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Development and Validation of the Employee-Supervisor Attachment Scale

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DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF THE EMPLOYEE-SUPERVISOR ATTACHMENT SCALE

A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

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in

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ABSTRACT

Attachment theory and its connection to the workplace, as well as leader-member exchange (LMX) research, is reviewed before discussing strategies used for developing and validating the Employee-Supervisor Attachment (E-SA) scale. Analyses focused on an internal and external validation strategy. Study 1 consisted of item revisions from the Experiences in Close Relationships-Short scale (ECR-S) and SME ratings to develop the E-SA scale as well as a preliminary Exploratory Factorial Analysis to verify factor structure. Likewise, Study 2 tested the retained items to confirm factor structure, within a new sample, before assessing regressions between E-SA and relevant outcome variables. Furthermore, this project assessed support for the E-SA using regression analyses to test propositions (props 1, 2, and 3) and found evidence that the E-SA does differentially predict Interpersonal Helping Behavior (IHB), Discomfort with Disclosure, and Excessive Reassurance Seeking (ERS).

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CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee-Supervisor Attachment

Research supports the association between attachment and different types of relationships, such as the relationship between parent and child, as well as between romantic partners, though the application of attachment theory to relationships in the workplace has yet to receive much attention outside of leadership research (Harms, 2011). Gaining an additional perspective as to what an individual may require from their supervisor, or those they follow, in order to excel and feel comfortable in their role or position in an organization would be beneficial to hiring managers, supervisors selecting for teams, as well as researchers interested in various domains of leadership.

Furthermore, little research has been published addressing the attachment styles as an antecedent of important organizational outcomes. Attachment has received attention in recent years to better understand differences in leader-follower dynamics based upon research suggesting that insecurely (anxious/avoidant) attached individuals experience difficulty forming and maintaining stable and mutually gratifying relationships in adulthood (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007). Researchers have provided details of the influence of attachment on relationships throughout one's life. However, attachment is not typically assessed in a manner specific to workplace relations as they typically use assessments developed for other domains, such as adult attachment in

close, or romantic, relationships (Harms, 2011). The aim of this project is to address the aforementioned gap by developing and validating an attachment measure specifically for relationships between an employee and their supervisor in an attempt to build a more in depth understanding of workplace relationships.

Details regarding the development and application of attachment theory from childhood to adulthood are reviewed before consideration is given to leader-member exchange (LMX) and the relationship it may have with attachment in the workplace. Subsequently, the construct employee-supervisor attachment (E-SA) is introduced and defined before providing details of analyses and results for both studies *a)* E-SA scale development and *b)* E-SA external validation. Additionally, a discussion of the value added is offered as well as limitations to the project.

Attachment

Attachment theory has received a great deal of attention from researchers attempting to better understand different types of relationships. John Bowlby (1944) originally theorized that early childhood experiences affect later relationships after the observation that socially maladjusted and delinquent boys were likely to have experienced a disruption in their early home life. Attachment theory is widely understood as the idea that individuals are born with the innate desire to seek proximity to others in times of need, or distress, in order to enhance their chances of survival (Bowlby, 1988).

Ainsworth et al. (1978) constructed a taxonomy with three different attachment styles that were congruent with Bowlby's original ideas of attachment

at infancy. These attachment styles are extensively used in research to define different types of attachment: secure, anxious, and avoidant. Ainsworth et al. (1978) described secure children to perform attachment behaviors but would subside in a timely manner when their caregiver returned to their environment. Insecure attachment is believed to be any combination of anxious or avoidant attachment. Children who exhibited anxious attachment were observed performing attachment behavior when caregiver was removed from their environment; however, were not easily soothed when the caregiver returned. Children who exhibited avoidant attachment did not display much attachment behavior when their caregiver was removed and when their caregiver returned, children began actively avoiding contact with them (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Attachment theory has not only helped understand experiences in early childhood but has also been applied to better understand how individuals perceive and experience relationships later in life. As such, research suggests attachment styles in early childhood may influence styles of attachment later in life.

Attachment in Adults. Attachment in adulthood, or adult attachment, affects how individuals perceive others in a relationship as well as if they seek out support from others based on prior experiences with caregivers growing up. Previous experiences with a primary caregiver influence the development of an internal working model for interactions in future relationships (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1988). The framework of adult attachment is reliant on this internal

working model to make sense of an individual's relationships and comfortability with attachment figures. Similar to earlier research of attachment, there are typically three styles: secure, anxious, and avoidant.

Harms (2011) provides explanations for all three styles of attachment, where *secure attachment* is understood as having expectations that others can provide support, whereas *insecure attachment* is understood as either avoidant or anxious. Individuals exhibiting an *anxious attachment* style are typically anxious about the availability and supportiveness of a caregiver or supportive partner. Whereas *avoidant attachment* style is typically accompanied by an individual who is uncomfortable when others emotionally open up to them and are unlikely to rely on emotional support from others (Harms, 2011). If an individual does not report or exhibit anxious or avoidant attachment styles, they are considered to have a secure style of attachment.

Attachment at Work. The application of attachment theory to the organizational setting can provide an inclusive understanding of an individual in regard to their personality as well as their perceptions and expectations of supportive figures. Attachment theory in the workplace has historically been overpowered by more proclaimed assessments of individual differences, such as the zealous application of the five-factor model of personality (FFM). Though personality has previously been linked to organizational outcomes, attachment as an additional individual difference, will likely reveal more about an individual and how they view the world around them. This in-depth viewpoint of employees, or

job applicants, in the workplace will likely result in greater selection criteria to enhance organizational outcomes influenced by stronger employees. Not only can attachment provide important information in regard to an individual's ability to create relationships, work in teams, and receive feedback, attachment will also reveal information as to the role they may take on as a leader or how leaders may effectively communicate with followers based on an individual's style of attachment. Despite the obstacles faced in having attachment theory accepted in the applied setting, a number of studies linking attachment styles to workplace outcomes have been published on a variety of topics (Harms, 2011). Though it seems logical to apply an additional measure of individual differences, such as attachment style, to understand potential organizational outcomes, researchers have yet to publish studies specifically using attachment as an antecedent of organizational outcomes.

Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) focuses on the dyadic relationship between a leader and member of their team (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). As the relationship progresses, members become more or less involved in meaningful and challenging tasks based on the quality of relationship with their supervisor. To better understand the quality of the relationship will likely rely on the perceptions and expectations of both parties. Congruent with different styles of attachment and the level or quality of relationship between two parties, higher quality relationships between leaders and a member of their team often parallel

with greater levels of LMX. Likewise, leader and follower individual differences may influence the degree in which one is inclined to develop a meaningful and mutually beneficial relationship and at what stage in the relationship they are able to do so. Graen and Uhl-bien (1995) claim that leaders often have a range of relationships with their varying followers or members of their team. As the two parties begin to work more closely these relationships may progress from a mostly formal and transactional relationship to a more close and personal level of relationship. During this progression, an increasing amount of information will continue to be shared between parties as the quality of LMX continues to increase. Quality of LMX is believed to influence the perception both leader and follower have of the other party and has an impact on outcomes at both the individual and organizational level (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Likewise, in varying types of relationships, an individual's adult attachment style will likely influence their perceptions and experiences they have in their relationships. For example, individuals high in attachment anxiety may be predisposed to perceive uncertainty in their interpersonal relationships as more threatening than individuals with lower levels of attachment anxiety (Wright et al., 2017). Similarly, individuals high in attachment avoidance have been described as feeling uncomfortable with being close or dependent on their partners, often experiencing little hope of receiving the care and support of others and suppressing their need for attachment figures in order to maintain self-esteem, autonomy, and control (Galdiolo & Roskam, 2016). In contrast, individuals rated

higher on attachment security have positive beliefs about the social world, view others as trustworthy and dependable, and are confident that those close to them will be responsive and supportive in times of need (Collins & Read, 1990; Galdiolo & Roskam, 2016; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Though LMX research has gained a great deal of attention since its development, there is little agreement as to what level of exchange leaders and followers experience in their relationship (Gerstner & Day, 1997). Distinguishing leaders as attachment figures specific to the organizational context, or supportive figures one will innately seek support from in the workplace, may benefit researchers addressing this gap in LMX theory by providing an additional perspective of one's interpersonal and behavioral tendencies.

