Affective Match in Leadership: Leader Emotional Displays, Follower Positive Affect, and Follower Performance¹

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Leader emotions may play an important role in leadership effectiveness. Extending earlier research on leader emotional displays and leadership effectiveness, we propose that the affective match between follower positive affect (PA) and leaders’ emotional displays moderates the effectiveness of leader emotional displays. Leader display of emotions has more positive effects on follower behavior if the match between the valence of leader emotion and follower PA is strong rather than weak. Support for this hypothesis was found in 2 experiments. Congruency between leader emotional displays and follower PA determined follower task performance and extra-role compliance. Results from the second experiment indicated that this effect is due to affective aspects of leader behavior and not to the valence of message content.

Although interest in leadership and affect is increasing, empirical evidence for the role of affect (i.e., emotions and moods) in leadership processes is still scarce. Recent studies have shown that leaders’ affective displays may influence leadership effectiveness (e.g., Bono & Ilies, 2006; George, 1995; Glomb & Hulin, 1997; Lord & Brown, 2004; Sy, Côté, & Saavedra, 2005), but at the same time suggest that this is not always the case (e.g., Lewis, 2000; Locke et al., 1991). In addition, some studies have suggested that the display of positive affect may be more effective than the display of negative affect (Gaddis, Connolly, & Mumford, 2004; McColl-Kennedy & Anderson, 2002; Newcombe & Ashkanasy, 2002; cf. Martin, Ward, Achee, & Wyer, 1993),

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whereas other evidence has suggested that the display of negative emotions may also be effective, or may even be more effective in influencing others than the display of positive emotions (Tiedens, 2001; cf. Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2004a, 2004b).

Clearly, we still have limited understanding of the role of affect in leadership processes. Importantly, the somewhat muddled picture that arises from the literature seems to suggest that we may advance our understanding of the relative effectiveness of leader positive and negative emotional displays by looking at potential moderators. In the present study, we address this issue by investigating how follower characteristics may inform responses to leader affective displays. Specifically, we will zoom in on the role of follower affective state as a moderator of the effectiveness of leader positive versus negative emotional displays in engendering follower task performance. We propose that leader emotional displays are more effective when there is a better affective match between leader affective display and follower affective state. We test this affective match hypothesis in two experimental studies of leader emotional displays and follower performance.

Leader Emotional Displays and Leadership Effectiveness

There is an abundance of evidence indicating that affect is of major importance for human functioning. Indeed, affect strongly influences cognitive processes such as memory, imaging, attention, judgment, and planning (Damasio, 1994; Forgas, 1995; Williams, Watts, MacLeod, & Mathews, 1999). Additionally, people use both their own feelings and others’ affective displays as informational input for the cognitive processes that are needed to interact successfully with each other (Damasio, 1994; Forgas, 2001; Fridja, 1986; Keltner & Haidt, 1999; Oatley & Jenkins, 1996). For instance, affective displays are argued to influence the interaction between individuals by providing vital information about others’ feelings (Scherer, 1986), intentions (Fridlund, 1992), and orientation toward the relationship (Knutson, 1996).

Affect is considered to shape social interaction in groups as well. For instance, affective displays are thought to build identification with the group (Keltner & Haidt, 1999), adjust behavior in the group (Cacioppo & Gardner, 1999), and define group boundaries (Frijda & Mesquita, 1994). Evidently, affect colors people’s perceptions of the social world and plays an important role in social interaction (Oatley & Johnson-Laird, 1987; Schwarz & Clore, 1983).

Given the fact that affect is important for social interaction, it is perhaps not surprising that affect also plays a key role in organizational functioning. Indeed, evidence showing that affect plays a pervasive influence in organiza-
tions is accumulating (Brief & Weiss, 2002; George & Brief, 1996; Judge & Ilies, 2004; Lord, Klimeski, & Kanfer, 2002; Staw, Sutton, & Pelled, 1994; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Affective displays, for instance, influence behavior in work teams (Barsade, 2002; George, 1990; Kelly & Barsade, 2001), negotiation settings (Carnevale & Isen, 1986; Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b), sales-representative/client interaction (Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, & Sideman, 2005; Sutton & Rafaeli, 1988), and managerial processes (Staw & Barsade, 1993).

Affect has also been related more specifically to leadership effectiveness. The literature provides anecdotal analyses of charismatic and transformational leadership, suggesting that leadership effectiveness may derive in part from leaders’ use of emotions (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000; Awamleh & Gardner, 1999; Bass, 1998; Cherulnik, Donley, Wiewel, & Miller, 2001; Conger & Kanungo, 1998). Empirical tests of the relationship between leader emotional displays and influence on followers are still scarce, but the available evidence does support the conclusion that leaders’ emotional displays affect leadership effectiveness. A number of studies have documented the positive effects of leader positive emotional displays (e.g., Bono & Ilies, 2006; Damen, van Knippenberg, & van Knippenberg, 2003).

Another body of empirical research focuses on the relative effectiveness of positive and negative emotional displays. Some of these studies have suggested that the display of positive emotions is more effective than the display of negative emotions, possibly because the display of positive emotions signals more positive feedback than does the display of negative emotions (Gaddis et al., 2004; McColl-Kennedy & Anderson, 2002; Newcombe & Ashkanasy, 2002; cf. Martin et al., 1993). However, Sy et al.’s (2005) findings suggest that the relative effectiveness of positive and negative displays may be contingent on the indicator of leadership effectiveness in question. Their study, although a study of leader mood and not necessarily leader affective display, indicated that a leader in a positive mood (compared with a leader in a negative mood) produces more coordination among group members, but less effort on the group task. Other studies have suggested that the display of negative affect can be effective as well, or even have suggested that the display of negative emotions can be more effective than the display of positive emotions (Tiedens, 2001; cf. Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b).

The available evidence thus suggests that both positive and negative emotional displays may at times add to leadership effectiveness. Yet, it is unclear what conditions influence the relative effectiveness of the display of positive versus negative emotions.

We may advance our understanding of the effects of leader emotional displays by looking at potential moderators of the effectiveness of the display of positive and negative emotions. Of course, the list of potential moderators
is abundant, varying from contextual factors to leader traits and conduct, for instance. However, as some researchers have noted, in order to explain leadership effectiveness, it may be wise to concentrate more on the follower (Lord & Brown, 2004; van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer, & Hogg, 2004). There is no leadership without followers, and it is the followers’ compliance, cooperation, and endorsement that enable leaders to be effective.

