



Handelshøyskolen BI

GRA 19703 Master Thesis

Thesis Master of Science 100% - W

Predefinert informasjon

Startdato: 09-01-2023 09:00 CET
Termin: 202310
Sluttdato: 03-07-2023 12:00 CEST
Vurderingsform: Norsk 6-trinns skala (A-F)
Eksamensform: T
Flowkode: 202310||11184||IN00||W||T
Intern sensor: (Anonymisert)

Deltaker

Navn:

Informasjon fra deltaker

Tittel *:

Navn på veileder *:

Inneholder besvarelsen
konfidensielt
materiale?: Nei

Kan besvarelsen
offentliggjøres?: Ja

Gruppe

Gruppenavn:

Gruppenummer:

Andre medlemmer i
gruppen:

Master Thesis

Navigating Emotional Waters:

Exploring the relationship between emotion validation and LMX: The moderating role of attachment style

Supervisor:

Per Magnus Thompson

Campus:

BI Oslo

Programme:

Master of Science in Leadership and Organizational Psychology

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, we would like to thank our supervisor, Associate Professor Per Magnus Thompson for providing us with invaluable guidance and expertise throughout this entire research process. His commitment and dedication to our project has exceeded our expectations and we are extremely grateful for his support and feedback. Additionally, we want to thank PhD candidate Jon Magnus Frostad Haakonsen for a great collaboration, engagement and competence. He has provided us valuable insight into his own research, which has been instrumental in shaping this research paper. Professor Anders Dysvik deserves an acknowledgment for providing helpful directions and guidance in our initial stages.

Furthermore, we would like to express our gratitude to the participants of this study, whose willingness to share their experiences and insights has enriched this research. Without their cooperation, this study would not have been possible.

We extend a heartfelt appreciation to our friends and family for their encouragement and support during this period. Their continuous motivation has been invaluable throughout this process. Lastly, we would like to thank each other for unwavering commitment, support and great collaboration.

Abstract

This study aims to explore the relationship between emotion validation and leader-member exchange, with a particular focus on the potential influence of attachment style. Using a cross-sectional design, this study investigates a sample of 183 Norwegian employees. The results show a positively significant relationship between emotion validation and followers' perception of the leader-member exchange quality. Our results imply that followers' who experience that their leaders validate their emotional expressions, report a higher quality relationship with their supervisors. While our study did not yield empirical support for attachment style as a moderator, we did discover a noteworthy triple interaction effect by incorporating relatedness as a moderating moderator. This finding suggests that having an avoidant attachment style reduces the positive effect that emotion validation has on relationship quality in certain situations, particularly when experiencing negative emotions.

List of Content

1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Research question	6
2.0 Theory and hypothesis	6
2.1 Emotions and leadership	6
2.2 Emotion validation	7
2.3 Attachment style	9
3.0 Method	13
3.1 Research design	13
3.2 Sample and procedure	13
3.3 Measures	14
3.3.1 LMX	14
3.3.2 Emotion validation	14
3.3.3 Attachment style	15
3.4 Control variables	15
3.5 Exclusion criterion	16
3.6 Research ethics	16
3.7 Data cleansing	17
4.0 Statistical analysis	18
5.0 Results	18
5.1 Descriptive statistics	18
5.2 Hypothesis testing	21
5.3 Moderation analysis	22
5.4 Post-hoc analysis	22
6.0 Discussion	25
7.0 Practical implications	29
8.0 Limitations	30
9.0 Future research	32
10.0 Conclusion	34
11.0 References	35
12.0 Appendices	41
Appendix 1: Consent Form	41
Appendix 2: Survey	41

1.0 Introduction

Since the beginning of time, humans have relied on their ability to perceive and react to significant stimuli as a means of survival. Through human development, complex psychological states have evolved and are commonly known as emotions (Griffiths, 2002). Emotions have served various purposes throughout the ages, aiding our ancestors in detecting threats through fear, facilitating cooperation by expressing our internal states to others, in addition to fostering adherence to social norms through emotions like shame and guilt (Fredrickson, 2003). Still, in today's modern society, emotions continue to play a pivotal role in human existence. While the specific types of fear and decisions may differ from those faced by hunters and gatherers, emotions still shape our everyday lives. Whether forming new relationships, pursuing goals, or navigating difficulties and stress, emotions significantly influence our responses to these situations (Ashkanasy, 2003). Furthermore, emotions extend beyond personal interactions and profoundly impact the organizational context, influencing employee motivation, teamwork, decision-making, and overall workplace dynamics.

Specifically, there has been a growing emphasis on the role of emotions in the development and maintenance of high-quality leader-member relationships and exploring the relational dimensions of leadership (Bono et al., 2007). The roots of focusing on relational leadership behaviors can be traced back to the 1940s with the Ohio State leadership studies. The Ohio State University conducted a series of studies aimed at identifying observable behaviors exhibited by leaders. These studies led to the identification of two distinct dimensions known as consideration and initiating structure (Northouse, 2021), both of which were found to be associated with effective leadership (Li, 2018). Consideration involves demonstrating concern for the well-being of subordinates and fostering positive relationships, while initiating structure pertains to behaviors such as task definition, goal setting, and work organization (Northouse, 2021). These studies were the first to examine leadership in terms of behaviors and marked a shift in the understanding of leadership from a trait-based approach to a behavioral approach. Moreover, these studies propelled the recognition and understanding of the importance of relational behaviors in effective leadership. Subsequently, later studies delved deeper into leadership behaviors and identified both relation-oriented and task-oriented behaviors among leaders, such as the University of

Michigan Studies (Northouse, 2021) and the Managerial Grid (Blake & Mouton, 1964).

The significance of emotions and emotional competencies in leadership theory has become increasingly prominent in the last decades (Gooty et al., 2010) and most theories of transformational and charismatic leadership suggest emotional links between leaders and members (e.g., Bass & Riggio, 2006). A significant contributing factor to this shift has been the inclusion of emotional intelligence as a critical component of effective leadership (McCleskey, 2014). While the exact definition and scope of emotional intelligence remain subjects of scholarly debate, it primarily involves the capacity to perceive, comprehend, and regulate one's own emotions, as well as those of others (Cooper, 2021). Within the field of organizational science, there has also been a notable focus on individual emotion regulation, which refers to an individual's employment of strategies to manage their own emotional expressions (Troth et al., 2018). Although there is an agreement that emotion regulation occurs at multiple levels, limited attention has been given to the interpersonal level, which involves the utilization of strategies to handle emotions of others or using others to regulate one's own emotions (Troth et al., 2018). However, one study conducted by Little and colleagues (2016) examines the specific ways in which leaders employ such strategies to effectively manage the emotions of their followers. They found a significant association between the use of different strategies and followers' perception of the leader-member exchange quality, suggesting that interpersonal emotion regulation serves as a building block for fostering and sustaining positive workplace relationships. It has further been argued that individuals possessing a high capacity for emotion regulation are more inclined to promote positive emotions in their work group and prioritize the needs of others above their own (Sosik & Megarian, 1999). Although the role of emotions has been given increasing attention in leadership theory, there is less research exploring the link between leaders and their behavior to employees' emotions (Bono et al., 2007).

In addition to emotional competencies, there is a recognition that personality traits can significantly influence how leaders interact with their followers and shape the dynamics of their relationship (Bernerth et al., 2007). For instance, agreeable individuals exhibit a range of traits that may be positive in interpersonal relationships, such as kindness, deep sense of respect and cooperative nature, as well as displaying goodwill and genuine care towards

others (Bernerth et al., 2007). Hence, it may be that leaders who are agreeable are more likely to get along with their followers and provide care and support towards their followers' emotions. Furthermore, studies suggest that agreeable individuals are more inclined to place trust in their employees and foster relational psychological contracts, thereby enhancing the emotional and long-term dynamics of relationships (Blake et al., 2022).

Although previous meta-analyses have found that agreeableness is not a significant predictor of leadership emergence and effectiveness (Judge et al., 2002), there has been a shift in societal expectations, with an increasing acceptance and expectations on leaders being agreeable or “nice”. This has prompted new investigations that challenge the previous findings, suggesting that leader agreeableness is indeed positively associated with leadership outcomes (Blake et al., 2022). For instance, there are several findings of positive relationships between leader agreeableness and servant, charismatic and transformational leadership (Blake et al., 2022). Furthermore, agreeableness has been found to be associated with higher quality leader-member exchange (Bernerth et al., 2007), which aligns with the notion that leader-member exchange is a social relationship and the predictive power of agreeableness in forming reciprocal social alliances (Buss, 1991).

While personality traits have received considerable attention regarding its associations with organizational outcomes, attachment style has received comparatively less recognition in organization science, both as a domain of personality and a possible antecedent of important workplace outcomes (Harms, 2011). Attachment style is the typical way in which an individual views and behaves in close relationships (Shalit et al., 2010). A few studies have delved into the exploration of attachment style in leaders and its links to leadership behavior. For instance, research suggests that leaders with secure attachment styles tend to exhibit higher tendencies for delegation, whereas those with avoidant attachment styles demonstrate the least inclination towards delegation (Johnston, 2000). Furthermore, secure leaders are more likely to adopt a relational leadership style as opposed to a task-oriented approach (Doverspike et al., 1997). While research has provided evidence regarding the impact of leaders' attachment styles on their leadership approaches, there is relatively less understanding of how followers' attachment styles influence various outcomes (Harms, 2011). According to the research conducted by Shalit and colleagues (2010), followers' attachment style

plays a role in shaping their preferences for specific leadership behaviors. The study's findings revealed that individuals with a secure attachment style showed a preference for a socialized charismatic leader. These leaders align their vision with the needs and aspirations of their followers, foster open and two-way communication, and adhere to moral standards. On the other hand, individuals with an avoidant attachment style tended to favor personalized charismatic leaders. These leaders promote their own vision, engage in one-way communication, and prioritize external moral standards that align with their self-interest. The findings indicate that there is no universal leadership behavior or style that suits everyone. Instead, the most effective leadership approach may vary depending on individual differences, including attachment style.

