LEADER INTERPERSONAL EMOTION REGULATION, LMX and FOLLOWERS’ OUTCOMES:
A THREE-WAVE EXAMINATION

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ABSTRACT

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LEADER INTERPERSONAL EMOTION REGULATION, LMX and FOLLOWERS’ OUTCOMES: A THREE-WAVE EXAMINATION
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Many scholars studied leaders’ regulation of followers’ emotions since emotions play an important role in leadership. However, little research has focused on how leaders regulate followers’ emotions and the effects of this on followers’ task performance. In my research, I therefore examined leader interpersonal emotion regulation (IER), which refers to a regulation process that people make intentional effort to impact the emotions of other people (Niven, 2017). In particular, I examined how leaders’ IER strategies shape followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction through followers’ perception of the quality of leader–member exchange (LMX) relationship in a multinational company (MNC) in the industry of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) in China.

I conducted a three-wave time-separated field survey collecting data from 620 sales representatives and their matched 209 sales supervisors from two operation units and used structural equation modelling and Monte Carlo simulation to test my hypotheses. Results revealed that those leaders who used a cognitive change IER strategy were able to indirectly improve followers’ objective task performance and job satisfaction via improved LMX. In contrast, leaders who used a modulating emotional response IER strategy actually indirectly made followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction worse through poorer LMX.

My study provides three distinctive contributions. First, my study advances the IER theory by exploring how leaders’ use of different IER strategy influences one of followers’ core outcomes, objective job performance, via LMX in the organisational setting. Second, my study contributes to the theory of social exchanges with leaders’ behaviour of regulating followers’ negative emotions as an antecedent other than a purely transactional-cognitive route. Third, my study provides a practical contribution to organisations on how leaders can effectively regulate team members’ negative emotions in the workplace by utilising different IER strategies. Organisations can train their business leaders, especially the front-line managers, on how to utilise or avoid specific IER strategies when they are facing the negative emotions of team members and eventually improve followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction.

Keywords: interpersonal emotion regulation (IER), leader-member exchange (LMX), objective job performance, job satisfaction
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Leadership research has only started considering the role of emotions in leadership relatively recently despite the fact that leadership research has always been a vital one in the behavioural sciences (Gooty et al., 2010, Van Kleef et al., 2012). Although regulating the emotions of followers is one of the key duties of leaders (Humphrey, 2002), people normally think that the duties of leaders mainly consist of planning, organising, controlling, etc. Despite the fact that leadership research still considers the role of emotions to be an emerging field, more and more researchers acknowledge that emotions could have significant influence on leaders’ effectiveness which refers to leader’s capability of mobilising and motivating followers (Brief and Weiss, 2002). Emotions are main drivers of people’s motivation, cognition and behaviour, and have significant impact in people’s social interaction (Keltner and Haidt, 1999, Van Kleef, 2009). With more and more focus on the social influence of leaders on followers, how leaders’ and followers’ emotions shape leadership effectiveness becomes an important question in leadership studies (Van Knippenberg and Van Kleef, 2016). Experimental studies have examined how emotions impact job satisfaction (Brief and Weiss, 2002, Weiss, 2002), and the consequences of emotions (Alliger and Williams, 1993) and discrete emotions (Fitness, 2000, Lewis, 2000). With more consensus on the importance of emotions in organisations, there is a need to understand more about the role of emotions in the workplace. Leadership literature that considers the role of emotions has been dominated by studies on individuals’ emotional abilities (e.g. emotional intelligence, positive and negative affectivity), emotional processes (e.g. emotional contagion, emotional labour) and leaders’ emotional displays, and how these emotional abilities, processes and displays will impact team members (Little et al., 2016). For example, Van Knippenberg and Van Kleef (2016) suggested that leaders’ emotional displays may influence followers’ outcomes through two pathways including emotional contagion and cognitive interpretation. Recently, understanding the consequences of emotion regulation has started to receive attention from organisational scholars (Coté, 2005, Grandey, 2000, Sy et al., 2005). Gross (1998) defined emotion regulation as the
process by which people influence which emotions they have, when they have them and how they experience or express these emotions. Understanding how emotion regulation process might influence leadership outcomes has been the focus of recent theoretical researches (Coté, 2005, Grandey, 2000). Emotional regulation should impact areas of organisational behaviour other than emotional labour (Trougakos, 2006), though previous research has focused on emotional labour.

Research on emotion regulation has been centred on intrapersonal emotion regulation, which focuses on how emotions influence individuals’ own cognition and action (Frijda, 1986). Relatively recently, research on emotions has engaged with the interpersonal aspect of emotions, recognising that the influences of emotions are not only intrapersonal but also interpersonal, which means people’s emotions may also influence other people’s emotions (Hatfield et al., 1994, Keltner and Haidt, 1999). Intrapersonal emotion regulation refers to the process by which individuals attempt to regulate or control their own emotional experiences (Gross and Thompson, 2007). Looking at the social nature of emotion regulation, interpersonal emotion regulation refers to the process by which individuals attempt to regulate or control others’ emotional experiences (Campos et al., 1989, Gross and Thompson, 2007). The primary target of interpersonal emotion regulation is the emotions of other people instead of one’s own, in contrast to intrapersonal emotional management. People often regulate their own and others’ emotions (Butler, 2011, Butler and Randall, 2013). Regulate the emotions of others occurs both consciously (Niven et al., 2009) and unconsciously (Parkinson, 2011). In my study, interpersonal emotion regulation (IER) concerns deliberate attempts to regulate others’ emotions (Niven, 2017). Leaders normally are positioned to help followers on how to manage negative emotions and express emotions positively (Thiel et al., 2015). It is consistent with the argument made by many researchers that there is a consensus between leaders and followers that the regulation of followers’ emotions, especially the negative emotions, is a primal responsibility of leaders (Ashkanasy, 2003, Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2002, Humphrey, 2008, Huy, 2002, Sanchez-Burks and Huy, 2009, Pescosolido, 2002, SEO et al., 2012, Toegel et al., 2013).
Here is an example that may sound familiar to some of you. Michael has been working in a company for more than 15 years. He has heard that his company will be acquired by another company. He is not sure whether his position will still be there after the restructure. His wife quit her job five years ago to take care of their children and he feels nervous and insecure since he heard about the news of the acquisition. He is expecting his line manager Evelyn to help him to cope with these negative emotions resulting from this undesirable situation. On the other side, Evelyn, as a leader, is worrying whether the news of the acquisition will have a negative influence on her team members’ emotions and eventually impact her team’s performance because she can detect the sadness, anxiety and depression among her team members.

Leaders influence their followers through many ways and one of those is managing followers’ emotions. One of the key jobs of leaders is to help followers to cope with negative emotions in the workplace. Toegel and colleagues (2013) found that it is the expectation of followers that leader steps in to help them on how to regulate the negative emotions when they are struggled with negative emotions. So what should Evelyn do to manage Michael’s negative emotions? Should Evelyn modify the situation to alter its negative emotional impact on Michael? Or should Evelyn reappraise or reinterpret the situation that Michael is worried about? For example, Evelyn may help Michael to reinterpret the potential acquisition as a bigger platform for his career development. Or should Evelyn take the approach that some of the leaders will use, which is distracting Michael’s attention away from the situation with her humour to make him focus on his tasks? Or should Evelyn ask Michael to suppress his negative emotions during this sensitive period in order to fall in line with the emotion display rule in the organisation? Leaders can choose from different IER strategies to help followers (Diefendorff et al., 2008), but which one should leaders employ to improve followers’ outcomes such as job satisfaction and job performance?

The examples of strategies I listed above that leaders may employ can be categorised
into four different IER strategies, namely situation modification, cognitive change, attentional deployment and modulating the emotional response. Situation modification refers to make active efforts to directly modify or change a situation in order to change its emotional impact (Gross, 1998). Cognitive change refers to choose different meanings link to the situation, reinterpret or reappraise the situation, especially the negative one, in order to reduce the harm to goals, concerns and well-being (Gross, 1998). Attentional deployment refers to the efforts to distract attention away from the factors of a situation that are harmful to goals, concerns or well-being, or get out of the situation entirely (Gross, 1998). Modulating the emotional response refers to modulate the emotional expression when experiencing the emotions (Little et al., 2016). So how will Evelyn taking these four different IER strategies influence Michael’s and the other team members’ task performance and job satisfaction? If you were Evelyn, which strategy would you employ to improve team members’ performance or job satisfaction?

1.1. THEORETICAL FOCUS

1.1.1. Interpersonal emotion regulation and followers’ outcomes

Emotions are main drivers of people’s motivation, cognition and behaviour, and have significant impact in people's social interaction (Keltner and Haidt, 1999, Van Kleef, 2009). So, people’s emotions will have significant impact on how they interact with others, their attitude about organisations and their performance (Barsade and Gibson, 2007, Totterdell and Niven, 2014). More and more researchers place emotions at centre stage in the study of leadership effectiveness, which is evaluated by a range of attitudinal and behavioural indicators.

Empirical studies have examined the effects of leaders’ IER on team-level organisational citizenship behaviour (Madrid et al., 2018), team innovation (Madrid et al., 2019), organisational citizenship behaviour performed with interpersonal relationships (Little et al., 2016), followers’ work-related stress (Thiel et al., 2015),
helping followers deal with relationship conflict (Thiel et al., 2018), planning performance and subjective performance measured by leaders (Vasquez et al., 2020), etc. Although IER has known play important role in the leadership, little is known about how it influence followers’ critical outcomes such as individuals’ objective task performance and job satisfaction. The primary aim of this study is therefore to examine the effect of leaders’ IER strategy on followers’ objective job performance, as well as job satisfaction, in the workplace. In my study, I employ the definition of IER strategies as active and conscious leader behaviours aimed at regulating followers’ negative emotions (Williams, 2007). I try to find out how the IER strategies enacted by leaders influence team members’ objective job performance as well as their job satisfaction. My research will provide some important insights into alternative IER strategies that business leaders should use to regulate followers’ negative emotions in the workplace in order to improve followers’ outcomes.

1.1.2. Leader-member exchange (LMX) as the mediation path between IER and follower’s outcomes

Another feature of research into IER is that we know little about how leaders’ IER affects employee outcomes. Empirical studies have examined how leaders’ IER impacts followers’ outcomes with the mediation path of followers’ emotions (e.g. Vasquez et al., 2020, Madrid et al., 2019, Holman and Niven, 2019), while more mediation paths can be explored in this regard leaders’ IER influences followers’ outcomes.

The theory of leader-member exchange (LMX) is one of the popular theories in the study of leadership (Yammarino et al., 2005). LMX theory grew out of the approach of vertical dyad linkage (VDL) during the 1970s (Dansereau Jr et al., 1975, Graen and Cashman, 1975), and now refers to how leaders treat their followers in different ways (Dansereau Jr et al., 1975), which leads to differing qualities in the relationships between a leader and each follower through different types of exchanges (Martin et al., 2016). Followers may then reciprocate the quality of the relationship between
themselves and their leaders by putting extra effort into their work, which eventually leads to improved job performance. Stem from social exchange theory, LMX theory claims that it is the interactions between leaders and followers form the perceptions of the quality of LMX (Blau, 1964). Followers’ perceptions of LMX are vital in the workplace because of their impact on followers’ attitudinal variables and behavioural variables such as work performance (Dulebohn et al., 2012, Gerstner and Day, 1997) and followers’ perceptions of LMX also reflect their expectation that leader will repay them for their voluntary behaviours (Bernerth et al., 2007). Empirical studies have shown that LMX has significant consequences in the workplace. For example, it has been found that LMX is related with turnover intention, actual turnover, job performance (Gerstner and Day, 1997, Dansereau Jr et al., 1975, Ferris, 1985, Graen et al., 1982, Judge and Ferris, 1993, Scandura and Schriesheim, 1994), organisational citizenship behaviour (Anderson and Williams, 1996, Ilies et al., 2007), promotions (Graen et al., 1977) and job satisfaction (Dansereau Jr et al., 1975). However, more extensive exploration on antecedents of LMX can be done (Gerstner and Day, 1997, Liden et al., 1997), and there is very limited research linking IER with LMX. To the best of my knowledge, no research has examined leader’s use of IER strategy as the antecedent of LMX using a time-separated longitudinal design, but one study used a cross-sectional design, namely the study of Little et al. (2016). I argue that leaders’ IER strategies may influence the LMX because emotion regulation has been found to impact the way people interact socially with others (Butler et al., 2004).

So another aim of this study is to explore the mediation path between leaders’ use of IER strategy and followers’ outcomes with a focus on how leaders’ use of an IER strategy affects followers’ outcomes through its effects on LMX. IER is a social phenomenon that carries meaning about an agent’s intention to regulate another’s emotion (Thiel et al., 2015). At the same time, the target will attribute intentions to the agent’s IER behaviour (Martinko and Gardner, 1987). For example, leader is expected to remove obstacles such as followers’ negative emotions in the workplace. Leaders’ behaviour in actively managing followers’ negative emotion is laden with information,
attribution and intentionality that followers draw upon to evaluate and reciprocate the relationship with their leaders. So I propose that leaders’ IER behaviour is an important antecedent of LMX.

1.2. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

As identified above, my study has two key aims. First, it will examine the impact of leaders’ IER on aspects of core followers’ outcomes with a focus on followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment in my study, and job satisfaction. Second, I will expand the leadership literature by exploring leaders’ IER as a potential key antecedent of LMX, which eventually influences followers’ outcomes. My study will link IER theory and LMX theory which is one of the classic leadership theories.

In order to accomplish these two aims, I will test a model, as shown in Figure 1.1, demonstrating how leaders’ use of different IER strategies at time 1 will impact followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction at time 3 through followers’ perceived LMX at time 2.

Figure 1.1 Conceptual model.

1.3. OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH APPROACH

To accomplish the research aims identified above, I used surveys to collect data in two operation units (OUs) in a large-size multinational company (MNC) in the fast-moving
consumer goods (FMCG) industry in China. Participants were sales representatives who interact with customers every day to generate sales and their direct bosses, sales supervisors, who interact with and influence sales representatives’ emotions all the time. In total, 620 sales representatives and 209 supervisors were included in my research. I adopted a three-wave time-separated longitudinal design. Three rounds of data collection were conducted in August 2017, March 2018 and October 2018, respectively. I also collected data on objective sales attainment from these two operation units’ human resource system. An average six months’ sales attainment rate after time 2 was used in my study as sales representatives’ objective job performance data (therefore the data on this variable corresponded to the same time period as the other third-wave measures).

1.4. POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH

My study provides a theoretical, methodological and practical contribution to the IER, job performance and LMX theory.

First, my study extends our theoretical understanding of IER in organisational settings by exploring the effect between leader’s use of IER strategies and LMX. Previously, researchers have focused on study the effects between intrapersonal emotion regulation and emotional intelligence which are relevant constructs and LMX with much less attention being paid to the effects of leaders’ IER in the workplace (George, 2000, Gooty et al., 2010, Madrid et al., 2019). My study contributes to leadership theory with a specific focus on the interaction process between leader and follower (Graen, 1976) instead of behaviours or traits of leaders. Given the importance of LMX in the workplace, it is valuable to understand why and how some leaders and followers can build a high LMX relationship quality while others cannot. In nature, LMX is interpersonal and relational, so the understanding of the relationship between IER and LMX will give us some insights into the answer why and how some can build the high quality LMX while others cannot. Therefore, my research contributes to a more
comprehensive understanding of antecedents of the LMX by revealing leaders’ use of different IER strategies as an important antecedent. So my study will also contribute to leadership theory, specifically LMX theory.

Second, organisational scholars started to focus more on understanding the consequences of employees’ emotion regulation process in the workplace (Côté, 2005, Grandey, 2000, Pugh, 2002). The studies on emotion regulation have focused on emotional labour which mainly on the effects on customer satisfaction. My study contributes to the existing literature by exploring the effects of emotion regulation on other types of job performance including objective task performance and job satisfaction other than customer satisfaction. To the best of my knowledge, very few studies have examined the effects of IER on followers’ task performance. Those that did relied mainly on subjective job performance data, which were measured by leaders. For example, Little et al. (2016) examined the effect of leader IER on followers’ subjective task performance and organisational citizenship behaviour, which were measured by leaders. In my research, I used followers’ objective job performance instead of leaders’ subjective rating of followers’ performance to minimise the impact of common source bias.

Third, from a methodological perspective, my study used a time-separated longitudinal design to collect multilevel data from three-wave surveys across 12 months and used objective data, followers’ sales attainment, as the dependent variable. Many of the studies tested the effects of IER or LMX with a cross-sectional design, which cannot avoid common-method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2012) and a possible reciprocity effect. My research design with objective measurement of followers’ job performance and the time-separated method will provide a stronger indicator of the direction of causality between variables and mitigate the common-method bias.

Last but not least, my study makes a practical contribution to helping business leaders to understand what specific IER strategy they should take to manage followers’
negative emotions in the workplace to eventually improve team members’ job performance, or which IER strategy they should try to avoid using since it will negatively impact followers’ job satisfaction. Compare to the top leadership team, frontline managers are closer to employees both physically and psychologically which makes frontline managers’ leadership crucial in the workplace (SEO et al., 2012). Organisations can use the results of my study to train business leaders, with a focus on front-line sales managers, in how to proactively regulate followers’ negative emotions to deliver better business results, which is critical not only in terms of short-term job performance but also business leaders’ career development in the long run. When organisations recruit and select leaders, they can also use the findings of my study to choose the right business leaders to handle tough situations, which normally causes a lot of negative emotions among team members.

1.5. OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS STRUCTURE

This thesis is split into two sections. The first section presents the theoretical background, an outline of the theoretical framework and research approach for the thesis. The second section includes the research context and method, the results of the main study and a general discussion on the findings of the thesis.

1.5.1. Section one: Background

The first section consists of Chapters one and two with the purpose of outlining the theoretical background to this thesis. Chapter one delineates the objective of the research and details potential theoretical and practical contributions that may flow from it.

Chapter two provides a thorough review of the IER and LMX literature from a theoretical perspective. As a theoretical construct, IER is distinguished from other concepts, which are related but distinct. In Chapter two, the theoretical framework is
also presented through which IER in the workplace can be conceptualised. The chapter ends with a summary of what the chapter has accomplished.

1.5.2. Section two: Main study and general discussion

The second section of the thesis presents the research context and method, the results of the main study and a discussion on the key findings and contributions of this study. The section contains Chapters three, four and five.

Chapter three focuses on the research context and method of the thesis. It describes the details of the research context and method for my study, including an overview of the analysis approach.

The results of the main studies are elaborated in Chapter four. Descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis and tests of hypotheses are discussed, and the results of the statistical analysis are presented in this chapter.

Chapter five is the final chapter and forms the general discussion of the thesis. The general discussion summarises the findings and the theoretical and practical contributions of the thesis, while also presenting the limitations and direction for future research. It closes with a summary and the final conclusions.

I have introduced the conceptual model, aim, research approach and detailed contributions of my research. The next chapter will elaborate the research literature from which my conceptual model stemmed together with my hypotheses.
CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. OVERVIEW

Many employees struggle to get up every day to go to work. Why? One of the key reasons is that people might experience numerous negative emotions in the workplace and they may not know how to handle those negative emotions. Even worse news is that the negative emotions that employees experience (e.g. fear, anger, sadness) (Dasborough, 2006) are normally more intense than positive emotions. One of the key sources of negative emotions is interpersonal interactions in the workplace. The negative emotions generated by affective work events (Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996) can have significant impacts on employees’ behaviour (Ashkanasy et al., 2003, Gibson and Callister, 2010, Hochschild, 1983), their physiological and psychological health (Cooper et al., 2001, Greenberg, 2006, Lawrence, 2008) and their performance (Côté et al., 2008, Jordan et al., 2002). How to help team members deal with negative emotions in the workplace has become the pivotal question for leaders.

In my study, I define IER strategies (Williams, 2007) as observable leaders’ behaviours targeted at regulating followers’ negative emotions. I argue that followers will attribute the different IER strategies used by leaders to different intentions, which will influence the relationship between follower and leader according to social exchange theory and attribution theory. Specifically, a leader’s use of situational modification, cognitive change or attentional deployment strategies will make followers feel that their leader cares about them, which will therefore predict a positive relationship with followers’ perceptions of LMX. When a leader uses the modulating the emotional response strategy, it will be negatively related to followers’ perception of LMX since it will make followers feel that their leader does not address the cause of their negative emotion, which means the expectation toward the leader will be unmet. Then I argue that followers’ perceptions of LMX will mediate the effect of each IER strategy on followers’ outcomes, including job performance and job satisfaction. I focus on objective job
performance and job satisfaction because of their conceptual relationships with LMX and their importance for organisational performance and leadership effectiveness.

2.2. EMOTION REGULATION

It is necessary to understand emotions in comparison to other related concepts and the importance of emotions in the workplace before I start the literature review on emotion regulation. “Affect” is a hypernym covers a variety of affective phenomena and it consists of states and traits (Brief and Weiss, 2002, Elfenbein, 2007, Frijda, 1986, Weiss and Cropanzano, 1996). Trait refers to people’s dispositional tendency towards either positive or negative affective states (Lazarus, 1991, Watson and Clark, 1984). As for states, affect comprises moods and emotions. Emotions refer to intense and comparatively short-term affective reactions to a particular stimulus (Reber, 1985). Moods are relatively longer than emotions but shorter than trait affect in duration (Fisher, 2000, Fridja, 1993). In my study, I use the term “emotions” as a general term to include both momentary affective states that last in the order of minutes about short-lived and intense reactions to a specific stimulus (Gooty et al., 2010), and moods which are somewhat more permeated states that last in the order of hours and do not react to a specific stimulus.

Emotions play an important role in the workplace and influence various critical organisational variables. According to Barsade and Gibson’s (2007) review, the consequences of emotions include job performance, decision-making, organisational citizenship behaviour, turnover, etc. Given that emotions are inevitable in the workplace and also have significant consequences, it is valuable for researchers to continue studying how to effectively regulate emotions (Lawrence et al., 2011).

Gross (1988)’s definition and model of emotion regulation has been widely accepted as the most influential one indicates the intention to influence people’s experience of emotions including what emotions they experience, when and how they experience
emotions as well as express emotions. It indicates that the emotions that a person experiences are not constant; they can be subject to change. Here, I want to differentiate emotion regulation from some similar concepts. One of these similar concepts is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is defined as an ability that people can use it to 1) detect their own or others’ emotions, 2) understand emotions and how emotions work, 3) leverage emotions to shape their thinking, and 4) manage the emotional experience of themselves and others as well as emotional expression (Mayer et al., 2000). There are some researchers used a portion of the Mayer et al. (2000)’s definition about people’s ability to manage their own and others’ emotional experience as well as expression as the definition of emotional regulation (Gratz and Roemer, 2004, Kafetsios et al., 2014, Nelis et al., 2011). I argue that they use the term improperly and need to distinguish between two concepts, in that emotional intelligence refers to ability while emotional regulation refers to behaviour. Another similar concept is emotional labour. With the purpose to comply with the display rules in the organisation, emotional labour refers to a process that people use different strategies to regulate their own emotions (Hochschild, 1983). Hochschild’s (1983) definition was originally proposed to be applied when employees interact with customers while it was extended to between business and followers as well as among colleagues (Bono and Vey, 2007, Gardner et al., 2009). With this extension, some researchers studied the relationship between emotion regulation strategies and followers’ outcomes (Hülsheger and Schewe, 2011). So emotional regulation and emotional labour are similar concepts while emotional regulation is broader than emotional labour because it also includes emotion regulation that is engaged out of choice rather than simply obligation.

In recent years, the focus of emotion regulation has been not only on intrapersonal emotion regulation, which refers to regulating individuals’ own emotions, but also on interpersonal emotion regulation, which refers to the regulation of others’ emotions (Troth et al., 2017). Because a lot of interpersonal emotion regulation has been built on the intrapersonal emotion regulation framework, it is important to understand intrapersonal emotion regulation first to build the foundation for understanding
interpersonal emotion regulation.

2.2.1. Intrapersonal emotion regulation

Empirical researches have focused on to reveal how people utilise emotion regulation to manage their own negative emotions (Gross, 1998) and this process is identified as “intrapersonal emotion regulation” with the regulation target as intrinsic (Gross, 2013b, Zaki and Williams, 2013) which means individuals attempt to regulate their own emotions with their own resource or social interaction with others (Gross, 2013b, Hofmann, 2014, Zaki and Williams, 2013).