While the role of followers in the leadership process has been acknowledged, research in this respect has been cognitive in flavor. It has focused mainly on cognitive representations of leadership to explain reactions to leadership (e.g., Howell & Shamir, 2005; Lord & Maher, 1991; Meindl, Ehrlich, & Dukerich, 1985) and on follower self-definition as a factor informing responses to leadership (e.g., van Knippenberg & Hogg, 2003). It has not, however, addressed the possibility that follower affective states influence responses to leadership.

People use their emotions and affective states as informational input in evaluating social situations (Bower, 1981; Forgas, 1995, 2001; Schwarz & Clore, 1983). Affect colors the way that the social world around us is perceived. More importantly, affective states influence attention to, evaluation of, and memory for affective stimuli (Blaney, 1986; Forgas, 1994; Singer & Salovey, 1988). Applying these insights to leadership processes, we may expect that follower affect informs responses to leadership in general, and to leaders’ emotional displays specifically. In the present study, we focus on follower positive affect (Watson & Tellegen, 1985), and investigate whether it operates as a moderator of the effectiveness of leader positive versus negative emotional displays.

Follower Positive Affect and Leader Emotional Displays

Positive affect (PA) “represents the extent to which one feels enthusiastic, active, and alert” (Watson & Tellegen, 1985, p. 221; see also Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). PA encompasses both emotions, as specific, interruptive, and intense feelings; and moods, as relatively lower intensity, longer lasting, and more diffuse feeling states with often less clearly identifiable causes (Forgas, 1992; Frijda, 1986; Lewis & Haviland-Jones, 2000). People with high PA are likely to experience positive emotions and moods (e.g., enthusiasm, excitement), while people with low PA are likely to do so to a lesser extent and may experience feelings such as sadness instead.

PA has been shown to be an important moderating factor in predicting organizational attitudes and behavior (e.g., Anderson & Thompson, 2004; Barsade, Ward, Turner, & Sonnenfeld, 2000; Cropanzano, James, &
Konovsky, 1993; Duffy, Ganster, & Shaw, 1998; Fortunato & Stone-Romero, 2001; Hochwarter, Kiewitz, Castro, Perrewé, & Ferris, 2003; Iverson & Deery, 2001; Judge & Ilies, 2004; Yoon & Thye, 2000). PA may represent an affective trait (referring to individual differences in the disposition to experience PA), as well as an affective state (referring to an individual’s PA at a particular point in time). Because trait PA should express its influence through state PA, and because we are interested in the effects of PA (i.e., whether followers’ current affective state informs responses to leader affective displays), in the present study we focus on state PA.

Of particular relevance to the present analysis are findings suggesting that PA may influence responses to affective stimuli. Bower’s (1981) network theory implies that people may have stronger and a greater number of connections among emotional experiences that are congruent with their affective states. As a consequence, people’s affective states invite mood-congruent information processing and retrieval of information (Blaney, 1986; Forgas, 1994, 1995; Niedenthal & Showers, 1991; Singer & Salovey, 1988). Positive mood states, therefore, are thought to increase the accurate perception of positive stimuli and the tendency to make positive judgments and retrieve positive memories.

Gray’s (1971, 1981, 1987) theory of affective traits also points to the possibility that follower affect may inform responses to affective stimuli. Gray posited that individual differences in impulsivity may account for the relative strengths of a motivational system that regulates behavior in the presence of signals of reward. As a consequence, some people may be more sensitive to positive emotional stimuli than others (e.g., Lord et al., 2002). Likewise, others (e.g., Larsen & Ketelaar, 1991) have suggested that traits such as extraversion make people more susceptible to PA and less susceptible to negative affect (NA). Although these theories do not focus explicitly on PA, the high correlations between impulsivity/extraversion and state and trait PA may suggest that these theories are applicable to a wider range of affect-related concepts (Rusting & Larsen, 1997, 1998; Zelenski & Larsen, 1999).

In sum, these combined perspectives suggest that individuals are more sensitive and more open to experiences that are congruent with their own affective state. Importantly, there is also evidence for the idea that individuals have better relationships with and more positive attitudes toward, and are more strongly persuaded by others who have a congruent affective state. There is growing evidence that work groups function better when there is similarity of affect, especially of PA (Barsade, 2002; Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Bauer & Green, 1996; Totterdell, 2000). Barsade et al. (2000), for instance, focused on the effects of the extent to which top management team members
had similar levels of trait PA, and found that a match of affect between the managers in a team was associated with positive attitudes toward and perceptions of the team. In a similar vein, Bauer and Green (1996) found that leader–follower relationships were better when leaders and followers were similar in trait PA. Although these findings again do not concern state PA, the findings clearly hint at the possibility that leader affective displays may have positive effects when they match followers’ affective states. Research on affect and persuasion (e.g., Albarracín & Kumkale, 2003; DeSteno, Petty, Rucker, Wegener, & Braverman, 2004; DeSteno, Petty, Wegener, & Rucker, 2000; Mackie & Worth, 1989) has revealed comparable mood congruity effects. For instance, DeSteno et al. (2004) manipulated the mood of participants and found that a message was more persuasive when it was likely to elicit similar affective responses. When the message was likely to trigger sadness, people who were induced with a sad mood were more likely to be persuaded than were people in an angry or neutral mood. However, when the message was likely to elicit anger, people in an angry mood were more likely to be persuaded than were neutral or sad participants. These findings thus suggest that leaders may be more influential when their affective displays match followers’ affective states.

There is also evidence that PA is more important than its counterpart NA (negative affect, refers to trait or state differences in the experience of negative affective states; Watson & Clark, 1984). In studies that focused on social interaction (i.e., as in leader–follower relationships) and affect congruency effects, PA appeared to be substantially more influential than NA (e.g., Barsade et al., 2000; Blaney, 1986; Singer & Salovey, 1988; Watson, Clark, McIntyre, & Hamaker, 1992). Because PA may affect responses to affective stimuli to a larger extent than NA, the present study focuses specifically on the role of PA.

