# Follower Forgiveness and Reactions to Leader Interpersonal Transgressions

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## ABSTRACT

**Follower Forgiveness and Reactions to Leader Interpersonal Transgressions**

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Do leaders transgress in the workplace? Research has shown that they do and that these offenses may occur in a variety of ways (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2002; Grandy & Starratt, 2010; Shapiro, Boss, Salas, Tangirala, & Von Glinow, 2011). This dissertation examines factors that influence the forgiveness accorded by followers for interpersonal transgressions committed by direct supervisors, as well as the impact of forgiveness on organizational outcomes. More specifically, I explore the effects of transgression severity on forgiveness, as moderated by the quality of the leader-follower relationship (leader-member exchange – LMX; Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975), courageous followership (Chaleff, 2009), and apologies. Forgiveness is then argued to impact both turnover intentions and counterproductive behavior, as moderated by one's continuance commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Two studies were conducted. First, a scenario-based study examined the effects of perceptions of severity on forgiveness, as moderated by LMX and apologies ($N$ = 456). Second, a retrospective field study ($N$ = 333), in which participants were asked to recall a transgression committed by a direct supervisor, was conducted. Across both studies, severity and LMX significantly impacted forgiveness. In Study 1, LMX moderated the relationship between severity and the three subscales of forgiveness (avoidance, revenge, and benevolence motivations; e.g., McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997; McCullough, Root, & Cohen, 2006), such that the effects of severity were mitigated when LMX was high versus low. In contrast, the moderating

effect of LMX on overall forgiveness in Study 2 suggests that LMX magnifies the negative effects of severity on forgiveness. Higher levels of forgiveness were associated with fewer intentions to leave the organization and less counterproductive behavior. Finally, a key finding from this dissertation is that forgiveness mediates the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and both outcomes. This suggest that forgiveness is an important variable that helps us to understand how and why followers desire to leave the organization and engage in deviance as a result of leader interpersonal transgressions. Future research directions and practical implications of this research are discussed.

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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

- *"He made a snide remark about my weight".*
- *"I was screamed at for about ten minutes for something I did not have control over".*
- *"A shipment was messed up because the supervisor forgot about it. Then when it came he tried to make it look like it was my fault".*
- *"My supervisor was more concerned about producing the project than my health needs. She basically told me to suck it up".*
- *"Called me an idiot".*
- *"Co-worker took credit for my project and was not set straight [by] the manager".*

Do leaders transgress in the workplace? Research has shown that they do and that these offenses may occur in a variety of ways (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2002; Grandy & Starratt, 2010; Shapiro, Boss, Salas, Tangirala, & Von Glinow, 2011). The transgressions above, described by participants in the current dissertation, further attest to this reality.

Such actions on the part of leaders can have numerous effects for both the victims of the transgression (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2002) as well as the organizations in which they are employed. As illustrations of such effects, Harris, Kacmar, and Zivnuska (2007) found abusive supervision to negatively impact subordinate job performance (measured via both employee performance appraisals and ratings by the supervisor). Furthermore, a recent meta-analysis by Schyns and Schilling (2013) found destructive leadership to be related to many important individual, job, organization and leader-related outcomes. As examples, the authors found destructive leadership to correlate negatively with job satisfaction and well-being, and correlate positively with turnover intentions and

counterproductive behavior. Although it is important to acknowledge that leader transgressions do not necessarily reflect abusive supervision or destructive leadership, such research highlights the potentially harmful effects of these leader behaviors.

Given that leader transgressions do occur in the workplace, it is interesting to examine the factors that may contribute to the decisions of followers to forgive, or to not forgive, leaders who have offended them. As note Tripp, Bies and Aquino (2007), fractured relationships sometimes cannot be fixed. Thus, it is important to understand what happens, both with respect to the follower and to the organization, when such transgressions occur. This dissertation aims to contribute to this body of literature through the investigation of factors that may influence follower forgiveness for interpersonal workplace transgressions, as well as their subsequent reactions.

As such, this dissertation examines the effects of several variables that may contribute to the degree of forgiveness that followers will bestow upon their offending leaders. Leader transgressions are examined in the context of interpersonal offenses committed by direct supervisors against followers in the workplace. Interpersonal transgressions have been described as "a class of interpersonal stressors in which people perceive that another person has harmed them in a way that they consider both painful and morally wrong" (McCullough, Root, & Cohen, 2006, p. 887).

Specifically, this dissertation explores how follower perceptions of the severity of leader interpersonal transgressions impact forgiveness of the leader (as moderated by the quality of the leader-follower relationship, followership style, and leader apologies), as well as how forgiveness then influences both turnover intentions and workplace deviance (as moderated by a follower's level of continuance commitment to the organization).

**Theoretical Model**

A review of the literature, spanning several research areas, reveals that numerous variables have been associated with forgiveness. Three key variables from the existing research are incorporated into the theoretical model for this dissertation. Their inclusion is based both on the evidence found in the literature and their theoretical relevance to the research question. Thus, the effects of three factors – the severity of the offense that has been committed, the relationship between the parties, and leader apologies – on the degree of forgiveness accorded by the follower for the leader's interpersonal transgression are examined.

First, it is argued that a follower's perception of the severity of the transgression committed by the leader will be a key determinant of how much forgiveness he or she will accord. This study adopts the definition of forgiveness as presented by McCullough, Pargament and Thoresen (2000) as "intraindividual, prosocial change toward a perceived transgressor that is situated within a specific interpersonal context" (p. 9).

The effects of transgression severity have been examined in many studies (e.g., Fincham, Jackson, & Beach, 2005; McCullough, Fincham, & Tsang, 2003; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002). A recent meta-analysis by Fehr, Gelfand and Nag (2010) found severity and forgiveness to be negatively correlated. Additionally, a study by Blase and Blase (2002) identified several behaviors through which principals mistreated educators, further classifying them based on their level of aggressiveness. As such, this study not only highlights that leaders can transgress in many ways, but also demonstrates that these transgressions have the potential to vary in terms of their severity.

In sum, the extant literature indicates that the severity of the offense that has been committed is an important variable to consider when investigating forgiveness. It is argued that follower perceptions of the gravity of the transgression that has been committed against them will be a key factor influencing whether followers will be willing to extend forgiveness to their leaders. However, the relationship between follower perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness may depend upon a number of factors. The first moderator examined in this dissertation is the quality of the dyadic relationship between the leader and follower.

Several studies have explored how the relationship between the individual who was hurt and the offender relates to forgiveness (e.g., McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown, & Hight, 1998). Furthermore, the attractiveness of the relationship is one factor that has been argued to impact forgiveness of a transgression (Worthington & Wade, 1999). Meta-analytic findings by Fehr et al. (2010) showed a positive correlation between several relationship variables and forgiveness (specifically, relationship closeness, relationship satisfaction and relationship commitment). The correlation has also been found to exist in cross-cultural research (Karremans et al., 2011). Some research has also found the effect to be indirect (e.g., Fincham, Paleari, & Regalia, 2002; McCullough et al., 1998).

Leader-member exchange theory (LMX; Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1975) is used as the theoretical framework for the investigation of leader-follower relationships in this dissertation. LMX emphasizes that leader-follower relationships can differ in quality (e.g., Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Thus, the effect of one's perceptions of the severity of an offense committed by one's leader on forgiveness may

differ depending upon the quality of the relationship that has been developed between the leader and follower.

This dyadic relationship is examined in the context of formal leadership in organizations. The concept of leadership has been defined in many ways (see Bass & Bass, 2008, for an extensive discussion; House & Javidam, 2004). This dissertation adopts the definition of leadership in which it is described as "the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization of which they are members" (House & Javidan, 2004, p. 9).

The second variable upon which the relationship between follower perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness is argued to depend is one's followership style. Followership may be defined as "the study of the nature and impact of followers and following in the leadership process" (Uhl-Bien, Riggio, Lowe, & Carsten, 2014, p. 84). While several scholars have presented models describing different 'types' of followers, this study incorporates Chaleff's (2009) conceptualization of *courageous followership* as the framework for investigating the moderating effect of followership on the relationship between severity perceptions and forgiveness.

The third and final moderating variable included in the model reflects a leader's apology following his or her offense. The impact of apologies on forgiveness has been examined in the literature (e.g., Davis & Gold, 2011; McCullough, Worthington, & Rachal, 1997; Zechmesiter, Garcia, Romero, & Vas, 2004), as well as the correlation of apologies with forgiveness (e.g., Brown & Phillips, 2005; Fehr et al., 2010). Given the workplace context of this study, it is argued that leader apologies are an important variable to consider with respect to follower forgiveness. Although employees may

choose to terminate their relationship with the organization as a result of the transgression, it is likely that many followers will choose to remain in their positions. Efforts by the leader to address the transgression may therefore prove to be a factor that helps to mitigate the effects of severity perceptions on one's forgiveness of the leader.

Additionally, this dissertation examines how the degree of forgiveness accorded for the offense may impact salient organizational outcomes. Thus, this study explores the mediating effect of follower forgiveness on the relationship between one's perceptions of the severity of the transgression committed and both the follower's intentions to leave the organization and engagement in counterproductive work behavior.

The final component of the theoretical model argues that the relationship between follower forgiveness and both outcome variables may depend upon the follower's level of continuance commitment to the organization. Continuance commitment – the need to stay in the organizational relationship, due either to the high cost of departure or the lack of options to one's current situation (Meyer & Allen, 1991) – is argued to influence followers' intention to leave or to engage in counterproductive behavior when they have not fully forgiven the leader for his or her actions.

In sum, this dissertation investigates how follower's perception of the gravity of a leader's offense will impact follower forgiveness, as moderated by the quality of the leader-follower relationship, followership style and leader apologies. Furthermore, the degree of forgiveness accorded may then impact follower's turnover intentions and counterproductive behavior, depending upon one's level of continuance commitment to the organization. The full theoretical model explored is presented below in Figure 1.

This model was tested with two studies. Using an experimental design, Study 1 assessed the effects of perceptions of transgression severity on forgiveness, as moderated by leader-member exchange and leader apologies. A retrospective field study was conducted for Study 2, in which the full theoretical model was examined.

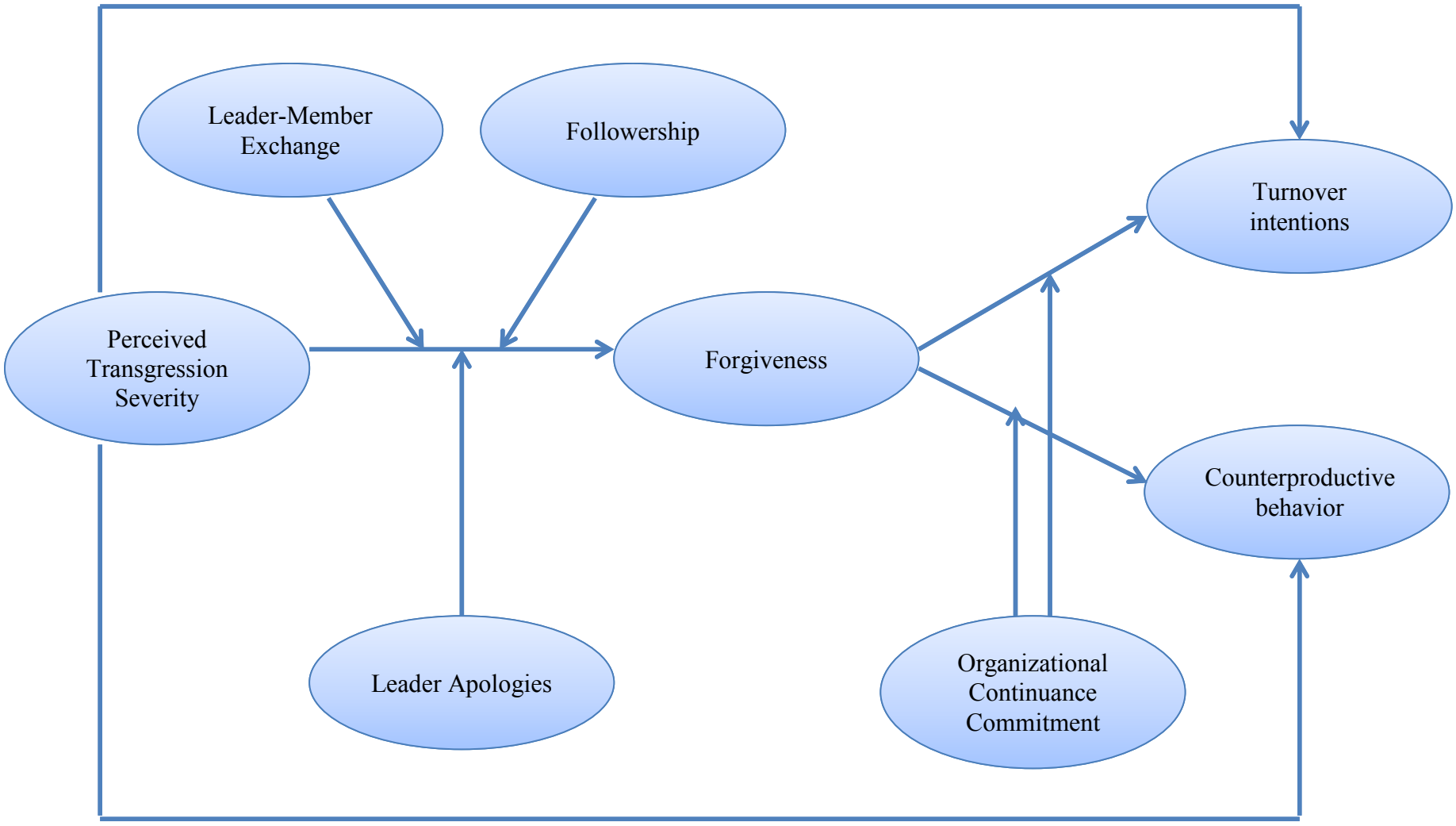
**Contributions**

This dissertation aims to make several contributions to the literature. Although there is excellent literature on forgiveness in organizations, it has been noted by several authors that it has not been vastly studied specifically in the field of management (e.g., Bradfield & Aquino, 1999), the organizational sciences (Fehr & Gelfand, 2012), or related to the workplace (Aquino, Grover, Goldman, & Folger, 2003; Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2001; Cox, 2011).

While more literature has emerged on the topic of forgiveness (Karremans & Van Lange, 2009) and in management (Fehr & Gelfand, 2012) over the past years, the examination of leader workplace transgressions on follower forgiveness and subsequent intentions and behaviors in this dissertation addresses a research topic that has not been vastly explored in the literature. By adding to our understanding of the factors that may influence follower forgiveness for workplace offenses, and by investigating forgiveness as an intervening variable through which we may understand the relationship between transgression severity and organizational outcomes, this dissertation makes contributions to both the forgiveness and leadership literatures.

Figure 1

*Theoretical Model*



Additionally, the examination of the effects of forgiveness in the workplace on two salient organizational outcomes is also argued to contribute to these bodies of literature. Both turnover intentions and workplace deviance have been shown to be of great consequence to organizations. First, a recent meta-analysis by Park and Shaw (2013) showed voluntary turnover to be negatively associated with organizational performance, with an average corrected correlation of -.15. While intentions to leave may not necessarily translate into the actual voluntary departure of employees, literature has shown turnover intentions to be correlated with turnover (e.g., Steel & Ovalle, 1984). Importantly, turnover can entail many costs (e.g., Davidson, Timo, & Wang, 2010; Watlington, Shockley, Giglielmino, & Felsher, 2010). Second, workplace deviance has also been shown to significantly impact organizations. For example, a relationship has been found between counterproductive behavior (at the group level) and business-unit performance (Dunlop & Lee, 2004). As such, these findings highlight the significant effects that both voluntary turnover and counterproductive behavior can have in the workplace, underscoring the relevance of their inclusion in this dissertation.

Finally, the follower-centric approach adopted in this dissertation is also argued to represent a contribution. It has recently been noted that followership research in still in its early stages (Kelley, 2008) and that the topic is understudied (Bjugstad, Thach, Thompson, & Morris, 2006; Blanchard, Welbourne, Gilmore, & Bullock, 2009). Although followership was not generally a focus in past literature, more research is beginning to examine the concept (Uhl-Bien et al., 2014) and scholars have identified numerous research topics and questions that focus on followership and follower

experiences (e.g., Bligh, 2010; Kelley, 2008). As such, it is argued that the follower-centric approach of this dissertation contributes to the literature in this area.

**Summary**

In sum, this dissertation examines factors impacting follower forgiveness of leader interpersonal transgressions and its consequences for individuals. The theoretical model proposed that perceptions of the severity of interpersonal transgressions committed by leaders impact follower forgiveness, as moderated by the quality of the relationship that exists between the leader and follower, courageous followership behavior, and leader apologies. The model further examines how forgiveness may act as a mediator of the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and both intentions to leave the organization and one's inclination to engage in deviant behavior in the workplace, as moderated by one's level of continuance commitment to the organization.

The following chapter reviews literature related to the above-mentioned relationships and proposes several hypotheses. These hypotheses are then investigated in two studies. Chapters 3 and 4 detail the methodology and discuss the results of a scenario-based experiment exploring the effects of severity on forgiveness, as moderated by LMX and apologies. The methodology and results from a second retrospective field study are next presented in Chapters 5 and 6, followed by an overall discussion in which the findings and contributions of both studies are summarized and integrated in Chapter 7.

# CHAPTER 2

# LITERATURE REVIEW

As understanding how followers forgive leader interpersonal transgressions in the workplace and their subsequent reactions is central to this dissertation, this chapter opens with a brief overview of the literature related to the nature of transgressions and their potential effects. Forgiveness is then defined. The chapter continues with several sections developing hypotheses related to the impact of perceived transgression severity on forgiveness, as well as the proposed moderating effects of leader-member exchange, followership, and leader apologies on the relationship between transgression severity and forgiveness.

The focus then turns to the outcome variables, summarizing relevant literature related to turnover intentions, counterproductive behavior, and the proposed moderating effects of continuance commitment on the relationship between forgiveness and both outcomes. Finally, the proposed mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and the outcomes is articulated.

## Leader Transgressions

Interpersonal transgressions are actions that are painful to the victim and for which the latter feels that he or she has been wronged (McCullough et al., 2006). The literature demonstrates that leaders can transgress and that these offenses can take many forms. For example, research by Shen, Davies, Rasch and Bono (2008) identified nine categories of leader behaviors that may be described as ineffective. Although these ineffective behaviors do not mean that a transgression has occurred, many of the specific behaviors associated with each category may be perceived as an interpersonal

transgression by employees, thus illustrating the wide range of potential leader offenses. The authors note that they include behaviors that are both intentional and unintentional within their framework. This is highly relevant with respect to the current dissertation, where it is argued that the *perception* that a transgression has occurred is key. Accordingly, transgressions may or may not be purposeful and may or may not be actions that leaders are conscious of committing.

It has also been demonstrated that transgressions can have numerous consequences on individuals. Blase and Blase (2002) investigated ways in which principals mistreated educators, as well as the effects of such treatment. The authors describe several resulting negative effects on the educators, including psychological, physical and emotional consequences, harm pertaining to the schools and departures of the educators from their positions.

In summary, research has shown that leaders may transgress in a myriad of ways against their followers and that such behavior can have serious consequences for the victims of the offenses (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2002). Additionally, research has investigated the effects of more specific leadership behaviors – such as destructive leadership, abusive supervision, and toxic leadership – that reflect ways in which leaders may act in a harmful manner toward followers. The following sections present an overview of the literature pertaining to each of the three aforementioned behaviors.

**Destructive leadership**. Though leaders who commit interpersonal transgression may not be demonstrating destructive leadership, this body of literature is nonetheless informative for understanding how leader behaviors can negatively impact followers and organizations. While there are many ways in which destructive leadership has been

defined (Schyns & Schilling, 2013), a recent definition by Krasikova, Green and LeBreton (2013) describes the concept as the following:

> Volitional behavior by a leader that can harm or intends to harm a leader's organization and/or followers by a) encouraging followers to pursue goals that contravene the legitimate interests of the organization and/or b) employing a leadership style that involves the use of harmful methods of influence with followers, regardless of justifications for such behavior (p. 1310).

Einarsen, Aasland and Skogstad (2007) propose four types of leadership, depending on whether the behavior is good or bad for subordinates or the organization. Leadership that is good for the organization and subordinates is termed *constructive leadership*. Leadership that is good for subordinates but bad for the organization is labeled *supportive-disloyal leadership*. As the two aforementioned styles are viewed as positive for followers, they are not applicable to the interpersonal offenses examined in this dissertation. However, the remaining two styles may be very relevant. Leadership that is bad for subordinates but good for the organization is labeled *tyrannical leadership*. Finally, leadership that is bad for both parties is termed *derailed leadership*. In Einarsen, Skogstad and Aasland (2010), the authors add *laissez-faire leadership* to their model, to indicate inactive leader behavior related to both the organization and followers. However, it may be noted that Schyns and Schilling (2013) argue that *laissez-faire* leadership and supportive disloyal leadership do not fall into the category of destructive leadership. Rather, the authors argue that supportive disloyal leadership should be a seen as a

separate construct. This again demonstrates that there are many conceptualizations of destructive leadership that exist in the literature.

Several studies have examined the impact of destructive leadership on important organizational outcomes. Schyns and Schilling (2013) found destructive leadership to have a negative relationship with several variables (as examples, job satisfaction and commitment) as well as a positive relationship with several important concepts (as examples, stress, counterproductive behaviors and turnover intentions). Additionally, Aasland, Skogstad, Notelaers, Neilsen and Einarsen (2010) investigated how often a sample of 2539 Norwegian participants had faced destructive leadership within the past half of a year. The authors found that a full third of participants (33.5%) had faced one aspect or more of this type of leadership with some frequency.

Thus, research has shown that destructive leadership relates to several salient outcomes for individuals and organizations (e.g., Schyns & Schilling, 2013) and, importantly, occurs relatively often (e.g., Aasland et al., 2010).

**Abusive supervision**. Abusive supervision has been defined by Tepper (2000) as a "sustained display of hostile verbal and non-verbal behaviors, excluding physical contact" (p. 178). Grandy and Starratt (2010) provide an excellent summary of different ways in which this concept has been defined in research, including (but not limited to) such terms as emotional abuse, aggression by leaders and leader bullying. The authors also highlight the many ways in which leaders may engage in abusive supervision, identifying ten such behaviors (as examples, playing favorites, criticizing followers publicly, and telling lies).

Literature has examined both antecedents and consequences of abusive supervision. With respect to precursors of such behavior, Tepper, Moss and Duffy (2011) found that the supervisor's perception that he or she had a high degree of dissimilarity with an employee influenced abusive behavior. Abusive supervision has been shown to impact such outcomes as subordinate performance (Harris et al., 2007) and creativity at work (Liu, Liao, & Loi, 2012). Furthermore, Tepper (2000) found abusive supervision to be negatively correlated with several outcomes, including two forms of commitment (affective and normative), as well as both job and life satisfaction. In contrast, Tepper found numerous variables to be positively associated with this leader behavior, including turnover, continuance commitment, as well as both work-to-family and family-to-work conflict (p. 183-4). As discussed by Tepper (2000), these findings demonstrate the serious effects abusive supervision may have on subordinates.

Thus, research has shown that leaders can act abusively in many ways (e.g., Grandy & Staratt, 2010), examined antecedents of such behavior (e.g., Tepper et al., 2011) and has demonstrated that these behaviors can result in several negative effects for both individual and organizations (e.g., Liu et al., 2012; Tepper, 2000). This literature therefore highlights the relevance and importance of exploring the factors that may influence follower forgiveness for such offenses, as well as how the degree of forgiveness accorded for the transgression may in turn impact salient organizational outcomes.

**Toxic leadership**. Leaders who exhibit toxic behavior may be characterized as "those individuals, who by dint of their *destructive behaviors* and *dysfunctional personal qualities* generate a serious and enduring poisonous effect on the individuals, families, organizations, communities and even entire societies they lead" (Lipman-Blumen, 2005,

p. 29, emphasis in the original). These leaders may mean to be toxic or may not (Lipman-Blumen, 2005). Considering the definition presented above, it could certainly be argued that leaders who exhibit such behavior will often engage in transgressions against followers, though it must again be acknowledged that this is not necessarily the case.

**Summary**. Research has shown that leader transgressions can happen in many ways (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2002). Additionally, literature on three specific leadership behaviors – namely, destructive leadership, abusive supervision, and toxic leadership – provide concrete examples of ways in which leaders can exhibit negative behaviors in the workplace and demonstrate that such actions can have harmful effects for both followers and organizations. As this literature establishes that leaders can indeed transgress against followers in the workplace, the importance of investigating follower forgiveness and reactions to such events is underscored. Before turning to the hypotheses to be investigated in this dissertation, the following section defines, and overviews literature on, forgiveness.

**Forgiveness**

Several researchers have noted that forgiveness has been defined in numerous ways (e.g., Harris & Thoresen, 2005; Karremans & Van Lange, 2009; McCullough et al., 2000; Worthington, 1998; Worthington & Scherer, 2004). Forgiveness has been conceptualized both in terms of different types of forgiveness that one may demonstrate (e.g., Baumeister, Exline & Sommer, 1998; Fincham & Beach, 2002), and assessed as a ratio-level variable in such works as the Enright Forgiveness Inventory (Enright & Risque, 2004) and the Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM) (e.g., McCullough et al., 2006, for the TRIM-18).

Several authors have also distinguished between forgiveness and *pseudoforgiveness* (e.g., Enright and the Human Development Group, 1991). Finally, the concept of unforgiveness, defined as "a 'cold' emotion involving resentment, bitterness, and perhaps hatred, along with the motivated avoidance of or retaliation against the transgressor" (Worthington & Wade, 1999, p. 386) has been discussed in the literature.

As such, the numerous ways in which forgiveness has been both defined and conceptualized, as well as the distinctions between forgiveness and related concepts of pseudoforgiveness and unforgiveness, highlight that forgiveness is indeed a complex research issue.

The definition of forgiveness adopted in the current dissertation presents forgiveness as "intraindividual, prosocial change toward a perceived transgressor that is situated within a specific interpersonal context" (McCullough et al., 2000, p. 9). As such, forgiveness reflects a change in one's motivations toward the person who committed the act, such that the desire to be vengeful and to avoid the offender lessens and the desire to be kind toward the transgressor increases (McCullough et al., 1997).

The focus on prosocial change in the definition by McCullough et al. (2000), characterized by changes in one's motivations toward the individual who has committed the offense, fits strongly with the context of this dissertation. It is argued that the examination of follower motivations to gain revenge against, avoid, and act benevolently toward leaders who have committed interpersonal transgressions is highly relevant for understanding why the individual may choose to leave the organization or engage in deviant behavior as a consequence of the amount of forgiveness accorded.

This dissertation examines four specific factors that may influence how much a follower forgives an offending leader. Each variable – perceptions of the severity of the offense that has been committed, the quality of the leader-follower relationship, one's followership style, and leader apologies – are next discussed in turn.

**Perceived Transgression Severity**

The literature demonstrates that the severity of an offense can influence forgiveness (e.g., Fincham et al., 2005; Karelaia and Keck, 2012; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002). In the context of this dissertation, it is argued that the forgiveness bestowed by followers who are victims of interpersonal transgressions at the hands of their direct supervisors will be strongly influenced by their perceptions of the gravity of the offense committed against them. Based on the research reviewed below, it is expected that followers will forgive their leaders less as the severity of the transgression increases.

The severity of the offense that has been committed is a major determinant contributing to the degree to which a follower may forgive a leader for an interpersonal offense. Its effect on forgiveness has been found in the literature (e.g., Finacham et al., 2005; McCullough & Hoyt, 2002) and has been included in theoretical models related to forgiveness (e.g., Scobie & Scobie, 1998). Exline and Baumeister (2000) also note that prior research indicates that severity of transgressions influences forgiveness. It has been argued that when the effects are still felt by victims, transgressions are more challenging to forget (Baumeister et al., 1998).

Several studies have investigated the impact of transgression severity on forgiveness. Fincham et al. (2005) found that forgiveness was influenced by both objective and subjective severity in a study examining offenses within the context of

dating relationships. The authors found the relationships between both types of severity and forgiveness had different moderators. Specific to subjective severity (as this dissertation focuses on follower perceptions of the gravity of the leader's offense), attributions that were made related to responsibility for the offense moderated the relationship, such that severity was more important in cases when participants felt that the reasons behind the offense were either promoting conflict or not. Finally, Karelaia and Keck (2012) found that participants in a scenario-based study were more willing to discipline a leader (vs. someone who was not a leader) when an offense was severe and less willing (vs. someone who was not a leader) when it was not severe.

Based on the literature and rationale presented above, the following hypothesis, proposing a main effect of perceptions of transgression severity on forgiveness, is proposed:

*Hypothesis 1: Perceptions of transgression severity will be negatively related to forgiveness of the leader.*

**Moderating Effect of Leader-Member Exchange**

Three variables are proposed to moderate the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness. The first of these moderators is leader-member exchange (LMX), which concerns the relationship between a leader and a subordinate (e.g., Dansereau, Cashman & Graen, 1973; Dansereau et al., 1975; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX argues that the quality of leader-follower relationships operates along a continuum, with high quality relationships – denoting a rapport between the leader and follower characterized by such attributes as high levels of

trust and cooperation – at one end of the spectrum and low quality relationships – where less trust and respect are interchanged between the parties – at the other.

Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) discuss the progression of the theory from its early versions to more recent perspectives and note that research on the Vertical Dyad Linkage and socialization provided the starting point for LMX theory. Vertical Dyad Linkage examines how supervisors may develop different types of relationships with their subordinates via their exchanges (e.g., Dansereau et al., 1973; Dansereau et al., 1975). In a longitudinal study, Dansereau et al. (1975) found that some subordinates fell into what may be classified as an "in-group" while others were members of an "out-group" with the supervisor. Among their results, the authors found that the leadership used by the supervisor (as compared to simply engaging in supervision within the dyadic relationship) was greater for in-group members, as was the amount of support from the supervisor, when compared to out-group members.

In this dissertation, it is agued that leader-member exchange will act as a moderator of the relationship between severity and forgiveness. Stated differently, the effects of perceptions of transgression severity on forgiveness may change depending upon the quality of the relationship between the leader and follower. As noted above, such relationships operate on a continuum, ranging from high to low in quality. Below, I theorize how this moderating effect may occur.

The lack of mutual trust and cooperation characterizing low quality LMX relationships may not provide the necessary foundation that would help to compensate for the severity of the leaders' transgression in the eyes of the follower. Thus, it is argued

that relationships of lower quality would not be expected to buffer the negative effects of transgression severity on forgiveness.

However, this may change as the quality of the leader-follower relationship increases. On one hand, a high quality relationship may act as a buffer of the effects of the severity of the transgression, thus serving to weaken its negative relationship with forgiveness. On the other hand, high quality relationships may actually intensify the impact of transgression severity in the eyes of the follower, thus strengthening the negative effect of severity on forgiveness.

Research by Chung and Beverland (2006) may provide some support for the above argument that high quality LMX may either help to reduce the effects of perceptions of transgression severity for followers, or, in contrast, may actually increase them. The authors examined how offenses committed in a marketing context would influence the forgiveness by consumers and note that the literature indicates that close relationships may buffer reactions or may amplify how people respond in such a context. Although this study investigates the influence of close relationships in terms of their main effects on reactions, it does provide some support for the notion that competing hypotheses may be appropriate to consider in this dissertation.

As research has not yet conclusively demonstrated the superiority of one argument over the other (i.e., that LMX will interact with severity on forgiveness, such that its effects will be buffered or intensified), it is argued that both possibilities are equally plausible. As a result, it is deemed appropriate to investigate both in the current study. Accordingly, the rationales underlying two competing moderation hypotheses are presented below.

Firstly, it is possible that LMX may help to reduce the negative impact of transgression severity on follower forgiveness. In essence, the positive experiences that have been shared by the leader and follower will serve to buffer the negative impact of transgression severity.

An interesting experiment by Pelletier (2012) may provide some support for this argument. The author investigated how one's LMX status (whether one is part of the in-group or out-group) and whether one identifies with the target of a leader's toxic behaviors (i.e., whether the person being treated poorly is part of the same in-group or out-group as the participant) impacted how toxic one felt the leader to be and whether one was willing to stand up to the leader. Participants were randomly assigned to a high or low LMX condition, asked to read a vignette and finally watched a video. In the video, a leader treated an individual poorly who was either part of the in-group, out-group, or where group membership was unclear. Among the results, Pelletier found that participants in the low LMX condition, when compared to their counterparts in the high LMX condition, would be more apt to challenge and perceived more toxicity in the leader.

The findings by Shapiro et al. (2011) also provide support for the above argument. The authors investigated LMX as a mediator of the relationship between perceptions of two qualities of the leader – namely his or her ability and his or her inspirational motivation (argued by the authors as two ways in which the leader may build idiosyncrasy credits) – on how harshly they were evaluated for offenses. The harshness of the evaluations was decreased by both independent variables. With respect to the effects of LMX, the results showed that this variable decreased punitiveness.

Additionally, the findings supported LMX as a mediator of the relationship between the two leader qualities and punitiveness.