An attachment measure specific to the organizational context may be beneficial to LMX research. Harms (2011) expressed that attachment theory can be employed to understand the individual differences of both a leader and follower, stating each party will bring different expectations and interpretative frameworks to the relationship. As an individual progresses into a leadership role, their attachment style will likely reflect their actions as a leader in relation to their follower's stress and need for support. Likewise, as individuals begin to build relationships with supervisors or those in leadership roles, their tendency to seek proximity to and support from these figures will influence their actions in times of stress.

Research has continued to develop across domains of attachment and leadership, though few studies have focused on attachment theory as an underlying element of the dyadic relationship between a leader and member of their team in an organizational setting. Specifically, little work has been done to verify that a leader may be viewed as an attachment figure (Molero et al., 2013). Though this specific domain has yet to be explored, both attachment and LMX have a great deal of meaningful research to help build a connection between the two. For instance, attachment styles influence how individuals perceive and experience relationships throughout life, thus suggesting attachment may effectively predict LMX quality in workplace relationships. Moreover, LMX research has examined the predictive ability of organizational fit and a variety of individual differences, and an additional predictive measure will likely prove useful for LMX research as well as practical use for an organization or institution selecting for supervisory or leadership roles. Addressing this proposal, the development and validation of an organizational specific attachment scale will likely benefit both domains.

Employee-Supervisor Attachment

Employee-Supervisor Attachment (E-SA) can be defined as the ability and willingness to seek and provide support in moments of stress or uncertainty (Craig et al., 2020). Though similar to interpersonal helping behavior and comfort with disclosure, E-SA focuses primarily on the action and reaction surrounding support in an organizational setting, whereas interpersonal helping behavior

focuses on only providing support and comfort with disclosure focuses on one's ability to build connections through self-disclosure, both in a variety of settings. Likewise, excessive reassurance seeking behavior can be used as an additional concurrent measure because of the similarity to specific dimensions of E-SA.

To account for the dimensionality of this construct, attachment is broken into two popular subdimensions, avoidant and anxious. The avoidant sub dimension will attempt to measure one's tendency to avoid providing or receiving support in times of stress or need, while the anxious sub dimension will attempt to measure one's tendency to excessively seek or provide support in times of stress. Both sub dimensions reveal equally important aspects regarding an individual's overall attachment toward a supervisor. It is important to note that individuals scoring high on both avoidant and anxious are considered to have an insecure attachment style; individuals scoring high on one but not the other are considered to have an insecure attachment style with an emphasis on the high sub dimension; individuals scoring low on both avoidant and anxious are considered to have a secure attachment style. Justification to tackle this construct domain comes from the absence of an organizational specific attachment scale as well as the expected practical application of assessing organizational relationships using Employee-Supervisor Attachment as a potential predictor of various group and individual level outcomes.

The remainder of this paper aimed to address the development of the E-SA scale and initial validation efforts of the first study as well as the assessment

of external validity in the second study. Processes in which items were selected and revised are discussed prior to examining factor structure and finalized items in study 1. Study 2 then further validates the E-SA above and beyond that of the initial efforts of study 1 by confirming factor structure of the finalized items using EFA in a sample different than that of the initial study. Furthermore, construct validity of the E-SA scale is assessed by examining correlations with measures of varying constructs expected to be associated with attachment anxiety and avoidance such as interpersonal helping behavior, comfort with disclosure, and excessive reassurance seeking. Once validated, the E-SA scale can be used to assess individual differences in employees and what they may need to foster a mutually gainful relationship with their supervisor, ultimately benefiting an organization through improved communication and trust from both parties.

CHAPTER TWO

STUDY 1: E-SA DEVELOPMENT

Method

Procedures

Attempting to better understand the expectations one may have from their workplace relationship with their supervisor or subordinate is likely to benefit an organization as a whole. Likewise, having a better understanding of which employees will provide one another with the interaction they prefer will not only provide a stronger workplace environment, likely decreasing turnover rates, but also help build stronger teams. The basis of this study was developed through a collaborative project for Applied Psychological Measurement (PSYC6644; CSUSB). Craig et al. (2020) aimed to revise a well-established scale (ECR; Brennan et al., 1998), used to evaluate an individual's attachment style in relation to their romantic partner, in an attempt to focus primarily on an employee and attachment styles in relation to their work supervisor.

A total of 36 items (anxious subscale = 18 items; avoidant subscale = 18 items) were revised before I/O Psychology graduate students, acting as SMEs, provided ratings on the Employee-Supervisor Attachment (E-SA) items. The majority of revisions were completed by replacing the phrase "romantic partner" with "work supervisor," though some items were revised by changing the context to be specific to the workplace. A total of 32 items were retained based on SME ratings (anxious subscale = 14 items; avoidant subscale = 18 items). Craig et al.

(2020) hypothesized that an underlying structure representative of employee-supervisor attachment would be revealed via exploratory factorial analysis.

Subjects

Participants were asked to respond to 32 items using a 7-point Likert type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) as well as demographic questions and were provided with course credit as an incentive for completing the survey. The revised scale was administered to 135 participants recruited using SONA, 86% of which were currently employed. Though less than 40% of participants had only been employed at their current place of work for more than 2 years, data was used from all participants as the items were based on work experiences and not specific to one position or organization. The majority of participants identified as female (92.13%) and about 76% of all participants were between the ages of 18 and 29.

Results

Data was used to examine the dimensionality of the scale items via a principal axis factoring method with oblimin rotation. Oblimin rotation was selected based on the assumption that the two factors are orthogonal and the probability that the two factors would be correlated considering they are both on a spectrum measuring the secure attachment. Though the initial factor analysis revealed seven factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, a two factor model was chosen to reflect popular sub dimensions of adult attachment, avoidant and anxious attachment. Likewise, before extraction Factor 1 accounted for 22.32%

and Factor 2 accounted for 20.67% of the variance in the model, whereas Factor 3 accounted for less than 7% of the variance in the model. Suppressing items with factor loadings lower than .6 allowed for a simple structure and removed any cross loaded items. Subsequently, a total of 17 items were retained. 9 items specific to attachment anxiety (α = .88) and 8 items specific to attachment avoidance (α = .86); reliability estimates were stronger after removing items with poor factor loadings. *Table 1* includes a list of all E-SA items and their corresponding statements to reference in the following tables. *Table 2* shows the retained items and their factor loadings for study 1.

