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Item Type	Thesis
Authors	Naughton, Bernadette
Download date	2026-06-13 09:47:38
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**LEADER INTERPERSONAL EMOTIONAL REGULATION IN A
CONTEXT OF THREAT: A POLYCONTEXTUAL APPROACH**

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Degree of PhD in Work and Organisational Psychology

Supervised by Prof. Deirdre O'Shea and Dr Lisa Van der Werff

A thesis submitted to the University of Limerick in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy

February 2023

LIST OF PAPERS, CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS AND GRANTS

PAPERS

Naughton, B., O’Shea, D., Van der Werff, L., & Buckley, F. (revised & resubmitted).

National leaders’ interpersonal emotion regulation strategies’ impact on trust and compliance with COVID-19 restrictions. *Emotion*, ISI IF 4.329.

Naughton, B., Van der Werff, L., O’Shea, D. (in preparation). Leader reactions to follower goal failure: The role of leader interpersonal emotion regulation to encourage follower goal adjustment and turnover intentions. *Journal of Organisational Behaviour*

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS/PRESENTATIONS

Naughton, B., O’Shea, D., Van der Werff, L. & Buckley, F. (2022). *National leader use of interpersonal emotion regulation strategies on citizen affect, and trust during a global pandemic*. Oral Presentation at the 20th Congress of the European Association of Work and Organisational Psychology, Glasgow, 11th-14th January (oral presentation cancelled due to COVID).

Naughton, B., O’Shea, D. & Van der Werff, L. (2020). “*It’s not what you do, it’s you that makes the difference!*” *Interpersonal emotion regulation and follower well-being: The moderating role of managerial trustworthiness*. 14th Conference of the European Association of Occupational Health Psychology, Cyprus, 6th -8th April. (oral presentation cancelled due to COVID).

Naughton, B., O'Shea, D. & Van der Werff, L. (2019). *Follower reactions to interpersonal emotion regulation strategies for managers*. Psychological Society of Ireland Annual Conference, Kilkenny, 7-8th November.

Naughton, B., O'Shea, D. & Van der Werff, L. (2019). *Hey boss, I failed''! The influence of interpersonal emotion regulation strategies on trust perceptions when disclosing a failure to a manager*. Oral presentation at the 19th Congress of the European Association of Work and Organisational Psychology, Torino, 30th May – 1st June.

OTHER RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS

Naughton, B. & O'Shea, D. (2019). Managing relationships in organisations: An interpersonal perspective on emotions, motivation, and behaviours in the workplace. KBS Spring Seminar Series, **University of Limerick**, 23rd April.

GRANTS

Buckley, F., O'Shea, D., Van der Werff, L. & **Naughton, B.** (2020). Assessing public trust and compliance with pandemic advice and policies. Health Research Board/Irish Research Council COVID Rapid Response Call, €137,530.

O'Shea, D., **Naughton, B.** & Van der Werff, L. (2020). Interpersonal emotion regulation and trust in managers. Kemmy Business School Seed Funding, €700.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Tony, my best friend, for without your unwavering support, patience, and encouragement, none of this would be possible. I chose this road, but we travelled it together, thank you.

Declaration

The substance of this thesis is the original work of the author and due reference, and acknowledgement has been made, where necessary, to the work of others. No part of the thesis has been submitted in candidature of any degree. The candidate was the primary author of the two empirical papers.

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13/02/2023

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Acknowledgements

First, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my two supervisors, Professor Deirdre O'Shea, and Dr Lisa Van der Werff for their excellent supervision. Deirdre was extremely supportive when I first timidly approached her about doing a PhD. I could not have undertaken this journey without their unwavering support and guidance during the past five years. The years were marked with personal tragedy; however, Lisa and Deirdre were always so encouraging and supportive. Their passion, enthusiasm, expertise, kindness, and work ethic are sincerely admirable, and it has been such a privilege getting to know them. Deirdre and Lisa have been great advocates in terms of advancing my career and helped me to broaden my skills during my time as a PhD student, encouraging me in terms of presenting at conferences, and networking. It was a pleasure to work with both.

I would also like to thank Professor Finian Buckley, Dublin City University, for his assistance on paper two. Professor Buckley is warm, and gentle, and extremely knowledgeable, and it has been an absolute honour to collaborate with him.

I am deeply indebted to my parents, Teresa, and James (R.I.P) who sacrificed so much for my siblings and me, growing up. I love you both more than you will ever know, and without your love and support, I would never have made it this far. Mam, thank you so much for your prayers, love, and immense support in everything I do. I honestly do not know what I would do without you. To my sisters, and brother, you were right, I made it! I am also grateful to my classmates, Gemma, and Paolo, for all the interpersonal emotional regulation, the laughs and moral support, and to my colleagues and friends: Marguerite, for her help with editing, and Janice, for her assistance with formatting.

Finally, to my beautiful, best friend Marie (R.I.P) who supported me in everything I did, but never got to see me finish my PhD. I hope you are proud.

Abstract

Interpersonal emotion regulation theory (Niven et al., 2009) has received growing attention in recent years. While the primary purpose of IER is to alter affect, most recently, scholars have argued that IER can serve instrumental purposes beyond hedonistic goals such as improving performance (Vasquez et al., 2020). However, scholarship on how leaders' IER relates to followers' behavioural intentions is scarce, representing a critical gap in IER research, given that negative affect adversely influences followers' behavioural intentions. Theoretically, such an examination shifts the empirical focus of IER beyond hedonistic goals towards a functional perspective of IER in leveraging instrumental outcomes. The aim of this thesis is three-fold: to develop and test a conceptual model to examine whether leaders' IER relates to followers' behavioural intentions, to explore the key psychological mechanisms that underpin this focal relationship, and to understand the contextual factors that may act as boundary conditions. Overall, the four studies presented in this thesis support the hypotheses relating to the indirect effects of trust and affect in relationship between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions. I present results regarding the relevance of the interpersonal process as key to understanding how followers intend to behave in response to leaders' IER. In addition, my findings support the view that the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' trust, affect, and behavioural intentions varies depending on the environmental, relational, and person- contextual conditions. Such an examination will contribute to enhancing the explanatory potential surrounding the IER-behavioural intentions relationship and, in doing so, lay the foundations for new and refined context-bound theories of IER and contextualised explanations of IER on followers' responses. Recommendations are made for leaders using IER within a crisis context.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and freedom.

Rollo May (1963)

My research focuses on how leaders' interpersonal emotional regulation (IER) can influence followers' behavioural intentions through the management of negative emotions in a threat context. Negative emotions are omnipresent in life and in work, which is why research on interpersonal emotional regulation is so important. When followers share vulnerability and disclose negative emotions to leaders, it creates opportunities for leaders to connect with followers at an emotional level. Followers, in turn, may perceive increased psychological safety, be more willing to trust the leader, and be more motivated to engage in behavioural intentions that are functional for the follower, the leader, and the organisation. The social signalling function of negative emotions may be particularly critical when individuals are confronted with potentially threatening or harmful stimuli (Van Kleef et al., 2016). Prior research, both in the organisational context and outside of it (Patzelt et al., 2021; Scott & Barnes, 2011; Shepherd et al., 2009, 2011, 2014; Shockley et al., 2012), provides well documented accounts of how negative emotions can drive a range of detrimental affective, and cognitive responses for the follower that influences their behaviour. In such circumstances, when a follower is distressed, the expressions of negative emotions must serve as an important catalyst for a leader to act. This is the moment where a leader must choose whether to be silent or to try and help. The challenge for leaders is in knowing what to say.

Scholarly interest in how to manage others' emotions first emerged when Rimé and colleagues' (2007) focused on individuals' social sharing of emotional experiences.

Over the past 16 years, IER has emerged as an important phenomenon of interest, with scholars conceptualising it as a controlled, intentional, interpersonal process that can be used to worsen or improve affect (Niven et al., 2009). It is striking that, despite the critical role leaders play in influencing followers who experience negative emotion, the value of leaders' IER to alleviate followers' negative emotions has not been to the forefront of research. Consequently, despite the recognition that IER is a part of leadership practice, scholarly understanding of how leaders can regulate followers' negative emotions is still underdeveloped (Cropanzano et al., 2020; Torrence & Connelly, 2019).

The 'space' around followers' negative emotion and the effects of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions forms the basis of these set of studies. In that space, leaders can provide IER in a multiplicity of ways using various strategies, which can ease or worsen negative affect. I contend that what a leader does in that 'space' can define how the follower feels, how they view their leader, and how they intend to (re)act. However, research is limited in understanding that space; knowing how leaders' IER relates to followers' behavioural intentions, or the factors that shape this relationship is still in its infancy and represents a critical next step in advancing IER research. What we do know is that occupying that space can be difficult for followers and leaders alike. Processing negative emotions with others can be risky (Nils & Rime, 2012), particularly where there are power differences within the relationship; the potential for leaders to exploit the vulnerability of emotionally distressed followers is always present, and followers appear acutely aware of that (Toegel et al., 2013).

Comparably, commentators have noted that crisis and post-crisis conditions are posing serious challenges to leaders' relational abilities to be authentic about compassion (Goulding, 2020), with leaders being progressively judged by the impact that they have

on their followers (Caffrey, 2023; Kock et al., 2019). However, leaders' relational behaviours towards the follower can serve as an important driver of affective climate whether through the information they communicate to followers, or through how they treat followers (Cropanzano et al., 2020).

Accordingly, knowing how to occupy that space in a supportive manner can be crucial for leaders who wish to use IER to positively influence followers' behavioural intentions. The task of a supportive leader is therefore to understand what strategies to use, with whom and when. Additionally, how followers perceive, interpret, and respond to the leaders' relational strategies is shaped by contextual conditions. However, this poses an inherent challenge to IER researchers in that contexts are multidimensional systems (Bamberger, 2008), which are embedded within one another and include environmental, relational, and person-level contextual conditions. To date, empirical enquiry has predominantly ignored contextual factors that shape IER outcomes. Yet, to advance knowledge around leaders' relational behaviours, understanding IER within a contextual framework is crucial. The lack of contextual specificity in empirical work makes it difficult to ascertain the utility of specific IER strategies in specific contexts, thereby limiting the practical function of IER for leaders. Simply put, how followers respond to IER depends on what the problematic situation is, who is regulating, and who the target of the IER response is.

To be useful, IER strategies must fit the environmental context in which they occur. For example, followers' affective, behavioural, and cognitive responses arising from a given IER strategy may vary depending on the circumstances in which the negative emotions are triggered. Equally, the relational context may influence the effect of IER on the follower (Niven, 2017). When we seek support, our family or friends or trusted co-workers are usually the first point of contact. However, when leaders engage

in attempts at regulating followers' affect, they occupy a space that is the remit of close others. Indeed, research on leaders' IER and follower outcomes has focused exclusively on (close) proximal leader-follower relations (e.g., manager-follower). However, in an era where global crisis has become increasingly commonplace (e.g., COVID-19, climate change, political conflict), government leaders are required to address the emotional needs of their followers and in doing so, exert considerable social influence on the collective. During COVID-19, distal leaders' relational behaviours and their impact on citizens received immediate worldwide scrutiny. However, much of the academic discourse focused on specific relational abilities that leaders used (e.g., expression of sentiment and compassion: McGuire et al., 2020), and were not linked to a general theoretical framework that would allow scholars to theorise about such behaviours, or leaders to use a particular framework deliberately for executive advantage. Therefore, building distal leadership into IER research represents an important scholarly attempt to understand how responses to leaders' IER may vary according to distal relations.

Beyond the environmental and relational context, there have been few attempts, to my knowledge, to identify and examine person-level contextual characteristics i.e., individual factors that may influence the perceptions of IER strategies. Aligned with social ecological models that recognize individuals as embedded within larger systems (Sallis et al., 2008), my model portrays the individual as embedded in a contextual structure but also as part of that context. From a social ecological perspective, the impact of any environmental influence is mediated by (operates through the pathway of) a range of interactive, and intra-individual variables. Two individual factors that potentially influence the variability in IER responses are the followers' discrete emotions experienced because of the emotion-eliciting event, and followers' motivational states (e.g., what the event means to the follower, and how concerned they are about what

happened). Consistent with appraisal theories (Frijda et al., 1989), the type of emotion experienced (e.g., anger, sadness) in response to the salient event may moderate the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' responses. Moreover, prior evidence suggests that followers' motivational states can influence perception of the emotional experience that elicited IER (Greenaway et al., 2018).

Consequently, motivational states are likely to have divergent implications on how followers perceive the utility of the strategies, and accordingly, how they respond to them. However, contextual variability related to person-level characteristics has been largely ignored (cf. Niven, 2022). Accordingly, I introduce individual factors as the third contextual condition that may define variability in IER responses. Thus, it is increasingly important to understand the environmental, relational, and person-contextual conditions that may determine the variability of IER effects. As such, consistent with the notion that leaders' relational behaviours have emerged as a central theme in leadership and practical management discourse, I turn my attention to the systematic study of how leaders regulate followers' negative affect to influence their behavioural intentions through the lens of IER.

1.1 Aim and Thesis Overview

This thesis consists of four empirical studies. Collectively, these studies examine a conceptual model that aims to evaluate the impact of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions. Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification of IER is adopted as it facilitates the examination of a wide range of affect-improving and affect-worsening strategies and is extensively used in IER research (Niven et al., 2009, 2012; Madrid et al., 2019; Vasquez et al., 2020). My model examines three dependent variables, turnover intentions, goal adjustment, and compliance intentions, in its prediction of followers' behavioural intentions. These behavioural intentions are selected based on their relevancy

to the perceived situation (threat) under examination.

Investigating the causal mechanisms that underpin the focal relationship under examination is critical to understanding how IER transmits its influence. Accordingly, I examine whether two theoretically driven causal mechanisms, affect and trust, explain the association between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions. In addition, this research addresses the contextual basis for the link between IER and behavioural intentions. The idea of contextualising IER rests on the assumption that followers will respond to IER strategies differently, depending on the context. Adopting a polycontextual research approach (Shapiro et al., 2007), this research examines the role of environmental, relational, and person-level contextual conditions that potentially determine how leaders' IER relates to followers' behavioural intentions. Accordingly, across my four studies, I specify the environmental context as that of perceived threat, depicted as salient goal failure within the workplace (Study 1 and 2), and citizens' experience of COVID-19 (Study 3 and Study 4). From the perspective of the General Process Model of Threat and Defence (GPM) (Jonas et al., 2014), both threat states can be interpreted as epistemic and motivational discrepancies that fuel perceptions of threat. In specifying the relational context within the design of the study, this research examines whether leaders' hierarchical level acts as a contextual condition that may influence the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions. Thus, Study 1 and 2 examines how IER strategies relates to followers' behavioural intentions in a proximal leadership context (manager-follower relations); Study 3 and 4 will examine the impact of distal leaders' IER. Finally, to gain a deeper understanding of those for whom IER strategies work best (i.e., the person-level context), I will examine the moderating effects of the followers' discrete emotions following salient goal failure (Study 1), and regulatory focus (Study 2), on the indirect effects of IER on followers' affect and trust

responses.

Chapter 2: Interpersonal Emotion Regulation

This chapter provides an overview of the conceptualisation and classification of IER models. Difficulties in defining IER, as well as how strategies are classified and measured, are discussed. The chapter sketches out the empirical evidence that clearly shows how IER offers a variety of benefits as well as cataloguing the gaps in the existing literature that form the basis of my research, namely (a) whether IER relates to followers' behavioural intentions, (b) the theoretical mechanisms underpinning this focal relationship and, (c) when, and under what conditions, and for whom IER works best.

2.1 Theoretical Background

Since 2007, influential research (Little et al., 2012, 2013, 2016; Niven et al., 2009, 2012, 2019; Madrid et al., 2019; Vasquez et al., 2020) has firmly established the importance of IER as a phenomenon of interest. Undeniably, the IER literature has grappled with conceptual ambiguities and operational deficiencies (Zaki & Williams, 2013), making it difficult for the researcher to compare empirical evidence regarding IER. For instance, the intentional act of influencing another person's emotional state has been given many names, including interpersonal affect regulation (Niven, 2016), interpersonal emotion regulation (IER), extrinsic emotion regulation (Zaki & Williams, 2013), social regulation of emotion (Reeck et al., 2016), interpersonal emotion management (Little et al., 2012, 2013, 2016; Toegel et al., 2013), and leader-facilitated emotion management (Thiel et al., 2015). Variability in the terms used to describe IER have been associated with the use of different taxonomies which confounds our understanding of how leaders' IER relates to follower responses. In this research, I use the term interpersonal emotion regulation (IER) because it is used most extensively across empirical research. Moreover, the term IER reflects the common theme observed

across academic discourse on interpersonal regulation in that IER is an active, conscious, goal-directed process in which an individual makes efforts to alter the emotional experience of another person.

IER involves the use of strategies to improve or worsen followers' feelings (Niven et al., 2009). According to Niven (2017), IER is distinguished by four fundamental characteristics in that it: (1) is a form of regulation, (2) has an affective target state, (3) is a deliberate process, and (4) has a social target. As such, IER is distinct from a range of related concepts including social support, interpersonal influence, prosocial behaviour, and empathy. These concepts have some similarities with IER in that they occur during social interactions and involve emotional components, but they are distinct in that they have no specific regulation goal (Messina et al., 2021). For instance, provisions of social support may not be motivated by or function to influence the target's emotions (Dixon-Gordon et al., 2015). Conversely, the primary goal of IER is altering another person's emotions in an interpersonal context. Importantly, IER should not be confused with the notion of emotional intelligence (Madrid et al., 2019). The latter is defined as a series of abilities (i.e., recognition, understanding and the use of emotion) among which modification of others' feelings is described (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). A consensus among IER scholars is that a leaders' responsiveness to followers' emotions is laden with information, attributions, and intentionality (Niven et al., 2009, 2012; Little et al., 2016), which means that specific IER strategies used by the leader are central to understanding followers' responses.

2.2 Models of Interpersonal Emotion Regulation

In the past several years, there has been a rapid proliferation of cross-sectional and experimental research focused on the impact of IER within proximal leader relations (manager- follower dyads). The most widely adapted models employed in this

organisational research are the Process Model of Emotion Regulation (Gross, 1998, 2015) and the Interpersonal Affect Regulation model (Niven et al., 2009).

2.2.1 Process Model of Emotion Regulation

Much of the IER research in workplace contexts has emanated from the intrapersonal emotional regulation literature. Gross's (1998, 2015) Process Model of Emotion Regulation is arguably the most influential intrapersonal emotion regulation (ER) model adapted to understand interpersonal regulatory attempts. Gross's model proposes that emotions can be regulated at various stages in the process of emotion generation: (1) selection of the situation, (2) modification of the situation, (3) deployment of attention, (4) modification of cognitive appraisal, and (5) modulation of responses. Williams (2007) first applied the process model to theorise regarding IER in the context of a threat experience within the workplace. Williams (2007) hypothesised that IER strategies function as threat-reducing behaviours initiated by managers to alter the negative emotions of followers. Williams further proposed that regulating emotional responses using IER strategies can play a key role in building and maintaining trust. As such, Williams' theorising focuses specifically on strategies used to manage others' negative emotions for instrumental gain. Williams' theoretical framework comprised of four strategies used to manage others' negative emotions in threatening situations. Drawing on Gross's (1998, 2015) process model of ER, threat-reducing IER strategies include altering the situation (removing or modifying the elements of a situation that would have a negative impact on the target), altering attention (focusing the target's attention away from the more troubling aspects of the situation), altering the cognitive meaning of the situation (reframing or reappraising the situation to change its meaning for the target), and response modification (involves

actions that suppress the current experience of emotion).

Scholars who have used the process model within the interpersonal context have largely built on the work of Williams (2007) (e.g., Little et al., 2012, 2016). Extending Williams' work, Little and colleagues (2012) validated an interpersonal emotion management scale based on four of Gross's (1998) strategies (excluding situation selection) to measure behaviours targeted specifically at managing the negative emotions of followers in the workplace (Walsh, 2019). The Interpersonal Emotion Management Scale has subsequently been applied to the examination of emotion regulation strategies used to manage customers' emotions (Little et al., 2013), and in leader-follower exchange (Little et al., 2016).

Situation modification refers to active efforts to directly remove, modify, or change the situation or problem causing the undesired emotion in the follower to alter its emotional impact (Gross, 1998, 2008; Little et al., 2016). This strategy deals with modifying the characteristics of the situation causing the emotion, not managing the emotion itself. As such, situation modification is perceived as a problem-focused strategy (Gross & John, 2002; Little et al., 2013, 2016), as it involves managing the problem causing the emotion through action. The limited research on this IER strategy suggests that situation modification appears to be a functional strategy for managing emotion-laden events in the workplace. For instance, Little and colleagues (2012, 2016) found that when leaders use situation modification, they communicate to followers that the expression of negative emotions is acceptable.

Cognitive change is distinguished from situation modification in that the antecedent causing the undesired emotion is not removed or altered (Little et al., 2016). Instead, the negative emotional impact of the antecedent is mitigated by changing the way the follower thinks about the problem (Little et al., 2016). Scholars have

differentially categorised cognitive change as an emotion-focused strategy (Thiel et al., 2015), and a problem-focused strategy (Little et al., 2013, 2016). Despite problems with nomenclature, scholars agree that cognitive change involves utilising cognitive skills (e.g., perspective-taking, reappraising, reframing the meaning of thoughts and situations, or challenging interpretations) to modify the meaning of stimuli that generate negative emotional reactions (Gross, 1998). Notably, reappraisal is the most researched form of cognitive change within both ER and IER literature and requires leaders to reframe events in a manner that causes followers to reappraise the situation as having less potential for harm to their goals, concerns, and wellbeing (Williams, 2007). However, findings regarding the link between cognitive change and positive outcomes for followers is mixed. For instance, Little and colleagues' (2016) experimental research demonstrated that when a manager uses cognitive change (reappraisal), it enhances the quality of leader-member exchange, and job satisfaction. Conversely, Thiel and colleagues (2015) found that reappraisal (plus empathy) had little effect on followers in crisis. Little and colleagues (2013) observed that while reappraisal was associated with lower levels of anger in customers, it was not linked to positive affect. Reeck and colleagues (2016) noted if the regulator (e.g., leader) offers alternative interpretations to the target (e.g., follower) to improve their emotional state, reappraisal may be perceived as a direct challenge to the target's existing views (Niven et al., 2015), negating any potential gain for the target.

Attention deployment strategy is distinguished from situation modification and cognitive change in that the threatening elements of the problem triggering the undesired emotion is not removed, reframed, or directly addressed (Little et al., 2016). Instead, when using this strategy, a leader is attempting to distract a followers' attention away from those emotion-provoking elements (Gross & Thompson, 2007; Williams, 2007). For

instance, a proximal leader (e.g., manager) may offer to buy the follower a drink as a way of distracting them to improve their emotions (Little et al., 2012). This strategy ignores the cause of the problem and solely focuses on changing an emotional state using alternative stimuli (Little et al., 2013). Scholars have construed attention deployment as an emotion-focused strategy, focused on directly changing emotions (Little et al., 2016) and a prototypical disengagement strategy (Traeger, 2013). Arguably, a leaders' attempts at attention deployment may be construed as supportive in that being able to disengage from emotional stimuli may reduce the tendency to experience negative affect (Torrence & Connelly, 2019); redeploying attention may lead to a "flexibility of attention" that may free up cognitive resources (Barth et al., 2019). The major cost of attention deployment is that it does not allow for the processing and evaluating of emotional information (Shafir et al., 2015). Indeed, limited empirical evidence (Little et al., 2013, 2016) supports the notion that attention deployment is not particularly useful as an IER strategy in altering negative affect, however attention deployment has a positive relationship with followers' perceptions of managerial trust (Little et al., 2012).

Response modulation refers to attempts to directly alter the physical or emotional response to a situation. Suppression as a response modulation strategy is commonly used in the workplace to manage negative emotions (Little et al., 2016). Organisational display rules are typically targeted at the suppression of negative emotions such as anger, shame, and sadness (Fisher, 2019), and leaders encourage adherence to these display rules via acts of modulating the emotional response. The empirical evidence surrounding the use of suppression is mixed.

On the one hand, managers' use of suppression often "makes it clear [one] do[es] not care how the target feels," (Niven et al., 2009, p. 504), and aims to reduce the followers' expression of these feelings, rather than to address the problem causing the feelings. In

support of this, Little and colleagues (2016) found that managers who encourage followers to modulate, or suppress, their emotional responses to negative events reap followers' negative views of the manager- follower relationship. However, Thiel and colleagues (2015) found that under ambiguous, anxiety-filled conditions, followers may react more favourably to suppression when combined with empathy, because it is perceived as the best course to certainty and stability during crisis.

Overall, Gross' (1998, 2008) process model has been effectively applied to the interpersonal setting, uncovering important relationships between strategies and outcomes in proximal leader-follower, and customer relations within the workplace (e.g., Little et al., 2013; Troth et al., 2018). Empirical insights using the process model have shown that, in work contexts, attempts to change followers' affect through leaders' IER strategies can have an impact on followers' trust (Little et al., 2012: Study 4), affect (Little et al., 2016), and stress (Thiel et al., 2015). It is a particularly helpful framework for evaluating the effectiveness of *specific* IER strategies (Troth et al., 2018). The accumulated evidence thus far provides evidence of the complex relationships between different IER strategies and target's outcomes, with some strategies showing positive outcomes for followers in one study but not another (cf. reappraisal: Little et al., 2013, 2016; Thiel et al., 2015). This suggests that the utility of specific IER strategies can vary widely and may depend on the contextual conditions in which the strategies are employed. The accumulated evidence also lacks insight regarding why some strategies hold promise in altering followers' affect, which carries clear pragmatic value for leaders wishing to engage in IER.

2.2.2 *The Interpersonal Affect Regulation Model*

Although the process model provides a starting place for conceptualising the IER process, it was created as a framework for intrapersonal regulation, not IER and the

degree to which intrapersonal and IER strategies align remains unknown (Christensen & Haynos, 2020). One of the most seminal advances in IER research was the development of a classification by Niven and colleagues (2009), specifically intended to represent interpersonal regulation. Niven and colleagues (2009) proposed an alternative way to classify and think about different emotion regulation strategies by primarily considering the motives of the regulator (to help someone feel better or worse), and the means used to achieve the regulation (Niven et al., 2009; Turluc & Jitaru, 2019). Moreover, Niven and colleagues use the broader concept of affect regulation as an alternative to the one of emotion regulation. Affect regulation is “the process of initiating, maintaining, modulating, or changing the occurrence, intensity, or duration of internal feeling states” i.e., emotions or moods (Eisenberg et al., 2000, p. 137). As stated earlier, Niven and colleagues’ classification of interpersonal affect regulation is supported by four fundamental characteristics that underpin the conceptualisation of IER (Niven, 2017). First, IER is a form of regulation to modify affect to achieve a desired outcome that supports a variety of higher-order goals or motives (e.g., compassion, impression management). Second, IER is a deliberate effortful, intentional, controlled, resource-intensive, conscious process (Niven, 2017). The regulator (e.g., the leader) must implement an actual action based on a goal. The intentionality of the IER process in targeting affect is a key component of Niven’s vision (Turluc & Jitaru, 2019), and lies in stark contrast to other IER models (e.g., Zaki & Williams, 2013), that advocate that IER can happen without the deliberate intention of the regulator. Niven (2017) argues that in the absence of intentionality, IER can be confounded by related constructs such as emotion contagion and affective presence. Third, IER has an affective target (e.g., the follower) whereby the regulator influences the target’s emotional trajectory by changing the nature, duration, or intensity of the emotional experience (Niven, 2017). Finally, IER

has a social target: emotion regulation in a social context can be considered as being interpersonal only when there is a regulator that deliberately tries to change the affective state of the target (Niven, 2017).

Niven and colleagues' (2009) framework primarily distinguishes between two major categories of IER strategies, according to the *motive* behind their use (affect-improving or affect-worsening). While affect-improving strategies provoke positive feelings in the target or reduce negative affect, affect-worsening strategies elicit the opposite response. Strategies can be further delineated according to the *means* used to achieve regulation. Accordingly, affect-improving strategies can be apportioned into positive engagement strategies or relationship-oriented strategies. Positive engagement strategies include *affective engagement* and *cognitive engagement strategies* (Niven et al., 2009). Affective engagement strategies include deliberate problem-focused engagement strategies where the regulator is focusing the target's attention on the situation (Niven et al., 2009) to alter the situation. Prototype strategies here include, listening to the target's problems, allowing the target to vent their emotions, talking to the target about their problems, having a supportive conversation with the target, or being available for the target (Niven et al., 2009). Affective engagement strategies are comparable to instrumental forms of support (Niven et al., 2009), with a focus on "helping the person to enhance their/their sense of competence or efficacy" (Horowitz et al., 2001, p. 50). Cognitive engagement strategies involve trying to change the way the target thinks about the situation to improve the targets' feelings. Prototype strategies include, giving the target advice, or trying to get the target to view a situation objectively (Niven et al., 2009). Engagement strategies can be considered proactive strategies (Hughes et al., 2020).