Decades of research show that leaders and followers establish a relational bond characterized by an emotional link (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bono et al., 2007). Moreover, leaders who possess emotional competencies contribute to numerous favorable outcomes within organizations (McCleskey, 2014; Saha et al., 2023; Troth et al., 2018). Empirical research has demonstrated that leaders who are skilled at managing their own emotions and the emotions of their followers are more likely to develop high quality leader-member relationships (Little et al., 2016). However, limited research exists regarding the link between leaders and their behavior towards employees' emotions (Bono et al., 2007). The manner in which leaders approach the emotional expression of followers can be described as either emotion validation or invalidation, depending on their approach. Emotion validation refers to the act of acknowledging and accepting another individual's emotions as understandable and valid, whereas emotion invalidation refers to the act of dismissing or rejecting an individual's thoughts, feelings, or behaviors, thereby undermining their emotional experiences (Zielinski & Veilleux, 2018). These leader behaviors provide followers with information that may influence how they evaluate, reciprocate and maintain the relationship with their leaders, as suggested by Little and colleagues (2016). Despite its importance, less is known about the role of emotion validation in effective leadership and its influence on leader-member relationships. This knowledge gap is particularly surprising given the growing emphasis on emotional intelligence and empathic leadership in modern organizations (Sadri et al, 2011; McCleskey, 2014). There is one unpublished study by Haakonsen (2023) that examines the relationship between emotion invalidation and leader-member exchange. The findings of this study

imply that avoiding emotional invalidation is important for establishing high-quality leader-member exchange. The results of this study underscore the significance of minimizing emotional invalidation in fostering a high-quality leader-member exchange. Building upon these findings, we propose that the validation of followers' emotions by leaders can significantly influence the perceived quality of the relationship. The leader-member exchange theory, a renowned leadership framework that centers on the dyadic connection between leaders and followers (Northouse, 2021), offers a valuable conceptual framework for investigating the relationship quality between leaders and members.

Research evidence further suggests that individual differences play a significant role in shaping leadership preferences, styles, and the dynamics of the leader-member relationship (Shalit et al., 2010; Blake et al., 2022). Specifically, studies have established a connection between differences in attachment style and relationship quality, as well as individuals' responses to emotional expressions (Brennan & Shaver, 1995). Moreover, the experience of emotion validation is highly subjective, influenced by individual perceptions, interpretations, and various personality factors, including individual differences (Zielinski et al., 2022). Additionally, some individuals are more inclined to perform emotion validation towards others. For instance, Haakonsen (2023) found that agreeable leaders engage less in emotional invalidation than those who score low on agreeableness. However, the exploration of attachment style in relation to perceived emotion validation and relationship quality remains unexplored. In this study, we want to investigate whether the perceived emotion validation from supervisors affects the quality of the leader-follower relationship, and whether this is contingent upon the follower's primary attachment style.

The current study seeks to examine the potential existence and significance of a relationship between emotion validation, leader-member exchange and attachment style. This study aims to make a contribution to the existing literature on emotion validation and its impact on leader-member exchange quality by using a novel measurement questionnaire. Additionally, this study intends to expand upon prior research by incorporating the moderating role of attachment style in the relationship between emotion validation and LMX quality, which has not been previously explored in the literature. Furthermore, we consider this study to have a practical value. Knowing how emotion validation and attachment style influences the development and maintenance of leader-

member relationships can help identify and address potential barriers or challenges to the development of a high-quality relationship. It can be useful in the development of interventions and strategies to improve leader-member relationships and thus provide leaders with tools to lead more effectively. Investigating a less explored research area can potentially contribute to expanding the theoretical framework of leadership and emotions.

1.1 Research question

The purpose of this master thesis is to examine the following research question: *“Does emotion validation affect the perceived quality of LMX? If so, how does attachment style influence this relationship?”*

2.0 Theory and hypothesis

2.1 Emotions and leadership

Research on the emotional aspects of leadership has increased in recent years, and more emphasis has been placed on leaders being able to manage both their own emotions and the emotions of their followers (Little et al, 2016; Saha et al, 2023; Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Moreover, many scholars argue that the management of follower emotions is a fundamental responsibility of leadership (Little et al, 2016). This behavior is closely tied to the concept of charisma, which is an important aspect of transformational leadership (Kelly & Barsade, 2001). Charismatic leaders are able to make their group members feel more positive while reducing negative emotions (Kelly & Barsade, 2001).

Additionally, empathy is another key aspect in the field of leadership and emotions, as proposed by Goleman (2006). Empathy can be defined as the ability to understand and identify what other people are feeling, and to be capable of taking their perspective and fostering positive relationships and harmony with a wide range of individuals (Goleman, 2006). Sadri and colleagues (2011) explored empathic emotion, one aspect of empathy, in relation to leadership performance. The results show that leaders who are rated by their followers as engaging in behaviors that signal empathic emotion (i.e. the ability to understand what others are feeling) are perceived as better performers by their own immediate leaders.

This finding corresponds with several theories that emphasize that the ability to have and display empathy is an important part of leadership (Sadri et al, 2011). In transformational leadership, for instance, showing individualized consideration to followers and accurately recognizing emotion in others are key concepts (Sadri et al, 2011). Empathy is further an important aspect of the construct of emotional intelligence (EI). Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others (Cooper, 2021). This concept has faced substantial criticism encompassing its definitions and models, the inadequacy of robust assessment and measurements, as well as the significance of EI as a predictor of important organizational outcomes (McCleskey, 2014). However, many scholars consider EI as a critical component of effective leadership. Some argue that leadership is an emotion laden process and emotional intelligence should therefore matter for effective leadership (McCleskey, 2014). This is consistent with the numerous findings of a positive relationship between EI and leadership effectiveness, as well as performance and stronger organizational identity among followers (Saha et al, 2023; McCleskey, 2014).

In a meta-analysis, Harms and Crede (2010) found that EI effectively distinguished charismatic and transformational leaders from transactional leaders, whereby their empathy is an essential component. Charismatic and transformational leaders prioritize establishing positive relationships with their followers, while also empowering them to take ownership of tasks and work independently (Saha et al, 2023). These findings suggest that emotional intelligence and its various features are important for leader effectiveness, also from the employees' perspectives. With regard to emotion validation, leaders with emotional intelligence abilities are probably more likely to engage in emotion validation by nature, as they have the ability to accurately recognize and respond to the emotions of their followers.

2.2 Emotion validation

Emotion validation refers to the act of recognizing and accepting the emotions of others and communicating that these emotions are understandable and reasonable (Zielinski & Veilleux, 2018). Prior studies suggest that emotion validation is associated with the decrease of negative emotions, while invalidation is associated with the intensification of negative emotions (Kuo et al, 2022). Schenk and

Fruzzetti (2011) conducted a study to investigate the effects of validating and invalidating responses on emotional reactivity. The results of the study indicated that participants who were exposed to invalidating responses demonstrated significantly higher levels of negative affect, heart rate, and skin conductance over time when compared to their counterparts who received validating responses. This finding suggests that validating responses may be an effective strategy for promoting emotional wellbeing and preventing discomfort. Kuo et colleagues (2022) found that individuals with high emotion dysregulation experienced increases in positive emotions when shame or sadness was validated and lesser increases when fear was validated. However, dysregulation did not have any moderating effect on emotion invalidation, which can imply that emotion invalidation may have negative consequences regardless of an individual's level of emotion dysregulation.

There is limited research on emotion validation within the organizational context. However, the findings from an unpublished study by Haakonsen (2023) suggest that emotional invalidation can prevent the development of a high-quality leader-member exchange. Emotion invalidation refers to a process of communicating, either directly or indirectly, that an individual's emotions or experiences are not acceptable, wrong, or inappropriate, and is linked to the development or worsening of several emotional and physical health conditions (Zielinski et al, 2022). Zielinski and colleagues (2022) found that higher perceived emotion invalidation predicted lower momentary positive affect, and participants experiencing high emotion invalidation experienced increased stress in combination with increased daily negative affect.

In their study, Little and colleagues (2016) explored the relationship between leader's behaviors in regulating their followers' negative emotions and LMX. The study utilized the concept of interpersonal emotion management strategies (IEMS), which was derived from Gross's (1998) work. The IEMS framework proposes that leaders manage their followers' negative emotions in a similar manner to how they manage their own. This framework consists of four strategies: situation modification, cognitive change, attentional deployment and modulation of the emotional response. In *situation modification*, leaders actively alter the emotional impact of a situation, by removing, modifying, or changing aspects that may cause negative emotions in followers. *Cognitive change* involves introducing a new interpretation or meaning of a situation, with the aim of

minimizing its negative emotional impact. *Attentional deployment* refers to the process of shifting one's attention away from elements of a situation that are harmful or unpleasant. *Modulating emotional response* aims to reduce the behavioral expression of an emotion once it is experienced. Leaders employ this strategy by encouraging followers to suppress their undesired negative emotions. The study revealed that followers' perception of LMX is influenced by their perception of the strategies employed by their leaders. Furthermore, followers reported higher quality LMX for leaders who employed *situation modification* and *cognitive change* and lower LMX quality for leaders who used the strategies *attentional deployment* and *modulating emotional responses* (Little et al, 2016). The two latter can be considered a form for emotion invalidation since they aim to modify or suppress the emotions of followers instead of recognizing and accepting them. If this is the case, these findings support our assumption that followers who experience invalidation from their leaders report a lower quality LMX.

Lawler (2001) introduces emotions as a central feature in the social exchange theory. If the actors participating in the exchange perceive the interaction as successfully accomplished and generate a positive result for them, they are more likely to experience positive emotions and thereby be motivated to participate in similar exchanges in the future (Lawler, 2001). Thus, social exchanges produce emotions, and these emotions affect how actors perceive and feel about the specific exchange and the relationship overall. If a leader invalidates a followers emotions, and thereby potentially amplifies them, the exchange can be perceived as unsuccessful and negatively impact how the follower perceives his relationship with his leader going forward. Based on the discussion above, we have formulated the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Follower-rated EV is positively related with follower-rated LMX

2.3 Attachment style

The concept of attachment theory was first introduced by John Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980). Bowlby posited that the manner in which a child is attended to by their primary caregiver during their primary years exerts a significant impact on their capacity to cultivate significant interpersonal connections in adulthood. This is especially prominent when children encounter distressing situations, as the caregiver's adeptness in providing solace and meeting the child's needs shapes

their internal working models for perceiving and comprehending the external environment (Young et al, 2019). Consequently, individuals generate different cognitive schemas, which Bowlby (1969) explains as analogous to maps and plans, being applied to predict the behavior of others in social interactions, as well as to plan one's own behavior to achieve relational goals. Research shows that children who experience that their needs are met and acknowledged are more likely encounter the world and others with curiosity and joy, hence, with security (Thompson et al., 2016). Contrary, children who have caregivers who either ignore or wrongfully meet their needs will develop negative cognitive schemas and be more restrained to trusting other individuals. As a result, the child will stop relying on their caregiver and soothe themselves when experiencing feelings of distress (Ainsworth et al, 1978).