Discussion

36 items from a preexisting scale (ECR; Brennan et al., 1998) were revised and evaluated by SMEs to determine items with the best theoretical fit to the new E-SA construct. The 32 revised and retained items were then administered to college students who primarily had jobs. An EFA was then used to analyze and examine the items to develop a reliable 17-item scale for E-SA.

CHAPTER THREE

STUDY 2: E-SA VALIDATION

Methods

Study 1 established an exploratory factor structure within the revised employee-supervisor attachment scale items as well as estimated alpha coefficients for the finalized subscales. Study 2 aimed to further previous efforts by establishing criterion related and content related validity using concurrent measures. These concurrent measures acted as analogous constructs in relation to the different styles of attachment and the tendencies one may have. Likewise, an increasingly generalizable subject pool in comparison to the first study further justifies an additional validation study of the E-SA scale.

Criterion Related Validity

Styles of attachment are believed to carry over across different types of relationships. Based on this understanding, criterion related validity was established using a shortened version of the ECR (ECR-S; Wei et al., 2007), which contains many of the unrevised items of the E-SA scale. We hypothesize that responses to E-SA (anxious and avoidant subscales) would positively predict responses to ECR-S (anxious and avoidant subscales). Subsequently, various existing measures were used as outcome variables to further assess the validity of the E-SA scale.

Construct Validation

Anxious and avoidant styles of attachment are likely to affect aspects of an individual's behavior in relationships. Furthermore, individuals identifying with a more secure attachment style may exhibit similar behaviors, though varying frequencies or intentions may also occur. Therefore, we proposed that different styles of attachment will predict different levels of interpersonal helping behavior, comfort with disclosure, and excessive reassurance seeking behavior.

Interpersonal Helping Behavior. The first outcome variable, helping behavior, is an aspect of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) that focuses on voluntarily helping others with, or preventing the occurrence of, work-related problems (Podsakoff et al., 2000). Though OCBs can include various forms, researchers have described "helping behavior" as consisting of behaviors such as altruism, peacemaking, and courtesy. Examples may include an employee helping a new colleague settle in or taking over some tasks of an overburdened coworker without formal incentives as well as deliberate acts that encourage cooperation, remove barriers to performance for others, or help others perform their task-oriented job activities (Den Hartog et al., 2007; Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996). Helping behaviors are likely to occur in higher quality LMX relationships as both leaders and followers are capable of providing the behaviors and actions to support one another, though members of a lower quality

LMX relationships will likely have very little experience providing support outside of their typical occupational role.

Likewise, individuals rated as securely attached are likely to behave similarly when engaging in helping behaviors compared to those in a high quality LMX relationship, as they too have previous positive experiences to draw from to help navigate their relationships. In contrast, individuals rated as insecurely attached are believed to have lower levels of helping behavior due to their inability or unwillingness to get emotionally close to others as well as the potential misconception of closeness or consistent need for proximity. In relation to attachment, we proposed different styles of employee-supervisor attachment would predict varying levels of interpersonal helping behavior.

Proposition 1: Anxious and avoidant sub-scales of the E-SA will uniquely predict varying levels of interpersonal helping behavior.

We expected each sub-scale of E-SA (anxious and avoidant) would account for variance in interpersonal helping behavior. Evidence of differential prediction will be reflected by the extent to which both anxious and avoidant sub-scales significantly predict the outcome independently in a simultaneous regression model. Moreover, differential prediction was assessed using the regression coefficients of both predictors, examining to see if the values were similar, different, or equal to one another.

Comfort with Disclosure. The second outcome variable, comfort with disclosure, was measured using the Distress Disclosure Index (DDI; Kahn &

Hessling, 2001). Kahn et al. (2012) explain distress disclosure as an individual's tendency to disclose (vs. conceal) distressing thoughts, personal problems, and unpleasant emotions across time and situations. An individual high in comfort with disclosure is more likely to engage in verbal disclosure and emotional expression, and also have a more positive attitude about expressing/disclosing their emotions. Also, individuals with these tendencies are likely to perceive social relationships as supportive (Kahn et al., 2012). Though the quality of LMX is not based on the sharing of distressing information between a follower and leader, comfort with disclosure may impact a follower's perception of a leader as well as their trust in leadership. Individual's uncomfortable with disclosing distressful details may also be less likely to engage in information sharing, specifically when the information discredits their own performance.

Furthermore, attachment is believed to have a similar relationship with comfort with disclosure. Securely attached individuals are likely to engage in an appropriate amount of information sharing, whereas insecurely attached individuals are more likely to engage in varying frequencies or may disengage altogether. Individuals high in anxious attachment are likely to share more information than necessitated and individuals high in avoidant attachment are less likely to engage in disclosing distressful information about themselves due to their distrust in others. In relation to attachment, we proposed different styles of employee-supervisor attachment would predict varying levels of comfort with disclosure.

Proposition 2: Anxious and avoidant sub-scales of the E-SA will uniquely predict varying levels of comfort with disclosure.

We expected each sub-scale of E-SA (anxious and avoidant) would account for variance in comfort with disclosure. Evidence of differential prediction would be reflected by the extent to which both anxious and avoidant sub-scales significantly predict the outcome independently in a simultaneous regression model.

Excessive Reassurance Seeking. The third outcome variable, excessive reassurance seeking behavior, is the tendency to excessively ask other people for reassurance of one's own worth (Joiner et al., 1999; Joiner & Metalsky, 2001). Though this outcome specifically measures one's tendency to ask for emotional reassurance in close relationships, in an organizational context this outcome may consist of an individual excessively seeking reassurance regarding their worth to their supervisor/organization, or whether their performance is meeting the standards of their supervisor. Excessive reassurance seeking behavior is closely related to a term used in leadership research, employee feedback-seeking behaviors (FSBs), defined by Ashford (1986) as a "conscious devotion of effort toward determining the correctness and adequacy of behaviors for attaining valued end states" (p. 466). Though this behavior is typically seen as beneficial, excessively seeking reassurance or feedback from one's supervisor or leader is likely to hinder the level of LMX and may make the follower seem less competent overtime. Nevertheless, it is important to note that followers can also engage in a

sensible amount of FSB which can also promote LMX quality because of a healthy exchange in information. Likewise, leaders who have high quality LMX with a specific follower may provide greater quality feedback compared to the feedback they provide to their followers in lower quality LMX relationships. Furthermore, lower quality LMX may also impact the degree of FSBs engaged in due to the lack of feedback likely to be provided by a leader in a low quality LMX.

In terms of attachment, individuals high in anxious attachment are likely to excessively seek reassurance in an attempt to benefit their own self-esteem and gain proximity or support from their supervisor, whereas individuals exhibiting an avoidant attachment style may not seek support or reassurance from their supervisor due to their distrust in others. In relation to attachment, we proposed different styles of employee-supervisor attachment would predict varying levels of excessive reassurance seeking behavior.

Proposition 3: Anxious and avoidant sub-scales of the E-SA will uniquely predict varying levels of excessive reassurance seeking behavior.

We expected each sub-scale of E-SA (anxious and avoidant) would account for variance in excessive reassurance seeking behavior. Evidence of differential prediction would be reflected by the extent to which both anxious and avoidant sub-scales significantly predict the outcome independently in a simultaneous regression model.