2.2.1.1. Gross’s process model of intrapersonal emotion regulation

Gross’s (1998) process model has been used by most of the scholars to study intrapersonal emotion regulation. In Gross’s (1998) model, there are two different categories of strategies including antecedent-focused which focus on before emotions being experienced and response-focused which focus on after emotions being experienced. For antecedent-focused strategies, Gross (1998) identified four different intrapersonal emotion regulation strategies which are situation selection, situation modification, attentional deployment and cognitive change. For response-focused strategies, there are two categories which one is response modification (e.g. suppression the expression of emotion) (Gross, 1998) and another is authentic expression of emotion (Lawrence et al., 2011). Since the authentic expression of emotion does not involve any regulation, most researchers just study the five intrapersonal emotional regulation strategies defined by Gross (1998), which are shown in Figure 2.1.
As Figure 2.1 shows, the first strategy is situation selection. Situation selection refers to regulate emotions through choosing to be closer to or avoiding certain individuals, situations, places or objectives (Gross, 1998). For example, employees may try to walk in a different direction when they saw a leader they don’t like walking towards them to avoid meeting him or her, as they foresee it would cause them negative emotions if they met with the leader. People need to understand the characteristics of different situations that normally make people emotional to understand situation selection (Wallbott, 1986). Situation selection requires people to be aware of possible characteristics of different situations and anticipate the emotional response towards those characteristics. The awareness and understanding of situations which normally imbedded with information is needed for individuals to make right decisions to approach or avoid certain situations with balance between long-term and short-term interests. For example, it could benefit an employee in the short term to try to avoid interaction with peers and leaders in the workplace while it may cost him or her in the long run. Confrontation and avoidance are the two types of situation selection strategies. Confrontation means that individuals choose to confront the situations which might trigger negative emotions while avoidance means individuals choose to get away from the situation (Peña-Sarrionandia et al., 2015).
The second strategy is situation modification which refers to individuals make active effort to modify the situation directly so as to change its impact on emotions (Gross, 1998). For example, imagine an employee who is overloaded and burned out. S/he discusses this situation with a line manager and eventually receives additional resources, which help him or her release the pressure. So situation modification can be seen as problem-focused coping (Folkman and Lazarus, 1984). Direct situation modification, support seeking and conflict resolution are the three different types of situation modification strategies. Direct situation modification means that individuals take actual actions that directly influence a situation; support seeking means that individuals look for others’ assistance to modify a situation; conflict resolution means that individuals take steps to change a conflict situation (Peña-Sarrionandia et al., 2015).

The third strategy is attentional deployment. The strategies of attentional deployment can be classified into three categories: distraction, concentration and rumination (Gross, 1998). Distraction refers to transfer individuals’ attention from current situation to the others (Derryberry and Rothbart, 1988) or just focus on non-emotional aspects of a situation (Nix et al., 1995). Distraction could refer to alter individuals’ internal focus or select an new internal situation which shows that the boundaries of different emotion regulation strategies are blur sometimes (Gross, 1998). The second category is concentration which refers to engaging individuals’ cognitive resource in specific tasks (Erber and Tesser, 1992). Concentration sometimes will create flow which is a spectacular state can be self-sustained (Csikszentmihályi, 1975) or can be used to focus on the triggers of emotions, which can be referred to as “controlled starting of emotion” (Wegner and Bargh, 1998). The use of concentration can also be treated as selecting new (internal) situations. Finally, rumination means individuals focus on feeling itself and its consequences (Gross, 1998).

The fourth strategy is cognitive change. It is just the start when an emotional situation happens to a person. Both the understanding of the meaning of the situation and the
evaluation of one’s ability to deal with it are required to generate an emotion. Cognitive steps need to be taken to convert a perception of a situation into the trigger of emotions (Scherer, 1988, Smith and Ellsworth, 1985) and evaluations need to be made about individual’s capability to manage the situation received (Bandura et al., 1999, Folkman and Lazarus, 1988). When we talk about cognitive change, we talk about change the cognitive steps or the evaluations (Frijda, 1986). Cognitive change mechanisms include denial, isolation, intellectualisation, the tendency to interpret events in a more positive way (Taylor and Armor, 1996, Taylor and Brown, 1988), downward social comparison (Taylor and Lobel, 1989, Wills, 1981), etc. Cognitive reframing and reappraisal are two specific forms of cognitive change. Cognitive Reframing means that individuals reframe the situation from a failure to a neutral situation if not a success (Carver et al., 1996). Reappraisal refers to cognitively transforming the situation with the purpose of changing its emotional impact (Gross, 1998).

The fifth strategy is response modulation, which is the only response-focused emotion regulation. Response modification refers to directly influencing physiological, experiential or behavioural responding (Gross, 1998). Response modulation occurs in the late stage of emotion generative process in comparison to the four antecedent-focused emotion regulations that happen in the early stage of the process (Gross, 1998). Individuals may leverage different ways including take drugs (Gross, 1998), exercise (Thayer et al., 1994), and relaxation (Suinn and Richardson, 1971, Wolpe, 1968) etc. to modify the emotion experience. Regulating emotional expressive behaviour is one of the most common forms of response modulation (Gross et al., 2006). It usually involves suppressing outward signs of emotion, e.g. changing one’s facial expression. For example, a leader felt very frustrated when followers missed an important performance goal. Instead of showing his or her disappointment or anger, the leader kept calm and chose to express his or her emotion neutrally in order to motivate the team to learn from the failure for next success. Other forms of response modulation include emotion sharing with others (Rimé, 2007), verbal or physical aggression to reduce tension, and substance usage including alcohol, drugs or medicines (Peña-Sarrionandia et al., 2015).
2.2.1.2. Intrapersonal emotion regulation in the workplace

Employees frequently regulate their emotion in the workplace. The majority of research on intrapersonal emotion regulation in workplace has focused on the customer service domain, where researchers have focused on intrapersonal emotion regulation performed as emotional labour, i.e. as part of the job. Researchers have noted that while service employees may engage in intrapersonal emotion regulation in good faith, often to fulfil job requirements or to benefit the organisation in some way, this process may also have unintended negative consequences. For example, many researchers have argued that intrapersonal emotion regulation performed as emotional labour can stimulate stress in workers and eventually impair their performance (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, Hochschild, 1983).

With the language of emotional labour, we can classify antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies as deep-acting versus surface-acting strategies respectively (Grandey, 2000). According to Gross (1998), antecedent-focused strategies may be relatively more effective because they cope with the underlying cause of emotion. Research in customer service reveals that while antecedent-focused strategies have positive, or at least neutral, impact on employees’ well-being and job performance, response-focused strategies can have a negative impact on these outcomes (Brotheridge and Lee, 1998, Brotheridge and Lee, 2002, Grandey, 2003).

Various mechanisms can explain the relationships between individuals’ intrapersonal emotion regulation strategies and their well-being and job performance. An important mechanism is felt inauthenticity. Response-focused strategies may constrain personal authenticity because an individual’s actual feelings are different from his or her emotional expression (Brotheridge and Lee, 2002). This inconsistency between actual feelings and emotional expression is related to depressed emotion and stress (Erickson and Wharton, 1997, Sheldon et al., 1997), while for antecedent-focused strategies there
is consistency between true feeling and displayed emotions, which does not compromise the authenticity. A further mechanism is authenticity of the emotion display. According to emotion as a social information model, emotional displays provide important information to observers and influence their behaviours (Keltner and Haidt, 1999, Van Kleef, 2009). Individuals can separate the genuine emotional displays from the fake ones (Ekman et al., 1988), and positive emotional displays will lead to positive reactions only if others are aware that those emotional displays are authentic (Grandey et al., 2005, Hennig-Thurau et al., 2006). This suggests that antecedent-focused strategies are related positively and response-focused strategies negatively, to performance outcomes. Another mechanism is about the power of positive and negative emotions. Antecedent focused strategies tend to result in positive or neutral emotions. For example, the avoidance strategy keeps the individual away from the events trigger the negative emotions and will lead to neutral if not positive emotions. While response focused strategies are more likely to maintain negative emotions since individuals already experienced events which triggered negative emotions. Of course, some response focused strategies, such as exercise, could help individuals to improve the emotion experience. According to broaden-and-build theory, individuals’ positive emotions not only make them feel pleasure for the moment, but also will benefit their well-being in the future via the effect of upward spiral (Fredrickson, 1998, Fredrickson and Joiner, 2002). At the same time, individuals’ attention and cognition is broadened to build up personal resources and cope mechanisms because the positive emotions also generate a positive mindset (Fredrickson, 1998, Fredrickson and Joiner, 2002).

Although a lot of the workplace research on intrapersonal emotion regulation focuses on the customer service context, there are more and more researches start examining intrapersonal emotion regulation in the context of leadership. For example, Torrence and Connelly (2019) suggested the effects of emotion regulation strategies varies when leaders handle all kinds of emotion-laden events in order to improve performance in the workplace. They investigated the effects of different strategies that leaders may take when they are in all kinds of situations which trigger emotions. Their findings suggested
that there is a positive relationship between leaders’ situation modification or cognitive reappraisal strategies and performance in leadership tasks while leaders’ suppression strategy is negatively related to this (Torrence and Connelly, 2019). Leader’s knowledge of how emotions operate and their capability of leverage the skills to change the emotions triggered by situations is the reason why leaders’ situation modification and cognitive reappraisal strategies work well for them and make them a more effective leader (Torrence and Connelly, 2019). It may offer leaders the chance to have holistic understanding of the situation, realise what the situation means and others’ perspectives when leaders utilise cognitive reappraisal strategies to alter emotions through reinterpretation and perspective taking (Torrence and Connelly, 2019). On the contrary, leaders who engage in suppression only address responses of emotions (Koole, 2009) while do not address emotional elements that damage leaders’ judgment and performance (Torrence and Connelly, 2019). No significant relationship between attentional deployment and task performance was found in that study.

Glasø and Einarsen (2008) examined how leaders and followers’ emotion regulation influenced LMX, job satisfaction and health complaints. The sample included 135 leaders and 207 followers. The results indicated that participants typically expressed or faked positive emotions while they suppressed negative emotions in the workplace. The data revealed that suppressing and faking emotions had negative relationship with LMX and job satisfaction while had positive association with health complaints (Glasø and Einarsen, 2008). This study revealed that intrapersonal emotion regulation is an important facet of the relationship between leader and follower because it will have a potentially significant influence on both leaders and followers in the workplace.

2.2.2. Interpersonal emotion regulation

More recently, in the past ten years or so, researchers have increasingly recognised a parallel emotion regulation process that occurs and has relevance in the workplace, which is interpersonal emotion regulation. Researchers today (Côté et al., 2013, Little
et al., 2012, Niven et al., 2012b, Niven et al., 2012c, Zaki and Williams, 2013) are beginning to recognise the importance of IER, because people experiencing emotions normally choose not to just handle emotions by themselves but to reach out to others for help to regulate their emotions, especially negative ones. Recently, more and more researchers have begun to realise that emotion regulation often depends on the interactions between agent and target. In other words, there is a need for scholars to study emotion regulation as a specific process occurring at the interpersonal level (Ashkanasy, 2003, Ashkanasy and Humphrey, 2011, Côté et al., 2013, Humphrey et al., 2015, Little et al., 2012, Netzer et al., 2015, Niven et al., 2011, Zaki and Williams, 2013). For example, employees may worry about job security during merger and acquisition and look for assistance from their associates or leaders to regulate their emotions, or business leaders may attempt to regulate team members’ emotions to align with the organisation’s display rules.

2.2.2.1. Conceptualisation of interpersonal emotion regulation

Different aspects of IER such as social support receipt and provision (Bolger and Eckenrode, 1991), social sharing of affective states (Rimé, 2009) and motivations to help others improve their emotional states (Goetz et al., 2010) have been studied by scholars. However, there is still a need to have the exact definition of IER and clear understanding on how it corresponds to related processes (Niven, 2017).

In 2017, Niven attempted to clarify the situation by defining IER as a process involving four key characteristics. Specifically, Niven (2017) posited that IER is a deliberate process of regulation with an affective target and a social target. According to Niven (2017), first of all, IER is a regulation process which means that it is about changing or keeping a state in accordance with reference goal (Carver et al., 2015). Secondly, what differentiates IER from other processes as a cognitive and behavioural process is that there is a feeling state as an affective target being regulated (Niven, 2017). Thirdly, there is deliberate effort in IER to minimise the gap between current and desired states
(Niven, 2016). The fourth element of the IER process is that it has a social target, e.g. a follower, peer or customer. IER consists of both a regulator engaging in the regulation process and a target state that is being regulated (Niven, 2017).

Niven’s (2017) definition is different from that applied by some other researchers, most notably Zaki and Williams (2013). Zaki and Williams (2013) proposed a 2*2 categorisation scheme to map out the construct of IER. As shown in Figure 2.2, the first dimension is whether the target of a regulation attempt is intrinsic or extrinsic (Gross, 2013b, Zaki and Williams, 2013). “Intrinsic” means regulation in which individuals regulate their own emotions, which is equivalent to intrapersonal emotion regulation as I have defined it. However, Zaki and Williams (2013) explain that this form of regulation can evolve to interpersonal when social resources are used in the process of emotion self-regulation (e.g. seeking social support). “Extrinsic” means regulation in which individuals attempt to regulate other people’s emotions (Gross, 2013a, Hofmann, 2014, Zaki and Williams, 2013), and this category maps on to the process of IER as Niven (2017) defines it. The second dimension is whether the regulation is response-dependent or response independent (Hofmann, 2014, Zaki and Williams, 2013). Response-dependent refers to a bidirectional regulation process in which the agent might change his or her emotion regulation strategy with the impact by target’s feedback either verbal and/or non-verbal (Ashkanasy and Humphrey, 2011, Gracia and Ashkanasy, 2014, Zaki and Williams, 2013), while response-independent refers to a static regulation process in which no target’s feedback is considered to impact the agent’s emotion regulation strategy (Little et al., 2012, Niven et al., 2009, Niven et al., 2011, Zaki and Williams, 2013). My study focuses on leaders’ behaviour in adopting IER strategies to manage followers’ negative emotions specifically without considering followers’ feedback on leaders’ use of IER strategy. So, the definition of IER in my study is response-independent extrinsic IER in line with the definition of Zaki and Williams (2013).
One of the first attempts to identify the strategies involved in enacting IER was published by Niven et al. (2009). In their research, they used two factors including motive and the means used to achieve the motive to distinguish among four categories of IER strategies. In terms of motive, one kind of strategies is to improve target’s emotions and another is to worsen target’s emotions (Niven et al., 2009). As for means used to achieve the motive, the difference is whether the focus of agent’s strategies is on target’s situation or emotion which called engagement strategies or on the target’s relationship with the agent which called relationship-oriented strategies (Niven et al., 2009). As regards emotion-improving strategies, they are classified into positive engagement, which means the agent attempts to involve the target in his or her situation or emotion to improve his or her emotion, and acceptance, which involves behaviours that recognise the target (Niven et al., 2009). As for emotion-worsening strategies, they are classified into negative engagement, which means the agent attempts to involve the target in his or her situation or emotion to worsen the target’s emotion, and rejection, which involves behaviours that snub the target (Niven et al., 2009).

Through collecting empirical data, Niven and colleagues identified hundreds of unique IER strategies that fell within these four categories. They analysed their data to establish meaningful subcategories of IER strategy types. There are two subcategories, affective engagement and cognitive engagement, within the positive engagement strategies. For
affective engagement, it engages directly with target’s emotions with problem-focused engagement strategies specifically focus on target’s attention on the situation and target-focused engagement strategies focus on target’s attention on himself or herself. For cognitive engagement, it engages with target’s cognitions with intention to change the emotions accordingly. Within the acceptance strategies there are also two subcategories, one of which focuses on attention that agent giving the target attention, while the other focuses on agent’s use of humour towards the target. For the strategies that agent gives attentions, we can distinguish them between dictation and valuing such as spending time with the target. There are also two subcategories, affective engagement and behavioural engagement, within the negative engagement strategies. Affective engagement means the agent engages directly emotions and behavioural engagement means agent engages target’s behaviour in order to change target’s emotinos. Within the rejection strategies, there are also two subcategories which are identified as “rejecting the target’s feelings” and “putting one’s own feelings first”. “Rejecting the target’s feelings” strategies refer to the agent displaying a lack of care for the target either confrontationally or non-confrontationally. “Putting one’s own feelings first” refer to the agent displaying his or her dissatisfaction on the target. Niven et al.’s (2009) classification of IER strategies is shown in Figure 2.3.
However, an alternative theory and model of IER strategies has been proposed by Williams (2007) and further developed by Little and colleagues (e.g. Little et al., 2016) amongst others. Williams’s (2007) model is different from Niven et al.’s (2009) approach. It builds on Gross’s (1998) model on intrapersonal emotion regulation and focuses specifically on strategies used to manage others’ negative emotions. With extension of Gross’s (1998) process model of intrapersonal emotion regulation strategies into the field of IER strategies, Williams (2007) proposed four strategies might be used to regulate negative emotions of others considering that the tactics of individuals regulate their own emotions and others’ emotions are the same (Francis, 1997, Lively, 2000, Thoits, 1996). Williams’s (2007) four IER strategies consist of situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change and modulating the emotional response. Situation modification (SM) refers to removing or changing the
situation to reduce the impact of emotions. Attentional deployment (AD) refers to directing the target’s attention to positive things. Cognitive change (CC) refers to reappraising or reinterpreting the situation in a more positive way. The last one is modulating the emotional response (MER) which refers to directly suppressing individuals’ emotional responses. All these four strategies target specifically on others’ negative emotions to either reducing the negative ones or improving the positive ones (Little et al., 2012). I elaborate the four IER strategies below.

Situation modification refers to make active efforts to directly modify or change a situation in order to change its emotional impact (Gross, 1998). Situation modification is problem-focused because the leader will improve or change the facets of the situation that caused followers’ negative emotions. For example, when a sales representative faces pressure to deliver the monthly revenue target, the sales supervisor might reduce the revenue target of this sales representative while asking another sales representative to overdeliver the sales target for this month so that the whole sales team can still hit the sales target. The sales supervisor’s behaviour would reduce the sales representative’s fear of not delivering her/his sales target for that month, which would otherwise let the whole team down.

Cognitive change refers agent selecting different meaning of the situation, reappraising or reinterpreting the situation to reduce the harm towards goals, concerns and well-being (Gross, 1998). Unlike situation modification, cognitive change does not remove or change the situation which triggered followers’ the negative emotions but changes the way followers think about the situation. So, it is also problem focused. For example, a sales representative feels depressed when s/he receives the sales target from the sales supervisor because s/he thinks it is too high to achieve. The sales supervisor does not reduce the target but explains to the sales representative that the high target reflects the leader’s recognition of her/his capability and it is a good opportunity to reach her/his full potential. It might improve sales representative’s acceptance of the target and her/his emotion may change from negative to neutral, if not positive, after the
conversation with the sales supervisor. The sales supervisor does not change the
situation causing the sales representative’s negative emotion but change the way sales
representative thinks about the situation.

Attentional deployment refers to either moving others’ attention entirely out the
situation that are harmful to goals, concerns or well-being, or distracting others’
attention away from the facets of a situation (Gross, 1998). Attentional deployment is
leaders’ effort to distract followers’ attention from the situation causing the negative
emotions of followers. So, it is emotion-focused since the problem has not been
removed, reframed or directly addressed. For example, a sales representative is worried
about her/his job security during an organisational change. The sales supervisor jokes
that s/he may get fired before the sales representative because the sales supervisor is
more expensive. Humour is one of the normal means leaders often use as attentional
deployment.

Different from the previous three IER strategies, modulating the emotional response
happens once an emotion is experienced and focus on reduce the behavioural
expression of that emotion (Little et al., 2016). Rather than addressing the problem,
leaders focus on influence followers to suppress their negative emotions triggered by
the situation. So it is also emotion-focused. For example, a sales representative feels
angry when receiving the monthly sales target. The sales supervisor just asks her/him
to calm down and tells her/him that the decision has been made and there is no point in
arguing.

The discussion above highlights two alternative models that could be adopted when
studying IER behaviour. Researchers need to think about and choose their model
carefully to align with their research aims. I have two key reasons why I think that
Williams’s (2007) adaptation of Gross’s (1998) model is more appropriate for my study.
First, Gross’s (1998) intrapersonal emotion regulation process model is the most
established model of emotion regulation. The IER strategies are theoretically and
empirically comparable to Gross’s (1998) intrinsic emotion regulation strategies. Secondly, Williams’s (2007) framework has been broadly adopted by scholars. At the same time, a robust measure called the Interpersonal Emotion Management Scale was developed and validated by Little et al. (2012), who built on Williams’s (2007) theoretical work. The Interpersonal Emotion Management Scale has been applied in the study of customer-focused emotion regulation strategies used to manage customers’ emotions (Little et al., 2013), and also has been used in the study of IER between leaders and followers (Little et al., 2016).

2.2.2.2. Interpersonal emotion regulation in the workplace

IER has been examined in the workplace within a variety of contexts among agents and targets. For example, IER was examined among employees and customers (e.g. Little et al., 2013, Martínez-Íñigo et al., 2013) and among leaders and followers (e.g. Thiel et al., 2015, Vasquez et al., 2020, Madrid et al., 2019, Holman and Niven, 2019, Little et al., 2016, Glasø and Einarsen, 2008, Madrid et al., 2018, Thiel et al., 2012, 2018).

Martínez-Íñigo et al.’s (2013) study indicated that health-care workers face personal resource depletion and emotional exhaustion when they interact with patients engaging IER strategies, emotion-improving or emotion-worsening. The sample of the first study included 78 participants who were students from a UK university. The first study results showed that participants had much less time for self-regulation task after used IER, which indicated that utilising IER will take limited resources from self-regulation and lead to depletion (Martínez-Íñigo et al., 2013). The sample of the second study included 154 employees of a foundation for psychosocial rehabilitation and was used to test the relationship of targets’ feedback in a resource recovery process. The results suggested that the resource cost was partly offset though the use of an interpersonal emotion-improving strategy by triggering a positive response in targets while the use of an interpersonal emotion-worsening strategy was related to greater depletion without any offset of resource cost.
Little et al. (2013) investigated the impact of IER among customer service representatives. The sample consisted of 228 calls from 40 customer service representatives in a medical billing organisation in the United States. The findings revealed that customer service representatives’ problem-focused IER strategies, situation modification and cognitive change, had a positive impact on customers’ emotions while emotion-focused IER strategies, attentional deployment and modulating the emotional response, had a negative influence on customers’ emotions.

Holman and Niven (2019) examined whether perceived emotion-improving interpersonal regulation has a positive relationship with task performance via positive emotions. The sample of study 1 included 78 pairs of university academics and doctoral students from a British university and the sample of study 2 included 100 pairs of driving instructors and learner drivers from England. The results supported the model that supervisors’ and instructors’ IER influences students’ and learners’ task performance through the core path of positive emotions (Holman and Niven, 2019). Holman and Niven (2019) claimed that the evidence supported the theorised model that the reason why IER is positively related to positive emotions is that it helps others to reappraise situations, diverts attention away from situations’ triggered negative emotions, modifies the situations and communicates interpersonal caring (Niven et al., 2012a). The broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001) explained the positive effect between positive emotions and task performance since positive emotions might broaden behavioural and attentional repertoires and facilitate the integration of knowledge. Also, a possible cognitive mechanism that targets reciprocal behaviours was elicited after their cognitive inferences of agents’ IER behaviours. The results of this study can be applied to the leader-follower relationship because the findings are relevant to various occupational roles that are responsible for developing the skills and improving the performance of others. The nature of the cross-sectional design of this study might limit the conclusion of causality.
2.2.2.3. Interpersonal emotion regulation in leader-member relationships

Rooted in social exchange theory, LMX theory suggests that it is the interactions between leaders and followers define the foundation for perceptions of the exchange relationship quality (Blau, 1964). Although the interactions between leaders and followers consist of a variety of emotions and information related to them, the focus of LMX theory and research has been cognitive-transactional approach with a few exceptions (Ballinger and Rockmann, 2010, Saavedra and Van Dyne, 1999). It is important to understand how IER influences LMX since IER is laden with information, attribution and intentionality (Butler et al., 2003). Followers evaluate, reciprocate and maintain the LMX relationship with all the information they interpret from leaders’ behaviour of using different IER strategies to regulate their emotions (Little et al., 2012).