In 1978, Mary Ainsworth and colleagues further expanded Bowlby's research with the Strange Situation experiment. In this experiment, the quality of the attachment between primary caregiver and child was assessed through exposing the child to stressful events, including leaving the child alone and leaving the child alone with a stranger. The pattern observed in the child's reaction towards the caregiver's return then served as the foundation for establishing the taxonomy of attachment styles in adult attachment theory. Attachment style is defined as "an individual's pattern of expectation, needs, emotions and social behavior that results from a particular history of attachment experiences, usually beginning in relationships with parents" (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016, p. 23). It is categorized into secure and insecure attachment, where the latter is further divided into anxious and avoidant attachment style (Ainsworth et al, 1978).

Meta-analytic reviews indicate that the quality of early care is a major determinant for being classified as secure vs. insecure in the Strange Situation (Brumbaugh & Fraley, 2006). The insecure attachment styles are often described along two dimensions, from anxious to avoidant, where low scores on both dimensions indicates that the individual has a secure attachment style (Ravitz et al., 2010). Individuals with a high score on anxious attachment style exhibit a strong desire for intimacy, although these relationships can create a lot of distress as they tend to view others through a lens of fear and insecurity (Feeny & Noller, 1996). Consequently, they often seek frequent reassurance and may overreact to minor conflicts. Their strong need for other's approval can ultimately make them

overly solicitous and disregard their own needs to please others, stemming from the fear of being abandoned (Feeny, Noller & Hanrahan, 1994). Mikulincer and Shaver (2016) explain how anxiously attached individuals pay close attention to the behaviors and actions of others. This tendency is called hyperactivation which is caused by their lack of confidence they have into others ability to meet their needs, making them search for cues that oppose a threat to their relationship (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016).

In contrast to anxious attachment, individuals with high scores on the avoidant attachment style demonstrate a fear of intimacy and encounter difficulties in trusting others (Feeny & Noller, 1996). By employing a self-protective strategy, they purposely distance themselves from others in fear of any potential rejection or inability to meet their needs. This is accompanied by a cognitive thinking pattern characterized by skepticism towards other intentions, which serves as a reinforcement to this emotional detachment (Brennan & Shaver, 1995). Consequently, they tend to minimize or deny their emotional reactions and will often avoid disclosing their distress to others. From their learnt behavior of soothing themselves when facing difficult situations in their childhood, they may feel discomfort in openly expressing their feelings to others (Ainsworth et al., 1978). This emotional self-sufficiency often leads to difficulties in effectively managing negative emotions and seeking assistance from others, as they perceive such acts as intrusive upon their autonomy (Feeny & Noller, 1996).

Research indicates that these attachment styles seems be stable over time and can influence interpersonal relationships throughout life (Fearon & Belsky, 2016; Fraley et al., 2011). This may be because the internal working models can function as self-fulfilling prophecies (Feeny & Noller, 1996). Individuals who believe that others don't care about them may encounter situations defensively, and be less likely to get their needs met, reinforcing their negative schemas. This can affect relationships in several settings and over the last years the role of attachment styles in organizations has received increasing attention (Falvo et al., 2012). The reason for why theory that initially originated in developmental psychology has been applied in work-related settings, is because of the way leaders are compared to being father figures (Popper & Maysles, 2003), and that individuals seek closeness and support when experiencing distress. Research suggests that an individual's attachment style has been linked to followers' ratings on the perceived quality of the relationship with their leaders (i.e. LMX) (Schyns,

2016; Barthilomew & Horowitz, 1991). For instance, anxiously attached individuals have been found to glorify their leaders and rank them as more transformational than others (Schyns, 2016). They project their hope and longing for emotional support onto their managers, causing them to see a stronger relationship than reality. However, their hyperactivation causes them to search for cues that their relationship is not as secure as it seems. This tendency can cause them to quickly alternate from idealizing to devaluing the individual involved in the relationship (Feeny, 1996). A concept that has been less explored, is how the follower will rate the relationship if the leaders is able to actually provide the reassurance that the individual requires. As they have an excessive need for reassurance, it is reasonable to assume that this would result in the anxious individual to rate the relationship quality even higher if the leader is able to sooth them and provide them with support.

For someone with an avoidant attachment style the opposite seems to be true. Characterized by having a positive view of self but a negative view of others and their intentions, research has found that they tend to rate their dyadic partner more negatively (Barthilomew & Horowitz, 1991). When experiencing situations of distress, they tend to pull away from the information and suppress their emotions (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2016). By detaching themselves they dismiss other's positive intentions and traits, ignoring the support that is offered. Consequently, their negative schemas are reinforced. When being exposed to others attempts to establish emotional closeness, avoidant individuals tend to experience discomfort and actively work to avoid intimacy (Feeny, 1996). As a result, they are less inclined to enhance their perception of the leader-follower relationship, even when provided with reassurance by the leaders as opposed to secure or anxiously attached individuals. Based on the discussion above, we propose the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2a: The relationship between emotion validation and LMX is moderated by followers' avoidant attachment style, such that EV in avoidant followers' is associated with lower level of LMX

Hypothesis 2b: The relationship between emotion validation and LMX is moderated by followers' anxious attachment style, such that EV in anxious followers' is associated with higher level of LMX

Our proposed research model:

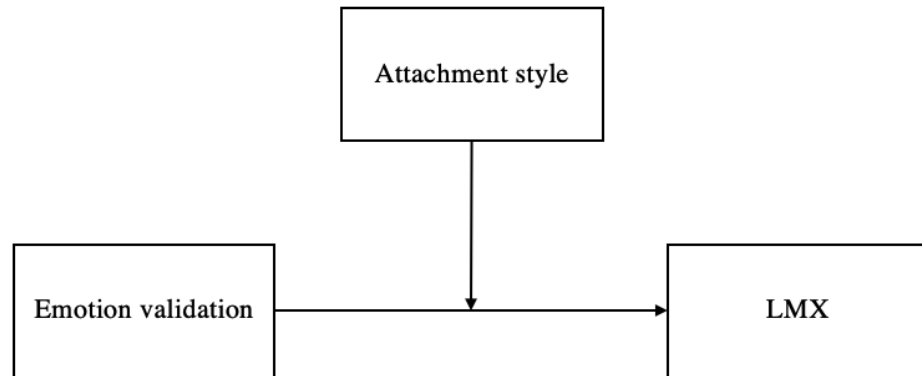


Figure 1: Research Model

3.0 Method

3.1 Research design

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between emotion validation, attachment style and LMX, which is done by applying a quantitative approach. This approach has its strength in allowing researchers to analyze data in a systematic and objective manner and to draw conclusions based on statistical analyses of the data (Bell et al., 2018). This study applies a cross-sectional design, which involves collecting data from a sample of individuals at a single point in time. This design allows us to detect patterns and trends in the data (Bell et al., 2018), and thus be able to identify potential correlations between emotion validation, attachment style and LMX.

3.2 Sample and procedure

We collected data through a self-completion questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed and administered through the survey platform Qualtrics and distributed on several social media sites to reach a wider audience. The current study is concerned with LMX and emotion validation from employees' perspectives, hence, the study was restricted to employees that have a relationship with an immediate leader. We are further interested in employees in Norway and translated all measurements to Norwegian to ensure Norwegian respondents.

The survey initially received 289 respondents, but after data cleansing (see 3.7) the sample resulted in 183 valid respondents (N=183), giving us a response

rate of 63%. The sample consists of 76.5 % females and 23 % males. Only one individual identifies as other/non-binary. The age group with the most respondents is “25-34”, accounting for 34,4 % of the sample, followed by the age group “45-54”, which constitutes 25,1 % of the sample. There were only 2 participants over the age of 65. The sample is fairly evenly distributed across the other age groups. The majority of the respondents work in the private sector, representing 61,2 % of the sample, while 36,6 % work in the public sector. The remaining respondents are employed in other sectors.

3.3 Measures

3.3.1 LMX

Employees’ perspective of their leader-member exchange was measured using the scale LMX-MDM developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998). LMX-MDM is a multidimensional scale that measures four dimensions of LMX: affect, loyalty, contribution, and professional respect. This variable was measured through a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Sample items could be “My supervisor would defend me to others in the organization if I made an honest mistake” and “I do work for my supervisor that goes beyond what is specified in my job description”. The variable’s Cronbach's alpha is valued at .88, indicating high internal consistency among the items. According to Tavakol & Dennick, (2011) a Cronbach's alpha of .70 and above indicates a solid reliability.

3.3.2 Emotion validation

Emotion validation was measured by a newly established scale developed and translated to Norwegian (Haakonsen et al., 2023). It consists of measurement items for emotion validation, negative invalidation, and positive invalidation. The latter two concepts are measured with reversed items. Sample items include “when I show or express negative emotions (e.g., worries, frustration, sadness) my leader treats me with respect” and “when I show or express negative emotions (e.g., worries, frustration, sadness), my leader responds by criticizing me for the way I’m feeling” (reversed). Participants indicated agreement with items using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). For emotion validation, the Cronbach’s alpha was measured to .97.

3.3.3 Attachment style

To measure respondents' attachment style, we used the measurement scale ECR-N12 suggested by Olsson and colleagues (2010). The instrument is an abbreviated and Norwegian-translated version of the established ECR measure, which measures experiences in close relationships of adult attachment. Attachment style was measured through a 7-point Likert scale, as proposed by the authors. Examples of items applied to capture this concept are "I worry about being abandoned", and "I worry that my partner doesn't care as much as I do". The Cronbach's alpha for the scale measuring attachment was found to be .88.

3.4 Control variables

To account for the potential influence of factors on the true cause-and-effect relationship between the different variables we included different control variables. Firstly, the respondents were asked demographic questions including gender, age, and sector. These variables are commonly controlled for to reduce unwanted variation and to isolate the specific effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable (Bernierth & Aguinis, 2016).

In addition to demographics, we formulated the questions "How long has your immediate leader been your leader?" as previous research indicates that relationship duration could influence the quality of the leader-member relationship (Erdogan & Bauer, 2014). Thus, it was reasonable to control for the possibility that employees might rate leaders more positively as the duration of their relationship increases. The inclusion of these control variables served the purpose of mitigating alternative explanations and potential biases associated with the observed phenomena in this study.