Thus, extrapolating the aforementioned findings to the present study, one would expect that the relative fit between a leader’s emotional display and follower PA influences the persuasiveness of the leader’s influence attempt. More specifically, we propose that followers are more open to leaders’ appeals if the valence of the leader’s emotional display matches followers’ levels of PA more closely. Thus, for followers high in PA, the match with leaders who display positive emotions (e.g., enthusiasm, happiness) is closer than the match with leaders who display negative emotions (e.g., sadness, anger). For followers who lack PA, the match with leaders who display positive emotions is weaker than the match with leaders who also seem to lack positive affect and instead display negative emotions. Thus, for followers high in PA, appeals accompanied by positive emotional displays are relatively more effective than are appeals accompanied by negative emotional displays. For followers low in PA, appeals accompanied by positive
emotional displays are relatively less effective than are appeals accompanied by negative emotional displays.

We test this hypothesis in two experiments. The first study is designed to test our core prediction that leaders’ emotional displays will be more effective in engendering desired follower behavior when the valence of the display matches follower PA. The second study is designed to replicate the core finding with another (different-gender) leader, and to establish that the predicted effect is driven by leaders’ emotional display, and not by the valence of the content of the message per se.

**Study 1**

We manipulated leaders’ positive versus negative emotional displays and added a measure of follower PA as a factor to the design. To manipulate emotional displays of the leader, we focused on anger and enthusiasm. Both anger and enthusiasm are clearly recognizable and reflect high levels of arousal. In addition, they are each other’s opposites in terms of their pleasantness or valence (Larsen, Diener, & Lucas, 2002). Thus, anger is seen as a strong negative emotion, whereas enthusiasm is seen as a strong positive emotion.

Analyses have suggested that enthusiasm and anger are highly relevant to leadership effectiveness (e.g., Fitness, 2000; Glomb & Hulin, 1997; Lewis, 2000; Lord et al., 2002; Tiedens, 2001). Although relying on anecdotal evidence, rather than systematic research, analyses of charismatic leadership have pointed to charismatic leaders’ ability to motivate through the display of their own enthusiasm (cf. Conger & Kanungo, 1998), and other analyses have suggested that the display of anger is associated with perceptions of power and status and may motivate compliance (Tiedens, 2001; Van Kleef et al., 2004a, 2004b).

The importance of enthusiasm and anger may follow from the information that is communicated about the action orientation of the person who displays these affective states (cf. Frijda, 1986; Larsen et al., 2002). Enthusiasm and anger are high-activation affective states, and both imply a readiness for action. To the extent that emotional displays communicate social information (Keltner & Haidt, 1999), the display of high-activation emotion may communicate the message that the leader himself or herself is action-oriented, and that he or she expects followers to be similarly action-oriented. Both enthusiasm and anger may thus convey the desirability of action and may motivate followers into action.

We assessed two behavioral indicators of leadership effectiveness: task performance and extra-role compliance. Although we expected to find the
same pattern of results for both measures, it is nevertheless important to test this explicitly because it cannot be assumed that in-role task performance and extra-role behavior are governed by the same processes (e.g., Motowidlo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997; Organ, 1990; Wright, George, Farnsworth, & McMahan, 1993). Therefore, the use of both measures may give us important information about the extent to which effects of leaders’ affective displays generalize from task performance to extra-role behavior.

Method

Participants and Design

We recruited 47 first- and second-year business and economics students (26 males, 21 females; $M_{\text{age}} = 20.47$ years, $SD = 2.04$). Participants received 10 euro (approximately $13) for participation in a study on “leadership and communication.” The participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions (leader emotion: angry or enthusiastic).

To measure state positive affect, we used nine items developed by Watson et al. (1988). By using a median split ($Mdn = 2.89$), we distinguished between participants high and low in PA and added this variable as a factor in the design ($\alpha = .90; M = 2.96, SD = 0.71$). A test of the difference in PA between the two groups confirmed that people in the low PA group indeed scored lower ($M = 2.34, SD = 0.51$) on positive affect than did people in the high PA group ($M = 3.46, SD = 0.38$), $t(45) = -8.62, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .62$.

Procedure

The participants were seated in separate cubicles with a personal computer, which was used to present all experimental materials and to collect all data. Participants were told that they were about to be supervised by a person who was introduced as a manager of a large information-technology company who was enrolled in an executive development program at the participants’ university to perfect her management skills. They were told that this leader was present in another room and that a live video connection between them and the leader was established. It was explained that the aim of the research was to “investigate how leaders communicate.” Then a female leader appeared on the participants’ computer screens, and she introduced herself.

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3We were not able to translate “attentive” into Dutch while maintaining the same affective connotation. Therefore, we used 9 items for PA, rather than the original 10.
The “leader” was, in fact, a trained actress who was taped earlier. To present participants with a leader who was not too dissimilar to them, we selected an actress who was relatively young (28 years). Also, the leader introduced herself as someone who had earned an MBA degree at the participants’ university some years ago. She told participants that she was asked, because of the course that she followed, to manage the present group of participants. She then instructed the participants to begin performance of the task.

The task simulated a computer retail store in which participants had to process preprogrammed customer requests (see Dependent Measures). The leader attempted to motivate participants to do well in this task and specifically assigned them the goal to process as many customer requests as they could in 20 min. The participants then processed the customer requests for 20 min. Subsequently, the assessment of extra-role compliance took place; manipulation checks were assessed; and participants were paid, debriefed, and thanked for their participation.

**Manipulation of Leader Emotion**

The leader allegedly knew how other groups had performed on this task in the past, and on the basis of this (bogus) information, expressed her feelings about the fact that the group of participants was assigned this particular task. When performance on the task had allegedly been bad in the past, she expressed anger. When performance on the task had allegedly been good in the past, she expressed enthusiasm. Leader emotion was manipulated mainly by variations in facial expressions (smile or frown), tone of voice (high-pitched pleasant or high-pitched unpleasant), and body language (body posture; e.g., making a fist in anger or raising thumbs in enthusiasm). The leader also mentioned the emotion that she felt (angry or enthusiastic). In both conditions, the leader said almost exactly the same thing; thus, except for the fact that she either said she was angry or enthusiastic, she referred to past task performance.