Relationship-oriented strategies focus on the social ties between individuals

(Niven et al., 2009), allowing the follower to feel accepted and valued. For instance, when attempting to regulate followers' affect, leaders might aim to communicate acceptance by paying attention to the follower and their needs (*Attention strategy*). Alternatively, they may arrange an activity for the follower (*Distraction strategy*), or make the follower feel special (*Valuing strategy*) (Niven et al., 2009).

Finally, affect-worsening strategies are strategies designed to worsen affect and can be divided into negative engagement and relationship-oriented strategies. Negative engagement strategies can be dichotomised further into *negative affective engagement* and *behavioural engagement strategies* (Niven et al., 2009). Negative affective engagement strategies include trying to worsen the way the follower feels about a situation, while negative behavioural engagement involves complaining about the followers' behaviour. Negative relationship-oriented strategies involve *rejection* strategies and *putting oneself first*. Prototypical rejecting strategies include making it clear the leader does not care, being rude or ignoring the follower (Niven et al., 2009). Putting one's own feelings first may be used to communicate snubbing, for example, sulking around the follower.

Notably, Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification has established the foundational building blocks for empirical research and provided much needed conceptual clarity by introducing clearly articulated definitions of IER, which greatly increased the volume of IER research. Niven and colleagues' classification system has played a salient role in understanding the effects of IER in the work context. This research has shown that attempts to improve or worsen followers' affect can have an impact on followers' well-being (Niven et al., 2012), quality of relationships at work (Niven et al., 2012), trust (Niven et al., 2012b), task performance (Holman & Niven, 2019), innovation in teams (Madrid et al., 2019), and follower performance (Vasquez et al., 2020).

There are several conceptual distinctions between the process model adapted by Williams (2007), Little and colleagues (2012, 2013, 2016), and Niven and colleagues' classification (see Table 2.1 for overview). The disparity between conceptual frameworks has meant that it is difficult to compare empirical evidence on the effects of IER. First, Niven and colleagues (2009) consider the concept of interpersonal affect regulation as a broader construct than interpersonal emotional management (IEM) or IER. As such, Niven and colleagues' classification (2009) centres on the empirical examination of affect (i.e., emotions and moods), whereas Williams (2007), and Little and colleagues (2012) have specifically focused on the regulation of negative emotions. Second, Williams' model deploys a simpler taxonomy in that it specifies a smaller range of IER strategies, whereas Niven and colleagues' (2009, 2011, 2012) classification comprises a wide set of strategies nestled together according to the motives of the regulator (affect-improving versus affect -worsening), as well as the means used to achieve this motive (e.g., positive engagement versus relationship-oriented strategies).

Despite conceptual distinctions between Gross's model and that of Niven's, what unifies both models are the proposition that IER is deliberately enacted to change someone else's feelings (Madrid et al., 2019; Niven, 2022). Both models have been applied to understanding leader-follower IER and the implications of IER strategies on target outcomes (e.g., Little et al., 2012, 2016; Niven et al., 2012). However, this research employs Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification of IER as an over-arching framework for two reasons: First, the classification system focuses specifically on *interpersonal* regulation, and secondly, it allows for a very comprehensive empirical examination of the motives as well as the means used to achieve regulation.

Much of the research to date employing Niven and colleagues' classification has examined the effects of IER, according to the motive behind their use, as such, scholars

have yet to fully utilise Niven and colleagues' comprehensive framework to examine the effects of IER according to the means used to achieve that regulation. The failure to fully use Niven and colleagues' comprehensive framework means there is a lack of clarity regarding the effectiveness of distinct strategies beyond their motives. While a desire to improve affect may motivate leaders, the means used to achieve that regulation may not be particularly effective. It may be that certain strategy types are favoured in certain circumstances (Niven et al., 2009), due to the way in which strategies are likely to be appraised (Niven, 2022). Moreover, it is not clear whether 'nested' strategies with conceptual equivalence (e.g., positive engagement strategies: affective and cognitive) have similar effects on followers' outcomes. Using Niven and colleagues' framework to examine the means used to achieve regulation may provide valuable insight regarding the utility of specific IER strategies in certain contexts; and importantly why some strategies may work, and others may not. Uncovering a meaningful basis for making comparisons between distinct types of controlled IER strategies could provide further insights into the merits of Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification system. For instance, it may be the case that strategies with conceptual equivalence transmit their effects through similar mechanisms or that similar means of regulation result in similar outcomes. This issue is of theoretical and practical importance given the paucity of research on classification systems and the lack of unifying theoretical approach in an emerging field. Adopting Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification system as my framework, the next section provides an overview of the research questions that will be addressed.

Table 2. 1 *Classification of IER Strategies (Study 1 and Study 2)*

Williams (2007)	Niven et al. (2009) Controlled Interpersonal Affect Regulation Strategies	Little et al. (2012) Interpersonal Emotion Management (IEM) strategies
Threat-reducing	Affect-improving Positive engagement	Situation modification Active efforts to directly remove, modify, or change the situation or problem causing the undesired emotion in the follower to alter its emotional impact (Gross, 1998, 2015; Little, 2016; Torrence & Connelly, 2019).
	Affective engagement (problem-focused) strategy e.g., Talking to the target about their problems Cognitive engagement strategy e.g., Trying to change the way the target thinks about a situation to improve the target's feelings, e.g., giving the target advice	Cognitive change e.g., Altering the way that the follower thinks about the problem (Little et al., 2012; 2016) through involves utilising cognitive skills (e.g., reappraising, or challenging interpretations) (Gross, 1998).
	Affect-improving Relationship-oriented	Attention Deployment Distract a followers' attention away from those emotion provoking elements (Gross & Thompson, 2007; Williams, 2007) by replacing those thoughts with positive or neutral ones (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991; Richards & Gross, 2006).
Threat-enhancing	Affect-worsening Relationship-oriented	Rejection strategy Nonconfrontational strategies, e.g., ignoring the target Modulating the emotional response Reducing the behavioural expression of an emotion once it is experienced (Little et al., 2016)

2.3 Research Questions

As noted above, the development of classification systems laid important foundations regarding the nature of IER, and the effects of IER on the target of the regulation. Drawing on Whetten's (1989) elements of theory building, much work remains to be done regarding the *what* (i.e., what are the connections between IER and follower outcomes?), the *how* (what factors play a part in the relationship between IER and follower outcomes?), and the *when* (what contextual factors might influence this relationship?).

2.3.1 *Research Question 1: What is the Influence of Leaders' IER on Followers' Behavioural Intentions?*

Despite the growing interest in studying IER (Dixon-Gordon et al., 2015), the influence of leaders' IER strategies on how followers intend to behave is still poorly understood. This is a critical gap in IER research given the propensity of negative affect to adversely alter followers' behavioural intentions. Behavioural intentions capture one's level of motivation to perform a behaviour (Fishbein, 1975), and are an accurate determinant of behaviour. While recognizing the intention behaviour-gap documented in previous research (Morwitz & Munz, 2020), two related reasons drove my decision to focus on behavioural intentions rather than behaviour as an outcome. First, my primary goal lies in understanding the theoretical mechanisms and contextual features that influence the link between leader IER and followers' behaviour rather than in the behaviour itself. Thus, to adequately test such a rich theoretical model, the research design and behavioural measures that provide the most compelling evidence to meet my overarching research goal requires a focus on behavioural intentions rather than behaviour. Secondly, by adopting a mixed methods approach (i.e., including experimental and field studies) my research can demonstrate a clear connection between IER and outcome

behaviours.

Theoretically, such an examination shifts the empirical focus of IER beyond hedonistic goals towards a functional perspective of IER in leveraging instrumental outcomes. Certainly, emerging IER research has recently identified that leaders' whose relational behaviours focus on the affective experience of followers can leverage positive performance-related outcomes (Madrid et al., 2019; Vasquez et al., 2020), as well as innovation in teams (Madrid et al., 2019). While these findings provide important insight into the idea that IER is functional for organisations, this research failed to specify the affective climate that IER was enacted in, i.e., it is not clear whether IER was implemented to initiate or maintain positive affect or lower negative affect.

As stated, affect is considered "an umbrella concept" that encompasses moods, emotions, and feelings (Anderson et al., 2019). Negative affect refers to the subjective experience of an array of negative emotions (e.g., fear, anger, sadness, guilt) (Anderson et al., 2019). Negative affect is often triggered by discrete affective events which can adversely influence behavioural intentions (Izard, 2010). Prior research verifies that negative affect activates behavioural intentions that frequently centre around disengagement, avoidance, and withdrawal. For instance, within the organisational context, research has pointed to the detrimental effects of negative affect on turnover intentions (Andreescu & Vito, 2021; Yu et al., 2021), failure to adjust to goals (Barlow et al., 2018), and reduced motivation (Shepherd et al., 2014). Negative affect reduces the probability of deliberate and rational decision-making and can adversely degrade the ability to process information (Zelenski, 2008). Accordingly, negative affect is also correlated with increased risk-taking (Hasel, 2013), impulsivity (Cyders & Smith, 2008), and counter-productive behaviour (Cropanzano et al., 2020; Grandey, 2008). Given that behavioural intentions provide the most accurate prediction of behaviour (Fishbein &

Ajzen, 1975), how a leader regulates negative affect to assuage adverse behavioural intentions is an important source of enquiry in the IER field.

When a follower communicates their negative affect to a leader, they want to be heard and understood (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999). They want their distress communication to be met with a level of responsiveness that communicates their value (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999), be that as a staff member or a citizen. However, expressions of negative affect can be (mis) construed by the leader as a criticism or an unwelcome obligation, and thus invite a defensive response. Knowing how to attend to displays of negative affect is part of the leadership task and critical for the followers' well-being. The consequences of the distress communication may depend on how the follower interprets the leaders' relational behaviour.

Yet research is not clear regarding how a follower derives meaning from the leaders' IER attempts, and how this translates into behavioural intentions. What is apparent though from experimental and observational evidence generated over several decades is that behavioural intentions are malleable and that changes in intention are often followed by changes in behaviour (Fishman et al., 2020). This underscores the significance of understanding how leaders' IER can alter followers' negative affect, and how this influences behavioural intentions.

One challenge in IER research is the vast array of strategies at a leaders' disposal rendering it tricky to decipher how specific strategies may relate to followers' behavioural intentions. From a functionalist perspective, each IER strategy may motivate follower intentions in diverse ways. Thus, understanding how strategies relate to behavioural intentions can clarify whether strategies are 'meaningful' in context of negative affect, thus providing a clear rationale for employing certain strategies over others. This will deepen the theoretical understanding of IER strategies beyond current models, which

primarily focus on the positive effects for the target individual (Williams & Emich, 2014), to the applied potential of IER for maintaining key organisational outcomes.

2.3.2 Research Question 2: How does IER influence Behavioural Intentions?

Makadok and colleagues (2018) suggest that the most central aspect of any theory is the causal mechanism that it relies upon as the foundation for its own internal logic. Investigating the causal mechanisms underpinning the association between leaders' relational strategies and followers' behavioural intentions is important both for the advancement of IER theory and the refinement of leadership practice. Specifically, examining causal mechanisms allows for the enhancement of current classification models, potentially illuminating the synergies and differences among classes of strategies (cf. Niven et al., 2009). As stated earlier, it is not clear whether 'nested' strategies with conceptual equivalence, (i.e., IER strategies with the same meaning across groups, for example engagement strategies) exert their effects through similar processes. Exploring causal mechanisms may also address the important question of how IER is linked to other concepts. To date, little is known about how IER might exert its effects on followers. Accordingly, this research will help us understand at a more mechanistic level, how the experience of IER alters behavioural intentions.

The question then arises as to what the mediating mechanisms might be. There is no widely accepted paradigm or theory to draw upon in this regard, and the mechanisms relating IER to behavioural intentions have not been explored. However, there is consensus among IER scholars that the primary goal of IER is the target's (e.g., follower) affective state. Similarly, Holman and Niven (2019) provided evidence for the role of positive mood as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between interpersonal affect regulation and task performance Results of two dyadic studies (one with academics and

doctoral students, N = 78, the other with driving instructors and learner drivers, N = 100) support the notion that IAR is associated with positive mood, and in turn task performance because IAR helps people to reappraise events, divert attention away from aversive stimuli or events, modify the situation to change its affective impact, and because it communicates interpersonal caring (Holman & Niven, 2019). Most recently Vasquez and colleagues (2020) provided evidence for the role of affect as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' task performance. Using a multisource field study involving 31 leaders and 157 followers, Vasquez, and colleagues (2020) investigated whether affect-improving and affect-worsening strategies were related to followers' affect, and thereby to their task performance. This study revealed that leaders' affect-improving IER was positively related to followers' positive affect, which in turn, positively correlated to task performance. However, while affect-worsening strategies resulted in unpleasant feelings, affect-worsening strategies did not have an indirect effect on task performance via affect, thereby suggesting the presence of unexamined mediators. Although Vasquez and colleagues' (2020) study examined a single work-related outcome (performance) in a specific organisation, the findings show promise that affect may underpin the relationship between specific IER strategies and behavioural intentions.

Although affect may be regarded as a natural pathway arising from the conceptualisation of IER as an affective process, affect may not be the only mechanism through which leaders' IER impacts followers. Little and colleagues were the first to examine relational pathways through which IER influences outcomes in other people. Results from multisource data in a sample of 163 leader–follower dyads confirmed that leaders' IEM strategies provide interpersonal cues that can engender stronger positive or negative perceptions about the nature and quality of the exchange relationships they share with their followers (Little et al., 2016). Given the emphasis on the relational nature of

IER, embedded in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of IER, and the findings from Little and colleagues' research (2016), there is merit to also considering relational mechanisms as an explanatory pathway in understanding IER effects. Trust is one such important relational mechanism that has yet to be considered. Trust at an individual level has frequently been defined as an individual's willingness to be vulnerable based on the positive expectations of another individual or entity (Mayer et al., 1995; Rousseau et al., 1998). As this definition highlights, with its focus on vulnerability, trust is particularly relevant in contexts of uncertainty and risk (Mayer et al., 1995). By representing an expectation that others will act in a way that serves one's interests, trust acts as a heuristic frame of reference that allows actors to conserve cognitive resources (McEvily et al., 2003).

Scholars have conceptualised trust in diverse ways; trust operates in terms of dispositions, beliefs (or cognitions) and feelings (or affects and emotions) (Barbalet, 2019). For instance, Mayer and colleagues (1995) proposes that a trustor (e.g., follower) "trusts" a trustee (e.g., leader) when the trustee is found to be "trustworthy" (Hamm et al., 2019). Accordingly, Mayer and colleagues (1995) defined trustworthiness as an antecedent to trust based on three characteristics of the trustee such as the trustee's individual ability (skills and competencies), benevolence (caring for others) and integrity (principled acting). This three-factor model of trustworthiness is consistently cited as a parsimonious measure of trustworthiness and is widely regarded as a model of trustworthiness in the leadership literature (Dirks & De Jong, 2022). This conception of trust defines the concept as attitudinal, or cognition-based in terms of the beliefs and expectations that people hold. Gillespie (2003) designed a measure of trust to try and better capture the willingness to be vulnerable aspect of Mayer's definition of trust. Accordingly, trust is measured as a behavioural expression – a willingness to engage in trusting behaviours in the relationship

namely, to rely on and disclose personal or sensitive information to others (Gillespie et al., 2021).

A decade has passed since two studies were conducted that supported the notion that IER has the potential to alter trust relations between a supervisor and the follower (Little et al., 2012: Study 4), and between co-workers (Niven et al., 2012), however, the literature on IER has yet to generate further empirical evidence regarding the implications of the IER-trust relationship. Trust cues arising from the IER strategies may be particularly salient in predicting followers' behavioural intentions within non-proximal dyads where one party (e.g., leader) has a hierarchical advantage over another (e.g., follower) (Niven et al., 2012). Indeed, Williams (2007) theorised that IER strategies may be conceived as 'trust-building behaviours' that can arouse behavioural and cognitive responses in followers. "Trust building" refers to processes that increase trust, from a neutral or positive initial state—one that has not been damaged (Williams, 2012). Specifically, I contend that IER strategies can signal affective and cognitive information that create feelings of having a competent, benevolent leader (or not) and serves as a necessary condition for a general willingness to build trust. As such, IER is conceptualised as an important antecedent to the development of trust. Given that trust in institutions and leaders has been in crisis across the globe (Dirk & De Jong, 2022), IER may serve as a new paradigm that can provide important (and timely) practical, actionable insights on the ways in which leaders can foster trusting relationships.

Consistent with theorising by other IER researchers (Niven et al., 2009; 2012), I draw on theories of emotional communication (Schwarz, 2012; Van Kleef, 2009; Van Kleef et al., 2010) to illustrate how IER may transmit its influence on followers' affect, and trust evaluations, and in turn, behavioural intentions. Theories of emotional communication suggest that emotional expressions can arouse either complementary or

reciprocal emotional reactions in observers (Van Kleef & Cote, 2022). Complementary emotions reactions are when individuals respond with emotional expressions that are different from those displayed by the expresser yet match those expressions in terms of their social-motivational implications (Van Kleef et al., 2016). Reciprocal emotional reactions occur when an observer experiences the same (or similar) emotions as those shown by the expresser (Van Kleef & Cote, 2022). Reciprocal emotional reactions occur through emotional contagion processes (i.e., catching someone's else's emotions) (Hatfield et al., 1994). Both types of reactions influence the expresser. For example, prior research confirms that in the case of negative emotions (e.g., sadness), complementary emotional reactions (e.g., empathy) to others' emotional expressions can reflect the degree to which people care about the other person (Sinaceur et al., 2015).

Extending this logic, displays of negative affect by the follower that are matched by leaders' attempts to improve affect (i.e., complementary emotional reactions) are likely to positively influence followers' automatic affective reactions to the extent that the follower 'feels' that the leader has their best interests at heart (Niven et al., 2012; Vasquez et al., 2020). What feels right to the follower is likely to be informed by contextual factors (Van Kleef & Cote, 2022) that determine the perceived appropriateness of the leaders' emotional response as expressed through distinct IER strategies. Therefore, distinct affect-improving strategies can elicit feelings of care and concern.

Conversely, when displays of negative affect by the follower are reciprocated by a leaders' attempts to worsen affect (i.e., reciprocal emotional reactions), they are likely to negatively influence followers' automatic affective reactions. For example, if followers' expression of fear is matched by a leaders' fear response, then it is likely that the followers' negative affect is enhanced. Indeed, IER studies found that leaders' attempt at worsening affect instigated matching affective states in their followers (Little et al., 2012). The follower

feels the (reciprocal) negative reaction expressed by the leader as signalling a lack of care and consideration.

Relational appraisal theoretical models (Scherer, 2009; Smith & Kirby, 2009) suggest that trust appraisals are assumed not to be a simple function of either the stimulus characteristics (e.g., IER strategies) or the individual's dispositional characteristics (caring, kindness) (Keller et al., 2012). Rather, appraisals of trust reflect an evaluation of what the stimulus implies for the person's well-being in relation to the individual's goals, needs, and resources (Smith & Kirby, 2009). Trust is therefore a condition of in-depth processing, with the trustor (e.g., follower) acting as a 'vigilant social perceiver' (Gustafsson et al., 2021). Accordingly, perceptions about leaders' IER and what strategies signify in terms of followers' goals, become a proxy for perceptions regarding the leader. When strategies are relevant to the followers' goals, there is a sense that trustee (e.g., leader) can be relied on to satisfy the followers' needs or serve their interests or goals (Barbalet, 2019). This includes a sense that dependence on the leaders' capacities or actions (e.g., IER) through trust will yield benefit (Barbalet, 2019). Therefore, when a follower infers that IER strategies are congruent with their goals, these IER strategies are likely to elicit positive appraisals of the leader, and in turn, influence trust evaluations.

Regarding how affect and trust transmits their influence on behavioural intentions, I contend that affective, and cognitive inferences regarding the leaders' use of IER can serve 'directive functions' (Swartz & Clore, 1983) which in turn can influence followers' behavioural intentions (Koning & Van Kleef, 2015). Affective reactions have informational (Slovic et al., 2002) and motivational value (Frijda, 1986; Kahneman, 2003); consequently, reducing negative affect is likely to be associated with energising tendencies (Chen & Bargh, 1999). Conversely enhancing negative affect can motivate actions to avoid those feelings e.g., withdrawal tendencies (Keller et al., 2012).

When followers are motivated to engage in thorough information processing, the relative impact of inferences drawn from trust reactions may have a profound influence on behaviour (Van Kleef & Cote, 2022). From a mobilising perspective, trust can motivate followers to contribute toward collective endeavours (McEvily et al., 2003), and to engage in behavioural intentions that align with organisational objectives.

2.3.3 Research Question 3: When, or Under What Conditions does IER Influence Behavioural Intentions?

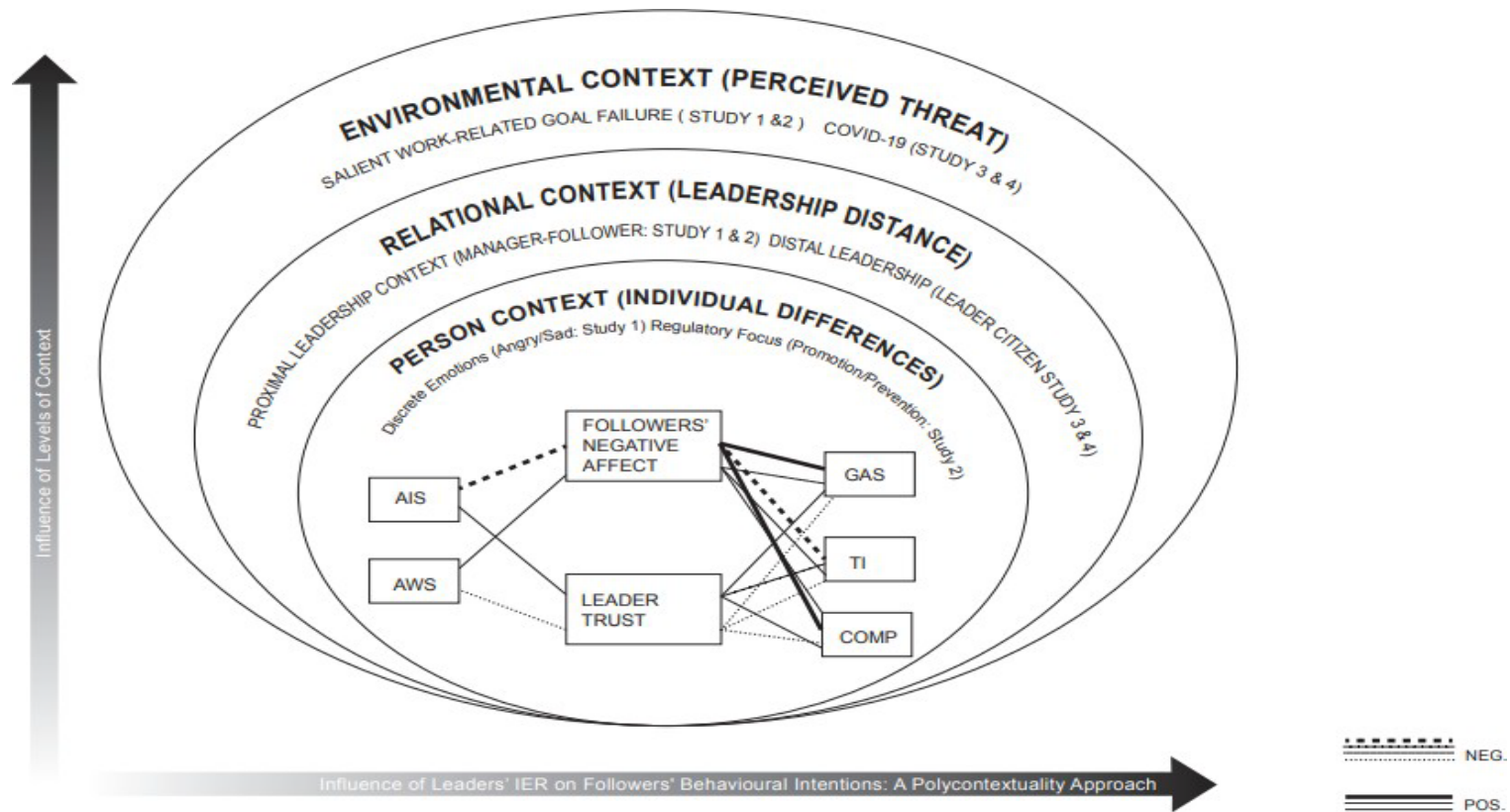
While research questions 1 and 2 address the “what” and the “how” of IER, research question 3 focuses on the contextual conditions in which IER works (answering the “when” question: Troth et al., 2018; English et al., 2017). Recent views in the field of IER suggest that there is no one effective strategy (Levy-Gigi & Shamay-Tsoory, 2017), which suggests that there may be underlying contextual variables that influence IER outcomes. This aligns also with broader self-regulation research which suggests the need to flexibly adapt regulatory strategies depending on the context (Bonanno & Burton, 2013). Scholars have argued that context is implicitly considered by followers when appraising leaders’ relational behaviours (Thiel et al., 2015), and shapes how a given IER strategy is perceived and interpreted (Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999; Nozaki & Mikolajczak, 2020). Hence, context is a variable that most likely impacts the effectiveness of an IER strategy. Despite this, the recognition of the importance of context has appeared primarily in the theoretical realm, with empirical research falling behind (English et al., 2017; Troth et al., 2018). By clearly specifying a context in which to assess IER outcomes, the predictive validity of context-congruent outcomes can be significantly and meaningfully determined (Swift & Peterson, 2019) and more specific, actionable recommendations can be made to leaders.

To better understand the interface between IER and context, it is important to identify which contextual factors carry the potential to impact followers' behavioural intentions, and why. In any setting, there are multiple contextual variables in that context - a condition that Shapiro and colleagues (2007) refer to as 'polycontextuality'.

Accordingly, there are three contextual considerations that warrant immediate investigation and are discussed in detail below. First, the *environmental context* i.e., the situational context that prompts the need for IER. Factors that prompt the need for IER in the first place should have influence in terms of the subsequent impact of IER on a followers' responses and define which IER strategies are more suitable. IER is typically elicited to improve negative affect; however empirical analyses, has for the most part, failed to elucidate the rationale for IER or indeed the consequences of IER in specific contexts. As such, attention to these environmental factors is important given their potential influence on IER strategies but are largely ignored design factors.

Second, there is a paucity of research examining the *relational context* that influences IER processes (Niven et al., 2009). Clarifying the relationship between the target and the regulator in the design and interpretation of IER research is essential to monitor distinctions in the perceived utility of IER strategies (Niven et al., 2012). For instance, within the work context, there may be a difference in how strategies are perceived, depending on whether the leader is someone that the follower is familiar with or not. Third, the "*person*" context i.e., individual factors are likely to influence IER strategies. In the following section, I will discuss these three contextual features that may distinguish the effects of IER on behavioural intentions (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2. 1 *The Influence of Leaders' IER on Followers' Behavioural Intentions: A Polycontextual Approach*



Note. Polycontextual model of IER with proposed relationships between leaders' IER strategies and followers' behavioural intentions (goal adjustment, turnover intention, and compliance intentions), mediated by leaders' trust and followers' negative affect. AIS=leaders' affect-improving strategies; AWS=leaders' affect-worsening strategies; GAS=Goal adjustment capacities; TI=turnover intention; COMP=compliance intentions (Solid line indicates a proposed positive relationship; dashed line indicates a proposed negative relationship).