Prior research suggests that the need for emotion validation becomes more prominent when individuals are experiencing feelings of exclusion and distress (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Thus, relatedness was incorporated as a control variable. Through the measurement of the respondents' sense of belongingness and relationships with their coworkers, an opportunity arose to investigate whether these factors could shed additional light on the potential associations between variables. Relatedness was assessed through the Need For Relatedness Scale (NRS-10) from the measurement tool W-BNS (Broeck et al., 2010). It consists of 6 items, whereby half are reversed. Sample items include "At work, I feel part of a group" and "I don't really feel connected with other people at my

job” (reversed). Participants rated their responses on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5), as recommended by the authors. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficient was found to be .83.

3.5 Exclusion criterion

The current study incorporates an exclusion criterion to identify and exclude respondents who do not meet the predefined sample criteria. Given the research interest in individuals who engage in frequent interactions with their leader, specific items were included to assess the dyadic intensity. Four items from Pearce and Geregensen’s (1991) scale of task interdependence were applied. Examples of these items include statements such as “My work necessitates regular consultations with my leader” and “I frequently engage in coordination efforts with my leader”. The purpose of these items is to ascertain the existence of closely intertwined working relationships between respondents and their leader.

3.6 Research ethics

The process of data collection necessitates careful attention to a range of ethical considerations (Johannessen et al., 2016). One prominent factor that must be adhered to when gathering data for research purposes is the acquisition of informed consent from participants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Informed consent entails providing participants with comprehensive and accessible information about the research project, enabling them to make an informed decision regarding their participation (Crow et al., 2006). Moreover, participants should be granted the opportunity to withdraw their consent without experiencing any adverse consequences (Crow et al., 2006).

In our study, we have taken into careful consideration the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requirements. To ensure ethical practices and protect participant confidentiality, informed consent was obtained from each respondent. A consent form (See appendix A) was distributed alongside the survey, detailing the study's purpose, data management procedures and the participants voluntary agreement to take part by countinuing with the survey. Regarding confidentiality, the survey was anonymized, and no personal data was recorded. This was achieved through the activation of the “anonymize responses” function in Qualtrics, which conceals the respondent’s IP address, location data, and contact information.

Furthermore, demographic information was categorized in broad terms to prevent individual identification. Given that the survey explores the experiences, perception and behaviors of respondents, ensuring confidentiality has been important, as the provided information could be considered personal for many participants. Additionally, to foster accurate and honest responses, participants were explicitly informed that their survey responses would remain anonymous.

3.7 Data cleansing

Prior to commencing the analysis, a thorough examination of the dataset was conducted to identify any instances of corrupted, incomplete, or duplicated data. Following the closure of the survey, the initial dataset contained 284 participants (N = 284). Incomplete responses were assessed and eliminated as recommended by Goldammer and colleagues (2020). To ensure comprehensive reading and understanding of the items, a cut-off of 3 minutes was established, as it was deemed that a shorter duration would not allow for a thorough review and comprehension of the material. The trustworthiness of responses that falls below the minimum may be doubted (Huang et al., 2012).

Furthermore, issues arose concerning vague responses to questions that allowed for free-text answers. For instance, in response to the question “How many individuals have your leader as their closest leader?”, answers such as “Everyone” and “Not sure” were received. Consequently, this question was excluded from the analysis as it would not provide meaningful information due to the inability to establish the team size.

It is recommended to screen for careless responding, as it can lead to psychometric challenges and undermine the credibility of the findings (Goldammer et al, 2020). In our sample, indications of inconsistency and careless responding were detected, leading to the exclusion of certain participants. Specifically, regarding the Emotion validation scale, which encompasses items related to emotion validation and negative and positive invalidation, it was observed that some respondents rated their leader highly on all dimensions. After careful consideration, it was decided to exclude these participants, as their agreement with contradictory statements such as “When I show or express negative emotions (e.g., worries, frustration, sadness) my leader treats me with respect” and “When I show or express negative emotions (e.g., worries, frustration, sadness), was deemed inconsistent. .

The final exclusion criterion in our data cleaning process was dyadic intensity. Respondents who reported infrequent interactions with their leader were deemed unfit for the desired sample. Our decision to set the cut-off point at 3, which represents “slightly disagree”, was based on the rationale that lower scores would indicate insufficient contact with the leader, thereby limiting the usefulness of their responses for the analysis. Following the completion of these data cleaning procedures, the final sample size was reduced to $N = 183$.

4.0 Statistical analysis

Each analysis was performed using IBM SPSS. We reversed items to compare values and then computed each associated item to create new meaningful variables. Further, we computed an average score for each multiple item measure. Prior to conducting the analyses, the internal consistency of the scales were assessed. Reliability was examined using Cronbach's alpha, with values above 0.7 considered as a benchmark, as commonly practiced by analysts (Gripsrud et al., 2017). When reliability was established, we retrieved descriptive statistics and correlations to gain insight into relationships and patterns within the dataset. To examine the first hypothesis, we conducted a regression analysis. For the second hypothesis, we employed a moderation analysis approach. Specifically, we utilized the PROCESS macro developed by Hayes (2018) to conduct the moderation analysis.

5.0 Results

5.1 Descriptive statistics

To better understand our dataset, the first step of the analysis was to conduct a descriptive analysis. Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha and correlations between the variables. By calculating a correlation matrix, it becomes possible to ascertain the degree of interrelation between variables and gain insights into their importance for subsequent analysis. The strength of the relationship between variables is assessed by examining the coefficient value (Cohen et al., 2002). It ranges from -1 to +1, where values close to -1 indicate a strong negative correlation, values close to +1 indicate a strong positive correlation, and values close to 0 indicate weak or no correlation (Cohen et al., 2002; Myers & Well, 2003). From the correlation matrix, it is evident that the

control variable “Relatedness” demonstrates significant correlations with all of the primary factors included in Table 1. Specifically, it displays a strong positive correlation with LMX ($r=.31, p <.01$) and EV ($r=.32, p <.01$), a strong negative correlation with Avoidant ($r=-.24, p <.01$) and a weak negative correlation with Anxious ($r=-.15, p <.05$). Other observations of particular interest is the strong positive correlation between LMX and EV ($r=0.74, p <.01$), which emerges as the most influential association in the analysis. Moreover, the factor Avoidant exhibits a pronounced negative relationship with age ($r=-.28, p <.01$) and the variable Anxious displays a strong negative correlation with both age ($r=-.43, p <.01$) and Duration of relationship ($r=-.24, p >.01$). The remaining observations did not yield any significant correlations. Given that the correlation matrix solely provides information about the direction and strengths of the relationship (Field 2013), it was necessary to perform a regression analysis to investigate the predictive power of emotion validation on LMX.

Table 1: Descriptive Data

Control variables, dependent variable, and independent variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Correlation between variables															
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8								
1 Gender	1.78	.43																
2 Age	2.78	1.28	-.02															
3 Duration of relationship	3.85	1.68	.01	.28**														
4 Relatedness	3.94	.90	.02	.02	.01			.83										
5 LMX	5.26	1.21	.08	-.08	.02	.31**		.88										
6 Emotion Validation	5.20	1.34	.13	-.02	-.01	.32**	.74**		.97									
7 Avoidant	2.61	1.33	-.08	-.28**	-.10	-.24**	-.01	-.12		.91								
8 Anxious	2.97	1.21	.01	-.43**	-.24**	-.15*	-.04	-.05	.46**		.81							

Note: M and SD are used to represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Cronbach's alpha in parentheses. LMX = Leader-member exchange.

5.2 Hypothesis testing

Table 2: Model 1 & 2
Control variables and main variables

Variable	LMX	
	Model 1	Model 2
Relatedness	.31**	.80
Emotion validation		.71**
Total R^2	.09	.55
F value	19.11**	108.02**

Note. $N = 183$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. Coefficient are standardized.

Table 2: Model 1 & 2

To test hypothesis 1, we performed a regression analysis. As shown in the correlation matrix, the control variable *Relatedness* had significant correlation and was therefore included. We performed a hierarchical regression to test for the control variable and main variables. Perceived emotion validation was significantly and positively related to LMX ($\beta = .712$, $p < .01$). We conducted a collinearity diagnostic to assess whether multicollinearity was present in the regression model. The analysis revealed that each variance inflation factor (VIF) value was less than 5, which suggests that multicollinearity is not a concern. Typically, a VIF threshold of 10 is used to identify problematic levels of multicollinearity, although some researchers prefer a more stringent threshold of 5 (O'Brian, 2007). Hypothesis 1, that perceived emotion validation has a positive relationship with perceived LMX, was supported.

5.3 Moderation analysis

Table 3: Model 1, 2 & 3
Anxious & Avoidant attachment style

Variable	LMX			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3a	Model 3b
Relatedness	.31**	.08	.11	
Direct effects				
Emotion validation		.71**	.71**	.71**
Avoidant			.11	
Anxious				.01
Interaction effects				
Emotion validation × Avoidant			-.08	-.01
Emotion validation × Anxious				
Total R ²	.10	.55	.57	.55
F value	19.11**	108.02**	56.90	53.43

Note. N = 183, *p<.05, **p<.01. Coefficient are standardized.

Table 3: Model 1, 2 & 3

To examine hypotheses 2a and 2b, we performed a moderation analysis using PROCESS macro. Model 1 contained control variables, model 2 contained control variables and the main variable and model 3 consisted of control variables, main variables and the interaction effect. Hypothesis 2a proposed that followers' avoidant attachment style will moderate the relationship between emotion validation and LMX, such that emotion validation in avoidant followers' is associated with lower level of LMX. This was not supported. As indicated in the table, the interaction effect of followers' avoidant attachment style was not significant ($\beta = 0.0516, p > .05$). Likewise, hypothesis 2b, which posited that followers' anxious attachment style will moderate the relationship between emotion validation and LMX, such that emotion validation in anxious followers' is associated with higher levels of LMX, was not supported either ($\beta = .0064, p > .05$).

5.4 Post-hoc analysis

Previous research has observed that individuals' reactions to stressful or uncomfortable situations are influenced by their primary attachment style

(Thompson et al., 2016). This phenomenon, commonly referred to as attachment system activation, suggests that distressing circumstances trigger cognitive patterns associated with attachment styles. This notion can be traced back to the early development of attachment theory. Both Bowlby and Ainsworth studied how children would react in a situation where they experienced stress and anxiety to understand attachment dynamics (Ainsworth, 1979; Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980). In an organizational context, the absence of basic psychological needs, such as relatedness, autonomy, and competence (Deci & Ryan, 2000), has been found to activate the attachment system. For example, an unpublished study investigating attachment system activation and leader-member exchange (LMX) revealed that anxiously attached followers reported lower levels of LMX when experiencing limited autonomy, a finding that was also evident for their leaders (Thompson, 2023).