Theoretical frameworks of IER have been developed and can help us to clearly understand this concept. For example, Connelly et al. (2013) proposed a framework that listed various types of emotion knowledge, skills and abilities as antecedents to leader performance in seven areas including inspirational motivation, conflict resolution, negotiation, providing feedback, risk taking, ethical decision-making and creative thinking. Connelly et al.’s (2013) model gave leaders insights into the emotion world by revealing that types of emotions, emotion norms, regulation methods, and emotion processes and outcomes will influence leadership performance via promoting the development and use of abilities and skills related to emotions. At the same time, the effect of IER will be moderated by individual differences among leaders, e.g. personality, cognitive ability, gender and situational factors, i.e. uncertainty, conflict/stress and follower attribution (Connelly et al., 2013). Connelly et al.’s (2013) framework shed light on the antecedents, consequences, processes and moderators of IER in the workplace.

Another comprehensive theoretical model by Kaplan et al. (2014) was developed to help us to entirely understand leaders’ IERs and investigate the nature and correlates of
them. Kaplan et al.’s (2014) framework delineated the antecedents, knowledge-based and skill-based, and the consequence, e.g. trust in the leader, task motivation, and receptiveness to feedback, of IER as well as the ultimate outcomes including task performance, burnout, strain and satisfaction. The model proposed eight broad dimensions of IER. The first dimension is about leaders skillfully interacting and communicating with team members. The second refers to leaders demonstrate consideration and support for team members. The third talks about leader using emotional displays to influence team members’ behaviour. The fourth refers to leaders take employees’ emotions into consideration when structuring work tasks. The firth refers to leaders often promote positive emotions. The sixth is about leaders behave in a fair and ethical manner. The seventh refers to leaders manage interactions and relationships with colleagues. The last dimension refers to leaders maintain open and frequent communications with team members (Kaplan et al., 2014). Many of these behaviours influence emotions indirectly. For example, maintaining open and frequent communication might reduce uncertainty which leads to the reduction on anxiety (Huy, 2002). However, it indicates more about general good leadership than specific behaviours of leaders targeted at regulating followers’ emotions. Compared with traditional IER strategies that focus on more specific leader behaviour in managing others’ emotions, the behaviours in this study are broader, which means it might be difficult for people to differentiate them from general effective leadership behaviours. Even so, this framework shed light on how leaders’ IER will impact various outcomes with a broader picture of IER and potential moderators, including target attributes (i.e. the status difference of followers, followers’ the need and desire for IER) and situational factors (i.e. leaders’ workload, amount of contact with followers), of the process.

Besides the building of conceptual frameworks of IER, there have been studies that try to understand leaders’ use of IER strategies using either Gross’s (1998) or Niven et al.’s (2009) classification to predict individual and organisational outcomes in various contexts. Specifically, researchers have examined potential antecedents, consequences and moderators of the process of IER in the leader-follower context.
Madrid et al. (2018) examined the effect of leaders’ affective presence on followers’ team-level citizenship behaviour through the process of followers’ perception of leaders’ IER strategy in a team context. Ninety-nine teams from a large public administration organisation in Chile were included in the sample in the study. Team members were asked to rate their leaders’ affective presence which refers to individuals’ tendency to elicit positive or negative emotions consistently from interactions with others (Eisenkraft and Elfenbein, 2010), leaders’ emotion-improving or emotion-worsening IER strategies, perceived teamness which reflects team members’ perceived degree of interdependence and reflexivity in team tasks, and emotions while leaders were asked to rate team-level citizenship behaviour. With teamness used as the boundary condition in the study, the results indicated that leaders’ positive affective presence was positively related to team-level citizenship behaviours through followers’ perception of leaders’ emotion-improving IER strategy while leaders’ negative affective presence was negatively related to team-level citizenship behaviours through followers’ perception of leaders’ emotion-worsening IER strategy (Madrid et al., 2018). The negative relationship was sensitive to the perceived teamness as boundary condition while the positive relationship was not. The negative relationship was only found when team members perceived low teamness. In this study, leaders’ IER strategy was used as a mechanism from leaders’ affective presence to followers’ team-level citizenship behaviours. This study looks only at the broad category of leaders improving or worsening followers’ emotions instead of looking at specific strategies.

Madrid et al. (2019) tested whether leaders’ attempts to improve followers’ emotions are positively associated with team innovation through a team positive emotion tone and leaders’ attempts to worsen followers’ emotions are negatively related to team innovation through a team negative emotion tone. To the best of my knowledge, this was the first study to apply IER in the teamwork setting. The sample included 182 executive managers nested in 45 teams within a multinational energy organisation. The results suggested that leaders’ emotion-improving IER positively impacted the
emotions among team members, which in turn positively influenced team innovation. Conversely, leaders’ emotion-worsening IER was negatively related to team innovation via shared unpleasant emotions among team members (Madrid et al., 2019). This study also used a cross-sectional design, which means the mediation process may involve a reciprocity effect.

Little et al. (2016) claimed that problem-focused IER strategies, situation modification and cognitive change, are positively associated with LMX while emotion-focused emotion regulation strategies, attentional deployment and modulating the emotional response, are negatively associated with LMX via three compelling pathways. The first is followers’ role expectations towards leaders’ IER (Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2002, Toegel et al., 2013). It is expected that leaders shall help followers to remove all kinds of barriers in the workplace including regulating follower’s negative emotions (Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2002, Humphrey et al., 2008). The second is followers’ attribution of leaders’ intentionality regarding emotion regulation (Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2005). Thirdly, since expression of emotions contains a lot of information of individuals, it could promote positive relational function (Gottman and Levenson, 2000, Gross and John, 2003). Leaders either encourage followers or prevent them from expressing their emotions when adopting different IER strategies which will either promote or damage the relational functioning. Using a snowball technique and after asking undergraduate students to participate, Little et al. (2016) successfully recruited 163 matched dyads from a variety of occupations in their sample. Followers were asked to complete the survey about the degree of their respective leaders’ engagement in a specific behaviour of regulating followers’ negative emotions to measure leaders’ use of specific IER strategy. Followers were also asked to rate their perceived LMX and their degree of happiness with their job as general job satisfaction while leaders were asked to rate followers’ organisational citizenship behaviours performed within interpersonal relationships (OCBIs). Findings suggested that both problem-focused strategies, situation modification and cognitive change, were positively related to LMX and indirectly related to followers’ OCBIs and general job satisfaction. Additionally,
cognitive change was found to be directly and positively related to general job satisfaction. The results of emotion-focused strategies were a little bit more complicated. No significant effect was found between attentional deployment and LMX. Modulating the emotional response was found negatively related to LMX, OCBIs and general job satisfaction, and indirectly and negatively associated with OCBIs and general job satisfaction. We cannot infer the causality since the data in this research were cross-sectional in nature. At the same time, some other core behaviour outcomes, e.g. task performance, were not included in this study too.

Thiel et al. (2015) created a laboratory study to examine the effects of emotion-focused IER strategies, reappraisal and suppression, and a person-focused strategy, empathy, on work-related stress in a simulated crisis situation. A total of 155 undergraduate students participated in the research with anger being induced in all of them. It is worth noting that problem-focused IER strategies including situation modification and cognitive change were not included in this study but two emotion-focused IER strategies including attentional deployment and the emotional response were included. It is not common to include empathy as IER, although it has been studied as leadership behaviour quite often (Gentry et al., 2015, Kellett et al., 2002, Sadri et al., 2011, Toegel et al., 2013). Toegel et al. (2013) defined empathy as one of the forms of leaders’ behaviours used to help followers handle their negative emotions triggered by undesirable situations. Empathy was seen as person-focused emotion-helping behaviour for helping the receivers, especially their perception of the message from leaders (Thiel et al., 2015). In contrast to an emotion-focused strategy that targets emotions, a person-focused strategy targets followers’ social needs instead of directly impacting followers’ emotions. Results suggested that the combination of a person-focused IER strategy, empathy and emotion-focused IER strategies reduced participants’ level of stress with the effect being most salient for the combination of suppression and empathy (Thiel et al., 2015). Thiel et al. (2015) claimed that the difference in the effects between reappraisal and suppression when employed concurrently with empathy was rooted in the different expectations on leaders during a crisis compared to a non-crisis
situation. In crisis, followers expect leaders demonstrate decisiveness and resolve the issues (Bligh et al., 2004, Pillai and Meindl, 1998) on top of their expectation on leaders’ empathic concerns (Pescosolido, 2002, Yukl, 2004). Reappraisal, which was normally found to be more effective than suppression (Gross, 2002), might have little effect together with empathy in a crisis situation without providing resolve and decisiveness for followers. This study takes place in a simulated workplace and so lacks ecological validity to some extent.

Thiel et al. (2018) investigated how leaders use reappraisal, one of the IER strategies, to help followers deal with relationship conflict which stemmed from perceived interpersonal incompatibilities have negative impact on both individuals’ and team performance (De Dreu, 2006, De Dreu and Weingart, 2003, Jehn, 1995, Jehn and Mannix, 2001). The sample included 917 participants across 375 workgroups. Results suggested that leaders engaging in reappraisal strategy with followers helped mitigate the negative effects of relationship conflict on workgroup communication and identification. The results of this study demonstrated that there was a negative performance implication without leader-to-follower interpersonal reappraisal (Thiel et al., 2018). This study demonstrates the importance of leaders’ IER for leaders managing relationships with followers. This study only studied one IER strategy, reappraisal, without examining other IER strategies.

Leaders’ IER has also been studied in relation to followers’ discrete emotions (e.g. anger and pessimism), and not just general emotions, with a view to improving their performance in planning tasks (Thiel et al., 2012). The laboratory experiment study focused on cognitive change which is one of the IER strategies. In total, 147 undergraduate students took part in the research and a survey administrator participated online as a leader who utilised different IER strategies. Results suggested that reappraisal may be a better interpersonal emotion strategy leader shall employ for angry followers than a downward social comparison strategy while followers who experienced pessimism may benefit more from a leader’s use of downward social
comparison emotion regulation strategy (Thiel et al., 2012). This study is valuable to discover the effect of leaders’ use of specific IER strategy on discrete emotions. The laboratory experiment setting made the generalisation in the organisational setting unclear and leaders’ IER strategies were utilised through emails rather than face to face.

Vasquez et al. (2020) applied the IER construct in the leader-follower context to examine the effect of leaders’ IER on followers’ performance via the mediation path of followers’ emotions. The sample of the study comprised 157 employees nested in 31 leaders from a retail organisation in Chile. The results from multilevel modelling showed that leaders’ emotion-improving IER was positively associated with followers’ task performance via followers’ improved emotions. While the data showed that there is no significant relationship between followers’ negative emotions and their task performance, though, the negative relationship between leaders’ emotion-worsening IER and followers’ negative emotions was verified. Followers’ subjective task performance measured by leaders might create some bias and common-method variance in this study.

2.3 THEORETICAL MODEL

Emotion has been known as an important component of leadership-related processes and outcomes. It has been embedded within theories of leadership, including leader-member exchange (Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2002). Dienesch and Liden (1986) and Vecchio et al. (1986) first studied the role of emotions in the perception of exchange quality and it was then tested by Day and Crain (1992) and Bauer and Green (1996). In LMX theory development, emotions have been of central importance (Ashkanasy et al., 2000, Ashkanasy et al., 2002, Fisher and Ashkanasy, 2000, Day and Crain, 1992). Since then, more and more scholars have become interested in and built on this idea. Empirical studies have revealed leaders’ emotionality as a predictor of many followers’ outcomes in the workplace, such as followers’ performance (McColl-Kennedy and Anderson, 2002), their creativity (Zhou and George, 2003) and their emotion (Sy et al.,
However, we know relatively little about how leaders’ use of an IER strategy impacts followers’ work attitudes and behaviours.

In the present thesis, I chose job satisfaction and job performance as followers’ two outcomes in workplace. Job satisfaction shows the degree of how much an employee enjoys a job and is a vital variable of job attitude and outcomes in organisational behaviour (Judge et al., 2001). Since leaders will directly impact followers’ experiences of their job, followers’ job satisfaction is a relevant outcome for the leader-member exchange relationship (Dulebohn et al., 2012). There is no doubt that another key outcome of leadership effectiveness includes work performance. Leaders always try to develop a strong LMX relationship with each follower (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995, Scandura, 1999) in order to improve his or her work performance and other follower outcomes such as job satisfaction (Anand et al., 2011, Martin et al., 2010). For work performance, leader-rated performance has been broadly used as a subjective measurement. Although the relation between LMX and objective performance is not as strong as the relationship between LMX and leader-rated performance (Martin et al., 2016), empirical studies have proved that LMX predicts both leader-related performance and objective performance (Funder, 1995). Nevertheless, given the greater objectivity, in my study I focus on followers’ objective performance, which is the sales attainment (percentage of actual sales to sales target) of sales representatives.

Building upon previous researches, I proposed a theoretical model that leaders’ use of IER strategies perceived by followers will shape LMX and in turn LMX will impact followers’ job satisfaction and objective job performance. Figure 2.4 shows my theoretical model.
My theoretical model takes the LMX perspective to leadership, which will be outlined in the sections below. I am also going to explain the steps of my theoretical model, starting with how each IER strategy used by leaders influences LMX, moving on to how LMX influences followers’ job satisfaction and objective job performance, before finally explaining the mediated effect of leaders’ use of an IER strategy on followers’ job satisfaction and job performance via LMX in subsequent sections.

### 2.3.1. Leader-member exchange

There are a number of studies on leadership, and the key leadership theories in the last 30 years have focused on transformational leadership (Bass, 1985), team leadership (Hackman et al., 1986), 360-degree feedback (Lepsinger and Lucia, 2009) and on-the-job experience (McCaulley and Brutus, 1998). In transformational leadership theory, leaders provide meaning and understanding to inspire followers with challenges, make
followers to reach their full potential via support, coach and mentor, and followers identify and imitate charismatic leaders (Bass, 1998). Team leadership theory emphasises that leaders have to build a team which will cover all the aspects jointly by knowing their strengths, weaknesses and interests (Ulrich et al., 1999). The notion of 360-degree feedback refers to being perceptive about employees’ behaviours and the impact of behaviours on peers, subordinates, line managers and other stakeholders (Collins and Holton III, 2004). On-the-job experience also rose as an critical way to develop leadership (McCauley and Brutus, 1998). At the same time, many of the classic leadership theories still have a significant impact on leadership development. The trait approach focuses on leaders’ personality as the primary leadership character while the style approach focuses on the behaviour of leaders. Power influence theory focuses on the importance of the amount and type of power leaders have and how they wield that power (Collins and Holton III, 2004), while contingency leadership theory focuses on matching a leader’s style to the right setting (Fiedler, 1964). Situational leadership theory focuses on leaders adopting a different leadership style according to different situations (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969), while path goal theory focuses on influencing team members to believe that making a serious effort will attain valued outcomes (Evans, 1970, House, 1971). Last but not least is the LMX theory, which emphasises that leadership is a process with interaction between leader and follower (Graen, 1976) instead of behaviours or traits of leaders. LMX theory focuses on the dyadic level that explains the relationship between a leader and a follower (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995, Liden et al., 1997).

Dansereau Jr et al. (1975) first introduced vertical dyad linkage, which evolved into the concept of LMX, to acknowledge the different relationships leaders need to make efforts to build with individual followers according to their diversified personalities, attitudes and personal needs. There are two theories heavily influenced the development of LMX theory, namely role theory (Graen, 1976, Graen and Scandura, 1987) and social exchange theory (Erdogan and Liden, 2002, Kamdar and Van Dyne, 2007, Liao et al., 2010, Wayne and Green, 1993). Because of this, we can view LMX as a process of
either continuous role-making (Katz and Kahn, 1978) or reciprocal social exchange (Blau, 1964) to fulfill both leaders’ and followers’ expectations and needs in this relationship (Dansereau Jr et al., 1975). In terms of LMX, it was categorised as either in-group or out-group in early stage (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995, Liden et al., 1997) and later evolved into two categories including either high-quality or low quality. The shared respect and perceptions of mutual obligation between a leader and a follower will decide whether the relationship is of high or low quality (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). A high-quality LMX relationship refers to continuously generating feeling of mutual obligation and reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960, Liden et al., 1997) while a low-quality LMX relationship refers to transactional exchange rely on formal agreements, timely and fair exchange of tangible assets, such as employment contracts focusing on pay for performance (Blau, 1964).

The emotional connection between leaders and followers will be strengthened with the mutual reciprocation out of high-LMX relationships (Ferris et al., 2009, Gerstner and Day, 1997, Liden and Maslyn, 1998, Maslyn and Uhl-Bien, 2001, Uhl-Bien et al., 2000, Uhl-Bien and Maslyn, 2003). With high-quality LMX relationship, individuals will make extra effort stepping beyond formal organisational roles to achieve desired goals (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995) while individuals with low-quality LMX relationship will be stuck in just their formal organisational roles which will stop them from stepping out of the boundaries.

Individuals in a high-quality exchange relationship will not only experience high job satisfaction but also go beyond their formal job description to pay back their leaders who gave them extensive social, political and economic support (Liden and Graen, 1980, Wayne and Green, 1993). Empirical studies have examined the quality of LMX relationship as the predictor of a variety of outcomes in the workplace, including followers’ job satisfaction (Graen et al., 1982, Green et al., 1996), organisational citizenship behaviours (Gerstner and Day, 1997, Liden et al., 1997), turnover rate and followers’ performance because followers tend to reciprocate the positive treatment
they received from their leaders (House and Aditya, 1997).

2.3.2. Interpersonal emotion regulation and LMX

Emotions are highly relevant to understanding LMX because interpersonal exchanges are embedded with emotions and emotion-related information, although researchers in LMX have traditionally focused on a cognitive-transactional perspective (Ballinger and Rockmann, 2010, Saavedra and Van Dyne, 1999). There are five key theoretical frameworks, namely affective events theory (AET), the affect theory of social exchange (ATSE), emotional contagion theory (ECT), the appraisal theory of emotion (ATE), and the emotions as social information theory (EASI), might be used to understand the relationship between emotion-related constructs and LMX (Herman et al., 2018).

The first is Weiss and Cropanzano’s (1996) affective events theory, which claims that positive or negative affective events lead to individuals’ affective states and, in turn, influence their attitudes and behaviours (Butts et al., 2015, Dasborough, 2006). So a leader, as an important player in the organisation, will trigger affective events via his or her behaviour and emotion that will eventually have consequences for other employees (Dasborough, 2006, Gooty et al., 2010, Tse and Dasborough, 2008).

The second is the affect theory of social exchange, which addresses the specific role played by emotions in the process of social exchange between leaders and followers (Ashkanasy and Tse, 2008, Barsade, 2002, Tse and Dasborough, 2008). IER influences how followers and leaders feel about the social exchange relationship since IER is covered by ATSE, which posits specifically that social exchange processes cause both leaders’ and followers’ positive or negative emotion (Lawler, 2001). Many studies have examined the relationship between LMX and emotion-related constructs adopting the ATSE framework. While most of the emotion-related constructs between persons that have been studied relate to emotional intelligence, psychological contract violation, affective commitment, affectivity, followers’ emotional masking, etc., only Little et al.
(2016) have studied how leaders’ use of specific emotional regulation strategies to manage followers’ negative emotions relate differently to LMX perceptions, while another study revealed how LMX moderates the main effect relationship between the perception of leaders’ intrapersonal emotion regulation rooted in emotional labour (deep-acting and surface-acting) and followers’ work attitudes and behaviours (Fisk and Friesen, 2012).

The third is emotional contagion theory, which claims that individuals unconsciously and unintentionally mimic the emotions of others (Hatfield et al., 1992). This theory explains emotion transfer within dyads (Fujimura et al., 2010) and groups (Collins et al., 2013). An individual difference variable associated with this concept is emotional contagion susceptibility (Doherty, 1997), which explains why emotional experiences across employees are different through leader-follower interactions (Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2002, Rajah et al., 2011). LMX plays a critical role in facilitating the contagion process within dyads, within teams and among all members in the team (Barsade, 2002, Tee et al., 2013, Tse and Dasborough, 2008).

The fourth is the appraisal theory of emotion, which claims that the result from individuals’ evaluation of events triggers different emotions (Scherer et al., 2001) from three perspectives including relational, motivational and cognitive (Lazarus, 1991). From a relational perspective, individuals appraise the interaction of people and their situational environment. From a motivational perspective, individuals appraise the situation and its’ relationship with their goals. From a cognitive perspective, individuals appraise the degree of relevancy of the situation to the achievement of their goals. There are two stages, a primary and a secondary stage, involved in the process (Lazarus, 1991). In the primary stage, individuals evaluate two major motivational dimensions, namely relevance and congruence (Smith and Kirby, 2009). In the secondary stage, individuals assess their ability to deal with the emotional consequences from the primary appraisal stage (Herman et al., 2018). And there are two categories of coping strategies identified as the result of appraisal. One is a problem-focused strategy, in which individuals seek
to directly handle the situation that caused the emotion, and the other is an emotion-focused strategy, where individuals seek to regulate the emotion instead of the situation that caused it (Herman et al., 2018). In short, individuals’ emotional reactions to a situation are the result of both primary and secondary appraisals of leadership events (Herman et al., 2018).

The fifth is emotions as social information theory (EASI) which refers to individuals consciously interpret the meaning of others’ emotional states and display to make decision on how they regulate their emotional states (Van Kleef, 2007). The EASI model is a cognitive appraisal process in which individuals will decide the proper emotional reactions in response to their perceptions of leaders’ emotional displays.

In the literature review, I noted that very little empirical research has examined the IER strategy as the antecedent of LMX. For antecedents of LMX, there are three key categories, i.e. follower characteristics (e.g. competence, agreeableness, extraversion, openness, positive affectivity and negative affectivity), leader characteristics (e.g. supervisors’ expectations of followers, transformational leadership, extraversion and agreeableness) and interpersonal relationships (e.g. liking, perceived similarity, assertiveness and leader trust). It was only in the last decade that a few researchers considered IER as the antecedent of LMX.

I claim that there are three pathways from followers’ perception of leaders’ use of an IER strategy to LMX. First, followers have role expectation toward a leader regarding his or her IER (Dasborough, 2006, Toegel et al., 2013). Leaders are expected to work on eliminating workplace hassles in order to help followers to manage negative emotions (Dasborough and Ashkanasy, 2002, Humphrey, 2008). When leaders attempt to alleviate negative emotions in their followers, the role expectations toward leaders may be met. So LMX is improved and a sense of obligation from the follower is also created. A second pathway from leaders’ use of an IER strategy to LMX is how followers attribute leaders’ intention during the interaction. Dasborough and Ashkanasy
suggest that people act as “naïve scientists” in interpreting, making sense of and attributing intentions to other people’s behaviour. Followers may similarly attribute leaders’ IER behaviour during their interactions with leaders in the workplace, which in turn could affect perceptions of the relationship. For example, if followers perceive that leaders have acted for the benefit of followers then this should lead to a more positive LMX than if they feel that the leaders have acted in their own interest (Niven et al., 2019). A third pathway is related to the expression of emotions which will enhance communication and promote relationship between leaders and followers (Gottman and Levenson, 2000, Gross and John, 2003). If, when using different IER strategies, leaders allow their followers to express their feelings, this is supposed to make LMX better since followers appreciate leaders allowing them to express their emotions and thoughts (Gross and Levenson, 1997).

In my study, I propose that three IER strategies that leaders can use to manage their followers’ feelings, namely situational modification, cognitive change and attentional deployment, are positively associated with LMX. For situational modification, the leader is aware of the cause of followers’ negative emotions and directly addresses the cause to help followers extricate themselves from these emotions. For example, when someone is burned out with too many things going on at home that eventually impact their work, the leader will give him or her a few days off to take care of his or her family first. S/he will appreciate the leader’s behaviour in addressing the issue directly and the leader’s care for him or her. This ought to meet followers’ expectations about leaders’ duty of care and should be interpreted as being an unselfish behaviour designed in the interest of followers. It also allows followers to express how they truly feel rather than suppressing their feelings. So, leaders’ use of a situation modification strategy is positively related to LMX.