2.3.3.1 IER and the Environmental Context

To make evidence-based decisions regarding the utility of IER strategies, it is necessary to establish an environmental context in which to examine IER. Environmental factors, such as the situational context that prompts the need for IER, are important to consider, as they can shape the very nature of the emotional experience, and correspondingly, the outcomes associated with leaders' IER strategies. A paradigm that lends itself well to the examination of IER based on negative affect is the experience of perceived threat. One conceptual framework of threat derives from Jonas and colleagues' (2014) General Process Model of Threat and Defence (GPM). The value of the GPM model is that it incorporates insights derived from previous theoretical insights into an overarching framework for threat. Irrespective of the type of threat experienced, the GPM posits that threat is construed as a conflict or discrepancy (e.g., epistemic, or motivational) between an expectation or desire and the circumstances that undermines either physical (e.g., bodily harm) or psychological well-being (e.g., self-esteem) (Jonas et al., 2014). Threats are motivational discrepancies when one (or more) salient goal(s) are blocked (Lewin, 1935). In the broadest sense, motivational discrepancy constitutes a gap between what is and what ought to be (McGregor et al., 2010). The threat is experienced as an epistemic discrepancy that violates an individual's meaning framework (Heine et al., 2006), that allows people to understand their experiences and act with purpose in their environment.

The importance of examining the effect of IER on states of perceived threat is underpinned by prior theoretical contributions. First, there is broad consensus among researchers that perceived threat is positively associated with negative affect and psychological distress (Tomaka et al., 1997), and poses a risk to the person's well-being (Searle & Auton, 2015). Second, perceived threats fundamentally jeopardise core

psychological needs for belonging, trust in others, self-worth, and influence over the environment (Aquino & Thau, 2009). Third, negative emotional reactions can produce a variety of retaliatory behaviours in response to a perceived threat, including reactance, defiance towards authorities and subsequent noncompliance with leaders (Barkworth & Murphy, 2015; Murphy & Tyler, 2008). Threat provokes avoidance behaviours (King & Gardner, 2006), reduces goal focus and commitment (Devezer et al., 2014), and increases the possibility of goal disengagement in favour of any alternative tenable goal (Nash et al., 2011). Notably, these defensive responses are elicited not by the threat stimulus itself but by the associated negative affect (Xu & McGregor, 2018), highlighting the relevance of IER to counteract threat defences. As stated earlier, Williams (2007) first proposed a theoretical model which suggested that influencing the feelings of threat that others experience involves regulating the emotions of others. To date, no empirical research has directly examined Williams's theoretical model. It is likely that in the context of threat, some strategies are preferred over others and are more effective than others.

A major advantage of utilising psychological threats as a context to understand the effect of IER on behavioural intentions is that perceived threat can be experienced across multiple domains. Consequently, examining IER within this empirical context adds to the generalisability of the findings. My model begins by introducing salient work-related goal failure (Study 1 and Study 2), and COVID-19 (Study 3 and Study 4) as distinct domains of threat. While these domains might be initially construed as separate lines of enquiry, from the perspective of the GPM model, both salient goal failure and COVID -19 can be construed as epistemic and motivational discrepancies that fuel perceptions of threat. Notably, prior research has already demonstrated that both threatening events evoke negative affect, the consequences of which can have a detrimental impact on behavioural intentions. For instance, within the work context, failure to attain salient work-related

goals signifies a motivational discrepancy in that the individual is approach-oriented, but simultaneously experiences an inability to progress towards goal attainment (Jonas et al., 2014). The conceptualisation of goal failure as a motivational discrepancy broadly reflects the extant goal-related literature that considers goal failure as a mismatch between what people want and what they currently have (Carver, 2004a, 2015; Frijda, 1986; Lench et al., 2011; Levenson, 2014). Thwarted goals also signify an epistemic discrepancy given that salient goals give meaning to people's lives and not achieving these goals is aversive to a person's personal and social well-being (Boekaerts et al., 2012).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) announced the COVID-19 outbreak as a global pandemic on 11th March 2020 with life-threatening consequences emanating from an airborne virus. Psychologists have described this global pandemic as psychologically threatening with the potential to arouse anxiety and shape defensive behavioural intentions (Reiss et al., 2020). From the perspective of the GPM model, the COVID-19 pandemic can also be perceived through motivational-epistemic discrepancies related to goal attainment (McGregor et al., 2010). Mortality salience entails a motivational discrepancy between the desire to survive and the finitude of life (Jonas et al., 2014) and is a powerful threat because it is the goal blocker (e.g., survival) (Xu & McGregor, 2018). Mortality salience is a threat not only to one's physical self but also to one's sense of self and one's self-merit in general (Ben-Zur & Zeidner, 2009). Accordingly, COVID-19 represents an epistemic discrepancy in that the sense of purpose and life significance for many people has been adversely affected during the COVID-19 pandemic (De Jong et al., 2020). The loss of normalcy associated with COVID-19 (De Jong et al., 2020), and the sorrow for what is no longer possible, constitutes a loss of meaning in life.

Thus, immediate threat to highly valued goals might be considered as a macro-level contextual condition that influences the IER strategies. Leaders' IER should

complement environmental contingencies but in the absence of research, it is difficult to know what IER strategies lead to desirable behavioural intentions in specific contexts.

Accordingly, my thesis can provide theory-derived, research-based knowledge to inform leaders' decision regarding the utility of IER strategies in a targeted (threat) context. To this end, I include threat as a design factor that may influence perceptions of IER in the context of salient work-related goal failure (Study 1 and Study 2) and COVID-19 (Study 3 and Study 4).

2.3.3.2 IER and the Relational Context

Thus far, I have delineated context based on environmental factors that may influence IER. A second contextual feature is the relational context. One relational feature that may be particularly relevant to the empirical examination of leaders' IER is the leader-follower relationship. Despite the recognition that IER is a central part of leadership practice (Troth et al., 2018; Vasquez et al., 2020), our understanding of IER and leadership is still underdeveloped (Torrence & Connelly, 2019). Leadership is defined as the process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2019). The distance that a leader maintains from followers appears to be a defining element of the leadership influencing process (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002), and key to understanding human agency and relationships (Wang, 2021). The dynamics of the influencing process may differ depending on how "proximal" or "distal" followers are from their leader (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002). Low levels of followers' personal relevance to leader, little leader-related information, occasional observation of leader, symbolic impression management, and indirect experience with the leader characterises the distal leadership context (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002; Shamir, 1995; Chun et al., 2009). The distal leadership can be seen in the relationship between political leaders and followers.

The proximal leadership context is characterised by a prominent level of followers' personal relevance to the leader, substantial amount of leader-related information, repeated observation of leader actual day-to-day behaviours, and direct interpersonal experience with the leader (Chun et al., 2009). The proximal leadership context typically describes the manager- follower relationship, where the manager has a relationship with the follower and is directly and regularly interacting with them (Chun et al., 2009).

Within IER scholarship, theoretical and empirical discussion has been exclusively confined to proximal relationships within the workplace, i.e., supervisory-level leadership and specifically, the effects of leaders' IER on proximal followers, with no research to date (to my knowledge) focusing on the influence of IER within the distal leadership context (e.g., political leaders/CEO's). However, the importance of examining IER by distal leaders is echoed in recent calls for researchers to consider which relational behaviours may enhance distal leadership effectiveness in ensuring compliance with restrictive health measures during COVID (McGuire et al., 2020).

Leadership distance (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002; Carsten et al., 2022) may uniquely affect IER processes to the extent that it can contribute to or detract from leader effectiveness in altering behavioural intentions, through its impact on affect and trust. When the leadership relationship is distal in nature and characterised by limited information on and knowledge of the leader, the effects of IER on distal followers are likely to depend on the communication of perceived motives and values (Shamir et al., 1993; Shamir, 2012). Extending this logic, any affect-improving strategies that communicate care and concern may prove efficacious in altering affect in distal relations. Conversely, proximal followers are more likely to be influenced by what the leader does than by what they say (Shamir, 2012). Proximal relations engender greater expectations from leaders (Shamir, 1995) and as such, proximal followers judge leaders' behaviours

based on *how* the leader addresses the problem (Bligh & Riggio., 2012; Shamir, 1995; 2012). Accordingly, IER strategies targeted directly at the problem may be more relevant in proximal leadership situations and may be more strongly correlated to lower levels of followers' negative affect, than other IER strategies.

Distance also affects the way trust in a leader develops (Shamir, 1995) and may influence the followers' preference for IER strategies. For instance, assessments of trust can be particularly challenging for distal followers (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002; Crouch & Yetton, 1988) and may be more strongly related to ability and integrity, and less to benevolence (Jarvenpaa et al., 1998). However, leaders' ability and integrity may not easily be determined if followers do not have direct information on the leader and are "distal" from the leader (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002). Action is a crucial antecedent to establishing trust in distal contexts (Jarvenpaa et al., 1998). Accordingly, action-oriented (e.g., affective engagement) strategies aimed at addressing the problem causing the negative emotion that address the followers' goals may confer greater levels of trust in distal leadership. To this end, I include leader distance as a second design factor that may influence perceptions of IER and examine the influence of IER on behavioural intentions across two levels of leadership, specifically, the manager-follower relationship (proximal leadership context: Study 1 and 2), leader-citizen relationship (distal leadership context: Study 3 and 4).

2.3.3.3 IER and the Person Context

In addition to the design characteristics of the research, psychological factors represent the third contextual condition that may predict how IER strategies relates to behavioural intentions. However, advances in IER research are impeded by the failure to consider how psychological factors may influence the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' outcomes. For instance, psychological factors may impact on how

individuals perceive and respond to IER attempts by leaders. To increase the accuracy and generalisability of IER research, I draw on prior research to establish the theoretically most salient psychological factors to elicit person-level contextual conditions (Busse et al., 2017). Accordingly, this thesis explored the effects of regulatory focus and discrete emotions as psychological factors that may influence the effect of IER strategies on followers' behavioural intentions in a context of salient goal failure (Study 1 and 2).

2.3.3.3.1 Leaders' IER and Followers' Discrete Emotions. Current research on IER has not considered the effect of discrete emotions on IER. Given that the primary function of IER is to alter emotion, it seems likely that the followers' discrete emotions experienced prior to the IER attempt should exert a differential influence on IER process. Indeed, one experimental study offers preliminary insight into the notion that the discrete emotions expressed by the target of the regulation may predict the effect of IER on the targets' stress (Thiel et al., 2015). Discrete emotions trigger specific appraisal and action tendencies (Frijda et al., 1989), that could bias a followers' preference regarding IER strategies used by leaders and in doing so, potentially alter the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' affect, and trust. Given that IER strategies have distinct profiles characterised by the motives of the regulator (e.g., affect-improving /worsening), as well as the means to achieve that motive (engagement versus relationship-oriented strategy), leaders' IER strategies that fit with emotion-specific action tendencies (Frijda et al., 1986) of the follower should prime strategy preference for the latter, and as such, exert a stronger positive influence on affect and trust responses. For instance, anger is a common response to a threat. Anger is associated with an obstacle that can be overcome (Lench et al., 2016), and is associated with the readiness to change the situation (Frijda et al., 1989), remove the problematic components, and re-establish the situation that existed prior to the problem (Lerner &

Tiedens, 2006). Based on this reasoning, it is conceivable that the primary emotion expressed in response to a perceived threat may be an psychological factor that operates in the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions, which explains the strength of the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' affect, and trust responses.

2.3.3.3.2 Leaders' IER and Followers' Regulatory Focus. Regulatory focus theory (RFT: Higgins, 1997; Higgins & Silberman, 1998) is the second psychological factor that I consider relevant to understanding the effects of IER on behavioural intentions in the context of salient goal failure. RFT distinguishes between two motivational systems (promotion and prevention) that explain differences in what fundamentally motivates goal pursuit (Higgins, 1997). According to RFT, prevention focus is a self-regulatory focus that serves the fundamental survival need of security (Higgins, 1997, Higgins & Silberman, 1998). It involves using vigilant strategies such as avoiding things that can be harmful (e.g., Freitas & Higgins, 2002) to protect the self and others, and fulfil responsibilities, duties, and obligations (for reviews, see Higgins, 1997, Higgins & Silberman, 1998; Molden et al., 2008; Scholer et al., 2019). Regulatory focus theory proposes that promotion focus, in contrast, serves the fundamental survival need for growth (Higgins, 1997). Promotion focus involves the motivation to achieve gains with an emphasis on aspirations and ideals. When pursuing a goal, individuals who are promotion-focused are open to any information that may help them to ensure gains (Righetti et al., 2014).

Regulatory focus theory and research has demonstrated that individuals' regulatory focus (promotion and prevention focus) influences the nature and magnitude of their emotional reactions to failure. For instance, individuals with a dominant prevention focus seem most vulnerable to the detrimental effects of failure compared to those with a

promotion focus. Furthermore, empirical evidence from self-regulation research also suggest that regulatory foci influence self-regulatory preferences to negative emotion. For instance, promotion focus has a stronger link to affective engagement coping (Gao et al., 2017), and reappraisal (Llewellyn et al., 2013), and the use of more constructive strategies such as constructive accommodation and mutual negotiation, and less maladaptive strategies (i.e., mutual blame) to solve problems (Rodrigues et al., 2019). In contrast, prevention focus has a stronger relationship with less adaptive emotion-focused coping strategies (Woltin et al., 2018).

Higgins (2000) suggested that an intrapersonal regulatory fit- a “feeling of rightness” occurs when individuals act in line with their own strategic (promotion /prevention) preferences. Regulatory fit makes individuals feel right about both their positive and negative reactions to things (Higgins, 2004). This suggests that self-regulatory preferences in response to negative emotion functions as a ‘regulatory fit’ sustaining a person’s regulatory motivational focus (Righetti et al., 2011). Researchers (Freitas & Higgins, 2002; Righetti et al., 2011) have extended Higgins’s research to examine *interpersonal* regulatory fit that is, when a person perceives an interaction partner’s approach to goals congruent with an individual’s own regulatory focus. My theorising extends this idea in that regulatory focus is likely to influence how the follower processes IER attempts by a leader. When the follower interacts with the manager, the followers’ regulatory focus following goal failure shapes the perceptions of the IER strategies used by the manager, either creating a ‘regulatory fit’ or ‘non-fit’ (Higgins, 2000). For example, it is likely that those with a promotion-focused mindset would prefer engagement strategies compared to relationship-oriented distraction strategies. This aligns with the notion that these individuals perceive interpersonal assistance as an opportunity to acquire information that can help them to reach their goal (Righetti et al., 2011). I therefore propose that IER

strategies that are congruent with a followers' regulatory focus in response to failure, will have a stronger effect on followers' affect, and trust in the leader.

Drawing on the above, regulatory foci and discrete emotions may function as psychological factors that moderate the proposed pathways in the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' affect, and trust. I propose that when leaders' IER fit either emotion-specific action tendencies (Study 1) or regulatory foci (Study 2), followers will evaluate the IER strategies favourably ("it just feels right"), and this will strengthen affective and trust responses. The "fit" between the IER strategy and what is desired (shaped by discrete emotions and regulatory focus) will make people feel much better and they have stronger evaluative reactions towards the leader. Such an investigation will strengthen the theoretical basis for predicting variability in effects. It also identifies subgroups for whom specific IER strategies may be particularly effective. It also offers practical advantages, informing tailored IER responses based on the emotions/regulatory focus expressed by the follower, thereby mitigating potential negative outcomes for the follower.

In sum, building on the Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification of interpersonal affect regulation, the conceptual framework used as the basis of the empirical investigations theorises how (proximal/distal) leaders' IER influence followers' behavioural intentions in the context of perceived threat, and the psychological mechanisms that underpin this relationship as well as potential individual factors that may limit the strength of IER effects. The next section will briefly outline my studies and chart the perceived research contributions.

2.4 Thesis Outline

The present set of studies addresses these caveats through three experimental studies and a fourth cross-sectional study (see Figure 2.1). These studies gave rise to two

distinct research papers which comprise the main body of the thesis. Both papers have been submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals. The first two randomised experimental studies examined the impact of managers' IER on followers' behavioural intentions in the context of salient work related-goal failure. Utilising IER framework developed by Niven and colleagues (2009), I propose that in a context of salient goal failure, leaders' IER will facilitate or impede followers' goal adjustment, and intention to quit, along two parallel pathways: followers' affect following IER, and trust. Further, the effect of the followers' discrete emotions (Study 1) and regulatory focus (Study 2) will be examined as psychological factors that may moderate any observed indirect effects. These studies will be the first, to my knowledge, to consider trust as an important psychological mechanism to predict the focal IER relationship.

The second two studies investigate whether IER strategies used by a government leader in ministerial briefings impact citizens' compliance intentions via either negative affect or perceived trustworthiness. Across two studies based in Western Europe (Study 3: experimental; Study 4: survey), I explored whether leaders' use of IER strategies increases compliance intentions via perceived trustworthiness and/or affective states. This set of studies highlight the importance of IER strategies of distal leaders in motivating citizens to comply with public health restrictions during a pandemic.

2.5 Research Contributions

IER is a new area of research that has seen exponential growth in recent years. At the forefront of this empirical enquiry is the relative influence of specific IER strategies on the target. Clarifying the extent to which different strategies produce change in outcomes provides a clear rationale for employing certain strategies over others. However, despite the unique contributions of several authors (Holman & Niven, 2019; Little et al., 2012, 2013; Niven et al., 2009, 2012; Madrid et al., 2019; Williams, 2007; Vasquez et al., 2020),

many questions persist, and important theoretical gaps remain unaddressed. The following section addresses the proposed contribution of this thesis to theoretical and empirical IER research.

2.5.1 Understanding the Effect of Leaders' IER on Followers' Behavioural Intentions

My key contribution is to advance the theoretical and empirical understanding of how distinct leaders' IER strategies relate to followers' behavioural intentions in a context of perceived threat. We currently know little about the effects of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions. Accordingly, I introduce behavioural intentions as the focal phenomenon of interest. Despite the growing interest in IER in leveraging instrumental outcomes, the limited number of studies (Madrid et al., 2019; Vasquez et al., 2020) examining the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' behaviour has narrowed the scope of between-studies comparisons. Moreover, empirical studies on the influence of IER on behaviour have examined only one behavioural outcome at a time, therefore falling short of modelling a more comprehensive understanding of the effects of IER. Given the current paucity of research regarding how leaders' IER relates to followers' behavioural intentions, an examination of the instrumental use of IER is a timely and fruitful line of inquiry.

Notably, these empirical studies have adopted Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification of IER and focused on the motive behind the regulation attempt, contrasting the effects of affect-improving or affect-worsening strategies on the target. However, the comprehensive conceptualisation offered by Niven and colleagues' (2009) taxonomy affords an excellent opportunity to test the means used by the leader to achieve regulation. Accordingly, the emphasis in this thesis is on understanding how the means used to achieve the regulation impacts on followers' behavioural intentions, utilising the

conceptual distinctions proposed by Niven and colleagues' (2009) in their classification of interpersonal affect regulation. It may be the case that specific strategies assume significant importance depending on contextual factors. A more nuanced understanding of the impact of specific strategies complements the current understanding of affect-improving and affect-worsening IER strategies dominant in research.

2.5.2. Understanding the Key Psychological Mechanisms that underpin the IER-Behavioural Intentions Relationship

There is a dearth of research on the key psychological mechanisms that underpin the relationship between IER and behavioural intentions. I argue that because these psychological mechanisms are inevitably complex, there is a critical need for scholars to establish how leaders' IER strategies transmits its effect. This is an important contribution as there is little evidence regarding how strategies exert their effects on outcomes with only one study to date (Vasquez et al., 2020) empirically assessing a single pathway (affect) as an explanatory variable. Single mediator designs make it impossible to assess which mediators are most important for outcomes (Hughes et al., 2018). Moreover, given that IER is also an interpersonal process, the interpersonal nature of the IER may have significant bearing on how followers intend to act following an IER attempt.

This thesis therefore challenges the implicit assumption that affect is the only pathway to describe IER effects, and proposes a new theoretical explanation trust, as a unique way to understand the implications of the IER process. Hence, two potential mediating mechanisms hold promise in providing theoretical guidance: followers' affect, and trust perceptions. Notably, the current study is unique for its inclusion of trust as a mediating variable that aids in understanding why IER affects outcomes and proposes that affect, and trust may act as parallel mediators that explains the association between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions. I therefore contend that how IER

relates to the followers' behavioural intentions is likely to occur through a more complex integration of affective reactions and trust evaluations that may function independently to influence behavioural intentions. Robust evidence on the psychological mechanisms that underpin the relationship between IER, and outcomes can therefore enhance current understanding of this fledging field.

2.5.3. The Influence of Context on the IER–Behavioural Intention Relationship

Recent views in the field of IER suggest that there is no one universally effective strategy (Levy-Gigi & Shamay-Tsoory, 2017), which suggests that there may be underlying contextual variables that influence IER outcomes. Contextualisation is a viable means to improve the general predictive validity of IER and contributes to the development of a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between IER and behavioural intentions. Despite this, previous work on IER has treated context in a singular, homogeneous fashion typically exploring empirical questions regarding the utility of IER embedded within a (proximal leader) relational framework (e.g., Vasquez et al., 2020). However, context is multidimensional (Bamberger, 2008); accordingly, my model adopts a polycontextual approach with my empirical enquiry regarding the IER-behavioural intention relationship nested in environmental, relational, and person-contextual conditions. This approach challenges the current status quo of IER research and produces context-sensitive explanations for the link between IER strategies and behavioural intentions. Such an examination will contribute to enhancing the explanatory potential surrounding the IER-behavioural intention relationship and in doing so, lay the foundations for new and refined context-bound theories, and contextualised explanations. It will also enhance the field's impact on practice by helping leaders to make informed choices regarding the use of IER in specific circumstances. To this end, I include two contextual factors in the design of the overall study: the environmental and the relational

context. By doing so, I integrate theory to understand IER responses in threatening situations and broaden the contextual scope of IER to include distal leadership. Exploring the connection between IER and leadership distance permits more critical thinking about the features of leadership that potentially shape how the follower perceives IER and how it is acted upon.

As my third contextual factor, I also evaluate whether person-level psychological factors pertinent to the environmental context, (emotions experienced in the aftermath of the threat: Study 1, and regulatory focus: Study 2) frame the target's affect and trust responses, and whether in doing so, may shape followers' behavioural intentions.

In summary, I present a conceptual model that examines the differential effects of specific leaders' IER strategies on followers' behavioural intentions, examining the causal mechanisms that underpin this relationship, and the contextual conditions that predict when the impact of IER on followers is more or less pronounced.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Methodology summarises how the research process will proceed. Accordingly, this chapter will discuss the philosophical foundations upon which this scholarship is based, and the methodology used to address the research questions presented in Chapter 3. The concluding section of this chapter discusses the ethical considerations fundamental to my research.

3.1 Philosophical Foundations

Research paradigms are the philosophical frameworks that guide the way research is conducted and is shaped by the following core elements: ontology (how reality is viewed), epistemology (how the nature of knowledge is conceived), axiology (the role and values of the research process), methodology (how the paradigm defines the research process), and rigour (the criteria used to justify the quality of research in the paradigm) (Park et al., 2020).

Ontology is concerned with the nature of reality, specifically “what is reality?” (Bem & De Jong, 2013). In this suite of studies, the main ontological perspective is post-positivism. The post-positivist tradition comes from 19th-century writers, such as Comte, Mill, Durkheim, Newton, and Locke, and more recently from writers such as Phillips and Burbules (2000) (Creswell, 2014). The post-positivist paradigm evolves from positivism and challenges the traditional notion of the absolute truth of knowledge (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). For instance, positivism is often associated with the realist premise that one true reality exists and can be apprehended through empirical observation (Gamlen & McIntyre, 2018). Conversely, the post-positivist approach assumes that reality is a subjective experience, constructed by individuals. From the post-positivist perspective, not everything is completely knowable (Waismann, 2011), in that the cause of social

phenomena lie within psychological states and are relative to the contextual frames of reference that motivate and shape human behaviour (Ryan, 2006).

For the post-positivist researcher, positivism fails to account for the specificity of outcomes, and the fact that people make contradictory choices in different contexts (Lindenlaub, 2016). Post-positivists contend that truth is not a universal property of human beings but emerges only against the background of and stands in permanent competition with other alternatives (Lindenlaub, 2016). Reality is therefore not a fixed entity but is influenced by context and purpose. Consequently, it is necessary to incorporate context in describing, understanding, and theorising about phenomena within it (Tsui, 2006), to grasp the complexity of experience (Ryan, 2006). Indeed, one major criticism of positivism is that it ignores context and attempts to establish generalities independent of setting.

Context has a considerable influence on how meaning is ascribed to IER strategies and the associated outcomes (Levy-Gigi & Shamay-Tsoory, 2017). The need to contextualise knowledge about IER has been a growing concern among scholars (English et al., 2017; Troth et al., 2018), however, to date this has not been rooted in IER research. Context consists of multiple layers that influence the existence, direction, and strength of developed theories (Johns, 2006). Indeed, targets of IER are likely to use multiple contexts embedded within another, to determine IER outcomes. Von Glinow and colleagues (2002) refer to this multiple embedded contextualisation as polycontextuality. Relatedly, Shapiro and colleagues (2007) proposed several categories of contextual variables, ranging from environmental factors to internal psychological dimensions. Aligned with post-positivism, my model embraces context-sensitive thinking regarding IER phenomena recognising that how IER strategies predict outcomes are likely to be informed by (a) environmental factors which prompted the need for the IER in the first place; (b) relational factors e.g., how familiar the follower is with the leader implementing

the IER strategies, and (c) individual factors that are relevant to the follower and their respective circumstances.

These contextual variables can help make sense of how followers ascribe meaning to leaders' IER. From a post-positivist perspective, the contextual delineation of these studies acknowledges that there is always a dynamic plurality of truths, each possibility constantly excluding and giving rise to other plausible alternatives (Lindenlaub, 2016). This implies that followers' perceptions of IER are contingent on contextual conditions. If the context changes, then the perceived efficacy of the IER strategy may change. Importantly, contextualisation increases the ecological validity of the findings, and will allow for contextualised IER responses that might better meet the needs of those who seek IER.

Moreover, causal processes can produce different results in different settings (Jones, 2010). Pawson and Tilley (1997) have developed a realism-inspired form of evaluation which involves identifying CMO configurations where C is context, M is mechanism and O is outcomes (Jones, 2010). They argue that researchers should aim to identify the features of contexts that allow different mechanisms to be activated to generate outcomes (Jones, 2010). This method seeks not generalisation, but specification; what works for whom in a set of given circumstances (Jones, 2010). For example, the impact of the recent COVID-19 pandemic suggests that "established assumptions, concepts and practices in management studies and its many sub-fields will require revision and rethinking" (Muzio & Doh, 2020, p.1725). Therefore, context will not only structure how IER is perceived by the follower but may determine the relevance of certain mediators depending on contextual features.

Epistemology is concerned with what constitutes acceptable knowledge about the world, that is, the nature of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2019). The ideas, assumptions,

and beliefs associated with post-positivism constitute an epistemological base. Post-positivism emphasises that knowledge cannot be divorced from reality and personal experience (Ryan, 2018). Post-positivist approaches are interpretive, and this has led to an emphasis on meaning, experience, and knowledge as multiple, relational, and bound by contextual factors (Ryan, 2006). The truth is out there, but we can only know it imperfectly (D'Eon, 2020). Post-positivism research assumes that social reality is measurable and knowable, albeit difficult to access (D'Eon, 2020). Post-positivist thinkers focus on establishing and searching for evidence that is valid and dependable in terms of the existence of phenomena, rather than generalisations.

The axiology of post-positivists involves the belief that research is free from bias, and ethical, with an emphasis on accurate data reporting and acknowledging the limitations of one's work (Killam, 2013). Post-positivist researchers value randomised experiments as the most ethical way to gain knowledge, as experiments aid in establishing cause and effect (Killam, 2013). In the quest for objectivity, the post-positivist researcher uses rigorous methods to prevent their values from overtly influencing the research (Killam, 2013). Empirical replication (i.e., a previous study is replicated using the same procedures but a different population), is deemed vital to establish knowledge (Aguinis & Solarino, 2019; Killam, 2013).