The results from the above-mentioned articles are very interesting. Shapiro et al. (2011) demonstrate that leader-member exchange can impact how harshly leaders are assessed for their transgressions, such that a high quality relationship between the leader and follower can bring followers to judge leaders less harshly for transgressions (e.g., Shaipiro et al., 2011). Furthermore, among the results of Pelletier's (2012) experiment, participants in the high LMX group were less apt to challenge the leader than were participants in the low LMX group. Applying these results to the current dissertation, it is argued that a pre-existing high quality LMX relationship, built upon shared positive exchanges, trust and cooperation between the dyad, may therefore serve to mitigate the negative effects of perceived transgression severity on follower forgiveness. The high quality relationship may lead the follower to feel a greater sense of benevolence toward the leader and thus soften the effects of the severity of the offense. Recall that forgiveness may be characterized by a reduction in one's motivation to avoid and get revenge against another, and an increase in one's motivation to be benevolent toward them (e.g., McCullough et al., 1997). The following hypothesis is therefore presented:

> *Hypothesis 2a: Leader-member exchange will moderate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and forgiveness, such that the relationship will be weakened when LMX is high versus low.*

Second, it may be argued that a higher quality leader-follower relationship may actually increase the negative effects of transgression severity on follower forgiveness. Thus, as higher quality relationships develop between the parties, followers may develop

expectations related to the behavior of leaders. The interpersonal transgression committed by the latter may act as a substantial blow to those expectations, thus highlighting the impact of the offense. Consequently, it may lead the transgression to be appraised in a more severe manner.

The concepts of the psychological contract (Rousseau, 1989) and unmet expectations may be invoked to further support this rationale. Rousseau (1995, p. 9) describes psychological contracts as "individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of an exchange between individuals and the organization". Rousseau (1995) notes that the fact that a violation of the psychological contract has occurred has the potential to harm a relationship and argues that the perception of the infringement will be impacted by both the history between the members and the quality of their relationship. Additionally, unmet expectations have been found to have a negative impact on trust (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002), which is a characteristic of high LMX relationships. One may therefore argue that leaders who do not meet the expectations of followers with whom they share high LMX relationships will face, in consequence, decreased trust from the follower in the future.

It is therefore argued that the trust, cooperation and respect that denote high quality leader-follower relationships may lead followers to develop expectations about how they should be treated by their leader. Leader interpersonal transgressions may tarnish those expectations and potentially fracture the psychological contract that they perceive to exist with the leader and organization. The literature indicates that unmet expectations can have effects on trust (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002) and that violations of

psychological contracts can harm relationships (Rousseau, 1995), suggesting that such perceptions can have serious negative effects in the eyes of followers.

As such, it is argued that perceptions of transgression severity and LMX will interact, such that the effect of the gravity of the offense on forgiveness will be strengthened when LMX is high. The following competing hypothesis is therefore proposed:

> *Hypothesis 2b: Leader-member exchange will moderate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and forgiveness, such that the relationship will be strengthened when LMX is high versus low.*

**Moderating Effect of Followership**

Several followership typologies or frameworks have been proposed in the literature (e.g., Adair, 2008; Chaleff, 2009; Howell & Méndez, 2008; Kellerman, 2008; Kelley, 1992; Zaleznik, 1965). In this dissertation, followership is examined with respect to the degree to which followers display courageous followership behavior in the workplace. As such, it is theoretically grounded in Chaleff's (2009) discussion of courageous followership.

Chaleff (2009) describes five behaviors that reflect courageous followership. The first is the *courage to take responsibility*. This is explained as taking responsibility related to oneself, by concentrating on such aspects as one's improvement, initiative and self-management, as well as to the organization, through a focus on its improvement as well. The second is the *courage to serve*. The author notes that this may involve such actions as defending the leader against grievances that are not directly given to the leader, offering options for leaders to consider when issues arise, and supporting the leader in

situations where crises emerge. The third is the *courage to challenge*, which may be accomplished through such actions as providing feedback, input, or discussing behaviors that one does not endorse with the leader. The fourth is the *courage to participate in transformation*. This may involve such actions as helping the leader in times of change or helping the leader to actually see that the change is needed. The final dimension is the *courage to take moral action* when appropriate. Examples presented include choosing not to participate in something that one does not believe in or resigning if one feels that it is necessary.

Chaleff (2009) proposes a typology of followership styles, based on the interaction of two of the aforementioned behaviors of courageous followers – namely, those of challenging and of supporting one's leader. As such, followers who do not provide support for the leader, nor show willingness to challenge the leader when needed, are referred to as *resource* followers. In contrast, followers who do not provide support for the leader but show a great deal of willingness to challenge the leader are called *individualists*. When high support is provided without a great deal of willingness to challenge the leader, followers are referred to as *implementers*. Finally, those followers who provide both high levels of support and challenge to the leader when needed are termed *partners*.

Chaleff's discussion of courageous followership behavior is highly relevant to the context of the current dissertation. The ability to demonstrate courageous followership, through such actions as challenging leaders for offensive behaviors, is highly applicable to this study in which the impact of leader transgressions on follower forgiveness is

examined. It is therefore used as the theoretical framework with which followership is investigated.

Research has investigated the effects of followership on organizational outcomes. Although not based on Chaleff's (2009) followership framework, research by Blanchard et al. (2009) is relevant to review. Blanchard et al. (2009) examined the association between the two dimensions from Kelley's (1992) followership typology[1] and job satisfaction, as well as affective and normative organizational commitment. In a sample of university faculty, the authors found job satisfaction (both intrinsic and extrinsic), as well as organizational commitment (both affective and normative – continuance was not measured) to be positively related to active engagement. In contrast, normative commitment and extrinsic job satisfaction were negatively related to the second dimension of Kelley's (1992) model of independent, critical thinking. The dimensions were also found to interact with respect to participants' job satisfaction. Critical thinking augmented job satisfaction (intrinsic) for participants with high engagement, but decreased job satisfaction (extrinsic) for participants with low engagement. This research demonstrates that followership can significantly impact outcomes that are salient to both individuals and organizations. Chaleff (2008) notes that Kelley's two dimensions of critical thinking and active engagement are similar to his dimensions of courage to challenge and to support, respectively.

[1] Kelley (1992) identified five followership styles, derived from a consideration of the degree to which one is actively engaged and the degree to which one demonstrates independent thinking. Thus, followers who are passive and do not engage in critical thinking are termed *passive* (or *sheep* in Kelley, 2008), while followers who are passive but think critically and independently are referred to as *alienated*. Followers who are actively engaged but do not tend to think independently and critically are labeled as *conformist* (or *yes-people* in Kelley, 2008), while followers who are active and think critically and independently are referred to as *exemplary* (or *star* followers in Kelley, 2008). Finally, followers who fall in the middle of both dimensions are termed *pragmatists*.

This dissertation explores the moderating effect of courageous followership on the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness. Chaleff (2009) notes that courageous followers will speak up when they do not feel at ease with something a leader or group does. As such, it may be argued that this willingness to be frank when one feels that one has been wronged or harmed by a leader's transgression will help the follower to perceive a greater sense of justice with respect to the situation at hand. As a result, the ability to demonstrate courageous followership is argued to weaken the negative relationship between perception of the gravity of the offense and forgiveness.

Results by Karremans and Van Lange (2005) provide some support for this argument. In an experiment, the authors found that tendency to forgive was higher in the condition in which participants were primed with an image invoking justice, as compared to a control condition (where participants were primed with an image unrelated to justice). Similar results were found in a second experiment, which included an additional control condition with no priming.

Although the results of this study reflect the effects of justice on forgiveness, they are nonetheless relevant for the proposed moderating effect of courageous followership in this dissertation. It is argued that high courageous followership will allow followers to speak their mind following a transgression, thus perceiving a greater sense of justice regarding the situation, when compared to followers who display low courageousness. It is therefore proposed that courageous followership will moderate the relationship between one's perception of transgression severity and one's decision to forgive the

offender, such that the relationship will be weakened when followers display high courageous followership, as compared to low courageous followership.

*Hypothesis 3: Followership will moderate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and forgiveness, such that the relationship will be weaker when courageous followership is high versus low.*

**Moderating Effect of Leader Apologies**

Leader apologies represent the third and final moderating variable of the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness.

According to Kador (2009), an apology means to "accept responsibility for an offense or grievance and express remorse in a direct, personal, and unambiguous manner, offering restitution and promising not to do it again" (p. 16). The author notes that effective apologies are ones that include five key elements, although specifying that all five elements may not be necessary in all cases. The first is to *recognize* the event that transpired for which the person needs to apologize. The second is to acknowledge *responsibility*. The third is to show that one is *remorseful* for the offense. The fourth is to offer a form of *restitution*. Finally, the apology should note that one will not *repeat* what has happened in the future.

As such, Kador's (2009) work suggests that apologies may contain several facets. Similarly, Fehr and Gelfand (2010) note that an apology may contain multiple components and conducted a study focusing on three found in the literature – where the offender communicates empathy for the person harmed, where some measure of reparation is offered, and where the infringement is recognized by the offender. The authors found that apologies influenced one's forgiveness more when there was a better

fit between the apology and one's self-construal (where self-construal was either relational, independent or collective). In a similar vein, authors have also noted that apologies can take numerous forms (Lee, 1999; Schlenker & Darby, 1981).

Some literature indicates that apologies can have positive effects on outcomes. For example, Brown and Phillips (2005) found forgiveness to be positively associated with the reception of an apology. Basford, Offerman and Behrend (2014) also found sincere leader apologies to influence follower forgiveness. Additionally, Exline and Baumeister (2000) note that repentance (of which apologies are one form) on the part of a transgressor can help the relationship between the latter and the victim of the offense.

Apologies have also been found to influence forgiveness through mediators, such as their impact on one's level of empathy for the person who committed the offense (McCullough et al., 1997). Furthermore, apologies have also been shown to positively impact other outcomes. For example, leaders who apologize for errors, as compared to those who do not, have been found to be perceived by individuals to whom they have transgressed as being more transformational (Tucker, Turner, Barling, Reid & Elving, 2006).

However, it has been noted by several researchers that forgiveness, or other positive outcomes, are not always enhanced as a result of the apologies offered by offending parties (Basford et al., 2014; Fehr & Gelfand, 2010; Tripp et al., 2007). As one example, a laboratory study conducted by Jehle, Miller, Kemmelmeier and Maskaly (2012) looked at how participants responded to an apology after being treated in a rude manner by a research assistant during the experiment. The results showed that the more the apology was viewed as being of one's own volition, the more it helped in the

situation. However, in a second scenario-based study, evaluations of the assistant were not improved by whether the assistant presented an apology, nor did the motivation behind the apology (choosing to apologize or being made to apologize) matter. Additionally, Marler, Cox, Simmering, Bennett and Fuller (2011) explored the effects of apologies, including how touch (such as a handshake) influenced how the apology was viewed. Among their results, they found that participants who watched the video where the leader gave a handshake felt the apology was more sincere than participants who watched the video with no touch. Furthermore, the authors found that the degree to which participants perceived the apology to be sincere was positively associated with willingness to forgive. The importance of the sincerity of leader apologies is also emphasized by Basford et al. (2014).

Research has also considered the influence of additional contextual factors on the effects of apologies. Of great relevance to this dissertation, studies have examined different types of transgressions. More specifically, research has separated transgressions along two lines, considering whether they center on integrity or on competence (e.g., Kim, Dirks, Cooper & Ferrin, 2006; Kim, Ferrin, Cooper & Dirks, 2004). For example, Kim et al. (2004) investigated how one's reaction following a transgression (i.e., whether one presents an apology or denies culpability) and the type of offense can impact trust. Among their results, they found that the type of transgression impacted whether apologies or denials of culpability had positive effects on various indicators of trust.

This dissertation examines the moderating effects of leader apologies on the relationship between follower perceptions of the severity of leader interpersonal transgressions and forgiveness. Though issues surrounding the reception of apologies are

complex, as demonstrated by the literature reviewed above, it is assumed that apologies will generally prove beneficial to the forgiveness process. As such, leader apologies are argued to weaken the negative relationship between severity perceptions and follower forgiveness. Apologies will therefore serve to mitigate the effects of follower perceptions of the gravity of the offense that has been committed. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

> *Hypothesis 4: Leader apologies will moderate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and forgiveness, such that the negative relationship will be weaker when the leader apologizes.*

**Turnover Intentions**

This dissertation examines the effects of follower forgiveness on two outcome variables. The first is the follower's intention to leave the organization. As turnover has been shown in the literature to have a substantial impact on organizations, this is a highly relevant outcome to consider. For example, a recent meta-analysis by Park and Shaw (2013) showed that voluntary turnover (the type of turnover most relevant to the context of this dissertation) was negatively associated with organizational performance.

It is argued that followers who experience less forgiveness toward their leaders for transgressions committed against them will be more likely, in consequence, to desire to leave their employment situation. Support for this argument may be found in the literature. Aquino, Griffeth, Allen and Hom (1997) found that satisfaction with the supervisor negatively influenced withdrawal cognitions, which in turn positively impacted turnover. As the offender in the current dissertation is the supervisor, Aquino et al.'s (1997) results are very relevant, as it may be argued that a follower who does not

fully forgive a supervisor for a transgression would feel less satisfied with the leader as well.

Furthermore, Schyns and Schilling (2013) found a positive association between turnover intentions and destructive leadership. Although leader transgressions do not necessarily indicate the presence of destructive leadership, this meta-analytic result does speak to the fact that harmful leadership behavior can lead, in consequence, to greater intentions to leave the organization. Additionally, among the results of their study, Shapiro et al. (2011) found that the more punitively a leader was judged for a transgression, the more participants reported turnover intentions.

Although the findings summarized above do not directly reflect the effect of forgiveness on turnover intentions, they do demonstrate that satisfaction with the supervisor (e.g., Aquino et al., 1997) and destructive leadership behavior (e.g., Schyns & Schilling) are related to the desire to leave one's employment. These results lend support to the argument that followers will be less likely to want to leave the organization as their forgiveness of the leader increases. In contrast, working for a leader who has offended them, but who they do not forgive, may prove dissatisfying and stressful for the follower.

While research has not specifically examined the impact of forgiveness on intentions to leave the organization, the literature does suggest that forgiveness can have significant effects on salient outcomes. For example, forgiveness has been associated with health (e.g., Lawler, Younger, Piferi, Jobe, Edmonson & Jones, 2005). Furthermore, Wallace, Exline and Baumeister (2008) found that forgiveness from a victim may impact whether someone chooses to transgress against the individual in the future. In Wallace et al.'s study, two experiments were conducted in which participants had to decide whether

they would choose to re-transgress against someone who had forgiven them for a past transgression (created within the study) or someone who had not. The results showed that participants were less likely to select the person who had demonstrated forgiveness. However, the authors note that one of the studies included a possibility that the person selected could retaliate against the participant at a later time in the experiment. In such a case, a significant difference did not emerge between the participants' choice to re-offend against forgiving and non-forgiving people.

Drawing on the research and rationale presented above, it is proposed that as followers experience less forgiveness toward their leaders, they will have greater inclinations to engage in turnover. The following hypothesis is therefore stated:

*Hypothesis 5: Forgiveness will be negatively related to turnover intentions.*

**Counterproductive Behavior**

The second organizational outcome argued to be affected by the amount of forgiveness bestowed by the follower is counterproductive work behavior (CPB). Robinson and Bennett (1995, p. 556) define deviant behavior in the workplace as "voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and in doing so, threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both".

Several types of deviant actions in the workplace have been identified in the literature. Robinson and Bennett (1995) classified counterproductive behavior into four categories, depending upon the severity of the action and whether the behavior is focused on people within the organization or on the company itself. The resulting typology identifies less serious behavior targeted at the organization as production deviance (e.g., purposefully not working as quickly as one is capable of doing) and less serious behavior

that focuses on individuals as political deviance (e.g., gossiping about someone in the organization). In contrast, behavior that is severe falls under the label of property deviance when it is aimed at the company (e.g., theft from the organization) and under the label of personal aggression when directed at individuals (e.g., theft from others) (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

The literature has explored how transgressions may lead to various reactions on the part of the victim (such as revenge, retaliation, and forgiveness). Several researchers have proposed models that demonstrate the potential for several variables to contribute to one's decision as to which response one will select following a transgression. Thus, Tripp et al. (2007) and Tripp and Bies (2010) propose models that help to explain the process by which one decides how one may respond to an offense. Potential responses may include forgiving the transgressor, seeking retribution, resolving differences, or avoiding the offender (Tripp et al., 2007), as well as trying to justify why one did not react following the event or imagining obtaining revenge against the person who committed the hurt (Tripp & Bies, 2010).

Among the responses listed above, several studies have specifically examined factors that contribute to one's inclination to obtain revenge against a transgressor. As the conceptualization of forgiveness used in the current dissertation reflects one's motivations for revenge, avoidance and benevolence toward an offender (such that forgiveness reflects a decrease in the first two motivations and an increase in the third; McCullough et al., 1997), this literature is also highly relevant.

Aquino, Tripp and Bies (2006) found that the absolute hierarchical status of the victim was related to the desire for revenge, such that higher status individuals were less

likely to want revenge. The authors further found that procedural justice climate made people more likely to want to resolve differences after an offense. Research by Bordia, Restubog and Tang (2008) has also found breaches of the psychological contract to impact deviance, through the mediating effects of the violation felt by the victim, which in turn influenced thoughts of revenge. Finally, McCullough, Bellah, Kilpatrick and Johnson (2001) have shown vengefulness to be positively associated with several variables, including neuroticism, negative affectivity, rumination and both the revenge and avoidance subscales of the transgression related interpersonal motivations inventory (where the latter two reflect measures of forgiveness).

Central to this dissertation, another possible response that victims of transgressions may select is forgiveness (e.g., Tripp et al., 2007; Tripp & Bies, 2010). It is argued that the amount of forgiveness accorded by followers in response to a leader's interpersonal transgression will impact their engagement in counterproductive work behavior.

This argument may be further supported with the results from three studies conducted by Karremans, Van Lange and Holland (2005), in which the authors show that forgiveness can impact prosocial orientation. Although these findings do not speak directly to the effect of forgiveness on deviant behavior (rather demonstrating that it can lead individuals to act prosocially), they nonetheless inform the current argument. Thus, these results may be extrapolated to propose that followers who experience more forgiveness for an offending leader may, due to increased prosocial feelings, engage in less deviant behavior in the workplace.

It is therefore hypothesized that followers who experience greater forgiveness for a leader who has committed an interpersonal transgression against them will be less likely to engage in counterproductive behavior in the workplace, both directed toward individuals and toward the organization itself.

*Hypothesis 6: Forgiveness will be negatively related to follower engagement in counterproductive behavior.*

**Moderating Effect of Continuance Commitment to the Organization**

A follower who has not fully forgiven the leader for the transgression committed might decide to remain in the organization despite his or her lingering feelings regarding the offense. High continuance commitment provides a compelling explanation for why a follower who has not forgiven a leader might continue to work under the transgressor's supervision.

Meyer and Allen (1991) present a three-component model of commitment. *Affective commitment* refers to a feeling that one has a bond with the organization. *Normative commitment* refers to a feeling that one is obliged in some way to stay. Finally, *continuance commitment* refers to a feeling that one needs to stay in the organization, due either to the high cost that the follower associates with leaving (termed as *high sacrifice*) or to a small number of other options (termed as *low alternatives*).

The literature on organizational commitment includes studies that have measured continuance commitment along both dimensions (e.g., Bentein, Vandenberg, Vandenberghe, & Stinglhamber, 2005; Gellatly, 1995; Jaros, 1997; Stinglhamber, Bentein, & Vandenberghe, 2002; Vandenberghe & Panaccio, 2012). Some studies have found the dimensions of low alternatives and high sacrifice to have different effects on

organizational outcomes, such as turnover intentions. This provides strong support for the decision to investigate, when theoretically justifiable, the two continuance commitment dimensions separately in this dissertation.

The commitment literature also looks at multiple targets to which one may feel committed. For example, Stinglhamber et al. (2002) worked on measures for five targets of one's commitment – the organization, the supervisor, customers, work groups, and one's occupation. In the context of this dissertation, it is argued that the organization is the most relevant target of one's commitment that may moderate the relationship between forgiveness and the two outcomes investigated. As such, the following section outlines the rationale behind the proposed moderating effect of continuance commitment to the organization on the relationships between forgiveness and both turnover intentions and counterproductive behavior.

**Moderation of the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions**. The main effect of continuance commitment on turnover intentions has been investigated in the literature. Interestingly, Jaros (1997) found one dimension of continuance commitment – namely, high sacrifice – to be negatively related to turnover intentions. In contrast, low alternatives did not have an effect on turnover intentions in the aforementioned study. Bentein et al. (2005) note that prior research on commitment and turnover intentions has generally found that, of the two dimensions of continuance commitment, only high sacrifice relates to this outcome. In their study, the researchers found that both dimensions of continuance commitment were related to intentions to leave when measured at one time point, however the dimensions were related to the outcome in different ways. Whereas high sacrifice was negatively related to turnover

intentions, the dimension of low alternatives was positively related. Finally, a meta-analysis conducted by Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch and Topolnytsky (2002) found continuance commitment to be negatively related to withdrawal cognitions, with high sacrifice having a stronger negative relationship than low alternatives. Thus, the findings discussed above suggest that the two subscales of continuance commitment can have different main effects on turnover intentions.

In this dissertation, it is argued that the relationship between follower forgiveness and intentions to leave the organization may depend upon one's level of continuance commitment to the organization. Drawing on the research reviewed above (though focused on the main effects of continuance commitment on intentions to leave the organization), as well as the theoretical rationale outlined in the following section, two moderating hypotheses are proposed. Both dimensions of continuance commitment are argued to moderate the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions; however the dimensions are posited to influence the relationship in different ways.

***High sacrifice***. As noted above, several studies have found high sacrifice to negatively relate to both turnover intentions (Bentein et al., 2005; Jaros, 1997) and withdrawal cognitions (Meyer et al., 2002). Although these results pertain to the main effect of high sacrifice on the intention to leave, they are nonetheless informative for the development of the moderation hypothesis presented in this dissertation.

It has been argued that follower forgiveness will be negatively related to turnover intentions (see Hypothesis 5). However, high sacrifice is proposed to moderate this relationship, such that the negative effects of forgiveness on intentions to leave will be weaker when followers perceived that leaving one's employment would involve a high

degree of sacrifice. The perception that quitting one's job would necessitate a high personal cost may motivate the individual to stay despite the lingering negative feelings (i.e., low forgiveness) that he or she is experiencing.

As such, the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions is argued to be stronger when the follower does not perceive that his or her departure from the organization would entail a great deal of personal costs. In contrast, when followers associate a high sacrifice with leaving, the relationship will be tempered. The following hypothesis is therefore proposed:

> *Hypothesis 7: Perceptions of high sacrifice will moderate the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions such that the relationship will be weaker when participants perceive high sacrifice versus when participants do not perceive high sacrifice.*

***Low alternatives***. Mixed findings regarding the main effect of low alternatives on turnover intentions are found in the literature reviewed above. Whereas Jaros (1997) did not find this subscale to have an effect on turnover intentions, Bentein et al. (2005) found that it was positively related to intent to leave, and Meyer et al. (2002) also found a negative relationship (though the latter was not strong). Furthermore, Stinglhamber et al. (2002) conducted a study that included two samples – one of nurses and one of university alumni – and found that low alternatives and intention to leave the organization had a positive relationship in one sample (composed of alumni).

Perceptions of low alternatives are also argued to moderate the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions in this dissertation. Drawing on the findings reviewed above (though pertaining to main effects), the following rationale and

moderation hypothesis is proposed. It is argued that the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions will be *stronger* when followers perceive low alternatives to their employment situation, as compared to followers who do not perceive low alternatives.

This rationale may be supported by an argument by Jaros (1997), who noted that some individuals perceiving low alternatives may decrease turnover intentions and others may, in contrast, increase their intentions to leave, especially if they are not satisfied. The author notes that these employees might, as a result, become motivated to think of new ways in which they might be able to leave the organization. Followers who have been the victims of a transgression on the part of their leaders might fall within the latter category of Jaros' argument, given that transgressions are likely to produce dissatisfaction in instances where followers do not fully forgive. Feeling like they need to stay in their employment situation after having an offense committed against them by a leader, due to a lack of other options, may actually fuel the desire of followers to think of ways to leave. As such, their intentions to leave the organization may be magnified by the fact that they perceive a paucity of work alternatives.

A recent article by Vandenberghe and Panaccio (2012), in which the authors conduct several studies investigating the two dimensions of continuance commitment and motivations behind each, may also provide some support for this rationale. Among the findings in the studies, low alternatives were negatively correlated with a feeling of self-determination. Applying this finding to the context of the current dissertation, the reasons for the followers' behavior (i.e., staying in the organization) are not likely to feel self-determined (i.e., autonomously motivated). Furthermore, the perception of low alternatives may also create tension on the part of followers who feel they need to stay in

the organization despite the transgression that has occurred. Intentions to leave the organization may function as an attempt to relieve this tension. As such, their current inability to leave the organization might make their desire to do so, once the opportunity permits, more salient.

In sum, the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions is argued to depend upon one's perception of low alternatives. When the follower perceives low alternatives, the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intention will increase as the lack of options makes thoughts of quitting the organization more salient to the individual.

*Hypothesis 8: Perceptions of low alternatives will moderate the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions such that the relationship will be stronger when participants perceive low alternatives versus when participants perceive a high number of alternatives to their current situation.*

**Moderation of the relationship between forgiveness and counterproductive behavior**. One's level of continuance commitment to the organization is also proposed to moderate the relationship between forgiveness and follower counterproductive behavior. Followers who remain in the organization because they feel that they must, despite having been offended but not fully forgiving the leader, will likely feel a degree of tension due to their circumstance. This tension may be due to cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957), reflected by the lack of congruence between what the individual feels (e.g., not fully forgiving the leader) and what the individual does (e.g., remaining in the organizational relationship despite the transgression committed by the leader). As notes

Festinger, one is likely to engage in behaviors with the goal of decreasing the cognitive dissonance that one feels.

One behavior that may be selected by individuals in such circumstances is deviance. It is argued above that followers who experience less forgiveness for the transgression committed against them will be more apt to engage in counterproductive behavior in consequence. However, it has been argued by Aquino et al. (2006) that having less power than a transgressor may make the engagement in deviance harmful to the individual, therefore the individual will be less likely to try to get back at the offender. In other words, the victim runs a risk by committing such action because they are in the position where they have less power. This point applies well within the context of this dissertation, as the perpetrator of the offense is one's direct supervisor, who will at the very least have more legitimate power (French & Raven, 1959) in the organization. Tripp et al. (2007) also note the role of the amount of power held by the victim on his or her actions.

Relatedly, Aquino et al. (2001) found blame that employees attribute for workplace offenses to positively impact one's desire for revenge. This relationship was found to be moderated by two measures of one's level of power *vis à vis* the transgressor – namely, one's relative status and "absolute hierarchical status" as compared to the person who committed the action. The authors further found that blame attributed by the employee negatively related to one's desire to reconcile with the offender, which the authors describe as one way in which forgiveness may be demonstrated.

Thus, although it is predicted that followers will engage in more deviance when they feel less forgiving toward their leader, high continuance commitment is likely to

change this relationship. Specifically, when the follower feels that he or she must stay in the organization, it is argued that the negative relationship between forgiveness and deviance will be weakened. As engaging in deviance may entail consequences (e.g., Aquino et al., 2006), the follower will be less likely to commit such behavior due to the fact that one feels that one must stay in the employment situation.

However, it must be acknowledged that the findings by Wei and Si (2013) do not lend support to this rationale. The authors found the relationship between abusive supervision and two types of counterproductive behavior (i.e., theft and withdrawal) to be moderated by one's perceptions of mobility (which is similar to low alternatives), such that individuals demonstrated *greater* deviance when they felt that they had lower mobility. This result runs contrary to the current hypothesis that high continuance commitment (conceptualized as a global construct of both high sacrifice and low alternatives) will weaken the negative relationship between forgiveness and CPBs, thus making such behavior less likely to occur. However, it is important to note that Wei and Si (2013) examined the effect of abusive supervision on CPBs, whereas the focus here is on the relationship between *forgiveness* and CPBs. Thus, although this contradictory finding is important to acknowledge, it is argued that it does not weaken the rationale underlying the current hypothesis.

Given that neither theoretical rationale, nor evidence from past research findings, provide a strong basis upon which to propose different moderating hypotheses for each dimension of continuance commitment (i.e., high sacrifice and low alternatives) on the relationship between forgiveness and workplace deviance, the following hypothesis explores the moderating effects of the global construct of continuance commitment.

Thus, although low levels of forgiveness of the interpersonal transgression may cause the follower to want to engage in more deviance, it is proposed that high continuance commitment will mitigate (i.e., weaken) this desire. It is therefore hypothesized that:

> *Hypothesis 9: Continuance commitment to the organization will moderate the relationship between forgiveness and counterproductive behavior such that the relationship will be weaker when participants have high continuance commitment to the organization.*

**Mediation**

The degree of forgiveness that one accords to a leader for an interpersonal transgression is argued to mediate the relationship between perceptions of the severity of the offense committed and both one's intentions to leave the organization and one's counterproductive work behavior. As noted above, transgressions may be viewed as stressors (e.g., McCullough et al., 2006; Worthington & Scherer, 2004). An interpersonal offense, committed by one's direct supervisor, may certainly be viewed as a potentially stressful event in the eyes of the follower.

**Assessment of main and mediation effects – an overview**. When developing mediation hypotheses, three paths must be considered (Baron & Kenny, 1986). A first reflects the effects of the independent variable on the mediator. This relationship between perceived transgression severity and forgiveness is discussed above in the development of Hypothesis 1. A second path reflects the relationship between the mediator and the dependent variables. These relationships are also discussed above with respect to Hypotheses 6 and 7, in which the effects of forgiveness are proposed to impact turnover

intentions and counterproductive work behavior. As a final component, the effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable(s) must be stated.

***Main effects of perceptions of transgression severity on TIs and CPBs***. The stress literature has separated stressors into two categories – hindrance stressors and challenge stressors. *Hindrance stressors* refer to those that one feels may limit one's ability to do well and to develop (Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007), while *challenge stressors,* in contrast, denote those that one feels may in fact help in such endeavors (Podsakoff et al., 2007). Of the two aforementioned categories, it is argued that leader transgressions will act as hindrance stressors to followers.

Research has shown that hindrance stressors can impact work outcomes. First, a meta-analysis by Podsakoff et al. (2007) found hindrance stressors to influence turnover intentions and withdrawal behavior indirectly. The authors proposed a model through which the stressors impacted the outcomes via their influences on strain, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Specific to the outcome variables examined in the current study, Podsakoff et al. (2007) found that hindrance stressors were positively associated with the intention to leave the organization.

Moreover, research has demonstrated that certain leadership behaviors can impact turnover intentions and deviant behavior directly. The literature suggests that destructive leadership positively correlates with both outcome variables (e.g., Schyns & Schilling, 2013) and that abusive supervision influences counterproductive behavior (e.g., Tepper et al., 2008; Wei & Si, 2013).

In sum, the literature reviewed above suggests that interpersonal transgressions can impact both turnover intentions and counterproductive behaviors directly. It is

therefore argued that the more severe a follower perceives a leader's interpersonal transgression to be, the more likely the follower will be to wish to leave the organization and to engage in deviant behavior in the workplace. The following main effects are therefore proposed:

*Hypothesis 10: Perceptions of transgression severity will be positively related to turnover intentions.*

*Hypothesis 11: Perceptions of transgression severity will be positively related to counterproductive behavior.*

**Mediating effect of forgiveness**. The hypotheses above predict that leader transgressions will directly impact both intentions to leave the organization and counterproductive work behavior. However, they do not explain *how* transgressions influence the outcomes. Mediation allows us to uncover the process by which an independent variable influences one or more dependent variables. Here, the degree of forgiveness granted by the follower is proposed as a mechanism that helps to explain how one's perceptions of the severity of a leader's offense may impact intentions to leave the organization and deviant behavior in the workplace.

Why might forgiveness intervene in the relationship between perceptions of severity and outcomes? The literatures on transgressions and stress provide compelling possibilities. First, as noted above, victims may consider interpersonal transgressions to be stressors (e.g., McCullough et al., 2006, Worthington & Scherer, 2004). Worthington and Scherer (2004) argue that unforgiveness, which refers to a "cold" emotion from which one may wish to avoid the offender or possibly seek vengeance for the

transgression, is a stress reaction. One way that an individual may deal with this stressful reaction, as per the authors, is through forgiveness (Worthington & Scherer, 2004).

A similar argument was proposed by Cox (2011). The author investigated the effects of forgiveness climate on organizational outcomes, further exploring how willingness to forgive may mediate the aforementioned relationships. Notably, Cox (2011) argued that transgressions may increase one's stress, in cases where forgiveness has not been accorded.

Researchers have also noted that forgiveness, or similar reactions, can function as coping responses. Aquino et al. (2001) note that such responses may include revenge and reconciliation (the latter representing one way in which one may demonstrate forgiveness). Furthermore, Egan and Todorov (2004) note forgiveness as one way of coping with interpersonal transgressions within the context of school bullying (also drawing upon the work of Worthington & Scherer, 2004).

Forgiveness, as an internal coping response to a stressor introduced by one's leader, may therefore help to explain one's behavioral reactions to the transgression. The literature reviewed below in support of this point mainly focuses on deviance, however, it is argued that the process underlying the argument also applies well to the second outcome – turnover intentions – investigated in this dissertation.

First, counterproductive behavior has been argued to be a strain response (e.g., Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001; Fox & Spector, 2006) and has also been examined itself as a coping response (e.g., Krischer, Penney, & Hunter, 2010). While strain is not measured in the current study, it is assumed that the transgressions committed by leaders will cause

strain to followers. The research noted above suggests that workplace deviance might be one way in which followers attempt to cope with leader transgressions in the workplace.