**Dependent Measures**

*Task performance.* After the instructions from the leader were presented, the customer requests appeared on the computer screen. The task, developed by Hertel, Deter, and Konradt (2003), simulated a computer retail store in which participants had to combine hardware packages of a personal computer (PC), a monitor, and a printer according to customer requests. Each
request consisted of a price limit (e.g., 3680 euro) and one specific request (e.g., a 1200-dpi printer). The participants had to combine these hardware packages without violating the customer requests.

The available PCs (standard = 1750 euro; standard plus = 2000 euro; professional = 2250 euro), monitors (15-in. = 750 euro; 17-in. = 950 euro; 19-in. = 1150 euro), and printers (bubble-jet = 530 euro; 600-dpi printer = 660 euro; 1200-dpi printer = 890 euro) were shown on each participant’s computer screen. Then, participants had to choose one PC, one monitor, and one printer by clicking the corresponding button with the mouse. After picking the three items, each participant had to click the “Send” button, which completed one request, and then the next order was shown. The number of completed orders was displayed in the upper right corner of the screen. The use of watches, pocket calculators, or paper and pencil was not allowed during the experiment.

The number of completed customer requests functioned as the performance measure (for more details, see Hertel et al., 2003). Hertel et al. developed this task primarily to assess effort exerted in task performance. Following from our analysis pointing to the motivation for action that may be engendered by the leader’s display of enthusiasm or anger, we adopted the task for exactly these purposes. A comparison of the total number of orders completed (i.e., the primary indicator of effort exerted) to the number of orders completed without error (i.e., an indicator that clearly reflects quality or accuracy of performance) shows that in both experiments reported here, the current measure correlated very highly with the alternative measure that had a greater emphasis on quality (Study 1, \(r = .92\); Study 2, \(r = .94\)).

Extra-role compliance. After 20 min, this task ended automatically and the leader appeared for the second time on the computer screen. In the same emotional mode (i.e., angry or enthusiastic), she told the participants that, while they were working on the task, she discovered some spelling errors in the written task instructions. She said that she considered this to be rather unprofessional and asked the participants to let the experimenter know that spelling errors had been found when they were providing their remarks about the study later in the experiment. Not much later, participants were given the opportunity to type any remarks that they might have about the study. Here, participants could inform the experimenter about typing errors if they chose to do so. Whether or not participants notified the experimenter of spelling errors was our behavioral measure of compliance with the leader.

Manipulation Checks

Finally, the participants completed a short questionnaire measuring manipulation checks. We used one item to measure perceptions of the
leader’s anger (“This manager was angry”) and one item to measure perceptions of the leader’s enthusiasm (“This manager was enthusiastic”). Responses were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree completely) to 5 (agree completely).

Results

Manipulation Checks

Manipulation checks were analyzed in a Leader Emotion × Follower PA ANOVA. In the condition in which the leader was enthusiastic, she was also perceived as more enthusiastic ($M = 4.25, SD = 0.68$) than in the condition in which she was angry ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 1.15$), $F(1, 43) = 51.58$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .55$. When the leader was angry, participants indicated that she was angrier ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.07$) than in the condition in which she was enthusiastic ($M = 1.21$, $SD = 0.42$), $F(1, 43) = 125.76$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .75$. No other effects were significant. Therefore, the manipulation of leader emotion can be considered successful.

Task Performance

We did not find a main effect for leader emotion, nor for follower PA. However, as expected, we found an interaction between leader emotion and follower PA, $F(1, 43) = 4.91$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = .10$. The pattern of results was as predicted in our affective-match hypothesis (see Figure 1). To further test our hypothesis, we used planned comparisons. We tested whether participants processed more orders in the case of a relative affective match between leader and follower (i.e., an angry leader combined with followers low in PA, or an enthusiastic leader with followers high in PA) than in the case of a relative affective mismatch (i.e., an angry leader with followers high in PA, or an enthusiastic leader with followers low in PA). As expected, participants in the match conditions processed more orders ($M = 43.07$, $SD = 13.07$) than did participants in the mismatch conditions ($M = 34.50$, $SD = 12.63$), $t(45) = 2.13$, $p < .05$.

Extra-Role Compliance

The behavioral measure that assessed leader effectiveness in terms of compliance with the leader (i.e., informing the experimenter of spelling errors
in the task instruction) was analyzed in hierarchical loglinear analysis. Although the pattern of the PA × Leader Emotion interaction conformed to our expectations, it failed to reach significance, $\chi^2(1, N = 47) = 1.20, ns$ (see Figure 2). No other effects were significant.

**Discussion**

We found the predicted interaction between leader emotion and follower PA. Participants processed more orders in the case of an affective match,
compared to an affective mismatch. We found the same pattern of results for our compliance measure, but possibly as a result of our modest sample size, this interaction failed to reach significance. The findings for task performance thus provide important first evidence that follower affect moderates the effectiveness of leaders’ displays of positive as compared with negative emotions.

An important issue to consider is that even though the results are in line with the affective-match hypothesis, the observed effects could also have been caused by valence of the actual message content per se, rather than by the affective display of the leader. Even though the leader always made an optimistic appeal to followers to perform to the best of their ability, the leader quoted poor task performance by earlier participants as a reason for her anger, and good task performance by earlier participants as a reason for her enthusiasm. Hence, the content of the leader’s message in the enthusiasm condition was more positive than in the anger condition. The reason for this is self-evident: Positive emotions typically are linked to more positive messages than are negative emotions. Yet, from a research methodological perspective, this raises the issue as to what extent the observed effects are a result of the leader’s emotional displays, rather than of the valence of the content of the message itself. This issue is addressed in Study 2.

Another important issue raised by Study 1 is that the evidence it yielded in support of the affective-match hypothesis is tied to the performance of a single leader. Replication of the findings of the first study with another leader would bolster our confidence in the conclusions. Moreover, leader stereotypes and expectations are not gender-neutral (Lord, DeVader, & Alliger, 1986; Lord, Foti, & Philips, 1982), so we should not assume that findings for a female leader (note that Study 1 employed a female leader) more or less by definition generalize to a male leader. As a case in point, Lewis (2000), although not a study involving followers, showed that perceivers’ evaluations of a male leader displaying anger were more positive than were perceivers’ evaluations of a female leader displaying anger. Although we have no reason to believe that the main effect observed by Lewis affects the interaction between leader emotion and follower PA, it is nevertheless important to test whether the affective-match hypothesis also holds for a male leader. This issue is addressed in Study 2 as well.