Considering that hypotheses 2a and 2b did not receive support, an investigation was conducted to explore whether the activation of the attachment system could yield significant results. Specifically, we examined how the level of relatedness, a fundamental psychological need, influenced the relationship between emotion validation, attachment style, and LMX. Relatedness was treated as a moderator rather than a control variable, and subsequently examined for a triple interaction effect by employing model 3 from PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2018). The three-way interaction of emotion validation, relatedness, and anxious attachment style on LMX was not significant ($p > .05$). However, the three-way interaction of emotion validation, relatedness, and avoidant attachment style on LMX was significant ($p > .05$). The tested model proved to be a good fit to the data, explaining 58% variance of LMX ($R^2 = .58$, $MSE = .63$, $F(7, 171) = 33.83$ for $p < .01$).

Table 4: Post-hoc analysis
Triple-interaction effect: emotion validation, avoidant attachment style, and relatedness

	Coefficient	SE	t	p	95%CI
Constant	-4.78	2.44	-1.95	0.05	-9.61; .04
EV	1.74	.48	3.6	.00	.78; 2.69
Avoidant	2.04	.73	2.79	.00	.59; 3.48
EV × Avoidant	-.36	.14	-2.51	.01	-.65; -.07
Relatedness	1.49	.60	2.44	.01	-.28; 2.69
EV × Relatedness	-.24	.11	-2.12	.03	-.48; -.01
Avoidant × Relatedness	-.44	.18	-2.38	.01	-.82; -.07
EV × Avoidant × Relatedness	.08	.03	2.29	.02	.01; .15

Table 4: Post-hoc analysis

The highest order of the unconditional interaction for LMX as the outcome variable for EV x Avoidant attachment style x Relatedness, provided R²-change of .01 and $F(1, 171) = 5.27$ for $p < .05$. The analysis showed that the triple interaction effect is significant at a low level of relatedness ($p < .05$), but not medium ($p > .05$) and high ($p > .05$). A simple slope test was conducted to investigate and interpret this interaction, as proposed by Aiken and West (1991). Participants receiving emotion validation reported higher LMX-quality under conditions of low relatedness and low avoidant attachment style. Contrary, participants receiving emotion validation reported lower LMX-quality under conditions of low relatedness and high avoidant attachment style. As illustrated in the slope output, the graph is steeper for participants with low relatedness and low avoidant attachment than for those with low relatedness and high avoidant attachment style. Specifically, it indicates that individuals with high avoidant attachment don't experience the same benefit of emotion validation, which provides partial support for hypothesis 2b. This finding was unexpected and will be discussed later.

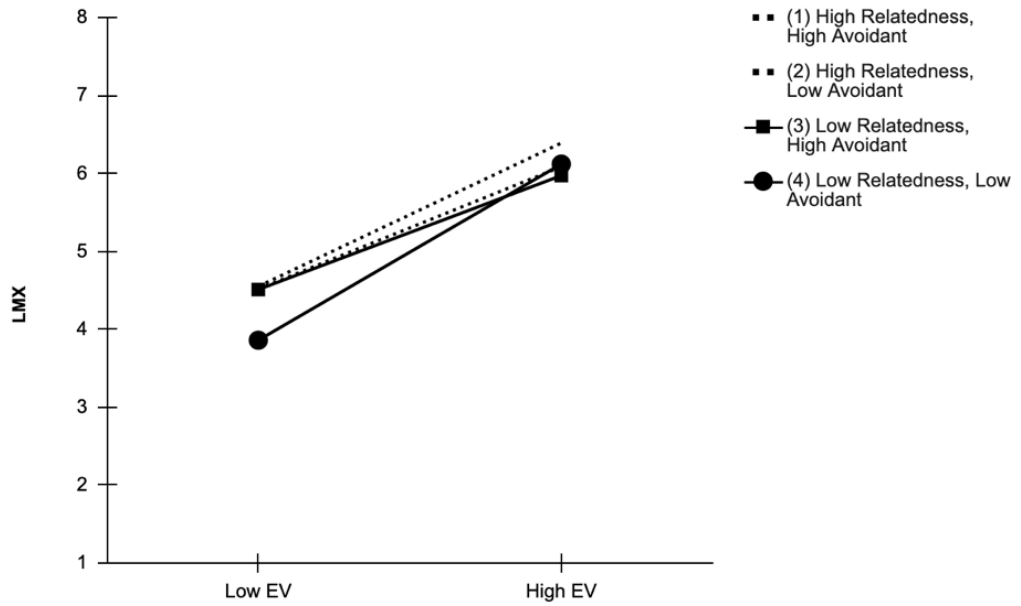


Figure 2: Simple slope test

6.0 Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether there is a positive relationship between emotion validation and LMX as suggested by previous studies. Additionally, we incorporated a new measurement questionnaire for emotion validation created specifically for workplace contexts.

Our results imply that followers' who experience that their leaders validate their emotional expressions, report a higher quality relationship with their supervisors. We present empirical evidence that supports previous findings of a significantly positive relationship between emotion validation and LMX. This is particularly consistent with Haakonsen's (2023) finding that avoiding emotional invalidation is important for establishing high-quality leader-member exchange. This further aligns with the findings of a study conducted by Little and colleagues (2016). Here, leaders who employed strategies aimed at regulating followers' negative emotions through means such as distraction or suppression were associated with lower levels of follower-perceived leader-member exchange. In contrast, leaders who attend to followers' emotions and needs by actively modifying the situation, such as removing triggers that contribute to negative emotions, or reframing events to alter their meaning, for instance reframing a failure as normal, exhibit stronger levels of LMX as perceived by their followers'. The relationship between emotion validation and LMX can be rationalized by considering that the quality of LMX is cultivated and sustained through ongoing

interactions, wherein each interaction provides information to both parties, thereby shaping the individual's perception of their relationships. Thus, emotion validation or invalidation can act as cues that cause stronger positive or negative perceptions about the quality of the relationship. When a leader responds emphatically to a follower's emotional state, demonstrating comprehension of the reasons behind those emotions and expressing acceptance of their validity, this interaction can be constructed as a manifestation of support, which is an essential element of a high-quality LMX. Emotion invalidation, on the other hand, can create a sense of devaluation or disrespect. In a high quality LMX, the leader and follower are expected to establish a mutual understanding and respect (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Emotion invalidation undermines this foundation. Furthermore, emotion invalidation prevents the development of an environment that supports open communication and trust. When leaders dismiss or ignore the emotions expressed by their followers', it creates the perception that their concerns and well-being are not valued or considered important. The lack of validation can prevent followers' from expressing their emotions openly and potentially discourage the overall sharing of vital information or feedback. Not least, invalidation can contribute to increased psychological distress among follower's. Prior research has found that invalidation can strengthen negative emotions and cause distress (Kuo et al., 2022; Zielinski et al., 2022), which in turn can negatively affect job satisfaction and motivation. Consequently, the overall quality of the working relationship between the leader and follower and its positive outcome may be compromised.

The hypothesis 2a aimed to investigate if the relationship between emotion validation and LMX is moderated by followers' avoidant attachment style, such that EV in avoidant followers is associated with lower level of LMX. However, analysis of the data indicated no significant relationship between avoidant attachment style and emotion validation on lower level of LMX. Even though the hypothesis was rejected it can still be valuable to discuss alternative explanations as this can contribute to understanding the complexities of theoretical concepts and identify new research areas of interest.

Research suggests that avoidant individuals tends to distance themselves from love, support, and emotional closeness from others (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). They utilize protective strategies to uphold their self-reliance, as accepting support from others may feel like a threat to their self-concept. Their skeptic and

distrusting view of others may cause them to perceive the offered support as dishonest and unreliable, resulting in a negative view of others' support. Hence, it seemed reasonable to believe that this would cause avoidant followers to experience negative associations when the leader tries to build a closer emotional relationship. However, this relationship seems to be more complex than this.

One explanation for why the hypothesis was rejected could be how someone with an avoidant attachment style defines a high-quality relationship. Avoidant individuals tend to ignore and disregard behaviors that foster close interpersonal relationships, which may lead them to downplay the importance of emotion validation when evaluating the quality of their relationship with their leader (i.e. LMX). Studies suggest that avoidant individuals value work settings with a high degree of autonomy and independence (Leiter et al., 2015). Consequently, if they are given such autonomy, they might rate their leader highly in terms of emotion validation, even if this is not a significant factor for them. Meaning, that since their leader is proficient in areas that matter to them, they assume that they are sufficient in providing emotion validation for those individuals who find validation important.

Similarly, the hypothesis concerning the influence of anxious attachment style on the relationship between emotion validation and LMX, was rejected. The hypothesis was built on prior research suggesting that anxious individuals have a strong desire for close relationships, but also a strong need for reassurance. If the anxious individual feels as if they receive the reassurance they need, for instance through emotion validation, it could be expected that they would rate the quality of their relationship with their leader higher. Additionally, studies show that due to their strong desire to build close relationships they may experience high-quality relationships regardless of the reality of the situation. Although this reasoning is logical and in line with theory, other studies explain a different and more complex side to anxious attachment which could help explain the rejection of the hypothesis. Although they crave intimacy and closeness, they do have experiences with caregivers who are not able to meet their needs, which ultimately leads them to project their own self-traits onto others as a way of protecting themselves from abandonment. Ultimately, the anxious individual will distance themselves from their own negative traits and project this onto the individuals around them (Mikulincer & Shaver 2007; Thompson et al., 2016). This could result in them having a negative view of their leader, and due to their experience of having

caregivers who are not able to meet their needs, this may have distorted their ability to identify emotion validation from others making their attachment style negatively associated with the LMX outcome.

Attachment-system activation presents an alternative explanation for the rejection of both, hypothesis 2a and hypothesis 2b. Individuals with an insecure attachment style are not constantly applying these behaviors, but rather engaging in them in situations where feelings of distress occur. While young children have similarities in what causes feelings of distress, this trigger will become more and more subjective as the child matures (Mikulincer et al., 2003). Consequently, it becomes challenging to determine whether the attachment system is activated when the individual with an insecure attachment receives emotion validation. As such, we believe that one should not dismiss the idea of attachment systems as moderators for the relationship due to the complexity of assessing individuals' attachment activation. We propose that further research is warranted in developing explanations of the variance observed in followers' individual reactions to a given social environment.