Importantly, research has also focused on forgiveness as a coping response. Orcutt, Pickett and Pope (2005) examined the effects of events that may be described as traumatic to the individual on one's experience of symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder. Among their results, the authors found forgiveness to act as a partial mediator of this relationship, arguing that the variable intervenes through its promotion of "healing and resilience" (p. 1009). The argument that forgiveness can serve to help a healing process (Orcutt et al., 2005) applies well within the context of this dissertation. Thus, it may be proposed that forgiveness, as a prosocial behavior and an action that helps individuals to heal, explains (at least partly) why one's perception of the severity of an offense committed by a leader can impact a follower's decision to engage in deviant behavior or develop intentions to leave the organization.

Second, research has examined how stressors can impact outcomes, through their effects on various emotion-related variables. For example, Spector and Fox (2002) propose a model in which the effects of various situational factors (such as conflict), through their influence on negative emotions, may impact counterproductive behavior. Additionally, Fox et al. (2001) examined the effects of several workplace stressors on deviant behavior, examining whether negative emotions would mediate the effects of two job stressors (interpersonal conflict and organizational constraints), as well as both distributive and procedural justice on deviance. Among their results, the authors found that negative emotions fully mediated the effects of distributive justice on deviance toward the organization, as well as the impact of procedural justice on counterproductive

behaviors directed at both organizational and personal targets. Partial mediation was found for the effects of interpersonal conflict and organizational constrains on both types of deviant behavior. In a related vein, negative emotional reactions have been found to mediate the relationship between events (i.e., both positive and negative events perceived as important to the individual in the workplace) and engagement in deviance (Matta, Erol-Korkmaz, Johnson & Biçaksiz, 2014). Finally, the relationship between hindrance stressors on counterproductive behavior has also been examined in the literature. Rodell and Judge (2009) found this relationship to be mediated by anxiety and also by anger. Overall, this research shows that various emotions may help to explain the process whereby stressors impact outcomes.

Given that transgressions act as stressors (e.g., McCullough et al., 2006; Worthington & Scherer, 2004), the literature reviewed above is very informative. Of the four stressors examined by Fox et al. (2001), it is argued that three have the most potential to reflect a potential transgression on the part of a leader – distributive justice, procedural justice and interpersonal conflict. The results of the study show that the effects of distributive justice on CPB (to the organization) and procedural justice on CPB (to both the individual and organization) are fully mediated by negative emotions. In addition, the effects of interpersonal conflict on CPB (*vis à vis* both individuals and organizations) were partially mediated by negative emotions.

Although it must be stressed that the constructs of negative emotions and forgiveness are not the same, these findings do allow some inference to be made with respect to the mediating effect of forgiveness. The literature summarized above suggests that negative emotions can help to explain the process by which transgressions, or other

situational factors, can lead individuals to engage in deviant behavior. If negative emotions may intervene in this relationship, the possibility may also be considered that forgiveness, as a process characterized by prosocial change (McCullough et al., 2000), may also act as a mediator of such a relationship. In other words, if negative emotions can help us to understand why deviant behaviors occur or do not occur in such situations, perhaps more positive motivations toward the person who committed the action may also help us to explain why a follower may engage in, or refrain from, counterproductive behavior following such an offense. Thus, while research has looked at the impact of negative emotions, the present rationale focuses on the influence of increased positive motivations toward the transgressor as a potential explanatory mechanism to understand the impact of perceptions of transgression severity on counterproductive behavior and turnover intentions.

Based on the rationale presented above, the following two mediation hypotheses are proposed:

*Hypothesis 12: Forgiveness will mediate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and turnover intentions.*

*Hypothesis 13: Forgiveness will mediate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and counterproductive behavior.*

**Summary**

The theoretical model examined in this dissertation explores the effect of perceptions of transgression severity on follower forgiveness, as moderated by the quality of the relationship between the leader and follower, courageous followership behavior, and leader apologies. The model further investigates how forgiveness may then impact

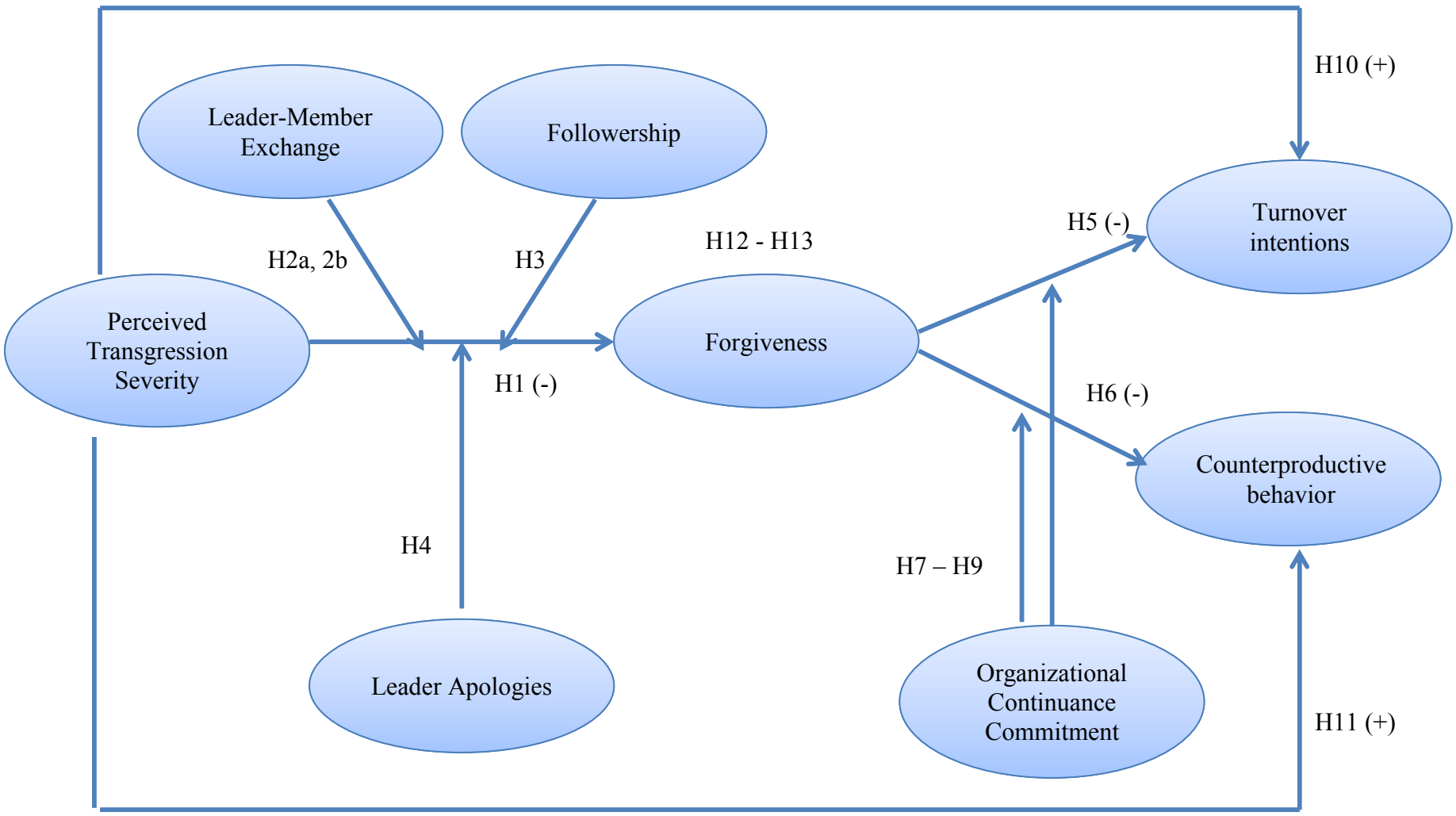
two salient organizational outcomes – namely, turnover intentions and counterproductive behaviors, as well as how these relationships may depend on one's level of continuance commitment to the organization. The hypotheses associated with each proposed relationship are summarized below in Figure 2.

Two studies are conducted to assess these relationships. Using an experimental design, the first study employs scenarios to explore the effects of perceptions of transgression severity on follower forgiveness, as moderated by leader-member exchange and leader apologies. The second is a retrospective field study that examines the full theoretical model in which participants are asked to recall a transgression committed by a direct supervisor.

The following two chapters outline the methodology and results from Study 1 (Chapter 3 and 4). The two subsequent chapters present the methodology and results from Study 2 (Chapter 5 and 6). Finally, this dissertation concludes with a general discussion of both studies in Chapter 7.

Figure 2

*Theoretical Model With Hypotheses*



# CHAPTER 3

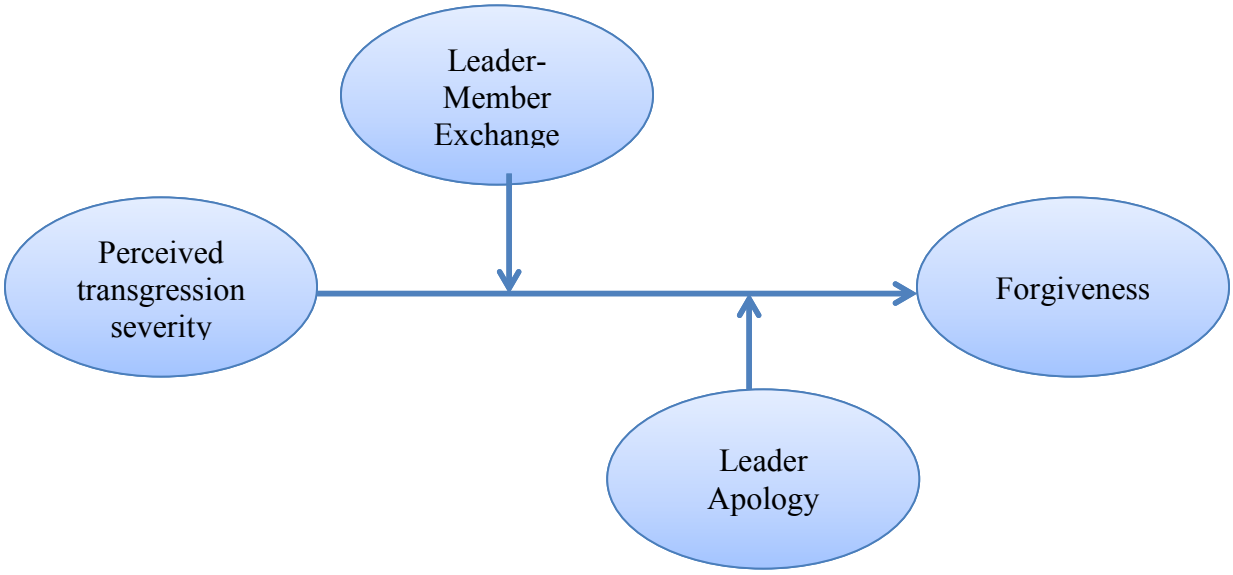
# STUDY 1 METHODOLOGY

## Introduction

The purpose of Study 1 was to investigate the effects of perceptions of the severity of a leader's transgression on follower forgiveness, as moderated by both leader-member exchange and leader apologies. To this end, an experimental design was used in which perceptions of severity, LMX and leader apologies were manipulated through a series of vignettes written for this dissertation. The theoretical model for Study 1, which represents a subset of the full theoretical model explored in this dissertation, is presented below in Figure 3. Please see Appendix A for the certificate of ethical acceptability for Study 1.

Figure 3

*Theoretical Model for Study 1*



**Hypotheses**

Three hypotheses were investigated in this first study. To reflect the experimental design of Study 1, the hypotheses were rephrased to propose differences among study conditions such that:

*Hypothesis 1: Participants assigned to the high severity condition will forgive less than participants in the low severity condition.*[2]

*Hypothesis 2a: LMX will interact with perceived transgression severity, such that the difference in forgiveness between the high and low severity conditions will be smaller when participants are assigned to the high LMX condition, as compared to the low LMX condition.*[3]

*Hypothesis 2b: LMX will interact with perceived transgression severity, such that the difference in forgiveness between the high and low severity conditions will be larger when participants are assigned to the high LMX condition, as compared to the low LMX condition.*[4]

*Hypothesis 4: Leader apologies will interact with perceived transgression severity, such that the difference between the high and low severity conditions will be smaller when participants are assigned to the apology conditions, as compared to the no apology condition.*[5]

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[2] Original hypothesis for H1 states "Perceptions of transgression severity will be negatively related to forgiveness of the leader".

[3] Original hypotheses for H2a states "Leader-member exchange will moderate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and forgiveness, such that the relationship will be weakened when LMX is high versus low"

[4] Original hypotheses for H2b states "Leader-member exchange will moderate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and forgiveness, such that the relationship will be strengthened when LMX is high versus low"

[5] Original hypothesis for H4 states "Leader apologies will moderate the relationship between perceived transgression severity and forgiveness, such that the negative relationship will be weaker when the leader apologizes". As followership is not included in Study 1, Hypothesis 3 is not examined.

**Sample**

Four hundred and fifty six undergraduate students, enrolled in multiple sections of a course at a large Canadian university, participated in this study ($n$ = 226 male, $n$ = 230 female). As a measure to ensure the quality of the data used in the study, only participants who spent at least ten minutes on the survey were included in the sample. Data were collected over the course of two semesters. Participants received extra credit toward their course in exchange for their participation.

Participants averaged 21.56 years of age ($SD$ = 2.86) and were predominately business majors. Respondents averaged 1.15 years of full-time ($SD$ = 1.97) and 3.55 years of part-time ($SD$ = 2.49) work experience. Almost two thirds of the sample were currently employed (65.8%), working on average 16.96 hours per week ($SD$ = 7.97)[6].

**Research Design**

The experiment was a 2 (perceived transgression severity: high versus low) x 2 (LMX: high versus low) x 2 (apology: leader apologizes versus does not apologize) fully randomized between-subjects design. Additionally, as some research has suggested that leadership behavior can differ among men and women (e.g., Eagly, Johnannesen-Schmidt, & van Engren, 2003) and that gender-based stereotypes of leaders exist (e.g., Johnson, Murphy, Zewdie, & Reichard, 2008), the gender of the leader was also manipulated. In so doing, the study procedurally controlled for any potential confounding effects of the gender of the leader by creating two versions of each manipulation – a first portraying the leader as female and a second depicting the leader as male.

In total, the experiment contained sixteen conditions to which participants were randomly assigned. However, it must be noted that the researcher specified that

[6] 1 missing observation.

respondents should be evenly distributed among conditions in Qualtrics (the software used for data collection). The final sample size ranged from 22 to 32 participants per condition. A summary table of each condition, the word count of each manipulation, and sample size per condition (*n*) is presented below in Table 1.

Table 1

*Summary Table of Study Conditions and Word Count*

| **Condition** | **LMX** | **Severity** | **Apology** | **Gender** | **Words** | ***n*** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | High | High | Yes | Female | 350 | 26 |
| 2 | High | High | Yes | Male | 350 | 29 |
| 3 | High | High | No | Female | 332 | 27 |
| 4 | High | High | No | Male | 332 | 32 |
| 5 | High | Low | Yes | Female | 334 | 22 |
| 6 | High | Low | Yes | Male | 334 | 31 |
| 7 | High | Low | No | Female | 316 | 27 |
| 8 | High | Low | No | Male | 316 | 30 |
| 9 | Low | High | Yes | Female | 343 | 29 |
| 10 | Low | High | Yes | Male | 343 | 29 |
| 11 | Low | High | No | Female | 325 | 30 |
| 12 | Low | High | No | Male | 325 | 30 |
| 13 | Low | Low | Yes | Female | 327 | 28 |
| 14 | Low | Low | Yes | Male | 327 | 31 |
| 15 | Low | Low | No | Female | 309 | 26 |
| 16 | Low | Low | No | Male | 309 | 29 |

## Procedure

Data were collected online via questionnaires. Participants first read the consent form and indicated whether they accepted to participate in the study. Respondents who consented to continue answered several demographic questions, read one scenario (described in detail below) and then responded to the questions of the survey. All materials were presented in English.

## Manipulations

Sixteen scenarios, manipulating perceptions of transgression severity, leader-member exchange and leader apology were written for this study. The vignettes depicted an interpersonal transgression committed by a supervisor (described as "M") against a follower ("you") in a workplace environment. As noted above, two versions of each manipulation were designed, such that the leader was either described as male or female. Please see Appendices B through D for the full text of each manipulation. A pilot test was conducted prior to the commencement of Study 1 ($N$ = 50 undergraduate students). Results from the pilot test are presented in Chapter 4 (Study 1 Results).

The first section of each vignette described the quality of the leader-follower relationship. LMX was either characterized as reflecting a great working relationship, with high cooperation, trust and respect between the parties (high LMX), or denoting a poor working relationship in which the parties lack cooperation, doubt each others' work, and where mutual disrespect is present (low LMX). The manipulation of perceived transgression severity followed. As the manipulation of perceived transgression severity was strengthened following the pilot test, both manipulations are discussed in separate sections below. Finally, the vignettes closed with the apology manipulation. The text

either describes that the supervisor sincerely apologizes for his/her actions (apology condition) or does not mention anything about the incident that had happened earlier (no apology condition).

**Severity manipulation in the pilot test**. In both the high and low perceived severity conditions, the leader is noted to walk up to the employee and yell about a missing form. It is further stated that the leader did not want to listen to anything that the employee had to say about the form. In the high severity condition, the employee is described as feeling embarrassed and mad about the situation. In the low severity condition, the employee shrugs off the event and does not think about it further. The text for the severity manipulation, as used in the pilot test, is found in Appendix E.

**Severity manipulation in Study 1**. Following the results of the pilot test, the manipulation of perceived transgression severity was strengthened. In both the high and low severity conditions, the leader is noted to walk up to the employee and yell about a form that is missing, without listening to anything that the employee has to say. However, the incident happens in the presence of several colleagues in the high severity condition and the employee is described as feeling embarrassed, angry and humiliated after the supervisor leaves. In contrast, the low perceived severity condition describes the event as taking place when no colleagues were present. The employee shrugs the event off, and it is noted that it does not cross his/her mind again afterwards.

**Measures**

**Demographics**. Participants were asked to report their age, gender, ethnicity, number of years of full-time and/or part-time work experience, as well as their major in

their studies. Participants were also asked if they were currently employed and, if so, how many hours they worked per week.

**Forgiveness**. The transgression-related interpersonal motivations inventory (TRIM-18; McCullough et al., 2006) was used to measure forgiveness. The instructions and the wording of many of the TRIM-18 items were slightly modified to reflect the context of this study. The measure consists of eighteen items (see Appendix F) where participants responded using a five-point scale (1=strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Seven items measured the motivation to avoid the other person (sample item: "I will try to keep as much distance between us as possible"), six items measured the motivation to be benevolent toward the other person (sample item: "I have given up my hurt and resentment"), and five items measure the motivation to get revenge on the other person (sample item: "I'll make *M* pay"). In order to derive an overall score for forgiveness, several past studies have reverse coded items, where necessary, from the three subscales to create an overall score (e.g., Burnette, McCullough, Van Tongeren, & Davis, 2012; Tabak & McCullough, 2011). In this dissertation, the revenge and avoidance items were reverse scored to compute an overall score for forgiveness (where a higher score on the forgiveness measure denotes greater forgiveness).

**Perceived transgression severity – manipulation check**. The perceived severity of the transgression committed by the leader in the scenarios was assessed in two ways. One item, taken from McCullough et al. (2003) and slightly adapted to fit the context of the study, asked participants "How painful would this offense have been to you?". Participants indicated their perceptions based on a scale ranging from 0 (not painful at all) to 6 (worst pain I would have ever felt). Second, three items adapted from Wenzel,

Turner and Okimoto (2010) were included in the questionnaire. The items include "I find the supervisor (M)'s behavior very wrong", "I find the supervisor (M)'s behavior totally unacceptable" and "The supervisor (M)'s behavior pains me a lot" (where the authors credit the last item to McCullough et al., 2003). Respondents rated each item using a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

**Leader-member exchange – manipulation check**. The LMX-7 (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) was used to assess the manipulation of leader-member exchange. The scale includes seven items (sample item: "How well does your leader recognize your potential?") to which participants respond based on a five-point scale (where the anchors differ among the items). Please see Appendix G for the full scale and corresponding anchors. The wording of the items was again slightly adapted to reflect the context of the study. Four items were presented in gender-neutral terms while the remaining three items specified the gender of the leader. The questionnaire was designed such that the gender specified in these three questions matched the gender of the leader in the vignette read by participants.

**Leader apology – manipulation check**. Leader apology was assessed in two ways. Firstly, one item, written for this study, inquired "Did the supervisor *M* apologize?" (where participants selected either yes or no in response). Secondly, a 2-item measure of "apology/making amends" by Bono, McCullough and Root (2008) was incorporated into the questionnaire. The wording of the two items was slightly modified to fit the context of the study, such that participants were asked "How apologetic was *M* toward you?" and "To what extent did *M* make amends for what he/she did to you?". As was the case with several LMX items, two versions of the last question were created,

such that the gender of the leader in the question presented to participants matched that of the leader in the condition to which they were assigned. Respondents used a 7-point scale to indicate their agreement with these items that ranged from 0 (not at all) to 6 (completely), as presented by Bono et al. (2008).

# CHAPTER 4

# STUDY 1 RESULTS

## Study 1 – Pilot Test

### Sample

The sample for the pilot test was comprised of 50 undergraduate students ($n$ = 21 male, $n$ = 29 female), taking one of multiple sections of a business course at a large Canadian University. Respondents received extra credit toward their course in exchange for their participation in the study.

Participants averaged 23.76 years of age ($SD$ = 4.84) and reported an average of 2.46 ($SD$ = 3.80)[7] and 2.56 ($SD$ = 2.20) years of full-time and part-time work experience, respectively. Sixty percent of the sample indicated that they were currently working, with an average of 23.18 working hours per week ($SD$ = 12.30). Most respondents reported that their major field of study was business. Data were collected in the semester preceding the start of the full data collection for Study 1.

### Reliabilities

The alpha coefficients for the 3-item severity measure (α = .76), LMX-7 (α = .85), apology (α = .89), overall forgiveness (α = .93), as well as the forgiveness subscales (avoidance, α = .92; revenge, α = 87; and benevolence, α = .79), all demonstrated acceptable reliability.

### Manipulation Checks

**Perceived transgression severity**. To assess the manipulation of perceived transgression severity, two independent samples t-tests were conducted. The first compared the means of the 1-item severity measure between the high ($n$ = 25) and low

[7] Based on 49 observations.

severity conditions ($n$ = 25), and the second compared the means of the 3-item severity measure between the same groups. For all independent samples t-test reported below, the null hypothesis ($H_o$) states that there are no significant differences among the groups, while the alternative hypothesis ($H_a$) states that the groups have significant differences. The decision rule is to reject the null hypothesis if the significance (p-value, two-tailed) is less than or equal to .05.

The results revealed that the means in the high and low perceived transgression severity conditions were not significantly different for either measure. However, it is notable than the means for both measures were greater in the high severity condition than those in the low severity condition. Furthermore, the difference between the high and low severity conditions for the 1-item measure of severity was close to statistical significance ($p$ = .06). A summary of the means, standard deviations and t-test results for all manipulation checks is presented below in Table 2.

**Leader-member exchange**. An independent samples t-test was also performed to investigate whether the mean for leader-member exchange differed significantly among the high ($n$ = 26) and low ($n$ = 24) LMX conditions. The results indicated a significant difference between the groups. The mean was greater in the high LMX condition, when compared to that of the low LMX condition.

**Leader apology**. The apology manipulation was examined in two ways. Firstly, the results of the 1-item manipulation check question indicated that the majority of participants (82%) perceived the manipulation successfully. More specifically, 84.6% of participants in the apology condition answered that the leader did apologize, and 79.2% of participants in the no apology condition considered that the leader did not apologize.

Secondly, the results from an independent samples t-test showed a significant difference in the means for the 2-item apology measure between the two conditions. The mean in the apology condition ($n$ = 26) was indeed significantly greater than that of the no apology condition ($n$ = 24).

Table 2

*Summary of the Results of Independent Samples T-Tests By Manipulation*

| | **Level 1** | | **Level 2** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Manipulation** | **M** | **SD** | **M** | **SD** | **df** | ***t*** | **Sig.** |
| Severity (1-item) | High severity | | Low severity | | | | |
| | 4.71 | 1.16 | 4.04 | 1.24 | 47 | 1.95 | .06 |
| Severity (3-items) | High severity | | Low severity | | | | |
| | 4.89 | 1.15 | 4.67 | 1.26 | 48 | .67 | .51 |
| LMX | High LMX | | Low LMX | | | | |
| | 3.50 | .60 | 2.29 | .54 | 48 | 7.46 | .00** |
| Apology | Apologizes | | No apology | | | | |
| | 4.65 | 1.30 | 2.75 | 1.47 | 48 | 4.86 | .00** |

*Note* ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. Significance value is two-tailed.

**Conclusions**

Despite the small sample size, the results of the pilot test suggested that both the leader apology and LMX manipulations were successful. However, the results of independent samples t-tests conducted with both the 1-item and 3-item measures of perceived transgression severity indicated no significant differences between the high and

low severity conditions, though the means for both measures were in the expected directions.

As the t-test results did not indicate that perceptions of severity were significantly different between the high and low severity conditions, this manipulation was strengthened prior to the commencement of Study 1.

## Study 1 Results

### Data Cleansing

**Missing data**. The following decision rules were adopted with respect to missing data. Firstly, scales with a low number of items (i.e., severity and apology) would only be computed in cases where no items were missing. Secondly, the forgiveness subscales (revenge – 5 items, avoidance – 7 items, and benevolence – 6 items), as well as the 7-item LMX measure would only be computed when 1 item or less was missing. Finally, the 18-item forgiveness measure would be computed only in cases where 2 items or less were missing from the dataset. Applying the above decision rules, two participants were missing scores for the apology measure. No further deletions were required in the study.

### Intercorrelations, Reliabilities and Means

The intercorrelations and reliabilities among the variables are presented in Table 3 below. All variables demonstrated accepted reliability (where $\alpha > .70$), ranging from $\alpha = .78$ for the 3-item severity measure to $\alpha = .92$ for the overall measure of forgiveness (TRIM-18).

Table 3

*Intercorrelations and Reliabilities*

| Variable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Severity (1-item) | --- | | | | | | | |
| 2. Severity (3-items) | .58** | **.78** | | | | | | |
| 3. LMX | -.16** | -.38** | **.88** | | | | | |
| 4. Apology | -.07 | -.26** | .22** | **.86** | | | | |
| 5. Revenge | .13** | .14** | -.26** | -.07 | **.82** | | | |
| 6. Avoidance | .23** | .39** | -.52** | -.13* | .57** | **.88** | | |
| 7. Benevolence | -.08 | -.21** | .44** | .22** | -.53** | -.64** | **.79** | |
| 8. Forgiveness | -.19** | -.31** | .50** | .17** | --- | --- | --- | **.92** |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$ level (2-tailed), * $p < .05$ level (2-tailed). Reliability coefficients are presented in bold along the diagonal of the table.

**Manipulation Checks**

**Perceived transgression severity**. Independent samples t-tests were conducted with both the 1-item and 3-item severity measures to evaluate the success of the severity manipulation. The results indicated that the means in the high ($n$ = 232) and low ($n$ = 224) severity conditions were significantly different for both the 1-item ($t$ = 6.5, df = 444.95, $p$ = .00, 2-tailed) and 3-item measures ($t$ = 5.32, df = 454, $p$ = .00, 2-tailed). The means were greater in the high ($M$ = 4.94, $SD$ = 1.18; $M$ = 5.43, $SD$ = 1.25) versus low ($M$ = 4.18, $SD$ = 1.31; $M$ = 4.81, $SD$ = 1.21) severity conditions for both the 1-item and 3-item measures, respectively. As such, it is concluded that the manipulation of perceived transgression severity was successful. Please note that, while both the 1-item and 3-item measures of severity were used to assess the success of the manipulation of severity in

Study 1, only the multi-item measure is used in the ANOVA and MANOVA results reported below.

**Leader-member exchange**. An independent samples t-test was also performed to assess the manipulation of leader-member exchange. The results showed a significant difference between the high ($n$ = 224) and low ($n$ = 232) LMX conditions ($t$ = 18.23, df = 454, $p$ = .00, 2-tailed). An examination of the means shows that participants reported more LMX in the high ($M$ = 3.38, $SD$ = .60) versus low ($M$ = 2.28, $SD$ = .67) conditions. As such, it is concluded that the LMX manipulation was also successful in Study 1.

**Leader apology**. The success of the apology manipulation was evaluated in two ways. First, the results of an independent samples t-test revealed that the means between the apology ($n$ = 224) and no apology ($n$ = 230) conditions were significantly different ($t$ = 17.78, df = 452, $p$ = .00, 2-tailed). Perceptions of leader apology were greater in the apology condition ($M$ = 4.34, $SD$ = 1.30), as compared to the no apology condition ($M$ = 2.23, $SD$ = 1.23). A summary of all t-tests is presented below in Table 4, followed by the means and standard deviations for each condition in Table 5.

Second, examination of the 1-item manipulation check question suggested that an overwhelming majority of participants correctly perceived the condition in which they were placed. More specifically, 419 participants answered this question correctly (representing 91.89% of the sample), while 37 participants answered incorrectly (8.11%). Overall, the results indicate that the manipulation of leader apology was successful[8].

[8] Participants who assessed the apology manipulation check question incorrectly were evenly split between the apology ($N$ = 19) and no apology ($N$ = 18) conditions. To examine whether these incorrect responses had an effect on the results of the study, the 37 responses in which participants incorrectly identified the apology condition in which they were placed were removed from the database (resulting in $N$ = 419). The pattern of results of the ANOVA (examining the effects of the severity, LMX, and apology treatments on overall forgiveness) and MANOVA (where the effects of the three treatments were assessed on the three transgression-related interpersonal motivations separately) were the same as when the analyses were run

Table 4

*Summary of the Results of Independent Samples T-Tests By Manipulation*

| **Manipulation** | ***t*** | **df** | **Sig.** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Severity (1-item) | 6.5 | 444.95 | .00** |
| Severity (3-items) | 5.32 | 454 | .00** |
| LMX | 18.23 | 454 | .00** |
| Apology | 17.78 | 452 | .00** |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$. Significance is 2-tailed.

**Gender of the leader**. Finally, the gender of the leader in the vignettes was manipulated to address its potential confounding effect on the results. To this end, two versions of the severity, LMX, and apology manipulations were written (one featuring a female leader and one featuring a male leader who committed a transgression against the follower).

A series of independent samples t-tests were performed to ascertain whether the gender of the leader had any impact on forgiveness, or any of its subscales, in the study. The results indicate that the mean scores did not differ significantly among groups with respect to overall forgiveness ($t$ = -.66, df = 454, $p$ = .51, 2-tailed), avoidance motivations ($t$ = 1.18, df = 454, $p$ = .24, 2-tailed), revenge motivations ($t$ = .31, df = 454, $p$ = .76, 2-tailed) or benevolence motivations ($t$ = -.07, df = 454, $p$ = .94, 2-tailed).

with the full dataset, with only one exception. Specifically, when the effects of the severity, LMX and apology treatments were examined on avoidance, revenge and benevolence motivations separately, the effect of the apology manipulation on one's motivation to act benevolently toward the leader was significant ($p < .05$), whereas this effect was non-significant when the dataset included participants who incorrectly identified the apology condition through the 1-item manipulation check question. As the pattern of results was essentially the same, all analyses are reported in this dissertation based on the full dataset.

Table 5

*Means and Standard Deviations by Condition*

| | Level 1 | | Level 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Manipulation** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
| Severity (1-item) | High severity | | Low severity | |
| | 4.94 | 1.18 | 4.18 | 1.31 |
| Severity (3-items) | High severity | | Low severity | |
| | 5.43 | 1.25 | 4.81 | 1.21 |
| LMX | High LMX | | Low LMX | |
| | 3.38 | .60 | 2.28 | .67 |
| Apology | Apologizes | | Does not apologize | |
| | 4.34 | 1.30 | 2.23 | 1.23 |

To further assess whether the gender of the leader influenced forgiveness in the current study, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed in which the effects of the severity, LMX, apology and gender treatments on overall forgiveness were examined. The results showed that both the severity ($p < .01$) and LMX conditions ($p = .00$) influenced forgiveness, while leader apologies ($p = .90$) and the gender of the leader ($MS = .05$, $F = .17$, $p = .68$) did not significantly impact overall forgiveness of the leader.

Finally, to ensure that the gender of the leader did not influence any of the subscales of forgiveness individually, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed, where the severity, LMX, apology and gender treatments were entered as fixed factors, while the mean scores for avoidance, revenge and benevolence were

inputted as dependent variables. The results indicate that severity ($p < .05$), LMX ($p = .00$) and apology ($p < .05$) had significant main effects on the forgiveness subscales. Furthermore, a marginally significant interaction between severity and LMX on the subscales also emerged ($p < .10$). Importantly, the main effect of the gender of the leader was not significant ($p = .56$).

Overall, the results suggest that neither overall forgiveness, nor the individual forgiveness scales, were significantly influenced by the gender of the leader in the vignettes. Consequently, treatment for the gender of the leader in the vignettes is not included in any of the analyses presented below.