**Study 2**

The aim of our second study is twofold. First, it is designed to disentangle the effects of leaders’ emotional displays from those of the valence of the message per se. Second, Study 2 aims to replicate the findings of Study 1 with
a different (and male) leader. Study 2 basically follows the same design and procedures as in Study 1, with the addition of two conditions in which the leader’s message (i.e., including the reference to earlier task performance) is not accompanied by an emotional display.

Our argumentation leading to the relative affective-match hypothesis included evidence pertaining to the idea that a state of positive affect leads people to be more open to information (i.e., including appeals by others) that is congruent with that affective state (e.g., people in a PA state may be more open to positive information than to negative information). Importantly, there is evidence that this congruency effect may hold even stronger for affect-laden information, however (DeSteno et al., 2000). That is, the affect-congruency effect seems to be stronger for information implying similar affect (e.g., remembering a happy occasion when in a happy mood) than for information that only implies similar valence (e.g., remembering a positive outcome when in a happy mood).

Accordingly, we expect that the moderating effect of follower PA is first and foremost linked to the additional influence of the leader’s affective display and not to the valence of the message per se. In other words, we expect that the observed effect is primarily a matter of affective match, rather than of what may be called *valence match* (i.e., a match between the valence of the message content and follower PA). In order to find support for our hypothesis, the moderating effect of follower PA on responses to leader appeals should be stronger for appeals accompanied by emotional displays than for otherwise identical appeals without the display of emotion.

Note that we decided not to include a negative message accompanied by a positive emotion and a positive message accompanied by a negative emotion. We considered that such conditions would be artificial and of less relevance. Indeed, positive and negative affective displays usually communicate congruent positive or negative information (e.g., Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 2000; Keltner & Haidt, 1999; Miller & Leary, 1992; Oatley & Jenkins, 1996; Scherer, 1986).

**Method**

*Participants and Design*

Study 2 participants were 99 first- and second-year business and economics students (61 males, 38 females; $M$ age $= 20.91$ years, $SD = 1.95$) who participated voluntarily in exchange for payment of 10 euro. The participants were randomly assigned to the conditions of a 2 (Leader Emotion: present vs. absent) $\times$ 2 (Valence of Message: negative or positive) between-subjects design.
Positive affect was measured with the same nine items from the PA scale (Watson et al., 1988) as in Study 1. We used a median split ($Mdn = 3.11$) and distinguished participants high and low in PA and added this variable as a factor in the design ($\alpha = .87$; $M = 3.07$, $SD = 0.66$). The participants who were low in PA ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 0.44$) scored lower on PA than did participants who were high in PA ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.36$), $t(97) = -13.33$, $p < .0001$, $\eta^2 = .65$.

Procedure and Dependent Measures

The leader in this study was a trained 27-year-old male actor. The procedure was the same as in Study 1. The only difference lies in the gender of the leader and in the extension of the design with two conditions in which the leader did not display emotions. Thus, as our manipulation of valence of message, the leader stated in the videotaped message that this task was typically executed poorly in the past (“I have been working with this task before, and I experienced that people perform poorly on this task. The results are often bad on this task and that annoys me.”) or that it was typically executed well (“I have been working with this task before, and I experienced that people perform well on this task. The results are often good on this task and that pleases me.”).

As in Study 1, the manipulation of leader emotion consisted of the leader being emotional about the necessity to work with this task (i.e., angry in the case of a negative valence of message, and enthusiastic in the case of a positive valence of message). The actor displayed anger and enthusiasm in the same manner as in Study 1, or he was not emotional about it (i.e., neutral: displaying no emotions, but still conveying the same negative or positive message). We used the same dependent measures as in Study 1.

Manipulation Checks

We added and adjusted manipulation checks in order to cover all independent variables in this extended design. Again, all responses were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (disagree completely) to 5 (agree completely). To check the manipulation of leader emotion, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which the leader displayed an emotion (e.g., “This leader did not show emotions”). In addition, we asked which emotion, if any, the leader displayed (“This leader was angry” or “This leader was enthusiastic”). We also assessed the successfulness of the manipulation of valence of message by measuring how well participants indicated that the task had been
done in the past. A two-item scale was used: “The task I did has been done badly before” (reverse-scored), and “The task I did has been done well before” ($M = 2.99, SD = 1.57; \alpha = .86, r = .76$).

Results

Manipulation Checks

First, we found the expected main effect of leader emotion on the extent to which participants perceived the leader to display emotion. Participants indicated that the leader showed less emotion in the no-emotion condition ($M = 2.24, SD = 0.98$) than in the emotion condition ($M = 3.61, SD = 0.96$), $F(1, 91) = 48.72, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .35$. No other effects were significant.

Furthermore, we found that participants clearly recognized the valence of message, as communicated by the leader. More specifically, we checked the positiveness of the message and found that participants in the positive-valence condition ($M = 4.33, SD = 0.86$) than did those in the negative-valence condition ($M = 1.75, SD = 0.93$), $F(1, 91) = 194.90, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .68$. No other effects were significant.

A successful manipulation of the specific emotions of the leader should be apparent from an interaction of Valence of Message $\times$ Leader Emotion on the extent to which participants considered the leader to be enthusiastic and angry. Indeed, we found a Valence of Message $\times$ Leader Emotion interaction on the extent to which the leader was perceived as enthusiastic, $F(1, 91) = 14.48, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .14$. When the leader was enthusiastic, followers rated him as more enthusiastic ($M = 4.20, SD = 0.58$) than when the leader was angry ($M = 2.45, SD = 1.00$), $t(43) = 7.37, p < .0001$; when the leader displayed no emotion with a positive message ($M = 2.65, SD = 0.98$), $t(46) = 6.72, p < .0001$; or when the leader combined no emotions with a negative message ($M = 2.29, SD = 0.90$), $t(54) = 9.17, p < .0001$. No other effects were significant.