Methodology refers to how the research is undertaken. The purpose of the research is to predict results, assess a theory and find the strength of the relationship between variables. Positivism and post-positivism share similar assumptions regarding how research is undertaken in that (a) the scientific method can be used to understand relations of cause and effect, (b) systematic and sustained empirical observation is key to gaining knowledge and, (c) science should be value-neutral (Corry et al., 2018). Like positivism, post-positivism is aligned with the hypothetico-deductive model of science that begins

with theory from the literature to (1) build testable hypotheses, (2) design an experiment through operationalising variables (i.e., identifying variables to manipulate and measure through group assignments), and (3) conduct empirical studies based on experimentation (Park et al., 2020). Like the positivist perspective, post-positivism rhetoric is precise, scientific and is presented objectively, with all variables of interest clearly defined (Macionis & Gerber, 2011). While the post-positivist worldview is compatible with both quantitative and qualitative methodologies (Gamlen & McIntyre, 2018), my studies adopt a quantitative research design, as discussed below.

3.2 Quantitative Research Design

Design decisions depend on the philosophical assumptions underpinning the research, as well as the questions being asked or the issues being explored (Ryan, 2006). Consistent with the post-positivist approach, the present research adopts a quantitative design to establish evidence that is valid and reliable. Quantitative research uses deductive reasoning, where the researcher forms a hypothesis, collects data in an investigation of the problem, and then uses the data from the investigation, after analysis is made and conclusions are shared, to prove the hypotheses not false or false.

Quantitative research aligns with post-positivist research in a number of ways. It can be used to describe a reliable social reality by employing a systemic mathematical investigation of large-scale patterns in data (Gamlen & McIntyre, 2018). By arranging observations into discrete categories and assigning a numerical value to each, researchers can compare the relative size and importance of social phenomena (Gamlen & McIntyre, 2018). For the purposes of my research, quantitative research design allows me to identify the social facts in my research field (Gamlen & McIntyre, 2018) - the patterns of followers' behavioural intentions derived from leaders' IER through large-scale experimental and cross-sectional studies. The social facts derived from this method belong

not to an ultimate objective reality of the kind identified in positivist studies, but to an intersubjective reality that different social actors can agree on (Gamlen & McIntyre, 2018).

Moreover, quantitative methods permit an understanding of the causal mechanisms that underpin the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions. Analysing data from a much larger and more representative group of followers, enables identification of the most likely, and more general, factors that account for how leaders' IER transmits its influence on followers' behavioural intentions. Examining underlying causal mechanisms (rather than simply observing phenomenon) can help post-positivist scholars to understand outcome patterns rather than seek outcome regularities, and to be sensitive to the context in which the patterns have been found (Jones, 2010). This undertaking aligns with the post-positivism claims that reality must be subjected to the widest possible critical examination by scholars to facilitate apprehending reality as closely as possible (Letourneau & Allen, 1999).

Quantitative research is principally associated with experimental and survey research strategies (Saunders et al., 2019). There are five main types of quantitative research: descriptive, survey (cross-sectional and longitudinal), correlational, causal-comparative/quasi- experimental, and experimental research. Descriptive research is used to understand a specific phenomenon and does not involve the manipulation of variables. Surveys, on the other hand, are the most common method of gathering data and are conducted in two ways: cross-sectional and longitudinal. Cross-sectional surveys are used to conduct research at a given point in time, whereas longitudinal surveys run surveys across multiple points. Quasi-experimental research involves subjects being assigned to conditions based on non-random criteria. Research that uses correlational designs aims to determine whether relationships exist between the key variables; research that uses

experimental designs aims to establish the causal direction of the relationships between these variables (Saunders et al., 2019). Therefore, the choice of research methods should align with the aims of the research.

3.2.1 *Experimental research*

The overarching aim of this thesis was to develop a model that can explain the impact of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions, the key psychological mechanisms that underpin this relationship, along with an examination of the contextual factors that may relate to outcome variability. For studies 1-3, experimental research was deemed the most appropriate research design to determine the causal direction of the proposed relationships (Antonakis et al., 2010). Experimental research allows the independent variables to be manipulated to determine the direct and indirect effects on the dependent variables. Three essential aspects constitute the design of effective experiments, (a) experimental manipulation of independent variable, (b) standardisation of procedures – that is, the control of all variables other than the independent variable, and (c) random assignment to conditions (Howett & Duncan, 2020). These aspects were evident in my studies.

Studies 1-3 used a between-subjects randomised experimental controlled design. Study 1 manipulated discrete emotions (angry/sad/emotionally neutral), in the respondents in addition to 4 IER strategies employed by the 'manager' and a control condition (inaction), resulting in a 3 x 5 experimental design with 15 conditions. Study 2 built on the outcomes of Study 1 and targeted the examination of regulatory focus (promotion/prevention), and the same 4 IER strategies plus a control —yielding a 2 x 5 experimental design with 10 conditions. Study 3 has six conditions. The purpose of the control condition is to see how respondents behave when they receive a lower level of the variable than is being manipulated (Howitt & Cramer, 2020). The experimental and

control conditions were identical in every way but for the variable being manipulated (Howitt & Cramer, 2020).

A second essential characteristic of the true experiment is the standardisation of procedures – that is, the control of all variables other than the independent variable (Howitt & Cramer, 2020). Within my studies, this is largely achieved by standardising all aspects of the procedures employed. Only the experimental manipulation varied. The variables to be examined were clearly identified and hypotheses were formed according to existing theories relating to IER.

Random assignment is an essential feature of an experiment ((Howitt & Cramer, 2020). Using a simple random sampling technique, respondents in the three experimental studies were randomly assigned to one of condition (block randomisation), using the random allocation sequence feature of Qualtrics. For instance, the first respondent was allocated to the first condition, the second respondent to a second condition, and so on. Block randomisation works by randomising respondents within blocks such that an equal number of respondents were assigned to each group (Efird, 2011). Each respondent was exposed to a single condition ensuring that response fatigue was reduced; moreover, the dimensions of the experimental manipulation are better concealed, since they are not repeated (Martínez-Pastor & Fernández- Lozano, 2022).

Experimental designs are referred to as the “gold standard” of scientific research (Podsakoff & Podsakoff, 2019); however, the paucity of experimental research is understandable given the associated practical and logistical constraints (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Specifically, it takes time and effort to conduct an experiment, involving the creation of experimental materials, recruiting of respondents, and administering the experimental treatments (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). The next section details the type of experimental research employed in Studies 1-3, before discussing the use of correlational

design in Study 4.

3.2.1.1 Experimental Vignette Methodology - Studies 1 - 3

Studies 1-3 examined a conceptual model to evaluate the impact of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions via affect and trust. Study 1 and 2 were concerned with understanding how, in a context of salient goal failure, a proximal leaders' (e.g., manager) use of IER relates to followers' behavioural intentions, and the potential moderating influence of the followers' psychological processes (Study 1: discrete emotions; Study 2: regulatory focus) on this relationship. Study 3 considers the impact of the IER strategies employed by a national leader in pandemic communication on citizens' compliance intentions.

All three studies adopted a between-person experimental vignette methodology (EVM) (Atzmüller & Steiner, 2010) to evaluate the conceptual model. EVM consists of two major types: 'paper people' and 'policy capturing/conjoint analysis' (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). 'Paper people' EVM consists of presenting respondents with carefully constructed and realistic scenarios that allows for experimental control over the manipulated antecedents while assessing the dependent variables (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). 'Paper people' was deemed to be the most appropriate EVM for this set of studies as the goal is to assess explicit processes and outcomes—those of which respondents are aware and on which they can provide information (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). Between-person designs require that each participant read only one vignette, and comparisons are made across participants (Atzmüller & Steiner, 2010).

From a post-positivist perspective, EVM is deemed a suitable methodological approach as it enhances experimental realism (Aguinis, & Bradley, 2014). Respondents in Study 1 and 2 were presented with carefully constructed written vignettes in written form (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014) depicting a hypothetical salient goal failure in the workplace to

assess the effects of leaders' IER and followers' psychological processes on dependent variables including followers' affect, trust, and behavioural intentions. Respondents in Study 3 were instructed to listen to an edited audio recording prefaced by a generic introduction by the Taoiseach, contextualising COVID-19 as a pandemic, followed by a clip with one of the six IER strategies used in the ministerial briefing. After listening to the clip, respondents were asked to complete a survey capturing their affective reactions to the audio clip, perceptions of the trustworthiness of the leader, and their intention to comply with the COVID-19 restrictions because of the audio clip.

As Evan and colleagues (2015) observed:

The content and characteristics of a vignette can be described as consisting of up to three different aspects, based on their function in the study design: (a) experimental aspects, which are systematically manipulated across vignettes to assess their effect on the dependent variables; (b) controlled aspects, which are kept consistent (i.e., identical or similar) across vignettes in order to eliminate extraneous variance; and (c) in some cases, contextual aspects, which demonstrate some variation across vignettes in order to provide verisimilitude (e.g., nonessential details that enhance the 'personhood' of a vignette character), but are not thought to exert a causal influence on the dependent variables. By parsing the variance of vignette content into these three parts, researchers can strive toward overall vignette equivalence-where the structure and variation of the text within a vignette is similarly apportioned across all vignettes in the study (p.162).

Accordingly, respondents in each study were presented with the same baseline information (i.e., a general description of the issues involved) to provide a similar contextual background for all respondents. For instance, in the Study 1 vignette, respondents were asked to play the role of a follower who had failed to secure funding for a new project resulting in salient goal failure (controlled aspect). The vignette was then

parsed based on the experimental manipulation: respondents' anger or sadness was subsequently primed through attributions of causality around the failure. Each vignette ended where the respondent 'met' their manager and were 'exposed' to one of four IER strategies or the control condition. (Details of the full experimental manipulation and each IER strategy is found in Appendix A: Experimental Manipulation, Study 1).

Study 2 followed the same protocol. Respondents read a vignette where they were instructed to imagine themselves as a follower in a company who had, some months ago, availed of a funded company scheme to undertake a part-time master's degree to enhance existing occupational skills. They had failed the first year of the two-year programme, as they found it hard to balance studying and working full-time (controlled aspect). The vignette was then parsed based on the experimental manipulation: The regulatory focus inducement was given in two ways: firstly, through the rationale for choosing to engage in a master's degree which reflected prior research on the differences between promotion and prevention focus (Halvorsen & Higgins, 2013). Secondly, performance appraisals were used as images to prime regulatory focus to increase experimental realism in Study 2 (see Appendix A). Accordingly, the subjective experience of being personally immersed in the situation described in the vignette was enhanced through visual aids (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). To discuss the failure, the respondent was told they met their manager, where they were exposed to one the four IER strategies. (Details of the full experimental manipulation and each IER strategy is found in Appendix A: Experimental Manipulation, Study 2).

Respondents in Study 3 were presented with an audio vignette of a clip from a real-live ministerial briefing from the Taoiseach of Ireland. They were instructed to listen to an edited audio recording prefaced by a generic introduction by the Taoiseach, contextualising COVID-19 as a pandemic (controlled aspect), followed by a clip with one of the six IER strategies used in the ministerial briefing (experimental manipulation).

Using real briefings to explore the effect of IER on behavioural intentions increases external validity as the scenarios are drawn from experiences in the real world.

Another feature of EVM studies is that they employ participant-reported data collection strategies (i.e., self-reported responses to questions about the vignette), which are characteristic of traditional survey methodologies (Evan et al., 2015). Hence, after reading the vignettes, respondents in each study were asked to respond to a questionnaire consisting of manipulation checks to ensure that the manipulation was successful, and standardised measures of dependent variables. Response consistency - where items and response options are standardised for all participants - ensures that the data gathered are interpretable in a consistent manner, allowing meaningful conclusions to be drawn (Evan et al., 2015).

In comparison to traditional survey questions, EVM has several advantages. First, EVM has been successfully adopted by experimental psychologists to explore how individuals' feelings and behaviours are influenced by factors that may not be easily accessible in real-life situations (Evans et al., 2015). For instance, EVM offers an ethically appropriate way of understanding how in the context of threat, a follower may react to leaders' IER and what their subsequent behavioural intentions might be. Second, EVM allows for a simultaneous investigation of the interaction effects of the factors varied in the vignette experiment (Steiner et al., 2017). By manipulating the experimental conditions, I was able to understand the moderating role of psychological processes on followers' behavioural intentions. Third, EVM is particularly useful when researchers need to exercise control of independent variables to gather evidence regarding causation (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). The intentional manipulation of vignettes in experimental designs to compare the causal effects of variables enhances internal validity (e.g., Finch, 1987; Hughes, 1998). Fourth, vignette questions are more realistic and less abstract than

conventional survey questions and can be used in different formats (Steiner et al., 2017). For instance, by using performance appraisals as images to prime regulatory focus (Study 2) and audio clips from a real ministerial briefing (Study 3), I was able to engage the respondents' senses more fully, thereby increasing external validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014). In sum, using EVM in studies 1-3 allowed for researcher control, random assignment, and the manipulation of variables, and as such yielded higher levels of confidence regarding the integrity of causal inferences (high internal validity) and the generalisability of findings (high external validity) (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014; Steiner et al., 2017). Indeed, EVM studies have been recognized as a "hybrid" methodology that inherits the external validity strengths of survey research and the internal validity strengths of experimental methods (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014).

3.2.2 Cross-sectional design

The aim of Study 4 was to replicate the findings of Study 3. Study 4 adopted a cross-sectional design to address questions on how a national leaders' use of IER related to the citizens' compliance. This type of study uses data to make statistical inferences about the population of interest or to compare subgroups within a population (Cummings, 2017). A single-source cross-sectional design asks respondents to provide all data about themselves within the questionnaire that is generally administered in a single session (Liu, 2008).

Study 4 used cross-sectional design as it was theoretically relevant and convenient. For instance, cross-sectional data can be highly efficient in assessing the prevalence of intentions (Liu, 2008). The real time collection of data (discussed below) meant that the cross-sectional design was the most convenient. Cross-sectional designs can be used to analyse variables at once like age, gender, or geographic location to see if they relate to increased reports of compliance following leaders' IER. In this regard, every effort was

made to include a representative sample across counties in Ireland, with 23 out of the 26 countries represented in the study.

Planning the sampling strategy is an essential component of cross-sectional study design (Wang & Cheng, 2020). Inclusion criteria of respondents were predetermined prior to data collection (Cummings, 2017). Respondents were included based on the fact they identified as Irish, were willing and available to participate in the research after the (second) ministerial briefing, and were accessible via email, or text message, or online via Prolific. Data collected from a representative sample will provide an unbiased indication of what the overall population would indicate if time and resources allowed all members of that population to respond (Cummings, 2017). While the cross-sectional design limits the extent to which I can infer causality, the real time collection of the data, directly following real leader speeches meant I captured 'live' reactions to the ministerial briefings.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

Clarity about rights, obligations, and compensation of respondents in scientific studies is a requirement both for ethical research and for the validity of results (Palan & Schitter, 2018). Before the commencement of data collection, ethical permission was sought and granted from the University's ethics committee (See Appendix E). Guidelines outlined by The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI), American Psychological Association (APA) Code of Professional Ethics and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) were fully complied with. Respondents were fully briefed on the nature of each ethically approved study, and what was required of them before agreeing to participate. Respondents were also informed of their rights to withdraw from each study without having to explain or give a reason, up to a period of two weeks after the data collection is completed. Respondents were informed regarding how the information collected was going to be used, i.e., in future academic presentations and publications. In this instance,

all survey respondents were informed that their personal information would be anonymised to safeguard confidentiality. An online link to the Research Privacy Notice was given at the beginning of each study; respondents were invited to read the contents and explicitly consent to their personal data being processed in line with this Research Privacy Notice (Appendix E). Research Privacy Notice Data outlined that data protection was being dealt with in line with University of Limerick GDPR guidelines. Respondents' personal information and electronic data will be held securely in line with the Data Protection Act (1998) and General Data Protection Regulation (2018).

All interested respondents provided online informed and voluntary consent. In Study 1 and 2, respondents were informed that the researchers were interested in the relationship between managers and followers; the survey involved answering questions based on a hypothetical scenario around a follower disclosing goal failure to a manager. I did not consider this research to be sensitive in nature, and therefore I did not anticipate that there would be any vulnerabilities associated with these studies.

Study 3 and 4 informed respondents that the researchers were interested in emotional and behavioural responses following a leaders' speech on COVID-19. Respondents were told that they would be asked questions about themselves, their experience of the COVID-19 crisis, and their reactions to the leaders' audio clip. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that this research aims to understand emotional and behavioural responses to COVID-19, I was of the view that the respondents (and/or their family or friends) may be worried about the virus during the investigation. Thus, it was possible that individuals may have been adult patients at some stage during the study or may have had a sick relative. To protect respondents, they were provided with a list of psychological support services at the end of each survey that they could contact if they were affected by any sensitive issues.

All scales used were psychometrically validated. I only asked what was needed to complete the study and address the aims of the study. Moreover, as the design of the research pertains to the completion of online surveys, there was no undue pressure upon individuals to partake in the study if they or their relatives were unwell at any timepoint. Consideration of the wellbeing of the respondent takes precedence over the interests of science.

To counteract the widespread challenge of perceived researcher unfairness on online platforms (Fieseler et al., 2017), all respondents were clearly informed regarding the payment per unit when they signed up to complete the study. Moreover, online respondents in the research were paid appropriately, with compensation approved for completed responses within 48 hours of the online respondent completing the study to address perceived researcher unfairness. Following completion, respondents were thanked for their participation and asked to direct any issues or concerns to me via email.

Chapter 4: Influencing Reactions to Goal Failure: How a Proximal Leader's use of IER Influences Followers' Behavioural Intentions via Trust and Affect

A version of this chapter is currently in preparation to submit for publication as follows:

Naughton, B., Van der Werff, L., O'Shea, D. (in preparation). Leader reaction to followers' goal failure: The role of leader interpersonal emotion regulation to encourage followers' goal adjustment and turnover intentions. *Emotion*.

Abstract

Failure to attain important work-related goals is a frequent, ubiquitous source of negative affect in followers' organisational lives that can drive turnover intentions, and an inability to adjust to goal failure. Emerging research has identified supportive leadership as central in determining positive work-related outcomes post-failure (Patzelt et al., 2021; Shepherd et al., 2011).

However, there is a dearth of research (e.g., Little et al., 2016) examining specific relational behaviours that leaders can use in response to followers' negative affect. To explore the effective management of followers' negative reactions to failure (Patzelt et al., 2021), I draw on the IER literature (Madrid et al., 2016; Niven et al., 2009) to consider the impact of managers' relational strategies on followers' goal adjustment and turnover intentions. Adopting a moderated mediation framework, the current research examines how a manager's use of specific IER strategies relates to followers' turnover intentions and goal adjustment along two parallel pathways: followers' negative affect, and trust in the manager. In addition, I investigate whether the indirect effects of IER on behavioural intentions are moderated by the followers' discrete emotions (anger /sad) following the

salient goal failure (Study 1) and/or regulatory focus (prevention/promotion) (Study 2). Across two experimental studies, my findings demonstrate that feeling better is not necessarily what drives behavioural intentions; rather, trust evaluations consistently connect the relationship between affect-improving strategies and behavioural intentions. For respondents who were exposed to the anger manipulation, anger weakened the relationship between affect-improving cognitive engagement strategies and turnover intentions; equally for respondents in the sad condition, sad weakened the relationship between affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy and goal adjustment through the link between IER and negative affect.

Unexpectedly, I did not find that followers' regulatory foci moderated the indirect effects of negative affect or trust on IER. Although affect-worsening strategies were positively associated with turnover intentions, and negatively associated with goal adjustment, this relationship was not linked via negative affect or trust. The current study provides a key step forward in understanding when, and how IER works, and for whom.

Keywords: *Goal failure, IER, trust, emotions, behavioural intentions, regulatory focus*

Failure is omnipresent in organisations, occurring regularly at every hierarchical level, in every functional area, in both collective and individual work, and with varying levels of severity (Todt et al., 2021). Failure to reach important work-related goals is a frequent, ubiquitous source of negative emotion in followers' organisational lives (Jones et al., 2013) that can drive avoidance behaviours, exhibited through reduced effort at work (Spector & Fox, 2002) and turnover intentions (Scott & Barnes, 2011; Shockley et al., 2012). Failure to reach salient work goals can also inhibit goal adjustment capacities, namely the ability to disengage from a goal and re-engage in other organisational endeavours. Supportive leadership is important in determining positive work-related outcomes following failure (Patzelt et al., 2020, 2021; Shepherd et al., 2011; 2013); nonetheless, there is a dearth of research examining *specific* relational behaviours that leaders can use in response to followers' negative affect (e.g., Little et al., 2016; Gooty et al., 2010). My paper considers IER as an example of specific leaders' relational behaviours, which have the potential to impact followers' behavioural intentions post-failure.

IER is a conscious, deliberate goal-directed process, in which a leader alters followers' affect using specific strategies (Niven, 2017). Although interest in IER in organisational settings has been growing, little is known about the influence of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions or the key mechanisms that may predict this focal relationship. Recently, research has begun to shed light on the value of IER strategies for organisational outcomes (Holman & Niven, 2019; Madrid et al., 2019), with one study (Vasquez et al., 2020), demonstrating that positive affect but not negative affect explained the link between leaders' IER and followers' work-related performance. Research also confirms that IER can alter trust relations between the leader and the follower (Little et al., 2012; Niven et al., 2012); however, how trust functions in the relationship between leaders'

IER and followers' behavioural intentions has yet to be established. Notably, trust may be particularly important in context of failure. Failure can thwart followers' trust in others (Aquino & Thau, 2009) and enhance uncertainty; therefore, followers who feel threatened following failure may be particularly sensitive to trust cues. Moreover, trust cues may be even more significant than affect in predicting a followers' response to IER where one party (e.g., manager) has a hierarchical advantage over another (e.g., follower) (Niven et al., 2012). Whether affect and trust can predict how IER relates to behavioural intentions requires further investigation.

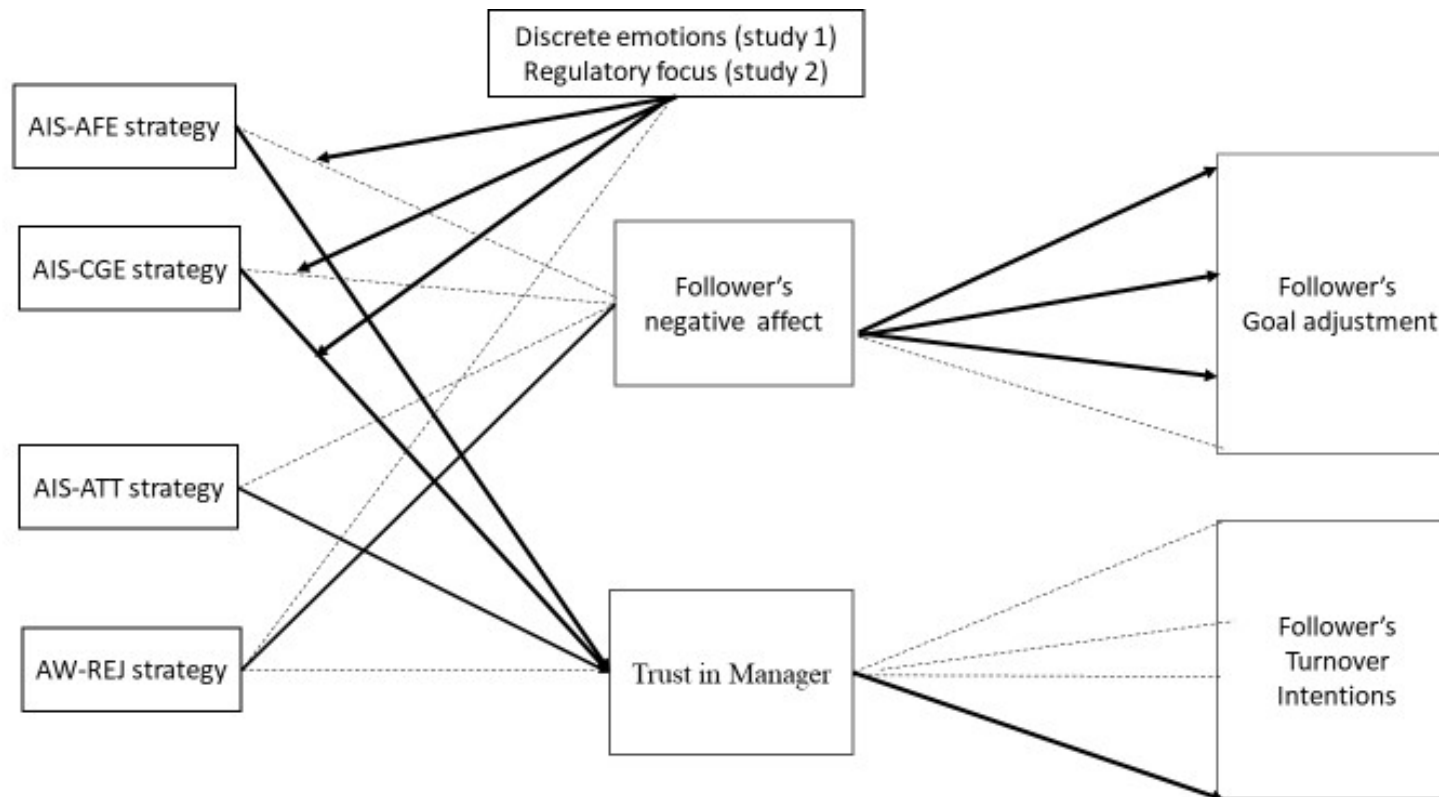
Drawing on the interpersonal affect regulation framework developed by Niven and colleagues (2009), I examine whether IER used by managers can impact failure-related outcomes via affect and trust mechanisms. I propose that in a context of salient goal failure, a leaders' IER will ease or impede followers' behavioural intentions along two parallel pathways: followers' affect following IER, and trust. I suggest that affect and trust are conceptually and empirically distinguishable pathways to behavioural intentions that warrant separate consideration. Whilst IER represents an attempt to alter followers' affect, a change in affect may not be a necessary pre-condition for trust (Niven et al., 2012). For example, Niven and colleagues' (2012) research on IER and relationship quality found that an unsuccessful affect-improving attempt might not make the target feel better, but the attempt makes the target feel valued, contributing toward perceptions of trust.

I also examine whether the effects of IER strategies on behavioural intentions may be influenced by psychological processes, namely by the discrete emotion experienced by the follower following goal failure (Study 1) and the regulatory focus of the individual (Study 2). Current IER research paradigms rarely incorporate discrete emotions into their investigations (cf. López-Pérez & Pacella, 2021); however, discrete emotions trigger emotion-specific action tendencies (Frijda et al., 1989) that may well influence how IER

strategies are perceived and responded to. I suggest that, given that IER strategies have distinct profiles characterised by the motives of the regulator (e.g., affect-improving /worsening), as well as the means to achieve that motive (engagement versus relationship-oriented strategy), then IER strategies that align with emotion-specific action tendencies of the follower should exert a stronger positive influence on affect and trust responses. Moreover, empirical evidence from self-regulatory research supports the notion that self-regulation varies as a function of discrete emotions (cf. Rivers et al., 2007). Thus, I consider whether the effect of IER on affect and trust outcomes varies as a function of the emotion experienced by the follower following their failure experience.