Contrary to our findings, additional evidence from various research seems to support the notion that attachment style has an influence on the relationship between emotion validation and LMX. One compelling idea is that leaders, compared to parents, exhibit many of the same characteristics. They provide support, guidance, and direct individuals, and like parents, they can foster a sense of security and help them navigate challenges and achieve goals (Wu & Parker, 2014). The research conducted by Wu and Parker (2014) highlights how leaders act as a secure base for followers, which draws attention to the multifaceted nature of their roles. Even though our analysis did not yield any statistically significant result, we suggest that further examination of the relationship is needed to fully understand the interplay between attachment style, emotion validation, and LMX.

In the post-hoc analysis, we found support for a three-way interaction between emotion validation, avoidant attachment style and relatedness on LMX, implying that relatedness can act as an attachment-system activator. The triple interaction effect suggests that the avoidant attachment style as a moderating variable in the relationship between emotion validation and LMX, is a strong moderator when the level of relatedness is low. Specifically, when both relatedness is low and avoidant attachment style is high, it leads to the weakest LMX. This could be rationalized by considering that lack of relatedness can place

individuals in a vulnerable position, which fosters feelings of distress, consequently resulting in the activation of the individual's protective strategies. This is in line with Bowlby's (1969, 1973, 1980) theory that the attachment system is activated in times of distress. For avoidant individuals this involves distancing themselves from others and difficulties receiving and expressing emotional closeness as it threatens their sense of independence and self-reliance. Thus, when leaders try to offer support through emotion validation, this can be perceived as invading and degrading. This finding is consistent with the implications from Thompson's (2023) article, wherein anxiously attached followers reported lower levels of LMX when experiencing low levels of autonomy. In this study, autonomy, one of the three basic psychological needs along with relatedness and competence, acted as a system activator.

Moreover, the findings suggest that when participants' experience low levels of relatedness and score low on avoidant attachment style, emotion validation is a stronger predictor for LMX. When someone scores low on avoidant attachment style, it suggests that they exhibit fewer characteristics associated with avoidant attachment in relationships. A low score indicates that the person is less likely to exhibit avoidant behaviors and tendencies, such as reluctance to form close emotional bonds. They are likely to feel more comfortable with emotional closeness and seek support and comfort from others during times of distress. Thus, when they feel a sense of exclusion or a lack of belongingness in the workplace, they can experience higher levels of distress and are in need of proximity and closeness from others. Receiving support and comfort from leaders through emotion validation can then strengthen the perceived relationship quality.

7.0 Practical implications

Consistent with previous research in this domain, these findings suggest that followers who experience leaders who validate their expressed emotions tend to perceive their leader-member exchange relationship as higher in quality. This is of significance as high-quality relationships between leaders and followers have been associated with various positive outcomes. This study highlights a potential important role of emotion validation in effective leadership. Notably, given the extensive criticism and disagreement surrounding emotional intelligence, this study introduces emotion validation as a novel valuable tool for examining the

role of emotions in the workplace. These findings suggest that emphasizing the importance of emotion validation among leaders and integrating training in emotion validation as part of leadership development programs could be an effective strategy to facilitate improved leader-follower relationships. By equipping leaders with the skills to effectively validate emotions expressed by their followers, organizations can enhance the quality of the leader-member exchange and foster a more positive and supportive work environment.

These findings further imply that the impact of emotion validation on LMX is significantly positive for individuals who score low on avoidant attachment style and low on relatedness. This indicates that emotion validation can serve as a valuable tool in situations where employees experience distress, such as during organizational change processes. However, further research is needed to establish sufficient support for this proposal. Contrary, findings suggest that validating emotions is not always effective. For individuals with an avoidant attachment style, whose system is activated, emotion validation will not necessarily build a stronger relationship between follower and leader. These findings do not imply that it will result in low-quality LMX, but rather that the positive effect EV has on LMX will decrease. Hence, leaders should be conscious when they validate the emotions of avoidant followers, as they may perceive this as invading and uncomfortable. This consideration should be communicated during leadership training regarding emotion validation. We acknowledge the fact that knowing each followers' individual attachment style may be unrealistic as it sometimes can be difficult to identify in work-related settings. However, this finding underlines the importance of adapting leadership approaches and behaviors to individual needs.

8.0 Limitations

This current study does not come without limitations. The utilization of a cross-sectional study design presents certain restrictions that should be acknowledged, such as its limited capacity to explain longitudinal effects (Bell et al., 2018). This design does not allow us to draw inferences of causality or establish the direction of causal influence. For instance, it could be that LMX quality affects emotion validation, and not the other way. Moreover, the study employs a non-random selection approach known as convenience sampling, providing us a relatively skewed sample, which prevents the generalizability of our findings (Bell et al.,

2018). Our population is quite heterogeneous, as we are interested in all Norwegian employees. It is recommended that the greater heterogeneity, the larger a sample should be (Bell et al., 2018). Consequently, our current sample size of 183 individuals may be considered relatively small in relation to the magnitude of heterogeneity present in the population. Overall, we cannot claim validity from this study due to its limitations.

Since we obtained all data from the same source, in the same measurement context, the responses might be influenced by common method bias. Common method bias represents the primary contributor to measurement error, which poses an unfortunate challenge as it can provide an alternative explanation for the observed relationships, deviating from the initial hypotheses (Podsakoff et al., 2003). As presented in the correlation matrix, LMX and emotion validation had a highly significant and positive correlation ($r = .74$). This relationship might be influenced by some form of common method bias. There is a substantial amount of theory that suggests that respondents attempt to maintain consistency when conducting a survey, and that they even look for similarities between constructs and items to maintain consistency (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The survey was designed in a way that the respondents first provided their responses to items related to LMX, followed by items related to emotion validation. If an individual reported having a positive relationship with their leader, it could have potentially influenced their responses on the emotion validation items, leading them to consistently provide similar scores across those items. However, several of the items related to emotion validation were reversed, which could have reduced the impact of this particular response bias. As a self-report questionnaire, there could be a tendency of social desirability, whereby respondents provide responses that they perceive as socially desirable rather than reflecting their true thoughts or behaviors, consequently providing us with incorrect data (Cooper, 2021). However, to encourage participants to answer truthfully, it was explicitly communicated that the questionnaire is completely anonymous and emphasized our inability to trace the responses back to individual respondents.

The questionnaire administered consisted of approximately 50 items, multiple of which were long and complicated. Consequently, it is plausible that certain respondents may have experienced boredom or exhibited a tendency towards careless responses (Goldammer et al., 2020). In an effort to mitigate this issue, a cut-off of 3 minutes was utilized, leading to the exclusion of participants

who completed the survey within a shorter duration. We further eliminated participants who provided contradictory answers. However, these approaches do not guarantee the exclusion of all incidents of careless responding. Hence, it becomes necessary to question the quality of the data.

9.0 Future research

While acknowledging the limitations of the current study, it is important to highlight the valuable contributions and implications that emerge from the findings. The current study found a positively significant relationship between emotion validation and LMX. Given the restrictions of the data and the scarcity of similar previous studies, we suggest that future research should focus on investigating the current research question with improved quality. Furthermore, researchers could explore emotion validation and its predictive effects on other organizational outcomes, other than leader-member relationship quality, to further establish the potential importance of emotion validation in leadership and the organizational context. This study does not only provide support for existing research but also uncovers a novel area that warrants further investigation in future studies. Although we did not find any evidence that attachment style directly moderates the relationship between emotion validation and LMX, there might be other individual differences that can moderate this relationship, such as followers' emotion regulation ability. Individuals with high emotion regulation abilities are more proficient at recognizing and regulating their own emotions (Troth et al., 2018). As a result, they may be less reliant on external validation and support from their leaders to maintain positive LMX. Conversely, individuals with lower emotion regulation ability may rely more on external sources to manage their emotional states. For them, the validation by leaders may play a crucial role in maintaining supportive and trusting relationships. Additionally, exploring the impact of individual personality traits on the relationship between emotion validation and leader-member exchange could yield intriguing insights. For instance, individuals high on neuroticism might experience a strong impact of emotion validation on LMX, as they might benefit from the reassurance and emotional support provided by their leaders. In future research, it is worth considering the examination of variables such as these for potential insights.

Given the follower-centric focus of this study, which examines followers' perceptions of emotion validation and leader-member exchange, as well as followers' attachment styles, an intriguing area for future research lies in exploring the impact of leaders' attachment styles on the utilization of emotion validation toward their followers. Prior studies have found that personality traits affect leadership styles and behaviors (Bernierth et al., 2007), such that agreeable individuals indulge less in emotion invalidation (Haakonsen, 2023). Leaders with different attachment styles may also vary in their ability to provide effective emotion validation to their followers. For example, leaders with a secure attachment style may be more adept at providing consistent and supportive emotion validation, thereby fostering a positive LMX. In contrast, leaders with insecure attachment styles may struggle to provide adequate emotion validation, potentially negatively affecting the quality of the leader-follower relationship. A further investigation of whether leaders' attachment styles act as moderators in the relationship between EV and LMX would provide valuable insights.

As the data is only obtained from Norwegian participants, it could be interesting to explore whether the relationship between emotion validation and LMX is as prominent in other cultures. The way emotion validation is expressed and perceived may vary across cultures. It is plausible that the impact of leaders' use of emotion validation on LMX may be contingent upon the cultural expectations leaders and employees hold towards each other. In some cultures, leader-follower relationships are viewed as strictly professional, whereas in other cultures these extend to a more social and interpersonal exchange (Thomas & Peterson, 2018). Thus, there can be different expectations and perceptions of a high quality LMX, and whether emotion validation affects the relationship. Future research involving data from multiple cultural contexts could ultimately contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

We found a three-way interaction between emotion validation, avoidant attachment style and relatedness on LMX, suggesting that having an avoidant attachment style will, in some situations, affect how you perceive emotion validation in relation to LMX. Future research can further explore this relationship by examining other situations that can trigger the activation of the attachment system, such as situations where followers may experience negative emotions or heightened stress levels. This could for instance be companies undergoing change

processes. To gain further insights, researchers could employ a longitudinal design, measuring these variables at two different time points: before the onset of the change process and during. This approach enables a comparison to assess whether the attachment style has been activated and how it influences the relationship between EV and LMX over time. This research could provide valuable insight into the role of emotion validation in promoting support, trust and positive interactions between leaders and followers during challenging organizational circumstances.