For perceptions of the leader’s anger, we also found an interaction of Valence of Message $\times$ Leader Emotion, $F(1, 91) = 45.22, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .33$. Thus, angry leaders were perceived as angrier ($M = 4.05, SD = 1.10$) than were enthusiastic leaders ($M = 1.40, SD = 0.65$), $t(43) = 10.09, p < .0001$; and than leaders who did not display emotions but had a positive message ($M = 1.22, SD = 0.42$), $t(41) = 11.45, p < .0001$; or a negative message ($M = 1.81, SD = 0.75$), $t(49) = 8.68, p < .0001$. No other effects were significant. Therefore, we concluded that our manipulations were successful.
Task Performance

We did not find main effects for leader emotion, valence of message, or followers’ PA, nor did we find two-way interactions. However, an ANOVA on the number of orders that participants completed reveals the expected three-way interaction of Positive Affect \times Leader Emotions \times Valence of Message, $F(1, 91) = 4.20, p < .05, \eta^2 = .04$ (see Figure 3). To test our hypothesis, planned comparisons were used (see Table 1). First, comparing performance within the emotion conditions, we tested whether participants processed more orders when there was a match between leader emotion and follower PA versus a mismatch, which would signify a replication of Study 1 (Contrast 1). Second, comparing performance in the no-emotion condition,
Table 1

Means and Contrasts Computed to Test Hypotheses: Study 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Contrast 1*</th>
<th>Contrast 2</th>
<th>Contrast 3</th>
<th>Contrast 4*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm PA+</td>
<td>39.00</td>
<td>14.76</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm PA−</td>
<td>31.22</td>
<td>12.37</td>
<td>−1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger PA+</td>
<td>34.80</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>−1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger PA−</td>
<td>44.30</td>
<td>16.29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message + Neutral PA+</td>
<td>36.50</td>
<td>11.55</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>−1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message + Neutral PA−</td>
<td>41.56</td>
<td>16.14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>−1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>−1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message − Neutral PA+</td>
<td>42.53</td>
<td>18.95</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>−1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>−1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Message − Neutral PA−</td>
<td>40.19</td>
<td>13.58</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>−1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. PA+ = high positive affect; PA− = low positive affect.

*Contrasts are significant at p < .05.
we examined whether participants processed more orders when there was a valence match, compared to a valence mismatch (Contrast 2). Note that we expected no difference here. If Contrast 1 is significant while Contrast 2 is not, this shows that the observed effect may be attributed to the additional influence of emotional display of the leader, and not to the valence of the leader’s message per se.

In addition, we included two other contrasts to test the relative effectiveness of leader appeals with versus without accompanying emotional displays. Although these contrasts are not central to the current focus on follower PA as a moderator of the effectiveness of leader positive versus negative emotional displays, they are of interest from the perspective that leader emotional displays may increase leadership effectiveness. Therefore, we also compared performance in the affective-match versus valence-match conditions (Contrast 3), and performance in the affective-mismatch versus valence-mismatch conditions (Contrast 4) to determine whether leader emotional displays may add to leadership effectiveness (in the case of affective match) or decrease leadership effectiveness (in the case of affective mismatch).

Contrast 1 was significant. In the case of an affective match, participants processed more orders ($M = 41.04$, $SD = 15.27$) than in the case of affective mismatch ($M = 33.11$, $SD = 10.70$), $t(97) = 2.01$, $p < .05$. This finding is a replication of the results of Study 1. Contrast 2 was not significant, as expected, indicating that valence match did not affect follower performance, $t(97) = -0.94$, $p = .35$. Contrary to expectations, Contrast 3 was not significant. Although participants in the affective-match conditions appeared to process more orders ($M = 41.04$, $SD = 15.27$) than did participants in the valence-match conditions ($M = 38.47$, $SD = 12.59$), this difference was not significant, $t(97) = 0.67$, $p = .50$. In support of our predictions, however, Contrast 4 showed that participants in the affective-mismatch conditions performed worse ($M = 33.11$, $SD = 10.70$) than did participants in the valence-mismatch conditions ($M = 42.17$, $SD = 17.59$), $t(97) = 2.05$, $p < .05$.

In sum, then, the results are largely in line with predictions. Follower PA moderated the effects of the leader’s display of positive versus negative emotion, whereas participants were unaffected by the content of the message per se. In addition, affective mismatch led to poorer performance than did valence mismatch, but affective match did not lead to significantly better performance than did valence match.

Extra-Role Compliance

For followers’ compliance with the leader’s request, the only significant effect in a hierarchical loglinear analysis was the predicted three-way interaction, $\chi^2(1, N = 99) = 6.14$, $p = .01$. We found the same pattern of results as
we did for task performance (see Figure 4). We further explored the results on extra-role compliance by conducting a series of chi-square tests, contrasting different match and mismatch conditions following the same logic as outlined previously.

In the emotion conditions, we expected to find that people who experienced an affective match would comply more with their leader than would people who experienced an affective mismatch. Indeed, participants who experienced an affective match with their leader complied in 42.3% of the cases, whereas participants who experienced an affective mismatch complied only in 5.3% of the cases, $\chi^2(1, N = 45) = 7.70, p < .01$. Note that Study 1 revealed a similar, though not significant, pattern of results. In the case of an unemotional leader, we did not expect a difference between the valence match

![Figure 4. Compliance with leader per condition: Study 2.](image)
and mismatch conditions. Indeed, we found no significant difference here, $\chi^2(1, N = 54) = 0.25, p = .61$ (40.0% of participants complied in the case of a valence match, while 33.3% of participants complied in the case of a valence mismatch).

Furthermore, we expected a difference between the affective-match and valence-match conditions and between the affective-mismatch and valence-mismatch conditions. Comparable to the results of task performance, we did not find differences in extra-role compliance between the affective-match and valence-match conditions. In the affective-match condition, 42.3% of participants complied, while in the valence-match condition, 40% complied, $\chi^2(1, N = 56) = 0.03, p = .86$. In the case of affective mismatch, only 5.3% complied, which differed, as expected, from compliance in the case of valence mismatch (33.3%), $\chi^2(1, N = 43) = 5.05, p < .05$.

**Discussion**

The results of Study 2 add to the findings of Study 1 in three important ways. First, they show that the findings of Study 1 were not tied to one particular leader. The affective-match hypothesis held for a male as well as for a female leader. Second, the results of Study 2 show that the greater effectiveness of leader emotional displays that match follower PA is tied to the leader’s emotional display, and not to the valence of the leader’s message per se (i.e., we did not find a valence-match effect, only an affective-match effect). Third, Study 2 shows that the effects observed for task performance may also obtain for extra-role behavior. In combination, these findings substantially bolster confidence in the conclusion that the relative effectiveness of leaders’ positive versus negative emotional displays in engendering desired follower behavior is contingent on the match between the leader’s emotional display and follower PA.