Additionally, I examine whether the effect of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions via trust and affect varies according to the regulatory focus of the follower. According to regulatory focus theory (RFT; Higgins, 1997), human behaviour is underpinned by two unique systems of self-regulation: *promotion focus*, which is concerned with aspirations and accomplishments of ideals, and *prevention focus*, which is concerned with avoiding mistakes and fulfilling obligations (Higgins, 1997). RFT posits that individuals' regulatory focus influences the nature and magnitude of their affective, behavioural, and cognitive reactions to failure, such that individuals with a prevention focus seem most vulnerable to the detrimental effects of failure (Hardin & Lakin, 2009, Higgins, 1997; 2012). Thus, it is conceivable that in the context of goal failure, evaluations of IER strategies may elicit different outcomes for the follower, depending on their regulatory focus. In sum, I consider that the discrete emotion experienced following failure and the regulatory focus of the individual may be useful starting points from which to consider variability in responses to IER in the context of goal failure. I illustrate my model in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4. 1 Moderation Mediation Model with Proposed Relationships between Proximal Leaders' IER Strategies and Followers Goal Adjustment and Turnover Intentions



Note. Proposed moderated mediation model with hypothesised relationships between manager IER strategies and behavioural intentions (goal adjustment and turnover intentions) mediated by followers' trust in the manager and negative affect. A solid arrow indicates a proposed positive relationship, dashed arrow indicates a proposed negative relationship. AI-AFE = affect-improving affective engagement strategy; AIS-CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; AIS-ATT = affect-improving attention strategy; AW-REJ = affect-worsening rejecting strategy

My paper makes three important contributions to the literature. Drawing on Whetten's (1989) elements of theory building, I develop and test a model regarding the *what* (i.e., what are the connections between IER and behavioural intentions?), the *how* (what factors play a part in the relationship between IER and behavioural intentions?), and *when* (what contextual factors might influence this relationship?). In doing so, my paper addresses a significant gap in research regarding the effective management of followers' reactions to work-related failure (Patzelt et al., 2020, 2021), and as such, provides an informative overview of the consequences of leaders' IER for followers' behavioural intentions. Second, to understand how IER works, it is necessary to examine causal pathways, and to empirically test for mediators and indirect effects. As such, my findings represent an important and unique contribution to IER theory and research in that I not only demonstrate the importance of the interpersonal nature of IER, but I also explicitly connect it to behavioural intentions, by showing that when a manager attempts to address negative affect, it is the *interpersonal* nature of the regulatory process that significantly defines how followers intend to behave. Third, I address the consistent criticism made by scholars (Greenaway et al., 2018; Niven, 2017; Troth et al., 2018; Zaki & Williams, 2013) that findings in IER research cannot be reliably interpreted independent of context. By clearly specifying the environmental (salient goal failure), relational (proximal-leader relations) and person-level (discrete emotions/ regulatory foci) contextual conditions that may influence the effects of IER on examined outcomes, the current study supplies valuable information regarding what IER strategies work in a context of crisis, how IER works, and for whom it works best. By adopting a polycontextual approach (Shapiro et al., 2007) to my study, my empirical examination can create important new insights that foster theory development and advance the rigour and accuracy of IER theory in a fledgling discipline.

4.1 Interpersonal Emotional Regulation

Two of the most widely accepted models of IER in the psychological literature are Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification of interpersonal affect regulation and Gross's process model (1998) (Madrid et al., 2019). These models are extensively reviewed in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Notably, both models have been applied to understand leader-follower outcomes, and the implications of IER strategies on trust and affect (e.g., Little et al., 2012, 2013, 2016; Niven et al., 2012). Outside the organisational context, scholars have empirically evaluated the effects of strategies associated with the process model: situation modification, attentional deployment, and reappraisal as *affect-improving strategies* and suppression as *an affect-worsening strategy* in altering affect (e.g., Holman & Niven, 2019; Post et al., 2019).

Using Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification as a guide, I adopt a similar approach within an organisational setting, examining situation modification as an affect-improving affective engagement strategy, reappraisal as an affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy, and attention deployment as an affect-improving relationship-oriented strategy. Positive engagement entails the agent attempting to involve the target with their situation or affect in order to improve the target's affect (Niven et al., 2009). As such, situation modification aligns with the notion of talking to the target about their problems (Niven et al., 2009). Suppression can refer to either (a) the suppression of the expression of emotion (e.g., controlling emotions by not expressing them) or the (b) experience of emotion or the thoughts surrounding the emotion-eliciting event (Webb et al., 2012). Although suppression can be conceived of an affect-improving strategy (Williams, 2009), telling a target to 'cheer up' or 'calm down' is more likely to be construed as an affect-worsening rejecting strategy that displays a lack of care for the target (prototype strategy "making it clear that you do not care how the target feels" (Niven et al.,

2009). (see Table 2.1).

4.2 Theoretical Model and Hypotheses Development

My model (see Figure 4.1) theorises that in a context of salient goal failure, the manager's use of IER will facilitate or impede followers' behavioural intentions along two parallel pathways: followers' affect following IER, and trust. I also hypothesise that the effects of IER strategies on behavioural intentions may vary according to the type of emotion experienced (anger and sadness) post-failure, and/or the regulatory focus of the individual. The integration of the IER theory (Niven et al., 2009) and General Process Model of Threat and Defence (GPM), (Jonas et al., 2014) with theories of emotion communication, and appraisal (Schwarz, 2012; Van Kleef et al., 2009) creates a potentially useful framework to explain how, in the context of threat, IER exerts its effects on behavioural intentions via negative affect and trust.

Drawing on Jonas and colleagues' (2014) GPM, (discussed in chapter 2), I conceptualise salient goal failure as a work-related threat, which negatively impacts followers' emotional experience, cognition, and behavioural intentions (Searle & Tuckey, 2017; Tuckey et al., 2015). In the work context, salient goal failure (e.g., failure to gain a promotion or to succeed in a project) can be characterised by blocked control or insufficient progress in advancing one's goal (Carver & Scheier, 1998), or by disturbances to the environment that render goal pursuit uncertain (Jonas et al., 2014). Thus, salient goal failure signifies a motivational discrepancy as the individual is approach-oriented (because of the saliency of the goal), but simultaneously experiences an inability to progress towards goal attainment (Jonas et al., 2014). The conceptualisation of goal failure as a motivational discrepancy broadly reflects the extant goal-related literature that considers goal failure a mismatch between what a follower wants and their current reality (Carver, 2004a, 2015;

Frijda, 1986). Thwarted goals may also signify an epistemic discrepancy, given that salient goals give meaning to people's lives and not achieving these goals is aversive to a person's personal and social well-being (Boekaerts et al., 2012).

Prior research has shown that goal failure can influence the followers' ability to adjust to the failure. For instance, salient work-related projects often engender feelings of "psychological ownership" (Pierce et al., 2001), and the failure of such projects can result in strong and enduring reactions. These reactions include grief (Shepherd et al., 2009, 2013), anger, sadness, shame, and anxiety (Lench & Levine, 2008; Searle & Auton, 2015), bitter disappointment (Shepherd et al., 2013) and rumination, which makes it difficult to adjust (Nolen-Hoeksema, 1991). Arguably strong goal adjustment capacities are needed to maintain well-being for individuals who perceive loss of control over important goals (Brandtstädter & Renner, 1990; Hamm et al., 2022; Rasmussen et al., 2006). Goal adjustment is essential to enhance psychological wellbeing (Wrosch, 2011), minimise stress and invigorate followers' efforts towards alternative endeavours (Mens et al., 2015) central to continued performance in the workplace. Goal adjustment reflects a behavioural intention to adapt to the experience of unattainable goals and involves two processes: goal disengagement, and re-engagement in more feasible goals (Wrosch, 2013). Goal disengagement requires a person to withdraw both effort and commitment from the pursuit of an unattainable goal (Wrosch, 2011), which can be a challenging task for the follower, as salient goal attainment holds functional primacy in the motivational system that organises human behaviour (Heckhausen & Schulz, 1995). Goal re-engagement, by contrast, involves the identification of, and commitment to, the pursuit of alternative goals (Wrosch, 2011), which is a necessary requirement of a functional work environment.

Additionally, prior research has also shown that work withdrawal is a common self-regulatory response to reduce negative affect associated with failure (Grandey et al., 2002).

Work withdrawal is expressed by means of lower affective commitment toward the organisation (Shepherd et al., 2009, 2011), and reduced motivation (Shepherd et al., 2014) which can lead to a likelihood of leaving the organisation (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Intention to quit refers to the possibility of leaving the organisation (Ozkan et al., 2020), and is a critical factor in a person's work-withdrawal process (Rubenstein et al., 2018). Intention to quit is also a proxy of actual turnover behaviour (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975; Griffeth et al., 2000), resulting in the loss of human capital to the organisation, as well as the loss of institutional knowledge. Followers with turnover intentions who remain with their organisations tend to be less engaged, and less willing to perform organisational citizenship behaviours (Xiong & Wen, 2020). Intention to quit is also an antecedent to poor performance (Podsakoff et al., 2009) and counterproductive organisational citizenship behaviours (Xiong & Wen, 2020). Thus, turnover intentions have been linked to other important organisational behaviours beyond just turnover (Chen et al., 2011).

Taken together, goal adjustment and turnover intentions represent behavioural intentions on the part of the follower to stay and to strive in the organisation (or not) (Bellou, 2008) and as such, constitute important prerequisites for a functioning organisation post-failure. However, how followers act in the aftermath of failure may not only be a function of individuals' thoughts and emotions post-failure, but also a consequence of interactional affective processes (Madrid et al., 2019). For instance, recent evidence suggests that environments that supply little support for followers in the aftermath of a failure show, on average, higher levels of negative emotions than more supportive work environments (Patzelt et al., 2020, 2021; Shepherd, 2009). Conversely, perceptions of supportive managership can limit the detrimental effects of recalled negative emotions from prior project failures on followers' job satisfaction and performance (Patzelt et al., 2021). Despite these insights, Patzelt, and colleagues (2021) observe that the leadership

literature has yet to acknowledge the potential role of supervising managers in the aftermath of failure, even though supervisors shape followers' behaviours at work (Judge et al., 2006; Settoon et al., 1996). For instance, supervisors, as agents of the organisation, appear particularly important in determining followers' withdrawal intentions (Vandenberghe & Bentein, 2009). Thus, how a manager handles failure may signal to the follower whether they have a future in the organisation or not. Demonstrative care and concern may also shape a followers' ability to recover from, and adjust to failure (Shepherd et al., 2011). Drawing on the interpersonal affect regulation framework developed by Niven and colleagues (2009), I propose that in a context of failure, IER exhibited by the manager can serve as a proximal mechanism through which supportive leadership can positively influence followers' behavioural intentions. Consistent with theories of emotional communication and appraisal (Schwarz, 2012; Van Kleef, 2009), the indirect relationship between IER and behavioural intentions through negative affect and trust, can be explained by affective reactions and cognitive appraisals regarding managers' IER, and specifically, what the leaders' strategy signifies in terms their discrepant experience. Reducing negative affect is likely to be associated with energising tendencies (Chen & Bargh, 1999), that can motivate ability to adjust to failure as well as remain in the organisation. Conversely, enhancing negative affect can motivate actions to avoid those negative feelings (Keller et al., 2012). From a mobilising perspective, trust can motivate followers to contribute toward collective endeavours (McEvily et al., 2003), and in doing so, foster behavioural intentions that align with the organisations /leaders' objectives.

In the following sections, I explain each stage in my conceptual model, starting with the hypothesised direct effect of manager's IER on followers' negative affect and trust, the indirect effects of IER on goal adjustment and turnover intentions via negative affect and

trust before addressing the moderators that may frame the indirect effects of IER on behavioural intentions.

4.3 Hypotheses Development

4.3.1 The Direct Relationship between Managers' IER and Followers' Negative Affect

At the first stage of my proposed model, I contend that a manager's use of IER will alter followers' negative affect. Goal failure represents a discrepancy between what is (failure) and what is desired (success), which cultivates negative affect for the follower. Consistent with theories of emotional communication (Van Kleef & Cote, 2022), I contend that leaders' attempts to improve affect (i.e., complementary emotional reactions) are likely to positively influence followers' automatic affective reactions to the extent that the follower 'feels' that the leader has their best interests at heart (Niven et al., 2012; Vasquez et al., 2020). What feels right to the follower is likely to be informed by contextual factors (Van Kleef & Cote, 2022) that determine the perceived appropriateness of the leaders' emotional response as expressed through distinct IER strategies.

I propose that the use of strategies that target a resolution of the motivational or epistemic discrepancy associated with goal failure will 'feel right' and correlate with lower levels of followers' negative affect. For instance, affect-improving engagement strategies may serve to ameliorate uncertainty and reduce negative affect along distinct pathways. Specifically, an affective engagement strategy may lower negative affect by focusing directly on the problem, removing barriers to the followers' goal success, and developing a pathway forward following failure. Cognitive engagement strategy (e.g., reappraising the meaning of the threat) (Niven et al., 2009) converts negative experiences into a positive meaning by changing the way in which events are perceived (Madrid et al., 2019), potentially resolving the epistemic discrepancy associated with goal failure. Hence,

addressing the problem causing the negative affect and trying to alleviate it through affective or cognitive engagement strategies is likely to reduce negative affect (Little et al., 2016), to the extent that the leaders' expressions directly address the discrepant experience and in doing so, match the followers' motivational desires.

Distraction represents a relationship-oriented strategy (Niven et al., 2009).

Evidence from self-regulatory research has established that distraction is a particularly effective strategy for reducing negative emotions (Denson & Fabiansson, 2011; Sheppes & Meiran, 2007). In terms of the follower who is experiencing perceived threat, distraction can effectively deploy the followers' attention away from failure-related rumination (Tsaur & Tang, 2012), and allow time to process the negative affective event. Thus, I contend that a distraction strategy may be effective in reducing negative affect; while it does not directly address the discrepant experience, it may allow the followers' time to process the threat.

Finally, the use of affect-worsening strategies such as rejecting is likely to be positively related to negative affect. When displays of negative affect by the follower are reciprocated by leaders' attempts to worsen affect, they are likely to negatively influence followers' automatic affective reactions (Van Kleef & Cote, 2022). Indeed, IER studies found that leaders' attempt at worsening affect instigated matching affective states in their followers (Little et al., 2012). The follower may perceive the (reciprocal) negative reaction expressed by the leader as signalling a lack of care for the followers' emotional experience. The active inhibition of followers' emotional thoughts makes emotion-related material more accessible (Howell & Conway, 1992), and may enhance perceptions of threat and heighten levels of negative affect for the follower. Thus, I propose:

Hypothesis 1a (H1a): Affect-improving affective engagement, cognitive engagement, and distraction strategies will exert a significant direct negative effect on followers' negative affect compared to the affect-worsening strategy under examination.

Hypothesis 1b (H1b): The affect-worsening strategy (rejecting) will exert a significant direct positive effect on followers' negative affect compared to other strategies under examination.

4.3.2 The Direct Relationship between Managers' IER and Followers' Trust

I also propose in the first part of my model that the manager's use of IER will impact followers' trust in the manager. While IER is conceptualised as an affective process, it is also an intentional interpersonal process (Niven et al., 2009), the nature of which may impact followers' trust in the manager. However, much of the empirical evidence to date has focused on affective change, ignoring the significance of the interpersonal process. I suggest that trust is an important relational mediator through which leaders' IER links to followers' behavioural intentions. In support of this proposition, Williams (2007) theorised that IER strategies may function as trust-building mechanisms that can arouse behavioural responses in followers. "Trust building" refers to processes that increase trust, from a neutral or positive initial state— one that has not been damaged (Williams, 2012).

The importance of examining the relationship between IER and trust is underscored by the fact that engaging in IER in the workplace can be construed as a risk given the power differences inherent in the manager-follower relationship, and thus can enhance followers' feelings of vulnerability. Prior research supports the contention that engaging in effective IER has the potential to alter trust perceptions (Little et al., 2012; Niven et al., 2012). Little and colleagues (2012) found that focusing on the problem (situation modification) and reappraisal were positively related to perceptions of trust in the leader, whereas distraction was not. Distracting the follower did not have the same impact, perhaps because distraction does not provide enough cognitive information to alter one's perception of trust in the manager (Little et al., 2012). Niven and colleagues (2012)

examined the association between IER, and relationship quality as assessed by friendship and trust among co-workers (Study 1), and among staff and prisoners in a high-security prison (Study 2), using a single item from a social network measure.

Building on this empirical foundation, my study differs from previous research in four main ways: This study investigates whether trust in the manager acts as a mediator through which IER relates to goal adjustment and turnover intentions, whereas the studies cited above examined trust as an outcome of the IER process. Thus, my study deepens our understanding of the pathways between IER and behavioural intentions by examining affect and trust as two parallel mediators. My study examines trust as a willingness to rely on another (reliance) and share sensitive information with another (disclosure) (Gillespie, 2003; 2012). This conceptualisation of trust was chosen because it captures the vulnerability and risk that is inherent in trust decisions particularly relevant in non-close dyads (e.g., manager-follower relationship) (Lee et al., 2010). Additionally, this well-validated measure of trust (Gillespie, 2012; Lee et al., 2010; Mayer, 1995) was specifically designed to measure trust in manager- follower relationships (Lee et al., 2010). As such, the operationalisation of trust is therefore different from earlier studies in that Little and colleagues (2012) used Mayer's unidimensional scale, whilst Niven and colleagues (2012) used a single item social network measure. Finally, the studies cited fail to provide insight into the effects of IER on trust in a crisis. Trust is context-specific, as the nature and forms of interdependence and vulnerability change according to the context and type of relationship (Gillespie, 2012). As such, it is difficult to generalise from the earlier research cited to understand how IER may impact assessments of trust in a context of high vulnerability and uncertainty.

I argue that affect-improving strategies function as threat-reducing behaviours that managers can use to build trust. Consistent with relational appraisal models (Scherer, 2009;

Smith & Kirby, 2009), I contend that trust appraisals are assumed not to be a simple function of either the stimulus characteristics (e.g., IER strategies) or the individual's dispositional characteristics (caring, kindness) (Keller et al., 2012). Rather, appraisals of trust reflect an evaluation of what the stimulus implies for the person's well-being in relation to the individual's goals, needs, and resources (Smith & Kirby, 2009). I contend that perceptions regarding the managers' IER strategies and what they signify in terms of followers' goals become a proxy for perceptions regarding the manager. When strategies are relevant to the followers' goals, there is a sense that the trustee (e.g., manager) can be relied upon to satisfy the followers' needs or serve their interests or goals (Barbalet, 2019). Therefore, when a follower infers that IER strategies are congruent with their goals, these IER strategies are likely to elicit positive appraisals of the leader and, in turn, influence trust evaluations. In other words, when IER strategies communicate to the follower that their needs are met, and the leader can be trusted; followers are likely to feel safer and more positive about disclosures of vulnerability.

Specifically, I argue that a manager's willingness to support the individual in the direction of continued goal pursuit (affective engagement strategy) can be construed as meeting the followers' primary motivational needs to compensate for failure, thus conferring positive assumption about motives and intentions of the manager (McEvily et al., 2003). Equally, reappraising the meaning of the failure (cognitive engagement strategy) to diminish the sense of threat may help resolve the epistemic discrepancy created by goal failure for the follower. A manager's attempts at distraction may be construed as accepting, and validating for the follower (Niven et al., 2009). Drawing attention away from the failure may be construed as an attempt to help followers' process the experience, and as such, there may be a sense the leader can be relied upon to satisfy the followers' needs and serve their goals. Therefore, when a follower infers that distraction strategy is compatible

with what they need, this strategy is likely to elicit positive appraisals of the leader, and in turn, predict positive trust evaluations. Overall, when cognitive appraisals of supportive leadership are clear through engagement or distraction strategies, the follower may be willing to rely on and disclose to the manager.

Conversely, the use of affect-worsening strategies (e.g., rejecting) confer that the manager is unwilling to address the followers' discrepant experience, thereby enhancing beliefs of vulnerability, and lowering trust in the manager. Niven and colleagues' (2009) demonstrated that the manager's use of an affect-worsening strategy often "makes it clear one does not care how the target feels," (p. 504), and aims to reduce the followers' expression of these feelings rather than to address the problem causing the feelings. Thus, trust in the manager can be eroded by their inaction or attempts to reject the emotions of the follower. Thus, I propose:

Hypothesis 2a (H2a): Affect-improving affective engagement, cognitive engagement, and distraction strategies will exert a significant direct positive effect on followers' trust compared to the affect-worsening strategy under examination.

Hypothesis 2b (H2b): The affect-worsening rejecting strategy will exert a significant direct negative effect on followers' trust compared to the affect-improving strategies.

4.3.3 The Indirect Effects of IER on Followers' Behavioural intentions via Negative Affect

The second stage of the model hypothesises that IER will predict goal adjustment, and turnover intentions, via affect and trust pathways. Thus far, the empirical evidence supporting the relationship between IER, and behavioural intentions has not been examined. Vasquez and colleagues (2020) established partial support for the mediating role of positive affect, but not negative affect in the relationship between IER and task

performance. Accordingly, their research calls into question whether IER is more intricately linked to behaviour via positive rather than negative affect. It is plausible that the indirect effect of affect-worsening strategies on followers' behaviours may be more covertly expressed through turnover intentions, rather than through measurable performance criteria. This current study will help address these gaps in knowledge.

I therefore propose that IER will be related to goal adjustment and turnover intentions, through its relationship with negative affect and trust. People use affect as a source of information about decision alternatives (Schwarz, 1990). Affect is a primary motivational system, and the reduction of negative affect can mobilise energy, organise and motivate cognition constructively to exert behavioural change (Izard, 2010). As such, affect-improving strategies that correlate with lower levels of negative affect, should in turn, be positively associated with goal adjustment. Affect-improving engagement and distraction strategies may serve to reduce negative affect along distinct pathways. For example, changing the situation for the follower (affective engagement strategy) to overcome goal obstacles is likely to have an "energising" potential, instrumentally moving the individual from negative affect following goal failure to goal adjustment. Cognitive engagement strategy involves changing the meaning attached to the failure; devaluing the centrality of the goal for the follower (Schwager & Rothermund, 2014) will make it easier to relinquish the goal. Fostering a new narrative about options can neutralise negative affect, by re-directing attention towards other attainable goals. Thus, cognitive engagement strategy is likely to ease goal adjustment (Larsen & Prizmic, 2004). Efforts by the manager to redeploy the follower's attention away from the perceived threat frees up cognitive resources (Van Dillen & Koole, 2007) to consider alternative courses of action, thereby helping goal adjustment. Accordingly, as a proximal reaction to affect-improving strategies, lowering negative affect may play a central mediating role in understanding the

effect of affect-improving IER on follower's goal adjustment. Thus, I propose:

Hypothesis 3a (H3a): Affect-improving affective engagement, cognitive engagement, and distraction strategies will exert an indirect effect on goal adjustment via negative affect, such that these strategies will be negatively associated with negative affect, which in turn, will be positively associated with goal adjustment.

Similarly, I argue that a manager's use of affect-improving strategies will be positively related to turnover intentions, through its relationship with negative affect. Feeling better as a result of perceived supportive leadership should strengthen the follower's affective attachment and commitment to the manager resulting in greater embeddedness to the organisation (Maertz & Griffeth, 2004), thus rendering intention to leave less likely. Specifically, affective engagement strategies are likely to have a positive impact on negative affect and in turn on turnover intentions, by making clear the followers' path; this should increase both followers' satisfaction and productivity, important corollaries of followers' retention (House, 1996; Terera & Ngirande, 2014). Equally, changing the (negative) meaning attached to the failure through cognitive engagement strategies is likely to increase levels of job satisfaction and foster followers' retention (Terera & Ngirande, 2014). Distraction is likely to reduce negative affect and correspondingly, turnover intentions through its effects on the manager-follower relationship and perceptions of organisational support. If followers perceive that the manager, as the agent of the organisation, supports them by taking the time to address what is important to them in a moment of crisis, then the chance that they will leave the organisation is diminished (Madden et al., 2015; Woznyj et al., 2021). Accordingly, I propose:

Hypothesis 3b(H3b): Affect-improving affective engagement, cognitive engagement, and distraction strategies will exert an indirect effect on turnover intentions, via negative

affect, such that these strategies will be negatively associated with negative affect, which in turn, will be negatively associated with turnover intentions.

Conversely, the deployment of an affect-worsening IER strategy (e.g., rejecting) can maintain or exacerbate negative affect (Little et al., 2013), leading to behavioural disengagement - separating oneself from one's current situation - as a self-regulatory response (Thayer et al., 1994). Failure to downregulate affect will mean that emotions have an increasing influence on behavioural intentions (Loewenstein & Lerner, 2003; Zaehring et al., 2020), evoking defensive actions such as "impulsive quitting" (Maertz & Campion, 2004) and follower withdrawal (i.e., actively quitting the job or passive neglect) (Kiefer, 2005; Pelled & Xin, 1999). Arguably, a rejecting strategy is likely to amplify the follower's negative emotion. The stronger the negative affect, the less likely followers are to report behavioural intentions that are supportive of an organisation (Coombs & Holladay, 2005). Equally, higher levels of negative affect should correlate with lower levels of goal adjustment. Rejecting the follower's emotional expression is likely to amplify defensive reactions to failure and evoke greater distress, which in turn, is likely to narrow the perception of available alternatives post-failure and weaken goal adjustment. Higher levels of negative affect should correlate with lower levels of goal adjustment. Thus, I propose:

Hypothesis 3c (H3c): The affect-worsening strategy will exert an indirect effect on goal adjustment through negative affect, such that this strategy will be positively associated with negative affect, which in turn, will be negatively associated with goal adjustment.

Hypothesis 3d (H3d): The affect-worsening strategy will exert an indirect effect on turnover intentions via negative affect, such that this strategy will be positively associated with negative affect, which in turn, will be positively associated with turnover intentions.

4.3.4 The Indirect Effects of IER on Followers' Behavioural Intentions via Trust

Trust has been conceptualised as the willingness to rely on and disclose personal or sensitive information to the manager (Gillespie, 2021). I propose the affect-improving engagement strategies will be positively related to goal adjustment via their effects on trust. As previously stated, when strategies are relevant to the followers' goals, there is a sense that the manager can be trusted to satisfy the followers' needs. Trust in management is more likely to mobilise adjustment capacities, as the follower gains the ability and support to control their environment. Moreover, when a manager uses strategies such as affective engagement (problem-focused), cognitive engagement strategies (constructing alternative meanings around the failure) or distraction that signal the need for goal adjustment, willingness to rely on the guidance of the manager is likely to facilitate goal adjustment.

Equally, trust can be considered a barometer of whether continued investment in the organisation is worthwhile (Ward et al., 2022). I propose that trust elicited through affect-improving strategies should strengthen intention to stay in the organisation. Affect-improving strategies should strengthen the emotional bond between the follower and their manager (Gillespie, 2021; Legood et al., 2021), and in doing so, boost identification with and trust in the manager. Trust provides greater certainty to the follower in crisis, regarding how they are treated by their manager, as an agent of the organisation. Thus, I argue that when affect-improving strategies are used, and trust is high, it decreases the likelihood of followers' attrition.

Hypothesis 4a (H4a): Affect-improving affective engagement, cognitive engagement, and distraction strategies through trust, such that these affect-improving strategies will be positively associated with trust, which in turn, will be positively associated with goal adjustment.

Hypothesis 4b(H4b): Affect-improving affective engagement, cognitive engagement,

and distraction strategies will exert an indirect effect on turnover intentions through trust, such that these affect-improving strategies will be positively associated with trust, which in turn, will be negatively associated with turnover intentions.

Conversely, a manager rejecting the followers' negative affect may be ineffective, and lead to perceptions of unsupportive leadership. The followers' disclosure of failure to a manager can be regarded as costly when met with affect-worsening strategies. Unmet obligations to provide support and care arising from affect-worsening strategies are likely to influence followers' perception that the manager is unreliable and motivated by egoistic intentions (Niven et al., 2019). Thus, the manager-follower relationship is likely to be compromised, leading to increased distrust and potentially the dissolution of the relationship (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010). I argue that affect-worsening strategies are likely to lead the follower to question the organisation's dedication to their welfare, which in turn can reduce intention to stay in the organisation. When individuals do not trust their managers, they are more likely to consider quitting (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). Moreover, affect-worsening strategies may signal a lack of concern regarding the followers' needs, and may therefore render goal adjustment more difficult. Thus, I hypothesise the following:

Hypothesis 4c (H4c): Affect-worsening strategy will exert an indirect effect on goal adjustment through trust, such that this strategy will be negatively associated with trust, which in turn, will be negatively associated with goal adjustment.

Hypothesis 4d (H4d): Affect-worsening strategy will exert an indirect effect on turnover intentions through trust, such that this strategy will be negatively associated with trust, which in turn, will be positively associated with turnover intentions.

4.3.5 The Moderating Role of Followers' Psychological Processes on the Indirect Effects of Managers' IER

Although I expect IER strategies to be associated with goal adjustment and turnover

intentions, through its effects on negative affect and trust, I also expect that these indirect effects may be contingent on followers' individual differences. Consistent with appraisal theories, the nature of the emotional experience following failure is likely to define how IER is interpreted. However, little research has examined this proposition. For instance, Thiel and colleagues (2015) provided preliminary insight into the notion that emotions expressed by the target of the regulation may moderate the link between IER strategies and followers' stress. Their experimental study examined whether certain leaders' IER strategies were more effective in lowering follower stress in times of crisis. Thiel and colleagues conceptualised IER strategies as either emotion-focused (cognitive engagement strategy, rejecting) or person-focused (empathy). Utilising a sample of 165 undergraduate students, the researchers induced anger, a discrete emotion (negative valence) in all respondents who were randomly assigned to one of eight conditions, in a 2 (cognitive engagement strategy vs. rejecting) \times 2 (crisis vs. no crisis) \times 2 (high empathy vs. low empathy). The results demonstrate that cognitive engagement strategy plus, empathy had an insignificant effect in lowering follower stress after an anger was induced.