This study has provided valuable insights into the topic at hand, while also uncovering several directions for future research. By addressing the limitations of this study and building upon its findings, future researchers can go deeper into these areas and expand the understanding of the subject matter.

10.0 Conclusion

The primary objective of this study was to examine the less explored relationship between emotion validation and LMX, while considering the potential impact of attachment style on this relationship. Our research findings provide robust evidence supporting the existence of an emotional connection between leaders and members. Specifically, we establish that leaders' behaviors towards employees' emotions significantly influence their perception of the relationship between them. Although we did not find empirical support for attachment style as a moderator, we did uncover a significant triple interaction effect by incorporating relatedness as a moderating moderator. Thus, our study diffusely expands upon previous findings of a relationship between individual differences, leadership style preferences and leader-member exchange quality. We acknowledge that the study has certain limitations, however, it has unveiled opportunities for further exploration that can contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field of emotion validation.

11.0 References

- Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Ainsworth, M. D. S., Blehar, M. C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (1978). *Patterns of attachment: A psychological study of the Strange Situation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Baumeister, & Leary, M. R. (1995). The Need to Belong. *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), 497–529. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497>
- Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2018). *Business research methods*. UK: Oxford university press.
- Bernerth, J. B., & Aguinis, H. (2016). A Critical Review and Best-Practice Recommendations for Control Variable Usage. *Personnel Psychology*, 69(1), 229–283. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12103>
- Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1973). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 2. Separation*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Bowlby, J. (1980). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 3. Loss, sadness and depression*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Brennan, K. A., & Shaver, P. R. (1995). Dimensions of adult attachment, affect regulation, and romantic relationship functioning. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 21(3), 267–283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167295213008>
- Broeck, A., Vansteenkiste, M., Witte, H., Soenens, B., & Lens, W. (2010). Capturing autonomy, competence, and relatedness at work: Construction and initial validation of the work-related basic need satisfaction scale. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 83(4), 981–1002. <https://doi.org/10.1348/096317909x481382>
- Brumbaugh, C. C., & Fraley, R. C. (2006). Transference and attachment: How do attachment patterns get carried forward from one relationship to the next? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32(4), 552-560. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.bi.no/10.1177/0146167205282740>
- Cohen, J., Cohen, P., West, S.G., & Aiken, L.S. (2002). *Applied*
- Cooper, C. (2021). *Individual differences and personality* (4th ed.). London: Routledge
- Crow, G., Wiles, R., Heath, S., & Charles, V. (2006). Research Ethics and Data Quality: The Implications of Informed Consent. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 9(2), 83–95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13645570600595231>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human need and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227-268. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

- DeVellis, R. F. (2012). *Scale development: Theory and applications* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dulebohn, J. H., Bommer, W. H., Liden, R. C., Brouer, R. L., & Ferris, G. R. (2012). A meta-analysis of antecedents and consequences of leader-member exchange: Integrating the past with an eye toward the future. *Journal of Management*, 38(6), 1715–1759.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206311415280>
- Erdogan, B., & Bauer, T. N. (2014). Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory: The relational approach to leadership. In D. V. Day (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of leadership and organizations* (pp. 407–433). UK: Oxford University Press.
- Falvo, R., Favara, I., Di Bernardo, G. A., Boccato, G., & Capozza, D. (2012). Attachment styles in organizations: A study performed in a hospital. *TPM – Testing, Psychometrics, Methodology in Applied Psychology*, 19(4), 263-279.
<https://doi.org/10.4473/TPM19.4.2>
- Fearon, P. R., & Belsky, J. (2016). Precursors of attachment security. In J. Cassidy, & P. R. Shaver (Eds.), *Handbook of attachment. Theory, research, and clinical applications* (3rd ed., pp. 291–313). New York, NY: Guilford Press
- Feeney, J. A., Noller, P., & Hanrahan, M. (1994). Assessing adult attachment. In M. B. Sperling & W. H. Berman (Eds.), *Attachment in adults: Clinical and developmental perspectives*. Guilford Press.
- Feeney, J., & Noller, P. (1996). *Adult attachment*. SAGE.
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*. Sage publications.
- Fraley, R. C., Vicary, A. M., Brumbaugh, C. C., & Roisman, G. I. (2011). Patterns of stability in adult attachment: an empirical test of two models of continuity and change. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 101(5), 974-992. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0024150>
- Goldammer, P., Annen, H., Stöckli, P. L., & Jonas, K. (2020). Careless responding in questionnaire measures: Detection, impact, and remedies. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 31(4), 101384. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2020.101384>
- Goleman, D. (2006). *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. Bantam Books.
- Gooty, J., Connelly, S., Griffith, J., & Gupta, A. (2010). Leadership, affect and emotions: A state of the Science Review. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(6), 979–1004.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2010.10.005>
- Graen, G. B., & Uhl-Bien, M. (1995). Relationship-based approach to leadership: Development of leader-member exchange (LMX) theory of leadership over 25 years: Applying a multi-level multi-domain perspective. *Leadership Quarterly*, 6(2), 219-247.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843\(95\)90036-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/1048-9843(95)90036-5)

- Gripsrud, G., Olsson, U.H., & Silkoset, R. (2017). *Metode og dataanalyse*. Oslo: Cappelen Damm
- Gross, J. J. (1998). The emerging field of emotion regulation: An integrative review. *Review of General Psychology*, 2(3), 271–299.
- Haakonsen, J. M. F. (2023). *Leader Agreeableness and LMX: The mediating Role of Leader Invalidation of Follower Emotions*. [Manuscript in preparation].
- Haakonsen J. M. F., Thompson, P.M. Nordmo M. (2023). *Unpublished Manuscript*. Department of Leadership and Organizational Behaviour, BI Norwegian Business School. [Manuscript in preparation].
- Harms, P. D., & Credé, M. (2010). Emotional intelligence and transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 17(1), 5–17. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051809350894>
- Hayes, A. F. (2018). *Introduction to Mediation, Moderation and Conditional Process Analysis. A Regression-Based Approach* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: The Guilford press
- Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. R. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52(3), 511-524. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.52.3.511>
- Huang, J.L., Curran, P.G., Keeney, J., Poposki, E.M., & DeShon, R.P. (2012). Detecting and deterring insufficient effort responding to surveys. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 27,99-114. <https://doi-org.e/10.1007/s10869-011-9231-8>
- Johannessen, A., Tufte, P.A., & Christoffersen, L. (2016). *Introduksjon til samfunnsvitenskapelig metode* (5th ed.). Oslo, Norway: Abstrakt forlag
- Kelly, J. R., & Barsade, S. G. (2001). Mood and emotions in small groups and work
- Kuo, J. R., Fitzpatrick, S., Ip, J., & Uliaszek, A. (2022). The who and what of Validation: An Experimental Examination of validation and invalidation of specific emotions and the moderating effect of emotion dysregulation. *Borderline Personality Disorder and Emotion Dysregulation*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40479-022-00185-x>
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Det kvalitative forskningsintervju*. Oslo: Gyldendal Norsk Forlag AS.
- Lawler, E. J. (2001). An affect theory of social exchange. *American journal of sociology*, 107(2), 321-352.
- Leiter, M. P., Day, A., & Price, L. (2015). Attachment styles at work: Measurement, collegial relationships, and burnout. *Burnout Research*, 2(1), 25-35. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.burn.2015.02.003>

- Li, A. N., & Liao, H. (2014). How do leader–member exchange quality and differentiation affect performance in teams? An integrated multilevel dual process model. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 99*(5), 847–866. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0037233>
- Liden, R. C., & Maslyn, J. M. 1998. Multidimensionality of Leader-Member Exchange: An empirical assessment through scale development. *Journal of Management, 24*(1): 43-72. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063\(99\)80053-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(99)80053-1)
- Little, L. M., Gooty, J., & Williams, M. (2016). The role of Leader Emotion Management in leader–member exchange and follower outcomes. *The Leadership Quarterly, 27*(1), 85–97. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2015.08.007>
- McCleskey, J. (2014). Emotional intelligence and leadership: A review of the progress, controversy and criticism. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 22*(1), 76–93. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijoa-03-2012-0568>
- Mikulincer, M., & Shaver, P. R. (2016). *Attachment in adulthood. Structure, dynamics, and change* (2 ed.). The Guilford Press.
Multiple Regression/Correlation Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences (3rd ed.).
 Routledge.
- Myers, J. L., & Well, A. D. (2003). *Research Design and Statistical Analysis* (2nd ed.).
 Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- O’brien, R. M. (2007). A caution regarding rules of thumb for variance inflation factors. *Quality & Quantity, 41*(5), 673–690. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-006-9018-6>
- of Leader Invalidation of Follower Emotions*. [Manuscript in preparation].
- Olsson, I., Sørrebø, Ø., & Dahl, A. A. (2010). The Norwegian version of the experiences in close relationships measure of adult attachment: Psychometric Properties and normative data. *Nordic Journal of Psychiatry, 64*(5), 340–349.
<https://doi.org/10.3109/08039481003728586>
- Pearce, J. L., & Gregersen, H. B. (1991). Task interdependence and extrarole behavior: A test of the mediating effects of felt responsibility. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 76*(6), 838.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common Method Biases in Behavioral Research: A Critical Review of the Literature and Recommended Remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*(5), 879-903. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879>
- Popper, M., & Mayseless, O. (2003). Back to basics: Applying a parental perspective to transformational leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly, 14*(1), 41-65.