Study 2 yielded the predicted effect for extra-role compliance, whereas Study 1 did not. Inspection of compliance levels in the emotion conditions across the two experiments suggests that this is mainly a result of higher levels of compliance in the affective-mismatch conditions of Study 1, as compared with Study 2. People seemed less hesitant to turn down a less appealing request for extra-role compliance (i.e., in the mismatch conditions) when the leader was male than when the leader was female. Possibly, this points to a gender effect in the relation between affective mismatch and extra-role compliance, but more empirical evidence is required for a less tentative conclusion.

Interestingly, Study 2 shows that affective mismatch led to lower leadership effectiveness than did a comparable message without the accompanying
emotional display. Affective match, in contrast, did not lead to significantly better performance than did a comparable appeal without emotions. If we assume that follower affective state leads followers to expect others, including their leader, to be in a similar state (cf. DeSteno et al., 2000), the observation that affective mismatch had a stronger impact on follower performance than affective match is consistent with evidence that circumstances that are incongruent with expectations tend to attract more attention than do circumstances that are congruent with expectations (e.g., Fiske & Taylor, 1991; Stangor & McMillan, 1992).

General Discussion

There is more and more evidence that leaders’ affective displays influence leadership effectiveness. Less clear is which factors influence the relative effectiveness of positive, compared with negative emotional displays. Focusing on a possible moderator of the relative effectiveness of positive versus negative emotional displays, the present study showed that the affective match between the valence of leaders’ emotional displays and followers’ levels of positive affect influenced leaders’ ability to engender desired follower behaviors. Thus, the contribution of the present study to the emerging field of leadership, affect, and emotions is that it highlights the role of follower characteristics—specifically follower PA—as moderator of the effectiveness of leaders’ positive versus negative emotional displays.

The present findings, as well as the current study’s limitations, suggest a number of issues that warrant further consideration and research. First, the stability and duration of affective experiences may differ considerably. Positive affect may concern relatively short-lived affective states, fluctuating over time and situations in the course of even a single day (Larsen et al., 2002; Lord & Brown, 2004; Watson, Wiese, Vaidya, & Tellegen, 1999), but it may also concern a trait that is more stable over time (Watson et al., 1988). For the purposes of our study, it seemed most relevant to focus on how participants were feeling at the moment they were confronted with their leader. However, it also may be interesting to investigate the extent to which trait affect functions as a moderator of the effects of leader emotional displays. Although one may expect PA as a trait to operate in a similar manner to PA as a state (given the fact that there is considerable overlap between the two; Schmulke, Egloff, & Burns, 2002), work by George (1991) has suggested that the effects of trait PA on behavior in organizations may be smaller than the effects of state PA. The affective match effect, therefore, might be stronger for follower state PA than for follower trait PA.

Another issue concerns the determinants of state PA. State PA may be affected by recent history, encounters with others, or other aspects of the
situational context. Thus, situational factors that could affect PA might be expected to moderate the relative effectiveness of leader positive and negative emotional displays. For instance, in times of organizational crisis and change, subordinates often feel more depressed and stressed (Bordia, Hobman, Jones, Gallois, & Callan, 2004; Terry, Callan, & Sartori, 1996) than in more stable organizational circumstances. Accordingly, PA of subordinates might be lower in times of organizational crisis and change, and higher in times of organizational prosperity. The current analysis, therefore, suggests that in times of crisis and change, displays of negative emotions by a leader are relatively more effective, and displays of positive emotions relatively less effective than in more stable and prosperous times. The present study suggests that a range of moderators of the relative effectiveness of leader positive versus negative emotional displays may be identified by focusing on the determinants of PA.

Note that the differential effects of leader positive and negative affective displays might also have an especially strong impact on followers during crisis and change because these situations can be described as “weak” situations (Jacobson & House, 2001; Mischel, 1973). In weak situations, few external cues are present to guide behavior, and people may feel uncertain about the appropriateness and desirability of certain behaviors. As a consequence, they will be more attentive to existing external cues in the hope that these may diminish feelings of uncertainty. Leader affective displays may provide such an external cue. The effects of leader affective displays, therefore, may be stronger in weak situations than in strong situations.

We focused on the match between follower PA and the valence of leaders’ emotional displays. We may raise the question as to whether a similar affective match would obtain for follower negative affect. Negative affect (NA) refers to the experience of discomfort and negative emotionality (Watson & Clark, 1984). Accordingly, one could argue that leader displays of negative emotions should be a better match with high follower NA than with leader displays of positive emotion and, accordingly, that follower NA should also moderate the relative effectiveness of positive versus negative leader affective displays. However, there is evidence that the affect congruence effect is stronger for positive affect than for negative affect (Blaney, 1986; Singer & Salovey, 1988) and that PA is more important than NA in social interaction (Barsade et al., 2000; Watson et al., 1992). Barsade et al., for instance, found that similarity in PA, but not NA, predicted team process. Thus, we would expect that follower NA is less important in informing responses to leader affective displays than is follower PA. Because we assessed PA with the Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule (Watson et al., 1988), we were able to also test the moderating role of follower NA. Consistent with the current reasoning, we did not find evidence for an effect of follower NA in either experiment.
Although the present study lends support to our affective match hypothesis, it provides little insight into the reason why affective match is of importance. It may be that similarity between people (i.e., between leader and follower) plays a significant role in the processes that we studied. In general, people like similar others (e.g., Berscheid & Reis, 1998; Fiske & Taylor, 1991), and leaders who are liked by their subordinates are more effective (Emrich, 1999; Engle & Lord, 1997; Stang, 1973). For instance, leaders who are similar to their followers on demographic dimensions (e.g., gender, race, tenure; Tsui & O’Reilly, 1989; Tsui, Porter, & Egan, 2002) and leaders who are more representative of the workgroup (e.g., van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005) have been shown to be more effective.