Procedures

The revised 17 item E-SA scale was re-administered to a new sample of 359 employed people. Participants were recruited through convenience sampling using social media (*n* = 259) and SONA (*n* = 100). SONA is a research management system providing a web-based subject pool for the Department of Psychology at CSUSB. Subjects ranged from spending less than one year and more than five years in their current job position.

Subjects

Of the 359 participants, 253 were female, 89 male, 1 Non-binary/third gender, and 1 subject declined to state their gender. 91.6% of subjects were currently employed, 3.1% were not currently and the remainder did not identify their current employment status. The number of years working in their current position ranged from less than one year to five or more years (*M* = 3.28, *SD* = 1.9). As a part of the same survey, participants were asked to complete additional measures such as experiences in close relationships (a measure of adult attachment), interpersonal helping behavior, comfort with disclosure, and excessive reassurance seeking behavior.

Measures

Employee-Supervisor Attachment Scale

The Employee-Supervisor Attachment scale is a 17-item instrument to measure attachment toward a supervisory relationship as an employee. Respondents use a 7-point, partly anchored, Likert-type scale ranging from 1

(*disagree strongly*) to 7 (*agree strongly*) to respond to the items. Point 4 on the scale is anchored by neutral/mixed. Alpha coefficient for Anxious subscale, α = .88, and Avoidant subscale, *α* = .86 (Craig et al., 2020). Study 2 revealed a viable alpha coefficient for all 17 items of the E-SA (*α* = .78), and subscales (Anxious subscale, *α* = .79, and Avoidant subscale, *α* = .81). Higher scores on a subscale indicate the degree in which an individual identifies with the specific subscale. Low scores on both subscales indicate a more secure attachment style.

Experiences in Close Relationships-Short

The Experiences in Close Relationships-Short scale is a 12-item instrument to measure attachment in close relationships. Respondents use a 7-point, partly anchored, Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*disagree strongly*) to 7 (*agree strongly*) to respond to the items. Point 4 on the scale is anchored by neutral/mixed. Alpha coefficients ranged from .77 to .86 for the Anxiety subscale and from .78 to .88 for the Avoidance subscale across four studies (Wei et al., 2007). Study 2 revealed a viable alpha coefficient for all 12 items of the ECR-Short (*α* = .76). It is important to note that, like with the E-SA, higher scores on a subscale indicate the degree in which an individual identifies with the specific style of attachment (anxious or avoidant). Lower scores on both subscales indicate a more secure attachment style.

Interpersonal Helping Behavior

Interpersonal Helping Behavior (IHB) scale is a 6-item assessment used to determine an individual's willingness and likelihood of helping other members of an organization without expectation of benefiting as the individual helping. Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all characteristic*) to 5 (*very much so*). Cronbach's alpha .86 (Den Hartog et al., 2007). Though this assessment was originally completed by an employee's supervisor, the items are straightforward and should not challenge participants' ability to rate themselves at an individual level. Study 2 revealed a comparable alpha coefficient for all six items of the IHB scale, $\alpha = .84$. Higher scores indicate a greater willingness and likelihood of helping other members of an organization without expectation of benefiting as the individual helping.

Distress Disclosure Index

Distress Disclosure Index is a 12-item assessment used to determine an individual tendency to disclose distress with others, measuring generalized self-reports of one's disclosure versus concealment of personally distressing information as a behavioral tendency (Kahn et al., 2012). Items are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Study 2 revealed a large alpha coefficient for all 12 items of the DDI, $\alpha = .92$. Total scores can range from 12 to 60, with higher scores indicating a greater tendency to disclose distress.

Excessive Reassurance Seeking Scale

Excessive Reassurance Seeking (ERS) Scale is a four-item instrument intended to measure the tendency to persistently seek reassurance even if reassurance has already been provided (Joiner & Metalsky, 2001). Respondents use a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). Reported alpha coefficients .88 (Joiner & Metalsky, 2001) and .89 (Wei et al., 2007). Likewise, Study 2 revealed equivalent alpha coefficients for the four item ERS scale, α = .89. Higher scores indicate greater reassurance seeking.

Analyses

Items retained in study 1 were readministered to a new sample of employed people. Likewise, data was also collected for the dependent variables which are believed to be related to some degree to E-SA. Data was analyzed using an internal validation strategy. We first performed an additional exploratory factorial analysis followed by reliability analyses for the developed E-SA scale and all outcome variables. Additionally, external validation was examined using correlations, regressions, and one-way ANOVA to test the aforementioned propositions (propositions 1, 2, and 3) and assessing how well E-SA items predict the outcomes of interest.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The 17 item E-SA scale was administered to 359 participants. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 60 or older (18-29 = 58.8%), where 70.5% of the participants were female. Additionally, participants were asked how long they had

been employed in their current position. 19.2% of participants responded *Less than 1 year*, 25.6% responded *1-2 years*, 13.1% responded *2-3 years*, 7.2% responded *3-4 years*, 7.8% responded *4-5 years*, 20.3% responded *5+ years*, and 1.7% *preferred not to say*. *Table 3* lists descriptives and Cronbach's alpha coefficients for both dependent and independent variables. Participants responded to 17 items of the E-SA using a 7-point Likert type scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Participants' data were used to examine the dimensionality of the scale items via a principal axis factoring method with a direct Oblimin rotation. The EFA procedures for study 2 were conducted via SPSS to confirm the factor structure observed in study 1. Study 2 made use of the EFA, as opposed to a formal Confirmatory Factorial Analysis (CFA), due to a larger sample size being needed for the CFA to converge on a solution. Additionally, the EFA of study 2 extracted two factors, like study 1, and had comparable factor loadings. Likewise, the EFA of study 2 went above and beyond the original sample size and expanded on the demographics from only college students to those primarily in the workforce and no longer in school and showed four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1. However, the percent of variance in study 2 for factor 3 (6.7%) and factor 4 (6.2%) were much lower than factor 1 (24.2%) and factor 2 (19.9%). Moreover, a two-factor solution was run due to current literature expressing two main styles of adult attachment, anxiety and avoidance. Considering the two styles of attachment we expected the factors to co-vary and to allow for this a direct Oblimin rotation was used. A two-factor

Table 1. E-SA Items and Statements for Study 1 and Study 2

Label	Statement
	Anxiety
ESA1	I get frustrated when my supervisor isn't around as much as I would like.
ESA3	Sometimes I feel that I force my supervisor to show more feeling, more commitment.
ESA5	I need a lot of reassurance that I am cared for by my supervisor.
ESA7	If I can't get my supervisor to show interest in me, I get very upset or angry.
ESA9	My desire to be very close sometimes scares supervisors away.
ESA11	I worry about being alone at work.
ESA13	I worry that supervisors won't care about me as much as I care about them.
ESA15	If I don't have a relationship with my supervisor, I feel somewhat anxious and insecure.
ESA17	I worry about being abandoned at work.
	Avoidance
ESA2*	I don't feel comfortable opening up to supervisors.
ESA4*	I get uncomfortable when a supervisor wants to be very close.
ESA6	I turn to my supervisor for many things, including comfort and reassurance.
ESA8*	I try to avoid getting too close to supervisors.
ESA10	I feel comfortable depending on supervisors.
ESA12	It helps to turn to my supervisor in times of need.
ESA14	I don't mind asking supervisors for comfort, advice or help.
ESA16*	I prefer not to be too close to supervisors.