Cognitive change does not directly address the cause, but leaders help followers reinterpret the situation, which triggers negative emotions in followers. For example, people may feel nervous during a merger and acquisition. They worry about losing their
job, their salary being cut, etc. Leaders help to reinterpret the situation into a good opportunity for companies to have a competitive advantage in the market, which may eventually give employees more career opportunities. The team feels good about it and changes the attitude towards the merger and acquisition from a potential threat into an opportunity to learn. Followers understand why leaders are doing this and appreciate leaders’ attempt to reframe the situation, which will improve followers’ perception of their relationship with the leader and the sense of obligation towards him or her. So cognitive change will cause followers have positive thinking about the leader (e.g. “S/he cares about my feeling and helps me to reappraise the situation”), so that a sense of obligation is created. Again, this IER strategy will also allow followers to express their true feelings. Thus, a leader’s use of a cognitive change strategy should be positively related to LMX.

When leaders adopt an attentional deployment strategy, it does not remove, reframe or address the cause of followers’ negative emotion. In many cases, followers knew that their line manager may not have enough influence to change the situation that triggered the negative emotions. For example, followers knew that their line manager had no power to stop the merger and acquisition from happening. But followers will appreciate their leader caring about them and even trying to distract them from a negative situation. For example, leaders will often use humour (e.g. make fun of themselves to let followers relax) or other means (e.g. discussing the weakness of a common enemy) as ways of distracting followers in order to improve their emotions (Niven et al., 2009). Leaders may joke about opening a new small company and having all the team members working with them again if they got fired during the merger and acquisition. Followers know their leader can do nothing about the situation but appreciate their leader still helping them to think less about the situation, which means s/he cares about them. So, the role expectation is met, the leader’s actions are interpreted as being in followers’ interest and followers are also able to express their true feelings. The relationship between leader and follower should therefore be improved when they perceive the leader’s use of an attentional deployment strategy.
Taking into consideration all three pathways, I make three hypotheses as shown below.

Hypothesis 1: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of situation modification at time 1 will be positively associated with LMX at time 2.

Hypothesis 2: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of cognitive change at time 1 will be positively associated with LMX at time 2.

Hypothesis 3: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of attentional deployment at time 1 will be positively associated with LMX at time 2.

Modulating the emotional response strategy is aimed at reducing followers’ expression of negative emotions once they are experienced, which indicates that leaders do not care about followers’ feelings and have no intention of addressing the source of followers’ negative emotions. In interpersonal relationships research, a key cause that will make relationships worse is the suppression of emotion which contains a variety of information (Alea and Bluck, 2007). According to the three pathways I listed above, when a leader mandates followers to suppress their emotions, the role expectation of the leader is unmet since the leader does not make followers feel validated, and the leader loses the opportunity for open, free and fair communication with followers, which could be adopted by the leader to improve the relationship (Gross and Levenson, 1997), and followers will interpret that leader’s use of modulating the emotional response strategy as being in the leader’s own self-interest. The use of modulating the emotional response is likely to hurt the communication between leaders and followers and eventually damage the relationship quality (Gross and John, 2003). I therefore expect leaders’ use of modulating the emotional response strategy to be negatively associated with LMX. My fourth hypothesis is shown as below.

Hypothesis 4: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of modulating the emotional
response at time 1 will be negatively associated with LMX at time 2.

2.3.3. Leader-follower exchange and job satisfaction and performance

Leaders have significant influence on their direct subordinates’ experience in the workplace that is beneficial for the socialisation (Ferris et al., 2009, Liden et al., 1993), motivation (Scandura et al., 1986), mentoring (Scandura and Schriesheim, 1994) and support (Settoon et al., 1996, Uhl-Bien and Maslyn, 2003) of their followers.

Relational leadership theory (RLT) proposes that relationships between leaders and followers are crucial for employees’ work experience (Brower et al., 2000). As an example of RLT, it has been proved that LMX is a primary leadership approach emphasising that interaction between leaders and followers, as the antecedent of work outcomes, is far more important than the individual characteristics and perceptions of leaders and followers (Uhl-Bien, 2011). The positive relationship between leaders and followers will benefit work outcomes of both sides (Cogliser et al., 2009) if they both put effort into the relationship (Maslyn and Uhl-Bien, 2001). In short, LMX determines critical work outcomes.

The empirical research on consequences of LMX includes attitudes and perceptions (e.g. job satisfaction, satisfaction with leaders, organisational commitment and turnover intention), behaviours (e.g. communications, innovation, organisational citizenship, performance and turnover) and outcomes provided by the organisation (e.g. bonuses, career progression, promotions and salary increases). It has been found that there is a significant relationship between LMX and the behavioural outcomes of job performance, turnover (Gerstner and Day, 1997) and organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) (Ilies et al., 2007). Attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction and organisational commitment were also found to be significantly and positively associated with LMX (Gerstner and Day, 1997). Figure 2.5 shows a list of consequences of a leader-member exchange relationship.
There are three major meta-analyses on LMX that have found significant relationships between LMX and the behavioural outcomes of job performance (Gerstner and Day, 1997, Martin et al., 2016) and organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) (Ilies et al., 2007). Gerstner and Day (1997) also found significant and positive associations between LMX and the attitude outcomes of followers’ overall job satisfaction. Based on the representation in the literature, I propose below two hypotheses regarding LMX on followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction, both of which are critical in the workplace.

2.3.3.1. Leader-member exchange and job satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to an individual’s pleasurable emotional state after s/he appraises his or her job (Locke, 1976). Building on Locke’s (1976) definition, Fisher (2000) and Weiss (2002) defined job satisfaction as an attitude (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993) with two components, one considered affective, such as mood and emotions, and the other

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**Figure 2.5** List of consequences of leader-member exchange.

**Table**

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<th>Consequences</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Turnover Intentions</td>
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<td>• Actual Turnover</td>
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<td>• Overall OCB</td>
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<tr>
<td>• <strong>Job Performance</strong></td>
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<td>• Overall Organisational Commitment</td>
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<td>• Affective Commitment</td>
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<td>• Normative Commitment</td>
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<td>• <strong>General Job Satisfaction</strong></td>
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<td>• Satisfaction with Supervisor</td>
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<td>• Satisfaction with Pay</td>
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<td>• Procedural Justice</td>
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<td>• Distributive Justice</td>
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<td>• Empowerment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Perception of Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Role Ambiguity</td>
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<td>• Role Conflict</td>
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</table>
considered cognitive, such as belief, judgment and comparison (Fisher, 2000, Weiss, 2002).

A variety of studies on LMX theory (Dansereau Jr et al., 1973, Graen and Schiemann, 1978) have proved that there are positive relationships between LMX and job satisfaction (Golden and Veiga, 2008, Major et al., 1995, Schriesheim et al., 1992, Vecchio et al., 1986). There are three key paths that can explain LMX as a predictor of job satisfaction from previous literature. First, a better LMX relationship offers employees many privileges and access to various resources (e.g. authorisation, involvement in the decision making, visibility of information) and positive socio-emotional experiences (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005). Second, employees in a high-quality LMX feel privileged and superior compared to employees in a lower-quality LMX, which consequently increases the job satisfaction of employees who have a high-quality LMX. The comparison between what employees get and what they expected to get form the path towards their job satisfaction (Locke, 1976). Employees with a high LMX relationship perceive more than they expected, which leads to higher job satisfaction while employees with a low relationship receive less than they expected, which leads to lower job satisfaction. Third, LMX is positively associated with job satisfaction because of work design models (Volmer et al., 2011). According to the Job Characteristics Model (Richard and Oldham, 1976), there are five core job characteristics, namely task identity, task significance, autonomy, skill variety and task feedback, are related to job satisfaction. Autonomy and social support are the predictors of job satisfaction, according to the Job Demand Job Control Model (Karesek and Theorell, 1990). A comprehensive list of predictor variables for job satisfaction had been summarized (Warr, 1999). Employees in a high LMX relationship have higher chance to get enriched jobs (Lapierre et al., 2006) associated with optimal levels of job features which will be positively related to job satisfaction (Parker and Ohly, 2008).

According to these three pathways between LMX and individuals’ job satisfaction that have been empirically tested, I make the hypothesis that LMX will be positively related
to followers’ job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 5: Followers’ perception of LMX at time 2 will be positively related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3.

2.3.3.2. Leader-member exchange and job performance

Performance contains three components which are task, citizenship and counterproductive (Judge and Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012, Rotundo and Sackett, 2002) though it has been conceptualised in many different ways (Campbell, 1990). In my study, I focus on task performance, which refers to employees’ behaviours that are involved in the accomplishment of tasks, including behaviours that contribute to producing a product or providing a service (Martin et al., 2016, Rotundo and Sackett, 2002). This concept covers not only the quantity and quality of work output but also the completion of work duties and job responsibilities (Martin et al., 2016).

There are three conspicuous pathways from LMX to team members’ task performance. First, good relationships occur when individuals clear about their roles according to the role theory (Graen and Scandura, 1987). For example, followers have expected behaviours such as making decisions, coordinating resources and taking responsibility from their leader. The role expectation of the leader and follower will significantly influence the pattern of social exchanges and the resources that could be exchanged (Martin et al., 2016). Given this, it is expected that high-quality LMX should create role clarity in the workplace which will lead to good performance. Second, LMX is also a process of trust-building (Bauer and Green, 1996, Liden et al., 1993, Scandura and Pellegrini, 2008). According to social exchange theory (Croppanzano and Mitchell, 2005), a high-quality LMX develops trust between a leader and a follower and the relationship between trust and behavioural outcome, e.g. performance, has been well established (Burke et al., 2007, Colquitt et al., 2012, Dirks and Ferrin, 2002, Pillai et al., 1999, Yang and Mossholder, 2010). Thus, I will say that a high-quality LMX should
enhance the trust between leaders and followers, which will eventually improve performance. Third, self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000) represents a broad framework for understanding people’s motivation, including both intrinsic (e.g. interests, curiosity, values) and extrinsic (e.g. reward systems and evaluation) sources of motivation. Conditions that support an employee’s experience of autonomy, competence and relatedness encourage people’s motivation and engagement in performance which is one of the forms of work-related activities (Martin et al., 2016). A high-quality LMX will make all three conditions happen: autonomy provided by leaders, followers’ competence improvement with leaders’ feedback and support for performance, and relatedness from an improved LMX (Martin et al., 2016). Therefore, a high-quality LMX should be positively related to performance with improved followers’ motivation and empowerment (Liden et al., 2000).

Taken together, each of these three pathways, i.e. role clarity, trust and motivation and empowerment, allows improved performance with the building of high-quality LMX. Thus, I hypothesise the following:

Hypothesis 6: Followers’ perception of LMX at time 2 will be positively related to followers’ objective job performance (sales attainment in my study) at time 3.

2.3.4. Mediated effects of interpersonal emotion regulation on followers’ job performance and job satisfaction

Relational leadership theorists argue that the relationship developed between leaders and followers is an extremely important factor influences followers’ outcomes (Brower et al., 2000). It appears that LMX provides an important explanation of the relationship between the antecedents and work outcomes I listed above. So, leadership is relational and it is not sufficiently accurate to just examine individual attributes alone (Uhl-Bien, 2011). Isolating the aspect of leader or follower may not be adequate, or at least too limited, in interpreting outcomes in the workplace.
Theory and empirical research have indicated that LMX may operate as a mediation mechanism between antecedents and consequences (Erdogan and Liden, 2002, Liden et al., 1997). This is reflected in my model shown in Figure 2.4, which presents LMX as a mediator between leaders’ use of IER strategies and the consequences experienced by followers, which are job performance and job satisfaction. In organisations, direct leaders have significant influence on individuals’ experience with their assistance in the socialisation (Ferris et al., 2009, Liden et al., 1993) and support (Settoon et al., 1996, Uhl-Bien and Maslyn, 2003) on their subordinates.

In my study, I expect sales representatives’ emotional experiences to be directly tempered by their line managers, who will use different IER strategies to regulate followers’ negative emotions. Sales attainment is the rate of achievement of actual sales against the sales target that the sales supervisor assigned to each sales representative. I argue that the sales attainment against the sales target given by the sales supervisor is a core mechanism for followers’ expression of both felt obligation and the reciprocity with high-quality LMX relationship, and vice versa. My study is going to identify one of the most important work outcomes associated with IER strategies. I position LMX as the explanatory mechanism from followers’ perception of leaders’ use of an IER strategy to sales representatives’ sales attainment against the sales target set by the sales supervisor.

When the leader uses the strategies of situation modification, cognitive change and attentional deployment, followers’ expectations of leaders are met, they will attribute leaders’ actions as being other-oriented and at the same time followers will appreciate that the leader allows them to express their true emotions. All these will contribute to improved quality of LMX relationship which reduces the uncertainty in the work, enhances the trust between leader and follower, and provides more autonomy and eventually result in followers’ improved task performance. So, I propose that each of these three strategies will positively influence followers’ objective job performance via
Hypothesis 7: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of situation modification at time 1 will be positively and indirectly related to followers’ sales attainment at time 3 through LMX at time 2.

Hypothesis 8: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of cognitive change at time 1 will be positively and indirectly related to followers’ sales attainment at time 3 through LMX at time 2.

Hypothesis 9: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of attentional deployment at time 1 will be positively and indirectly related to followers’ sales attainment at time 3 through LMX at time 2.

When leaders try to influence followers to suppress their negative emotions, the communication is weakened, followers will not think the leader is doing what s/he is supposed to do as a leader and the leader’s behaviour shows self-orientation from followers’ perspectives. All these factors will hurt the relationship between leader and follower, which will destroy their trust, make the work unclear and worsen relatedness, all of which detract from followers’ performance. So I propose that modulating the emotional response strategy will negatively influence followers’ objective job performance via a worse LMX relationship.

Hypothesis 10: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of modulating the emotional response at time 1 will be negatively and indirectly related to followers’ sales attainment at time 3 through LMX at time 2.

Job satisfaction reveals the degree to which an employee enjoys a job, which is a pivotal job attitude and outcome variable in organisational behaviour (Judge et al., 2001). When leaders use the IER strategies of situation modification, cognitive change and

Internal Use Only
attentional deployment, they provide clues about their willingness and intention to remove the barriers that triggered followers’ negative emotions. Followers’ role expectation toward leaders is met, followers’ attribution of their leader’s intentionality is other-oriented and followers appreciate that their leader allows them to express their true feelings. So the quality of LMX relationship is improved, which gives followers many privileges and resources, including more autonomy and support from the leader. All of these factors are positively associated with followers’ job satisfaction. So I hypothesise that leaders’ use of each of these IER strategies will positively impact followers’ job satisfaction via enhanced LMX.

Hypothesis 11: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of situation modification at time 1 will be positively and indirectly related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2.

Hypothesis 12: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of cognitive change at time 1 will be positively and indirectly related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2.

Hypothesis 13: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of attentional deployment at time 1 will be positively and indirectly related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2.

In contrast to employ situation modification, cognitive change or attentional deployment, the strategy of modulating followers’ emotional responses will be negatively related to followers’ job satisfaction, because followers will think that the leader is not addressing the underlying causes of their negative emotions and the leader will not allow followers to express their negative emotions. This in turn will lead to low-quality LMX, and low-quality LMX means that followers experience fewer privileges and less autonomy and social support from their leader, which will make
followers feel less satisfied. So, I hypothesise that the leader’s use of modulating the emotional response IER strategy will negatively impact followers’ job satisfaction via lower LMX.

Hypothesis 14: Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of modulating the emotional response at time 1 will be negatively and indirectly related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2.
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH CONTEXT AND METHOD

The two aims of the current chapter are to introduce the organisational context – a fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) company – within which my research took place and to outline the methods of my study conducted in this setting. First, the nature of the context is described followed by a discussion on the relevance of the context to the main study and the process undertaken in terms of having access to the organisation. The methodological requirements for the study are then summarised and a rationale for the approach and design of the study is presented. Then, the sample acquisition process, the participants and the measures used in the study are also elaborated. Finally, I explain the analysis strategy for my research.

3.1. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH CONTEXT

My research was conducted in a fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) company in China. It is a multinational company operating in China with more than 20,000 employees covering 11 provinces in the country. One operation unit (OU) covers one province and my study was conducted in two of the 11 OUs in that FMCG organisation. The two operation units have a similar population of around 50 million, as well as a similar business size and number of employees.

In each OU, there are sales, marketing, finance, logistics, manufacturing, human resources and public affairs elements. In my thesis, I focus on the sales side of the OUs. The sales head reports to the sales and marketing head who reports to the general manager of the operation unit. Normally there are a few regional sales managers reporting to the sales head. Underneath the regional sales manager there are sales centre managers or sales supervisors who directly manage sales representatives. In my study, the sample includes sales representatives and sales supervisors. The sales representatives visit customers five days a week. Sales representatives communicate promotions, helping with merchandising and placing orders for customers they visit.
Sales representatives report directly to sales supervisors whose job is to manage sales representatives in terms of coaching, mentoring, supporting and directing. The sales team needs to come into the office for a morning meeting every working day and then the sales representatives leave the office to visit customers as planned. Sales supervisors have a daily meeting with sales representatives and have a route ride (where the sales supervisor visits customers together with the sales representatives to coach them on selling skills) with selected sales representatives routinely. So, sales supervisors interact with different sales representatives nearly every day.

Since sales representatives visit customers every working day and take orders from customers, they have substantial influence on the sales performance of their region. Each sales representative has a sales goal every month. Sales representatives’ commission is based on the sales attainment percentage against the given sales goal monthly. The sum of the sales representatives’ sales attainment is the sales supervisor’s sales attainment. So, sales supervisors have the responsibility and motivation to help and monitor sales representatives in their team in order to achieve or exceed their own sales goal every month.

3.2. A CLOSER LOOK AT SALES OPERATIONS AND PERFORMANCE

In the FMCG organisation in which I conducted my research, one sales supervisor normally manages five to six sales representatives in terms of the management span. Of course, in some cases, one sales supervisor may manage less than five or more than six sales representatives. For example, if the sales office only has seven sales representatives, the company will have one sales supervisor to manage all seven sales representatives instead of having two supervisors. But the normal set-up is five to six sales representatives reporting to one sales supervisor. One sales representative will visit around 200 customers every week and the frequency of visit is weekly, biweekly or monthly according to service policy. Sales teams are organised according to what the company calls “sales offices”, which are based on geographical areas. In big sales
offices that cover more than 2,000 customers, sales supervisors report to a sales manager, who in turn reports the regional sales manager. The organisational chart is as shown in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1 The organisational chart of sales operations

Sales representatives receive a sales goal every month. The sales goal is set by the sales operation control manager taking into consideration the last six months’ sales goal
attainment and the sales goal attainment of the same month in the previous year. The sales manager and sales supervisor can adjust the sales goal, but it needs to be within a 10% range. At the end of the month, the sales attainment is expressed as a percentage of actual sales against the sales goal, which is used to determine the sales representatives’ monthly bonus. Normally the sum of sales representatives’ sales goal is equal to their sales supervisor’s sales goal for the month. So, each sales representative’s sales performance will influence sales supervisors’ performance. For this reason, sales supervisors give a lot of time and energy to coaching sales representatives sales skills, such as how to interpret the apparent success of a store, how to use mobile tools to place the right order based on the stock in the store and how to get extra displays and coolers to increase sales, etc. Sales supervisors also interact with different sales representatives nearly every day to motivate them to achieve or over deliver the sales goal.

There is a correlation between sales attainment and sales commission but with a different slope below or over 100% attainment. If a sales representative’s sales attainment is lower than 50% of the sales goal, s/he will receive no bonus. If a representative’s sales attainment is between 50% and 100%, the slope between the sales attainment and sales bonus is 1. If a sales representative’s sales attainment is between 100% and 150%, the sales representative will receive double the bonus for all sales over the goal amount. Sales bonuses are capped at 200%. The correlation between sales attainment and sales bonus is as shown in Figure 3.2.
3.3. GAINING ACCESS AND COLLECTING DATA

I have been working in this multinational FMCG organisation for more than 20 years. I approached the general managers and human resource managers in these two OUs informally about the research. They were all very supportive and agreed to have their OUs participate. I then worked with the human resource managers on how to conduct the surveys and collect data. In accordance with the ethical approval from the university, all the data collected will only be used for academic purposes and will be kept confidential to the company personnel including general managers and human resource managers.

In keeping with tradition, the OUs used QR (Quick Response) codes to conduct work surveys and employees were familiar with this technique. Therefore, I chose QR codes as the primary method for collecting data. The QR code is a trademark for a type of matrix barcode and was first developed by the Japanese company Denso Wave in 1994. QR codes are made up of a quiet zone, position detection patterns, separators for position detection patterns, timing patterns, alignment patterns, format information, version information, data and error correction code words (Chuang et al., 2010). Figure
3.3 shows the basic structure of QR codes.

![Figure 3.3 The basic structure of QR codes](image1.png)

I sent the questionnaires of sales representatives to human resource managers. They helped to convert the questionnaire into a QR code so that participants could scan and fill in the questionnaire on their cellphones. We used the platform that the OUs were already using, which is wjx.cn. Human resource managers sent me the QR code after it had been generated. I then verified the contents of the questionnaire to ensure that all items were accurate and tried to complete the questionnaire on my cellphone to check whether it was user-friendly.

Then I discussed with human resource managers the details on the logistics of data collection. The idea came from the human resource managers that it would be good to ask all sales representatives to fill in the survey during the sales morning meeting since everyone would be there. Human resource managers sent out guidelines on how to communicate with the sales team, including explaining that it was for academic rather than business use, how to scan and fill in the questionnaire and how to submit the survey, with participants just needing to click “finish” and “submit” at the end of the survey.
I also discussed with human resource managers how to encourage more sales teams to join the survey and complete the questionnaire. There is a function in wjx.cn whereby researchers can give out e-cash, known as “red envelope”, at the end of the survey. The amount of “red envelope” is random and I maximised it to one euro per questionnaire completed. Since the amount is random, it made the survey fun and encouraged more sales representatives to join in and complete the survey. I personally paid the total amount of e-cash after each survey round had been completed.

As regards conducting the survey, I conferred with human resource managers on the date to avoid busy days so that sales teams would be more focused on completing the survey. Then the sales manager or human resource manager helped to communicate with the sales team about the purpose of the research, which also appeared on the questionnaire for sales representatives (see Appendix 1). The sales team then scanned the QR code and completed the survey. At the end of each survey, they received random amounts of e-cash to thank them for joining the survey. All the data went directly to the back end system of wjx.cn and I received all the raw data for my study.

3.4. METHODOLOGY

As a researcher, I am engaged in field research study that targets real people and real things in real organisations. The field study is a method aimed at motivating researchers to come up with more new theoretical ideas with exploratory trials and assess whether established theories are valid in the real world with cross-validation (McGrath, 1964).

When talking about the framework of a research, it involves the convergence of the philosophy that the researchers hold, the research designs and the methods the researchers use. Creswell and Creswell (2017) pointed out that researchers need to be very clear about their philosophical world view, which sets the assumptions for their studies. It is important to identify the philosophical ideas that are largely hidden in
research studies (Slife et al., 1995) and impact the practices of researches. When I use
the term “world view”, I follow the definition that it is a basic set of beliefs that people
use to guide their behaviours (Guba, 1990). It has been called different things, including
“paradigms” (Lincoln et al., 2011), “epistemologies” and “ontologies” (Crotty, 1998),
or “research methodology” (Neuman, 2007). Researchers will normally employ
different research methods in their studies with different world views, including the
four that have been thoroughly discussed in the literature, namely post-positivism,
constructivism, transformativism and pragmatism (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). I
present the four key world views in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Four world views

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-positivism</th>
<th>Constructivism</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determination</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reductionism</td>
<td>Multiple participant meanings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empirical observation and measurement</td>
<td>Social and historical construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory verification</td>
<td>Theory generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformativism</td>
<td>Pragmatism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Consequences of actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power- and justice-oriented</td>
<td>Problem-centred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative</td>
<td>Pluralistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change-oriented</td>
<td>Real-world practice-oriented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My world view is post-positivism, which makes me believe that causes (probably)
determine effects or outcomes. With this deterministic model, my research needs to
recognise and evaluate the causes that determine the outcomes. My research design
reflects me as a post-positivist who is a reductionistic in minimising ideas into discrete
and confined variables that are comprised of hypotheses and study questions (Creswell
and Creswell, 2017). As a post-positivist, I study participants’ behaviour with the
development of a number of measures of observations, I collect data on instruments
based on measures that will support or disprove my hypotheses to verify the causal
relationship and I believe that data, evidence and rationality forge knowledge. As
Creswell and Creswell (2017) pointed out that a quantitative research design, as the
traditional form of research, fits the assumptions of post-positivist more than qualitative research, I adopted a purely quantitative design for my research. Specifically, I took a non-experimental design, a survey, in my study and collected data with a three-wave time-separated approach because the data from the survey research can provide a numeric characterization of a group of people’s attitudes, opinions or trends by involving a sample of that group of people in the research (George and Zhou, 2007).