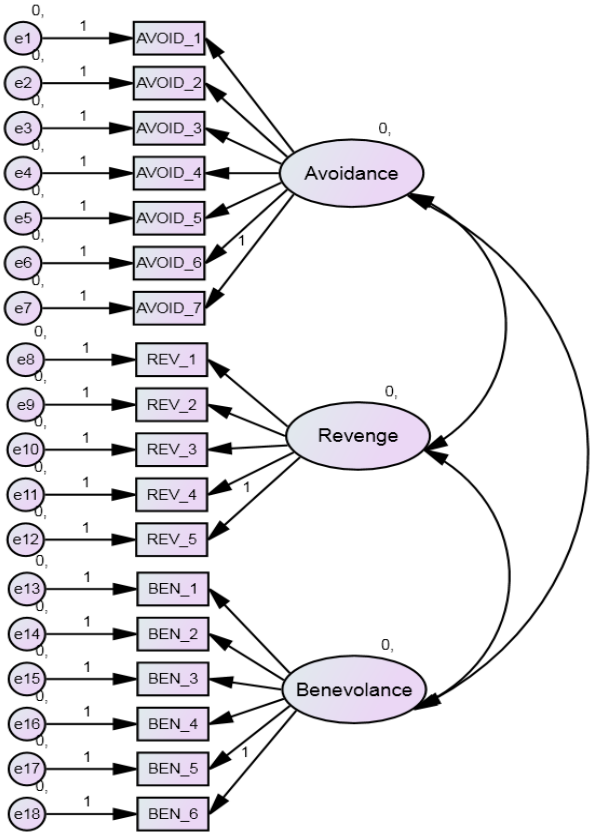
**Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to assess the factor structure of the forgiveness measure in the current study. Using AMOS, a three-factor model (presented in Figure 4 below) was examined, such that the items measuring avoidance, revenge and benevolence motivations were loaded onto their respective factors. The three factors were allowed to correlate[9]. Goodness of fit estimates indicate that the model had a reasonable fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 419.754$, df = 132, $p = .00$; CFI = .920; RMSEA = .069).

[9] As the dataset included some missing data, the "estimate means and intercepts" option was selected for both the 3-factor and 1-factor CFAs.

*Figure 4*

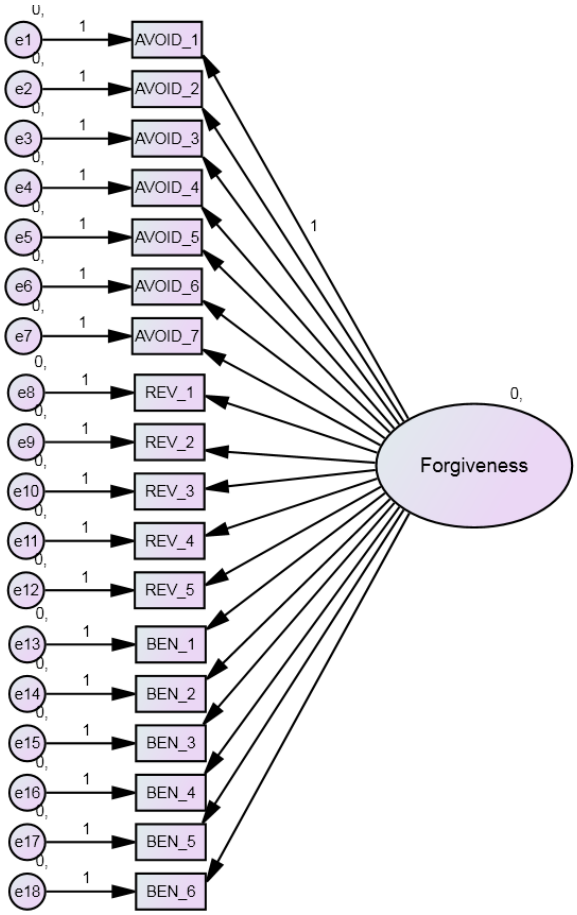
*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Three-Factor Model*




As a comparison, a second CFA was examined in which all items were loaded upon a single factor. This model is presented below in Figure 5. The one-factor model displayed a much poorer fit to the data ($\chi^2$ = 882.092, df = 135, $p$ = .00; CFI = .793; RMSEA = .110), thus suggesting the three-factor model, including the avoidance, revenge and benevolence subscales, best represented the data in this study.

Figure 5

*Confirmatory Factor Analysis: One-Factor Model*




**Hypothesis Testing**

Study 1 investigated the effects of perceptions of transgression severity on forgiveness, as moderated by both leader-member exchange and leader apologies. As the hypotheses articulated in the current dissertation proposed a relationship between severity and overall forgiveness (as moderated by LMX and leader apologies), an analysis of variance (ANOVA) is first performed to assess the relationships between the severity,

LMX, and apology manipulations and overall forgiveness. However, as the CFA of the forgiveness measure suggested that the three-factor model fit the data better than the one-factor model, the results of a multivariate analysis of variance are next presented in which the effects of the severity, LMX, and apology manipulations on the three forgiveness subscales (avoidance, revenge, and benevolence motivations) are examined.

**Overall forgiveness**. First, an analysis of variance was performed to assess the effects of the three manipulations on the overall forgiveness reported by participants in the study. An examination of Cook's distance indicated that no outliers were present (where Cook's $d < 1$ for all cases). The results are summarized in Table 6 below, followed by the descriptive statistics (i.e., means and standard deviations) for forgiveness at each level of severity, LMX, and leader apology in Table 7.

Hypothesis 1 stated that participants assigned to the high severity condition would report lower forgiveness of the leader than participants in the low severity condition. As can be seen in Table 7, the severity condition had a significant main effect on forgiveness. The effect size ($\eta^2_p = .02$) suggests that the severity of the transgression committed by the leader explain 2% of the variance in the overall forgiveness measure. Participants in the high severity condition forgave the leader less for the transgression that was committed ($M = 3.38$, $SD = .61$) than their counterparts in the low severity condition ($M = 3.54$, $SD = .61$). As such, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 6

*Summary of ANOVA Results*

| **Variable** | **MS** | ***F*** | **Sig.** | $\eta^2_p$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Severity condition | 2.75 | 8.68 | .00** | .02 |
| LMX condition | 25.84 | 81.48 | .00** | .15 |
| Apology condition | .00 | .00 | .96 | .00 |
| 2-way interaction: Severity x LMX | .03 | .09 | .77 | .00 |
| 2-way interaction: Severity x Apology | .00 | .00 | .99 | .00 |
| 2-way interaction: LMX x Apology | .21 | .67 | .41 | .00 |
| 3-way interaction | .55 | 1.73 | .19 | .00 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$

Hypothesis 2a proposed an interaction between perceptions of transgression severity and LMX, such that the difference between the high and low severity conditions would be *smaller* for participants in the high LMX condition, as compared to participants in the low LMX condition. In contrast, Hypothesis 2b argued that severity and LMX would interact, such that the difference between the high and low severity conditions would be *larger* for participants in the high LMX condition, as opposed to the low LMX condition. As the interaction between severity and LMX was not significant, neither Hypothesis 2a, nor Hypothesis 2b, were supported.

Table 7

*Means, Standard Deviations and Overall Row Means for Forgiveness*

| **Variables** | | **Apology** | | **No Apology** | | **Total** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
| High severity | High LMX | 3.69 | .58 | 3.58 | .54 | 3.63 | .56 |
| | Low LMX | 3.08 | .55 | 3.20 | .57 | 3.14 | .56 |
| | Total | 3.38 | .64 | 3.38 | .58 | 3.38 | .61 |
| Low severity | High LMX | 3.76 | .55 | 3.79 | .60 | 3.77 | .57 |
| | Low LMX | 3.32 | .60 | 3.30 | .52 | 3.31 | .56 |
| | Total | 3.53 | .61 | 3.55 | .61 | 3.54 | .61 |
| Total | High LMX | 3.72 | .56 | 3.68 | .57 | 3.70 | .57 |
| | Low LMX | 3.20 | .58 | 3.24 | .55 | 3.22 | .56 |
| | Total | 3.45 | .63 | 3.46 | .60 | 3.46 | .61 |

Finally, Hypothesis 3 stated that perceptions of transgression severity and apologies would interact, such that the difference between the high and low severity conditions would be smaller for participants in the apology condition, when compared to their counterparts in the no apology condition. As the interaction between severity and apology was also not significant, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

The results of the ANOVA further reveal a significant main effect of leader-member exchange on forgiveness. The effect size ($\eta^2_p$ = .15) indicates that the quality of the relationship between the leader and follower explains 15% of the variance in the overall forgiveness measure. Participants reported more forgiveness of the leader in the high LMX condition (*M* = 3.70, *SD* = .57) than in the low LMX condition (*M* = 3.22, *SD* = .56). Although a direct effect of the quality of the leader-follower relationship on forgiveness was not hypothesized, the literature indicates that the closeness of the relationship between the transgressor and the person who is harmed can be an important variable impacting forgiveness (e.g., Fehr et al., 2010; Karremans et al., 2011; McCullough et al., 1998; Worthington & Wade, 1999). As such, this result is consistent with the literature.

**Avoidance, revenge, and benevolence motivations**. The results of the ANOVA revealed that both perceptions of transgression severity and leader-member exchange significantly impacted the amount of forgiveness reported by participants in Study 1. This second set of analyses examines the effects of the severity, LMX, and apology manipulations on the three forgiveness subscales.

To this end, a MANOVA was performed in which the severity, LMX and apology conditions were entered as fixed factors and the means for avoidance, revenge and benevolence motivations were inputted as dependent variables. Again, an inspection of the results for Cook's distance revealed no outliers (where Cook's d < 1 in all cases). The results are summarized in Tables 8 and 9 below, followed by a table presenting the means and standard deviations per condition in Table 10.

Table 8

*Wilk's Lambda Statistic*

| **Effect** | **Wilk's Lambda** | ***F*** | **df[a]** | **Sig.** | **Partial $\eta^2$** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Severity condition | .98 | 3.05 | 3, 446 | .03** | .02 |
| LMX condition | .83 | 31.58 | 3, 446 | .00** | .18 |
| Apology condition | .98 | 2.78 | 3, 446 | .04* | .02 |
| Severity x LMX | .99 | 2.16 | 3, 446 | .09† | .01 |
| Severity x Apology | 1.00 | .04 | 3, 446 | .99 | .00 |
| LMX x Apology | 1.00 | .41 | 3, 446 | .74 | .00 |
| 3-way interaction | 1.00 | .62 | 3, 446 | .60 | .00 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, † $p$ less than or equal to .10. [a] = df of hypothesis, df of error.

As with the ANOVA, perceptions of transgression severity and the quality of the leader-follower relationship were found to have significant main effects on the dependent variables. The effect sizes ($\eta^2_p = .02$ and $\eta^2_p = .18$, respectively) suggest that transgression severity and leader-member exchange explain 2% and 18%, respectively, of the variance in the dependent variables.

Table 9

*Summary of the MANOVA Results*

| Variable | MS | *F* | Sig. | Partial $\eta^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Avoidance motivations** | | | | |
| Severity condition | 3.26 | 6.67 | .01** | .02 |
| LMX condition | 44.22 | 90.50 | .00** | .17 |
| Apology condition | .42 | .86 | .36 | .00 |
| Severity x LMX | .43 | .89 | .35 | .00 |
| Severity x Apology | .01 | .02 | .89 | .00 |
| LMX x Apology | .14 | .28 | .60 | .00 |
| Severity x LMX x Apology | .62 | 1.26 | .26 | .00 |
| **Revenge motivations** | | | | |
| Severity condition | 2.01 | 3.90 | .05* | .01 |
| LMX condition | 13.54 | 25.88 | .00** | .06 |
| Apology condition | .15 | .29 | .59 | .00 |
| Severity x LMX | .53 | 1.03 | .31 | .00 |
| Severity x Apology | .01 | .01 | .97 | .00 |
| LMX x Apology | .64 | 1.23 | .27 | .00 |
| Severity x LMX x Apology | .78 | 1.52 | .22 | .00 |
| **Benevolence motivations** | | | | |
| Severity condition | 2.89 | 7.70 | .01** | .02 |
| LMX condition | 19.93 | 53.17 | .00** | .11 |
| Apology condition | .95 | 2.53 | .11 | .01 |

| Variable | MS | *F* | Sig. | Partial $\eta^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Severity x LMX | .41 | 1.10 | .30 | .00 |
| Severity x Apology | .01 | .01 | .97 | .00 |
| LMX x Apology | .08 | .21 | .65 | .00 |
| Severity x LMX x Apology | .35 | .93 | .33 | .00 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

Table 10

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Overall Row Means for Avoidance, Revenge and Benevolence Motivations*

| Variables | | Apology | | No Apology | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
| **Avoidance motivations** | | | | | | | |
| High severity | High LMX | 2.48 | .75 | 2.53 | .68 | 2.51 | .71 |
| | Low LMX | 3.15 | .66 | 2.99 | .72 | 3.07 | .69 |
| | Total | 2.82 | .78 | 2.76 | .73 | 2.79 | .75 |
| Low severity | High LMX | 2.33 | .67 | 2.22 | .70 | 2.27 | .68 |
| | Low LMX | 2.98 | .74 | 2.95 | .67 | 2.96 | .71 |
| | Total | 2.67 | .78 | 2.58 | .77 | 2.62 | .77 |
| Total | High LMX | 2.41 | .71 | 2.38 | .70 | 2.39 | .70 |
| | Low LMX | 3.06 | .71 | 2.97 | .69 | 3.01 | .70 |
| | Total | 2.75 | .78 | 2.67 | .76 | 2.71 | .77 |

| Variables | | Apology | | No Apology | | Total | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
| **Revenge motivations** | | | | | | | |
| High severity | High LMX | 1.99 | .74 | 2.12 | .71 | 2.06 | .72 |
| | Low LMX | 2.56 | .77 | 2.37 | .71 | 2.47 | .74 |
| | Total | 2.29 | .80 | 2.25 | .72 | 2.27 | .76 |
| Low severity | High LMX | 2.02 | .77 | 1.97 | .76 | 1.99 | .76 |
| | Low LMX | 2.28 | .72 | 2.25 | .55 | 2.27 | .64 |
| | Total | 2.16 | .75 | 2.11 | .68 | 2.13 | .72 |
| Total | High LMX | 2.00 | .75 | 2.04 | .73 | 2.03 | .74 |
| | Low LMX | 2.42 | .76 | 2.31 | .64 | 2.37 | .70 |
| | Total | 2.22 | .78 | 2.18 | .70 | 2.20 | .74 |
| **Benevolence motivations** | | | | | | | |
| High severity | High LMX | 3.61 | .60 | 3.45 | .58 | 3.53 | .59 |
| | Low LMX | 3.05 | .64 | 3.05 | .62 | 3.05 | .63 |
| | Total | 3.32 | .68 | 3.25 | .63 | 3.28 | .65 |
| Low severity | High LMX | 3.66 | .55 | 3.59 | .64 | 3.63 | .60 |
| | Low LMX | 3.33 | .62 | 3.20 | .64 | 3.27 | .63 |
| | Total | 3.49 | .61 | 3.40 | .66 | 3.45 | .64 |
| Total | High LMX | 3.64 | .57 | 3.52 | .61 | 3.57 | .59 |
| | Low LMX | 3.19 | .65 | 3.12 | .63 | 3.16 | .64 |
| | Total | 3.41 | .65 | 3.32 | .65 | 3.36 | .65 |

Severity impacted all three transgression-related interpersonal motivations. The effect sizes suggest that severity accounts for 2% of the variance in avoidance motivations, 1% of the variance in revenge motivations and 2% of the variance in benevolence motivations. The means indicate that participants in the high severity condition were more motivated to avoid the leader ($M$ = 2.79, $SD$ = .75) and want revenge ($M$ = 2.27, $SD$ = .76) than their counterparts in the low severity condition ($M$ = 2.62, $SD$ = .77, $M$ = 2.13, $SD$ = .71, respectively). Furthermore, participants in the high severity condition were less motivated to act benevolently toward the leader ($M$ = 3.28, $SD$ = .65) than participants in the low severity condition ($M$ = 3.45, $SD$ = .64).

Leader-member exchange also significantly impacted all three motivations. The effect sizes indicate that the quality of the leader-follower relationship explains 17% of the variance in avoidance motivations, 6% of the variance in revenge motivations, and 11% of the variance in benevolence motivations. Participants in the high LMX condition reported less avoidance ($M$ = 2.39, $SD$ = .70) and revenge motivations ($M$ = 2.02, $SD$ = .74) than those in the low LMX condition ($M$ = 3.01, $SD$ = .70 and $M$ = 2.37, $SD$ = .70, respectively). Participants in the high LMX condition had greater benevolence motivations ($M$ = 3.57, $SD$ = .59) than participants in the low LMX condition ($M$ = 3.16, $SD$ = .64).

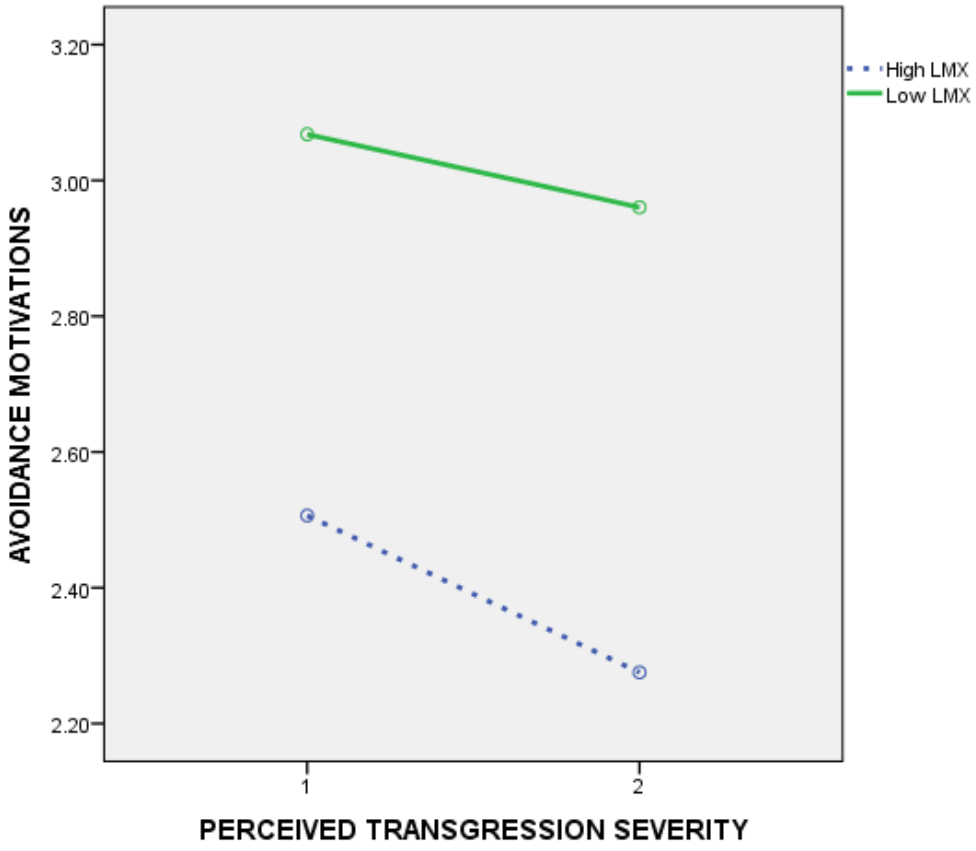
The MANOVA results also revealed a significant main effect of leader apology. The effect size ($\eta^2_p$ = .02) indicates that leader apology accounts for 2% of the variance in the dependent variables. However, this effect did not translate to any of the transgression-related interpersonal motivations individually. Interestingly, a marginally significant interaction also emerged for the interaction between severity perceptions and LMX. The

effect size ($\eta^2_p$ = .01) suggests that this interaction explains 1% of the variance in the dependent variables.

To further explore the nature of this interaction, plots of the interaction of severity and LMX (as obtained through the MANOVA) are presented below in Figures 6 through 8 for the estimated marginal means of avoidance, revenge and benevolence motivations.

Figure 6

*Interaction of Perceived Transgression Severity and LMX for Avoidance Motivations*[10]




[10] For the levels of perceived transgression severity (applicable to all graphs), 1 = high severity and 2 = low severity.

Figure 7

*Interaction of Perceived Transgression Severity and LMX for Revenge Motivations*

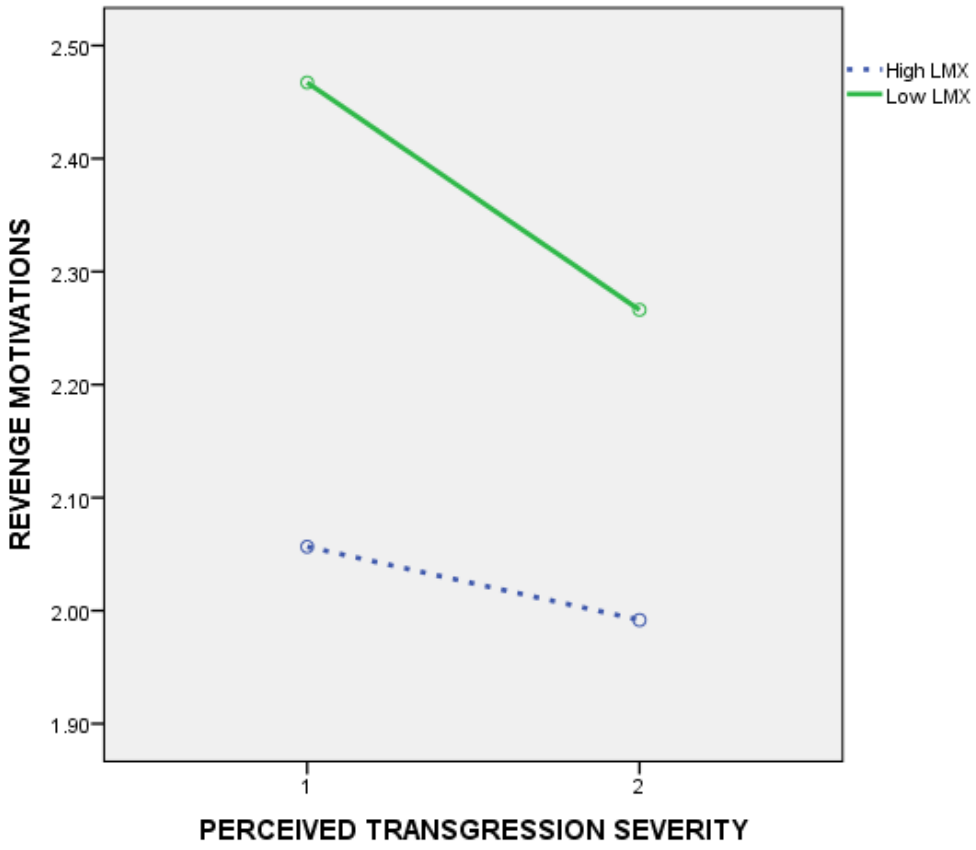
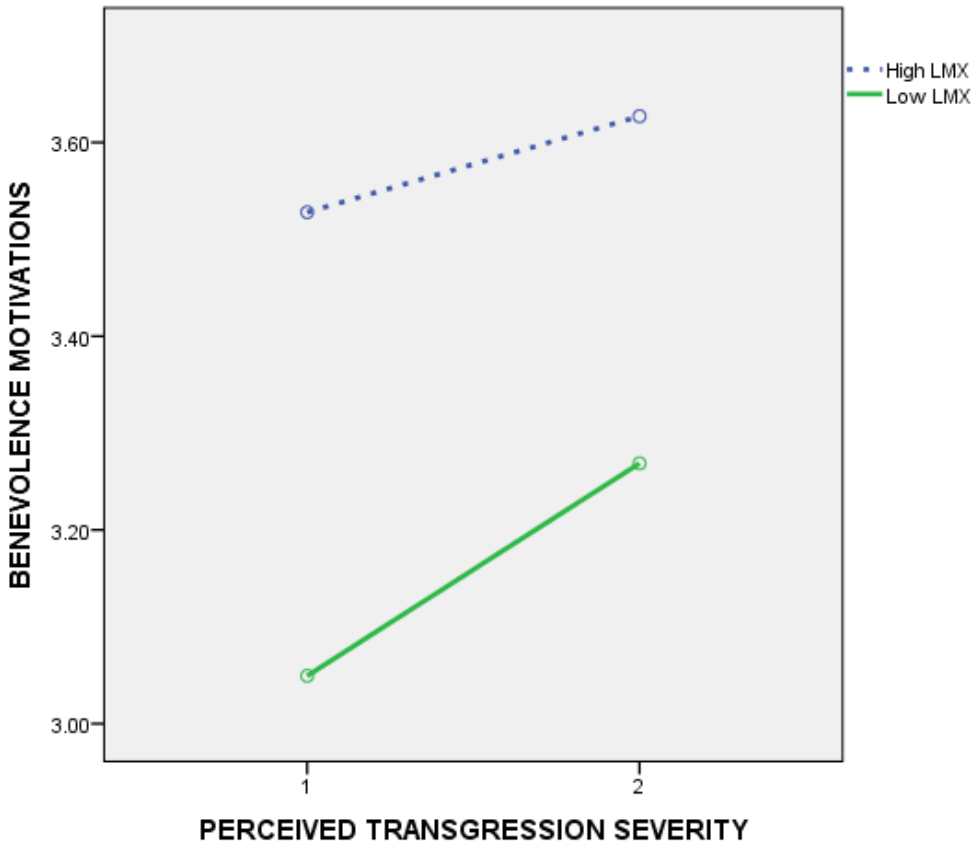


Figure 8

*Interaction of Perceived Transgression Severity and LMX for Benevolence Motivations*




A test of simple main effects was next performed to investigate the nature of the interaction further. In doing so, the impact of the manipulation of perceived transgression severity was examined for the high LMX and low LMX groups separately[11]. For participants who read a scenario in which a high-quality leader-follower relationship was depicted, the main effect of severity was marginally significant (Wilk's lambda = .97, $F$ = 2.40, df = 3, 228, $p < .10$, $\eta^2_p = .03$). An examination of the results per subscale revealed that severity significantly impacted avoidance motivations in the high LMX group ($MS$ =

[11] The database was split by LMX condition. A MANOVA was then performed with the severity treatment as the independent variable and avoidance, revenge, and benevolence motivations as the dependent variables.

3.06, $F$ = 6.32, df = 1, $p$ < .05). The effect size ($\eta^2_p$ = .03) suggests that transgression severity explains 3% of the variance in avoidance motivations in the high LMX group. Participants reported more avoidance motivations when severity was high ($M$ = 2.51, $SD$ = .71) than when severity was low ($M$ = 2.27, $SD$ = .68). In contrast, the effects of severity were neither significant for revenge motivations, nor for benevolence motivations.

For participants who read a vignette describing a low-quality relationship between the leader and follower, the main effect of severity was significant (Wilk's lambda = .96, $F$ = 2.83, df = 2, 228, $p$ < .05, $\eta^2_p$ = .04). More specifically, severity significantly impacted two of the transgression-related interpersonal motivations – revenge ($MS$ = 2.30, $F$ = 4.76, df = 1, $p$ < .05) and benevolence ($MS$ = 2.85, $F$ = 7.16, df = 1, $p$ < .01). The effect sizes indicate that transgression severity accounts for 2% of the variance in revenge motivations and 3% of the variance in benevolence motivations in the low LMX group ($\eta^2_p$ = .02 and $\eta^2_p$ = .03, respectively). Participants reported greater revenge motivations when transgression severity was high ($M$ = 2.47, $SD$ = .74) than when it was low ($M$ = 2.27, $SD$ = .64). Furthermore, participants were less motivated to act benevolently toward the leader when severity was high ($M$ = 3.05, $SD$ = .63) than when severity was low ($M$ = 3.27, $SD$ = .63). In contrast, the effects of severity were not significant for avoidance motivations.

In sum, the results provide some indication that high LMX may mitigate the effects of perceptions of transgression severity on the forgiveness subscales. While severity had a significant main effect on the transgression-related interpersonal motivations in the low LMX group, the effect of severity was only marginally significant

for participants in the high LMX group. This finding also provides some support for Hypothesis 2a, which stated that severity and LMX would interact such that the difference between the high and low severity conditions would be smaller in the high LMX condition than in the low LMX condition.

**Supplementary Analyses**

**Effects of participant gender**. Meta-analytic results suggest that forgiveness may be influenced by gender, such that women forgive more (Miller, Worthington & McDaniel, 2008). Thus, to examine whether the amount of forgiveness accorded to the leader differed significantly between male and female participants in this study, a series of four independent samples t-tests were conducted. Specifically, these tests investigated whether the means for overall forgiveness, as well as each of its subscales, differed between groups.

The results revealed no significant differences among groups with respect to overall forgiveness ($t$ = -.53, df = 454, $p$ = .60, 2-tailed), avoidance motivations ($t$ = -.79, df = 454, $p$ = .43, 2-tailed), revenge motivations ($t$ = 1.27, df = 443.142, $p$ = .20, 2-tailed) or benevolence motivations ($t$ = -1.38, df = 454, $p$ = .17, 2-tailed). Thus, it is concluded that the gender of the participant did not significantly impact forgiveness in Study 1.

# CHAPTER 5

# STUDY 2 METHODOLOGY

## Study 2 – Introduction

Study 2 used retrospective accounts of leader interpersonal transgressions to assess the effects of perceived transgression severity on forgiveness, as moderated by three variables – followership, leader-member exchange and leader apologies. Forgiveness was further argued to mediate the relationships between perceptions of severity and both turnover intentions and counterproductive behavior, as moderated by one's continuance commitment to the organization. As such, Study 2 examined the full theoretical model, as described in the introduction (see Figure 1). A copy of the certificate of ethical acceptability issued for Study 2 is found in Appendix H.

## Sample

Data were collected from two samples. The first was obtained through Qualtrics Panel Services ($N$ = 310) and the second via convenience snowball sampling ($N$ = 23)[12]. The two samples were combined into a single dataset of 333 participants ($N$ = 137 male, $N$ = 192 female[13]). Participants averaged 41.25 years of age ($SD$ = 12.86), with a mean of 20.23 years of full-time work experience (i.e., 20.23 years, $SD$ = 15.56 years[14]) and 5.10 years of part-time work experience (i.e., 5.10 years, $SD$ = 6.51 years). The vast majority of participants (94.29%) were from the United States of America, with the remainder of respondents living in Canada. Participants listed their highest level of education as some

[12] Data collection was planned using convenience snowball sampling. However, as the response rate was low using this strategy, additional data for Study 2 were collected using Qualtrics Panel Services.
[13] The sample included 4 missing observations for gender.
[14] Participants were asked to state their full-time and part-time work experience in terms of the number of years and number of months of their experience. A total was then created by combining the length of time in years and months. The totals are presented above in years.

secondary school (3.3%), secondary school or equivalent (9.9%), some postsecondary education (7.5%), postsecondary degree, diploma or CEGEP (8.7%), some undergraduate education (18.3%), Bachelor's degree (27.9%), graduate degree or diploma (9.3%), Master's degree (8.7%), Doctoral degree (1.8%), and other (4.2%). The demographic characteristics of each of the two samples are presented below in Table 11.

Table 11

*Comparison of Demographics for Sample Obtained Through Qualtrics and the Sample Obtained Through Convenience Snowball Sampling*

| **Demographic Characteristic** | **Qualtrics** | **Convenience** |
|---|---|---|
| Sample size | *N* = 310 | *N* = 23 |
| Average age | 41.49 years | 38.0 years |
| | (*SD* = 13.14) | (*SD* = 7.63) |
| Full-time work experience | 20.56 years | 15.91 years |
| | (*SD* = 15.91) | (*SD* = 8.84) |
| Part-time work experience | 5.11 years | 4.86 years |
| | (*SD* = 6.66) | (*SD* = 4.06) |
| Country | 100% USA | 78.26% Canada |
| | | 21.74% USA |
| Highest level of education attained | | |
| Some secondary school | 3.5% | -- |
| Secondary school or equivalent | 10.6% | -- |
| Some postsecondary education | 6.8% | 17.4% |

| Demographic Characteristic | Qualtrics | Convenience |
|---|---|---|
| Postsecondary degree, diploma or CEGEP | 8.1% | 17.4% |
| Some undergraduate education | 19.0% | 8.7% |
| Bachelor's degree | 28.1% | 26.1% |
| Graduate degree or diploma | 7.7% | 30.4% |
| Master's degree | 9.4% | -- |
| Doctoral degree | 1.9% | -- |
| Other | 4.5% | -- |

**Research Design and Procedure**

Study 2 was a field study that assessed all variables included in the theoretical model. Data were collected via an online questionnaire. All materials were presented in English.

The survey opened with the consent form. Participants who consented to continue were presented with demographic questions and items related to followership. Respondents were then asked whether they could think of a recent transgression by a direct supervisor in the workplace. For those who indicated that they could, questions pertaining to LMX, the transgression, apology, severity, forgiveness, continuance commitment and turnover intentions, dispositional forgiveness and counterproductive behavior then followed.

**Measures**

**Demographics**. Respondents were asked to report their age, gender, approximate number of years of full-time and part-time work experience, highest level of education attained, as well as the country in which they lived.

**Information regarding the transgression**. Participants were asked to think of a transgression, committed within the past year, by a direct supervisor in the workplace. The instructions related to the transgression for Study 2 drew upon the work of McCullough et al. (2006), where the authors note that participants in their study were asked to "think about the most recent time when someone with whom they were in a relationship hurt or offended them" (p. 889).

As such, respondents in Study 2 were presented with the following question: "Can you think of an incident involving a **current or past direct supervisor in the workplace** in which you were hurt or offended in some way, whether the incident was major or minor, **within the past year**? The incident can be about anything that you feel hurt or offended you. This incident may be something that you consider to be minor (small) all the way up to something that you consider to be major (big)".

Participants who answered 'no' were then presented with a follow-up question, providing several examples of potential leader transgressions. Specifically, participants were asked: "In the **past 12 months**, have you been hurt or offended by a current or past direct supervisor because he or she did one of the following: Was offensive to you? Criticized you in front of others? Reprimanded you? Lied to you? Yelled at you? Criticized you in private? Treated you unfairly? Took credit when not due or did not give credit for something? Or for a different reason?". The list of potential transgressions used

in this question was drawn from several behaviors listed by Blase and Blase (2002), where the authors identified ways in which educators were mistreated by principals in their study. Participants were asked to select yes or no to the overall question (not to respond to each example of possible transgression individually). Participants who answered 'no' were redirected to the end of the survey, while participants who indicated 'yes' continued with the next set of questions.[15].