Note. * indicates reverse coded items.

Table 2. Study 1 Item Loadings Based on Principal Axis Factoring with Direct Oblimin Rotation

Item	Anxiety (1)	Avoidance (2)
ESA1	.774	
ESA3	.749	
ESA5	.733	
ESA7	.724	
ESA9	.675	
ESA11	.640	
ESA13	.630	
ESA15	.607	
ESA17	.606	
ESA2*		-.785
ESA4*		-.696
ESA6		.667
ESA8*		-.638
ESA10		.620
ESA12		.615
ESA14		.609
ESA16*		-.607

Note. * indicates reverse coded items. Items are split based on subscales, anxiety and avoidance, respectfully.

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Variables

	M	*SD*	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Demographic											
1. Age	1.76	1.114									
2. Gender	1.75	.460	.028								
3. Employed	1.06	.275	.073	.063							
4. TICP	3.28	1.904	.519**	-.054	.086						
Predictor Variables											
5. E-SA Anx	5.044	.964	.136**	.052	.007	.033	(.789)				
6. E-SA Avd	3.729	1.063	.047	.011	-.003	-.018	-.092*	(.811)			
Outcome Variables											
7. IHB	2.024	.709	-.072	-.138**	-.007	-.091	-.029	.185**	(.843)		
8. DDI	2.808	.869	-.050	-.179**	.007	-.095*	.135**	.191**	.090	(.921)	
9. ERS	4.068	1.032	.345**	-.071	.103*	.246**	.280**	.000	.090	.106*	(.897)

Note. N = 302 - 344, TICP, Time in Current Position; E-SA Anx, Employee-Supervisor Attachment Anxiety (1 "*disagree strongly*" to 7 "*agree strongly*"); E-SA Avd, Employee-Supervisor Attachment Avoidance (1 "*disagree strongly*" to 7 "*agree strongly*"); IHB, Interpersonal Helping Behavior (1 "*not at all characteristic*" to 5 "*very much so"*); DDI, Discomfort with Disclosure Index (1 "*strongly disagree*" to 5 "*strongly agree"*); ERS, Excessive Reassurance Seeking Scale (1 "*not at all*" to 7 "*very much"*); Reliabilities (Coefficient Alphas) reported on diagonal; *p < .05, **p < .001

solution was retained. All odd E-SA items represented E-SA anxiety, whereas all even E-SA items represented avoidance. Two items (ESA15 and ESA6) have factor loadings greater than .3 on both factors. *Table 4* contains factor loadings of all items as well as communalities and *Table 5* contains eigen values and variance accounted for given a two-factor solution.

Interpersonal Helping Behavior

The first proposition focuses on the E-SA differentially predicting varying levels of Interpersonal Helping Behavior (IHB). To test this proposition a linear regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between IHB and E-SA anxious and avoidant attachment styles. High scores for anxious or avoidant attachment indicate greater levels of the sub dimension, whereas lower on both indicate a more secure attachment style. Furthermore, higher scores of IHB indicate a greater willingness and likelihood of helping other members of an organization without expectation of benefitting as the individual helping.

Analysis revealed a differential prediction between E-SA and IHB. E-SA anxiety did not significantly predict IHB, b = -.030, $t(300)$ = -.709, p = .479, whereas E-SA avoidant style did (b = .126, $t(300)$ = 3.384, p < .001). A statistically significant positive linear relationship was found between participant's reported E-SA avoidance and their reported IHB. For each one unit increase of an individual's reported level of E-SA avoidance, we predict their IHB will increase by .126 in a model that also contains participant's age, gender, if they are currently employed, amount of time in current work position, and reported E-

SA anxiety. Theoretically, this means that individuals who score high on E-SA avoidance are more likely to exhibit interpersonal helping behaviors.

Analysis also revealed IHB accounted for statistically significant variance in the E-SA outcome in the same aforementioned model, $R = .256$, $R^2 = .066$, $adjR^2 = .047$, $F(6, 306) = 3.512$, $p < .05$. R square indicates 6.6% of the variance in an individual's reported level of IHB is explained by reported levels of E-SA anxiety and avoidance in a model also containing participant's age, gender, if they are currently employed, and amount of time in current work position. Adjusted R square indicates 4.7% of the variance in one's level of IHB is predicted by the individual's reported levels of E-SA anxiety and avoidance in the same aforementioned model. *Table 6* lists these values in both steps for better interpretation. *Table 7* includes additional information regarding model fit.

Table 4. Study 2 Item Loadings Based on Principal Axis Factoring with Direct Oblimin Rotation.

Item	Anxiety (1)	Avoidance (2)	Commonalities
ESA1	**.473**	.028	.255
ESA3	**.397**	.221	.248
ESA5	**.566**	-.080	.343
ESA7	**.617**	-.141	.389
ESA9	**.377**	.012	.222
ESA11	**.595**	.055	.438
ESA13	**.577**	-.115	.313
ESA15	**.570**	**-.389**	.460
ESA17	**.751**	.004	.570
ESA2*	-.244	**-.578**	.379
ESA4*	-.060	**-.541**	.339
ESA6	**.462**	**-.567**	.473
ESA8*	-.104	**-.769**	.586
ESA10	.215	**-.512**	.309
ESA12	.233	**-.532**	.430
ESA14	.063	**-.584**	.395
ESA16*	-.032	**-.690**	.543

Note. * indicates reverse coded items. Bold print indicates factor loadings greater than .3. Items are split based on subscales, anxious and avoidant, respectfully.

Table 5. Eigenvalues and Variance Accounted for Given a Two-Factor Solution.

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues		Extracted Loadings	
	Total	Variance	Total	Variance
Anxiety	4.11	24.17%	3.59	21.12
Avoidance	3.39	19.93%	2.86	16.85

Table 6. Regression Coefficients of E-SA Predicting IHB

	Interpersonal Helping Behavior		
	B	*β*	*P* value
Step 1			
(Constant)	2.563	–	<.001
Age	-.020	-.032	.637
Gender	-.240	-.144	.012
Currently Employed	.023	.009	.880
Time in Position	-.031	-.083	.223
Step 2			
(Constant)	2.227	–	<.001
Age	-.025	-.039	.565
Gender	-.234	-.140	.013
Currently Employed	.029	.011	.845
Time in Position	-.029	-.078	.243
E-SA Anxiety	-.030	-.040	.479
E-SA Avoidance	.126	.191	<.001
R^2	.066*		

Note. * indicates $p < .05$

Table 7. E-SA Anxiety and Avoidance Predicting IHB

Source	SS	*df*	MS	F
Regression	10.158	6	1.693	3.512*
Residual	144.631	300	0.482	–
Total	154.789	306	–	–

Note. * indicates $p < .05$. Table also contains participant's age, gender, and amount of time in current work position.

Distress Disclosure Index

Proposition 2 focused on the E-SA differentially predicting varying levels of comfort or discomfort with disclosure using the Distress Disclosure Index (DDI). Testing this proposition, we used a linear regression to determine the relationship between participants measured E-SA and DDI. An individual high in comfort with disclosure is more likely to engage in verbal disclosure and emotional expression, and also have a more positive attitude about expressing/disclosing their emotions. Whereas lower scoring individuals are less likely to have a positive attitude about the expression of their emotions or verbal disclosure.