Researchers who use post-positivist claims to develop knowledge (i.e. a cause and effect mindset, narrowing down to particular variables, hypotheses and questions, measuring observations and verifying theories) normally employ a quantitative approach with strategies such as experiments and surveys to collect data for statistical calculation (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). It is more appropriate to use a quantitative approach when the models and questions in the research have been stipulated in line with well-established theories. In this case, my study builds on clear theories with well-developed and broadly agreed constructs and models that have been used by various researchers over time to accumulate knowledge (Edmondson and McManus, 2007). I developed my hypotheses, which are anchored in the mature IER and LMX literature and are argued thoroughly. My research adopted the hypothesis-testing approach trying to examine relationships between previous well-developed IER and LMX constructs and variables to produce variance theory, which is IERs’ effect on objective performance via LMX. As Edmondson and McManus (2007) pointed out that mature theory studies rely heavily on statistics and inferences to verify new theoretical propositions, the précised model that is supported by quantitative data typically consists in an effective field research that involves mature theory. Since my study builds on mature theory, which is normally advanced with convincing quantitative research (Edmondson and McManus, 2007), I employed a quantitative approach and used well-established constructs to collect quantitative data to test the hypotheses in my study. The constructs that I used in my research to collect quantitative data were well understood and I used reliable, valid measures of them from the literature review.
3.4.1. Research design

My research is about the influence of leaders’ use of IER strategies on followers’ outcomes. It takes time to allow the cumulative effects of leaders’ use of IER strategies to unfold over time. At the same time, it also takes time to develop the relationship quality between sales supervisors and sale representatives. Each sales supervisor has an average of five to six sales representatives. So, the dyad interaction between sales supervisors and each sales representative also takes turns, which needs time to accumulate. When considering the influence of LMX on performance, it also takes time to materialise. For example, sales representatives may need time to improve their relationship with customers, which will eventually impact sales performance. Taking into consideration all the factors and the nature of the industry, I decided to employ a three-wave time-separated design in my study. The second round of data collection on LMX took place six months after the first round of data collection on independent variables and control variables. The second round of data collection on job performance and job satisfaction happened another six months after the second round of data collection. The three-wave time-separated design offers stronger evidence of the causal inference direction than a cross-sectional design.

3.4.2. Ethical considerations

In designing my study, three main ethical issues were considered: voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity. In my study, all participants could scan the QR code by themselves and decide whether to complete the survey or not. They had been told that it was totally voluntary since taking part is not part of their job. When they completed the survey, they randomly received e-cash to thank them for their participation in the survey. The e-cash was less than one euro. In China, it is normal practice to randomly give participants e-cash to thank them for their time. Most of the participants were familiar with this e-cash incentive, which the Chinese call “red envelope”. So, all participants were encouraged to join the survey but totally voluntarily.
With regard to confidentiality, it was important to make sure that the data I collected would be completely confidential. Each participant could scan the QR code with his or her own cellphone and then fill in the questionnaire by himself/herself. When the participants had completed the survey, the data went to the wjx.cn back end system. Wjx.cn then sent all the data only to human resource managers, who sent them to the researcher, i.e. me, directly. So, no one can see the participants’ responses except for the researchers and two human resource managers. I have communicated with the human resource managers who agreed that the data will not be used for any other purposes than my study.

Finally, with respect to the issue of anonymity, the survey did not require participants to provide their names. Each participant provided their employee code as the identity verification to join the survey and I used the employee code to match the performance data. Sales supervisors were required to score their team members at time 3. In the survey, sales supervisors were asked to fill in the employee code of the respective sales representative whose performance they were rating. So, no names will appear in the research.

3.4.3. Participants

Participants were from two OUs (hereafter OU A and OU B). At time 1, which was the beginning of August 2017, 483 sales representatives from OU A and 441 sales representatives from OU B participated in the survey. In total, there were 924 sales representatives who joined my study in the first wave and provided ratings on IER and negative affect at work, among other things. At time 2, which was six months later, the beginning of March 2018, the same participants received an invitation to take part in the second survey and provided ratings for LMX. In the third wave, which occurred another six months later in October 2018, sales representatives completed the survey items for job satisfaction. Since each employee has an identical employee code, I used
the employee code to match the data from three-time surveys. The turnover rate of FMCGs is relatively high in China. So, some of the sales team members left the company at three survey times. Eventually, 620 sales representatives returned all three questionnaires. The response attrition rate was 32.9%. The support from each OU’s HR team and the sponsorship from each GM to allow sales team to complete the questionnaires during work time is the reason why I was able to achieve high response rates. Sales representatives’ ages ranged between 20 and 48 years, 229 (61.7%) were male, 188 (50.7%) high school educated or below and 153 (41.2%) college educated. The sales attainment (the overall rate of actual sales versus the sales goal) was obtained from the HR system in these two operation units.

3.4.4. Measures

I employed translation and back-translation procedures (Brislin, 1986) to translate the English-based measures into Chinese at all three data collection times. I used scales ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") for IERs, LMX and job satisfaction. The only exception is that I used scales ranging from 1 ("not at all") to 5 ("a great deal") for negative emotion.

At each time point, I created two survey questionnaires: one for sales representatives and another for sales supervisors. As my theoretical model relies only on data provided by the sales representatives (plus an objective data measure), below, I outline the measures from that survey. However, details of the sales supervisor survey are provided in the Appendices of the thesis, for further information.

3.4.4.1. Sales representatives’ survey

*Interpersonal emotion regulation strategies.* In my study, I investigated the impact of followers’ perception of leaders’ use of IER strategies on LMX. Considering that leaders may engage in IER unconsciously (Gyurak et al., 2011), I chose to assess leaders’
use of an IER strategy from the perspective of followers rather than from leaders’ own perspective. So the IER strategy measurement from followers’ perspective is able to capture the IER strategy that is used by leaders either consciously or unconsciously (Madrid et al., 2019). Secondly, I chose to measure leaders’ use of an emotion regulation strategy from followers’ perspective rather than leaders’ own rating, which is in line with the strategy applied by other researchers (e.g. Little et al., 2016, Madrid et al., 2018). My study focuses on a leader’s regulation on emotions of a follower instead of the whole team. So the data about this regulation behaviour from followers’ perspective fits my study better than from leaders’ own perspective. A further reason for using followers’ perception of leaders’ use of an IER strategy is that I theorised that it is recipients’ inferences about the IER strategy they received that is critical for influencing the LMX. So, it makes sense to collect data about leaders’ use of an IER strategy from followers’ perspective. I used data from sales representatives’ perception of sales supervisors’ use of IER strategies because such strategies may only have an effect when their usage is perceived by the followers (Niven et al., 2012c).

In my study, IER strategies were measured using the scale developed by Little et al. (2012), which includes four five-item subscales measuring each of the four IER strategies. Employees filled surveys with the items on a five-point Likert-type scale. The four IER strategies being measured are situation modification (SM), cognitive change (CC), attention deployment (AD), and modulating the emotional response (MER). Sample items include “My supervisor modifies the elements of the situation that are having an undesired impact on others” for SM; “My supervisor focuses their attention away from the troubling aspect of the problem when a situation is disturbing others” for CC; “My supervisor tries to influence the emotions of others by changing how they think about the situation they are in” for AD; and “My supervisor encourages others to keep their emotions to themselves” for MER. Before sales representatives filled in the survey, they were asked to what extent their sales supervisors engaged in a specific behaviour towards sales representatives’ negative emotions in the workplace.
The coefficient alpha value assessing the reliability of the IER strategies scale was 0.851 for situation modification, 0.883 for attention deployment, 0.899 for cognitive change and 0.868 for modulating the emotion response.

*LMX.* In my study, I use the most widely adopted seven-item LMX measures (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). Meta-analytical evidence indicates that, compared to all other available instruments, seven-item LMX measures provide the soundest psychometric properties and the highest correlations with outcomes (Gerstner and Day, 1997). LMX can be measured from either the leader’s or member’s perspective. In my study, I used the member’s perspective LMX because LMX is more reliably assessed from a member’s perspective than from a leader’s perspective (Gerstner and Day, 1997). Another reason is that it fits my study design that followers’ perception of LMX leads to the change of followers’ behaviour, which eventually influences followers’ objective performance. Also, follower reports have frequently been used in previous researches on LMX (Chen et al., 2007, Erdogan and Enders, 2007). Items were measured on a five-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” and sample items include “I usually know how satisfied my supervisor is with what I do” and “My supervisor understands my job problems and needs well”. A high score on the scale indicates a higher-quality LMX relationship.

The coefficient alpha value was 0.855.

*Job satisfaction.* Job satisfaction was measured using the average score on a five-item version of the Brayfield-Rothe satisfaction index (Brayfield and Rothe, 1951), which has frequently been used in recent job satisfaction research (Saari and Judge, 2004, Ilies and Judge, 2002). A sample item is “I feel fairly satisfied with my present job”. Sales representatives responded using a five-point Likert-type scale.

The coefficient alpha value was 0.814.
4.4 Control variables. Gender has long been related to emotionality (Gatta, 2002, Shields and Shields, 2002). With regard to emotion regulation, it has been found that males are more likely than females to hide their emotions (Gross and Levenson, 1997). Females are deemed to appropriately display a much wider range of emotions than males do (Pugh, 2002). At the same time, research shows that females are more responsive to others’ emotional expressions (Hatfield et al., 1994). Also, previous research has indicated a positive relationship between age and job satisfaction (Bedeian et al., 1992). Prior research indicates that LMX may be related to a similarity in leader and follower demographic characteristics such as age and gender (Bauer and Green, 1996). I therefore controlled for age and gender in my study. I also included tenure of sales representatives as a control variable because of its potential influence on the performance of sales representatives.

IER strategies are used to manage others’ (followers in my study) negative emotions. Research has indicated that emotions influence job performance. Since I focus on negative emotions in terms of IER strategies, I also controlled for sales representatives’ negative emotions in my study. To assess their negative emotions at work I used the 12 items from the measurement of affective well-being (Warr, 1990) that assesses participants’ experience of positive and negative emotion at work during the previous few weeks on a five-point scale ranging from “never” to “always”. Starting with the question “Thinking of the past few weeks, how much of the time has your job made you feel each of the following?”, the items were “worried”, “depressed”, “gloomy”, “tense”, “miserable” and “uneasy”.

The coefficient alpha value was .883.

3.4.4.2. Objective data

Sales performance. Objective performance refers to all measures of performance that do not rely on a subjective rating by others (e.g. leaders), which typically means indexes
of the quantity or quality of work, such as the total number of cases produced or the total sales in dollars (Graen et al., 1982, Tanner Jr and Castleberry, 1990).

In the two operation units with which I conducted my survey, each sales representative received a monthly sales goal generated from his or her performance history of the last six months and the same month in the previous year. Half of the sales representatives’ monthly bonus comes from the sales attainment, which is the actual sale versus the sales goal given to him or her. So, the sales attainment is a vital performance indicator for sales representatives in these two operation units. In my study, I used the average six months’ sales attainment percentage of each sales representative after the time 2 survey (April to September in 2018) as the indicator of objective job performance. The sales goal was recorded in the human resource system in these two operation units and the actual sales was captured by the finance settlement system and will be reflected in the human resource system after the month has ended to calculate the sales attainment percentage by human resource department. I received raw data on sales attainment percentage from human resource managers in these two operation units and calculated the average six months’ sales attainment percentage by sales representative. So it is each sales representative’s sales attainment percentage that is used in my study as the indicator of followers’ objective job performance.

3.5. STATISTICAL PROCEDURES

This section provides a brief overview of the data analysis methods that I used in my study. My study used multilevel analysis to account for the data with a hierarchical structure since sales representatives are nested within sales supervisors. I tested my model, which includes both direct and indirect effects, by controlling other variables. A two-step process was adopted in my study for data analysis. Firstly, I conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using Mplus version 7 (Muthén and Muthén, 2016) to verify the construct reliability and validity.
Secondly, structural equation modelling (SEM) was adopted to investigate the impact of LMX on the relationship between perceived leaders’ IER strategies and followers’ objective performance (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Figure 3.4 is my theoretical model as the baseline model for the SEM. Although my theoretical model, formed on the basis of my hypotheses, did not include direct paths between IER and the two outcomes, I decided to include those in my structural model to explore whether any of the effects of IER on followers’ performance and job satisfaction arise for reasons other than LMX. As such, the baseline model includes both direct paths (i.e. from each IER strategy to LMX and from LMX to job satisfaction) and indirect paths (i.e. from each IER strategy to job satisfaction and from each IER strategy to objective sales performance).

3.5.1. Confirmatory factor analysis

I conducted confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) as the first step to ensure that the overall measurement model had good psychometric properties and the latent variables were distinct from each other. I used CFA to verify whether observed indicators are consistent
with the latent variable. The CFA was conducted using Mplus version 7 (Muthén and Muthén, 2016) in my study. By referring to various model fit indices, I can assess the validity of the measurement model. There are two main categories of fit indices, namely “absolute fit” indices and “comparative fit” indices. “Absolute fit” indices measure model fit simply by examining “how well an a priori model fits the sample data (McDonald and Ho, 2002) and demonstrates which proposed model has the most superior fit” (Hooper et al., 2008). “Absolute fit” indices do not use an alternative model as a base for comparison, which is the key difference with “comparative fit”. There are several indices that fall into the category of “absolute indices”, including the chi-square test ($\chi^2$), “standardised root mean square residual” (SRMR) and “root mean square error of approximation” (RMSEA) (Steiger, 1990). Normally, a good model should have a non-significant result at the .05 level in the chi-square test, an RMSEA value of close to or less than .06 and an SRMR value of close to or less than .08 (Barrett, 2007, Hooper et al., 2008, Hu and Bentler, 1999). The other category is “comparative fit” indices, which evaluate the fit by comparing the observed model with a baseline model. The baseline model is typically one that has set covariance of indicators to zero, suggesting that there are no structural paths or factor loading among the indicators (Brown, 2014, Matsunaga, 2010). The Comparative-Fit Index (CFI) (Bentler, 1990) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) (Tucker and Lewis, 1973), whose values both range from 0 to 1, are in this category. Normally, a value of close to or greater than .95 indicates a good model fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

It is difficult to summarise universal cut-off criteria because fit indices are often influenced differently by factors such as sample size, the complexity of the model, estimation methods or types of data (Brown, 2014). To overcome these drawbacks, Hu and Bentler (1999) suggest using multiple fit indices for testing so that the models can be evaluated from different perspectives. Alongside the chi-square test, they suggest that researchers should also refer to two other model indices to determine the model fit. I follow the guideline from Hu and Bentler (1999) to determine the best model fit by using multiple fit indices. A model is considered to have a good fit when the RMSEA
value is close to or lower than .06, when the CFI or TLI values are greater than or close to .95 or when the SRMR values are close to or lower than .08 (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Table 3.2 presents the model fitness indices and their cut-off criteria that I used in my study.

Table 3.2 CFA model fitness indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index Name</th>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Cut-off</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square / Degrees of Freedom</td>
<td>Chi-Square x2/df</td>
<td>&lt; 3</td>
<td>(Marsh and Hocevar, 1985, Bentler, 1990, Bentler, 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardised Root Mean Square Residual</td>
<td>SRMR</td>
<td>&lt; .08</td>
<td>(Hu and Bentler, 1999, Kenny et al., 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Fit Index</td>
<td>CFI</td>
<td>&gt; .90</td>
<td>(Bentler, 1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root Mean Square of Error Approximation</td>
<td>RMSEA</td>
<td>&lt; .08</td>
<td>(Browne and Cudeck, 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normed Fit Index</td>
<td>NFI</td>
<td>&gt; .95</td>
<td>(Bentler and Bonett, 1980)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instrument of IER strategies includes four IER subscales: situation modification (SM), cognitive change (CC), attentional deployment (AD) and modulating the emotional response (MER). The CFA test is used to evaluate the factor loadings for each IER subscale and for the IER full scale; and the CFA also generates the measurement fitness indices to support the construct validity of this instrument. Whether each indicator’s estimated pattern coefficient on its construct factor is significant or not determines convergent validity (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). When the standard loadings, \( \lambda \), parameters, are significant and bigger than .5, it supports convergent validity.

I also performed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the discriminant validity
of variables collected from sales representatives (perceived leaders’ IER strategies – SM/CC/AD/MER, LMX, negative emotion and job satisfaction). My hypothesised model with four IER strategies, LMX, negative emotion and job satisfaction loading on seven independent factors as baseline model is compared against five other alternative models. The first alternative model is a two-factor model with all four IER strategies merged into one factor and negative emotion at time 1, LMX at time 2 and job satisfaction at time 3 merged into another factor. Alternative model 2 is a four-factor model that combined four IER strategies into one factor and negative emotion at time 1, LMX at time 2 and job satisfaction as three separate factors. Alternative model 3 is a three-factor model that combined three antecedent-focused IER strategies, situation modification, attentional deployment and cognitive change into one factor, modulating the emotional response as a response-focused strategy being the second factor and negative emotion at time 1, LMX at time 2 and job satisfaction at time 3 merged into the third factor. Alternative model 4 is a five-factor model that had three antecedent-focused IER strategies merged as one factor, response-focused strategy, modulating the emotional response as the second factor and negative emotion at time 1, LMX at time 2 and job satisfaction at time 3 as the other three separate factors. Alternative model 5 is a one-factor model with all the variables merged into one factor.

In summary, CFA is an analytic tool for construct validation of the conceptual model. The results of CFA provide compelling evidence of the convergent and discriminant validity of my theoretical model in this thesis. A major component of a CFA is the test of the validity of all the observed variables. I used CFA to assess the unidimensionality of each latent construct first, and then to assess the validity and reliability of all latent constructs. After that, mediation modelling the inter-relationship in a structural model (SEM) was performed in my study.

3.5.2. Structural equation modelling (SEM)

Because my data were nested in groups (sales supervisors and sales representatives),
regressions using the ordinary least squares method will lead to inflated variance and biased parameter estimates. So I used multilevel techniques to account for the influence of data structure. Specifically, because all study variables are at the individual level, I used the COMPLEX module in Mplus to account for the potential effect of the nested data. I specified a path model, which allows me to test all hypotheses simultaneously. I tested my hypotheses by means of SEM using Mplus (Muthén and Muthén, 2016). SEM can test specific postulated paths and is able to include the measurement model of LMX measures. At the same time, a series of overall fit statistics shows how well my data fit my theoretical model in addition to providing the path coefficients (Kline, 2005).

SEM is used to capture sophisticated and dynamic functional relationships among a cluster of observed and unobserved variables using a cogent multivariate mechanic that utilizes a conceptual model, path diagram and mathematical equations (Gunzler et al., 2013). Researchers can use either SEM or multiple regression to make a longitudinal examination of the main effects, the indirect effects and the conditional indirect effects. According to Gunzler et al. (2013), SEM is a more robust approach than regression analysis due to its several advantages, such as testing multiple variables simultaneously, allowing missing data, providing a more user-friendly surface for interpretation and providing easier procedures to extend the analysis to a longitudinal framework.

It is recommended a sample size of at least 200 cases to perform SEM (Kline, 2015, Loehlin, 1987). My sample size is bigger than 200. The SEM fits my study well. In the research design for my study, I took advantage of all the following specific merits of SEM: 1) it deals with possible missing data using information maximum likelihood; 2) it provides model fit information about the consistency of the theoretical mediation model to the data; 3) it estimates all the coefficients in a single run; 4) it confirms the significance level of the indirect effect using the bias-corrected bootstrapping technique as one of the sensitivity analysis procedures (MacKinnon, 2012, Hoyle and Smith, 1994).
To test Hypotheses 1 to 6, the direct effects of the IER strategy on LMX, LMX on leadership outcome and the IER strategy on leadership outcome, the model includes paths from each perceived IER strategy to LMX, LMX to job satisfaction or objective job performance and each perceived IER strategy to job satisfaction or objective job performance. Since the perceived IER strategies were measured six months before LMX was measured and job satisfaction and objective job performance data were obtained six months after LMX had been measured, a significant path indicates that perceived leader’s use of an IER strategy predicts LMX six months later, a leader’s use of an IER strategy predicts job performance and job satisfaction 12 months later and LMX predicts job satisfaction and job performance six months later. Since I controlled for followers’ negative emotion, operation unit and gender, I also tested the direct path from followers’ negative emotion to LMX and from operation unit or gender to job satisfaction or objective job performance to verify whether control variables were significantly related to dependent variables or not.

To test Hypothesis 7 to 14, concerning the indirect effect of the independent variable, each perceived IER strategy, on the dependent variable, job satisfaction or objective job performance, via the mediator variable, LMX, I followed the statistical procedure for testing mediation advocated by (Rucker et al., 2011). The procedure includes the test of significance of the indirect effect ab using bootstrapping to get bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals (Bauer et al., 2006, Preacher et al., 2010), where path a is the path from the independent variable, which is situation modification, cognitive change, attentional deployment or modulating the emotional response to the mediator, LMX, and path b is the path from the mediator, LMX, to the dependent variable, which is followers’ job satisfaction or objective performance (Figure 3.5). The mediation model parses the total effect (c) of X on Y into a direct effect (c’) and an indirect effect (ab) (Preacher and Selig, 2012).
Figure 3.5 Mediation model. X is the independent variable, M is the hypothesised mediator and Y is the dependent variable.

\[
\begin{align*}
    & \quad c \\
    X & \rightarrow M \quad a \quad b \\
    & \quad c' \\
    X & \rightarrow Y
\end{align*}
\]

In my study, I used the Monte Carlo simulation method, which involves directly generating sample statistics from the joint asymptotic distribution instead of resampling (Preacher and Selig, 2012) to test for indirect effects. The Monte Carlo method is an interactive tool for creating confidence intervals for indirect effects (Selig and Preacher, 2008, Binder et al., 1993). One of the advantages of using Monte Carlo is that it is very fast as the model is fit to data only once (Preacher and Selig, 2012). Another reason why I used the Monte Carlo simulation method is that bootstrapping is not feasible for my study where the data are multilevel. Over all, Monte Carlo confidence intervals perform similarly to percentile-based confidence intervals (Efron, 1981), though they may not be as strong as bias-corrected bootstrap confidence intervals (MacKinnon et al., 2004). Monte Carlo confidence intervals can lead to the same conclusion that bootstrap confidence intervals draw. I conducted simple mediation analyses (two-path) using the Monte Carlo method as recommended by Preacher et al. (2010) to get the confidence intervals in order to test the indirect effect of perceived leaders’ IER strategy on followers’ objective sales performance and job satisfaction via LMX. The indirect effect is significant when the confidence intervals exclude zero. In my study, a simulator on the website http://www.quantpsy.org with open-source software was used to generate and run the R code for simulating the sampling distribution of the indirect effects.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS OF MAIN STUDY

I discussed the purpose of my study, developed testable hypotheses to address the gap through the literature review and described my research method in previous chapters. The results of data analysis are presented in this chapter. I first report the descriptive statistics for all variables including their means, standardised deviations and initial correlations among variables in the main study. Secondly, I report the validity of my data with the result of CFA – confirmatory factor analysis. Thirdly, I report the structural relationship between measured variables and latent constructs with the output from SEM – structural equation modelling. Then I report the mediation effect of leaders’ four IER strategies at time 1 on followers’ objective performance at time 3 and job satisfaction at time 3, respectively, via LMX at time 2 using the Monte Carlo method recommended by Binder et al. (1993). Finally, I summarise the full analysis of the data in my study.