One interpretation for Thiel and colleagues (2015) findings is that discrete emotions carry specific appraisal and action tendencies (Frijda, 1986; Lowe & Ziemke, 2011) that may influence the perceptions of IER strategies. Emotion-specific action tendencies are tendencies to behave in certain ways prompted by the emotional process (Fontaine et al., 2013). For example, anger is a well-established proximal predictor of approach tendencies (e.g., Van Zomeren et al., 2004; 2008) and is associated with the readiness to change the situation (Dorison et al., 2020). Angry individuals who are eager to make decisions and unlikely to want to stop and ponder or carefully analyse (Dorison et al., 2020; Lerner & Tiedens, 2006) may be less receptive to a manager's attempt at reappraisal, as this cognitive engagement strategy is incongruent with angry followers' action

tendencies. It is therefore conceivable that leader' IER strategies that fit with followers' emotion-specific action tendencies should prime strategy preference for the follower, and as such, exert a stronger positive influence on affect and trust responses.

As the third stage in my model, I therefore propose that discrete emotions expressed in terms of followers' response to failure may be a contextual condition that operates in the relationship between the managers' IER and followers' behavioural intentions by predicting the strength of relationship between IER strategies and followers' affect (following IER), and trust. Specifically, I consider the differential effects of anger and sadness on IER strategies given that emotional episodes of anger and sadness are often associated with the experience of failure (Van Dijk & Zeelenberg, 2002), and often experienced in the workplace (Fitness, 2000). Prior research suggests that the emotions of anger and sadness are frequently shared to obtain counsel from others (Duprez et al., 2015). While anger is associated with approach tendencies (Dorison et al., 2020), sadness, on the other hand, is characterised by appraisals of experiencing irrevocable loss (Arias et al., 2020) and is accompanied by the action tendency to withdraw from the problem (Lerner et al., 2015). Distraction should be most preferable for those who are sad, consistent with the action tendencies to withdraw following failure.

It is also likely that the impact of affect-worsening strategies on followers' affect and trust for the angry follower may be more pervasive than for the sad follower. Rejecting (without empathy) is counter-intuitive to the action tendencies associated with anger and accordingly, should strengthen the negative association between affect-worsening strategies, negative affect, and trust, respectively. Rejecting may be less deleterious for the sad individual as it aligns with an avoidance action tendency. Thus, I propose:

Hypothesis 5a (H5a): The emotion of the respondent will moderate the indirect effect between managers' IER, and followers' goal adjustment and turnover intentions via trust

and negative affect.

Another important consideration determining the link between IER and behavioural intentions in the context of goal failure is the followers' regulatory focus. Regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997) distinguishes between two regulatory systems (promotion and prevention focus) that guide the pursuit of desired end states e.g., goals (Higgins, 1997). Promotion and prevention focus can arise from personality differences (trait) or can be induced from momentary environmental factors (state) (e.g., by instruction, feedback, maze task, or rewards) (Brockner & Higgins, 2001; Higgins, 1997). While individuals need both systems to be maximally effective, in any given moment the concerns of one system may predominate over the other because of environmental differences (Scholer et al., 2019).

Prior research has established that regulatory focus predicts inter-individual responses to goal failure. For instance, when failure occurs for individuals who are prevention-focused, failure represents an intense loss (Brockner & Higgins, 2001) and generates anxious emotions (Hardin & Lakin, 2009), nervousness and agitation (Higgins, 1997), worry, and stress (Higgins, 2012), and rumination (Jones et al., 2013). Failure for the individual who is prevention-focused drains cognitive resources and depletes self-regulatory mechanisms, thus regulating these negative affective experiences can be taxing (Bridgett et al., 2013). Conversely, for those with a predominant promotion focus, goal failure elicits a more muted responses expressed as low intensity sadness, disappointment, or discouragement (Higgins, 1997).

Furthermore, empirical evidence from self-regulation research also suggests that regulatory foci influence self-regulatory responses to negative emotion. For instance, promotion focus has a stronger link to problem-focused coping (Gao et al., 2017), and reappraisal (Llewellyn et al., 2013), and the use of more constructive strategies such as

constructive accommodation and mutual negotiation, and less maladaptive strategies (i.e., mutual blame) to solve problems (Rodrigues et al., 2019). In contrast, prevention focus has a stronger relationship with emotion-focused coping (Wolfin et al., 2018), and with strategies that are considered less adaptive for the individual. For instance, individuals with a prevention- focus mindset are more susceptible to self-handicapping than promotion-focused individuals (Hendrix & Hirt, 2009), as a self-enhancement bias to maintain esteem in the face of failure.

Higgins (2000) suggested that an intrapersonal regulatory fit- a “feeling of rightness” occurs when individuals act in line with their own strategic (promotion /prevention) preferences. This suggests that how individuals self-regulate (using either problem-focused or emotion-coping) acts as a ‘fit’ sustaining a person’s regulatory focus. Several researchers (e.g., Freitas & Higgins, 2002; Righetti et al., 2011) have extended Higgins’s research to examine interpersonal regulatory fit, that is, when a person perceives an interaction partner’s approach to goals congruent with an individual’s own regulatory focus. My theorising extends this idea in that regulatory focus is likely to influence how the follower processes IER attempts by a manager. Specifically, when the follower interacts with the manager, the individual’s regulatory focus shapes the perceptions of the IER strategies used by the manager, either creating a ‘regulatory fit’ or ‘non-fit’ (Higgins, 2000).

I therefore propose that IER strategies that are congruent with a followers’ regulatory focus, will have a stronger effect on the followers’ affect, and trust in the leader. Individuals with a prevention focus are most vulnerable to the detrimental effects of failure (Idson & Higgins, 2000). Righetti and colleagues (2011) demonstrated that those with a prevention focus are so exclusively focused on the problem at hand, they are less receptive to assistance when it is offered. This suggests that attempts to improve affect through

positive engagement strategies are less likely to lower negative affect for the individual who is cognitively and emotionally diminished from failure and have limited working memory capacity to consider alternatives or engage in problem-solving. Engagement strategies are not likely to fit with what feels right for a follower with a prevention focus. In line with self-regulatory preferences (Wolfin et al., 2018), distraction may strengthen affective responses for this follower.

In contrast, engagement strategies should be a better fit for followers who are promotion-focused and are likely to strengthen affective responses compared to those who are prevention-focused. This theorising aligns with Righetti and colleagues' (2011) evidence that individuals who are promotion-focused perceive interpersonal assistance as an opportunity to acquire information that can help them and as such are receptive to advice. Compared to the prevention focus, promotion-focused individuals are more sensitive to positive stimuli from the environment (Lanaj et al., 2012), and may be able reap the benefit of an affective engagement strategy in lowering negative affect. Thus, a promotion-focused mindset should strengthen the positive indirect influence of affect-improving engagement strategies on behavioural intentions via affect compared to the prevention focus mind-set.

While affect-worsening strategies are likely to be positively associated with negative affect for both the prevention, and the promotion-focused mindset, the strength of the relationship between affect-worsening strategies and negative affect is likely to be stronger for those with a prevention focus. Those with a prevention focus are especially sensitive to rejection (Keller & Pfattheicher, 2013; Pfattheicher & Sassenrath, 2014) and cues that signal social threat (Keller et al., 2012), such that they frequently withdraw from others, inhibiting their social behaviours (Lanaj et al., 2012). Furthermore, they feel highly responsible for problems (Higgins, 1997; Molden et al., 2008). Accordingly, the use of

affect-worsening strategies could exacerbate the feeling that they have failed to meet organisational expectations and heighten a felt sense of public loss and anxiety. Thus, prevention focus may strengthen the negative association between affect-worsening strategies and negative affect compared to the promotion focus mind-set.

Turning our attention to trust, prior research suggests that regulatory focus influences relational responses to others (Winterheld & Simpson, 2011). For instance, Keller and colleagues (2015) experimentally manipulated generalised trust across a series of studies and demonstrated that prevention focus is inversely related to generalised trust. This proclivity towards distrust could influence their ability to form trusting relations, even when faced with active trust building [affect-improving] strategies. Additionally, individuals with a prevention focus are likely to react defensively, specifically with distrust, when confronted with subtle signs related to threat and insecurity (Keller et al., 2015; Winterheld & Simpson, 2011). Consequently, the impact of affect-worsening strategies may be especially detrimental for trust relations between the follower with prevention-focused mindset and their manager. Moreover, an implicit bias towards maintaining relationship security and harmony (Ayduk et al., 2003) may prohibit this disclosure of distrust, prompting avoidance behaviours exhibited through high turnover intentions, and poor goal adjustment.

Accordingly, the proposed role of regulatory focus in this model therefore forms the second conditional indirect process. I propose:

Hypothesis 5b(H5b): The regulatory focus of the respondent will moderate the indirect effect between managers' IER, and followers' behaviours via trust and negative affect.

4.4 Overview of Studies

Across two studies, I investigated the relationship between the managers' IER

strategies and followers' behavioural intentions (goal adjustment and turnover intentions), following salient goal failure. The first study experimentally manipulated exposure to a single IER strategy to investigate its influence on respondents' perceptions of trust in the manager, negative affect, goal adjustment and turnover intentions. I also examined the moderation effect of discrete emotions on the indirect effects of IER on goal adjustment and turnover intentions via negative affect and trust. Study 2 extended Study 1 by additionally examining regulatory focus as a second boundary condition that may explain variability in the indirect effects of IER. I tested my model in both studies to examine the replicability of my findings.

Study 1

4.4 Method

4.4.1 *Sample and Procedure*

Respondents included 923 respondents recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (M-Turk), to complete an experimental vignette study. Compared with using more traditional samples, M-Turk conferred benefits that aligned with the aims and objectives of my research, namely access to a large and diverse pool of respondents with relevant work experience, and flexibility regarding the implementation of the research design choice e.g., experimental vignette methodology (Aguinis et al., 2021). Accordingly, to strengthen external validity, the inclusion criteria included individuals over the age of 18 years, currently in employment or employed within the last six months (outside of M-Turk), from native-English-speaking countries, and who identified as highly qualified M-Turkers (Masters workers). These inclusion criteria were based on the alignment between the desired target population and the M-Turk respondent. Sampling working adults or those with prior work experience in the last six months was pertinent to the study of followers'

behavioural intentions in the workplace and enhanced generalisability of the research findings within the workplace. English language fluency was considered critical as it influences how respondents interpret the study's instructions, manipulations, and measures and may pose a threat to internal validity (Aguinis et al., 2021). Those who are Master M-Turkers are registered members of the M-Turk labour force, with an approval rate of 95% in completing other available assignments. Using this cohort can lower attrition rates commonly associated with M-Turk use (Arechar et al., 2018; Cheung et al., 2017).

All respondents provided online informed and voluntary consent and received monetary compensation for completing the survey. Out of the 923 respondents who completed the survey, 225 cases were removed from the data set after failing both attention checks. The final sample comprised 698 respondents: 366 females (52.4%), and 329 males (47.1%), with one respondent self-identifying as non-binary and one respondent preferring not to disclose their gender, $M_{age} = 39.77$ years, $SD = 12.57$; age range: 19-87 years. 401 identified as subordinates (57.4 %), 166 as middle management (23.8 %), 79 as junior management (11.3 %) and 52 as senior management (7.4 %). 555 respondents reported working full-time (79.5 %), 96 part-time (13.8 %), 21 were employed on a casual basis (3.0 %), and 26 respondents were not working at the time of data collection (3.7 %), $M_{tenure} = 7.29$ years, $SD = 7.05$. Most respondents ($n=155$) 22.2 % worked in the service industry, 14% technical work, 12.8 % worked in administration and 12.5% in education, with the remaining 38.5% from a variety of other sectors.

This vignette study used a between-subjects randomised experimental controlled design, which manipulated two discrete emotions (anger and sad) and an emotionally neutral condition in the respondents, in addition to four IER strategies employed by the 'manager' (affect-improving strategies: affective engagement strategy, cognitive engagement strategy, distraction strategy, and an affect-worsening strategy: rejecting) and

a control condition (inaction), resulting in a 3x5 experimental design with 15 conditions. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of these conditions (block randomisation), using the random allocation sequence feature of Qualtrics, such that an equal number of respondents is assigned to each group (Efird, 2011).

To ensure sufficient power, a priori analysis was conducted using G*Power 3.1.5 software (Faul et al., 2009) to determine the sample size needed for statistical power. To conduct a power analysis for a MANOVA, four pieces of information are required: level of significance ($\alpha = .05$); Power ($1 - \beta = .80$); number of cells/groups; and effect size (as per Faul et al., 2009). For this study (15 conditions and 4 dependent variables), consistent with previous experimental research (e.g., Diekmann et al., 2011), I expected medium ($\eta^2 = 0.0625$) effect sizes (Cohen, 1992). The results from the power analysis showed that a sample size of $N \geq 195$ would achieve sufficient power to detect medium and large effects. Thus, the present study's sample size ($N = 698$) had sufficient power to detect a medium and large effect.

4.4.2 Experimental Manipulation

After supplying informed consent online, respondents completed the experimental manipulation as follows: respondents read a vignette where they were instructed to imagine themselves as a subordinate in a company. They had been working on an idea for a project for a number of months and had invested much time, energy, and effort in developing the project. However, they failed to secure funding for a new project, resulting in salient goal failure.

The emotion inducement of anger and sadness (and the emotionally neutral condition) was given through the rationale for the followers' failure to secure their /their goal (see Appendix A: Experimental Manipulation, Study 1). Anger is a social emotion; it tends to be a response to others' actions that are perceived to be unjust or unfair and cause

obstructions to goal-directed behaviour (Gibson & Callister, 2010; Sznycer et al., 2022). Sad is associated with appraisals that a situation is beyond one's control (Lench et al., 2016). Those in the angry condition were instructed that a co-worker had poached a clever idea securing both credibility for the idea and the sought-after seed funding, resulting in goal failure. Those in the sad condition were instructed that despite their best efforts and endless hours working ("missing their son's concert"), the respondent lost the opportunity to gain funding, as funding had been withdrawn from all projects and there was nothing that could be done. The emotionally neutral condition was devoid of any emotional overtone, merely specifying that 'the respondent' had been working on an idea for a new major project, which did not go ahead due to a lack of funding. Each vignette ended where the respondent met their manager and were 'exposed' to one of the IER strategies as follows:

In the affective engagement strategy condition, the manager tries to rectify the aspects of the situation causing the problem.

In the distraction strategy condition, the manager uses distraction by offering to have a coffee and talking about the followers' potential involvement in an upcoming work event.

In the cognitive engagement strategy condition, the manager reframes the failure by suggesting to the respondent "although you failed to secure funding on this occasion, you may have gained valuable knowledge around the entire funding process which may assist you in future funding applications."

The affect-worsening rejecting condition was induced by the manager directing respondents to inhibit expression of the emotion. Respondents were told "don't be upset about it, don't think about the project, just forget about it and move on".

In the control condition (inaction), the manager acknowledges the emotion-evoking situation,

offering no suggestions, and the respondent “leaves the office without any direction”

4.4.3 Measures

Affect was assessed using the Job-related Affect Well-being Scale (JAWS) (Van Katwyk et al., 2000), a 30-item scale designed to assess people's emotional reactions to their job. In this study, respondents were instructed to respond with reference to how they felt *after the manager* engaged in the IER strategy. The response scale consists of 15 positive feelings (e.g., calm, contented, relaxed, cheerful, enthusiastic, optimistic) and 15 negative ones (e.g., tense, uneasy, worried, depressed, gloomy, miserable). Responses were indicated on a visual analogue scale (Snippe et al., 2018) ranging from ‘*not at all*’ = 0 to an ‘*extreme amount*’ = 100. Visual analogue scales for assessing emotions have been demonstrated to be modestly more reliable than radio button item format in assessing emotional states (Marcus et al., 2017). The positive and negative items were each tallied to create positive and negative affect subscales. Mean scores were created for both positive ($\alpha = .98$) and negative affect ($\alpha = .95$), which were then divided by ten so that the range of scores (0-10) corresponded with the study's other measurement scales. A high score on the resulting analyses represents an elevated level of positive (negative) affect.

Trust was assessed using the Behavioural Trust Inventory (BTI; Gillespie, 2003), a 10- item validated scale based on the willingness to be vulnerable was used to measure trust. The BTI is a standardised instrument (Gillespie, 2003) that measures reliance and disclosure dimensions of trust on a seven-point rating scale ranging from ‘*completely unwilling*’ = 1 to ‘*completely willing*’ = 7. Respondents were requested to rate their willingness to demonstrate trusting behaviours towards the manager on this 7-point rating scale. An example item measuring the first dimension, i.e., reliance-based trust, is: “How willing are you to depend on your manager to back you up in difficult situations?” An

example item measuring the disclosure-based dimension is: “How willing are you to share your personal feelings with your manager?” ($\alpha = .97$)

Goal Adjustment was measured using the Goal Adjustment Scale (GAS; Wrosch et al., 2003), a 10-item scale that assesses goal disengagement and goal re-engagement intentions. The goal disengagement subscale assesses the ease with which respondents would be able to reduce effort and relinquish commitment toward unattainable goals using four items, e.g., “It’s easy for me to reduce my effort towards the goal.”). The goal re-engagement subscale refers to the identification of alternative approaches and committing to the new goal pursuit (Wrosch et al., 2003) and is assessed with six items, e.g., “I would convince myself that I have other meaningful goals to pursue.”) (Wrosch et al., 2003). Items are scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale from ‘*strongly disagree*’=1 to ‘*strongly agree*’ = 5. ($\alpha = .74$).

Turnover intentions were measured by Kelloway and colleagues (1999) using 4-item scale. Respondents were asked how likely they would be to leave their job if their manager reacted to them in the manner described in the scenario. Sample items include “My intention would be to ask people about new job opportunities” “I would think about leaving this organisation”. Items are scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale from one ‘*strongly disagree* = 1 to ‘*strongly agree*’ = 5. ($\alpha = .94$).

Manipulation Checks. There were two experimental manipulation checks, the first check evaluated the extent to which the respondent understood the specific IER strategy, and the second check evaluated the success of the emotional inducement as follows:

IER perceptions were checked using Little and colleagues’ (2012) validated four-dimensional interpersonal emotion management strategies representing behaviours targeted at managing negative emotions in others in the workplace. These four strategies included situation modification (affect-improving affective engagement strategy) ($\alpha = .77$),

reappraisal (affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy) ($\alpha = .78$), distraction (affect-improving distraction strategy) ($\alpha = .80$) and rejecting (affect-worsening suppression strategy) ($\alpha = .89$). Sample items include “I like it when my supervisor removes the negative aspects of situations that are negatively impacting me” for affective engagement strategy ; “I find it helpful when my supervisor distracts my attention from the aspects of problems causing undesired negative emotions in me” for relationship- oriented strategy; “I think it’s appropriate when my supervisor wants me to feel less negative emotions (such as anger or sad), s/he puts my problems into perspective” for cognitive engagement strategy ; “I think it’s appropriate that my supervisor encourages me to keep my emotions to myself” for modulating the emotional response. These questions were answered on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from ‘*Strongly disagree*’ =1 to ‘*Strongly agree*’ =7. In the current study, the scale was modified in three ways (a) based on the referent (i.e., changed the focus to the manager’s relational behaviour rather than rater’s behaviour, (b) the word ‘failure’ was inserted instead of ‘problem’ or ‘situation’ (c) five items were included to assess the control condition (inaction). Sample items for inaction included ‘My manager did not do anything to address the problem.’ ($\alpha = .95$) Followers were asked to rate their reaction to the IER strategies in terms of the degree to which their managers engaged in a specific IER strategies in relation to the followers’ negative emotions ($\alpha = .98$).

The *Discrete Emotions Questionnaire* (DEQ; Harmon-Jones et al., 2016), evaluated the effectiveness of the emotion inducement. The DEQ is sensitive to eight distinct state emotions: anger, disgust, fear, anxiety, sad, happiness, calmness, and desire. Respondents were asked to complete each item with reference to how they felt: “When reading the vignette, to what extent do you feel the following emotions”? with four items used to assess each emotion. Responses were made on a slider scale ranging from ‘*Not at all*’ = 0 to ‘*An extreme amount*’ =100. ($\alpha = .91$). All measures are enclosed in Appendix B.

Attention checks. Two attention checks in the form of instruction response items (*'please select strongly disagree for this item'*) were embedded in the middle of the survey to assess respondents' attentiveness. Instructed-response items, in general, are successful in screening out careless survey respondents to protect the validity of scale measurement (Meade & Craig, 2012).

Control variables. Relying on Bernerth and Aguinis' (2016) rationale regarding the inclusion of control variables, I controlled for age because previous empirical research has highlighted a statistical relationship between age and affect, as measured by JAWS and its sub- dimensions (Uncu et al., 2007) and IER strategies, respectively (Niven 2022). I also controlled for gender of the respondents as prior research (Nozaki & Mikolajczak, 2020) established that gender is likely to influence affect, trust, and IER responses.

Analytical Strategy

I tested my hypotheses in three steps: I tested (a) the impact of IER strategies and emotions on trust and affect, (b) the indirect effects of trust and affect, on the relationship between IER and goal adjustment and turnover intentions, and (c) whether emotions or regulatory focus moderated the indirect effects. I first conducted a two-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to assess the impact of the IER strategies and emotions (Study 1) and regulatory focus (Study 2) on trust, negative affect, turnover intentions, and goal adjustment using SPSS v.25, while controlling for age and gender (Study 1 and 2) and gender of the manager (Study 2).

The second step of my model examines whether the impact of the experimental conditions on turnover intentions and goal adjustment was mediated by trust and negative affect. To examine parallel mediation, I used Maximum Likelihood estimation with 10,000 bootstrap simulations to create 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals (CI) around my indirect effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2004, 2008). All continuous variables were mean-

centred to reduce multi-collinearity. In these analyses, an estimate is considered statistically significant if the 95% CI does not contain zero. This method is preferred, as it does not necessitate the sample distribution to be normal, is more robust against Type 1 and 2 errors and is more powerful than other procedures (Hayes, 2013). To test my parallel mediation hypothesis, I conducted a path analysis. Using the PROCESS macro (V3.5; Hayes, 2018; Model 4), all the experimental conditions were entered as follows: IER strategies were entered as a multi-categorical variable with inaction acting as a reference value, trust, and negative affect as parallel mediators, and turnover intentions, and goal adjustment as outcomes, controlling for age, gender, and gender of the manager and moderator variables.

The third step of my analyses examined the significance of the conditional indirect effects. I expect that the specific emotion experienced by the respondents following failure (Study 1) and followers' regulatory focus (Study 2) would moderate the indirect relations between IER strategies, and followers' turnover intentions and goal adjustment via its effect on trust and negative affect. Specifically, I investigate the moderating effect of emotion (angry vs sad, compared to neutral emotions) and regulatory focus (promotion and prevention) on the relationships between IER strategies, and trust and negative affect respectively (*X1-4 on M1 & M2 relationship*).

To examine the moderated mediation hypothesis, I used Maximum Likelihood estimation with 10,000 bootstrap simulations to create 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals around my indirect effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2004, 2008) with goal adjustment and turnover intentions mean-centred to reduce multi-collinearity. Using the PROCESS macro (V3.5; Hayes, 2018; Model 59), all the experimental conditions were entered as follows: IER strategies were entered as a multi-categorical variable, with inaction acting as a reference value. For study 1, the emotion conditions (angry, sad) were entered as a

second multi-categorical variable, with the neutral condition acting as a reference value. As the moderator is multi-categorical, this test of moderated mediation served as a test of difference between the conditional indirect effects in the three groups coded by the moderator variable. For study 2, regulatory focus was entered as a moderator variable. Respondent's age and gender were entered as covariates in the analyses with gender of the manager added as a covariate in study 2. While my analysis includes an examination of the conditional direct effect of X on M as a first stage and M on Y as a second step, the presence of a statistically significant interaction between the two regressors on a mediator was deemed insufficient evidence of a conditional indirect effect (Hayes, 2015). As recommended by Hayes (2015), the index of moderated mediation was used to formally test whether followers' discrete emotions or regulatory focus would moderate the indirect effect between IER, and goal adjustment and turnover intentions, via trust, and negative affect. A confidence interval that does not contain zero is evidence that the indirect effect is moderated (Hayes, 2015).

4.5 Results

4.5.1 Preliminary Analyses

Means and standard deviations for the manipulation measures (IER and discrete emotions) split by experimental conditions are presented in Table 4.1 and Table 4.2. High means scores for IER and discrete emotions revealed that the manipulation checks demonstrated that the independent variables were manipulated as intended. Means and standard deviation of the key measured variables (mechanisms and outcomes) split by experimental conditions are presented in Table 4.3. Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices and multicollinearity. The maximum value for Mahalanobis distance (20.38) was less than the critical value χ^2 (20.52), suggesting that

there were no substantial multivariate outliers. An analysis of respondents who were excluded from the study for failing both attention checks ($n = 225$) showed no statistically significant difference in terms of age, gender, education, or employment status. Despite the reduction in sample size, the power of the experiments was maintained by eliminating respondents who failed the checks (Oppenheimer et al., 2009). Observation of the bivariate correlation matrix indicated that multicollinearity was not a problem as none of the key variables in the analyses correlated above $r = .70$ (Pallant, 2005). There was no evidence of linearity, or singularity in this study. Homogeneity of variances was assessed by Levene's test (Levene, 1960). As the data violated the assumption of equality of variances normality, a more stringent alpha was set at .01. Correlations between mechanisms, outcomes, and control variables are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4. 1 Means and Standard Deviations for IER Manipulation Measure Split by Experimental Conditions (Study 1)

		IER Strategy Manipulation Measure				
		AIS-Affective Engagement strategy	AIS-Distractio n strategy	AIS-Cognitive Engagement strategy	AWS-Rejecting strategy	Inaction (Control)
Experimental Conditions	N	Mean (Standard Deviation)				
AIS Affective Engagement/ Anger	44	27.34 (4.09)				
AIS Distraction/ Anger	47	27.64 (5.27)				
AIS Cognitive Engagement /Anger	48	25.02 (4.81)				
AWS Rejecting /Anger	47	30.87 (4.97)				
Inaction (Control) /Anger	46	30.22 (4.62)				
AIS Affective Engagement /Sad	45	27.36 (5.34)				
AIS Distraction /Sad	53	27.81 (5.57)				
AIS Cognitive Engagement /Sad	44	26.55 (5.68)				
AWS Rejecting /Sad	49	29.47 (5.85)				
Inaction (Control)/ Sad	39	31.13 (5.17)				
AIS Affective Engagement /Neutral	49	27.88 (4.66)				
AIS Distraction / Neutral	46	26.20 (5.52)				
AIS Cognitive Engagement /Neutral	51	27.24 (4.40)				
Aws Rejecting /Neutral	49	29.33 (4.65)				
Inaction (Control) /Neutral	41	30.44 (4.49)				

N=698; AIS= Affect-Improving; AWS= Affect-Worsening.

Table 4. 2 Means and Standard Deviations for Discrete Emotions Manipulation Measure Split by Experimental Conditions (Study 1)

Experimental Conditions	N	Discrete Emotions Measure			
		Discrete Emotion: Anger		Discrete Emotion: Sadness	
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
AIS Affective Engagement/ Anger	44	22.73	6.17	14.89	5.45
AIS Distraction/ Anger	47	22.06	6.29	14.81	6.14
AIS Cognitive Engagement /Anger	48	23.92	4.95	16.11	6.70
AWS Rejecting /Anger	47	23.68	4.51	15.74	5.97
Inaction (Control) /Anger	46	22.64	5.05	14.69	5.95
AIS Affective Engagement /Sad	45	17.20	6.60	17.38	5.00
AIS Distraction /Sad	53	17.42	6.96	17.00	5.80
AIS Cognitive Engagement /Sad	44	19.36	6.81	18.32	6.59
AWS Rejecting /Sad	49	18.59	6.88	18.63	5.33
Inaction (Control)/ Sad	39	17.97	6.29	11.59	5.45
AIS Affective Engagement /Neutral	49	13.84	6.02	12.49	5.83
AIS Distraction/ Neutral	46	13.26	6.39	12.00	5.82
AIS Cognitive Engagement /Neutral	51	13.82	6.36	12.16	5.08
Aws Rejecting /Neutral	49	12.47	6.80	11.80	5.89
Inaction (Control) /Neutral	41	13.93	6.52	12.27	5.29

N=698; AIS =Affect-Improving; AWS =Affect-Worsening.