Analysis revealed a statistical prediction between E-SA and DDI. A statistically significant positive linear relationship was found between participant's reported E-SA anxiety and their reported DDI ($b = .117$, $t(298) = 2.693$, $p < .05$). For each one unit increase of an individual's reported level of E-SA anxiety, we predict their DDI will increase by .117 in a model that also contains participant's age, gender, if they are currently employed, amount of time in current work position, and reported E-SA avoidance. Theoretically, this means that individuals

who score high on E-SA anxiety are more likely to engage in verbal disclosure and emotional expression, and also have a more positive attitude about expressing/disclosing their emotions. Additionally, E-SA avoidance also proved to have a statistically significant relationship with reported DDI (b = .114, $t(298)$ = 3.471, $p < .001$). For each one unit increase of an individual's reported level of E-SA avoidance, we predict their DDI will increase by .114 in a model that also contains participant's age, gender, if they are currently employed, amount of time in current work position, and reported E-SA anxiety.

Analysis also revealed an individual's reported DDI accounted for statistically significant variance in the E-SA outcome in the same aforementioned model, R = .312, R^2 = .098, adjR^2 = .079, $F(2, 298) = 8.799$, $p < .001$. This indicates that as an individual's reported levels of E-SA anxiety and avoidance increase their DDI will also increase, meaning those with a less secure E-SA attachment style are more likely to engage in verbal disclosure and emotional expression, and also have a more positive attitude about expressing/disclosing their emotions. R square indicates 9.8% of the variance in an individual's reported level of DDI is explained by reported levels of E-SA anxiety and avoidance in a model also containing participant's age, gender, if they are currently employed, and amount of time in current work position. Adjusted R square indicates 7.9% of the variance in one's level of DDI is predicted by the individual's reported levels of E-SA anxiety and avoidance in the same

aforementioned model. Table 8 lists these values in both steps for better interpretation. Table 9 includes additional information regarding model fit.

Table 8. Regression Coefficients of E-SA Predicting Comfort with Disclosure

	Comfort with Disclosure		
	B	*β*	*P* value
Step 1			
(Constant)	3.609	–	<.001
Age	-.008	-.010	.882
Gender	-.386	-.188	.001
Currently Employed	.044	.014	.808
Time in Position	-.046	-.102	.132
Step 2			
(Constant)	2.540	–	<.001
Age	-.032	-.041	.535
Gender	-.403	-.197	<.001
Currently Employed	.042	.013	.815
Time in Position	-.040	-.088	.186
E-SA Anxiety	.117	.130	.021
E-SA Avoidance	.114	.177	.002
R^2	.098**		

Note. ** indicates $p < .001$

Table 9. E-SA Anxiety and Avoidance Predicting Comfort with Disclosure

Source	SS	*df*	MS	F
Regression	22.498	6	3.750	5.373**
Residual	207.955	298	.698	–
Total	230.435	304	–	–

Note. ** indicates $p < .001$. Table also contains participant's age, gender, and amount of time in current work position.

Excessive Reassurance Seeking Scale

The focal point of proposition 3 is if E-SA differentially predicts varying levels of excessive reassurance seeking (ERS) behavior using the Excessive Reassurance Seeking Scale (ERS-Scale). This proposition was tested using a linear regression to determine the relationship between participants measured E-SA and ERS. An individual high in ERS is more likely to excessively ask other people for reassurance of one's own worth.

Analysis revealed a differential prediction between E-SA and ERS. A statistically significant positive linear relationship was found between participant's reported E-SA anxiety and their reported ERS. For each one unit increase of an individual's reported level of E-SA anxiety, we predict their ERS will increase by .275 in a model that also contains participant's age, gender, if they are currently employed, amount of time in current work position, and reported E-SA avoidance, $b = .275$, $t(293) = 4.849$, $p < .001$. Theoretically, this means that individuals who score high on E-SA anxiety are more likely to excessively ask

other people for reassurance of one's own worth. In contrast, E-SA avoidance did not prove to have a statistically significant relationship with ERS in a model that also contains participant's age, gender, if they are currently employed, amount of time in current work position, and reported E-SA anxiety, b = -.043, $t(293)$ = -.858, p = .391.

Analysis also revealed ERS accounted for statistically significant variance in the E-SA outcome in the same aforementioned model, R = .441, R^2 = .195, adjR^2 = .178, $F(6, 293)$ = 11.806 , p < .001. This indicates that as an individual's reported levels of E-SA anxiety and avoidance increase their ERS will increase, meaning those with a less secure E-SA attachment style are more likely to excessively ask other people for reassurance of one's own worth. R square indicates 19.5% of the variance in an individual's reported level of ERS is explained by reported levels of E-SA anxiety and avoidance in a model also containing participant's age, gender, if they are currently employed, and amount of time in current work position. Adjusted R square indicates 17.8% of the variance in one's level of ERS is predicted by the individual's reported levels of E-SA anxiety and avoidance in the same aforementioned model. *Table 10* lists these values in both steps for better interpretation. *Table 11* includes additional information regarding model fit.

Table 10. Regression Coefficients of E-SA Predicting ERS

	Excessive Reassurance Seeking		
	B	*β*	*P* value
Step 1			
(Constant)	3.437	–	<.001
Age	.273	.296	<.001
Gender	-.165	-.067	.219
Currently Employed	.282	.073	.185
Time in Position	.041	.075	.219
Step 2			
(Constant)	2.358	–	<.001
Age	.243	.263	<.001
Gender	-.215	-.088	.097
Currently Employed	.248	.064	.226
Time in Position	.049	.091	.149
E-SA Anxiety	.275	.259	<.001
E-SA Avoidance	-.043	-.045	.391
R^2	.195**		

Note. ** indicates $p < .001$

Table 11. E-SA Anxiety and Avoidance Predicting ERS

Source	SS	*df*	MS	F
Regression	62.023	6	10.337	11.806**
Residual	256.552	293	.876	–
Total	318.575	299	–	–

Note. ** indicates $p < .001$. Table also contains participant's age, gender, and amount of time in current work position.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

Since theorized, attachment has gained a tremendous amount of attention across varying domains of research (Ainsworth, 1978; Bowlby, 1988). Likewise, individual differences, such as personality traits, have seemingly become a key factor of being successful in many leadership and managerial positions. Our attempt to create and validate an additional measure of individual difference, specific to how one seeks or provides comfort in times of stress, helps yield more fruitful information about an individual for either hiring managers or other strategic decision makers within an organization. Though research supports the connection of attachment to different types of relationships (parent-child, romantic partner, co-parental relationship), it is possible that the workplace may produce a unique dyadic relationship between an employee and their supervisor.

Until recently little research has been completed to address the gap between attachment theory and organizational outcomes (Harms, 2011). Attachment has earned attention in recent years to better understand differences in LMX relationships as well as who seemingly receives the most drawback from insecure attachment (Harms et al., 2016). Researchers have provided details to the connection between the two, however, attachment has yet to be assessed in a manner specific to organizational relations. This paper addressed this gap and

further developed an attachment measure specific to a relationship between an employee and their supervisor.