4.1. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Table 4.1 presents the descriptive statistics including means, standard deviation and bivariate correlations among variables in my study. As shown in the table, the correlation provides some initial evidence for my hypothesis, with respect to relationships between the IER strategies and the hypothesised outcomes. In particular, leaders’ use of a situation modification (SM) strategy at time 1 relates positively to followers’ objective performance at time 3 (r = 0.13, p < .01) and job satisfaction at time 3 (r = 0.13, p < .01). Leaders’ use of an attentional deployment (AD) strategy at time 1 relates positively to followers’ objective performance at time 3 (r = 0.12, p < .01) and job satisfaction at time 3 (r = 0.20, p < .01). Leaders’ use of a cognitive change (CC) strategy at time 1 is related positively to followers’ objective performance at time 3 (r = 0.10, p < .05) and job satisfaction at time 3 (r = 0.21, p < .01). For the MER (modulating the emotional response) strategy, the initial result is different from my hypothesis. Leaders’ use of a modulating the emotion response (MER) strategy at time
1 shows a positive relation with job satisfaction at time 3 (r = 0.22, p < .01) while I proposed that it links negatively to job satisfaction. Leaders’ use of modulating the emotional response (MER) strategy at time 1 is not significantly related to followers’ objective performance at time 3.

The correlations show significant relationships between leaders’ use of IER strategies at time 1 and the hypothesised mediator, LMX, at time 2. In particular, leaders’ use of a situation modification (SM) strategy at time 1 relates positively to LMX at time 2 (r = 0.28, p < .01). Leaders’ use of an attentional deployment (AD) strategy at time 1 relates positively to LMX at time 2 (r = 0.27, p < .01). Leaders’ use of a cognitive change (CC) strategy at time 1 is positively related to LMX at time 2 (r = 0.29, p < .01). In contrast to my hypothesis, leaders’ use of an MER (modulating the emotional response) strategy at time 1 also has a positive relation with LMX at time 2 (r = 0.19, p < .01) while I proposed that it relates negatively to LMX at time 2.

The correlations also suggest significant relationships between the hypothesised mediator, LMX at time 2, and the dependent variables of followers’ objective performance at time 3 (r = 0.15, p < .01) and job satisfaction at time 3 (r = 0.18, p < .01).

Among four IER strategies at time 1, correlations are also found between situation modification and attentional deployment (r = 0.76, p < .01), between situation modification and cognitive change (r = 0.69, p < .01), between situation modification and modulating the emotional response (r = 0.58, p < .01), between attentional deployment and cognitive change (r = 0.79, p < .01), between attentional deployment and modulating the emotional response (r = 0.67, p < .01) and between cognitive change and modulating the emotional response (r = 0.73, p < .01).

Some effects from control factors on other variables are also found from Table 4.1. In particular, followers’ negative emotions at time 1 are negatively related to their job satisfaction at time 3 (r = -0.19, p < .01) and LMX at time 2 (r = -.08, p < .05) but not
significantly related to followers’ objective performance at time 3. There are two operation units (OUs) in my study, which means two levels of the variable. So, the OU is a binary variable in my study that is also included in the correlation analysis. The results show that operation unit is significantly correlated to followers’ objective performance ($r = -0.13, p < 0.01$) and job satisfaction ($r = -0.40, p < 0.01$) at time 3. This means that one operation unit could have better performance in general than another operation unit with different factors influencing them, e.g. OU leaders’ leadership style. From the descriptive statistics, I also found that OU has a strong correlation with leaders’ IER strategies at time 1 (SM: $r = -0.25, p < 0.01$; AD: $r = -0.10, p < 0.01$; CC: $r = -0.10, p < 0.01$; MER: $r = -0.10, p < 0.01$) and LMX at time 2 ($r = -0.08, p < 0.05$). No significant correlation was found between gender/age and other variables except operation units.
Table 4.1
Means, standard deviations and correlations among variables in the main study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Performance at Time 3</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Job Satisfaction at Time 3</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Situation Modification at Time 1</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>.139**</td>
<td>.135**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Attentional Deployment at Time 1</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>.120**</td>
<td>.200**</td>
<td>.756**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Cognitive Change at Time 1</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>.103*</td>
<td>.215**</td>
<td>.694**</td>
<td>.793**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Modulating the Emotional Response at Time 1</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>.068</td>
<td>.229**</td>
<td>.576**</td>
<td>.665**</td>
<td>.725**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 LMX at Time 2</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>.148**</td>
<td>.180**</td>
<td>.283**</td>
<td>.269**</td>
<td>.294**</td>
<td>.193**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Negative Emotion at Time 1</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>-.191**</td>
<td>-.254**</td>
<td>-.296**</td>
<td>-.259**</td>
<td>-.222**</td>
<td>-.084*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Operation Units</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.138**</td>
<td>-.403**</td>
<td>-.104**</td>
<td>-.108**</td>
<td>-.105**</td>
<td>-.109**</td>
<td>-.086*</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Age at Time 1</td>
<td>38.64</td>
<td>67.28</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>-.005</td>
<td>-.015</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>-.034</td>
<td>.030</td>
<td>-.106**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Gender at Time 1</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>-.008</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>-.068</td>
<td>-.061</td>
<td>-.064</td>
<td>.226**</td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N = 620

*p < .05

**p < .01
4.2. CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

I evaluate the distinctiveness of all the variables in my study through a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) before I test my hypotheses. Seven measurement scales are employed in my study: four IER strategies, namely situation modification (SM), cognitive change (CC), attentional deployment (AD) and modulating the emotional response (MER), negative emotion (NE), job satisfaction (JS) and LMX. Factor loadings of all items on their specified constructs are presented in Figure 4.1. The factor loading coefficients reflect the variables’ discriminant validity.
Figure 4.1 Factor loading coefficients.
Table 4.2 shows the factor loading for CFA of all variables in my study from which I can inspect the correlations between the variables and item results.

Table 4.2
Factor loadings for confirmatory factor analysis of study variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Measurement Items</th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Situation</td>
<td>My supervisor modifies the elements of the situation that are having an undesired impact on me.</td>
<td>.572</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification</td>
<td>My supervisor works out plans to remove the negative aspects of situations.</td>
<td>.803</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor removes the negative aspects of the situation that are negatively impacting me.</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor changes the situation to alter its emotional impact.</td>
<td>.705</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor takes actions to get rid of the problems I am having.</td>
<td>.821</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentional</td>
<td>My supervisor focuses my attention away from the troubling aspect of the problem when a situation is disturbing me.</td>
<td>.790</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployment</td>
<td>My supervisor refocuses the conversation towards aspects of the situation that I should find more appealing.</td>
<td>.805</td>
<td>.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor distracts my attention from the aspect of the problem causing my undesired emotions.</td>
<td>.781</td>
<td>.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor refocuses me by discussing positive issues when a situation is unpleasant to me.</td>
<td>.818</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Change</td>
<td>My supervisor distracts me from focusing on the negative aspects of that situation when s/he think a situation will cause an undesirable emotion.</td>
<td>.693</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor puts my problems into perspective when s/he wants me to feel more positive emotions (such as joy or amusement).</td>
<td>.794</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor tries to influence my emotions by changing how I think about the situation I am in.</td>
<td>.816</td>
<td>.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor changes the meaning attaching to a situation when s/he wants me to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger).</td>
<td>.765</td>
<td>.033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor changes the meaning attaching to the situation when s/he wants me to feel more positive emotion (such as joy or amusement).</td>
<td>.785</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor puts my problems into perspective when s/he wants me to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger).</td>
<td>.848</td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modulating the Emotion Response</td>
<td>My supervisor tells me not to express my emotions when I am experiencing undesirable emotions.</td>
<td>.720</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor encourages me to keep my emotions to myself.</td>
<td>.775</td>
<td>.029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor gets me to stop when I “venting” about a problem during my interaction with him or her.</td>
<td>.795</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor suggests strategies for me to suppress my emotions when I am experiencing undesirable emotions.</td>
<td>.833</td>
<td>.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My supervisor encourages me not to express my emotions.</td>
<td>.658</td>
<td>.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Emotion</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>p-value</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worried.</td>
<td>0.700</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressed.</td>
<td>0.698</td>
<td>0.036</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloomy.</td>
<td>0.811</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tense.</td>
<td>0.573</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miserable.</td>
<td>0.854</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneasy.</td>
<td>0.845</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader-Member Exchange</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I usually know how satisfied my supervisor is with what I do.</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor understands my job problems and needs well.</td>
<td>0.832</td>
<td>0.024</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor recognises my potential well.</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td>0.030</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, my supervisor would use his/her power to help me solve problems in my work.</td>
<td>0.560</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority your supervisor has, he/she would “bail me out” at his/her expense.</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>0.044</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have enough confidence in my supervisor that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so.</td>
<td>0.642</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would characterise my working relationship with my supervisor as good.</td>
<td>0.797</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internal Use Only
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.</th>
<th>.934</th>
<th>.074</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I find real enjoyment in my work.</td>
<td>.998</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The confirmatory factor analysis showed a good fit for the baseline model consisting of seven constructs, as outlined above, with $\chi^2 = 918.786$, df (573), RMSEA = .031, CFI = .962 and TLI = 0.958. The $\chi^2$/df ratio is 1.60, which is below the criterion of 3. Both CFI and TLI are not less than .90; and RMSEA is .03, which is much smaller than the upper bound of .10 suggested by Steiger (1990).

Five alternative models are examined against the baseline seven-factor model, which is model 1. Model 2 is a two-factor model with all four IER strategies, situational modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change and modulating the emotional response, merged into one factor and the remaining three variables – followers’ negative emotion at time 1, LMX at time 2 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 – merged into one factor. This model was chosen as a comparison because I measured the four IER strategies at the same time point and there are correlations among four IER strategies as I described in “Descriptive statistics”. Moreover, the three other variables (job satisfaction, LMX and negative emotion) all tap into affective outcomes. The fitness indices of model 2 show $\chi^2 = 3107.909$, df (593), RMSEA = .083, CFI = .724, TLI = 0.707. Model 3 is a four-factor model with all four IER strategies merged into one factor as model 2 did while keeping followers’ negative emotion at time 1, LMX at time 2 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 as three separate factors. The fitness indices of model 3 show $\chi^2 = 1505.302$, df (588), RMSEA = .050, CFI = .900, TLI = 0.892. Model 4 is a three-factor model with three antecedent-focused IER strategies, situation modification, attentional deployment and cognitive change, merged into one factor, the response-focused IER strategy, modulating the emotional response, as a separate factor. At the same time, it combines followers’ negative emotion at time 1, LMX at time 2 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 into one factor for comparison. The fitness indices of model 4 show $\chi^2 = 2832.131$, df (591), RMSEA = .078, CFI = .754 and TLI = 0.738. Model 5 is a four-factor model with three antecedent-focused IER strategies merged into one factor while keeping modulating the emotional response strategy as a separate factor since it is a response-focused IER strategy. It also keeps followers’ negative emotion at time 1, LMX at time 2 and followers’ job satisfaction as
three separate factors. The fitness indices of model 5 show $\chi^2 = 1220.209$, df(584), RMSEA = .042, CFI = .930 and TLI = 0.925. Model 6 is a one-factor model with all variables merged into a single factor. This model was chosen in order to check for the extent of common-method variance in this study. The fitness indices of model 6 show $\chi^2 = 4215.498$, df (594), RMSEA = .099, CFI = .603 and TLI = 0.579. As shown in Table 4.3, the five alternative models exhibit significantly worse fit than the baseline model, as seen from the significant chi-square difference tests and model fit indices. So I conclude that the analyses provide clear evidence of the distinctiveness among the seven variables in my study.
Table 4.3 Comparison of measurement models for main variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models</th>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$df$</th>
<th>$\Delta\chi^2$</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>TLI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Seven factors: four IER strategies, negative emotion, LMX and job satisfaction</td>
<td>918.786</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.962</td>
<td>.958</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>Two factors with four interpersonal emotional regulation strategies combined as one factor and negative emotion, LMX and job satisfaction combined as another factor</td>
<td>3107.909</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>2189.123**</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.724</td>
<td>.707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 3</td>
<td>Four factors with four interpersonal emotional regulation strategies combined as one factor and negative emotion, LMX and job satisfaction as separate factors</td>
<td>1505.302</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>586.516**</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.900</td>
<td>.892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 4</td>
<td>Three factors with three antecedent-focused interpersonal emotional regulation strategies combined as one factor, MER as a separate factor and negative emotion, LMX and job satisfaction combined as another factor</td>
<td>2832.131</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>1913.345**</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.754</td>
<td>.738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 5</td>
<td>Five factors with three antecedent-focused interpersonal emotional regulation strategies combined as one factor and MER, negative emotion, LMX and job satisfaction as separate factors</td>
<td>1220.209</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>301.423**</td>
<td>.042</td>
<td>.930</td>
<td>.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 6</td>
<td>One factor with all seven variables combined as one factor</td>
<td>4215.498</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>3296.712**</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.603</td>
<td>.579</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

I tested my hypothesis using multilevel SEM (structural equation modelling). In particular, I used Mplus 7 (Muthén and Muthén, 2016) to account for the nested data structure by setting the model type as complex. I drew a diagram with the path coefficients for the correlations between the variables as shown in Figure 4.2 and the results of the SEM are shown in Table 4.4.

Figure 4.2 Path coefficients.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$
Leader’s use of modulating emotional response strategy at time 1 shows positive correlation with leader-member exchange relationship at time 2 in descriptive statistics because the strong correlation between modulating the emotional response strategy and situation modification strategy (.576**), cognitive change strategy (.725**) and attentional deployment strategy (.665**). At the same time, situation modification, cognitive change and attentional deployment strategies all have positive correlation with leader-member exchange relationship. All these impacted the correlation between leader's use of modulating the emotional response strategy and leader-member exchange relationship showing positive in descriptive statistics. While structural equation modelling analysis controlled other three interpersonal emotion regulation strategies when analyzing the influence of leader’s use of modulating the emotional response strategy on leader-member exchange relationship. The structural equation modelling analysis shows the influence of each individual interpersonal emotion regulation strategy on leader-member exchange relationship. Without the impact of strong correlation among interpersonal emotion regulation strategies, it shows a negative influence of leader’s use of modulating the emotional response strategy on leader-member exchange relationship for hypothesis testing.

Table 4.4 Results of structural equation models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate (β)</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>Est./S.E</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>IERs, time 1 → LMX, time 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM, time 1 → LMX, time2</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>1.594</td>
<td>.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC, time 1 → LMX, time2</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>2.711</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD, time 1 → LMX, time2</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>-0.562</td>
<td>.574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MER, time 1 → LMX, time2 ¹</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>-2.416</td>
<td>.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LMX, time 2 and IERS, time 1 → Followers’ Job Satisfaction, time 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMX, time 2 → Job Satisfaction, time 3</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>4.040</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM, time 1 → Job Satisfaction, time 3</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>.158</td>
<td>-2.066</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC, time 1 → Job Satisfaction, time 3</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.255</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>.949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD, time 1 → Job Satisfaction, time 3</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.306</td>
<td>0.836</td>
<td>.403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MER, time 1 → Job Satisfaction, time 3</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>0.998</td>
<td>.318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LMX, time 2 and IERS, time 1 → Followers’ Sales Attainment, time 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMX, time 2 → Sales Attainment, time 3</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>2.667</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM, time 1 → Sales Attainment, time 3</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>0.262</td>
<td>.794</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC, time 1 → Sales Attainment, time 3</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>-0.303</td>
<td>0.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD, time 1 → Sales Attainment, time 3</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td>0.753</td>
<td>0.451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MER, time 1 → Sales Attainment, time 3</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>.087</td>
<td>-0.671</td>
<td>0.502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OU → Job Satisfaction, time 3</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>.103</td>
<td>-2.276</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OU → Sales Attainment, time 3</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>.130</td>
<td>-1.516</td>
<td>.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OU → LMX, time 2</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>.111</td>
<td>-0.842</td>
<td>.400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Leader’s use of modulating emotional response strategy at time 1 shows positive correlation with leader-member exchange relationship at time 2 in descriptive statistics because the strong correlation between modulating the emotional response strategy and situation modification strategy (.576**), cognitive change strategy (.725**) and attentional deployment strategy (.665**). At the same time, situation modification, cognitive change and attentional deployment strategies all have positive correlation with leader-member exchange relationship. All these impacted the correlation between leader’s use of modulating the emotional response strategy and leader-member exchange relationship showing positive in descriptive statistics. While structural equation modelling analysis controlled other three interpersonal emotion regulation strategies when analyzing the influence of leader’s use of modulating the emotional response strategy on leader-member exchange relationship. The structural equation modelling analysis shows the influence of each individual interpersonal emotion regulation strategy on leader-member exchange relationship. Without the impact of strong correlation among interpersonal emotion regulation strategies, it shows a negative influence of leader’s use of modulating the emotional response strategy on leader-member exchange relationship for hypothesis testing.
\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
Gender & Job Satisfaction, time 3 & 0.32 & .105 & 3.065 & .002 \\
\hline
Gender & Sales Attainment, time 3 & 0.08 & .092 & 0.834 & .404 \\
\hline
Gender & LMX, time 2 & -0.22 & .091 & -2.395 & .017 \\
\hline
Tenure & Job Satisfaction, time 3 & -0.01 & .013 & -0.764 & .445 \\
\hline
Tenure & Sales Attainment, time 3 & 0.03 & .013 & 2.253 & .024 \\
\hline
Tenure & LMX, time 2 & -0.02 & .012 & -1.583 & .113 \\
\hline
NE, time 1 & Job Satisfaction, time 3 & -0.159 & .052 & -3.074 & .002 \\
\hline
NE, time 1 & Sales Attainment, time 3 & 0.024 & .038 & 0.639 & .523 \\
\hline
NE, time 1 & LMX, time 2 & -0.002 & .043 & -0.047 & .962 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Correlations between variables.}
\end{table}

SM = Situation Modification
AD = Attentional Deployment
CC = Cognitive Change
MER = Modulating the Emotional Response
LMX = Leader-Member Exchange
Sales Attainment = 6 Months’ Average Sales Attainment after Time 2 Survey
OU = Operation Unit
NE = Negative Emotion

4.3.1. Perceived leader IER strategy at time 1 on LMX at time 2

Hypothesis 1 proposed that followers’ perceptions of their leader’s use of the situation modification strategy will be associated with a higher-quality LMX relationship between leader and follower. The result of the path coefficient $\beta = .23$ (ns) in Table 4.4 shows the positive relationship is not significant. As such, Hypothesis 1 is not supported.

Hypothesis 2 proposed that followers’ perceptions of their leader’s use of the cognitive change strategy will be associated with a higher-quality LMX relationship between leader and follower. The result of the path coefficient $\beta = .39$ ($p < .01$) in Table 4.4 shows the
positive relationship is significant. As such, Hypothesis 2 is supported. So, leaders’ use of a cognitive change IER strategy, as perceived by followers at time 1, is associated with a higher-quality LMX at time 2.

Hypothesis 3 proposed that followers’ perceptions of their leader’s use of the attentional deployment strategy will be associated with a higher-quality LMX relationship between leader and follower. The result of the path coefficient $\beta = -0.10$ (ns) in Table 4.4 actually shows there is a negative relationship between a leader’s use of an attentional deployment strategy at time 1 and LMX at time 2, albeit not significant. So, Hypothesis 3 is not supported.

Hypothesis 4 proposed that followers’ perceptions of their leader’s use of the modulating the emotional response strategy will be associated with a lower-quality LMX relationship between leader and follower. The result of the path coefficient $\beta = -0.10$ (p < .05) in Table 4.4 shows there is a negative relationship between a leader’s use of modulating the emotional response strategy at time 1 and LMX at time 2. So, Hypothesis 4 is supported. Leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response strategy at time 1 will have a negative effect on the LMX relationship at time 2.

4.3.2. LMX at time 2 on followers’ outcomes at time 3

Hypothesis 5 proposed that a higher-quality LMX at time 2 will be positively associated with followers’ job satisfaction at time 3. The result of the path coefficient $\beta = 0.26$ (p < .01) suggests that LMX at time 2 is positively related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3. So Hypothesis 5 is supported. There is a significant positive impact of LMX at time 2 on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3.

Hypothesis 6 proposed that a higher-quality LMX at time 2 will lead to better followers’ performance, which means higher sales attainment at time 3. The result of path coefficient $\beta = 0.15$ (p < .01) suggests that LMX at time 2 positively impacts followers’ objective performance at time 3. So, Hypothesis 6 is supported. There is a significant positive impact...
of LMX at time 2 on followers’ objective performance, which means higher sales attainment at time 3.

4.3.3. Direct effects of IER at time 1 on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3

Although no direct effects of IER on job satisfaction were hypothesised, direct paths were included in the model to allow for this possibility. Only one of the IER strategies was found to have a direct effect on job satisfaction: the result of path coefficient $\beta = -0.33$ ($p < 0.05$) suggests that perceived leaders’ use of a situation modification strategy at time 1 actually negatively impacts followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 directly. In contrast, the paths to job satisfaction from cognitive change ($\beta = -0.02$, ns), attentional deployment ($\beta = 0.26$, ns) and modulating the emotional response ($\beta = 0.14$, ns) were not significant.

4.3.4. Direct effects of IER at time 1 on followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3

Likewise, no direct effects of IER on followers’ performance were hypothesised, but direct paths were included in the model to allow for this possibility. However, no direct effects were observed. The result of path coefficient $\beta = 0.03$ (ns) suggests that perceived leaders’ use of a situation modification strategy at time 1 does not have a significant impact on followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3 directly. The result of path coefficient $\beta = -0.06$ (ns) suggests that perceived leaders’ use of a cognitive change strategy at time 1 does not have a significant direct effect on followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3. The result of path coefficient $\beta = 0.17$ (ns) suggests that perceived leaders’ use of an attentional deployment strategy at time 1 does not have a significant direct effect on followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3. The result of path coefficient $\beta = -0.06$ (ns) suggests that perceived leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response strategy at time 1 does not have a significant direct effect on followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3.
4.3.5. Control variables – operation unit

The result of path coefficient $\beta = -.24$ ($p < .05$) suggests that operation unit has a significant effect on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3, which means followers in one of the operation units are significantly more satisfied with their jobs than followers in another operation unit. Operation unit does not have a significant impact on LMX at time 2, $\beta = -.10$ (ns) and followers’ objective performance at time 3, $\beta = -.20$ (ns).

4.3.6. Control variables – gender

The result of path coefficient $\beta = .32$ ($p < .01$) suggests that gender has a significant effect on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3. I coded male as 1 and female as 2. So it means that female followers have significantly higher job satisfaction than followers who are male. Gender also relates significantly to LMX at time 2, $\beta = -.22$ ($p < .05$), which means that male followers perceived significantly higher LMX with their leaders than females. Gender has no significant effect on followers’ objective performance at time 3, $\beta = -.08$ (ns).

4.3.7. Control variables – tenure

The result of path coefficient $\beta = -.01$ (ns) suggests that tenure has no significant effect on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3. Tenure also does not relate significantly to LMX at time 2, $\beta = -.02$ (ns), while it does have a significant effect on followers’ objective performance at time 3, $\beta = .03$ ($p < .05$).

4.3.8. Control variables – followers’ negative emotion

The result of path coefficient $\beta = -.159$ ($p < .05$) suggests that followers’ negative emotion at time 1 has a significant effect on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3, while followers’ negative emotion does not relate significantly to LMX at time 2, $\beta = .002$ (ns) and does not have a significant effect on followers’ objective performance at time 3, $\beta = .024$ (ns).
4.4. MEDIATION ANALYSIS

4.4.1. Mediation analysis of leaders’ IER strategy on followers’ performance via LMX

Hypothesis 7 stated that the perceived leaders’ IER strategy SM (situation modification) at time 1 would have a positive indirect effect on followers’ sales performance at time 3 through LMX at time 2. The confidence intervals (CIs) for the indirect path between a perceived leader adopting a situation modification IER strategy and followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, contained zero (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, lower limit [CI LL] = -0.001, upper limit [CI UL] = 0.035, with 20,000 Monte Carlo repetitions), indicating that it was not mediated by the LMX. So, Hypothesis 7 is not supported. Figure 4.3 depicts the 95% CI for the indirect effect of a perceived leader adopting a situation modification IER strategy on followers’ objective sales performance via LMX.

Figure 4.3
Distribution of indirect effect of leaders’ use of a situation modification IER strategy at time 1 on followers’ objective performance at time 3 through LMX at time 2.
In particular, leader’s use of a situation modification strategy at time 1 was not positively related to LMX at time 2 ($\beta = .19$, ns), though LMX at time 2 was positively related to followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3 ($\beta = .065$, $p < .05$).