Table 4.3 Means and Standard Deviation of the Key Measured Variables (Mechanisms and Outcomes) split by Experimental Conditions (Study 1)

Experimental Conditions	N	Negative Affect	Behavioural Trust	Turnover Intentions	Goal Adjustment
AIS affective engagement / Anger	44	48.18 (30.51)	51.16 (8.31)	11.95 (4.13)	32.93 (4.54)
AIS affective engagement / Sad	45	44.87 (35.93)	54.67 (9.01)	10.22 (3.98)	34.09 (6.32)
AIS affective engagement / Neutral	49	30.68 (29.48)	51.92 (12.31)	10.780 (4.80)	33.51 (5.69)
AIS relationship-oriented / Anger	47	73.17 (28.75)	41.11 (18.32)	14.04 (4.47)	34.17 (5.88)
AIS relationship-oriented / Sad	53	58.38 (36.48)	49.40 (12.19)	11.36 (3.72)	34.08 (5.37)
AIS relationship-oriented / Neutral	46	50.82 (36.16)	48.85 (11.58)	10.87 (4.25)	35.91 (4.80)
AIS cognitive engagement / Anger	48	72.10 (37.34)	39.73 (18.73)	14.06 (4.24)	34.54 (6.07)
AIS cognitive engagement/ Sad	44	57.40 (32.56)	46.86 (14.35)	11.77 (4.24)	35.32 (5.94)
AIS cognitive engagement/ Neutral	51	38.15 (32.83)	48.10 (13.13)	10.06 (4.30)	35.12 (4.76)
AWS rejecting/ Anger	47	95.27 (22.126)	22.60 (14.15)	16.89 (3.28)	32.64 (6.92)
AWS rejecting /Sad	49	88.21 (30.41)	29.78 (16.04)	14.49 (3.71)	33.43 (6.90)
AWS rejecting/ Neutral	49	69.04 (37.75)	31.53 (15.48)	13.14 (4.34)	34.06 (6.18)
Inaction (Control) /Anger	46	89.69 (30.11)	23.80 (15.32)	16.67 (3.04)	33.63 (6.43)
Inaction (Control) / Sad	39	89.69 (31.95)	27.72 (15.28)	15.72 (3.11)	34.21 (5.22)
Inaction (Control) / Neutral	41	74.23 (28.67)	27.39 (14.74)	14.32 (3.58)	34.05 (4.99)

N= 698; AIS = Affect-improving, AWS =Affect-worsening

Table 4. 4 *Correlations between Mechanisms, Outcomes, and Control Variables (Study 1)*

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Negative Affect					
2. Behavioural Trust	-.469**				
3. Turnover Intentions	.587**	-.560**			
4. Goal Adjustment	-.127**	.211**	-.175**		
5. Age	-.119**	-.006	-.127**	-.160**	
6. Gender	-.035	-.024	-.081*	-.002	.074

N= 698 **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.5.2 Hypotheses Testing

Using MANOVA, the first step of my model assessed the impact of the experimental conditions (IER strategies and discrete emotions) on trust, and negative affect simultaneously, using SPSS v.25, while controlling for age and gender of the respondents. The multivariate results indicated that there were significant differences across the experimental conditions (Wilk's Lambda = .572; $F(24, 2359.492) = 17.099$; $p < .001$; $\eta_p^2 = .131$), and the between-subjects effects indicated that these were found for trust ($F = 93.281$, $df = 4$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .354$), negative affect ($F = 44.986$, $df = 4$, $p = .00$, $\eta_p^2 = .21$), turnover intentions ($F = 33.868$, $df = 4$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .166$) but not for goal adjustment ($F = 2.203$, $df = 4$, $p > .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$). There was also a main effect of emotions across the experimental conditions (Wilk's Lambda = .866; $F(8, 1354.00) = 12.573$; $p < .001$; $\eta_p^2 = .06$), and the between-subjects effects indicated that these differences were found for trust ($F = 13.17$, $df = 2$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .037$), negative affect ($F = 32.093$, $df = 2$, $p = .00$, $\eta_p^2 = .086$), turnover intention ($F = 33.466$, $df = 2$, $p < .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .09$) but not for goal adjustment ($F = 1.919$, $df = 2$, $p > .01$). However, there was no interaction effect between IER and emotions across conditions (Wilk's Lambda = .972; $F(32, 2498.248) = .603$; $p = .962$).

4.5.3 Direct Effects of IER Strategies on Trust and Affect

H1a stated that affect-improving engagement strategies will exert a significant direct negative effect on followers' negative affect compared to other strategies under examination. Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that the affective engagement strategy resulted in a statistically significant direct negative effect on followers' negative affect compared to other strategies under examination: distraction: mean diff. = -19.637, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement; mean diff. = -14.935, $p < .01$;

rejecting: mean diff. = -42.522, $p < .01$ and inaction: mean diff. = -42.637, $p < .01$. These findings partially support H1a.

The affect-worsening strategy resulted in statistically significantly higher levels of negative affect compared to the affect-improving strategies: affective engagement: mean diff. = 42.552, $p < .01$, cognitive engagement: mean diff. = 27.617, $p < .01$, and distraction: mean diff. = 22.915, $p < .01$; however, there was no statistical difference between rejecting and inaction. Likewise, inaction resulted in significantly higher levels of negative affect compared to cognitive engagement: mean diff. = 27.811, $p < .01$; distraction: mean diff. = 23.109, $p < .01$; and affective engagement: mean diff. = 42.746, $p < .01$. These findings partially support H1b.

H2a stated that affect-improving strategies will exert a statistically significant direct positive effect on followers' trust compared to the affect-worsening strategy. Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that affective engagement resulted in significantly higher levels of trust compared to all other strategies under examination: distraction: mean diff. = 6.276, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement: mean diff. = 7.930, $p < .01$; rejecting: mean diff. = 24.761, $p < .01$; and inaction: mean diff. = 26.484, $p < .01$. There were no statistically significant differences between cognitive engagement and distraction on followers' levels of trust. These findings partially support H2a.

Additionally, rejecting resulted in statistically significantly lower levels of trust compared to affective engagement: mean diff. = -24.761, $p < .01$, cognitive engagement: mean diff. = -16.831, $p < .01$, and distraction: mean diff. = -18.485, $p < .01$; however, there was no statistical difference with inaction. Inaction resulted in significantly lower levels of trust compared to affective engagement: mean diff. = -26.484, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement: mean diff. = -18.554, $p < .01$, and distraction: mean diff. = -20.208, $p < .01$. These findings fully support H2b.

4.5.4 Direct Effects of IER Strategies on Goal Adjustment and Turnover Intentions

Although I did not hypothesise that the experimental conditions would have a significant direct effect on goal adjustment or turnover intentions, I conducted additional analysis of variance to examine any potential differences, using the same control variables. Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that there are no statistically significant differences between any of the strategies on goal adjustment. There was a statistically significant main effect for IER strategies on turnover intentions: $F(4, 695) = 32.733, p = .00, \eta_p^2 = .166$. Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated using the rejecting strategy resulted in significantly higher turnover intentions compared to affective engagement: mean diff. = 3.872, $p < .01$; distraction: mean diff. = 2.745, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement: mean diff. = 2.856, $p < .01$). Rejecting and inaction did not yield statistically significant differences on followers' turnover intentions. Likewise, there were no statistically significant differences between the affect-improving strategies on turnover intentions. (Table 4.5).

Table 4. 5 *Direct Effects of IER strategies on Turnover Intentions and Goal Adjustment (Study 1)*

IER Strategies	Trust (M1)		Negative affect (M2)		Goal adjustment (Y1)		Turnover Intentions (Y2)	
	Coeff. (SE)	95% CI	Coeff. (SE)	95% CI	Coeff. (SE)	95% CI	Coeff. (SE)	95% CI
Inaction (Control)	-9.25** (3.10)	-15.33, -3.16	23.75** (7.00)	9.99, 37.51	32.34 ** (1.26)	29.86, 34.82	14.79** (.75)	13.32, 16.27
AWS Rejecting	4.44 (3.02)	-1.48, 0.36	-3.76 (6.82)	-17.16, 9.64	-.84 (1.18)	-3.16, 1.49	-.37 (.70)	-1.75, 1.01
AIS Cognitive Engagement	20.40** (3.00)	14.52, 6.28	-34.80 ** (6.78)	-48.11, -21.49	-1.93 (1.31)	-4.51, .65	-.49 (.78)	-2.02, 1.04
AIS-Distracton	21.49** (3.06)	15.48, 27.50	-22.53** (6.92)	-36.12, -8.94	-1.06 (1.33)	-3.68, 1.55	-.41 (.79)	-1.96, 1.14
AIS Affective Engagement	24.69 ** (3.03)	18.75, 30.63	-43.74 ** (6.84)	-57.17, -30.30	-4.23 ** (1.39)	-6.96, -1.51	.97 (.82)	-.65, 2.59

N= 696. *p < .05; **p < .01; AIS =Affect-improving; AWS =Affect-worsening; Trust= trust in the manager; negative affect= followers' negative affect. All parameters are unstandardised.

4.5.5 Testing for Mediated Relationships

4.5.5.1 The Indirect Effects of IER Strategies on Goal Adjustment via Trust and Negative Affect

Findings show that there were no indirect effects of IER on goal adjustment via negative affect, thus failing to support H3a and H3d. However, all affect-improving strategies, namely affective engagement ($\beta = 2.39$; 95% CL [1.50, 3.31]), distraction ($\beta = 1.84$; 95% CL [1.13, 2.61]), and cognitive engagement ($\beta = 1.68$; 95% CL [1.01, 2.43]), had an indirect positive effect on goal adjustment, via trust supporting H4a. Conversely, rejecting did not exert an indirect effect on goal adjustment via trust, failing to support H3c. Overall, this model significantly accounted for 4.90% of the variance on turnover intentions, $F(7, 688) = 5.02$, $p = .0001$ (See Table 4.6).

4.5.5.2 The Indirect Effects of IER Strategies on Turnover Intentions via Trust and Negative Affect

H3b stated that affect-improving strategies will exert an indirect effect on turnover intentions, via negative affect, such that affect-improving strategies will be negatively associated with negative affect, which in turn, will be negatively associated with turnover intentions. In support of this hypothesis, my findings indicated that affect-improving strategies: affective engagement ($\beta = -1.88$; 95% CL [-2.44, -1.39]), cognitive engagement ($\beta = -1.23$; 95% CL [-1.70, -.81]), and distraction ($\beta = -1.02$; 95% CL [-1.45, -.64]), exerted an indirect effect on turnover intentions via negative affect. In support of H4b, my findings indicated that affect-improving strategies: affective engagement ($\beta = -2.46$; 95% CL [-3.05, -1.90]), cognitive engagement ($\beta = -1.72$; [95% CL -2.24, -1.26]), and distraction ($\beta = -1.90$; 95% CL [-2.43, -1.42]), exerted an indirect effect on turnover intentions via trust. Contrary

to my H3d and H4d, I did not find a statistically significant indirect effect of rejecting on turnover intentions, via trust or negative affect Overall, this model significantly accounted for 24% of the variance on turnover intentions, $F(4, 688) = 31.49, p = .0001$ (See Table 4.7).

Table 4. 6 Parameter Estimates of the Parallel Mediation Model Examining the Mediating Role of Trust and Affect in the Relationship Between IER Strategies and Goal Adjustment (Study 1)

Parameters		Coeff. (SE)	95% CI	Parameters		Coeff. (SE)	95% CI
Path c	Y- Intercept	31.84 ** (1.14)	29.61, 34.07	Path c'	Y- Intercept	29.16** (1.14)	26.44, 31.88
	REJ – GAS	-.61 (.67)	-1.97, .75		REJ – GAS	-.77 (.67)	-2.09, .56
	CGE – GAS	-.86 (.69)	-.51, 2.23		CGE – GAS	-.98 (.74)	-2.44, .47
	DIS – GAS	-.54 (.69)	-.82, 1.90		DIS – GAS	-1.45 (.74)	-2.90, .01
	PFE– GAS	-.65 (.70)	-2.03, .73		PFE– GAS	-3.30 ** (.81)	-4.89, -1.71
	R ² = .01, p > .05				R ² = .03**		
Path a	Y- Intercept	76. (64)	63.03, 88.25	Path a₁	Y- Intercept	34.69 (1.14)	29.09, 40.29
	REJ – NA	.18 (3.92)	-7.52, 7.87		REJ – Trust	1.75 (1.74)	-1.67, 5.16
	CGE – NA	-27.62 ** (3.94)	-35.35, -19.88		CGE – Trust	18.48 ** (1.75)	15.04, 21.91
	DIS– NA	-22.90 ** (3.92)	-30.59, -15.20		DIS– Trust	20.34 ** (1.74)	16.92, 23.75
	PFE – NA	-42.36 ** (3.98)	-50.18, -34.54		PFE – Trust	26.35 ** (1.77)	22.89, 29.82
Path b	NA – GAS	-.01 (.01)	-.02, .01	Path b₁	Trust- GAS	.10** (.02)	.10, .12
Indirect effects of IER on GAS via negative affect	REJ – NA- GAS	-.01 (.03)	-.08, .07	Indirect effects of IER strategies on GAS Via Trust	REJ - Trust - GAS	.16 (.17)	-.17, .51
	CGE – NA- GAS	.17 (.19)	-.20, .55		CGE – Trust - GAS	1.68** (.36)	1.02, 2.43
	DIS – NA- GAS	.14 (.16)	-.17, .46		DIS – Trust - GAS	1.84** (.38)	1.13, 2.61
	PFE -NA-GAS	.25 (.28)	-.30, .84		PFE – Trust - GAS	2.39** (.46)	1.50, 3.32
Total model							
R² = .049; F (7,688) = 5.02, p < .01							

N= 696; * p < .05; **p < .01; 95% CI = bias-corrected and accelerated 95% confidence interval with a resample procedure of 10000 bootstrap samples. GAS = goal adjustment; PFE = affect-improving affective engagement strategy; DIS = affect-improving distraction strategy; CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; REJ = affect-worsening rejecting strategy; Trust= trust in the manager; NA= followers' negative affect.

Table 4. 7 Parameter Estimates of the Parallel Mediation Model Examining the Mediating Role of Trust and Affect in the Relationship between IER Strategies and Turnover Intentions (Study 1)

Parameters		Coeff. (SE)	95% CI	Parameters	Coeff. (SE)	95% CI	
	Y- Intercept	.15**(.10)	13.55, 16.65	Y- Intercept	14**(.97)	.13, .35	
Path c	REJ – TI	-.68 (.48)	-1.62, .27	REJ – TI	-.52 (.55)	-1.31, .27	
	CGE – TI	-3.50** (.49)	-4.45, -2.54	Path c'	CGE – TI	-.55 (.57)	-1.41, .32
	DIS – TI	-3.44 ** (.48)	-4.38, -2.49	DIS – TI	-.52 (.44)	-1.39, .34	
	PFE– TI	-4.42** (.49)	-5.39, -3.46	PFE– TI	-.09 (.48)	-1.03, .86	
R²	R ² =.14**				R ² =.002, p>.05		
Path b₁	NA - TI	.04** (.01)	.03, .05	Path b₂	Trust - TI	-.12** (.01)	-.15, -.09
Indirect effects of IER on TI via negative affect	REJ – NA- TI	-.01 (.16)	-.32, .33	Indirect effects of IER on TI via trust	REJ - Trust - TI	-.16 (.17)	-.50, .04
	CGE – NA- TI	-1.23 ** (.23)	-1.70, -.81		CGE – Trust - TI	-1.72** (.25)	- 2.22, - 1.27
	DIS – NA- TI	-1.02 ** (.21)	-1.44, -.63		DIS – Trust - TI	-1.89 ** (.26)	-2.42, -1.42
	PFE – NA- TI	1.88 ** (.27)	-2.44, -1.38		PFE – Trust - TI	2.46** (.29)	-3.50, -1.91
Total model							
R² =.24							
F (7,688) = 31.49, p<.01							

N= 696. * p< .05; **p < .01; 95% CI = bias-corrected and accelerated 95% confidence interval with a resample procedure of 10000 bootstrap samples. PFE = affect-improving affective engagement strategy; DIS = affect-improving distraction strategy; CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; REJ = affect-worsening rejecting strategy; Trust= trust in the manager; NA= followers' negative affect; TI= Turnover intentions.

4.5.6 *Testing for Moderated Mediation*

Results showed that the direct association between IER strategies and goal adjustment was not moderated by followers' discrete emotions experienced following failure. The association between IER strategies and trust, and negative affect respectively, was not conditional on the emotion experienced by the respondent post-failure. The association between trust and goal adjustment, and between negative affect and goal adjustment respectively, was not conditional on the discrete emotion. A formal test of moderated mediation based on the index term (Hayes, 2015), revealed that the indirect effects of the cognitive engagement on goal adjustment via negative affect were conditional on the moderators (angry and sad) (slope = -1.06, CL [-2.30, -.02]). Specifically, the model demonstrated that there were significant differences in the conditional indirect effects of cognitive engagement on goal adjustment via negative affect between those who were in the neutral condition ($\omega = .86$, CI = .12, 1.82), compared to those who were in the sad condition ($\omega = -2.10$, CI = -1.02, -.52), but no evidence of conditional indirect effect of cognitive engagement strategy for those in the angry condition. In support of H5a, discrete emotions moderated the strength of the mediated relationship between the cognitive engagement strategy and goal adjustment via negative affect, such that the mediated relationship was stronger for those in the sad condition. Specifically, for those who were in the cognitive engagement strategy condition, the relationship between negative affect and goal adjustment was weaker for those who were in the sad condition, than for those who in the neutral condition. No other significant effects were found.

This analysis was replicated with turnover intentions as the outcome variable. The direct association between IER strategies and turnover intentions was not moderated by discrete emotions. The association between IER strategies and trust, and IER and negative

affect, was not conditional on the discrete emotions. There were also no significant differences between the conditional indirect effects of IER on turnover intentions via trust based on discrete emotions. However, the interaction between negative affect and the discrete emotion on turnover intentions was significant: $F(2,673) = 4.10, p = .02$, accounting for a minor change in R^2 of 0.01 (*path b*). Specifically, while results showed as negative affect increased, so too did turnover intentions; however, this negative interaction effect was weaker for those who were in the sad condition. ($\beta = -.02, p < .001$). A formal test of moderated mediation based on the index term (Hayes, 2015) revealed that the indirect effects of the cognitive engagement strategy on turnover intentions via negative affect was conditional on the moderators (angry and sad) (slope = 1.35, 95% CL [.16, 2.55]). Specifically, the model demonstrates that there are significant differences in the conditional indirect effects of cognitive engagement on turnover intentions between those who were in the neutral condition ($\omega = -2.09, CI = -3.11, -1.19$), and those in the angry condition ($\omega = -.74, CI = -1.47, -.14$), but no evidence of a significant differences in the conditional indirect effect between those who were in the neutral condition, and those in the sad condition. In partial support of H5a, the discrete emotion associated with the failure moderated the strength of the mediated relationship between the cognitive engagement strategy and turnover intentions via negative affect, such that the mediated relationship was weaker for those in the angry condition compared to those in the neutral condition. The conditional indirect effects of rejecting on turnover intentions was non-significant. Results of the moderated mediation analysis on the direct and indirect conditional effects are provided in Table 4.8.

Table 4. 8 *Conditional Indirect Effects of IER Strategies on Goal Adjustment and Turnover Intentions via Discrete Emotions (Study 1)*

Conditional Indirect effects of IER Strategies on Followers' Behavioural Intentions Via		Neutral		Sad		Angry	
		<i>Effect (SE)</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>Effect (SE)</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>Effect (SE)</i>	<i>95% CI</i>
REJ – Goal adjustment	Indirect 1: Trust	.43(.35)	-.17, 1.21	.21 (.36)	-.49, .94	-.10 (.26)	-.65, .38
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-.22 (.50)	-1.26, .75	-.54 (.43)	-1.46, .25
	Indirect 2: NA	.09 (.20)	-.26,.54	-.01 (.09)	-.24, .17	-.01 (.10)	-.27, .19
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-.10 (.22)	-.60, .28	-10 (.22)	-61, .29
REJ – Turnover intentions	Indirect 1: Trust	-.34(.26)	-.91, .14	-.20 (.32)	-.84,.41	.13 (.29)	-.43, .72
	Index of Moderated Mediation			.14 (.42)	-.67, .98	.16 (.49)	-.78, 1.16
	Indirect 2: NA	-.23 (.43)	-1.13, .58	-.06 (.23)	-.56,.35	.22 (.24)	-.26,.72
	Index of Moderated Mediation			.16 (.49)	-.78, 1.16	.44(.50)	-.50, 1.46
CGE - Goal adjustment	Indirect 1: Trust	1.98** (.64)	.79, 3.22	1.94** (.75)	.64, 3.57	1.24** (.54)	.34, 2.41
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-.04 (.99)	-1.90, 2.02	-.74 (.84)	-2.38, .95
	Indirect 2: NA	.86 ** (.42)	.15, 1.80	-.21** (.38)	-1.01, .53	.03 ** (.25)	-.55, .50
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-1.06** (.57)	- 2.28, -.02	-.83 (.50)	-1.97, .03
CGE - Turnover intentions	Indirect 1: Trust	-1.54 ** (.47)	-2.56, -.71	-1.83 ** (.46)	-2.80, -1.00	-1.51** (.40)	-2.37, -.80
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-.29 (.66)	-1.57, 1.05	.028 (.62)	-1.13, 1.27
	Indirect 2: NA	-2.09** (.48)	-3.10, -1.21	-1.02 ** (.35)	-1.80, -.43	-.74 ** (.34)	-1.49 -1.14
	Index of Moderated Mediation			1.07 (.60)	-.094, 2.24	1.35 **(.59)	.21, 2.52

Conditional Indirect effects of IER strategies on Followers' Behavioural Intentions Via		Neutral		Sad		Angry	
		Effect (SE)	95% CI	Effect (SE)	95% CI	Effect (SE)	95% CI
DIS - Goal adjustment	Indirect 1: Trust	2.09**(.70)	.81, 3.53	2.19** (.76)	.78, 3.77	1.35** (.56)	.38, 2.56
	Index of Moderated Mediation			.10 (1.04)	-1.92, 2.16	-.73 (.89)	-2.49, 1.01
	Indirect 2: NA	.55(.32)	.07, 1.30	-.21 (.38)	-1.02, .53	.02 (.23)	-.48, .46
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-.76 (.49)	-1.81, .12	-.53 (.39)	-1.41, .13
DIS-Turnover intentions	Indirect 1: Trust	-1.62 (.49)	-2.69, -.76	-2.06 (.49)	-3.10, -1.17	-1.65 (.41)	-2.52, -.92
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-.43(.70)	-1.80, .97	-.03 (.63)	-1.24, 1.27
	Indirect 2: NA	-1.35(.45)	-2.31, -.53	.16 (.49)	-1.01**(.34)	-1.77, -.43	-1.31, -.12
	Index of Moderated Mediation			.34(.56)	-.77, 1.45	.68 (.55)	-.38, 1.78
PFE -Goal adjustment	Indirect 1: Trust	2.40 **(.73)	.99, 3.86	2.73** (.94)	.98, 4.64	2.15** (.78)	.66, 3.73
	Index of Moderated Mediation			.33 (1.19)	-1.96, 2.76	-.25 (1.07)	-2.31, 1.88
	Indirect 2: NA	1.07 ** (.53)	.19, 2.26	-.29 (.53)	-1.35, .75	.06 (.56)	-1.07, 1.13
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-1.37 (.75)	-2.92, .01	-1.01 (.78)	-2.68, .39
PFE-Turnover intentions	Indirect 1: Trust	-1.86** (.52)	-2.98, -.92	-2.57** (.57)	-3.74, -1.51	-2.62 **(.48)	-3.66, -1.78
	Index of Moderated Mediation			-.70 (.78)	-2.23, .86	-.76 (.71)	-2.14, .66
	Indirect 2: NA	-2.63** (.50)	-3.65, -1.70	-1.43** (.44)	-2.38 -.70	-1.73** (.44)	-2.65, -.94
	Index of Moderated Mediation			1.19 (.66)	-.13, 2.46	.89 (.67)	-.42, 2.17

N= 696; * p< .05; **p < .01; 95% CI = bias-corrected and accelerated 95% confidence interval with a resample procedure of 10000 bootstrap samples. PFE = affect-improving affective engagement strategy; DIS = affect-improving distraction strategy; CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; REJ = affect-worsening rejecting strategy; Trust= trust in the manager; NA= followers' negative affect; Indirect 1: Trust and Indirect 2: NA represent the conditional indirect effects of the relationship between the IER strategy and outcome via trust and negative affect respectively.

4.6 Discussion

In this study, I examined a moderated mediation model to address the gaps in research regarding the effective management of followers' negative affective reactions to salient goal failure (Patzelt et al., 2021). The results support some, but not all, of my hypotheses. Specifically, this experimental study demonstrates that, in the context of goal failure, affect-improving affective engagement strategy is related to lower levels of negative affect and higher levels of trust in the manager compared to all other IER strategies under examination.

My results support the importance of examining affect and trust as parallel mediators in the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions. Findings show that trust, but not negative affect, connects affect-improving strategies and goal adjustment. However, the relationship between affect-improving strategies on turnover intentions is predicted by both affect and trust. This finding extends the limited research on IER and behavioural outcomes (Vasquez et al., 2020) by showing trust as an important (new) mediator in IER-behavioural intentions relationship. Therefore, this research addresses a gap in the literature regarding our understanding of the mediating processes underpinning IER and behavioural intentions within proximal leader-follower relations. Although affect-worsening strategy (rejecting) is directly related to goal adjustment and turnover intentions respectively, this relationship is not mediated by negative affect or trust. This finding supports Vasquez and colleagues' (2020) contention that understanding the impact of affect-worsening strategies on followers' outcomes seems to involve more complexity.

My moderated mediation analysis demonstrates broad support for hypotheses 5a and thus addresses the missing role of person-level context in the IER theory. Discrete emotions had a significant moderating effect on the indirect relationship between cognitive engagement

strategy and goal adjustment, and turnover intentions respectively, via negative affect.

Specifically, for those in the angry condition, the positive relationship between cognitive engagement strategy and negative affect was weaker, which in turn, was associated with higher turnover intentions than reported in the neutral condition. Similarly, for those in the sad condition, the positive relationship between cognitive engagement strategy and negative affect was weaker, which in turn, was associated with lower levels of goal adjustment than reported in the neutral condition. The results therefore demonstrate that the indirect relationship between cognitive engagement and followers' behavioural intentions via affect varies depending on what discrete emotions is experienced post-failure. By contrast, my results do not support moderated mediation of discrete emotions on the link between IER strategies, behavioural intentions, and trust. In a follow-up study (Study 2), I aim to provide evidence for the robustness of these findings by including a second, theoretically salient contextual variable (regulatory focus) and extending the examination of 'person-level' contextual conditions.

Study 2

Study 1 tested a moderation mediation model that examined whether the association between leaders' IER and followers' goal adjustment, and turnover intentions respectively, was mediated by negative affect and trust, as well as examining the conditional indirect effects of discrete emotions (angry and sad) on the IER-behavioural intentions relationship. Study 2 sought to replicate the findings from Study 1 and extend the investigation in two ways:

First, in Study 1, affective engagement was related to lower levels of negative affect and higher levels of trust in the manager compared to all other IER strategies under examination. It is plausible that the predictive utility of affective engagement may be related to external attributions of causality embedded in the experimental manipulation.

For example, the experimental manipulation in Study 1 reflects salient goal failure arising from perceived transgressions by a co-worker (angry manipulation) and company cutbacks (sad manipulation), which are factors outside the control of the follower. Based on attribution theory (Heider, 1958; Weiner, 1986, 2018), it is plausible that attributions of causality and responsibility for the failure may influence the perceptions of IER strategies. Implying that the co-worker and the company are to blame for the followers' upset (attributions of causality) may communicate to the respondents in Study 1 that the manager, as the agent of the organisation, is also, by extension, responsible for the problem (attributions of responsibility). Hence, the only way to improve the followers' negative affect or enhance trust is to employ an affective engagement strategy. To mitigate against the potential confounding effect of attributions of causality on perceptions of IER, the experimental manipulation used in this study aims to foster internal judgments of causality for the failure (e.g., the follower is unable to balance studying and working full-time).