Although the two aforementioned questions requested that participants recall a transgression that had occurred within the past year, several participants from the samples described incidents than had happened more than one year prior to answering the survey. It was therefore decided that only responses pertaining to transgressions that had occurred within **24 months** of completing the survey would be retained for the final sample. This timeframe was selected to ensure that participants would be able to recall both their perceptions of the incident, as well as their behaviors stemming from it.

Participants were also asked to provide information about the transgression that had occurred. Firstly, respondents were asked to provide a short description of the transgression, while not including any identifying information within the description to preserve anonymity. Questions related to the supervisor involved in the incident, the job that they were doing at the time, and the organization in which they worked when the transgression occurred were further posed. Specifically, participants were asked to indicate the industry in which they had worked (as per the industries identified by

[15] Information related to the number of people who did not qualify for the full survey was not collected for the sample obtained through Qualtrics Panel Services. However, this data is available for the convenience sample. Specifically, of the 75 respondents who provided data up to the transgression question in the convenience sample, 38 participants (50.67%) reported having experienced an interpersonal transgression with a direct supervisor in the workplace, while 37 (49.33%) respondents had not experienced such an offense.

Statistics Canada, 2013), the approximate amount of time that they had worked in the position, whether they still worked in the organization, whether they still worked for the supervisor who had committed the offense, how long they had worked under said supervisor, and how many months ago the incident had taken place.

***Transgressions***. Participants reported a wide variety of transgressions committed by their direct supervisors. Several examples are provided in Table 12 below, though these examples are not intended to represent an exhaustive list of the types of offenses described by participants. Notably, some participants reported transgressions of a very sensitive nature (as one example, sexual harassment). This provides a further indication of the great breadth of offenses recalled by participants.

Table 12

*Examples of Leader Transgressions Reported in Study 2*

- *"Supervisor gave me a less than expected evaluation".*
- "*Was called out and belittled by supervisor in front of other co-workers*".
- *"My supervisor was constantly redoing my own work to check it even though there was no reason to suspect a mistake and he never found any*".
- *"Taking away hours without notifying".*
- *"Reprimanded for suggesting changes".*
- *"Manager inexperienced in field and made many incorrect decisions".*
- *"He used to make fun of me".*
- "*Threw me under the bus*"
- "*Inappropriate email*"

Respondents reported transgressions that had occurred anywhere from 0 (i.e., ongoing) to 24 months prior to the completion of the survey ($M$ = 6.95, $SD$ = 4.94). Participants reported working in a large variety of industries. Industries most represented in this study included retail trade (15.3%), health care and social assistance (9.6%), educational services (7.8%) manufacturing (7.2%), professional, scientific and technical services (6.3%), accommodation and food services (6.3%), construction (5.7%), and transportation and warehousing (5.1%). Additionally, 20.1% of participants selected "other".

Overall, respondents stated that they had worked for an average of 7.66 years ($SD$ = 8.14[16]) in the position. Additionally, participants had worked on average 3.64 years ($SD$ = 3.85) for the supervisor who was involved in the incident. On average, participants had worked for the supervisor for 3.37 years ($SD$ = 4.02) when the transgression occurred. A little more than half of respondents (53.8%) still worked for the supervisor who was involved in the incident. Finally, the majority of participants still worked for the organization (61.3%) in which the incident occurred. Just under one fourth of participants (23.1%) indicated that they quit following the incident.

**Leader-member exchange**. As in Study 1, the LMX-7 (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) was used to measure leader-member exchange. As some participants in the study still worked for the supervisor involved in the incident, while others did not, two versions of each item were created to reflect either a present (sample item: "How would you characterize your working relationship with your supervisor?") or past tense (sample

[16] Participants were asked to the length of time they had worked in the position, worked for the supervisor, and worked for the supervisor when the incident occurred in terms of the number of years and number of month. A total was then created by combining the length of time in years and months. The totals are presented above in years.

item: “How would you characterize the working relationship that you had with your supervisor?”). The survey was designed so that participants viewed the version of the question that corresponded with whether they currently worked for the offending leader.

**Perceived transgression severity**. Participants’ perceptions of the severity of the transgression were assessed with the two measures used in Study 1. However, the wording of the items was slightly adapted to reflect the context of Study 2. Thus, participants were asked “How painful was the offense to you at the time that it happened?” (McCullough et al., 2003). The response scale ranged from 0 – not painful at all, to 6 – worst pain I ever felt. Additionally, the three items as described in Wenzel et al. (2010) were presented as “The supervisor’s behavior pained me a lot”, “I found the supervisor’s behavior totally unacceptable” and “I found the supervisor’s behavior very wrong”. The response scale for the three aforementioned questions ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

**Leader apology**. Leader apology was measured in two ways. Firstly, participants were asked one item based on a measure used by McCullough et al. (1997). McCullough et al. (1997) asked two questions to assess the degree to which the respondent feels that the other has apologized to them. One of these items was incorporated into Study 2 based on the authors’ description of their measure – specifically, participants were asked to rate their agreement with the statement “I feel that the supervisor apologized following the incident” (using the scale 0 – not at all to 6 – completely).

Secondly, the 2-item measure of apology/making amends by Bono et al. (2008) described in Study 1 was also included. The wording of the items was tailored to the context of Study 2, such that the participants were asked “How apologetic was the

supervisor toward you?" and "To what extent did the supervisor make amends for what he/she did to you?" (where the response scale ranged from 0 – not at all to 6 – completely).

**Followership**. Followership was measured with items from The Followership Profile (TFP; Dixon, 2003). The original version of TFP consists of 56 questions, where participants are asked to respond to the items using a 5-point scale (where 1 = "to little or no extent" to 5 = "to a very great extent"; Dixon, 2003). The questions reflect the five courageous followership behaviors, and an overall score for followership may also be calculated by averaging the means for the five behaviors (Dixon, 2003). Dixon found the questionnaire to demonstrate very good reliability, with an alpha of .96 for the full questionnaire.

Dixon (2006) presented a revised version of the questionnaire containing 20 items. This version also demonstrated good reliability, with an alpha of .87 (Dixon, 2006). Items measure all five courageous followership behaviors, including the courage to challenge (2 questions), the courage to serve (5 questions), the courage to take moral action (3 questions), the courage to be part of transformation (4 questions), and the courage to take responsibility (6 questions).

The 20-item version was used in a recent dissertation by Muhlenbeck (2012), in which the author adapted the wording of the items for her study. The current study incorporated ten of those items. One item was split into two questions, consistent with Muhlenbeck (2012), who further notes that other dissertations have also used both items separately.

The current study used the wording of four of the items as modified by Muhlenbeck (2012). The phrasing of the remaining seven items was based on that of Muhlenbeck (2012) but further customized for this study (please see Appendix I for the full list of items, as used in this dissertation). Thus, two items measured the *courage to challenge* (sample item: "When working in a group, I confront pressure to conform to decisions that the group has put forth"), two items measured the *courage to take moral action* (sample item: "If my actions had negative repercussions on my manager, I would resign to protect my manager from them"), three items assessed the *courage to serve* (sample item: "I would defend my manager from unwarranted attacks"), and four items measured the *courage to take responsibility* (sample item: "I organize my own schedule to ensure that I meet deadlines and keep commitments at work") were included in the questionnaire. Given the context of the study, items measuring the *courage to be part of transformation* were not included in this dissertation.

**Forgiveness**. As in Study 1, the transgression-related interpersonal motivations inventory (TRIM-18; McCullough et al., 2006) was used to assess forgiveness. Please see Appendix J for the items as worded in Study 2.

**Turnover intentions**. Turnover intentions were measured with two items taken from Bentein et al. (2005). Participants were asked to indicate their agreement with two statements, "I often think about quitting this organization" and "I intend to search for a position with another employer within the next year", based on a 5-point Likert scale (where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). The authors note that the aforementioned items were modified from the work of Hom and Griffeth (1991), as well as based on that of Jaros (1997).

**Counterproductive behavior**. Counterproductive behavior was assessed using the 19-item scale developed by Bennett and Robinson (2000). The measure consists of seven items measuring interpersonal deviance (sample item: "Cursed at someone at work") and twelve items measuring organizational deviance (sample item: "Put little effort into your work"). Please see Appendix K for the full scale. Participants were asked to indicate how often they engaged in the various behaviors listed in the measure since the incident occurred (where 1 = never, 4 = several times a year, and 7 = daily).

**Continuance commitment**. Continuance commitment to the organization was measured with six items taken from Stinglhamber et al. (2002). Three questions measured high sacrifice (sample item: "I did not leave this organization because of what I stood to lose") and three questions measured low alternatives (sample item: "I did not have a choice but to stay with the organization"). Participant responses were based on a five-point scale (where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). The full scale is presented in Appendix L.

**Dispositional forgiveness**. One's decision to forgive following an offense may also be impacted by one's disposition to forgive others. A meta-analysis by Fehr et al. (2010) found a population correlation of .30 between trait forgiveness and forgiveness, supporting the inclusion of dispositional forgiveness in Study 2 as a control variable.

Several measures have been created to assess dispositional forgiveness. This study used the Tendency to Forgive (TTF) scale developed by Brown (2003). The TTF includes four items (sample item: "I have a tendency to harbor grudges") where participants respond using a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). The measure has been used in several studies, noted below, demonstrating

acceptable reliability. Thus, Brown and Phillips (2005) found the TTF to be reliable (α = 0.73), as did Eaton, Struthers and Santelli (2006, where α of the TTF = .68), Steiner, Allemand and McCullough (2012, where the α = .68) and finally, Marler et al. (2011, where the α = .74). Please see Appendix M for the full scale.

# CHAPTER 6

# STUDY 2 RESULTS

## Data Cleansing

**Missing data**. Consistent with Study 1, several decision rules were adopted with respect to missing data. Firstly, scales with few items (i.e., severity, apology, turnover intentions, low alternatives, high sacrifice, and tendency to forgive) were computed only when no items were missing. Using this decision rule, two participants were missing scores for turnover intentions, three respondents were missing scores for low alternatives, four participants were missing scores for apology, six respondents were missing scores for the tendency to forgive scale, and eight participants were missing scores for both transgression severity and high sacrifice.

Secondly, the scales for LMX (7 items), followership (11 items), overall continuance commitment (6 items), counterproductive behavior – interpersonal (7 items), counterproductive behavior – organizational (12 items) and the forgiveness subscales (revenge – 5 items, avoidance – 7 items, and benevolence – 6 items) were computed only in cases where 1 item or less was missing. Using this decision rule, one scale score was missing for both the overall continuance commitment and avoidance scales, and two scores were missing for the LMX, followership, counterproductive behavior directed toward the individual (CPB-I) and counterproductive behavior directed toward the organization (CPB-O) scales.

Finally, overall forgiveness (18 items) was calculated only if two items or less were missing. Following this decision rule, one scale score was missing for this measure.

**Intercorrelations and Reliabilities**

The means and standard deviations are presented below in Table 13, followed by the intercorrelations and reliabilities in Table 14. All scales demonstrated acceptable reliability, ranging from .72 (turnover intentions) to .93 (overall forgiveness).

Table 13

*Means and Standard Deviations*

| **Variable** | **Reliability** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Severity | .87 | 5.78 | 1.31 |
| LMX | .90 | 3.10 | .91 |
| Followership | .82 | 3.78 | .63 |
| Apology | .93 | 2.83 | 1.99 |
| Forgiveness | .93 | 3.11 | .80 |
| Avoidance | .92 | 3.38 | 1.01 |
| Revenge | .90 | 2.43 | 1.04 |
| Benevolence | .89 | 3.29 | .89 |
| Continuance Commitment (CC) | .86 | 3.11 | .99 |
| Low Alternatives (LA) | .84 | 2.94 | 1.14 |
| High Sacrifice (HS) | .72 | 3.28 | 1.02 |
| Turnover Intentions (TI) | .72 | 3.29 | 1.19 |
| CPB-I | .86 | 1.54 | .91 |
| CPB-O | .89 | 1.64 | .88 |
| Tendency to Forgive (TTF) | .73 | 3.77 | 1.13 |

Table 14

*Intercorrelations and Reliabilities*

| **Variable** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** | **7** | **8** | **9** | **10** | **11** | **12** | **13** | **14** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Severity | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. LMX | -.27** | -- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. Followership | .22** | .34** | -- | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Apologies | -.25** | .53** | .17** | -- | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5. Avoidance | .44** | -.41** | .04 | -.28** | -- | | | | | | | | | |
| 6. Revenge | .25** | -.16** | -.03 | .02 | .58** | -- | | | | | | | | |
| 7. Benevolence | -.23** | .49** | .21** | .40** | -.50** | -.46** | -- | | | | | | | |
| 8. Forgiveness | -.38** | .42** | .06 | .27** | -- | -- | -- | -- | | | | | | |
| 9. Low alternatives | .02 | .00 | -.03 | .08 | .18** | .07 | .18** | -.04 | -- | | | | | |
| 10. High sacrifice | .00 | .09 | .03 | .12* | .08 | .02 | .21** | .04 | .67** | -- | | | | |
| 11. CC | .01 | .05 | .00 | .12* | .14* | .05 | .22** | .00 | -- | -- | -- | | | |
| 12. TI | .25** | -.29** | .03 | -.15** | .47** | .29** | -.16** | -.39** | .21** | -.11* | .07 | -- | | |
| 13. CPB-I | -.04 | .13* | -.05 | .20** | .09 | .36** | .06 | -.16** | .13* | .14** | .15** | .05 | -- | |
| 14. CPB-O | -.08 | .07 | -.11* | .18** | .11* | .29** | .05 | -.15** | .13* | .11 | .13* | .06 | .75** | -- |
| 15. TTF | -.16** | .23** | .14* | .18** | -.45** | -.40** | .48** | .53** | -.17** | -.01 | -.11 | -.28** | -.05 | -.03 |

*Note*. ** = Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed), * = Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).

**Assessment of Common Method Bias**

Common method bias may provide an alternative explanation for the results of a study when evidence suggests that scores may be inflated as a result of data being collected from one measurement instrument (e.g., Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). As all variables in Study 2 were measured via a single online questionnaire, and at one point in time, it is therefore important to ascertain whether common method bias is an issue in the study and may impact the interpretation of its results.

To this end, I tested for a general common method factor following the procedure outlined by Podsakoff et al. (2003). First, I performed a CFA where the items of all scales were loaded upon their respective factors, and all factors were allowed to correlate[17] ($\chi^2$ = 4844.093, df = 2418, $p$ = .000, CFI = .830, RMSEA = .055). Second, I added a common method factor to the model and drew paths from it to each indicator (with one path constrained to 1). This model did fit the data slightly better than the original ($\chi^2$ = 4270.245, df = 2346, $p$ = .000, CFI = .865, RMSEA = .050). However, the chi-square difference test suggests that the difference between the two models is not statistically significant. Thus, the difference in $\chi^2$ between the two models ($\chi^2_{diff}$ = 573.848) was larger than the critical $\chi^2$ value at the .05 level of significance and 72 degrees of freedom ($df_{diff}$ = 72). It is therefore concluded that the model in which all items are loaded upon one latent method factor is not statistically superior to the initial model, in which all items were loaded upon their separate constructs.

[17] The variables entered into this CFA include: severity (3 items), apology (2 items), LMX (7 items), followership (11 items), revenge (5 items), avoidance (7 items), benevolence (6 items), turnover intentions (2 items), CPBO (12 items), CPBI (7 items), continuance commitment (6 items), and tendency to forgive (4 items).

As a final step, I examined the difference in the standardized regression weights for each indicator when the model examined in the CFA did not include the common method factor and when this latent factor was added (summarized in Table 15 below). It has been suggested that absolute differences equal to, or greater than, .20 indicate that the item is impacted by common method bias (Gaskin, 2012). Using this guideline, it appears that seven items – all found within the counterproductive behavior scales and shaded in grey in the table below – were significantly influenced by such bias. As such, the results pertaining to deviance directed toward both the individual and the organization should be interpreted with some caution. As the remaining items did not show a significant difference when the common latent factor was added to the model, one may conclude that they were not significantly impacted by common method bias.

Table 15

*Standardized Regression Weights for CFAs with and without a Common Latent Factor*

| **Variable** | **Item** | **Standardized Regression Weight** | | **Difference** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Without CLF** | **With CLF** | |
| Severity | Severity 1 | .89 | .89 | .00 |
| | Severity 2 | .98 | .98 | .00 |
| | Severity 3 | .65 | .65 | .00 |
| LMX | LMX 1 | .79 | .78 | .01 |
| | LMX 2 | .73 | .73 | .00 |
| | LMX 3 | .69 | .66 | .03 |
| | LMX 4 | .69 | .68 | .00 |
| | LMX 5 | .75 | .74 | .01 |
| | LMX 6 | .76 | .77 | -.01 |
| | LMX 7 | .84 | .83 | .01 |
| Followership | Serve 1 | .47 | .47 | .00 |
| | Serve 2 | .58 | .59 | .00 |
| | Serve 3 | .69 | .69 | .00 |
| | Challenge 1 | .53 | .52 | .00 |
| | Challenge 2 | .58 | .58 | .00 |
| | Moral 1 | .45 | .44 | .00 |

| Variable | Item | Standardized Regression Weight | | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Without CLF | With CLF | |
| | Moral 2 | .40 | .42 | -.02 |
| | Responsibility 1 | .54 | .53 | .01 |
| | Responsibility 2 | .64 | .64 | .00 |
| | Responsibility 3 | .57 | .57 | .00 |
| | Responsibility 4 | .68 | .68 | .00 |
| Apology | Apology 1 | .93 | .88 | .05 |
| | Apology 2 | .94 | .91 | .03 |
| Revenge | Revenge 1 | .71 | .68 | .03 |
| | Revenge 2 | .84 | .77 | .07 |
| | Revenge 3 | .79 | .76 | .03 |
| | Revenge 4 | .85 | .75 | .09 |
| | Revenge 5 | .87 | .82 | .05 |
| Avoidance | Avoidance 1 | .75 | .75 | .01 |
| | Avoidance 2 | .74 | .72 | .02 |
| | Avoidance 3 | .75 | .75 | .01 |
| | Avoidance 4 | .81 | .81 | .00 |
| | Avoidance 5 | .89 | .89 | .00 |
| | Avoidance 6 | .75 | .73 | .01 |
| | Avoidance 7 | .86 | .86 | .01 |
| Benevolence | Benevolence 1 | .78 | .77 | .00 |
| | Benevolence 2 | .81 | .79 | .01 |
| | Benevolence 3 | .88 | .88 | .01 |
| | Benevolence 4 | .90 | .91 | .00 |
| | Benevolence 5 | .58 | .58 | .01 |
| | Benevolence 6 | .57 | .56 | .02 |
| Turnover intentions | TI 1 | .66 | .66 | .00 |
| | TI 2 | .85 | .84 | .01 |
| CPBI | CPB-I 1 | .58 | .60 | .02 |
| | CPB-I 2 | .78 | .37 | .41 |
| | CPB-I 3 | .67 | .66 | .02 |
| | CPB-I 4 | .64 | .58 | .06 |
| | CPB-I 5 | .77 | .15 | .62 |
| | CPB-I 6 | .79 | .20 | .59 |
| | CPB-I 7 | .71 | .52 | .19 |
| CPB) | CPB-O 1 | .46 | .50 | -.04 |
| | CPB-O 2 | .46 | .63 | -.18 |
| | CPB-O 3 | .51 | .36 | .15 |
| | CPB-O 4 | .53 | .67 | -.14 |
| | CPB-O 5 | .62 | .41 | .21 |
| | CPB-O 6 | .80 | .19 | .61 |
| | CPB-O 7 | .59 | .43 | .17 |
| | CPB-O 8 | .60 | .57 | .03 |
| | CPB-O 9 | .73 | .21 | .52 |

| Variable | Item | Standardized Regression Weight | | Difference |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Without CLF | With CLF | |
| | CPB-O 10 | .80 | .19 | .61 |
| | CPB-O 11 | .85 | .37 | .48 |
| | CPB-O 12 | .88 | .17 | .71 |
| CC | LA 1 | .73 | .72 | .01 |
| | LA 2 | .81 | .79 | .02 |
| | LA 3 | .83 | .83 | .01 |
| | HS 1 | .43 | .43 | .01 |
| | HS 2 | .73 | .73 | .00 |
| | HS 3 | .68 | .67 | .01 |
| Tendency to forgive | TTF 1 | .64 | .58 | .06 |
| | TTF 2 (recoded) | .45 | .51 | -.05 |
| | TTF 3 (recoded) | .67 | .75 | -.08 |
| | TTF 4 | .76 | .71 | .05 |

*Note*: Serve = Courage to serve, Challenge = Courage to challenge, Moral = Courage to take moral responsibility, Responsibility = Courage to take responsibility, CC = Continuance commitment, LA = Low alternatives, HS = High sacrifice, CPB-I = Counterproductive behavior directed toward the individual, CPB-O = Counterproductive behavior directed toward the organization, TT = Tendency to forgive. Areas shaded in grey reflect an absolute difference equal to, or greater than, .20[18].

**Hypothesis Testing**

**Procedure**. PROCESS (Hayes, 2013) was used to test the hypotheses proposed in the study. As the theoretical model involves a large number of variables, the analyses were performed in a series of steps. Each step is described in detail below.

All analyses included dispositional forgiveness as a control variable (i.e., the variable was entered as a covariate in each model run in PROCESS). Bootstapping was set to 10 000 and bias-corrected bootstrap estimates were requested. Additionally, mean centering of the products was requested.

Finally, the assumption of homoscedasticity was visually assessed via scatterplots. This visual analysis suggested that the assumption was violated for both

[18] Please note that the regression weights and differences were rounded to 2 decimal places in the table above (due to the rounding, some differences may appear incorrect by one one-hundredth).

CPB-I and CPB-O in the current dissertation. Consequently, heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors were requested for all analyses that involved the two aforementioned outcome variables.

***Step 1: Does forgiveness mediate the relationship between severity and the outcomes?*** As a first step, the mediating effects of forgiveness on the relationships between perceptions of transgression severity and the three outcomes (i.e., turnover intentions, deviance directed toward individuals, and deviance directed toward the organization) were examined. As the models in PROCESS examine only one dependent variable at a time, the results are organized by outcome.

To this end, a simple mediation model was run in PROCESS[19], whereby the effect of perceived transgression severity on each outcome, as mediated by follower forgiveness of the leader, was examined.

***Step 2: Do LMX, followership, and leader apologies moderate the relationship between severity and forgiveness?*** As a second step, the moderating effects of LMX, followership, and leader apologies on the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness were examined. PROCESS does not offer a model through which three first-stage moderators may be assessed simultaneously. Consequently, each moderator was investigated in turn using a simple moderation model[20].

It was decided that only moderators that significantly influenced forgiveness (either demonstrating a significant main effect on forgiveness, or a significant interaction with severity on forgiveness) would be included in subsequent analyses. Accordingly,

[19] Model 4 in PROCESS.
[20] Model 1 in PROCESS.

only two first-stage moderating variables were retained for the analyses of moderated mediation – namely, LMX and leader apologies.

***Step 3: Conditional process modeling***. The final set of analyses therefore examines the effects of perceived transgression severity on the outcomes, as mediated by follower forgiveness of the leader. Two moderators of the relationship between perceptions of severity and forgiveness were included (namely, LMX and leader apologies). Finally, one moderator of the relationship between forgiveness and the outcomes was included (either overall continuance commitment or one of its two subscales – high sacrifice and low alternatives). These analyses were performed using conditional process modeling (Hayes, 2013) in PROCESS[21].

As PROCESS allows only one dependent variable to be included in the model at a time, the analyses below are organized by outcome. The section begins with results pertaining to follower intentions to leave the organization, followed by deviance directed toward individuals and deviance directed toward the organization.

As the theoretical model proposed different moderating effects for each of the two dimensions of continuance commitment (i.e., low alternatives and high sacrifice) on the relationship between forgiveness and turnover intentions, two analyses are performed for this outcome – the first includes LMX and apologies as first-stage moderators and LA as a second-stage moderator, while the second includes LMX and apologies as first-stage moderators and HS as the second stage moderator. In contrast, the theoretical model

[21] Model 23 in PROCESS was used for all subsequent analyses. This model allows the researcher to investigate the mediating effects of one or more variables (in this case, forgiveness) on the relationship between one independent variable (perceptions of severity) and one dependent variable, along with two first-stage moderators (LMX and leader apologies) and one second-stage moderator (either low alternatives, high sacrifice, or overall continuance commitment).

proposed that continuance commitment, as a global construct, would moderate the relationship between forgiveness and counterproductive behavior. Consequently, one analysis is performed with respect to deviance directed toward individuals and one analysis is performed with respect to deviance directed at the organization (in both cases, using LMX and apologies as first-stage moderators and continuance commitment as the second-stage moderator).

The results pertaining to each of the above-mentioned steps are presented in detail below.

**Step 1: Mediation**. In this first step, the mediating effect of forgiveness is examined for each of the three outcome variables (turnover intentions, CPB-I and CPB-O). The models analyzed are depicted below in Figures 9 to 11.

Figure 9

*Forgiveness as a Mediator of the Relationship Between Severity and TIs*


Figure 10

*Forgiveness as a Mediator of the Relationship Between Severity and CPB-I*

Figure 11

*Forgiveness as a Mediator of the Relationship Between Severity and CPB-O*


***Turnover intentions***. Using the simple mediation model in PROCESS, the section begins with the results pertaining to follower intentions to leave the organization. The results are summarized in Table 16 below ($N = 316$).

Table 16

*Analysis of the Mediating Effect of Forgiveness on the Relationship between Severity and TI (Model 4)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Outcome: Forgiveness* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 2.90 | .22 | 13.06 | .00** | 2.46 | 3.34 |
| Severity | -.19 | .03 | -6.87 | .00** | -.25 | -.14 |
| TTF | .35 | .03 | 10.75 | .00** | .29 | .42 |
| *Outcome: Turnover intentions* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 4.41 | .47 | 9.39 | .00** | 3.49 | 5.34 |
| Forgiveness | -.44 | .10 | -4.60 | .00** | -.63 | -.25 |
| Severity | .11 | .05 | 2.11 | .04* | .01 | .21 |
| TTF | -.10 | .07 | -1.60 | .11 | -.23 | .02 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. LLCI = Lower level confidence interval, ULCI = Upper level confidence interval. $N = 316$.

Hypothesis 1 stated that perceptions of transgression severity would be negatively related to forgiveness of the leader. As can be seen in the table, this hypothesis was supported. Perceptions of transgression severity significantly impacted forgiveness, such that the more severe the offense was perceived to be, the less forgiveness was accorded to the leader. Dispositional forgiveness (a control variable) was also a significant predictor of forgiveness, such that a higher tendency to forgive was associated with more forgiveness.

Hypothesis 5 proposed that forgiveness would be negatively related to intentions to leave the organization. Supporting this hypothesis, forgiveness significantly influenced TIs, such that higher levels of forgiveness were associated with lower intentions to leave. Hypothesis 10 proposed a positive main effect of perceptions of transgression severity on TIs. Supporting this hypothesis, severity directly influenced TIs, such that transgressions perceived to be more severe in nature were associated with higher turnover intentions. The confidence intervals for all significant relationships noted above did not include 0.

Finally, Hypothesis 12 proposed that forgiveness would mediate the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness. The results are supportive of this hypothesis (indirect effect = .09, boot SE = .02, LLCI = .04, ULCI = .14[22]). As the confidence interval for this indirect effect does not include 0, the evidence supports forgiveness as a mediator of the above-mentioned relationship. The positive coefficient of the indirect effect is reflective of the pattern proposed in the theoretical model (where the relationship between severity and forgiveness is negative, and the relationship between forgiveness and TIs is negative, resulting in a positive coefficient for the indirect effect).

[22] LLCI = Lower level confidence interval, ULCI = Upper level confidence interval

***CPB-I***. The mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship between severity perceptions and CPB-I was next examined. The results are presented below in Table 17.

A negative relationship emerged between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness of the leader, supporting Hypothesis 1. Thus, higher perceptions of the severity of the offense were associated with lower levels of follower forgiveness. Dispositional forgiveness also significantly impacted forgiveness, such that participants who reported a greater tendency to forgive indicated that they forgave the leader more for the interpersonal transgression.

Table 17

*Analysis of the Mediating Effect of Forgiveness on the Relationship between Severity and CPB-I (Model 4)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Outcome: Forgiveness* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 2.91 | .28 | 10.56 | .00** | 2.37 | 3.45 |
| Severity | -.19 | .03 | -5.76 | .00** | -.26 | -.13 |
| TTF | .35 | .03 | 10.03 | .00** | .28 | .42 |
| *Outcome: Counterproductive Behavior toward the Individual* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 2.71 | .37 | 7.24 | .00** | 1.97 | 3.45 |
| Forgiveness | -.28 | .08 | -3.61 | .00** | -.43 | -.13 |
| Severity | -.09 | .04 | -2.24 | .03* | -.17 | -.01 |
| TTF | .06 | .05 | 1.21 | .23 | -.04 | .15 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. $N = 316$.

Hypothesis 6 predicted that forgiveness would be negatively related to engagement in counterproductive behavior. This hypothesis was supported with respect to deviance directed toward individuals. Participants with higher forgiveness of the leader reported less CPB-I.

Hypothesis 11 proposed that perceptions of transgression severity and counterproductive behavior would be positively related (both directed toward individuals and the organization). Interestingly, the main effect in Study 2 was negative, such that higher perceptions of the gravity of the offense were associated with *less* interpersonal deviance. Consequently, Hypothesis 11 was not supported. Please note that the confidence intervals for all significant effects noted above exclude 0.

Finally, Hypothesis 13 proposed that forgiveness would mediate the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and counterproductive work behavior. Specific to CPB-I, the results provide support for this mediation hypothesis (indirect effect = .05, boot SE = .02, boot LLCI = .02, boot ULCI = .10). As the confidence interval does not include 0, the evidence suggests that forgiveness is a mediator of the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and CPB-I. The positive coefficient of the indirect effect reflects the pattern proposed in the theoretical model (where the relationship between severity and forgiveness is negative, and the relationship between forgiveness and CPB-I is negative, resulting in a positive indirect effect).

***CPB-O***. Finally, the mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship between perceptions of transgressions severity and CPB-O was examined. The results are summarized below in Table 18 ($N = 316$).

Table 18

*Analysis of the Mediating Effect of Forgiveness on the Relationship between Severity and CPB-O (Model 4)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Outcome: Forgiveness* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 2.91 | .28 | 10.56 | .00** | 2.37 | 3.45 |
| Severity | -.19 | .03 | -5.76 | .00** | -.26 | -.13 |
| TTF | .35 | .03 | 10.03 | .00** | .28 | .42 |
| *Outcome: Counterproductive Behavior toward the Organization* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 2.85 | .38 | 7.42 | .00** | 2.10 | 3.61 |
| Forgiveness | -.26 | .08 | -3.30 | .00** | -.42 | -.11 |
| Severity | -.10 | .04 | -2.55 | .01* | -.18 | -.02 |
| TTF | .06 | .05 | 1.20 | .23 | -.04 | -.15 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. $N = 316$.

As can be seen in the table, perceptions of transgression severity significantly influenced follower forgiveness. Supporting Hypothesis 1, higher perceptions of transgression severity were associated with lower levels of forgiveness of the leader. Dispositional forgiveness was also a significant predictor of forgiveness. Participants with a higher tendency to forgive reported more forgiveness of the offending leader.

Forgiveness negatively influenced CPB-O, supporting Hypothesis 6. Participants who forgave the leader more for the offense reported less deviant behavior toward the organization. Hypothesis 11, which predicted a positive main effect of perceived

transgression severity on counterproductive behavior, was not supported for deviance directed at the organization. While the effect of severity on CPB-O was significant, the relationship that emerged was negative. Interestingly, this suggests that higher perceptions of transgression severity were associated with *less* incidences of deviant behavior toward the organization. The confidence intervals for all relationships noted above do not contain 0.

Finally, the results suggest that forgiveness acts as mediator of the relationship between perceptions of severity and deviance directed toward the organization (indirect effect = 05, boot SE = .02, boot LLCI = .02, boot ULCI = .09). As the confidence interval for this effect does not include 0, Hypothesis 13 is supported. The positive coefficient of the indirect effect reflects the pattern proposed in the theoretical model (where the relationship between severity and forgiveness is negative, and the relationship between forgiveness and CPB-O is negative, leading to a positive indirect effect)[23].

**Step 2: Moderators of the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and follower forgiveness**. In this second step, each of the three proposed moderators of the relationship between perceptions of severity and forgiveness were assessed individually using the simple moderation model in PROCESS. It was decided that only those variables demonstrating a significant effect on forgiveness of the leader (whether via a significant main effect or via a significant interaction with perceptions of severity on forgiveness) would be retained for future analyses.

***LMX***. The first moderator examined was leader-member exchange. The model analyzed is depicted below in Figure 12, followed by the results in Table 19 ($N = 317$).

[23] Note that the pattern of results was similar for both CPB-I and CPB-O in Step 1.