Hypothesis 8 stated that the perceived leaders’ IER strategy CC (cognitive change) at time 1 would have a positive indirect effect on followers’ objective performance at time 3 through LMX at time 2. The indirect path between the perception of leaders’ use of a cognitive change strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment, at time 3 via LMX at time 2 was found to be significant with none of the confidence intervals (CIs) including zero (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, lower limit [CI LL] = 0.01, upper limit [CI UL] = 0.07, with 20,000 Monte Carlo repetitions). Figure 4.4 depicts the 95% CI for the indirect effect of a perceived leader adopting a cognitive change IER strategy on followers’ objective sales performance via LMX.

**Figure 4.4**

Distribution of indirect effect of leaders’ use of a cognitive change IER strategy at time 1 on followers’ objective performance at time 3 through LMX at time 2.

In particular, leaders’ use of a cognitive change strategy at time 1 was positively related to...
LMX at time 2 ($\beta = .31, p < .05$), which in turn was positively related to followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3 ($\beta = .065, p < .05$).

Hypothesis 9 stated that the perceived leaders’ IER strategy AD (attentional deployment) at time 1 would have a positive indirect effect on followers’ sales performance at time 3 through LMX at time 2. The indirect path between the perception of leaders’ use of an attentional deployment strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment, at time 3 via LMX at time 2 was not found to be significant since the confidence intervals (CIs) included zero (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, lower limit [CI LL] = -0.03, upper limit [CI UL] = 0.01, with 20,000 Monte Carlo repetitions).

In particular, leaders’ use of an attentional deployment strategy at time 1 was not positively related to LMX at time 2 ($\beta = -.08, ns$), though LMX at time 2 was positively related to followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3 ($\beta = .065, p < .05$).

Hypothesis 10 stated that the perceived leaders’ IER strategy MER (modulating the emotional response) at time 1 would have a negative indirect effect on followers’ objective sales performance at time 3 through LMX at time 2. The indirect path between the perception of leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment, at time 3 via LMX at time 2 was found to be significant since none of the confidence intervals (CIs) included zero (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, lower limit [CI LL] = -0.02, upper limit [CI UL] = -0.001, with 20,000 Monte Carlo repetitions). Figure 4.5 depicts the 95% CI for the indirect effect of a perceived leader adopting a modulating the emotional response IER strategy on followers’ objective sales performance via LMX.
In particular, leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response strategy at time 1 was negatively related to LMX at time 2 ($\beta = -.15$, $p < .05$), and LMX at time 2 was positively related to followers’ performance at time 3 ($\beta = .065$, $p < .05$). The Monte Carlo method result reveals that there is a significant negative indirect effect of leaders’ use of an MER strategy at time 1 on followers’ objective performance at time 3 via LMX at time 2.

Table 4.5 summarises the results of Hypotheses 7–10.

Table 4.5
Summary of indirect effects of leaders’ IER strategy on followers’ objective job performance via LMX
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 7</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a situation modification IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a cognitive change IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 9</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of an attentional deployment IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 10</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the negative relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2. **Mediation analysis of leaders’ IER strategy on followers’ job satisfaction via LMX**

Hypothesis 11 stated that the perceived leaders’ IER strategy SM (situation modification) at time 1 would have a positive indirect effect on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2. The mediation analysis performed between a perceived leader adopting a situation modification IER strategy and followers’ job satisfaction yielded a marginally non-
significant result with the confidence intervals (CI) including zero (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, lower limit [CI LL] = -0.002, upper limit [CI UL] = 0.134, with 20,000 Monte Carlo repetitions). So, the analysis conducted does not support my Hypothesis 11.

In particular, leaders’ use of a situation modification strategy at time 1 was not positively related to LMX at time 2 (β = .19, ns), though LMX at time 2 was positively related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 (β = .31, p < .05).

Hypothesis 12 stated that the perceived leaders’ IER strategy CC (cognitive change) at time 1 would have a positive indirect effect on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2. The relationship between the perception of leaders’ use of a cognitive change strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 was found to be mediated by LMX at time 2 since the result is significant with none of the confidence intervals (CI) including zero (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, lower limit [CI LL] = 0.03, upper limit [CI UL] = 0.19, with 20,000 Monte Carlo repetitions). Figure 4.6 depicts the 95% CI for the indirect effect of a perceived leader adopting a cognitive change IER strategy on followers’ job satisfaction via LMX.
In particular, leaders’ use of a cognitive change IER strategy at time 1 was positively related to LMX at time 2 ($\beta = .31$, $p < .05$), which in turn positively relates to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 ($\beta = .31$, $p < .05$).

Hypothesis 13 stated that the perceived leaders’ IER strategy AD (attentional deployment) at time 1 would have a positive indirect effect on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2. The indirect path between the perception of leaders’ use of an attentional deployment strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 via LMX at time 2 was not found to be significant since the confidence intervals (CIs) included zero (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, lower limit [CI LL] = -0.17, upper limit [CI UL] = 0.11, with 20,000 Monte Carlo repetitions).
In particular, leaders’ use of an attentional deployment strategy at time 1 was not positively related to LMX at time 2 ($\beta = -0.08, \text{ ns}$), though LMX at time 2 was positively related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 ($\beta = 0.31, p < .05$).

Hypothesis 14 stated that the perceived leaders’ IER strategy MER (modulating the emotional response) at time 1 would have a negative indirect effect on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2. The indirect path between the perception of leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 via LMX at time 2 was found to be significant since none of the confidence intervals (CIs) included zero (95% bias-corrected bootstrap confidence interval, lower limit [CI LL] = -0.10, upper limit [CI UL] = -0.006, with 20,000 Monte Carlo repetitions). Figure 4.7 depicts the 95% CI for the indirect effect of a perceived leader adopting a modulating the emotional response IER strategy on followers’ job satisfaction via LMX.

**Figure 4.7**
Distribution of indirect effect of leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response IER strategy at time 1 on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 through LMX at time 2
In particular, leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response strategy at time 1 was negatively related to LMX at time 2 (β = -.15, p < .05), and LMX at time 2 was positively related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 (β = .31, p < .05). The Monte Carlo method result reveals that there is a significant negative indirect effect of leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response IER strategy at time 1 on followers’ job satisfaction at time 3 via LMX at time 2.

Table 4.6 summarises the results of Hypotheses 11–14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 11</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a situation modification IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 12</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a cognitive change IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 13</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of an attentional deployment IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 14</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the negative relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 Summary of indirect effects of leaders’ IER strategy on followers’ job satisfaction via LMX
### 4.5. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Table 4.7 summarises the results of all my hypotheses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of a situation modification strategy at time 1 will be positively associated with LMX at time 2</td>
<td>Not Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of a cognitive change strategy at time 1 will be positively associated with LMX at time 2</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of an attentional deployment strategy at time 1 will be positively associated with LMX at time 2</td>
<td>Not Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>Followers’ perception of leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response strategy at time 1 will be negatively associated with LMX at time 2</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5</td>
<td>Followers’ perception of LMX at time 2 will be positively related to followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 6</td>
<td>Followers’ perception of LMX at time 2 will be positively related to followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment, at time 3</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 7</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a situation modification IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Supported/Not Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of an attentional deployment IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the negative relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, at time 3</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a situation modification IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a cognitive change IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the positive relationship between perceived leaders’ use of an attentional deployment IER strategy at time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>LMX at time 2 will mediate the negative relationship between perceived leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response IER strategy at</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time 1 and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7 Summary of hypothesised test results
CHAPTER FIVE: GENERAL DISCUSSION

The aim of my study is to understand more about the consequences of leaders’ IER strategies. Specifically, my study focuses on examining the influence of leaders’ IER strategies on LMX relationship quality and followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction. My study drew upon two main streams of literature, namely LMX theory and emotion regulation theory. The literature on LMX theory has shown a solid relationship between the LMX and work performance and job satisfaction (Martin et al., 2016). The literature on emotion regulation indicates that the social nature of the emotion regulation process has been increasingly emphasised (Côté and Hideg, 2011, Van Kleef et al., 2012, Niven, 2016) and the emotional regulation also includes deliberate attempts to influence the feelings, experienced or expressed, of others, which were identified as IER (Niven et al., 2009, Niven et al., 2011, Niven, 2016). My study combined these two streams of literature to propose that leaders’ IER strategies can influence the leader-follower exchange relationship quality, which in turn will influence followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction.

The results of my study partially supported my hypotheses. Two of the four IER strategies, namely cognitive change and modulating the emotional response, do significantly influence the leader-follower exchange relationship quality, which eventually impacts followers’ objective performance and job satisfaction as expected, while the other two IER strategies, namely situation modification and attentional deployment, that leaders utilise do not significantly influence LMX as expected. Moreover, the results show that LMX influences followers’ objective performance and job satisfaction significantly as expected.

In this chapter, I present an in-depth discussion on all the findings and their implications. First, I outline the key findings of the research, explaining the pattern of findings and interpreting them in relation to previous research. I start with the findings concerning leaders’ IER strategies and LMX, followed by findings regarding LMX and followers’ objective performance and job satisfaction, and finally addressing the relationship between leaders’ IER strategies and followers’ objective performance and job satisfaction through LMX.
Subsequently, I turn my attention to drawing out the theoretical and practical implications of my findings. I then discuss the limitations of my study. Finally, the direction of future research will be discussed.

5.1. INTERPERSONAL EMOTION REGULATION STRATEGY AND LMX

Studies examining the impact of IER strategies in the workplace have been rather limited, though the importance of effective emotion regulation has been supported by more and more social psychology literature (Butler et al., 2003, Gross and John, 2003). My study reveals that specific leaders’ IER strategies will have a significant influence on LMX in the workplace.

Since leaders’ IER strategies were measured through followers’ eyes in my study, examining the impact of leaders’ IER strategies on LMX provides some important and interesting insights into the key relationship, i.e. between followers and their respective direct leaders in my study, in the workplace.

First, my study finding that does not support Hypothesis 1 that leaders’ use of a situation modification strategy will positively influence LMX is noteworthy. This may be the most counterintuitive finding in my study. This result is not consistent with the recent finding that suggests that leaders adopting a situation modification strategy will be positively related to followers’ evaluation of LMX (Little et al., 2016). My finding may be explained by several factors. First, situation modification refers to leaders’ behaviours that directly modify or change the situation to alter followers’ negative emotions (Gross, 1998). Even if a leader is helping followers out of the undesirable situation they are in, some of the followers may feel that the leader is using his or her position of power and it is the leader’s responsibility to help them out. As a result, leaders adopting a situation modification strategy may not positively impact LMX. For example, in my study, sales supervisors may have lowered sales representatives’ sales target since they thought the goal was too high to achieve. Sales supervisors’ behaviour did help sales representatives to have a better chance of achieving the
sales goal, which mitigated their potential negative emotions, while the sales representatives may have thought that their sales supervisor used his or her position of power to help instead of making a special effort to help them. It is possible that the sales representatives thought it was their sales supervisor’s responsibility to adjust the sales goal for them. Or some sales representatives may even have thought that their sales supervisor’s behaviour of adjusting the sales goal proved that their goal was too high. Secondly, leaders’ behaviour of directly modifying or changing the situation is more visible to the extent that it could be interpreted by followers as help (Zee and Bolger, 2019), according to the framework of social support visibility (Bolger et al., 2000, Bolger and Amarel, 2007). It is possible that leaders’ direct and visible help actually draws attention to followers’ inability to handle the difficult situation (Fisher et al., 1982). It is also possible that leaders’ direct and visible help increases followers’ perceived demands on reciprocal behaviour, which will trigger their concern (Gleason et al., 2003). Followers’ concerns over perceived incompetence and demand for reciprocal effort could negatively impact LMX. All of this could partially explain why I did not find a positive path from leaders adopting a situation modification strategy to followers’ perception of LMX.

Second, when followers perceived that leaders adopted a cognitive change interpersonal emotion strategy, followers’ perceived LMX significantly improved. This suggests that a leader adopting a cognitive change strategy may make followers think that the leader is trying to help them to see the situation, which triggers negative emotions in a more positive way. The results of my study suggest that followers may appreciate leaders putting situations into perspective for them by helping them to interpret situations with different meanings. To followers, it may mean that their leader does not have the power to change the situation for them but still tries his or her best to reappraise or reinterpret the situation so that there will be less potential harm to goals, concerns and well-being (Gross, 1998). For example, in my study, a sales representative may have felt frustrated when he or she received an aggressive sales goal because the sales representative thought that the aggressive goal would negatively impact the sales attainment, which would eventually hurt his or her bonus. The sales supervisor did not change the sales goal but taught the sales representative that the aggressive
goal was from the sales representative’s outstanding sales performance in the past few months and it showed the organisation’s confidence in the sales representative. The sales supervisor even shared his or her own experience about how s/he worked it out in the past and got promoted to a supervisor. The emotion of the sales representative changed from negative to positive after the coaching, though the aggressive sales goal never changed. According to the framework of social support visibility (Bolger et al., 2000, Bolger and Amarei, 2007), leaders’ behaviour of reappraising or reinterpreting a situation may be seen by followers as invisible support that will reduce reflected appraisals of inefficacy and make followers think that they are capable of coping with the situation with their personal resources (Zee and Bolger, 2019). Leaders adopting a cognitive change strategy as support instead of direct help to followers could make followers feel that the problem they are facing is common and it is not about themselves lacking ability (Zee and Bolger, 2019). Followers might appreciate the invisible and indirect support that their leader gave them. As a result, followers’ perception of LMX was enhanced. So the result supported my Hypothesis 2.

Third, the relationship between leaders’ attentional deployment strategy and followers’ perception of LMX was not statistically significant either. One potential explanation for this may lie in the focus of an attentional deployment strategy being a distraction. Though the purpose of a leader adopting an attentional deployment strategy is to help followers out of a situation that may induce undesirable emotions, the situation is still there. In my research design, leaders’ IER strategy data were collected six months before I collected the data from the second wave of the survey, which the LMX data came in. So it is possible that followers did feel LMX improved immediately after the leader adopted the attentional deployment strategy. But later, followers still need to face the situation that induced their negative emotions since leaders’ attentional deployment strategy involves using different ways of distracting followers to improve their emotions (Niven et al., 2009) while the cause of the situation is still there and not reframed. So, followers still need to face the undesirable situation when the distraction effect has gone away. The negative emotions related to the situation still conquered followers. The effects of distraction may be immediate and short-lived but not long-lived. My results suggest that after six months, followers may be aware
that their leader’s attentional deployment strategy was not really helpful for them in the long term. This may partially explain why no significant positive relationship is found between leaders utilising an attentional deployment strategy and LMX in my study.

In the workplace, it is equally important, if not more so, for leaders to know what strategy they should not adopt. According to the results of my study, modulating the response is the one that leaders should try to avoid. The result shows a statistically significant path between a leader adopting a modulating the emotional response strategy and followers’ perception of LMX with a negative correlation. Leaders are often keen to influence followers’ emotional response in the workplace when followers are experiencing negative emotions because they are facing an undesirable situation (Little et al., 2016). In many cases, leaders tried to make followers suppress their negative emotions such as rage, fear, and sadness to align themselves with the display rules in the organisation (Geddes and Callister, 2007). Display rules are defined as the emotional displays which guide individuals how to interact with others in ways are socially acceptable (Ekman and Friesen, 2003). In the workplace, it can be an explicit part of the job to display positive emotions as display rules, especially in service professions (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002, Diefendorff et al., 2006, Wharton, 1993). It will be very clear to the followers that leaders do not care about followers’ feelings but just want to reduce the expression instead of addressing the cause of negative emotions (Niven et al., 2009). Another possible reason is that emotions provide a lot of important social information (Levenson, 1999). Suppression of emotions reduced the opportunities for leaders to get emotional information from followers effectively, which can hurt the relationship between leader and follower. Consequently, followers perceived that LMX worsened since they felt that leaders did not care about them and the organisational display rules or leader showed no interest in understanding the social information followers tried to deliver to leaders. So, leaders’ use of a modulating the emotional response strategy was negatively related to followers’ perception of LMX. This finding supported my Hypothesis 4.

My study explored more about the understanding of antecedents of LMX from the
perspective of interpersonal emotional regulation on top of previous studies’ demonstration of the aspects of effectively managing LMX in the workplace. Though a lot of research has provided many antecedents and consequences of LMX at work, few studies have linked leaders’ IER and LMX. My study clearly showed that leader-follower relationship quality is at least partially influenced by leaders’ IER strategies, especially leaders’ cognitive change or modulating the emotional response strategy.

5.2. LMX AND FOLLOWERS’ JOB PERFORMANCE AND JOB SATISFACTION

In addition to examining the relationship between leaders’ IER strategy and LMX, I also verified how LMX will influence leadership effectiveness with a focus on followers’ objective performance and job satisfaction. It was expected that enhanced LMX would positively influence followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction.

Previous research has shown a positive relationship between LMX and follower outcomes (Anand et al., 2011, Martin et al., 2010, Schriesheim et al., 1998, Van Breukelen et al., 2006). But there are still some concerns. First, there are concerns about the direction of the effect between LMX and performance (Martin et al., 2016). Though there might be strong reason to propose the effect of LMX on performance, it is plausible to assume that performance impacts LMX or the relationship between LMX and performance works both ways (Dansereau Jr et al., 1975, Nahrgang et al., 2009). Therefore it is important to examine the direction of the effect as to whether LMX impacts performance or the other way around (Martin et al., 2016). Second, the majority of the studies used performance rating by leaders, which may partially explain why there is a strong relationship between LMX and followers’ performance (Duarte et al., 1993). There has been support for the relationship between LMX and followers’ performance beyond simply the leader rating followers’ performance (Gerstner and Day, 1997), while there are still opportunities for researchers to conduct more field tests using objective performance data to examine the relationship between LMX and job performance.
I also noticed that numerous studies on LMX theory (Dansereau Jr et al., 1973, Graen and Schiemann, 1978) have shown positive relationships between LMX and job satisfaction (Golden and Veiga, 2008, Major et al., 1995, Schriesheim et al., 1992, Vecchio et al., 1986). For example, Liden et al. (1997) revealed a significant positive relationship between the LMX and job satisfaction. Also, another meta-analysis showed a positive relationship between LMX and job satisfaction (Gerstner and Day, 1997), whereas we still have limited understanding about the direction of the effect between LMX and job satisfaction because most of the studies are cross-sectional (Deluga and Perry, 1991, Erdogan and Enders, 2007, Janssen and Van Yperen, 2004, Ozer, 2008) with a few studies using a longitudinal method to study the LMX-job satisfaction relationship (Epitropaki and Martin, 2005, Major et al., 1995, Vecchio et al., 1986). In my study, a time-separated longitudinal method was adopted to examine the path from followers’ perception of LMX to followers’ job satisfaction in order to enhance the understanding that LMX predicts followers’ job satisfaction.

So it was expected that results would support the positive relationship between LMX and followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction. The results in my study are further strengthened by the fact that followers’ perception of LMX has a positive impact on followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction. According to the results of my study, followers’ perception of LMX has a significant positive impact on followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment in my study, in six months. Also, my results showed that improved followers’ perception of LMX significantly increased followers’ job satisfaction in six months.

In sum, the results of my study are in part a replication of previous studies and in part extend the understanding with the adoption of field tests and objective job performance, while I will state that, to the best of my knowledge, my research is the first to explore the effect of leaders’ IER strategy on followers’ objective performance through the path of LMX using a time-separated longitudinal approach.
5.3. INTERPERSONAL EMOTION REGULATION STRATEGY ON FOLLOWERS’ OBJECTIVE JOB PERFORMANCE AND JOB SATISFACTION VIA LMX

The results of Monte Carlo simulation supported the mediation mechanism of LMX between leaders utilising a cognitive change strategy and followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment in my study, and followers’ job satisfaction. Specifically, they supported Hypotheses 8 and 12 that leaders adopting a cognitive change strategy positively influenced followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction. This is an exciting finding from my study. One explanation for the results could be based on social exchange theory, which involves a series of interactions that generate obligations (Emerson, 1976). Followers may still appreciate their leader helping them to reappraise the situation from their perspective even if the leader does not change the situation directly. Followers will think that their leader adopting cognitive change is for their benefit. Followers feel a sense of reciprocity toward their leader since they appreciate the leader taking good care of them. So the perceived leader utilising a cognitive change strategy enhanced the leader-follower exchange relationship quality. A high-quality LMX developed trust between leader and follower. Better trust between leader and follower triggered reciprocal behaviour, which positively influenced followers’ objective job performance, which is sales attainment in my study. The sales representative felt more obligated to hit the sales goal because of the trust built from the high leader-follower exchange relationship quality. At the same time, a high LMX will mean followers receive more autonomy and support from their leader, which will positively influence followers’ job satisfaction. Followers pay back the benefit they have received from their leader adopting a cognitive change strategy with improved job performance and job satisfaction.

The results of Monte Carlo simulation also support Hypotheses 10 and 14 that a leader utilising a modulating the response strategy will indirectly and negatively influence followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction. A leader utilising a modulating the response strategy was perceived by followers as the leader not caring about their feelings. A modulating the emotional response strategy made followers notice that leaders ignore the
information that followers want to deliver to their leader through their expression of emotions. Based on social exchange theory, followers’ reciprocity toward their leader becomes weaker. So, a leader utilising a modulating the emotional response strategy will be negatively related to leader-follower exchange relationship quality. The trust between leader and follower will get worse. Followers felt less obligated to hit the sales goal, and the sales attainment, which reflects followers’ objective job performance, was influenced negatively. At the same time, less autonomy and support from a leader with low LMX eventually lower followers’ job satisfaction. Followers paid back the lack of care they received from a leader adopting a modulating the emotional response strategy with worse job performance and job satisfaction.

The results of Monte Carlo simulation did not show any significant indirect effect between the other two kinds of leaders’ IER, situation modification and attentional deployment, and followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction. So, Hypothesis 7, 9, 11 and 13 were not supported.

After controlling for indirect effects, the results showed there is no significant correlation between any leaders’ IER strategy and followers’ objective job performance or followers’ job satisfaction except for a direct effect of leaders’ use of a situation modification strategy on followers’ job satisfaction. Leaders’ use of a situation modification strategy may improve followers’ emotion even though a follower may not perceive an enhanced leader-follower exchange relationship quality. Situation modification is the only one that still shows a direct effect after controlling for the indirect effects of LMX. Even if followers may think the leader used a position of power instead of making an extra effort to help followers out, leaders utilising situation modification did change the undesirable situation, which will remove followers’ negative emotions. Previous research has shown that positive emotions are positively related to employees’ job satisfaction (Judge et al., 2001, Judge and Ilies, 2004). So leaders’ situation modification strategy may still be positively related to followers’ job satisfaction. But no other direct relationship was found between another IER strategy and followers’ job satisfaction or objective job performance. There is also no direct relationship
between leaders’ situation modification strategy and followers’ objective job performance.

5.4 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

My research and findings contribute to IER theory by expanding this construct to the real business workplace and organisational domain. Less attention has been given by emotion regulation theories and studies to the effect of leaders’ specific interpersonal behaviour on others such as leader-member relationship exchange when other related constructs, such as intrapersonal emotion regulation and emotional intelligence, have been examined in the workplace and organisational domain, especially those related to leadership (George, 2000, Gooty et al., 2010, Madrid et al., 2019). My study connects IER theory with LMX theory and examined the effect on outcomes at individual level.

Secondly, to the best of my knowledge, few studies have examined the effects of IER on followers’ performance. And those that do (e.g. Little et al., 2016, Vasquez et al., 2020) have relied mainly on followers’ subjective performance, which is measured by their leaders, might be biased by factors such as the relationship between leader and follower. In my study, I used followers’ objective performance, sales attainment, as the dependent variable, showing a positive effect on followers’ objective job performance for a cognitive change strategy and a negative effect on follower’s objective job performance for modulating the emotion response strategy, which adds a lot of weight to the evidence that is available via replicating other IER studies (e.g. Little et al., 2016, Vasquez et al., 2020). To my understanding too, only a very limited number of IER studies have so far examined how leaders’ IER impact followers’ job satisfaction. The majority of the studies have focused on followers’ affective well-being (e.g. Thiel et al., 2015) rather than on their work attitude. So, my study addressed this omission by exploring how leaders’ IER strategy could potentially impact team members’ objective job performance and job satisfaction.

