me and my needs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35 I worry that I am not good enough for them.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36 They only seem to notice me when I am angry.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**III – Personal Characteristics**

- 1 What is your gender? \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female
- 2 What is your age as of your last birthday? \_\_\_\_\_ Years
- 3 What is your race? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 What is your nationality? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 How long have you worked in this organization? \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months
- 6 How many subordinates report directly to you? \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (5/12)

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**CONGRATS! YOU ARE HALF-WAY  
THROUGH THE SURVEY.**

**THE NEXT SECTION CONTAINS  
QUESTIONS ON SPECIFIC SUBORDINATES  
WE HAVE IDENTIFIED AT THE START OF  
THE SURVEY.**

If you have any questions regarding the survey,  
please contact the Survey Administrator  
*Kelvin Pang @ 91441344*

## APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (6/12)

### About Employee (A)

**Instructions:** Focus your attention on employee (A) whom you have identified at the start of the survey.

**Employee (A)...**

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Voluntarily assists customers even if it means going beyond job requirements.						
2	Helps customers with problems beyond what is expected or required.						
3	Often goes above and beyond the call of duty when serving customers.						
4	Willingly goes out of his/her way to make a customer satisfied.						
5	Frequently goes out of his/her way to help a customer.						
6	Takes undeserved work breaks.						
7	Spends time in idle conversation.						
8	Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform.						
9	Volunteers to do things for his/her co-workers.						
10	Helps orient new employees.						
11	Gets involved to benefit his/her co-workers.						
12	Helps co-workers learn about the work.						
13	Helps co-workers with their work responsibilities.						
14	Encourages co-workers to contribute ideas and suggestions for service improvement.						
15	Contributes many ideas for customer promotions.						
16	Makes constructive suggestions for service improvement.						
17	Frequently presents to others creative solutions to customer problems.						
18	Tries out new ideas and approaches to problems.						
19	Generates novel, but operable work-related ideas.						
20	Solves problems that cause others difficulties.						
21	Follows up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems.						
22	Performs duties with unusually few mistakes.						
23	Always has a positive attitude at work.						
24	Follows customer service guidelines with extreme care.						
25	Asks others to be critical when they gave him or her feedback.						
26	Prefers detailed critical appraisals even though they might hurt.						
27	Tends to seek good news about himself/herself.						
28	Asks for feedback if he or she knows it would be positive rather than negative.						

### APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (7/12)

**Instructions:** About your work relationship with employee (A)

1	2	3	4	5
None				A Lot

29	How much <u>friction</u> is there between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
30	How much <u>personality conflict</u> exists between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
31	How much <u>tension</u> do you experience when you work with him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
32	How much <u>emotional conflict</u> is there between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
33	How often do you <u>disagree</u> with him/her about work-related matters?	1	2	3	4	5
34	How frequently are there <u>conflicts in ideas</u> between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
35	How much <u>work conflict</u> exists between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
36	To what extent are there <u>differences in opinions</u> between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5

Do you have further comments about your work relationship with this particular employee?

## APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (8/12)

### About Employee (B)

**Instructions:** Focus your attention on employee (B) whom you have identified at the start of the survey.

**Employee (B)...**

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Voluntarily assists customers even if it means going beyond job requirements.						
2	Helps customers with problems beyond what is expected or required.						
3	Often goes above and beyond the call of duty when serving customers.						
4	Willingly goes out of his/her way to make a customer satisfied.						
5	Frequently goes out of his/her way to help a customer.						
6	Takes undeserved work breaks.						
7	Spends time in idle conversation.						
8	Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform.						
9	Volunteers to do things for his/her co-workers.						
10	Helps orient new employees.						
11	Gets involved to benefit his/her co-workers.						
12	Helps co-workers learn about the work.						
13	Helps co-workers with their work responsibilities.						
14	Encourages co-workers to contribute ideas and suggestions for service improvement.						
15	Contributes many ideas for customer promotions.						
16	Makes constructive suggestions for service improvement.						
17	Frequently presents to others creative solutions to customer problems.						
18	Tries out new ideas and approaches to problems.						
19	Generates novel, but operable work-related ideas.						
20	Solves problems that cause others difficulties.						
21	Follows up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems.						
22	Performs duties with unusually few mistakes.						
23	Always has a positive attitude at work.						
24	Follows customer service guidelines with extreme care.						
25	Asks others to be critical when they gave him or her feedback.						
26	Prefers detailed critical appraisals even though they might hurt.						
27	Tends to seek good news about himself/herself.						
28	Asks for feedback if he or she knows it would be positive rather than negative.						

### APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (9/12)

**Instructions:** About your work relationship with employee (B)

1	2	3	4	5
None				A Lot

29	How much <u>friction</u> is there between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
30	How much <u>personality conflict</u> exists between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
31	How much <u>tension</u> do you experience when you work with him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
32	How much <u>emotional conflict</u> is there between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
33	How often do you <u>disagree</u> with him/her about work-related matters?	1	2	3	4	5
34	How frequently are there <u>conflicts in ideas</u> between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
35	How much <u>work conflict</u> exists between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
36	To what extent are there <u>differences in opinions</u> between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5

Do you have further comments about your work relationship with this particular employee?

## APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (10/12)

### About Employee (C)

**Instructions:** Focus your attention on employee (C) whom you have identified at the start of the survey.

<i>Employee (C)...</i>	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Voluntarily assists customers even if it means going beyond job requirements.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2 Helps customers with problems beyond what is expected or required.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3 Often goes above and beyond the call of duty when serving customers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4 Willingly goes out of his/her way to make a customer satisfied.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5 Frequently goes out of his/her way to help a customer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6 Takes undeserved work breaks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7 Spends time in idle conversation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9 Volunteers to do things for his/her co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10 Helps orient new employees.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11 Gets involved to benefit his/her co-workers.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12 Helps co-workers learn about the work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13 Helps co-workers with their work responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14 Encourages co-workers to contribute ideas and suggestions for service improvement.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15 Contributes many ideas for customer promotions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16 Makes constructive suggestions for service improvement.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17 Frequently presents to others creative solutions to customer problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18 Tries out new ideas and approaches to problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19 Generates novel, but operable work-related ideas.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20 Solves problems that cause others difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21 Follows up in a timely manner to customer requests and problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22 Performs duties with unusually few mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23 Always has a positive attitude at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24 Follows customer service guidelines with extreme care.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25 Asks others to be critical when they gave him or her feedback.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26 Prefers detailed critical appraisals even though they might hurt.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27 Tends to seek good news about himself/herself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28 Asks for feedback if he or she knows it would be positive rather than negative.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



### APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (11/12)

**Instructions:** About your work relationship with employee (C)

1	2	3	4	5
None				A Lot

29	How much <u>friction</u> is there between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
30	How much <u>personality conflict</u> exists between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
31	How much <u>tension</u> do you experience when you work with him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
32	How much <u>emotional conflict</u> is there between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
33	How often do you <u>disagree</u> with him/her about work-related matters?	1	2	3	4	5
34	How frequently are there <u>conflicts in ideas</u> between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
35	How much <u>work conflict</u> exists between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5
36	To what extent are there <u>differences in opinions</u> between you and him/her?	1	2	3	4	5

Do you have further comments about your work relationship with this particular employee?

**APPENDIX 7 - Supervisor Survey (12/12)****CONGRATULATIONS!**

**YOU HAVE COME TO THE END OF THE SURVEY.**

**FINAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- **PLEASE CHECK THAT YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE QUESTIONS.**
- **NEXT, SEAL THE SURVEY IN THE ENVELOPE, AND REMOVE LABELS ON ENVELOPE.**
- **THE SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR WILL PICK UP THE SURVEY ONCE IT IS READY.**

If you have any questions regarding the survey,  
please contact the Survey Administrator  
*Kelvin Pang @ 91441344*