All three of our propositions focused on E-SA predicting different outcome variables. Proposition 1, E-SA will differentially predict varying levels of Interpersonal Helping Behavior (IHB), was evaluated and found significant results. E-SA avoidance significantly predicted IHB, whereas E-SA anxiety did not. Furthermore, Proposition 2, E-SA will differentially predict varying levels of Comfort with Disclosure, was evaluated and also found significant results. Both E-SA anxiety and avoidance had significantly positive relationships with the DDI. Lastly, Proposition 3, E-SA will differentially predict varying levels of Excessive Reassurance Seeking (ERS), was evaluated and it too had significant results. E-SA anxiety significantly predicted ERS, whereas E-SA avoidance did not.

The first proposition revealed a differential prediction between E-SA anxiety, avoidance, and IHB. The positive and significant relationship between E-SA avoidance and IHB likely means that individuals who avoid an emotional attachment in the workplace are also more willing to help others in interpersonal relationships without the need for personal reward in doing so. Likewise, this may be warranted by their lack of willingness to receive support. Since IHB can consist of helping a new coworker settle in or help others perform their task-oriented job activities, then performing IHB may directly influence the individual from being asked to help another and in-turn, receiving the unwanted support from their supervisor (Den Hartog et al., 2007; Van Scotter & Motowidlo, 1996).

Theoretically, this means that an E-SA avoidant individual will likely perform these tasks without being asked to, or incentivized to, because they do not want the support of others to ask or direct them.

The second proposition revealed varying levels of significant relationships between E-SA anxiety, avoidance, and the DDI. The positive relationship between E-SA anxiety and discomfort with disclosure being significant implies that individuals high in E-SA anxiety are likely to engage in verbal disclosure and emotional expression (Kahn et al., 2012). Likewise, individuals high in E-SA anxiety may have a positive outlook on the disclosure. The positive relationship between E-SA avoidance and the DDI, though theoretically differing from E-SA anxiety, may suggest a deeper level of comfort with disclosure. Individuals high in E-SA avoidance may still engage in verbal disclosure, especially when needed in the workplace, however, they may be less likely to view these social relationships as supportive (Galdiolo & Roskam, 2016). Moreover, those high in E-SA avoidance may still engage in the disclosure of distressful information about themselves but potentially with less detail or less trust than individuals high in E-SA anxiety.

The third proposition revealed a differential prediction between E-SA anxiety, avoidance, and ERS. The positive relationship between E-SA anxiety and ERS is congruent with our original understanding of the two variables as those high in E-SA anxiety are likely to exhibit excessive reassurance seeking behavior because they are more likely to rely on others to confirm their self-worth

and relationship security (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Wei et al., 2007). This also adds further support for the E-SA due to the lack of significance in the prediction between E-SA avoidance and ERS, since individuals scoring high on E-SA avoidance are less likely to want reassurance or support from others.

Regarding the findings of this study, attachment theory does in fact have a place in organizational research, even though more in depth research needs to be done. E-SA having significant predicting power within this study's outcome variables is the first step in a much longer process to gear E-SA more toward organizational, LMX, and individual differences research. As further research is conducted, E-SA may be employed as an additional predictor of organizational outcomes at a team or leadership level. With the E-SA scale being a reliable and valid measure of attachment between an employee and their supervisor, we can begin to assess workplace relationships from a new perspective of not only what an employee wants from their supervisor but also what may benefit the individual in the organizational setting. Furthermore, the ability to assess individuals to determine this information may enhance LMX by providing valuable information for those in leadership roles to help them better understand other members of their team.

Limitations

As for the limitations of the current study, there are a handful of obvious restrictions. First, the study being self-report can take away from the practicality of the responses given. Respondents may have over- or under-

exaggerated their responses to make their responses seem more sensible to themselves or the researcher. Additionally, conducting analyses using cross-sectional data may not provide the most pragmatic evidence to help support our hypotheses. Moreover, a larger sample size would permit for more in depth analyses and the potential use of a CFA.

Practical Implications

Professional use of E-SA may benefit mentoring in many different applied settings. For example, providing an individual with E-SA information about themselves may allow them to better understand how they perceive mentoring relationships as well as relationships with their supervisor. Furthermore, as a mentor, this information may be beneficial when building connections with those being mentored. E-SA can provide valuable information to those who seek to better the work environment of others through leadership and mentoring. As the E-SA construct continues to develop, professionals can begin to assess workplace relationships from additional perspectives, assessing individuals to determine how to best enhance LMX through the valuable information E-SA can provide.

At the individual level E-SA can also provide a great deal of valuable information. Using E-SA, individuals can employ this additional perspective to better understand how they interact with their supervisors as well as their collaboration style in the workplace, providing them with a unique resource in their own development. Additionally, individuals making use of this

information for their own development can potentially better understand how they interact with their supervisors, allowing them to attempt to generate more of their positive interactions and eliminate more of their negative.

Future Directions

Future research would likely benefit from addressing the above limitations. Making use of self-report data is the easiest way to test our hypotheses, although employing an observational based data collection will yield more accurate representations of participants in our study's model. Moreover, proper training and practice for researchers conducting observations will further benefit the quality of data collected and future research.

Although cross-sectional data was the most applicable and accessible means of collecting data, research will likely benefit from the utilization of longitudinal data. Collecting data from an individual over a longer period, potentially through different occupations and superiors in the workplace, will shed additional light on E-SA and how an individual may or may not shift their attachment style based on their tenure and/or supervisor.

Further research may also be conducted using more in-depth analyses, such as structural equation modeling (SEM). SEM could potentially be used to analyze the structural relationship between our newly developed E-SA scale and the ECR-S scale while also considering the dependent variables in this study and other prospective variables. *Figure 1* shows a potential SEM.