In line with these observations, we can expect that similarity in affect (i.e., affective match) between leader and follower feeds into liking for the leader and thus into leaders’ effectiveness in influencing followers. Another possible process that may play a role was already mentioned. Affect-congruent information and communication is processed more easily than is affect-incongruent information and communication (e.g., DeSteno et al., 2004). The same may hold for the information conveyed by leader affective displays. Followers confronted with affect-congruent affective displays may experience less cognitive load and may pick up the leader’s message more easily and be persuaded more by the leader’s message than followers who are confronted with leader affective displays that are less congruent with their own affective states. Although it seems plausible that these processes may have played a part, empirical evidence is necessary in order to reach a firm conclusion. Future research may address this important issue.

There are some studies suggesting that people perform better in organizational settings in the presence of others who experience similar (mainly positive) affect than in the presence of others who experience dissimilar affect (e.g., Barsade et al., 2000; Bauer & Green, 1996). The leaders, being such influential group members, may receive a great deal of attention from other group members. As a consequence, the leaders’ affective displays may, over time, strongly affect the affective states of the workgroup members, which may result in the development of an affective tone of the workgroup (George, 1996; George & Brief, 1992). This homogeneous affective tone among group members, in turn, may make followers particularly sensitive to the leaders’ influence. Leaders who are able to transfer affective information (e.g., because they have regular face-to-face contact with followers) in the long run may be more influential than leaders who miss the opportunity to transfer affect.

Related to this issue, and of particular relevance to managerial practice, some circumstances may be expected to produce relatively homogeneous follower affective states that are easily identifiable by the leader (e.g., a crisis
that affects everyone), whereas other circumstances may be expected to lead to more heterogeneous affect among followers (e.g., success unique to an individual follower) or to less predictable affect among followers (e.g., when the causes of affective state lie outside of the leader’s awareness). To the extent that leaders can control their emotional displays (e.g., suppress felt emotions, selectively show specific emotions), it would seem to be easier and more viable for leaders to use their emotions effectively in situations in which follower affective state can be expected to be relatively homogeneous and predictable than in situations in which follower affective state is likely to be more diverse or unpredictable. Indeed, in the latter case, refraining from displays of emotions would perhaps seem to be the better option, especially in view of current findings suggesting that affective mismatch may have stronger negative effects than that affective match has positive effects. Homogeneity and predictability of follower affective state thus might be an important determinant of the effectiveness of leader affective displays.

The key indicator of leadership effectiveness in our experiments was task performance. We argued that, contingent on affective match, leader affective displays might engender action-readiness and task motivation in followers. We tested this prediction in a task in which performance should be primarily effort-driven (cf. Hertel et al., 2003). Research on affect and task performance suggests, however, that affective states might also have more task-specific influences. For instance, people typically perform better on creative tasks when in a positive mood rather than in a negative mood (Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005) while they tend to perform better on more knowledge-intensive information-processing tasks when in a negative mood rather than in a positive mood (Forgas, 2001, 2007). These findings raise the question of whether the effectiveness of leaders’ displays of positive and negative affect may similarly be contingent on the nature of the task: Could it be that positive affective displays are also more effective in motivating creative performance, whereas negative affective displays are more effective in motivating performance on knowledge-intensive information-processing tasks? Findings by Sy et al. (2005)—who found that leaders in a positive mood were more effective in engendering cooperation, while leaders in a negative mood were more effective in engendering persistence in task performance—suggest that the effects of leader affective displays might be contingent on task requirements. Thus, exploring this issue in future research would seem to be highly valuable to our understanding of leadership effectiveness in organizational contexts.

A limitation of the current study is that we focused on two distinct emotions: anger and enthusiasm. Anger and enthusiasm are acknowledged as important aspects of leaders’ emotional behavior (e.g., Lewis, 2000; Lord & Brown, 2004; Tiedens, 2001). Therefore, studying them has definite value, but
they represent only one positive and one negative emotion. Ideally, we should be able to extend our conclusions to other positive and negative emotions. It would be valuable to test the affective match hypothesis with a broader range of positive and negative emotions in order to establish more firmly that the results obtained in the present study are attributable to the valence of the emotions studied, and not to more specific characteristics of anger and enthusiasm.

In a related sense, it would also be relevant to look at the effects of different causes of leaders' affective displays. In the present study, leaders' emotions were elicited by the task context and were not directed at followers. Although this may be a very plausible cause of leader emotions, we should be careful not to overgeneralize in this respect. Other causes of leaders' affect may lead to different influences on leadership effectiveness. Leader anger that is targeted at the follower, for instance, may work out quite differently than leader anger that is targeted at the task. It seems critical for cause and target of leaders' emotional displays to be taken into account if we are to develop a proper understanding of the effects of leaders' emotional displays. In this respect, the generalizability of current (and previous) findings might be limited to the kind of cause or target studied.

Another issue concerns the fact that we conducted laboratory experiments. The obvious advantage is that it was possible to reach conclusions regarding causality, and we could use an objective measure of follower performance. The experimental methodology was also important in disentangling the effects of emotional displays from those of the leader's appeal per se. However, even though experiments are not conducted in a quest for external validity (Brown & Lord, 1999; Mook, 1983), reports of experimental research may always elicit questions of external validity.

Something to note in this respect is that several leadership studies testing their hypotheses in the lab as well as in the field have shown consistently that findings from laboratory experiments generalize to field settings (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2002, 2004; De Cremer, van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, Mullenders, & Stinglhamber, 2005; van Knippenberg & van Knippenberg, 2005; cf. Dipboye, 1990). Even so, it would be valuable if future research were to study leaders' emotional displays and the moderating role of follower PA in organizational settings in which leaders and followers are in an ongoing relationship. This would also allow the study of the effects of leader emotional displays on the performance of more complex tasks than the current order-processing task, as well as the effects of leader emotional displays on performance of tasks that last longer than 20 min, or repetitive tasks, to attain a broader picture of the effects of leader emotions.

Given the important role of affect in guiding people’s perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors, developing our understanding of the effects of leaders’
emotional displays would seem to be highly relevant to our understanding of leadership effectiveness and, more generally, organizational behavior. By highlighting the role of follower affective state in this respect, it is hoped that the present study will contribute to the development of this analysis. Indeed, it is our firm belief that effectiveness of leaders’ emotions can only be understood if the role of followers is given as much weight as is the role of the leader.

References


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AFFECTIVE MATCH IN LEADERSHIP  899