Figure 12

*LMX as a Moderator of the Relationship Between Severity and Forgiveness*

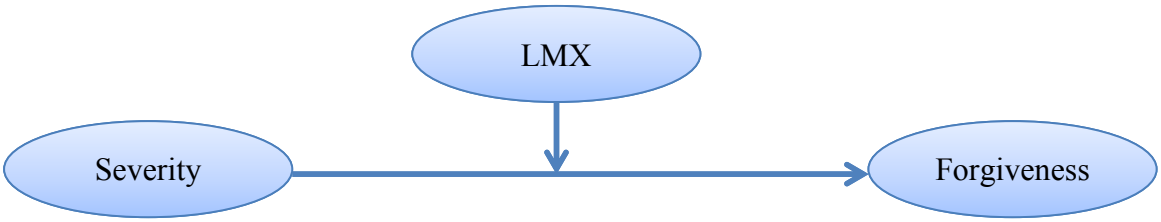



Table 19

*Analysis of the Moderating Effect of LMX on the Relationship between Severity and Forgiveness (Model 1)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 1.90 | .13 | 15.20 | .00** | 1.65 | 2.15 |
| LMX | .24 | .04 | 5.86 | .00** | .16 | .31 |
| Severity | -.14 | .03 | -4.94 | .00** | -.20 | -.08 |
| Sev x LMX | -.05 | .03 | -2.01 | .05* | -.10 | -.0011 |
| TTF | .32 | .03 | 10.01 | .00** | .25 | .38 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. $N = 317$.

The results indicate that the quality of the relationship between the leader and follower positively impacts forgiveness. The interaction between perceptions of severity and LMX on forgiveness was also significant, suggesting that LMX does act as a moderator of the relationship between severity perceptions and forgiveness. The interaction is presented visually in Figure 13 below, followed by the conditional effects

of perceived transgression severity on forgiveness at high, average and low levels of leader-member exchange in Table 20. The $R^2$ increase due to the interaction is statistically significant ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, $F = 4.04$, df1 = 1, df2 = 312, $p < .05$).

Recall that competing interaction hypotheses were proposed in this dissertation with respect to LMX. Hypothesis 2a argued that LMX would moderate the relationship between severity and forgiveness such that the relationship would be weakened when LMX was high versus low (i.e., high LMX would act as a buffer of the severity of the transgression). In contrast, Hypothesis 2b proposed that LMX would moderate the relationship such that the relationship would be strengthened when LMX was high versus low (i.e., high LMX would exacerbate the effects of the severity of the offense). As can be seen in the figure below, a negative slope is present for all levels of LMX. Thus, regardless of the quality of the relationship with the leader, forgiveness of the leader decreases as the severity of the offense increases. It is also notable that forgiveness is always highest when the quality of the relationship between the leader and follower is high, and lowest when the quality of the relationship is perceived to be low. These results reflect the main effects of severity and LMX, as seen in Table 18 above.

Figure 13

*Interaction of Severity and LMX on Follower Forgiveness (Model 1)*

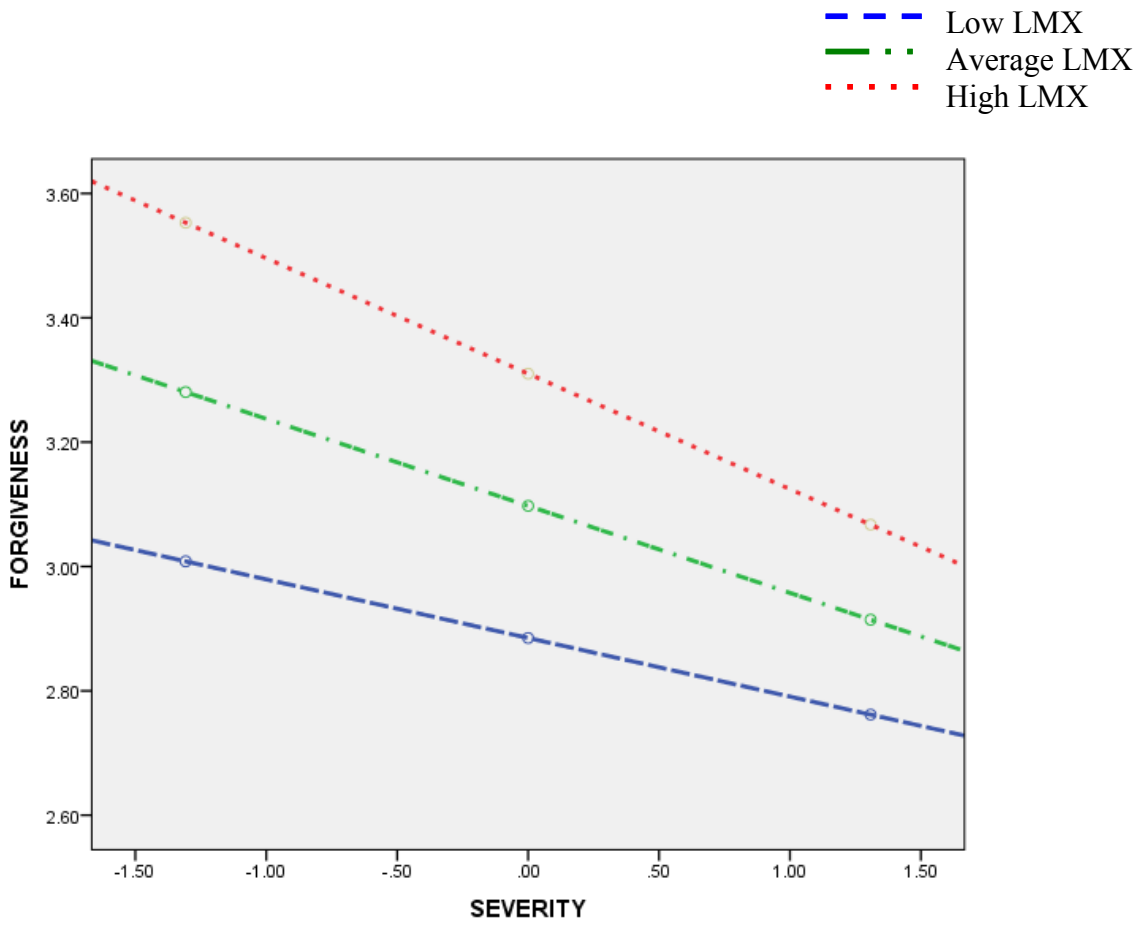



Table 20

*Conditional Effect of Severity on Forgiveness at High, Average, and Low LMX*

| LMX | Effect | SE | *t* | *p* | LLCI | ULCI |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| High | .90 | -.19 | .03 | -5.95 | .00** | -.25 | -.12 |
| Average | .00 | -.14 | .03 | -4.94 | .00** | -.20 | -.08 |
| Low | -.90 | -.09 | .04 | -2.31 | .02* | -.17 | -.01 |

*Note*. High = 1 *SD* above the mean; Average = the mean; Low = 1 *SD* below the mean.

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

However, the graph reveals that the negative slope is more pronounced when LMX is high, as compared to when LMX is low. This suggests that the negative effect of perceptions of transgression severity on follower forgiveness of the leader is strengthened by high LMX. The conditional effects of severity on forgiveness and different levels of LMX also reveal that the moderating effect is stronger for high LMX (coefficient = -.19) than for low LMX (coefficient = -.09). As such, Hypothesis 2b, which proposed that LMX would magnify the negative effects of severity on forgiveness, was supported. Consequently, Hypothesis 2a was disconfirmed.

***Followership***. The second moderator examined was followership. The model analyzed is presented below in Figure 14. The results are next summarized in Table 21.

The results ($N = 316$) show that neither followership alone, nor its interaction with perceptions of severity, significantly influenced follower forgiveness of the leader. Consequently, Hypothesis 3 – which proposed that followership would moderate the relationship between severity perceptions and forgiveness – was not supported.

Figure 14

*Followership as a Moderator of the Relationship Between Severity and Forgiveness*

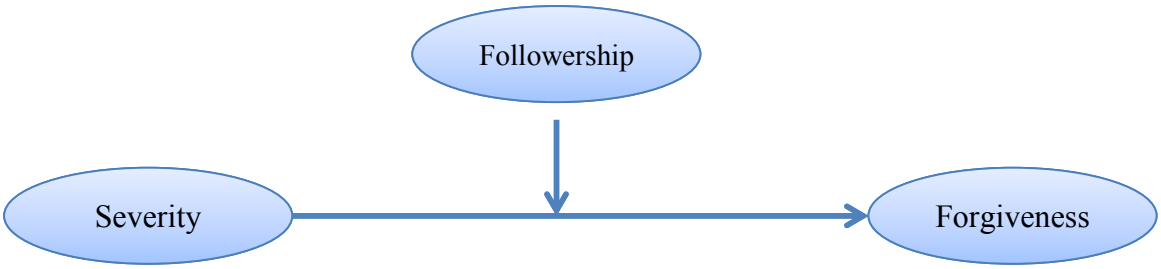


Table 21

*Analysis of the Moderating Effect of Followership on the Relationship between Severity and Forgiveness (Model 1)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 1.83 | .13 | 14.04 | .00** | 1.57 | 2.09 |
| Followership | .07 | .06 | 1.24 | .22 | -.04 | .19 |
| Severity | -.21 | .03 | -7.20 | .00** | -.27 | -.16 |
| Sev x FOLL | -.05 | .04 | -1.48 | .14 | -.12 | .02 |
| TTF | .34 | .03 | 10.37 | .00** | .28 | .41 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$. $N = 316$.

***Leader apologies***. The third and final of the first-stage moderators examined in Step 2 was leader apologies. The model analyzed is depicted in Figure 15 below and the results are presented in Table 22 ($N = 315$).

Figure 15

*Apologies as a Moderator of the Relationship Between Severity and Forgiveness*

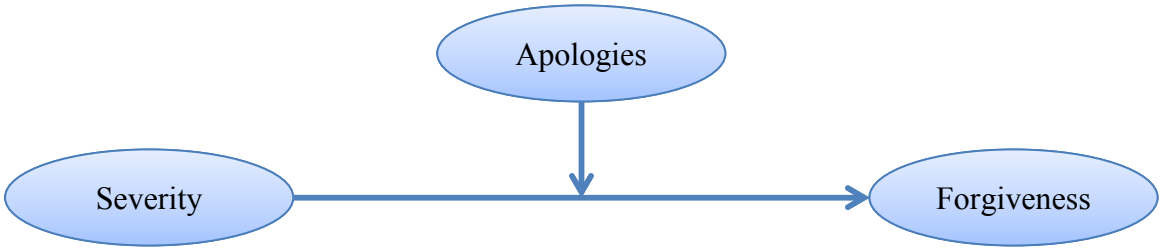


Table 22

*Analysis of the Moderating Effect of Leader Apologies on the Relationship between Severity ad Forgiveness (Model 1)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 1.86 | .13 | 14.49 | .00** | 1.61 | 2.11 |
| Apologies | .06 | .02 | 2.98 | .00** | .02 | .09 |
| Severity | -.18 | .03 | -6.30 | .00** | -.24 | -.12 |
| Sev x APOL | .00 | .01 | .18 | .86 | -.02 | .03 |
| TTF | .33 | .03 | 10.24 | .00** | .27 | .40 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$. $N = 315$.

The results suggest that leader apologies exert a significant main effect on follower forgiveness (please note that the confidence interval does not include 0). Thus, the more that participants perceive the leader to have apologized for his or her offensive action, the more forgiveness is accorded. However, the non-significant interaction effect fails to provide support for Hypothesis 4, which proposed that leader apologies would moderate the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness of the leader.

***Step 2 – summary***. As both the quality of the leader-follower relationship and leader apologies significant impacted follower forgiveness of the leader (the former demonstrating both significant main and interaction effects and the latter displaying a significant main effect only), the two variables are retained for the remaining analyses. However, as followership did not exert a significant influence on forgiveness in the current study, it is omitted from all subsequent analyses.

**Step 3: Conditional process modeling (Hayes, 2013)**. As a final step, the effects of perceptions of transgression severity on each outcome, as mediated by forgiveness, were examined. All analyses also assessed two moderators of the relationship between perceived severity and forgiveness (namely, LMX and leader apologies), as well as one moderator of the relationship between forgiveness and the outcomes (either continuance commitment or one of its dimensions). The analyses for each outcome are presented in turn (specifically, TI, followed by CPB-I and CPB-O).

***Turnover intentions: Analysis using LMX and apologies as moderators of the relationship between severity and forgiveness, and LA as a moderator of the relationship between forgiveness and TI.*** This first analysis assessed the indirect effect of perceptions of severity on TIs through forgiveness, as well as the moderating effects of LMX and apologies on the relationship between severity and forgiveness and the moderating effect of low alternatives on the relationship between forgiveness and TIs. The model is presented below in Figure 16, followed by the results in Table 23 ($N = 310$).

Figure 16

*Relationship between Severity and TI, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and LA as a Second-Stage Moderator*

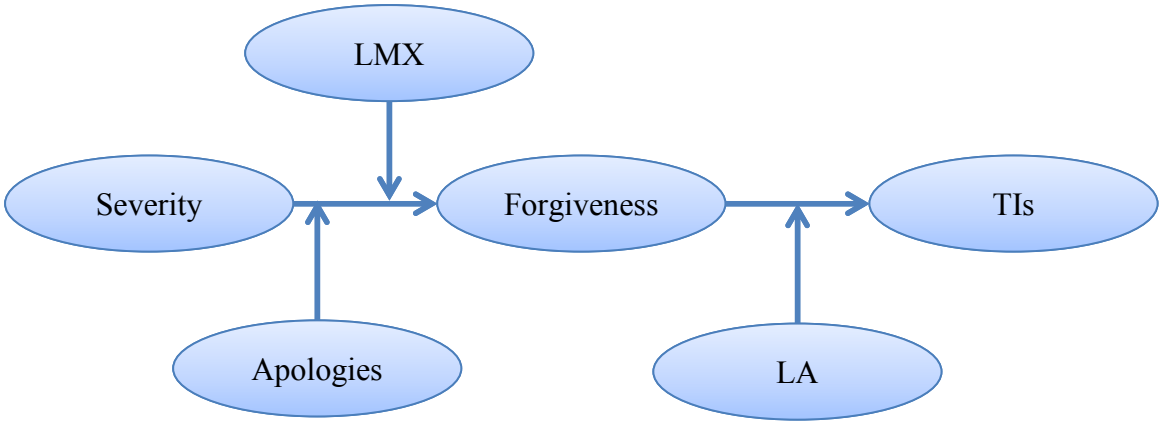


Table 23

*Analysis of the Relationship between Severity and TI, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and LA as a Second-Stage Moderator (Model 23)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Outcome: Forgiveness* | | | | | | |
| Constant | -1.20 | .12 | -9.59 | .00** | -1.45 | -.96 |
| Severity | -.14 | .03 | -4.88 | .00** | -.20 | -.08 |
| LMX | .22 | .05 | 4.72 | .00** | .13 | .31 |
| Sev x LMX | -.06 | .03 | -2.07 | .04** | -.11 | -.0029 |
| Apology | .01 | .02 | .63 | .53 | -.03 | .05 |
| Sev x APOL | .01 | .01 | .38 | .70 | -.02 | .03 |
| TTF | .31 | .03 | 9.88 | .00** | .25 | .38 |
| *Outcome: Turnover intentions* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 3.44 | .26 | 13.36 | .00** | 2.93 | 3.94 |
| Forgiveness | -.42 | .10 | -4.23 | .00** | -.63 | -.22 |
| Severity | .11 | .05 | 2.08 | .04* | .01 | .21 |
| LA | .20 | .06 | 3.69 | .00** | .10 | .31 |
| FOR x LA | .12 | .06 | 1.91 | .06$^{\dagger}$ | -.0034 | .24 |
| TTF | -.05 | .07 | -.71 | .48 | -.18 | .08 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, $^{\dagger}$ $p < .10$. $N = 310$.

The results are consistent with those from the analyses performed using the simple mediating model (examining forgiveness as a mediator of the relationship

between severity and TIs) and the simple moderating model (examining LMX as a moderator of the relationship between severity and forgiveness) above. However, the results from the present analysis are not consistent with those from the simple moderation model exploring the moderating effect of apologies on the relationship between severity and forgiveness of the leader. Whereas leader apologies demonstrated a significant main effect on forgiveness when analyzed using the simple moderation model, the effect of apologies on forgiveness emerged as non-significant in the present analysis.

The above analysis also incorporated a moderator of the relationship between forgiveness and TIs – in this case, perceptions of low alternatives. The results suggest that perceptions of LA significantly predict intentions to leave the organization, such that the more that participants perceived low alternatives to their current employment situations, the more they reported intentions to leave the organization.

Importantly, a marginally significant interaction of forgiveness and low alternatives on TIs is also present. However, it is notable that the confidence interval *includes* 0. Nevertheless, as the interaction was marginally significant and for the sake of completeness, the nature of this interaction was investigated. A simple moderation model was again performed, examining the moderating effect of LA on the relationship between forgiveness and TIs. The model analyzed is depicted below in Figure 17, followed by the results in Table 24 and the conditional effects of forgiveness on turnover intentions and high perceptions of few alternatives, average perceptions of few alternatives, and low perceptions of few alternatives in Table 25. The $R^2$ increase due to the interaction is statistically significant ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, $F = 4.20$, df1 = 1, df2 = 316, $p < .05$).

Figure 17

*Interaction of Forgiveness and Low Alternatives on Turnover Intentions (Model 1)*

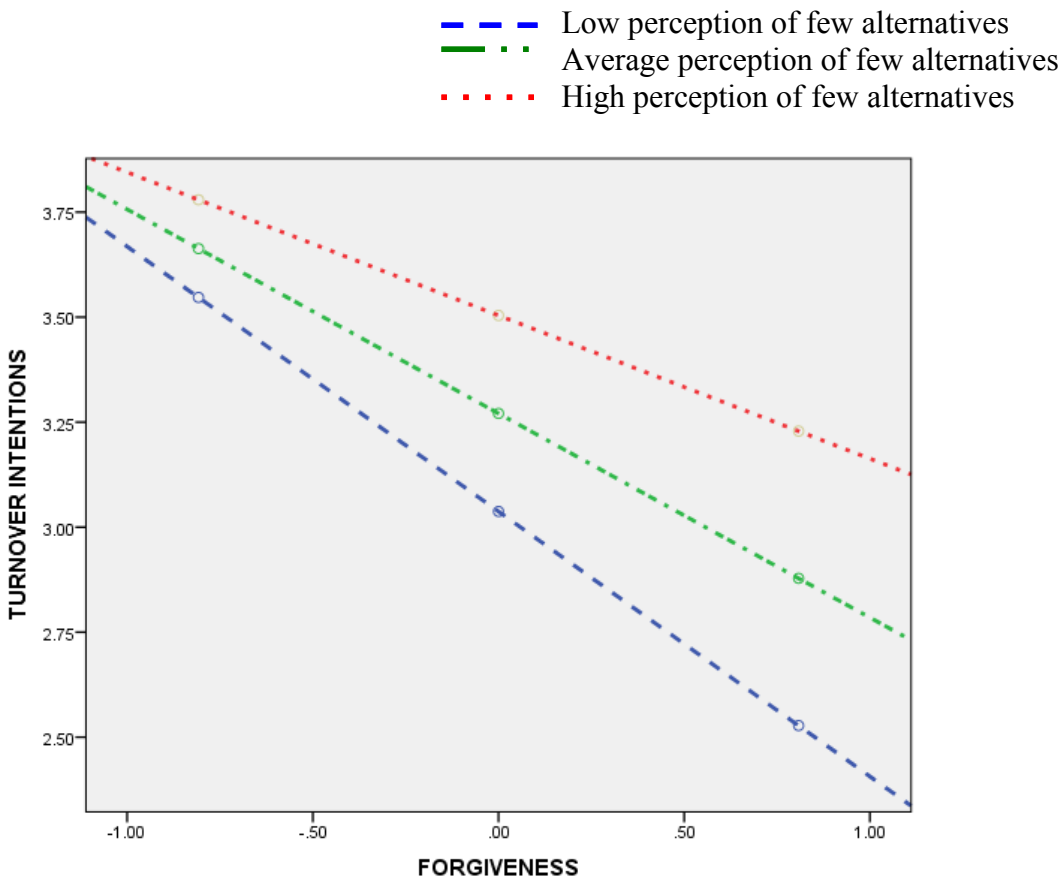



Table 24

*Analysis of the Moderating Effect of LA on the Relationship between Forgiveness and TI*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 3.40 | .25 | 13.59 | .00** | 2.91 | 3.89 |
| LA | .20 | .05 | 3.77 | .00** | .10 | .31 |
| Forgiveness | -.49 | .09 | -5.34 | .00** | -.66 | -.31 |
| FOR x LA | .13 | .06 | 2.05 | .04* | .01 | .25 |
| TTF | -.03 | .06 | -.53 | .60 | -.16 | .09 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. $N = 321$.

Table 25

*Conditional Effect of Forgiveness on TIs at High, Average, and Low LA*

| **Level of LA** | | **Effect** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| High | 1.14 | -.34 | .13 | -2.64 | .01* | -.59 | -.09 |
| Average | .00 | -.49 | .09 | -5.34 | .00** | -.66 | .31 |
| Low | -1.14 | -.63 | .10 | -6.35 | .00 | -.83 | -.44 |

*Note*. High = 1 *SD* above the mean; Average = the mean; Low = 1 *SD* below the mean. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

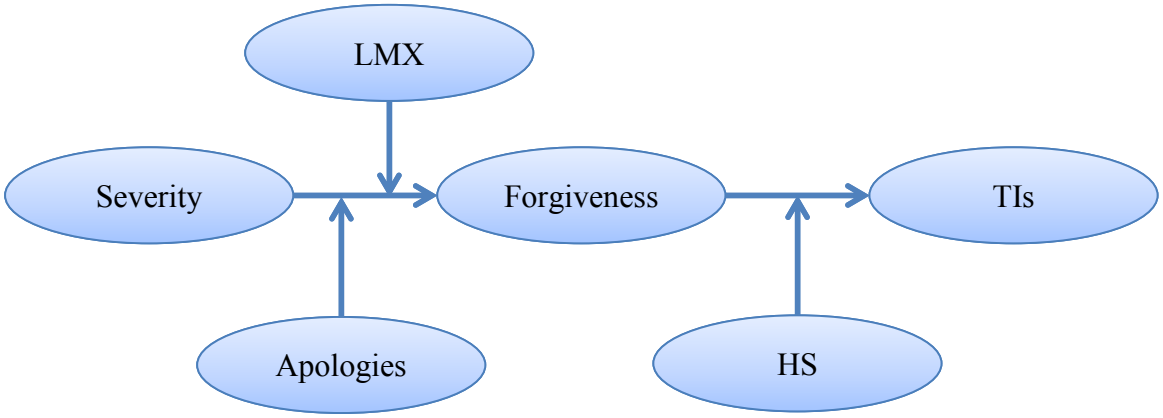
Recall that Hypothesis 8 proposed that perceptions of low alternatives would moderate the relationship between forgiveness and TIs, such that the negative relationship would be stronger when followers perceived low (versus high) alternatives to their current situation. As can be seen in Figure 17 above, lower levels of forgiveness are associated with greater intentions to leave the organization for all levels of the moderator (i.e., whether perceptions of low alternatives were low, average, or high). However, the negative slope is more pronounced when perceptions of LA are low, as compared to high. Stated differently, when participants felt that they had many other opportunities outside of their current employment situation, the negative effect of forgiveness on intentions to leave the organization was stronger. Consequently, Hypothesis 8 was not supported. This interaction, opposite to the hypothesized direction, is nonetheless notable.

***Turnover intentions: Analysis using LMX and apologies as moderators of the relationship between severity and forgiveness, and HS as a moderator of the relationship between forgiveness and TI***. This second analysis examined forgiveness as a mediator of the relationship between transgression severity and intentions to leave the

organization, with LMX and apologies as moderators of the relationship between severity and forgiveness and high sacrifice as a moderator of the relationship between forgiveness and TI. The model is presented below in Figure 18, followed by the results in Table 26 (*N* = 304).

Figure 18

*Relationship between Severity and TI, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and HS as a Second-Stage Moderator*




The results were again consistent with previous analyses using both the simple mediation and moderation models, with the exception of the non-significant main effect of leader apologies on follower forgiveness of the leader.

The results reveal that perceptions of high sacrifice were significantly related to intentions to leave the organization, such that participants who perceived that leaving their current employment situation would entail a high level of sacrifice reported less turnover intentions. Hypothesis 7 proposed that high sacrifice would moderate the relationship between follower forgiveness as TIs, such that the relationship would be

weakened when perceptions of HS were high versus low. As the interaction between forgiveness and high sacrifice was not significant, Hypothesis 7 was not supported.

Table 26

*Analysis of the Relationship between Severity and TI, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and HS as a Second Stage Moderator (Model 23)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Outcome: Forgiveness* | | | | | | |
| Constant | -1.21 | .13 | -9.51 | .00** | -1.46 | -.96 |
| Severity | -.14 | .03 | -4.57 | .00** | -.20 | -.08 |
| LMX | .21 | .05 | 4.45 | .00** | .12 | .30 |
| Sev x LMX | -.05 | .03 | -1.97 | .01* | -.11 | -.0001 |
| Apology | .01 | .02 | .51 | .56 | -.03 | .05 |
| Sev x APOL | .01 | .02 | .29 | .70 | -.02 | .03 |
| TTF | .32 | .03 | 8.84 | .00** | .25 | .38 |
| *Outcome: Turnover intentions* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 3.63 | .26 | 13.95 | .00** | 3.12 | 4.14 |
| Forgiveness | -.43 | .10 | -4.35 | .00** | -.63 | -.24 |
| Severity | .12 | .05 | 2.30 | .02* | .02 | .23 |
| HS | -.13 | .06 | -2.10 | .04* | -.26 | -.0086 |
| FOR x HS | .00 | .07 | .05 | .96 | -.13 | .14 |
| TTF | -.10 | .07 | -1.46 | .14 | -.23 | .03 |

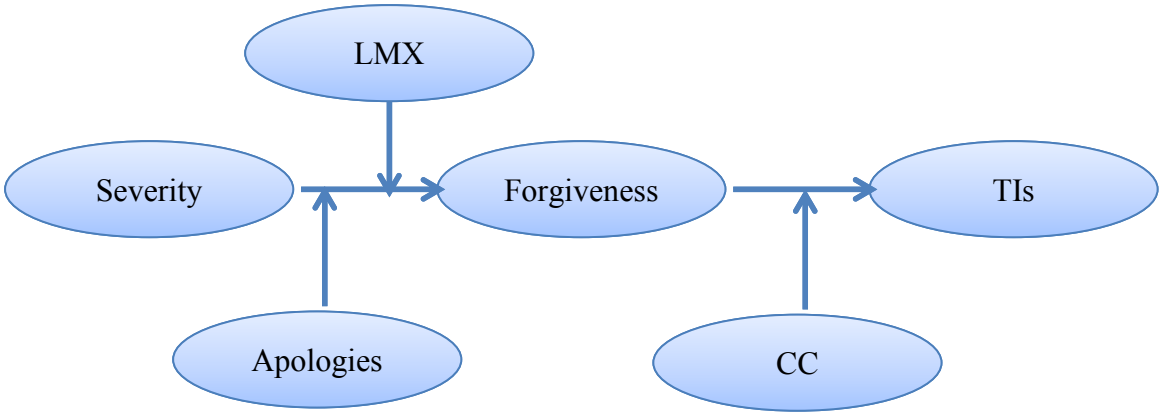
*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. $N = 304$.

It is interesting to note that the two dimensions of continuance commitment displayed opposite relationships with turnover intentions in the current dissertation. While perceptions of low alternatives were positively related with intentions to leave the organization (i.e., participants who perceived that they had few alternatives to their current employment situation tended to have more intentions to leave the organization), perceptions of high sacrifice were negatively related to the same outcome (i.e., the more that participants perceived leaving to entail a high degree of sacrifice, the lower their intentions to leave). As such, evidence from the current study suggests that the two dimensions of continuance commitment may not behave in the same manner with respect to follower intentions to leave the organization. This result is in line with research that has found the two dimensions to influence turnover intentions in different ways (e.g., Bentein et al., 2005; Jaros, 1997).

***Supplementary analysis***. This dissertation proposed separate moderation hypotheses for each of the two dimensions of continuance commitment on the relationship between forgiveness and intentions to leave the organization. As a post-hoc analysis, the model was re-run to examine whether the results would differ if the global construct of organizational continuance commitment was included as the moderator (in place of each subscale). The model tested is presented graphically in Figure 19 below.

Figure 19

*Relationship between Severity and TI, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and CC as a Second-Stage Moderator*




The results suggest that the global construct of CC was not a significant predictor of intentions to leave the organization. Additionally, the interaction between forgiveness and continuance commitment on TIs was non-significant. As such, it appears that the moderating effects in the current study are best explored using the two dimensions separately, as originally theorized in this dissertation.

In so doing, each dimension of continuance commitment (i.e., low alternatives and high sacrifice) emerged as significant predictors of forgiveness – though they behaved in opposite ways. The results further revealed a marginally significant moderating effect for low alternatives on the relationship between forgiveness and TIs. Though the nature of the interaction did not conform to the hypothesis proposed in this dissertation, it is nonetheless a finding of note.

**Recap**. The analyses performed in Step 1 examined the indirect effect of perceptions of transgression severity on all three outcomes, via the mediating effect of

follower forgiveness of the leader. The results suggest that forgiveness does indeed function as a mediator of the relationship between severity perceptions and turnover intentions, as well as the relationship between severity and CPBs.

As a second step, the moderating effects of LMX, followership, and leader apologies on the relationship between severity perceptions and forgiveness were investigated. The results suggest that the quality of the leader-follower relationship does moderate the above-mentioned relationship, such that the negative effect of severity on forgiveness is magnified by a high quality leader-follower relationship. Leader apologies demonstrated a significant main effect on forgiveness when examined using the simple moderation model, however, this effect became non-significant when the larger model was examined. In contrast, neither a significant main effect, nor a significant interaction effect, emerged with respect to followership when assessed using the simple moderation model. As such, only LMX and leader apologies were included in subsequent analyses.

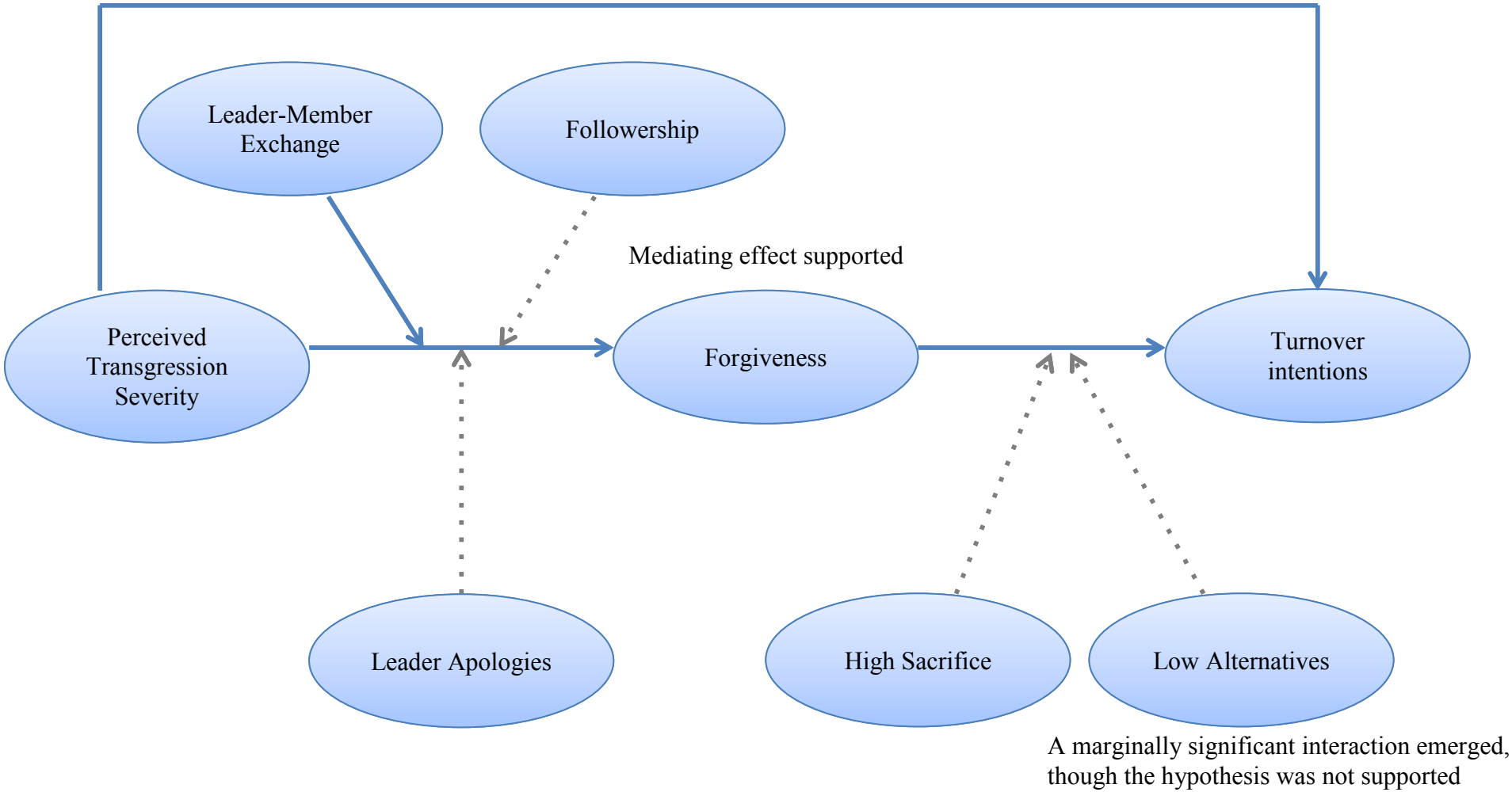
As PROCESS only allows one dependent variable to be included in a model, the results section is organized by outcome. Accordingly, this first section closed with the analysis of the effects of perceived transgression severity on intentions to leave the organization, as mediated by forgiveness (with two moderators – LMX and apologies – of the relationship between severity and forgiveness, and one moderator – LA or HS – of the relationship between forgiveness and TI). In addition to the significant findings summarized above, this analysis also revealed a marginally significant interaction effect for one dimension of continuance commitment (low alternatives) on the relationship between follower forgiveness and TIs. Although this interaction did not conform to the moderation hypothesis proposed in this dissertation, it is nonetheless notable.