Thirdly, the majority of the IER studies have focused on the effects of IER on core aspects of work performance via influencing team affect. For example, research was done to test a
mediation model in which leaders’ IER strategies were related to team innovation via team affective tone (Madrid et al., 2019). Specifically, a leader affect-improving IER strategy positively impacts team innovation via a team positive affective tone and a leader affect-worsening interpersonal emotion strategy negatively impacts team innovation via a team negative emotion tone (Madrid et al., 2019). Another research conducted among staff and prisoners in a high-security prison also shows that changes to a target’s affect mediate the effect of IER on the perceived relationship between agent and target (Niven et al., 2012c). Holman and Niven’s (2019) research among driving instructors and learner drivers demonstrated that an agent utilising IER, affect-improving IER specifically, towards a target is positively related to the target’s task performance through the target’s positive emotion. My study therefore contributes to IER theory by identifying leaders’ specific behaviours, utilising a specific IER strategy, that influence team outcomes through the mediation path of LMX as a further key mechanism, other than affect, through which leaders’ IER influences followers’ performance.

My study also contributes to leadership theory. Considering the importance of LMX in the workplace, it is crucial to understand the antecedents of LMX. Empirical studies have examined a variety of antecedents including three main categories, namely follower characteristics, leader characteristics and interpersonal relationships. Examples of follower characteristics include competence (Liden and Graen, 1980), agreeableness (Graziano et al., 2007, Perugini et al., 2003), extraversion (Phillips and Bedeian, 1994), positive affectivity (Kinicki and Vecchio, 1994, Phillips and Bedeian, 1994) and negative affectivity (Bernerth et al., 2007, Hui et al., 1999, Hochwarter, 2003, Hochwarter, 2005), etc. Examples of leader characteristics include transformational leadership (Anand et al., 2011, Wang et al., 2005), expectations of follower success (McNatt, 2000, McNatt and Judge, 2004, Liden et al., 1993, Wayne et al., 1997) and leaders’ personality such as extraversion (Judge et al., 2002, Bono and Judge, 2004), etc. Examples of interpersonal relationships include perceived similarity (Fairhurst, 2001, Liden et al., 1993, Turban and Jones, 1988), trust (Brower et al., 2009, Gomez and Rosen, 2001, Pelled and Xin, 2000, Van Dam et al., 2008, Wat and Shaffer, 2005) and followers’ upward influence behaviours such as ingratiatio...
assertiveness (Dienesch and Liden, 1986, Schriesheim et al., 2000), etc. My study contributes by exploring leaders’ specific behaviour, deliberately managing followers’ negative emotions, as a potential antecedent for LMX, which will eventually have important consequences, including followers’ job performance and job satisfaction in the workplace. In particular, my study provides the answer to the question that most of the LMX literature has not addressed as to which IER strategy works and how it affects LMX.

5.5. PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

The results of my study have numerous implications for business leaders and their subordinates. First, it is clear that leaders’ use of a modulating the response strategy has a number of negative consequences, including worse job satisfaction and objective sales performance. So, I strongly suggest that business leaders do not utilise the modulating the response strategy when team members are experiencing negative emotions in the workplace since it will hurt LMX, objective sales performance and job satisfaction. Instead, I encourage business leaders to utilise more the cognitive change strategy even if they cannot change or modify the situation, which normally is the case in the real business world, when team members are experiencing negative emotions. Followers are expecting their leaders’ support in reinterpreting or reappraising the situation that caused negative emotions.

Second, leaders’ emotional regulation strategy is about more than just emotions. Leaders’ IER strategies have a significant impact on LMX, which has been proved to have a lot of consequences for leaders, followers and organisations in the workplace. It is valuable for business leaders to understand more about leaders’ IER strategies because they provide a lot of insights into LMX too. Therefore, organisations that are dedicated to improving teams’ job performance and job satisfaction should bear in mind that managing employees’ emotions in this domain needs to be considered seriously.

Leadership training normally covers contents including general management, values, human resource, self-awareness, problem solving, decision-making, and motivations (Burke and
Day, 1986). It is valuable for leadership development programmes in organisations to consist of training to equip employees with a better understanding of antecedents of LMX, which will allow business leaders to manage team members more effectively. Of course, understanding IER strategies, as an important antecedent of LMX relationship shown in my study, should definitely be included in the training that both business leaders and team members need to take. Organisations can also develop training programmes for leaders to increase their self-awareness about their emotion management capabilities, such as leaders’ self-awareness of tendencies to use different IER strategies and the consequences of such strategies. It will benefit business leaders to be familiar with their strengths and weaknesses when utilising different IER strategies to manage teams’ negative emotions. Organisations can also include IER training, e.g. insights into negative emotions linked to different situations, in their problem-solving training, which will equip leaders with tools for handling various work problems that they will face in the workplace (Collins and Holton III, 2004). For example, leaders can learn from the training how to utilise a cognitive change strategy to effectively manage followers’ negative emotions in the workplace to improve the team’s job performance and job satisfaction. Also, leaders will be aware that they should try to avoid using the modulating the emotion response strategy, which will negatively impact a team’s job performance and job satisfaction. Burke and Day (1986) also concluded that training methods should include lectures, lecture/group discussion, behavioural modelling, sensitivity training, leader match, lecture/group discussion with role playing or practice and multiple techniques. Role playing is an effective training method to get leaders to be familiar with utilising different IER strategies to handle a team’s negative emotions. Eventually, all these training contents and methods can help organisations to get leaders ready to utilise different IER strategies to improve LMX, which eventually will improve followers’ job performance and job satisfaction.

For organisations, when selecting or recruiting leaders for team leadership positions, leaders’ ability to utilise an IER strategy could be considered an assessment variable. It may benefit organisations to have a better understanding of interpersonal emotional regulation and to develop a selection method with assistance to select proper business leaders to handle tough
situations that will cause a lot of negative emotions among employees. As we knew, there is dispositional aspect of emotion regulation, both intrapersonal and interpersonal (Gross, 1998). Organisations could leverage business leaders’ dispositional strengths while still trying to train them in areas for development. This will benefit both organisations and business leaders with awareness of different leaders’ emotion regulation tendencies. For example, when an organisation is going to experience situations, e.g. merger and acquisition, where employees will face lots of negative emotions, the assessment centre could appoint leaders with the right emotion regulation tendencies to manage the organisation through the situations and complete the challenging tasks. At the same time, organisation development centres can assign some tasks to gain insights into whether leaders are capable of leveraging different IER strategies to handle team members’ different negative emotions so that the organisation can choose the right leaders to handle different situations in a variety of work settings.

Last but not least, as a student in a DBA programme, I can apply the results from my study in the organisation that I am working for. The implications above suggest a variety of possible implications for organisational practice based on my study. I am fortunate to hold a senior role within the organisation that was involved in my study and will be using the findings of my research to inform a series of practical recommendations regarding practice in the organisation. In particular, based on my findings, I will be recommending that the human resource department increase the number of training courses on how leaders can utilise different IER strategies to regulate team members’ negative emotions in the workplace. During the current pandemic, many organisations are experiencing challenging times and many employees are experiencing various negative emotions in the workplace. At present, there is some training on employees’ emotions in the workplace, but no specific training on how leaders can help employees to regulate team members’ emotions. So, adding a practical training course on IER will be beneficial to the organisation I am in, especially for the frontline sales managers. I also plan to develop some coaching material with the findings from my study. We have a management trainee programme in the organisation and I will be coaching some management trainees and high-potential leaders. I am confident that coaches
will learn a lot from my coaching on how to utilise IER strategies in the workplace.

5.6. LIMITATIONS

Of course, as with any other research, my study is not without limitations. The first potential limitation of my study is the self-report nature of some of my hypothesis testing, which may have introduced some degree of common-method bias. For example, both LMX and job satisfaction were measured by the same group of participants, who are sales representatives in my study. This may also partially explain why there is a strong correlation between LMX and followers’ job satisfaction. A few factors may reduce the level of common-method variance in my study. First, I collected data on perceived leaders’ interpersonal emotional regulation strategy at time 1, LMX at time 2, which is six months later, and followers’ job satisfaction at time 3, which is after another six months. So I collected data on independent, mediator and dependent variables at three different points in time. The separation by time helped me minimise the common-method bias. Second, it has been argued that common-method variance is not typically large enough to make the research findings invalid even if concerns associated with common methods did exist (Crampton and Wagner III, 1994, Spector, 2006). Though the same source issue could not be avoided when I examined job satisfaction, I did use followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment, in my study as another important dependent variable.

The second limitation relates to the definition of modulating the emotional response strategy in my study. According to Little (2016), the main way that leaders use a modulating the emotional response strategy (i.e., to get the other person to modulate their emotional response) is to encourage followers to suppress their negative emotions. However, this does not include other possible ways such as encouraging the person to exercise or relax, which potentially have different effects that may differ from the results found in this study. Nevertheless, these alternative strategies may be less common in workplace situations, so my study reflects the effect of the most common way in which a lead may use a modulating the emotional response strategy.
The third limitation could be the method of analysis. My research design, which measured independent, mediator and dependent variables at three different times, provides a stronger argument on cause-and-effect relationships than a cross-sectional design whereby inferences are drawn from associations between two or more static variables (Ployhart and Vandenberg, 2010). But my analytical procedure did not capture the dynamic nature of the variables and their interrelationship (Chan, 1998). For the reason of pragmatism, I used time-separated approach. A longitudinal analysis could be deployed to further enhance the causal inferences by focusing on the change in the substantive constructs (Ployhart and Vandenberg, 2010). A longitudinal study contains at least three repeated measures, although more is better, of all the variables to observe the change over time (Ployhart and Vandenberg, 2010). A cross-lagged panel analysis could be used for future research to identify the causal relationship of variables via discrete time structural equation model.

Connected to the above issue is the fact that the study I conducted involved fairly long lags between measurement occasions, i.e. six months. I chose a six-month time lag in part because I wanted to allow for the cumulative effects of IER to unfold over time, considering in particular that relationships between leaders and their team members may take some time to develop and evolve and that changes in performance may take time to materialise. However, as discussed earlier in relation to the strategy of attentional deployment, it is possible that at least some forms of IER bring benefits that are only seen in the short term, which may have been missed based on this design choice. Using a shorter timescale involving repeated measurements (e.g. a daily or weekly diary study) might be more informative regarding the timescale over which the effects of IER are realised.

One more limitation has to do with my focus on a specific organisational setting, which will limit the generalisation of my results to other organisational settings, while on the other hand, my study was conducted in a China-based multinational organisation in a single industry, which would enable my study to be generalised to similar industries, for example other multinational fast-moving consumer goods organisations, in China. Two of the operating
units involved in my study are both in the same industry and my study focuses on the same group of employees, i.e. sales representatives and their line managers. This allowed the measurements in my study to be customised and hence provided a deeper understanding of a specific group of employees’ behaviours in specific organisational settings.

The sixth possible limitation of my study is using followers’ perception of leaders’ IER strategy. I have addressed the upside of using followers’ perception of leaders’ IER (Little et al., 2016, Madrid et al., 2018), while there could be a downside of using this approach too. When I asked followers to fill in the survey to capture leaders’ IER strategies, followers were only able to reflect leaders’ IER strategies that they were aware of. This may not reflect the intentional IER that leaders utilised. Future research could examine the effect of leaders’ IER strategy using leaders as a source of information.

The final limitation is associated with the control variables used in my study. Though various important control variables were controlled in my study, other relevant control variables may also be important considering the complexity of the concepts of IER, LMX, job performance and job satisfaction. For example, leaders’ or follower’s personality may be linked with the dependent variables.

Having discussed these limitations, now I am turning my attention to suggestion for future research.

5.7. FUTURE RESEARCH

When I discussed the limitations of my study, I mentioned that future research could include other important contextual variables when studying IER, LMX and followers’ outcome since it would provide more comprehensive insights into the emotions that emerge in the workplace. For example, future research could consider the character of leaders or followers as a contextual variable since individual characteristics differentiate leaders from non-leaders (House and Aditya, 1997). This has been of long-standing interest in leadership
research about the relationship between a leader’s personality and leadership effectiveness (Derue et al., 2011, van Knippenberg, 2012).

Another example is the apparent motives of leaders’ IER. Previous research has revealed that the effects of IER depend not only on the strategies that are used but also on regulators’ apparent motives (Niven et al., 2019). Leaders’ emotional behaviours, utilising different IER strategies in my study, convey crucial social information about their goals, intentions and attitudes based on which followers will make inferences to influence the interpersonal consequences of leaders’ behaviour (Van Kleef, 2009). It is expected that the effects of IER will depend on whether the apparent motive is prosocial, benefits others or egoistical, i.e. to benefit the leader (Niven et al., 2019). For example, the effect of leaders utilising a modulating the emotional response or attentional deployment strategy may vary when followers perceived leaders’ motive is prosocial, i.e. to benefit followers. It will be valuable for future research to examine how leaders’ apparent motives moderate the effect of leaders’ use of different IER strategies on followers’ job performance and job satisfaction via the path of LMX.

Future research could also extend the sample with a wider variety of participants in different industries and functions. It could be harder to isolate the relationships, while it will benefit the generalisation of the findings with samples that cover different companies, industries, functions or even cross different countries or cultures. Of course, researchers need to note that the study should be tested in one job across different organisations or several jobs in one organisation instead of collecting data from different jobs in different organisations in order to conduct a more homogeneous sample (Smith, 2008) when expanding to multiple organisations and industries. Having these control variables, moderators or a choice of different contexts in future research will be helpful for gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the role of leaders’ IER strategy in the workplace.

My study examined the effect of followers’ perception of leaders’ IER on LMX. It may be interesting to uncover the relationship between what strategy a leader thought s/he was
utilising and LMX since followers’ subjective perception may not be the same as the actual IER strategy that the leader utilised. It will also be interesting to understand more about why followers interpret their leader’s IER strategy differently to the actual one the leader utilised if there is a difference, which is highly likely to be the case in the real business world, or how the difference between a leader’s perception of his or her IER strategy and followers’ perception of their leader’s utilisation of an IER strategy will impact LMX. According to the framework of social support visibility (Bolger et al., 2000, Bolger and Amarel, 2007), invisible support alleviates recipients’ distress (Bolger and Amarel, 2007). Also, one of the benefits of invisible social support is the improvement of relational outcomes (Belcher et al., 2011, Girme et al., 2018). So it will be interesting for future research to look into the effect of leaders’ invisible IER compared to visible IER: for example, how the effects will be different when followers claim they cannot observe their leader’s IER strategy while the leader claims that he or she utilises a specific IER strategy compared to when both the leader and his/her followers are aware that the leader utilises a specific IER strategy.

Future research can also explore further the pathway from IER to followers’ outcome: for example, whether leaders’ utilization of IER improves or worsens followers’ emotions in the workplace. According to Fredrickson’s (2001) broaden-and-build theory, positive emotions will improve job performance in three ways. First, positive emotions will make employees cope better with job demands by broadening the use of current behavioural repertoires (Fredrickson and Branigan, 2005). Second, positive emotions will enable employees to respond quickly to the requirements of tasks and to obtain relevant information about the tasks by broadening attention to the wider array of stimuli (Holman and Niven, 2019). Third, positive emotions will help employees to build enduring task knowledge, which will benefit performance in the long run by facilitating the integration of new with existing knowledge (Holman and Niven, 2019). So future research can try to examine more mediation paths, such as followers’ positive emotions, from IER strategies to followers’ outcomes, alongside the pathway studied here (i.e. LMX), to ascertain which of the pathways is most relevant.

In my study, I examined the effect of IER strategies using Gross’s (1998) framework. Future
research can explore the effects of IER strategies with other alternative frameworks. For example, Niven et al.'s (2009) framework focuses on the distinctions between strategies to improve versus worsen others’ feelings and between those that are relationship-oriented and those focused on cognitive engagement. Other research has since used the term “socio-affective” strategies and shown these to have distinctive effects compared to cognitive strategies (Pauw et al., 2019). So future research can examine how an emotion-improving strategy impacts LMX compared to an emotion-worsening strategy and eventually influences followers’ outcomes or the different effects of socio-affective versus cognitive strategies on followers’ outcomes via LMX.

The comparison of leader’s use of different IER strategies among followers can be another interesting research angle for future research. Followers may compare the IER strategy they received with the strategy others received. The comparison will make followers feel that leader favor them or others more which may impact LMX. Or further, how comparison of leader’s use of different IER strategies impact followers’ perception of the LMX differentiation process, which will eventually influence followers’ outcomes in the workplace. Leaders have different LMX relationships with followers, thus the impact of LMX on work outcomes might not be based only on the LMX relationship but also on the comparison of the LMX relationship among team members (Martin et al., 2018). Martin et al. (2018) defined the LMX differentiation process as the way in which leaders develop different LMX relationships with followers. It will be valuable to examine how a comparison of leaders’ IER strategies impacts followers’ outcomes via the LMX differentiation.

Future research could also explore further how leaders’ IER strategy will influence followers’ objective performance of different tasks such as the number of new customers obtained, account receivables, production efficiency, etc., or expand the line of research to look into more objective outcomes such as the actual team members’ turnover rate, actual number of employees being promoted, etc.

Furthermore, it will be interesting to explore leaders’ IER strategy regarding followers’
relationship with customers or peers on top of with leaders in the workplace. Additionally, future research could explore the effect of leaders’ IER strategy on customer satisfaction and team engagement. It also will be interesting to find out the effects from peers’ IER behaviours on employees’ outcomes.

In short, it is fair to say that my study has only scratched the surface as to the influence of leaders’ IER strategies and the findings of my study suggest that more attention should be given to exploring the impact of leaders’ IER strategies in the workplace.

5.8 CONCLUSION

To conclude, my study examined the effects of leaders’ IER strategies on followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction. The results of my study provided insights into how different leaders’ IER strategies, namely situation modification, cognitive change, attentional deployment and modulating the response, influenced followers’ objective job performance, sales attainment and job satisfaction through the mediating mechanism of LMX. Structural equation modelling analysis results suggested that leaders’ cognitive change strategy related positively to LMX while leaders’ modulating the response strategy related negatively to it. The results also suggested that LMX related positively to followers’ objective job performance and job satisfaction. Further, Monte Carlo simulation results indicated that leaders’ use of cognitive change strategy indirectly and positively impacted followers’ objective performance and job satisfaction through the mediating mechanism of LMX. Monte Carlo simulation results also found that leaders’ use of modulating the response strategy indirectly and negatively influenced followers’ objective performance and job satisfaction through the mediating mechanism of LMX. No significant effects were found for leaders’ use of situation modification and attentional deployment on followers’ outcome.

My study contributes to IER theory by expanding this construct to the real business workplace and organisational domain. My study also addressed the omission of IER theory by exploring how leaders’ IER strategy could potentially impact team members’ objective
job performance and job satisfaction. Last but not least, my study contributes to IER theory by identifying the mediation path of LMX between leaders’ specific behaviours, utilising a specific IER strategy, and individual employee task performance. Practically, my study is of value and worth including in leadership development programmes in organisations to equip employees with a better understanding of antecedents of LMX, especially the understanding of IER strategies to get leaders ready for future challenges on how to manage followers’ negative emotions effectively. Second, would be valuable to include the results of my study in organisations’ selection or recruiting process to leverage business leaders’ dispositional strengths on IER to fit into different situations. My study will also be helpful to support leaders in building high quality LMX in the workplace, which is critical to both leaders’ and followers’ objective performance in the short term and for their longer-term career success.

I hope my study will generate more discussion and research into leaders’ IER in the workplace. Emotion regulation is a concept that has become more and more important in organisation settings. Additional research is needed to gain a better understanding of potential upsides and downsides of leaders’ use of IER strategy in the workplace. With deeper insights into leaders’ use of IER strategy, more organisations and employees will benefit from the findings.
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Internal Use Only


APPENDICES

All measures that I used in my final study are in black type and those omitted in red.

APPENDIX 1 – QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SALES REPRESENTATIVES

Introduction:

What is this survey about?
· This survey is for a research examining how people’s feelings relate to business performance in work environments. The survey has been designed and is being administered by an independent research team from the University of Manchester and SJTU.
· Participation in the survey is voluntary, but completion will enable us to be more confident about the recommendations based upon our findings. The survey should take you no longer than 20 minutes to complete.

Who will see my answers?
· The information that you provide in this survey will be kept completely confidential. None of your answers will be divulged to any person outside the university research team.
· Information in any future reports will be based on the whole sample of participants – it will not identify individuals.

How do I complete the survey?
· Please read each question carefully, then answer giving your first reaction. Do not spend too much time on any one question – it’s the overall pattern of your answers that we are interested in.
· Please do not omit any question. If you find a question that does not quite fit your circumstances, simply give the answer that is closest to your views.
· The usefulness of this survey depends on the frankness and honesty with which you answer the questions. There are no right or wrong answers – this is not a test.

Thank you for your support and there is a random red envelope after you complete the survey!
Survey:

Section 1. Background

The first set of questions collect some background details about you so that we can group and compare responses over time. Please remember that all your responses will be confidential to the research team.

Which OU are you working? ________________

Your employee ID _______________________

What is your age (in years)? ______________

What is your gender? Male □   Female □

How long have you worked in the OU? ____________ years ________ months

How long have you worked in your current role? ________ years ________ months

How long have you worked with your current supervisor? ________ years ________ months
Section 2. Your Supervisors

2.1 When you interact with your supervisor at work,

To what extent does he/she usually express the following emotions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Just a little</th>
<th>A moderate amount</th>
<th>Quite a lot</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tense</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Enthusiastic</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Gloomy</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Calm</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Worried</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Optimistic</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Depressed</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Relaxed</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Uneasy</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Miserable</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Contented</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Cheerful</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.2. When you experience negative emotions, normally what does your supervisor do?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>... , my supervisor ...</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 modifies the elements of the situation that are having an undesired impact on me.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 works out plans to remove the negative aspects of situations.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 removes the negative aspects of the situation that are negatively impacting me.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 changes the situation to alter its emotional impact.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 takes actions to get rid of the problems I am having.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 focuses my attention away from the troubling aspect of the problem when a situation is disturbing me.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 refocuses the conversation towards aspects of the situation that I should find more appealing.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 distracts my attention from the aspect of the problem causing my undesired emotions.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 refocuses me by discussing positive issues when a situation is unpleasant to me.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 distracts me from focusing on the negative aspects of that situation when s/he thinks a situation will cause an undesirable emotion.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>puts my problems into perspective when s/he wants me to feel more positive emotions (such as joy or amusement).</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>tries to influence my emotions by changing how I think about the situation I am in.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>changes the meaning attaching to a situation when s/he wants me to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger).</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>changes the meaning attaching to the situation when s/he wants me to feel more positive emotion (such as joy or amusement).</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>puts my problems into perspective when s/he want me to feel less negative emotion (such as sadness or anger).</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>tells me not to express my emotions when I am experiencing undesirable emotions.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>encourages me to keep my emotions to myself.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>gets me to stop when I “venting” about a problem during my interaction with him or her.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>suggests strategies for me to suppress my emotions when I am experiencing undesirable emotions.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>encourages me not to express my emotions.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.3. When you think about your relationship with your supervisor,

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I usually know how satisfied my supervisor is with what I do.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>My supervisor understands my job problems and needs well.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>My supervisor recognises my potential well.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, my supervisor would use his/her power to help me solve problems in my work.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority my supervisor has, he/she would “bail me out” at his/her expense.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I have enough confidence in my supervisor that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I would characterise my working relationship with my supervisor as good.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3. About your job

3.1. Thinking about your job, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. At work, I feel bursting with energy.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In my job, I feel strong and vigorous.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I am enthusiastic about my job.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My job inspires me.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I am proud of the work that I do.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I feel happy when I am working intensely.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I am immersed in my work.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I get carried away when I am working.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. How does your job make you feel?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thinking of the past few weeks, how often has your job made you feel each of the following?</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Relaxed</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Worried</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Depressed</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Calm</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Contented</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Gloomy</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Optimistic</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Tense</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Enthusiastic</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Cheerful</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Miserable</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Uneasy</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 4. When thinking about your work,

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I feel fairly satisfied with my present job.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Each day at work seems like it will never end.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I find real enjoyment in my work.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I consider my job to be rather unpleasant.</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>