- Ravitz, P., Maunder, R., Hunter, J., Sthankiya, B., & Lancee, W. (2010). Adult attachment measures: A 25-year review. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 69(4), 419–432. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2009.08.006>
- Sadri, G., Weber, T. J., & Gentry, W. A. (2011). Empathic emotion and leadership performance: An empirical analysis across 38 countries. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(5), 818–830. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.07.005>
- Saha, S., Das, R., Lim, W. M., Kumar, S., Malik, A., & Chillakuri, B. (2023). Emotional intelligence and leadership: Insights for leading by feeling in the future of work. *International Journal of Manpower*, 44(4), 671–701. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijm-12-2021-0690>
- Schyns, B. (2016). Leader and Follower Personality and LMX. *The Oxford Handbook of Leader-Member Exchange*, pp. 119–135. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Shenk, C. E., & Fruzzetti, A. E. (2011). The impact of validating and invalidating responses on emotional reactivity. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 30(2), 163–183. <https://doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2011.30.2.163>
- Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach’s alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2, 53–55. <https://doi.org/10.5116/ijme.4dfb.8dfd>
- teams. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 86(1), 99–130. <https://doi.org/10.1006/obhd.2001.2974>
- Thomas, D. C., & Peterson, M. F. (2018). *Cross-cultural management: essential concepts*. (4th ed.) SAGE.
- Thompson, P. M., Glasø, L., & Matthiesen, S. B. (2016). Leader-follower dyads through the lens of attachment theory. Attachment style as a predictor of LMX. *Academy of Management Annual Meeting Proceedings*, 2016(1), 14688. <https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2016.248>
- Thompson, P.M. (2023). *Attachment-system activation: A missing piece in the attachment style-LMX puzzle?* [Manuscript in preparation].
- Wu, C.-H., & Parker, S. K. (2014). The role of leader support in facilitating proactive work behavior: A perspective from attachment theory. *Journal of Management*, 43(4), 1025–1049. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314549489>
- Young, E. S., Simpson, J. A., Griskevicius, V., Huelsnitz, C. O., & Fleck, C. (2019). Childhood attachment and adult personality: A life history perspective. *Self and Identity*, 18(1), 22–38. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15298868.2017.1353540>
- Zielinski, M. J., & Veilleux, J. C. (2018). The Perceived Invalidation of Emotion Scale (PIES): Development and psychometric properties of a novel measure of current emotion invalidation. *Psychological assessment*, 30(11), 1454. DOI: 10.1037/pas0000584.

Zielinski, M. J., Veilleux, J. C., Fradley, M. F., & Skinner, K. D. (2022). Perceived emotion invalidation predicts daily affect and stressors. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping*, 36(2), 214–228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2022.2033973>

12.0 Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent Form

Formål med studien

Formålet med denne studien er å bidra til den eksisterende forskningen rundt emosjonelle prosesser på arbeidsplassen. Data fra prosjektet vil først benyttes i en masteroppgave og deretter i en artikkel i et vitenskapelig tidsskrift.

Hvem er ansvarlig?

Handelshøyskolen BI er ansvarlig institusjon for dette prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Du er invitert til å delta i spørreundersøkelsen dersom du jobber i en organisasjon og rapporterer til en leder.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Hvis du velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer det at du fyller ut et spørreskjema som tar ca. 10 minutter. Spørreskjema inneholder spørsmål om forholdet mellom deg og din nærmeste leder, hvordan lederen din responderer når du uttrykker følelser og hvordan du har det i nære relasjoner, samt andre jobbrelevante spørsmål.

Ditt personvern - Hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

All datamateriale med dine personopplysninger er fullstendig anonymisert. Det er frivillig å delta, og du kan når som helst avslutte spørreskjema dersom du ønsker å trekke din deltakelse. Ettersom deltakelse er fullstendig anonymt og individuelle responser ikke kan identifiseres vil det ikke være mulig å fjerne eller slette svaret når dette er innsendt. Det er kun involverte i prosjektet som har tilgang til og vil behandle innsamlet data.

Har du behov for mer informasjon?

- Ta kontakt med Anna Gundersen (anna-gundersen@hotmail.com) eller Katrine Løtveit (katrinelotveit@gmail.com)
- Jon Magnus Frostad Haakonsen, stipendiat ved Handelshøyskolen BI
- Per Magnus Thompson, førsteamanuensis ved Handelshøyskolen BI

Ved å trykke på "neste side" bekrefter du at du har mottatt og forstått informasjonen i skrevet over og samtykker til å delta i dette forskningsprosjektet.

Appendix 2: Survey

Kjønn

- Mann
- Kvinne
- Annet

Alder

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Bransje

- Privat
- Offentlig
- Annet

Omtrent hvor mange andre har din nåværende leder som sin nærmeste leder?

Hvor lenge har du hatt din nåværende leder som leder?

- 0-3 måneder
- 3-6 måneder
- 6-12 måneder
- 1-2 år
- 2-3 år
- 3-5 år
- Mer enn 5 år

De følgende påstandene beskriver dine personlige erfaringer med jobben din.

	Uenig	Litt uenig	Nøytral	Litt enig	Enig
Jeg føler egentlig ikke at jeg har spesielt gode relasjoner med kollegaene mine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg er på jobben, føler jeg meg som en del av et større felleskap	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg føler egentlig ikke at kollegaene mine og jeg har mye til felles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg er på jobben, føler jeg at jeg kan snakke om emner som virkelig betyr noe for meg	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg føler meg ofte ensom når jeg er sammen med kollegaene mine	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Noen av mine kollegaer er nære venner av meg	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

De følgende påstandene beskriver hvor tett du arbeider med din nærmeste leder. Med «nærmeste leder» mener vi lederen som har personalansvar for deg.

	Helt uenig	Uenig	Litt uenig	Nøytral	Litt enig	Enig	Helt enig
Jeg har et tett samarbeidsforhold med min leder	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg må ofte koordinere mine arbeidsoppgaver med min leder	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Måten jeg gjennomfører jobben min på har stor betydning for min leder	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mitt arbeid krever at jeg ganske ofte må konsultere med min leder	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

De følgende påstandene beskriver ditt forhold til din nærmeste leder. Med «nærmeste leder» mener vi lederen som har personalansvar for deg.

	Helt uenig	Uenig	Litt uenig	Nøytral	Litt enig	Enig	Helt enig
Jeg liker min nærmeste leder godt som person	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Min nærmeste leder er den type person man ønsker å ha som venn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Min nærmeste leder er mye morro å jobbe med	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Min nærmeste leder ville forsvare meg dersom jeg ble "angrepet" av andre	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Min nærmeste leder forsvarer mitt arbeid til sin overordnede, selv uten full kjennskap til saken det gjelder	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Min nærmeste leder ville forsvare meg til andre i organisasjonen hvis jeg gjorde en ærlig feil	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg gjør arbeid for min nærmeste leder som går utover det som er spesifisert i min stillingsinstruksjon	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg er villig til å yte ekstra innsats, utover det som normalt kreves, for å fremme interessene til min arbeidsgruppe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg har ikke noe i mot å jobbe så hardt jeg kan for min nærmeste leder	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg er imponert over min nærmeste leders kunnskap om hans / hennes jobb	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg respekterer min nærmeste leders kunnskap om og kompetanse på jobb	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg beundrer min nærmeste leders faglige ferdigheter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Denne delen omhandler hvordan din nærmeste leder møter og responderer på dine uttrykte følelser.

	Helt uenig	Uenig	Litt uenig	Nøytral	Litt enig	Enig	Helt enig
Når jeg viser eller uttrykker negative følelser (f.eks. bekymringer, frustrasjon, tristhet) behandler lederen min meg med respekt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lederen min får meg til å oppleve at mine følelser er viktige	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lederen min forstår meg når jeg er åpen om hva jeg føler	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg opplever bekymring, frustrasjon, tristhet eller andre negative følelser forstår lederen min hva mine emosjonelle behov er	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg opplever bekymring, frustrasjon, tristhet eller andre negative emosjoner gir lederen min meg emosjonell støtte	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Helt uenig	Uenig	Litt uenig	Nøytral	Litt enig	Enig	Helt enig
Når jeg viser eller uttrykker negative følelser (f.eks. bekymring, frustrasjon, tristhet) responderer lederen min med å kritisere meg for å føle det jeg føler	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg opplever å være entusiastisk over noe "punkterer" lederen entusiasmen min (f.eks. ved å respondere med en "flat" eller likegyldig respons"	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg opplever begeistring, entusiasme, glede eller andre positive følelser responderer lederen min med å kritisere meg for å føle det jeg føler	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg viser eller uttrykker negative følelser (f.eks. bekymring, frustrasjon, tristhet) får jeg inntrykk av at lederen min ikke tar meg alvorlig	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg viser eller uttrykker negative følelser (f.eks. bekymring, frustrasjon, tristhet) indikerer lederen min at mitt perspektiv eller min tankemåte er feil	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Helt uenig	Uenig	Litt uenig	Nøytral	Litt enig	Enig	Helt enig
Når jeg er trist, bekymret, eller opplever andre negative følelser er min leders første respons å forsøke og løse problemet fremfor å forsøke og forstå	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg viser eller uttrykker negative følelser (f.eks. bekymring, frustrasjon, tristhet) har lederen min problemer med å forstå hva jeg føler	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hvis jeg sliter med noe og kunne hatt nytte av emosjonell støtte har lederen min en tendens til å gi meg "tomme" forsikringer (f.eks. "ikke bekymre deg, det blir bedre") fremfor å forsøke og forstå meg	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hvis jeg sliter og kunne hatt nytte av emosjonell støtte, ignorerer lederen min hva jeg føler og leter i stedet etter praktiske løsninger på mine vansker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hvis jeg sliter og kunne hatt nytte av emosjonell støtte, får jeg ofte et inntrykk av at lederen min ikke forstår hvorfor jeg føler som jeg gjør	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Helt til slutt i undersøkelsen ønsker vi å stille noen spørsmål som ikke har noe med jobb eller lederen din å gjøre, men som sier noe om deg og hvordan du er som person. Det vi skal se på i denne delen er hvordan du generelt har det i nære relasjoner (f.eks. med ektefeller/samboer/kjæreste, nære venner eller familiemedlemmer).

Disse spørsmålene sier noe om deg og hvordan du er som person. Denne delen handler om hvordan du generelt har det i nære relasjoner (f.eks. med ektefeller/samboer/kjærester, nære venner eller familiemedlemmer).

	Helt uenig	Uenig	Litt uenig	Nøytral	Litt enig	Enig	Helt enig
Jeg bekymrer meg for å bli forlatt	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg har det godt med å være følelsesmessig nær kjærester	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg bekymrer meg mye over mine forhold	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg bekymrer meg over at kjærester ikke bryr seg like mye om meg som jeg bryr meg om dem	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg bekymrer meg en god del over å miste min partner	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg føler meg ikke vel når jeg skal åpne meg for kjærester	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg ønsker å komme nær min partner, men jeg trekker meg stadig unna	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg blir nervøs når partnere kommer for nær meg	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg forsøker å unngå å komme for nær partneren min	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Jeg synes det er vanskelig å tillate meg å være avhengig av kjærester	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hvis jeg ikke får partneren min til å vise interesse for meg blir jeg opprørt eller sint	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Når jeg ikke er involvert i et forhold føler jeg meg noe engstelig og usikker	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>