In sum, several hypotheses were supported (i.e., Hypotheses 1, 2b, 5, 10, and 12), while others were not (i.e., Hypotheses 2a, 3, 4, 7, and 8). Figure 20 presents key significant and non-significant findings pertaining to follower intentions to leave the organization. Please note that solid lines represent significant relationships, while dashed lines denote non-significant, though hypothesized, relationships[24]

[24] To examine whether it was appropriate to combine the two samples in this study (i.e., the sample obtained through Qualtrics Panel Services, $N$ = 310, and the convenience sample, N = 23), all analyses were re-run using only the sample obtained using panel services. The results were largely consistent with those reported in the section above, with three exceptions: 1) when using the simple mediation model (Model 4) to examine the mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship between severity and TIs, dispositional forgiveness demonstrated a significant effect on TIs ($p$ = .04) when only the sample obtained via panel services was used, 2) when assessing moderated mediation for the indirect relationship of severity on TIs through forgiveness (with LMX and apologies as first-stage moderators and HS as a second-stage moderator), dispositional forgiveness again significantly influenced TIs ($p$ = .05), and 3) when using the simple moderation model (Model 1) to examine the moderating effect of LA on the relationship between forgiveness and TIs, the significance of the interaction was slightly higher than the .05 threshold ($p$ = .0516). Overall, the pattern of results was very similar to the findings obtained when the full sample was used ($N$ = 336), suggesting that it is appropriate to report the results of the analyses using the full sample.

Figure 20

*Overall Representation of Results for Turnover Intentions*




*Note*. Significance and non-significant results reported above are taken from the analyses using conditional process modeling, with the exception of the mediating effects of forgiveness (taken from the results the simple mediation model) and the non-significant moderating effect of followership (based on results from the simple moderation model).

***CPB-I: Analysis using LMX and apologies as moderators of the relationship between severity and forgiveness, and CC as a moderator of the relationship between forgiveness and CPB-I***. The following section presents the results of the analysis of the relationship between perceptions of transgression and severity on deviance directed toward individuals, as mediated by follower forgiveness. Two first-stage moderators (LMX and leader apologies) and one second-stage moderator (continuance commitment) are also included in the model, as depicted in Figure 21 below. Recall that the assumption of homoscedasticity was violated for both CPBs directed toward individuals (CPB-I) and the organization (CPB-O). Consequently, heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors were requested for all analyses below.

Figure 21

*Relationship between Severity and CPB-I, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and CC as a Second-Stage Moderator*

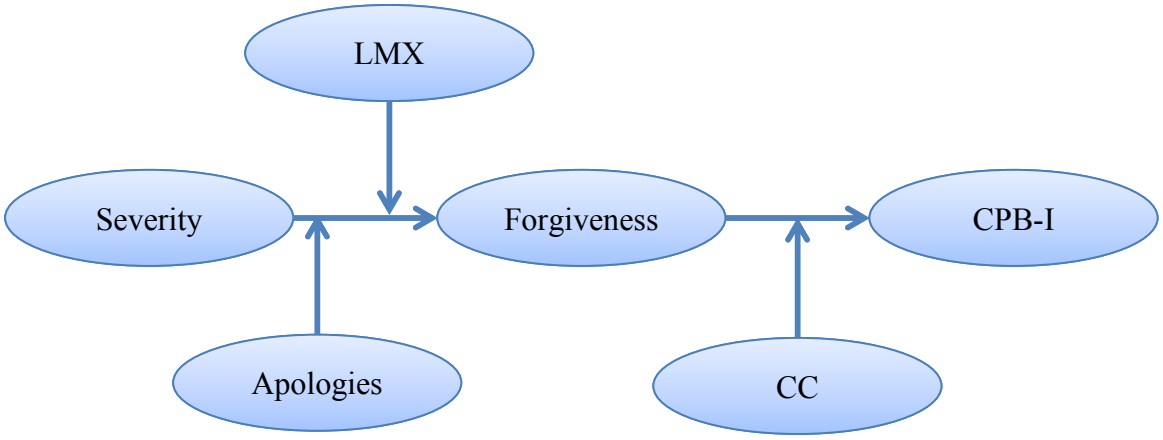


Table 27

*Analysis of the Relationship between Severity and CPB-I, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and CC as a Second-Stage Moderator (Model 23)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Outcome: Forgiveness* | | | | | | |
| Constant | -1.20 | .15 | -8.16 | .00** | -1.49 | -.91 |
| Severity | -.14 | .03 | -4.48 | .00** | -.20 | -.08 |
| LMX | .22 | .05 | 4.45 | .00** | .12 | .32 |
| Sev x LMX | -.06 | .02 | -2.62 | .01* | -.10 | -.01 |
| Apology | .01 | .02 | .52 | .60 | -.03 | .06 |
| Sev x APOL | .01 | .01 | .30 | .77 | -.03 | .04 |
| TTF | .31 | .04 | 8.80 | .00** | .24 | .38 |
| *Outcome: CPB-I* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 1.27 | .18 | 7.26 | .00** | .93 | 1.62 |
| Forgiveness | -.31 | .08 | -3.70 | .00** | -.48 | -.15 |
| Severity | -.10 | .04 | -2.54 | .01* | -.18 | -.02 |
| CC | .15 | .05 | 2.98 | .00** | .05 | .25 |
| FOR x CC | -.04 | .05 | -.47 | .47 | -.15 | .07 |
| TTF | .07 | .05 | 1.47 | .14 | -.02 | .17 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. $N = 311$.

The results, summarized in Table 27 above ($N = 311$), are consistent with those from the analyses examining the mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship

between severity and CPB-I and the simple moderation model examining the moderating effect of LMX on the relationship between severity and follower forgiveness. However, in contrast with the simple moderation model for the moderating effect of apologies on the relationship between severity and forgiveness, leader apologies did not exhibit a significant main effect on forgiveness in the current analysis.

Additionally, the results indicate that organizational continuance commitment positively predicted engagement in deviance directed toward individuals, such that higher perceptions of continuance commitment (the perception that one must stay in the organization) were associated with higher engagement in interpersonal deviance. Hypothesis 9 predicted that continuance commitment would moderate the relationship between forgiveness and CPB-I. As the interaction between forgiveness and continuance commitment was not significant, this hypothesis was not supported.

***Supplementary analysis***. The previous analysis examined organizational continuance commitment as a global construct. However, the two dimensions sometimes display different relationships with outcomes (e.g., with turnover intentions – see Bentein et al., 2005; Jaros, 1997, as well as this dissertation). As such, post-hoc analyses were conducted to ascertain whether the results would differ when the dimensions were included separately in the model. Figures 22 and 23 depict the two post-hoc analyses that were performed.

Figure 22

*Relationship between Severity and CPB-I, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and LA as a Second-Stage Moderator*

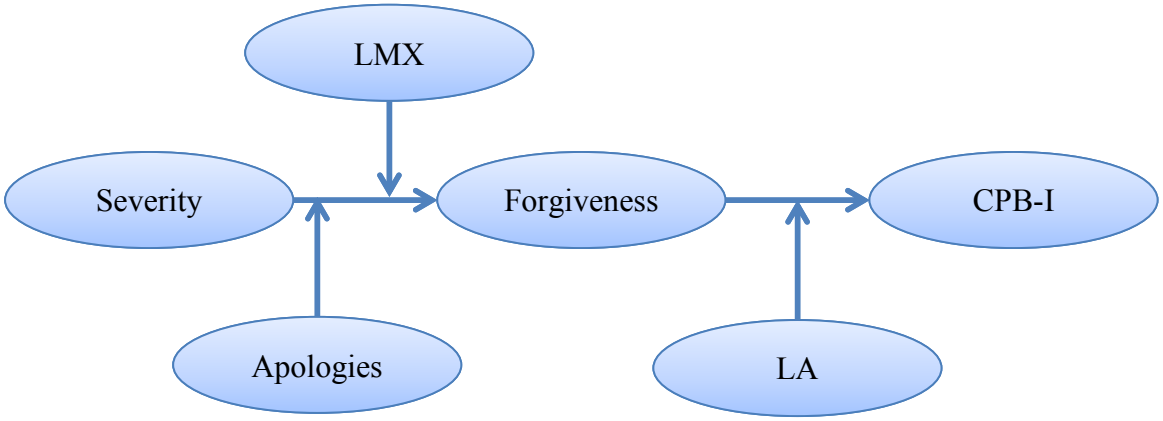
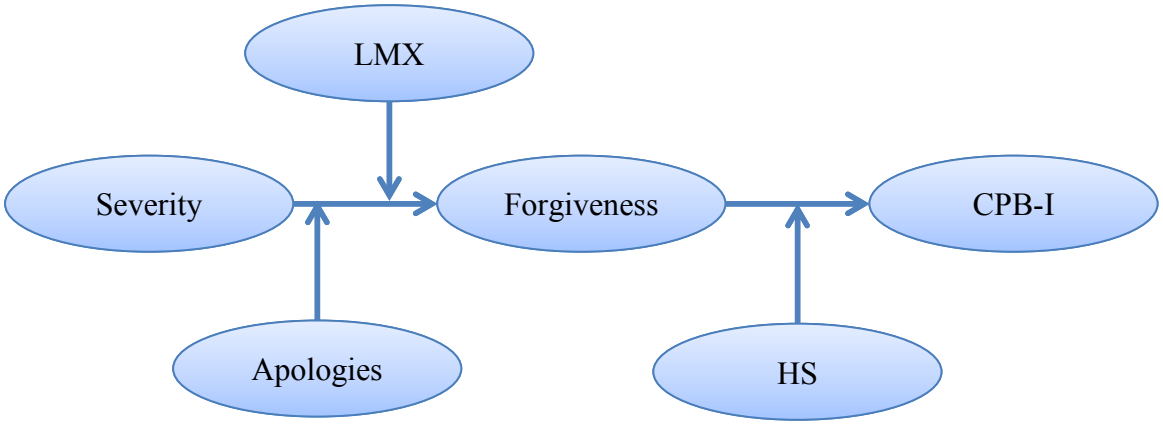



Figure 23

*Relationship between Severity and CPB-I, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and HS as a Second-Stage Moderator*



The results were consistent with those in which the global construct was used. Both low alternatives and high sacrifice were positively and significantly related to CPB-I. Furthermore, both dimensions had non-significant interactions with forgiveness on interpersonal deviance.

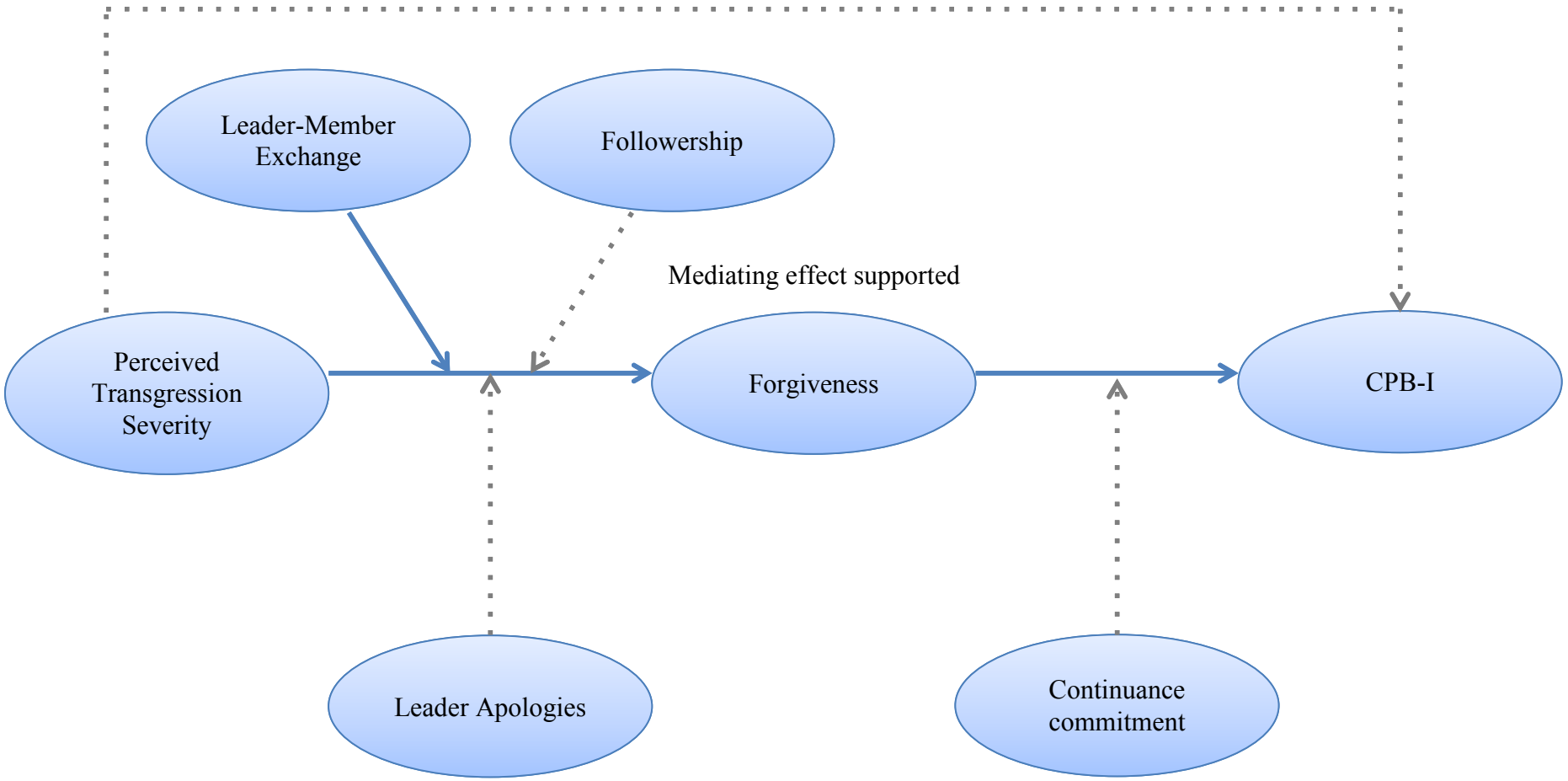
As such, there is no evidence to suggest that the dimensions behave differently with respect to the outcome of CPB-I in the current dissertation. It is therefore concluded to be appropriate to retain and report the more parsimonious model (i.e., using the global CC construct).

**Recap**. This section focused on the analysis of moderated mediation pertaining to counterproductive behavior directed toward individuals. Overall, several hypotheses received support (i.e., H1, H2B, H6, and H13). However, many hypotheses failed to receive support, including H2a, H3, H4, H9, and H11. Figure 24 below summarizes the supported and non-supported relationships proposed in the theoretical model. As before, solid lines represent significant relationships, while dashed lines denote non-significant relationships[25].

[25] Analyses were again conducted to ascertain whether it was appropriate to combine the samples obtained through panel services and through convenience snowball sampling. To this end, the analyses presented in this section were re-run using only the data from the sample obtained from panel services and the results were compared with those obtained with the full sample. The results followed the same pattern as when the full sample was used.

Figure 24

*Overall Representation of Results for CPB-I*

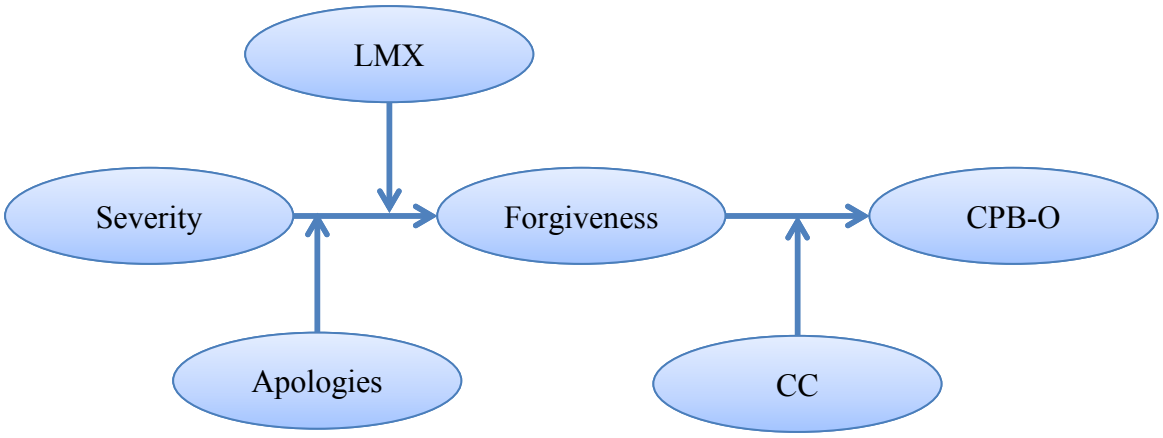



*Note*. Significance and non-significant results reported above are taken from the analyses using conditional process modeling, with the exception of the mediating effects of forgiveness (taken from the results the simple mediation model) and the non-significant moderating effect of followership (based on results from the simple moderation model).

***CPB-O: Analysis using LMX and apologies as moderators of the relationship between severity and forgiveness, and CC as a moderator of the relationship between forgiveness and CPB-O***. This final section presents the results of the analysis of the indirect effect of perceptions of transgression severity on deviance directed toward the organization, as mediated by forgiveness, and moderated by LMX and leader apologies (as first-stage moderators) and organizational continuance commitment (as a second-stage moderator). The model analyzed is presented below in Figure 25, followed by the results in Table 28 ($N = 311$).

Figure 25

*Relationship between Severity and CPB-O, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and CC as a Second-Stage Moderator*




The results are consistent with earlier analyses examining the mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship between severity and CPB-O, as well as the moderating effect of LMX on the relationship between severity perceptions and forgiveness. Again, the results from this analysis differ from those obtained using the simple moderation

model, where the moderating effect of apology on the same relationship was examined, such that the main effect of apology is non-significant in the present analysis.

Table 28

*Analysis of the Relationship between Severity and CPB-O, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and CC as a Second-Stage Moderator (Model 23)*

| **Variable** | **Coefficient** | **SE** | ***t*** | ***p*** | **LLCI** | **ULCI** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Outcome: Forgiveness* | | | | | | |
| Constant | -1.20 | .15 | -8.16 | .00** | -1.49 | -.91 |
| Severity | -.14 | .03 | -4.48 | .00** | -.20 | -.08 |
| LMX | .22 | .05 | 4.45 | .00** | .12 | .32 |
| Sev x LMX | -.06 | .02 | -2.62 | .01* | -.10 | -.01 |
| Apology | .01 | .02 | .52 | .60 | -.03 | .06 |
| Sev x APOL | .01 | .02 | .30 | .77 | -.03 | .04 |
| TTF | .31 | .04 | 8.80 | .00** | .24 | .38 |
| *Outcome: CPB-O* | | | | | | |
| Constant | 1.37 | .17 | 7.89 | .00** | 1.03 | 1.72 |
| Forgiveness | -.30 | .09 | -3.40 | .00** | -.47 | -.13 |
| Severity | -.11 | .04 | -2.77 | .01* | -.19 | -.03 |
| CC | .14 | .05 | 2.79 | .01* | .04 | .23 |
| FOR x CC | -.02 | .05 | -.30 | .76 | -.12 | .09 |
| TTF | .07 | .05 | 1.48 | .14 | -.02 | .17 |

*Note*. ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. $N = 311$.

Continuance commitment to the organization also significantly and positively predicted deviance toward the organization, such that participants who perceived higher continuance commitment engaged in more CPB-O. As the interaction between forgiveness and CC was not significant, Hypothesis 9 was not supported.

***Supplementary analysis***. Supplementary analyses were again conducted to assess whether the relationships would differ if the analyses were performed using the two dimensions of continuance commitment separately, rather than as a global construct. The two post-hoc analyses are represented in Figures 26 and 27 below.

Figure 26

*Relationship between Severity and CPB-O, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and LA as a Second-Stage Moderator*

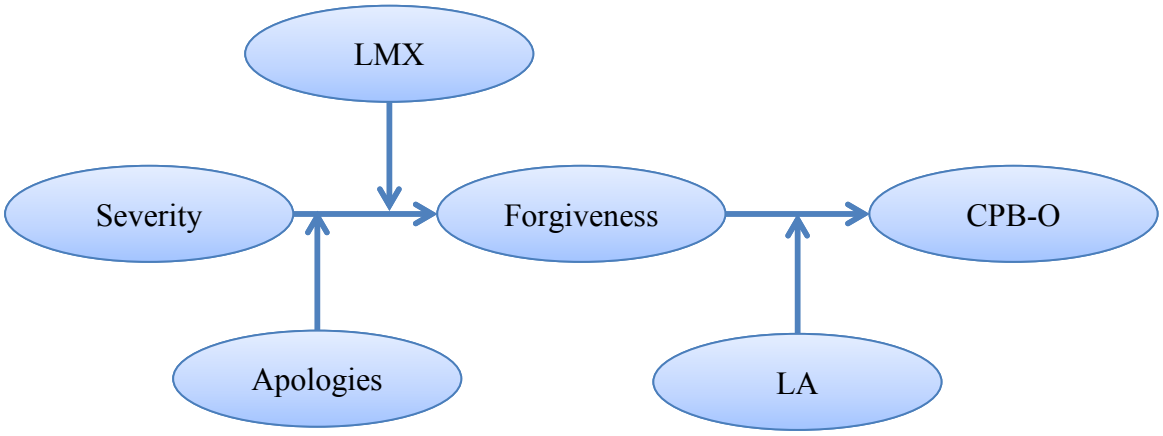
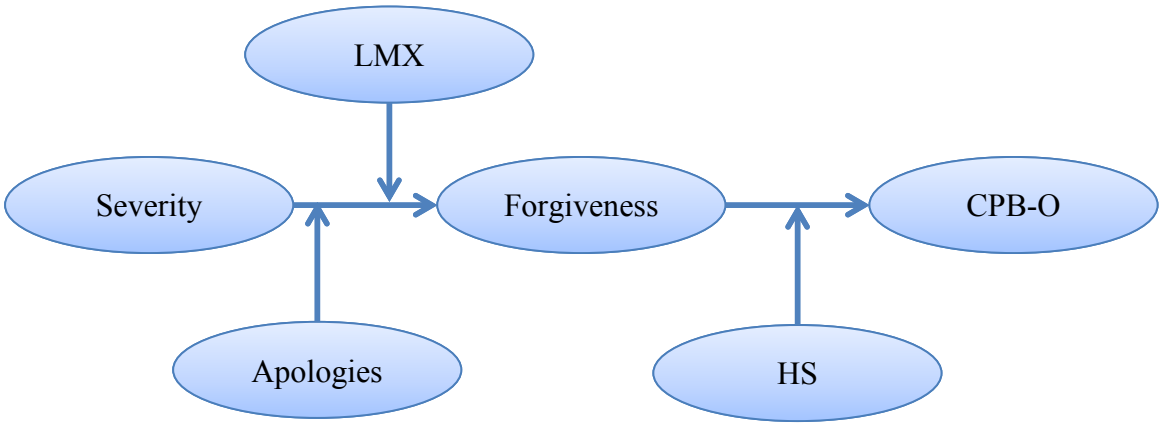


Figure 27

*Relationship between Severity and CPB-O, as Mediated by Forgiveness, with LMX and Apologies as First-Stage Moderators and HS as a Second-Stage Moderator*




The patterns of results were consistent with those obtained using the global continuance commitment construct. Specifically, both low alternatives and high sacrifice significantly and positively influenced counterproductive behavior directed toward the organization, while the interactions between both dimensions and forgiveness did not significantly impact this outcome.

**Recap**. In conclusion, this final section examined the indirect effect of perceptions of the severity of a leader's offense and counterproductive behavior directed at the organization, as mediated by follower forgiveness and moderated by the quality of the leader-follower relationship and leader apologies (as first-stage moderators), and continuance commitment (as the second-stage moderator).

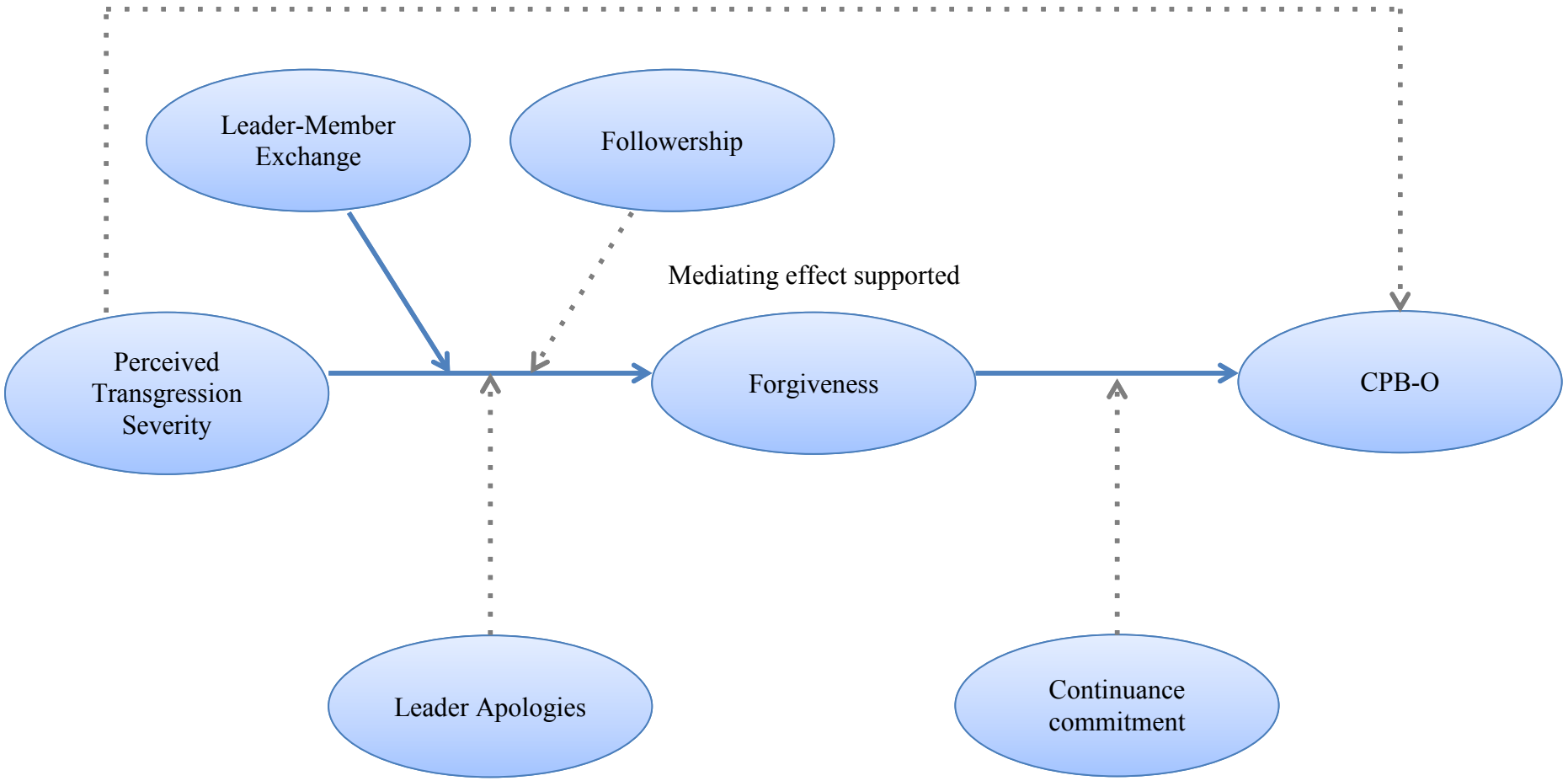
Examination of the results as a whole (using the simple mediation model to examine the mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship between severity and

CPB-O, the simple moderation models for LMX, apologies, and followership, as well as the final analysis in which the larger model was assessed), reveals that several hypotheses were supported (i.e., H1, H2b, H6, and H13). In contrast, a number of hypotheses were not supported in the results (i.e., H2a, H3, H4, H9, and H11). As with previous sections, these relationships are displayed visually in Figure 28 (where solid lines denote hypotheses that were supported)[26].

[26] To assess whether combining samples was again appropriate, the analyses were re-run using only the data obtained through panel services ($N = 310$). On the whole, the pattern of the results did not differ from that of the results using the full sample ($N = 333$). Only 2 differences emerged: 1) in the analysis of Model 23 with CC as the second-stage moderator, the effect of dispositional forgiveness on CPBOs was marginally significant ($p < .10$), and 2) in the analysis of Model 23 with LA as the second-stage moderator, the effect of dispositional forgiveness on CPBOs was also marginally significant ($p < .10$).

Figure 28

*Overall Representation of Results for CPB-O*




*Note*. Significance and non-significant results reported above are taken from the analyses using conditional process modeling, with the exception of the mediating effects of forgiveness (taken from the results the simple mediation model) and the non-significant moderating effect of followership (based on results from the simple moderation model).

# CHAPTER 7

# OVERALL DISCUSSION

This dissertation examined several factors with the potential to influence the amount of forgiveness accorded by followers to leaders who commit interpersonal transgressions in the workplace, as well as the effects of follower forgiveness on two key organizational outcomes – intentions to leave the organization and engagement in workplace deviance. Using both experimental and cross-sectional research designs, two studies were conducted to untangle this research question. Several interesting results emerged, with both important theoretical and practical implications.

## Factors Influencing Follower Forgiveness

Across both studies, perceptions of transgression severity and the quality of the leader-follower relationship emerged as significant predictors of follower forgiveness for leader interpersonal transgressions in the workplace. Consistent with the literature (e.g., Fincham et al., 2005), perceptions of transgression severity negatively impacted forgiveness. In both studies, the more severe the leader's offense was perceived to be, the less forgiveness was accorded. This finding implies that the gravity of a leader's offense is a highly important consideration for followers when deciding whether to forgive leaders for their offensive actions.

The results pertaining to leader-member exchange underscore the importance of leader-follower relationships in the workplace. Although a main effect of LMX on forgiveness was not hypothesized in the current dissertation, the quality of the leader-follower relationship significantly impacted forgiveness in Study 1, such that participants reported more forgiveness when LMX was high, as compared to when LMX was low.

Impressively, LMX explained over seven times the amount of variance in overall forgiveness than was explained by perceptions of the gravity of the offense (i.e., 15% versus 2% of the variance). Clearly, LMX had a substantial impact on the amount of forgiveness accorded by participants. Leader-member exchange also demonstrated a significant direct effect on forgiveness in Study 2, such that higher LMX (i.e., a leader-follower relationship characterized by such attributes as high cooperation, high trust, and high levels of respect between the parties) was associated with greater forgiveness of the leader. These results further reinforce the argument that the quality of the leader-follower relationship is a major variable impacting forgiveness in the workplace. These results are consistent with literature that has found relationship-related variables to be associated with forgiveness (e.g., Fehr et al., 2010).

In the current dissertation, LMX was proposed to act as a moderator of the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness. The findings from both studies provide support for the argument that LMX moderates the above-mentioned relationship. Interestingly, however, the results from Studies 1 and 2 provide somewhat contradictory evidence – on the surface – as to the nature of this moderating effect.

While the moderating effect of LMX on the relationship between severity and overall forgiveness was not significant in Study 1, a marginally significant interaction did emerge when the three subscales of forgiveness were examined as the dependent variables. This interaction was examined in depth using a test of simple main effects, where the impact of transgression severity was investigated separately for participants who had read a scenario depicting a high quality LMX relationship and for participants

who had read a vignette describing a low quality LMX relationship. When LMX was low, high severity significantly impacted both revenge and benevolence motivations, such that participants were more motivated to get revenge and less motivated to act benevolently toward the leader. The effect of severity on avoidance motivations was not significant.

In contrast, the main effect of severity on the three subscales was only marginally significant when LMX was high. When the vignette depicted a high quality leader-follower relationship, severity had a significant impact on avoidance motivations alone, such that participants were more motivated to avoid the leader when the severity of the offense was high. The effects of severity on revenge and benevolence motivations were not significant when LMX was high.

Notably, an important difference emerged when the effects of transgression severity were examined separately for participants in the high and low LMX conditions. While the main effect of severity was significant when LMX was low, the main effect of severity was only marginally significant when LMX was high. This result provides some indication that high LMX may act as a buffer for transgression severity in the workplace, thus mitigating the negative effects of transgression severity on follower forgiveness of the leader.

However, the findings from Study 2 paint a very different picture of the moderating effect of LMX on the relationship between severity and forgiveness. The interaction was again statistically significant, yet the pattern of results was markedly different from that which emerged in Study 1. Specifically, the results showed that transgression severity negatively predicted forgiveness at all levels of LMX (i.e., whether

LMX was high, average or low), with the negative slope being more pronounced when LMX was high, as compared to when LMX was low. This result therefore suggests that high LMX may in fact magnify the negative effects of transgression severity on forgiveness.

What may account for these conflicting results? Recall that competing hypotheses were presented with respect to the moderating effect of LMX on the relationship between severity and forgiveness in the current dissertation, as both arguments (i.e., that LMX could mitigate the negative effects of severity, as well as that LMX could exacerbate the negative effects of severity on forgiveness) were plausible.

First, it is important to note that the transgressions were strikingly different across the two studies. Study 1 examined only one type of transgression – a fictional event whereby a leader yells at a follower for a missing report and does not consider anything that the follower had to say pertaining to the report in question. Perceptions of the severity of the offense were manipulated in the scenarios, such that the transgression was either perceived as highly egregious or largely inconsequential to the follower. In contrast, the transgressions reported in Study 2 varied widely. Examples of offenses described in this study included being called names, receiving less than expected evaluations, and transgressions of a sensitive nature. Second, participants in Study 1 experienced the transgression vicariously. Thus, respondents read a scenario depicting the offense and existing relationship between themselves and the leader. In contrast, the events and relationships reported in Study 2 were real and had the potential to have serious effects on the follower.