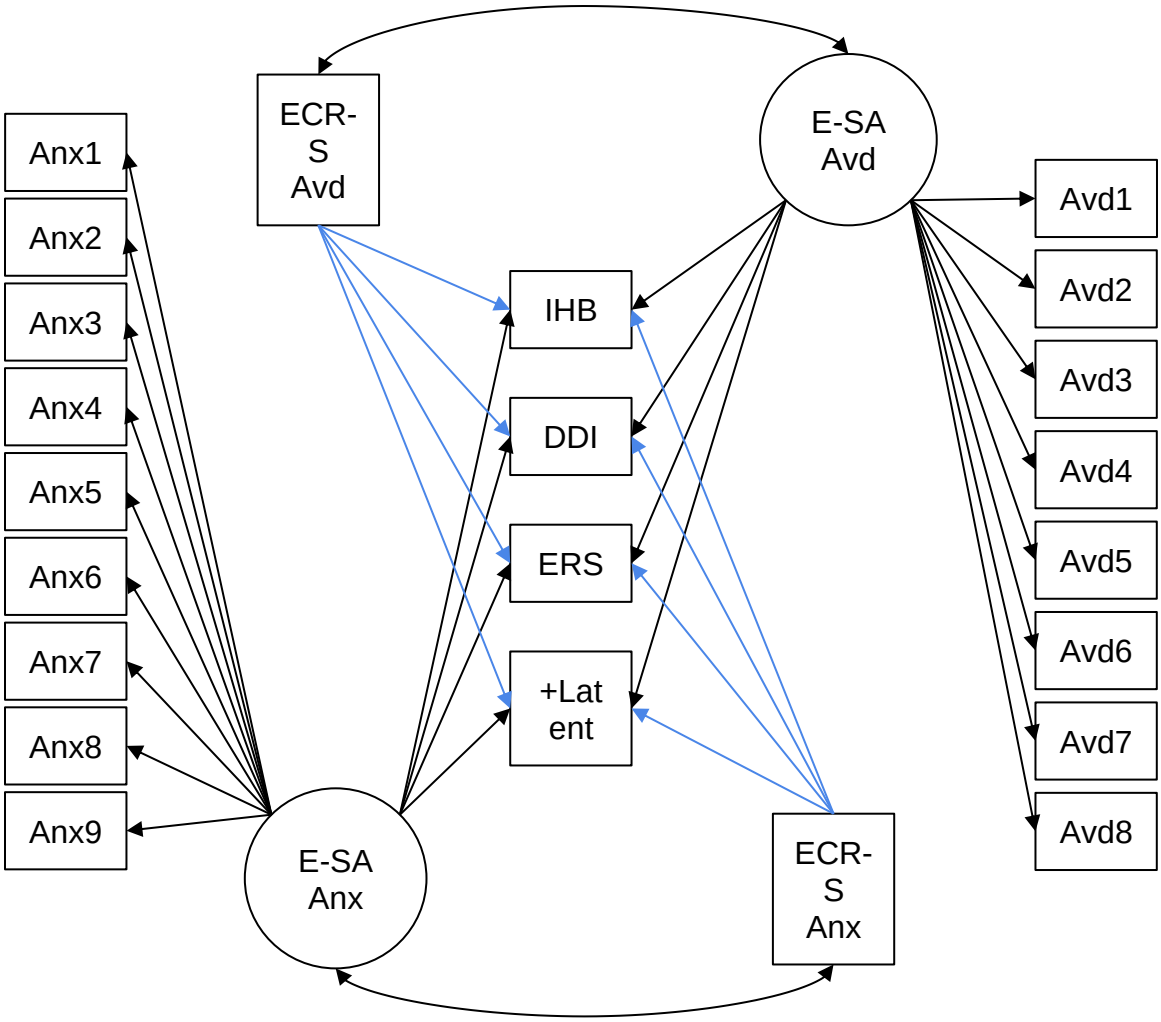

Figure 1. SEM Model for Future Research

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to establish and validate an attachment scale specific to an employee's relationship with their supervisors or those in leadership roles. This study not only addresses a gap between attachment theory and organizational outcomes, but it also provided support for attachment theory in LMX research by confirming that leaders or supervisors can be viewed as attachment figures by their employees or followers. This project furthered a measure that can be used to better understand the preferences for interpersonal relationships within the workplace, specifically with one's supervisor. Additionally, this project added to research in different domains including attachment theory, LMX/leadership, and research regarding individual differences.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY ITEMS

Age

Please indicate your age in years:

- 18-29 (1)
- 30-39 (2)
- 40-49 (3)
- 50-59 (4)
- 60+ (5)

Gender

Please indicate the gender you most identify with:

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Non-binary / third gender (3)
- Prefer not to say (4)
- Other: (5)

_____

Employment

Are you currently employed:

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Prefer not to say (3)

Time in Current Position (TICP)

Please indicate the amount of time you have been in your current job position:

- Less than 1 year (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 2-3 years (3)
- 3-4 years (4)
- 4-5 years (5)
- 5+ years (6)
- Prefer not to say (7)

E-SA

Anxious Subscale

1. I get frustrated when my supervisor isn't around as much as I would like.
2. Sometimes I feel that I force my supervisor to show more feeling, more commitment.
3. I need a lot of reassurance that I am cared for by my supervisor.
4. If I can't get my supervisor to show interest in me, I get very upset or angry.
5. My desire to be very close sometimes scares supervisors away.
6. I worry about being alone at work.

7. I worry that supervisors won't care about me as much as I care about them.
8. If I don't have a relationship with my supervisor, I feel somewhat anxious and insecure.
9. I worry about being abandoned at work.

Avoidant Subscale

1. I don't feel comfortable opening up to supervisors. (R)
2. I get uncomfortable when a supervisor wants to be very close. (R)
3. I turn to my supervisor for many things, including comfort and reassurance.
4. I try to avoid getting too close to supervisors. (R)
5. I feel comfortable depending on supervisors.
6. It helps to turn to my supervisor in times of need.
7. I don't mind asking supervisors for comfort, advice or help.
8. I prefer not to be too close to supervisors. (R)

Note. Items listed with (R) represent a reverse coded item.

Citation: Craig et al. (2020)

ECR-S

Anxious Subscale

1. I need a lot of reassurance that I am loved by my partner
2. I find that my partner(s) don't want to get as close as I would like.
3. My desire to be very close sometimes scares people away.
4. I do not often worry about being abandoned. (R)
5. I get frustrated if romantic partners are not available when I need them.
6. I worry that romantic partners won't care about me as much as I care about them.

Avoidant Subscale

1. It helps to turn to my romantic partner in times of need. (R)
2. I want to get close to my partner, but I keep pulling back.
3. I turn to my partner for many things, including comfort and reassurance. (R)
4. I try to avoid getting too close to my partner.
5. I usually discuss my problems and concerns with my partner. (R)
6. I am nervous when partners get too close to me.

Note. Items listed with (R) represent a reverse coded item.

Citation: Wei et al. (2007)

Interpersonal Helping Behavior

1. Helps others when it is clear their workload is too high
2. Takes the initiative to help orient newcomers in the organization even though it is not required
3. Lends a helping hand to coworkers when needed
4. Willingly assists others in meeting deadlines or requirements
5. Thinks of ways to improve collaboration within the organization
6. Works with others wherever possible to help improve the image of the group and organization

Citation: Den Hartog et al. (2007)

Discomfort with Disclosure Index

1. When I feel upset, I usually confide in my friends. (R)
2. I prefer not to talk about my problems.
3. When something unpleasant happens to me, I often look for someone to talk to. (R)
4. I typically don't discuss things that upset me.
5. When I feel depressed or sad, I tend to keep those feelings to myself.
6. I try to find people to talk with about my problems. (R)
7. When I am in a bad mood, I talk about it with my friends. (R)

8. If I have a bad day, the last thing I want to do is talk about it.
9. I rarely look for people to talk with when I am having a problem.
10. When I'm distressed I don't tell anyone.
11. I usually seek out someone to talk to when I am in a bad mood. (R)
12. I am willing to tell others my distressing thoughts. (R)

Note. Items listed with (R) represent a reverse coded item.

Citation: Kahn et al. (2012)

Excessive Reassurance Seeking Scale

1. Do you find yourself often asking the people you feel close to how they truly feel about you?
2. Do you frequently seek reassurance from the people you feel close to as to whether they really care about you?
3. Do the people you feel close to sometimes become irritated with you for seeking reassurance from them about whether they really care about you?
4. Do the people you feel close to sometimes get "fed up" with you for seeking reassurance from them about whether they really care about you?

Citation: Joiner and Metalsky (2001)

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL

Date: 7-15-2023

IRB #: IRB-FY2021-307
Title: Employee-Supervisor Attachment Validation
Creation Date: 6-3-2021
End Date:
Status: Approved
Principal Investigator: Ismael Diaz
Review Board: Main IRB Designated Reviewers for Department of Psychology
Sponsor:

Study History

Submission Type	Review Type	Decision
Initial	Exempt	Exempt

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