Taken together, these points suggest that the different moderation effects found in the two studies may not be as incompatible as they may seem at first glance. Rather, they imply that all transgressions may not be perceived as equal in the eyes of followers. Thus, it is possible that high LMX may buffer the relationship between severity and forgiveness for some categories, or types, of leader transgressions, while magnifying the negative effects of severity on forgiveness for other types of offenses. This is an interesting research question, discussed in more detail in the section on future research directions below. The answer to this question could also influence the practical implications that may be drawn from the research.

Research has examined different types of transgressions (i.e., those centering on integrity and those centering on competence) and how the way that one reacts following each type might differentially impact trust (e.g., Kim et al., 2004). While the transgression used in the vignettes for Study 1 was not designed to reflect a competence or integrity-based transgression, nor were transgressions in Study 2 coded based on the aforementioned categories, this body of research can provide some support to the argument that the moderating effect of LMX on the relationship between severity and forgiveness may change depending on the offense that was committed. Recent results by Matta et al. (2014) also provide some support for this argument. Among their analyses, the authors examined how different types of events (i.e., differentiating between events pertaining to a supervisor, a co-worker, or to an aspect of the job) might alter the relationship between events (positive and negative incidents perceived to be important to participants) and negative emotions. Finally, a recent article by Strelan and Zdaniuk (2014) found self-esteem to mediate the relationship between transgression severity and

forgiveness. The authors posit that transgressions may differ in how they impact self-esteem, which relates to the current argument that different types of transgressions may impact outcomes in different ways. As such, future research may examine whether the moderating effect found in this dissertation does indeed change depending upon the nature of what the leader has done to the follower, in addition to its severity.

Overall, leader apologies failed to demonstrate a significant effect on follower forgiveness in the current dissertation. The results from Study 1 showed that apologies did not significantly influence overall forgiveness of the leader. However, apologies did have a significant main effect when the three subscales of forgiveness were included as separate dependent variables (though apologies did not impact any of the motivations individually). The results from Study 2 were quite similar. While leader apologies predicted forgiveness in the simple moderation model (where the moderating effect of apologies on the relationship between severity and forgiveness was examined), neither a significant main effect, nor significant interaction emerged when the full model was assessed using moderated mediation.

The fact that apologies did not significantly impact forgiveness in the current dissertation is not completely inconsistent with the literature. Recall that while some research has found positive effects of apologies on forgiveness (e.g., Basford et al., 2014), other studies have shown this is not always the case (e.g., Jehle et al., 2012).

With respect to the experiment conducted in Study 1, it is possible that the manipulation of leader apology was too simple to have an impact on follower forgiveness. Thus, perhaps the manipulation would have been more impactful had it contained more elements. For example, Kador (2009) identified five elements of

apologies (though noting that all apologies need not contain every one) – recognizing the event, acknowledging responsibility, being remorseful, offering restitution, and noting that one will not repeat the action again in the future. Furthermore, Fehr and Gelfand (2010) examined the effects of three components from the literature, including showing empathy for the person hurt, offering some measure of reparation for the offense one has committed, and where the transgressor makes a point to recognize the infringement that has taken place. Drawing from this body of literature, one may speculate that the apology manipulation used in Study 1 may have had a greater influence on forgiveness had it included a larger number of components of an effective apology.

That said, apologies did not meaningfully influence forgiveness in Study 2, despite the fact that the apologies occurred in the context of real-world events. It is notable that the mean for leader apology in the second study was relatively low ($M$ = 2.83, $SD$ = 1.99, based on a Likert-style scale ranging from 0 to 6). It would appear that participants did not generally have high perceptions that the leaders apologized for their actions. This could certainly be a factor that can help to explain the non-significant findings related to apology in the study. The issue may not be that apologies do not influence forgiveness – rather the problem may be that followers do not perceive that leaders have apologized in the first place. Alternatively, it may be that participants were more apt to recall incidents in Study 2 in which the leader failed to apologize because such transgressions were more salient and memorable. Consequently, it is possible that participants were more likely to report incidents in which they did not receive an apology in the study.

Finally, the degree to which followers displayed courageous followership behaviors neither impacted forgiveness directly, nor significantly interacted with perceptions of severity to influence forgiveness of the leader. While the evidence does not support the inclusion of followership in the theoretical model for this dissertation, it is argued that followership is both an interesting and fruitful avenue for future research. Scholars may continue to explore the role of followership in the workplace by investigating its relationship with other key organizational outcomes.

**Effects of Transgression Severity on Turnover Intentions and CPBs**

The results from Study 2 suggest that perceptions of transgression severity can directly influence followers' turnover intentions and engagement in workplace deviance, directed at both individuals and the organization itself. In line with the proposed hypothesis, higher perceptions of the severity of the interpersonal offense committed by the leader were associated with greater intentions to leave the organization.

However, the results pertaining to counterproductive behavior did not follow the predicted pattern. While it was hypothesized that higher perceptions of transgression severity would be related to increased interpersonal and organizational deviance, the findings indicate that both types of counterproductive behavior *decreased* as severity increased. Although counter-intuitive at first glance, this result is not inconsistent with literature on this topic. Specifically, it has been argued that individuals may engage in less counterproductive behavior when they have less power than the person who has transgressed against them, due to the possible perils that such behavior may incur (Aquino et al., 2006). Given that the transgressors in the current study were the direct supervisors of the victims, this rationale may be highly applicable.

As workplace deviance may also be a sensitive issue for some, social desirability bias may provide a second possible explanation for the results. Evidence suggests that such bias may influence results when constructs are measured using self-reports, at least in studies related to health (e.g., van de Mortel, 2008). Thus, it is possible that topics that can invoke social desirability, such as counterproductive behavior, may be underreported due to their sensitive nature.

**Effects of Forgiveness on Turnover Intentions and Counterproductive Behavior**

In Study 2, negative relationships were found between forgiveness and both intentions to leave the organization and workplace deviance. As such, higher forgiveness of the leader was associated with less turnover intentions and less counterproductive behavior. This finding clearly shows that forgiveness can have important and beneficial effects on key outcomes in the workplace.

Organizational continuance commitment was also proposed to moderate the relationship between forgiveness and both TIs and CPBs. The results provided support for the moderating effect of only one dimension of continuance commitment – low alternatives – on the relationship between forgiveness and intentions to leave the organization (where the interaction was marginally significant). In contrast to the proposed moderation effect, the negative relationship between forgiveness and TIs was more pronounced when followers perceived that they had many alternatives to their current situation, as compared to when followers perceived that they had few alternatives.

Although direct effects of continuance commitment on turnover intentions were not hypothesized, it is interesting to note that the two dimensions of continuance commitment displayed opposite relationships with TIs in the current dissertation. While

perceptions of low alternatives were positively related with intentions to leave the organization (i.e., participants who perceived that they had few alternatives to their current employment situation tended to have more intentions to leave the organization), perceptions of high sacrifice were negatively related to the same outcome (i.e., the more that participants perceived leaving to entail a high degree of sacrifice, the lower their intentions to leave). As such, evidence from Study 2 suggests that the two dimensions of continuance commitment may not behave in the same manner with respect to follower intentions to leave the organization. This result is in line with research that has found the two dimensions to influence turnover intentions in different ways (e.g., Bentein et al., 2005; Jaros, 1997).

**Mediating Effects of Forgiveness**

Drawing upon the literature that suggests that transgressions are stressors (e.g., McCullough et al., 2006; Worthington & Scherer, 2004), as well as research on stress and the ways in which individuals cope with stressors, it was argued that forgiveness would mediate the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and both turnover intentions and counterproductive work behavior. It was proposed that forgiveness, as one method through which individuals may cope with events (e.g., Aquino et al., 2001; Egan & Todorov, 2004; Worthington & Scherer, 2004), would be an important variable that could help to explain the process by which the gravity of an interpersonal offense may influence the aforementioned outcomes.

In support of the proposed hypotheses, a standout finding from Study 2 indicates that forgiveness does indeed act as a mediator of the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and both intentions to leave the organization and engagement in

workplace deviance. These results suggest that forgiveness is a significant explanatory variable that helps us understand how and why followers refrain from intentions to leave the organization or deviance following leader transgressions. By increasing our understanding of how forgiveness can explain the impact of workplace transgressions on organizational outcomes, this finding makes an important contribution to the literature.

**Strengths and Limitations**

**Study 1**. The experimental design of Study 1, in which perceptions of transgression severity, LMX and leader apologies were manipulated via a series of vignettes, allows for the inference of causality. This represents a major strength of the study. Additionally, the study addressed the potential confounding effect of the gender of the leader on the results of the study. This was accomplished by creating two versions of each manipulation (one in which the leader was presented as male, and one in which the leader was presented as female) and randomly assigning participants to one of the two conditions. The results clearly indicate that the gender of the leader did not impact follower forgiveness in the study, suggesting that the steps taken to procedurally control for this potential confound were successful. In doing so, a threat to the internal validity of the study was eliminated.

Potential weaknesses of the study must also be acknowledged. With respect to the experimental design, the use of vignettes may limit the realism of the events for participants. As an example, it may have been difficult for participants to separate their own perceptions about the severity of the offense from the perceptions presented with the scenarios. However, it has been argued that experiments can be generalizable, despite limited realism of the setting within the experiment itself (Highhouse, 2009).

Furthermore, it is notable that the results of the manipulation checks indicated that each of the three manipulations (i.e., transgression severity, LMX, and leader apologies) were highly successful. Finally, the generalizability of the results may also be impacted by the use of a student sample, though it is important to note that the majority of participants had work experience, as 65.8% of respondents reported that they were currently employed.

**Study 2**. Participants in Study 2 reported a large breadth of leader transgressions that took place in a wide variety of industries, representing a major strength. This suggests that the results may be generalizable to many types of transgressions that may occur in several contexts.

However, potential weaknesses must also be noted. First, the retrospective nature of the study meant that participants were required to recall the transgressions, as well as their perceptions and forgiveness following the events, up to two years after the offense had occurred. This timeframe may have impacted participants' ability to accurately recall events and may have been influenced by additional events that had occurred after the transgression in question. Additionally, as participants were asked to recall incidents that had happened in the past, it is possible that participants may have been biased in the events that they chose to report – tending to select events of a more serious, or hurtful, nature.

Second, the measure of LMX in Study 2 asked participants to report on the quality of their relationship with their leaders in the present tense – not to recall the quality of the relationship with their supervisor prior to the transgression. Given the retrospective nature of this study, it is possible that a retrospective account of the leader-

follower relationship, prior to the offense, would have been biased by the transgression that had occurred. Longitudinal studies would be beneficial to investigate how LMX – prior to an offense – moderates the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and forgiveness.

Finally, given the cross-sectional research design, causality cannot be inferred. Finally, as data were collected using a single survey, at one point in time and from one source, common method and same source bias are possible. However, it is notable that the assessment of common method bias, as reported in Chapter 6, suggests that such bias had a limited impact on the study, influencing only items related to the CPB subscales.

To address the above-mentioned limitations, future research may collect data pertaining to more recent transgressions and use multiple sources. Studies may also attempt to collect data from both the follower and the supervisor who has committed the transgression. Alternatively, researchers may manipulate different types of transgressions in laboratory settings in order to assess their effects on followers.

**Future Research Directions**

The results from this study point to some interesting and fruitful avenues for future research. First, future studies may work to disentangle the conflicting results that emerged in this dissertation with respect to the moderating effect of LMX on the relationship between transgression severity and forgiveness. Clearly, the quality of the leader-follower relationship is an important variable influencing follower forgiveness. Both laboratory and field designs may be employed to understand the nature of this interaction further.

As forgiveness was found to mediate the effects of severity on two salient organizational outcomes in the current dissertation (i.e., turnover intentions and engagement in counterproductive behavior), a second direction for future research would be to examine the mediating effect of forgiveness on other outcomes, such as organizational-citizenship behavior. In doing so, researchers will contribute to the literature on both leadership and workplace forgiveness.

Finally, forgiveness was assessed in the current dissertation at but one point in time – either following a vignette in which a leader transgression was described (Study 1) or following a past leader transgression (Study 2). Notably, some studies have examined how forgiveness can *change* (e.g., Orth, Berking, Walker, Meier, & Znoj, 2008; McCullough et al., 2003; McCullough, Bono and Root, 2007; McCullough, Root Luna, Berry, Tabak & Bono, 2010) – however, more research in this area would be beneficial.

**Practical Implications**

Practical implications of this research are guided by four main takeaways. First, interpersonal transgressions – as perceived by followers – clearly happen in the workplace. Consistent with previous research (e.g., Blase & Blase, 2002; Grandy & Starratt, 2010; Shapiro et al., 2011), offenses of many different types were reported by participants in the current dissertation. Second, such interpersonal transgressions have the potential to substantially impact intentions to leave the organization and engagement in workplace deviance. While the effects of perceptions of transgression severity on CPB are less clear-cut (due to the presence of some common method bias in the CPB-I and CPB-O subscales), the findings related to turnover intentions in this dissertation clearly

show that perceptions of severity positively predict intentions to leave the organization. Thus, as perceptions of severity increase, so do intentions to leave the organization.

Third, the results suggest that the quality of the relationship between the leader and follower can significantly influence a follower's forgiveness of a leader following an interpersonal transgression. The results from Study 1 showed that LMX had a significant main effect on forgiveness, such that participants reported more forgiveness in the high LMX condition, as compared to the low LMX condition. Furthermore, the findings from Study 2 showed that LMX significantly and positively influenced follower forgiveness. These results suggest that organizations should promote high quality leader-follower relationships. However, a caveat may be in order. The mixed results pertaining to the moderating effects of LMX on the relationship between perceptions of severity and forgiveness (i.e., whether high LMX will attenuate or exacerbate the negative effects of transgression severity on forgiveness of the leader) indicate that it is important to be mindful that having a high quality relationship may not necessarily buffer the impact of an interpersonal offense. Consequently, the findings from this dissertation suggest that it is in the best interests of organizations to provide leaders with training to improve the quality of their relationships with followers and training to reduce the frequency and severity of interpersonal transgressions, where needed.

Finally, the results from this dissertation show that forgiveness is negatively related to both intentions to leave the organization and engagement in deviant behavior in the workplace. While it is possible that forgiveness may not always be the best response to workplace transgressions, very interesting research has examined the impact of forgiveness climates in organizations, defined as "the shared perception that empathetic,

benevolent responses to conflict from victims and offenders are rewarded, supported, and expected in the organization" (Fehr & Gelfand, 2012, p. 665). Fehr and Gelfand (2012) propose a large model that identifies many variables that can impact forgiveness climates, as well as outcomes that may be influenced by them. Additionally, Cox (2011) looked at aspects of the organization and found that three characteristics of an organization's climate – namely a supportive, cohesive and trustworthy climate (in terms of integrity) – influenced the forgiveness climate of the organization, which was associated with willingness to forgive. This in turn was found to positively impact two outcome variables (job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior) and negatively influence two other outcomes (job stress and organizational performance). Given that the results from this dissertation suggest that follower forgiveness of direct supervisors who have committed interpersonal transgressions can both reduce follower intentions to leave the organization and follower engagement in counterproductive behavior, organizations may wish to explore the concept of forgiveness climate (e.g., Cox, 2011; Fehr & Gelfand, 2012), to determine whether it may be beneficial to develop such a climate in their organizations.

Within their article on forgiveness cultures, Fehr and Gelfand (2012) note that leaders, through modeling, may help such cultures to develop. This point is highly relevant within the context of this dissertation. However, it may also be possible to extend this line of reasoning to followers. As social cognitive theory suggests that the effects of modeling are impacted by the degree to which one likes the characteristics of the exemplar (e.g., Bandura, 1977), it is proposed that followers may also act as important role models that encourage forgiveness in the workplace. In essence, when the

perpetrators of the transgressions are the leaders themselves, it is possible that the actions and attitudes of one's peers may, in the end, have a greater impact on one's decision to forgive than those of leaders.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, this dissertation integrated literatures from several domains to propose a complex theoretical model examining the effects of perceptions of the severity of leader interpersonal transgressions on follower intentions to leave the organization and follower engagement in counterproductive behavior, through the mediating effects of follower forgiveness. Data from both an experimental study and a retrospective field study provided support for several of the proposed hypotheses. The results suggest that transgressions can have significant effects on the aforementioned organizational outcomes.

Overall, the findings underscore the importance of the quality of the leader-follower relationship (LMX) in both predicting forgiveness and in moderating the relationship between perceptions of severity and forgiveness. Though the nature of this moderating effect needs to be explored further, the results clearly indicate that high quality relationships between leader and followers positively influence follower forgiveness of a leader for interpersonal transgressions.

Finally, a key finding from this dissertation pertains to the mediating effect of forgiveness on the relationship between perceptions of transgression severity and both turnover intentions and counterproductive work behavior. This suggests that forgiveness is an important variable that helps us to understand how and why followers desire to

leave the organization and engage in deviance as a result of leader interpersonal transgressions.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Certificate of Ethical Acceptability for Study 1


CERTIFICATION OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY
FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Name of Applicant: Melanie Robinson

Department: John Molson School of Business\ Management

Agency: N/A

Title of Project: Follower Forgiveness and Reactions to Leader Interpersonal Transgressions (Study 1)

Certification Number: 30001226

Valid From: January 10, 2014 to: January 09, 2015

The members of the University Human Research Ethics Committee have examined the application for a grant to support the above-named project, and consider the experimental procedures, as outlined by the applicant, to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Dr. James Pfaus, Chair, University Human Research Ethics Committee

## Appendix B: Study 1 – Manipulation of Leader-Member Exchange

LMX Manipulation – Female Leader:

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| High LMX | You have been working for *M*, your direct supervisor, for the past 5 years. During the years that you have worked together, you have developed a great working relationship. You both cooperate well with each other so that you both achieve your best at work. *M* has often commented to people that she has a great deal of trust in you as her employee and all the work that you do. You have also said the same thing about *M*'s work to several of your coworkers on numerous occasions. It is clear to everyone in the organization that you both have a lot of respect for one another. |
| Low LMX | You have been working for *M*, your direct supervisor, for the past 5 years. During the years that you have worked together, your working relationship has generally been poor. You both lack cooperation with each other occasionally, which can interfere with both of you achieving your best work. *M* has often commented to people that she doubts the work you do as her employee. You have also said the same thing about *M*'s work to several of your coworkers on numerous occasions. It is clear to everyone in the organization that there is some disrespect for one another in your relationship. |

LMX manipulation – Male Leader:

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| High LMX | You have been working for *M*, your direct supervisor, for the past 5 years. During the years that you have worked together, you have developed a great working relationship. You both cooperate well with each other so that you both achieve your best at work. *M* has often commented to people that he has a great deal of trust in you as his employee and all the work that you do. You have also said the same thing about *M*'s work to several of your coworkers on numerous occasions. It is clear to everyone in the organization that you both have a lot of respect for one another. |
| Low LMX | You have been working for *M*, your direct supervisor, for the past 5 years. During the years that you have worked together, your working relationship has generally been poor. You both lack cooperation with each other occasionally, which can interfere with both of you achieving your best work. *M* has often commented to people that he doubts the work you do as his employee. You have also said the same thing about *M*'s work to several of your coworkers on numerous occasions. It is clear to everyone in the organization that there is some disrespect for one another in your relationship. |

## Appendix C: Study 1 – Manipulation of Perceived Transgression Severity

Perceived Transgression Severity Manipulation – Female Leader

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| High perceived severity | One morning last week, you were sitting at your desk when your supervisor, *M*, walked up to you. With all of your colleagues standing nearby, *M* began to yell about a form that she was missing to complete a report. You tried to tell her that you were unaware of any form, but *M* did not want to listen to anything that you had to say. She continued yelling loudly for a couple of minutes and then stormed off toward her office.<br><br>After *M* had left, you just sat at your desk in shock. "I can't believe that she yelled at me like that in front of everyone", you thought to yourself. Your face turned red with embarrassment and anger. "I've never been so humiliated in my life. It was so awful and unfair of her to yell at me like that"!<br><br>You sat at your desk, reflecting on how mad you were at the way that you had been treated. For the rest of the day, all you could think about was how upset you were at the way that *M* had yelled at you. |
| Low perceived severity | One morning last week, you were sitting at your desk when your supervisor, *M*, walked up to you. No one else was around at the time, as all your colleagues were away from their desks. *M* began to yell about a form that she was missing to complete a report. You tried to tell her that you were unaware of any form, but *M* did not want to |

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| | listen to anything that you had to say. She continued yelling loudly for a couple of minutes and then stormed off toward her office.<br><br>After *M* had left, you just sat at your desk and shrugged off the fact that *M* had lost her temper a moment earlier. "It's not a big deal at all", you thought to yourself. "Sometimes tempers flare, I won't even remember it tomorrow".<br><br>You sat at your desk and did not think about what had happened any more. You just went on with the rest of your day and the incident didn't even cross your mind again. |

Perceived Transgression Severity Manipulation – Male Leader

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| High perceived severity | One morning last week, you were sitting at your desk when your supervisor, *M*, walked up to you. With all of your colleagues standing nearby, *M* began to yell about a form that he was missing to complete a report. You tried to tell him that you were unaware of any form, but *M* did not want to listen to anything that you had to say. He continued yelling loudly for a couple of minutes and then stormed off toward his office.<br><br>After *M* had left, you just sat at your desk in shock. "I can't believe that he yelled at me like that in front of everyone", you thought to yourself. Your face turned red with embarrassment and anger. "I've |

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| | never been so humiliated in my life. It was so awful and unfair of him to yell at me like that"!<br><br>You sat at your desk, reflecting on how mad you were at the way that you had been treated. For the rest of the day, all you could think about was how upset you were at the way that *M* had yelled at you. |
| Low perceived severity | One morning last week, you were sitting at your desk when your supervisor, *M*, walked up to you. No one else was around at the time, as all your colleagues were away from their desks. *M* began to yell about a form that he was missing to complete a report. You tried to tell him that you were unaware of any form, but *M* did not want to listen to anything that you had to say. He continued yelling loudly for a couple of minutes and then stormed off toward his office.<br><br>After *M* had left, you just sat at your desk and shrugged off the fact that *M* had lost his temper a moment earlier. "It's not a big deal at all", you thought to yourself. "Sometimes tempers flare, I won't even remember it tomorrow".<br><br>You sat at your desk and did not think about what had happened any more. You just went on with the rest of your day and the incident didn't even cross your mind again. |

## Appendix D: Study 1 – Manipulation of Leader Apology

Leader Apology Manipulation – Female Leader

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| Apology | At the end of the day, you walked by *M*'s office on your way out. *M* said that she was very sorry for what had happened earlier that day. She said that she regretted yelling at you and offered you a sincere apology for her actions. Then she said goodbye and wished you a good evening. |
| No apology | At the end of the day, you walked by *M*'s office on the way out. *M* did not mention anything to you about what had happened earlier that day. She said goodbye and wished you a good evening. |

Leader Apology Manipulation – Male Leader

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| Apology | At the end of the day, you walked by *M*'s office on your way out. *M* said that he was very sorry for what had happened earlier that day. He said that he regretted yelling at you and offered you a sincere apology for his actions. Then he said goodbye and wished you a good evening. |
| No apology | At the end of the day, you walked by *M*'s office on the way out. *M* did not mention anything about what had happened earlier that day to you. He said goodbye and wished you a good evening. |

## Appendix E: Manipulation of Perceived Transgression Severity Used in the Pilot Test

Perceived Transgression Severity Manipulation – Female Leader

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| High perceived severity | One morning last week, you were sitting at your desk when your supervisor, *M*, walked up to you. *M* began to yell about a form that she was missing to complete a report. You tried to tell her that you were unaware of any form, but *M* did not want to listen to anything that you had to say. She continued yelling loudly for a couple of minutes and then stormed off toward her office.<br><br>After *M* had left, you just sat at your desk in shock. "I can't believe that she yelled at me like that", you thought to yourself. "I've never been so embarrassed in my life. It was so awful and unfair of her to yell at me like that"! You sat at your desk, continuing to think about how mad you were at the way that you had been treated. |
| Low perceived severity | One morning last week, you were sitting at your desk when your supervisor, *M*, walked up to you. *M* began to yell about a form that she was missing to complete a report. You tried to tell her that you were unaware of any form, but *M* did not want to listen to anything that you had to say. She continued yelling loudly for a couple of minutes and then |

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| | stormed off toward her office.<br><br>After *M* had left, you just sat at your desk and shrugged off the fact that *M* had lost her temper a moment earlier. "It's not a big deal at all", you thought to yourself. "Sometimes tempers flare, I won't even remember it tomorrow". You continued to sit at your desk and did not think about it any more. |

Perceived Transgression Severity Manipulation – Male Leader

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| High perceived severity | One morning last week, you were sitting at your desk when your supervisor, *M*, walked up to you. *M* began to yell about a form that he was missing to complete a report. You tried to tell him that you were unaware of any form, but *M* did not want to listen to anything that you had to say. He continued yelling loudly for a couple of minutes and then stormed off toward his office.<br><br>After *M* had left, you just sat at your desk in shock. "I can't believe that he yelled at me like that", you thought to yourself. "I've never been so embarrassed in my life. It was so awful and unfair of him to yell at me like that"! You sat at |

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| | your desk, continuing to think about how mad you were at the way that you had been treated. |
| Low perceived severity | One morning last week, you were sitting at your desk when your supervisor, *M*, walked up to you. *M* began to yell about a form that he was missing to complete a report. You tried to tell him that you were unaware of any form, but *M* did not want to listen to anything that you had to say. He continued yelling loudly for a couple of minutes and then stormed off toward his office.<br>After *M* had left, you just sat at your desk and shrugged off the fact that *M* had lost his temper a moment earlier. "It's not a big deal at all", you thought to yourself. "Sometimes tempers flare, I won't even remember it tomorrow". You continued to sit at your desk and did not think about it any more. |

## Appendix F: Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM-18) (McCullough et al., 2006), as used in Study 1

*Avoidance subscale:*

1. I will try to keep as much distance between us as possible.
2. I will live as *M* doesn't exist, isn't around.
3. I will not trust *M* in the future.
4. I will find it difficult to act warmly toward *M*.
5. I will avoid *M*.
6. I will cut off the relationship with *M*.
7. I will withdraw from *M*.

*Revenge subscale:*

1. I'll make *M* pay.
2. I wish that something bad would happen to *M*.
3. I want *M* to get what *M* deserves.
4. I'm going to get even.
5. I want to see *M* hurt and miserable.

*Benevolence subscale:*

1. Even though *M's* actions hurt me, I have goodwill for *M*.
2. I want to bury the hatchet and move forward with our relationship.
3. Despite what *M* did, I want us to have a positive relationship again.
4. Although *M* hurt me, I am putting the hurts aside so we can resume our relationship.
5. I will give up my hurt and resentment.
6. I will release my anger so I can work on restoring our relationship to health.

## Appendix G: LMX-7 (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995)

1. How well does your supervisor (*M*) recognize your potential?
2. Do you know where you stand with your supervisor *(M*)…do you usually know how satisfied your supervisor is with what you do?
3. How well does your supervisor (*M*) understand your job problems and needs?
4. Regardless of how much formal authority your supervisor (*M*) has built into his position, what are the chances that your supervisor would use his power to help you solve problems in your work? (male leader)

   Regardless of how much formal authority your supervisor (*M*) has built into her position, what are the chances that your supervisor would use her power to help you solve problems in your work? (female leader)
5. I have enough confidence in my supervisor (*M*) that I would defend and justify his decision if he was not present to do so. (male leader)

   I have enough confidence in my supervisor (*M*) that I would defend and justify her decision if she was not present to do so. (female leader)
6. Regardless of the amount of formal authority your supervisor (*M*) has, what are the chances that he would "bail you out" and his expense? (male leader)

   Regardless of the amount of formal authority your supervisor (*M*) has, what are the chances that she would "bail you out" and her expense? (female leader)
7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your supervisor (*M*)?

*Anchors*:

Qn 1: 1 (not at all), 2 (a little), 3 (moderately), 4 (mostly), 5 (fully)

Qn 2: 1 (rarely), 2 (occasionally), 3 (sometimes), 4 (fairly often), 5 (very often)

Qn 3: 1 (not a bit), 2 (a little), 3 (a fair amount), 4 (quite a bit), 5 (a great deal)

Qns 4, 6: 1 (none), 2 (small), 3 (moderate), 4 (high), 5 (very high)

Qn 5: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree), 5 (strongly agree)

Qn 7: 1 (extremely ineffective), 2 (worse than average), 3 (average), 4 (better than average), 5 (extremely effective)

**Appendix H: Certificate of Ethical Acceptability for Study 2**


CERTIFICATION OF ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY
FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Applicant: | Ms. Melanie Robinson |
| Department: | Management |
| Agency: | N/A |
| Title of Project: | Follower Forgiveness and Reactions to Leader Interpersonal Transgressions (Study 2) |
| Certification Number: | 30001941 |

Valid From: September 23, 2013 to: September 22, 2014

The members of the University Human Research Ethics Committee have examined the application for a grant to support the above-named project, and consider the experimental procedures, as outlined by the applicant, to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Dr. James Pfaus, Chair, University Human Research Ethics Committee

01/29/2009

## Appendix I: Followership (Dixon, 2003, 2006; also using the items as modified by Muhlenbeck, 2012)

Items as adapted in the current dissertation:

*Courage to challenge:*

1. When working in a group, I confront pressure to conform to decisions that the group has put forth.
2. I speak up when I see inappropriate behavior in the workplace.

*Courage to take moral action:*

3. If my actions had negative repercussions on my manager, I would resign to protect my manager from them.
4. I will not compromise my personal ethics for continued employment.

*Courage to serve:*

5. I minimize unnecessary pressure on my manager.
6. I would defend my manager from unwarranted attacks.
7. At work, I encourage complainers to communicate concerns not emotions.

*Courage to take responsibility:*

8. I organize my own schedule to ensure that I meet deadlines and keep commitments at work.
9. I take initiative without formal responsibility at work.
10. I am passionate about my work.
11. I am passionate about my commitments at work.

Items from which the above were adapted:

1. I confront groupthink. (Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 87)
2. I challenge inappropriate behavior and model appropriate behavior. Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 87)
3. I would resign to protect my manager from the repercussions of my actions. (Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 87)
4. (as written by Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 88)
5. (as written by Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 87)
6. I defend my manager from unwarranted attacks. (Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 87)
7. I encourage complainers to communicate concerns not emotions. (Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 87)
8. I am self-managed in meeting deadlines and keeping commitments. (Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 86)
9. I take initiative without formal responsibility. (Muhlenbeck, 2012, p. 87).

10-11. One item was broken into two separate questions (see items 10 and 11 above). This was consistent with Muhlenbeck (2012), who further notes that other dissertations have also used both items separately.

## Appendix J: Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM-18) (McCullough et al., 2006), as used in Study 2

*Avoidance subscale:*

1. I tried to keep as much distance between us as possible.
2. I lived as if he/she didn't exist, wasn't around.
3. I didn't trust him/her.
4. I found it difficult to act warmly toward him/her.
5. I avoided him/her.
6. I cut off the relationship with him/her.
7. I withdrew from him/her.

*Revenge subscale:*

6. I wanted to make him/her pay.
7. I wished that something bad would happen to him/her.
8. I wanted him/her to get what he/she deserved.
9. I wanted to get even.
10. I wanted to see him/her miserable.

*Benevolence subscale:*

7. Even though his/her actions hurt me, I had goodwill for him/her.
8. I wanted to bury the hatchet and move forward with our relationship.
9. Despite what he/she did, I wanted us to have a positive relationship again.
10. Although he/she hurt me, I wanted to put the hurts aside so we could resume our relationship.
11. I wanted to give up my hurt and resentment.

12. I wanted to release my anger so I could work on restoring our relationship to health.

## Appendix K: Counterproductive Behavior Scale (Bennett & Robinson, 2000)

*Interpersonal deviance*:

1. Made fun of someone at work.
2. Said something hurtful to someone at work.
3. Made an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work.
4. Cursed at someone at work.
5. Played a mean prank on someone at work.
6. Acted rudely toward someone at work.
7. Publicly embarrassed someone at work.

*Organizational deviance*:

1. Taken property from work without permission.
2. Spent too much time fantasizing or daydreaming instead of working.
3. Falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money than you spent on business expenses.
4. Taken an additional or longer break than is acceptable at your workplace.
5. Come in late to work without permission.
6. Littered your work environment.
7. Neglected to follow your boss's instructions.
8. Intentionally worked slower than you could have worked.
9. Discussed confidential company information with an unauthorized person.
10. Used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol on the job.
11. Put little effort into your work.
12. Dragged out work in order to get overtime.

## Appendix L: Continuance Commitment to the Organization (Stinglhamber et al., 2002)

*High sacrifice:*

1. I did not leave the organization because of what I stood to lose.
2. For me personally, the costs of leaving this organization would have been far greater than the benefits.
3. I continued to work for the organization because I didn't believe another organization could offer me the benefits I had there.

*Low alternatives:*

1. I did not have a choice but to stay with the organization.
2. I stayed with the organization because I couldn't see where else I could work.
3. I felt that I had too few options to consider leaving the organization.

## Appendix M: Tendency to Forgive (Brown, 2003)

1. When people wrong me, my approach is just to forgive and forget.
2. If someone wrongs me, I often think about it a lot afterward. (reverse coded)
3. I have a tendency to harbor grudges. (reverse coded)
4. I tend to get over it quickly when someone hurts my feelings.