Second, how IER strategies relate to followers' behavioural intentions may vary according to other contextual variables, apart from discrete emotions. For example, literature on salient goal failure highlighted the relevance of regulatory focus in deciding affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses (Higgins, 2022). Followers may use their regulatory focus to evaluate what feels right in terms of IER and this feeling of "*rightness*" may strengthen or weaken affect and trust responses.

Thus, the central aim of the Study 2 was to replicate my findings regarding the direct and indirect effects of a managers' IER on followers' goal adjustment and turnover intentions via affect and trust, in the context of an internally attributed work-related failure. Second, I investigate whether the direct and indirect effects of a manager's use of IER strategies on behavioural intentions vary as a function of the followers' regulatory focus as indicative of a 'person-level' contextual variable that may influence how

individuals evaluate and judge IER.

4.7 Method

4.7.1 Sample and Procedure

Respondents were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Criteria for eligibility to take part in Study 2 were identical to Study 1. This study used a between-subjects experimental design, which manipulated regulatory focus (prevention and promotion-focused) x four IER strategies (affective engagement strategy, cognitive engagement strategy, distraction strategy, rejecting) and neutral condition "inaction," resulting in 10 conditions. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of these conditions, using the random allocation sequence feature of Qualtrics.

Out of the 677 respondents who completed the experimental study, the final sample comprised 482 respondents: 209 cases were removed due to incomplete responses or because of failing the manipulation and/or attention checks (165 cases were excluded due to failed manipulation checks, with an additional 30 respondents excluded due to failed attention checks). Compared to respondents who passed the manipulation checks, respondents who failed the checks ($n = 165$) showed no statistically significant difference in the effect of strategies on any of the variables. Using G*Power analysis, Faul and colleagues (2009) demonstrated that a sample size of $N \geq 160$ would achieve sufficient power to detect medium and large effects. Thus, the present study's sample size ($N = 482$) had sufficient power (Appendix A: Experimental Manipulation, Study 2). The final sample included 52.5% female, 47.5% male, $M_{age} = 38.71$ years, $SD = 12.17$, range 19-78 years. 59.8% self-identified as followers, with 40.2% in junior (13.7%), middle (20.1%), or senior (6.2%) management roles. 75% of respondents were employed full-time, 16.8% on a part-time basis, and 7.7% employed in casual labour. One respondent had failed to specify their role in their organisation and two respondents did not report their

employment status. Three respondents did not report their age.

4.7.2 *Experimental Manipulation*

Respondents read a vignette where they were instructed to imagine themselves as a follower in a company who had, some months ago, availed of a funded company scheme to undertake a part-time master's degree to enhance existing occupational skills. They had failed the first year of the two-year programme, as they found it hard to balance studying and working full-time. They requested a meeting with their manager, "Sam" to discuss the failure. The regulatory focus inducement was given in two ways: firstly, through the rationale for choosing to engage in a master's degree which reflected prior research on the differences between promotion and prevention focus (see Halvorsen & Higgins, 2013). Promotion focus is, at its core, about satisfying the need for accomplishment, advancement, growth and fulfilling desires; goals are perceived as idealistic opportunities to gain something (Halvorsen & Higgins, 2013). Therefore, promotion focus was induced by informing respondents that they engaged in a master's degree because they had *'always wanted to have a master's degree'... 'having a master's degree fulfilled hopes and aspirations'* and represented *"an exciting opportunity to self-improve, to learn new ideas, and enhance your professional network and promotional prospects"*. Conversely, prevention focus is about satisfying the need for security, keeping safe, and doing what is right; goals are perceived as something that individuals feel they ought to achieve and are perceived as duties, obligations, or responsibilities and appraised in terms of avoidance of loss (Halvorsen & Higgins, 2013). Hence, prevention focus was induced by informing respondents that they engaged in a master's degree because *'you saw a master's degree as something you should do or ought to do...'* *'having a master's degree would protect your present position (your role and salary) in the company and safeguard against any possible downsizing or demotion in the future.'*

Secondly, the regulatory inducement was also accomplished via a visual stimulus of the respondents' 'performance appraisal' which described specific attributes associated with prevention /promotion focus drawn from the well-validated Work Regulatory Scale (Neubert, 2008). Sample items on the 'performance appraisal' to induce a promotion focus included '*motivated, ambitious person,*' '*willing to take risks.*' Sample items on the 'performance appraisal' to induce a prevention focus included '*concentrates on completing tasks and work duties correctly.*' Respondents were informed that prior to the scheduled appointment with their manager, they reviewed their last performance appraisal as a reminder of how they were doing at work. The vignette ended where the manager used one IER strategy in response to the situation the follower was in, as follows:

In the affective engagement condition, the manager changes the aspects of the situation causing the problem by offering a temporary reduction in workload to provide the opportunity to study more and resit the exams next term.

In the distraction strategy condition, the manager offers a beverage and talks about potential involvement in an upcoming work project.

In the cognitive engagement strategy condition, the manager reframes the failure by suggesting to the respondent that "notwithstanding failing the exams, you have gained knowledge that perhaps can be applied in the current position".

The rejecting strategy condition was induced by the manager directing respondents to inhibit expression of the emotion. Respondents were told "to "forget about it" and "move on".

In the inaction condition, the manager acknowledges the emotion-evoking situation, offering no suggestions, and the respondent "leaves the office without any direction".

4.7.3 Measures

Negative affect ($\alpha = .94$), *trust* ($\alpha = .96$), *goal adjustment* ($\alpha = .90$) and *turnover intentions* ($\alpha = .94$) were assessed using the same measures as Study 1.

Manipulation Checks. There were two experimental manipulation checks. Like Study 1, using Little and colleagues' (2012) scale, respondents were asked to rate their understanding of the degree to which the manager engaged in a specific IER strategies: affect-improving affective engagement strategy: $\alpha = .73$; affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy: $\alpha = .85$; affect-improving distraction strategy: $\alpha = .84$; affect-worsening rejecting strategy: $\alpha = .80$) or failed to act (control condition) ($\alpha = .89$) A question embedded at the beginning of the survey was used to assess the extent to which respondents perceived the regulatory focus manipulation, based on theoretically salient aspects of the prevention /promotion system (Higgins, 2022; Halvorsen & Higgins, 2013): "It was important for you to undertake the master's degree because it was (a) something that you felt you *should, or ought* to do, as part of your *duties and responsibilities?* or (b) something that you felt you *wanted to do* to fulfil a *hope or aspiration?*"

Attention checks. An attention check in the form of an unrelated question that was like the survey questions in length and response format was embedded after the dependent variables to assess respondents' attentiveness.

Control variables. Like Study 1, I controlled for age and gender of the respondent. I also controlled for perceptions of gender of the manager "Sam" (the gender was unspecified), as it was likely to influence expectations regarding strategy use (López-Pérez & Pacella, 2021).

4.8 Results

4.8.1 Preliminary Analyses

Responses to regulatory focus and the IER manipulation checks are presented in Tables 4.9 and 4.10. Means and standard deviations of the variables (mechanisms and outcomes) by experimental condition are presented in Table 4.11. Correlations between mechanisms, outcomes, and control variables are presented in Table 4.12. Preliminary assumption testing was conducted to check for normality, linearity, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance covariance matrices, and multicollinearity, with no serious violations noted. Prior to testing the hypotheses, scores on the Mahalanobis distance were examined for deciding on retention or deletion of cases with multivariate outliers (Pallant, 2005). Best-practice recommendations for defining, identifying, and handling outliers recommended by Aguinis and colleagues (2013) were followed. Using single construct techniques (e.g., box plot) (Aguinis et al., 2013), a visual inspection of the potential error outliers followed by a quantitative analysis of the outliers in the top and bottom 2.5% in a percentage analysis resulted in all outliers being retained. None of the model variables exceeded the recommended inter-correlation value of > 0.80 (Katz, 2011), signifying a minimal risk of multi-collinearity in the data (Pallant, 2005). However, the assumption of equality of variance was violated on the two dependent variables (negative affect and trust); therefore, the alpha level for determine significance was set conservatively at .01.

Table 4. 9 *Frequency Table Indicating Responses to Regulatory Focus Manipulation Check split by Experimental Condition (Study 2)*

Experimental Conditions	Total no. of respondents in each experimental condition	No of Respondents who Reported the correct regulatory focus induced state	
		Prevention focus	Promotion focus
Prevention-Focused / AIS Affective Engagement	70	53	
Prevention-Focused/ AIS Distraction	62	49	
Prevention-Focused / AIS Cognitive Engagement Condition	69	59	
Prevention-Focused / AWS Rejecting	68	50	
Prevention-Focused/ Control Condition	71	57	
Promotion-Focused / AIS Affective Engagement	63		50
Promotion-Focused/ AIS Distraction	61		42
Promotion-Focused / AIS Cognitive Engagement	71		49
Promotion-Focused / AWS Rejecting	74		53
Promotion-Focused /Control	68		50

N = 677. AIS= Affect-improving; AWS = Affect-worsening

Table 4. 10 Means and Standard Deviation of the IER Manipulation Measure split by Experimental Condition (Study 2)

Experimental Conditions	IER Strategy Manipulation Measure				
	AIS Affective Engagement	AIS Distraction	AIS Cognitive Engagement	AWS Rejection	Inaction Control
	N	Mean (Std. Deviation)			
AIS Affective Engagement / Prevention-Focused	48	25.37 (4.60)			
AIS Affective Engagement / Promotion-Focused	39	28.44 (4.15)			
AIS Distraction / Prevention-Focused	46	12.79 (4.58)			
AIS Distraction / Promotion-Focused	35	25.58 (5.00)			
AIS Cognitive Engagement / Prevention-Focused	46	28.17 (5.52)			
AIS Cognitive Engagement / Promotion-Focused	43	26.05 (5.29)			
AWS Rejecting / Prevention-Focused	48	28.49 (4.50)			
AWS Rejecting / Promotion-Focused	56	28.22 (3.99)			
Inaction Control / Prevention-Focused	44	26.23 (5.71)			
Inaction Control / Promotion-Focused	51	28.42 (5.94)			

N= 456. AIS= Affect-improving; AWS = Affect-worsening

Table 4. 11 Means and Standard Deviations of the Variables (Mechanisms and Outcomes) By Experimental Condition (Study 2)

Experimental Conditions	N	Negative Affect	Behavioural Trust	Turnover Intentions	Goal Adjustment
AIS Affective Engagement / Prevention-Focused	48	25.80 (23.62)	52.54 (11.53)	7.08 (3.57)	25.52 (8.70)
AIS Affective Engagement / Promotion-Focused	39	21.31 (26.13)	53.61 (9.23)	7.23 (3.27)	22.49 (7.21)
AIS Distraction / Prevention-Focused	46	37.96 (28.13)	53.17 (8.64)	8.37 (3.47)	32.33 (6.49)
AIS Distraction / Promotion-Focused	35	35.48 (25.86)	52.20 (9.15)	8.06 (3.56)	31.57 (7.03)
AIS Cognitive Engagement / Prevention-Focused	46	29.44 (27.21)	52.00 (11.41)	8.39 (3.56)	32.61 (7.67)
AIS Cognitive Engagement / Promotion-Focused	43	22.27 (21.22)	51.84 (12.27)	8.47 (3.65)	30.95 (7.17)
AWS Rejecting / Prevention-Focused	48	55.11 (31.69)	32.10 (13.86)	11.04 (4.08)	29.06 (7.86)
AWS Rejecting / Promotion-Focused	56	61.49 (29.17)	30.32 (13.11)	13.09 (4.07)	29.38 (8.05)
Inaction Control / Prevention-Focused	44	60.44 (25.23)	33.59 (13.57)	12.20 (4.27)	28.93 (8.44)
Inaction Control / Promotion-Focused	51	64.98 (22.17)	35.31 (12.95)	12.25 (3.95)	29.73 (7.88)

N= 456. AIS= Affect-Improving; AWS = Affect-Worsening

Table 4. 12 *Correlations Between Mechanisms, Outcomes, and Control Variables (Study 2)*

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Negative Affect						
2. Behavioural Trust	-.219**					
3. Turnover Intentions	.586**	-.275**				
4. Goal Adjustment	.172**	.150**	.302**			
5. Age	-.140**	-.064	-.142**	-.107**		
6. Gender	-.062	-.004	-.039	-.098*	.023	
7. Perceived Gender of 'Sam' (Manager)	-.245**	.077*	-.198**	-.068	.052	.125**

N= 482 **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.8.1.1 Main effects and interaction effects

A two-way between-groups multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed to investigate differences in the effects of the experimental conditions (IER strategies and regulatory focus: promotion focus and prevention focus) on trust, negative affect, goal adjustment, and turnover intentions, using SPSS v.25, while controlling for age, gender of the respondents and perceived gender of the manager. I tested my hypotheses in three steps: I tested (a) the impact of the IER strategies on trust and affect, (b) the indirect effects of trust and effect on the relationship between IER and goal adjustment and turnover intentions, and (c) whether regulatory focus moderated the indirect effects.

The multivariate results indicated that there were significant differences in the main effect of IER strategies across the experimental conditions (Wilk's Lambda = .463; $F(16, 1344.86) = 24.108$; $p < .001$; $\eta_p^2 = .17$), and the between-subjects effects indicated that these were found for trust ($F = 37.81$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .25$), negative affect ($F = 75.17$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .40$), goal adjustment ($F = 16.75$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .13$) and turnover intentions ($F = 32.41$, $df = 4$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .22$). There was no significant main effect of regulatory focus (Wilk's Lambda = .992; $F(4, 440.00) = .910$; $p = .46$). Moreover, there was no significant interaction effect between regulatory focus and IER strategies on the dependent variables (Wilk's Lambda = .95; $F(16, 1344.86) = .80$; $p = .69$): trust: $F(4, 44.91) = .32$; $p = .87$; negative affect: $F(4, 704.91) = 1.05$; $p = .38$; turnover intentions: $F(4, 21.94) = 1.53$; $p = .19$; or goal adjustment: $F(4, 30.63) = .52$; $p = .72$.

4.8.1.2 Direct Effects of IER Strategies on Trust and Affect

H1a stated that affect-improving engagement strategies (affective engagement and cognitive engagement) would exert a direct significant negative effect on followers' negative affect compared to other strategies under examination. Pairwise comparisons with

a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that using affective engagement, resulted in lower levels of negative affect compared to the distraction strategy: mean diff. = -12.71, $p < .01$; rejecting: mean diff. = -33.26, $p < .01$, and inaction: mean diff. = -37.15, $p < .01$. Affective engagement and cognitive engagement were statistically comparable in terms of their effect on negative affect: mean diff. = -2.26, $p > .01$. There was no significant difference between distraction and cognitive engagement on negative affect. Thus, H1a was fully supported.

H1b stated that rejecting would exert a direct significant positive effect on followers' negative affect compared to other strategies under examination. Rejecting resulted in significantly higher levels of negative affect compared to affective engagement: mean diff. = 33.26, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement: mean diff. = 31.00, $p < .01$, and distraction: mean diff. = 20.55, $p < .01$; however, there was no statistical difference between rejecting and inaction. Likewise, inaction resulted in significantly higher levels of negative affect compared to affective engagement: mean diff. = 37.15, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement: mean diff. = 34.89, $p < .01$, and distraction: mean diff. = 24.44, $p < .01$. Thus, H1b was partially supported.

H2a stated that affect-improving strategies would exert a significant direct positive effect on followers' trust in the manager compared to rejecting. Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment did not indicate any statistical differences between the effect of affect-improving strategies on trust. Affective engagement was statistically comparable in terms of its effect on trust compared to cognitive engagement: mean diff. = 1.51, $p > .01$, and distraction: mean diff. = .66, $p > .01$ strategies. H2a was fully supported.

H2b hypothesized that rejecting will exert a significant direct negative effect on followers' trust compared to the affect-improving strategies. The results fully supported this. Rejecting resulted in significantly lower levels of trust compared to affective

engagement: mean diff. = -22.53, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement: mean diff. = -21.02, $p < .01$, and distraction: mean diff. = -21.87, $p < .01$; however, there was no statistical difference between rejecting and inaction. Likewise, inaction resulted in significantly lower levels of trust compared to affective engagement: mean diff. = -18.98, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement: mean diff. = -17.47, $p < .01$, and distraction: mean diff. = -18.33, $p < .01$.

4.8.1.3 Direct Effects of IER Strategies on Goal Adjustment and Turnover Intentions

Although I did not hypothesise that the experimental conditions would have a direct effect on goal adjustment or turnover intentions, I conducted an additional analysis of variance to examine any potential differences, using the same control variables. Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that the use of affective engagement by a manager was associated with significantly lower levels of goal adjustment compared to all other strategies under examination: distraction: mean diff. = -8.61, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement: mean diff. = -8.24, $p < .01$; rejecting: mean diff. = -5.92, $p < .01$, and inaction: mean diff. = -6.10, $p < .01$). There were no other statistically significant differences between IER on goal adjustment. Additionally, using rejecting as an IER strategy by a manager was associated with significantly higher turnover intentions compared to affective engagement strategy: mean diff. = 4.93, $p < .01$; distraction strategy: mean diff. = 3.84, $p < .01$; cognitive engagement strategy: mean diff. = 3.61, $p < .01$. There were no statistically significant differences between rejecting or inaction on turnover intentions: mean diff. = -.80, $p > .01$. There were also no statistically significant differences between the use of affect-improving strategies on turnover intentions.

4.8.1.4 Testing for Mediated Relationships

The second step of my model examines whether the impact of the experimental conditions on turnover intentions and goal adjustment was mediated by trust and negative affect. To examine parallel mediation, I used Maximum Likelihood estimation with 10,000 bootstrap simulations to create 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals around my indirect effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2004, 2008). All continuous variables were mean-centred to reduce multi-collinearity. In this analysis, an estimate is considered statistically significant if the 95% CI does not hold a zero. This method is preferred, as it does not need the sample distribution to be normal, is more robust against Type 1 and 2 errors and is more powerful than other procedures (Hayes, 2013). To test my parallel mediation hypothesis, I conducted a path analysis. Using the PROCESS macro (V3.5; Hayes, 2018; Model 4), all the experimental conditions were entered as follows: IER strategies were entered as a multi-categorical variable with inaction acting as a reference value, trust, and negative affect as parallel mediators, and turnover intentions, and goal adjustment as outcomes, controlling for age, gender, perceived gender of the manager and regulatory foci. The results of the path analysis results reaffirmed the direct effects of all conditions on perceived trust, and negative affect, for both goal adjustment and turnover intentions.

Regarding whether IER strategies exerted an indirect effect on goal adjustment via trust and negative affect respectively, my findings indicated that there were no indirect effects found. Contrary to H3a and H3c, there were no indirect significant effects observed between any IER strategies, and goal adjustment via negative affect. Contrary to H4a and H3c, there were no indirect significant effects observed between any IER strategies and goal adjustment via trust (Table 4.13).

Next, I analysed whether affect-improving strategies would exert an indirect effect on turnover intentions, via negative affect, such that affect-improving strategies would be

negatively associated with negative affect, which in turn, would be negatively associated with turnover intentions (H3b). This analysis confirmed that there was a significant total effect of affect-improving strategies on turnover intentions (c'), and this relationship became non-significant for cognitive engagement and distraction when the effect of the mediators was removed (c) (Table 4.14). The regression of turnover intentions on affective engagement was strengthened by the addition of the mediators ($\beta = -4.97$, 95 % CI [-6.14, -3.88]).

As hypothesised (H3d), affective engagement ($\beta = -1.37$, 95 % CI [-2.05, -.75]), distraction ($\beta = -.91$, 95 % CI [-1.41, -.47]), and cognitive engagement ($\beta = -1.30$, 95 % CI [-1.93, -.72]) exerted a negative indirect effect on turnover intentions via negative affect. As hypothesised (H4b), affective engagement ($\beta = -2.31$, 95 % CI [-3.10, -1.63]), distraction ($\beta = -2.26$, 95 % CI [-2.10, -1.60]), and cognitive engagement ($\beta = -2.14$, 95 % CI [-2.91, -1.48]) strategies exerted negative indirect effects on turnover intentions via trust by lowering turnover intentions. Contrary to my hypothesis (H3d and H4d), rejecting did not exert an indirect effect on turnover intentions via trust or via negative affect. This model accounts for 22 % of the variance in turnover intentions, $F(7,448) = 32.17$, $p = .000$. (Table 4.14).

4.8.1.5 Testing for Moderated Mediation

The third step of my analyses examined the significance of the conditional indirect effects identified in H5b. I expect that the respondents' regulatory focus would moderate the indirect relations between IER strategies, and followers' turnover intentions and goal adjustment via its effect on trust and negative affect. Specifically, I investigate the moderating effect of regulatory focus (promotion vs prevention) on the relationship between IER strategies, trust, and negative affect (X_{1-4} on M_1 & M_2 relationship). To examine the moderated mediation hypothesis (H5b), I used Maximum Likelihood

estimation with 10,000 bootstrap simulations to create 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals around my indirect effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2004, 2008), with goal adjustment and turnover intentions mean-centred to reduce multi-collinearity. Using the PROCESS macro (V3.5; Hayes, 2018; Model 59), all the experimental conditions were entered as follows: IER strategies were entered as a multi-categorical variable with inaction acting as a reference value. Regulatory foci were entered as a moderator variable, coded 1 for prevention- focus and 2 for promotion focus. Respondents' age and gender, and the perceived gender of the manager were entered as covariates in the analysis. Like Study 1, the index of moderated mediation (Hayes, 2015) was used to formally test whether regulatory focus will moderate the indirect effect between IER, and goal adjustment and turnover intentions respectively, via trust and negative affect. As the moderator is multi-categorical, this test of moderated mediation served as a test of difference between the conditional indirect effects in the three groups coded by the moderator variable. A confidence interval that does not contain zero is evidence that the indirect effect is moderated (Hayes, 2015). Results of the moderated mediation analysis on the direct and indirect conditional effects are provided in Table 4.15.

Results of the conditional indirect analyses showed that the interaction between regulatory focus and IER strategies on negative affect (M^1), $F(4,444) = 1.05$, $p > .05$ and trust, (M^2), $F(4,443) = .32$, $p > .05$, were non-significant.

4.8.2 Supplementary analysis

Given that I did not find evidence for the hypothesised pathways assessing the association between IER and goal adjustment, I conducted supplementary analysis to determine if positive affect would act as a third mediator, which would predict the relationship between IER and goal adjustment. Supplementary analysis revealed that the relationship between affect-improving strategies: affective engagement ($\beta = 1.94$, 95 % CI

[.43, 3.58], distraction ($\beta = 1.08$, 95 % CI [.23, 2.08], and cognitive engagement ($\beta = 1.30$, 95 % CI [.28, 2.46] strategies and goal adjustment was mediated by positive affect. As expected, the relationship between rejecting and goal adjustment was not mediated by positive affect ($\beta = .13$, 95 % CI [-.16, .44]). IER strategies did not exert an indirect effect on turnover intentions, via positive affect.

4.9 Discussion

This experimental study confirms and extends the findings of Study 1, demonstrating that the specific IER strategy used by a manager in the context of failure is important for influencing negative affect, trust, turnover intentions, and goal adjustment. This study supports Study 1 in that the affective engagement strategy is related to lower levels of negative affect compared to all other IER strategies under examination. All affect-improving strategies were associated with higher levels of trust. Contrary to Study 1, neither negative affect nor trust exerted an indirect influence on goal adjustment, however, supplementary analysis revealed that positive affect predicted the relationship between affect-improving strategies and goal adjustment. Importantly, the relationship between affect-improving strategies on turnover intentions is linked to followers' affect and trust. This finding is therefore replicated across two studies, strengthening the validity of the findings. My moderation mediation analysis failed to support hypothesis 5b in that the indirect effects of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions were not moderated by regulatory focus.

Table 4. 13 *Parameter Estimates of the Parallel Mediation Model Examining the Mediating Role of Trust and Affect in the Relationship between IER Strategies and Goal Adjustment (Study 2)*

Parameters		Coeff. (SE)	95% CI	Parameters		Coeff. (SE)	95% CI
	Y- Intercept	26.79** (9.04)	9.02, 44.56		Y- Intercept	27.36 (9.63)	8.43, 46.28
	REJ-GAS	-.18 (1.10)	-2.34, 1.98		REJ-GAS	-.16 (1.11)	-2.34, 2.02
	CGE – GAS	2.12 (1.15)	-.14, 4.37		CGE – GAS	1.60 (1.32)	-.98, 4.19
Path c				Path c'			
	DIS – GAS	2.45* (1.17)	.16, 4.75		DIS – GAS	2.00 (1.31)	-.58, 4.58
	PFE– GAS	-6.05** (1.17)	-8.34, -3.75		PFE– GAS	-6.60** (1.35)	-9.26, -3.94
R²		.15**				.15 **	
Path b₁	NA-GAS	-.01 (01)	-.04,.02		Trust -GAS	.01(.03)	-.05, .08
Indirect effects of IER Strategies on GAS via NA	REJ-NA-GAS	.03 (.09)	-.14, .23	Indirect effects of IER Strategies on GAS via Trust	REJ- Trust - GAS	-.05 (.41)	-.38, .24
	CGE-NA-GAS	.27 (.53)	-.79, 1.31		CGE- Trust - GAS	.24 (.63)	-.96, 1.50
	DIS-NA-GAS	.19(.38)	-.57, .95		DIS- Trust - GAS	.26 (.66)	-1.00, 1.58
	PFE-NA-GAS	.29 (.57)	-.82, 1.43		PFE- Trust - GAS	.26 (.68)	-1.02, 1.62
Total model							
R² = .13							
F (4,447) = 16.73, p< .001							

N= 456. * p< .05; **p < .01; 95% CI = bias-corrected and accelerated 95% confidence interval with a resample procedure of 10000 bootstrap samples. PFE = affect-improving affective engagement strategy; DIS = affect-improving distraction strategy; CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; REJ = affect worsening rejecting strategy; NA =Negative affect; Trust =Trust in manager; GAS =Goal adjustment;

Table 4. 14 *Parameter Estimates of the Parallel Mediation Model Examining the Mediating Role of Trust and Affect in the Relationship between IER Strategies and Turnover Intentions (Study 2)*

Parameters		Coeff. (SE)	95% CI	Parameters		Coeff. (SE)	95% CI
	Y- Intercept	15.44** (4.48)	6.64, 24.24		Y- Intercept	15.67 (4.09)	7.64, 23.70
Path c	REJ- TI	-.01 (.54)	-1.08, 1.06	Path c'	REJ- TI	-.31 (.47)	-1.23, .62
	CGE - TI	-3.67** (.57)	-4.79, -2.55		CGE - TI	-.23 (.56)	-1.33, .87
	DIS - TI	2.45 ** (.58)	-5.01, -2.74		DIS - TI	.71 (.56)	-1.80, .39
	PFE- TI	-4.97** (.58)	-6.10, -3.83		PFE- TI	-1.29** (.57)	-2.42, -.16
R²			.22**			.45**	
Path b	NA- TI	-.01 (.01)	-.04,.02		Trust - TI	.01 (.03)	-.05, .08
Indirect effects of IER strategies on TI via NA	REJ-NA-TI	-.14 (.15)	-.47, .13	Indirect effects of IER strategies on TI via Trust	REJ-Trust- TI	.43 (.24)	-.01, .94
	CGE-NA-TI	-1.29** (.31)	-1.92, -.72		CGE- Trust - TI	-2.14** (.36)	-2.89, -1.48
	DIS-NA-TI	-.91** (.24)	-1.40, -.47		DIS- Trust - TI	-2.26** (.35)	-2.98, -1.60
	PFE-NA-TI	-1.37** (.33)	-2.05, -.75		PFE- Trust - TI	2.31** (.37)	-3.09, -1.62
R² = .22				R² = .22			
F (4,447) = 32.17, p < .001				F (4,447) = 32.17, p < .001			

N= 456. * p < .05; **p < .01; 95% CI = bias-corrected and accelerated 95% confidence interval with a resample procedure of 10000 bootstrap samples. PFE = affect-improving affective engagement strategy; DIS = affect-improving distraction strategy; CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; REJ = affect-worsening rejecting strategy; Cont. - control condition (Inaction); NA =Negative affect; Trust =Trust in manager; TI =Turnover intentions.

Table 4. 15 *Conditional Indirect Effects of IER Strategies on Goal Adjustment and Turnover Intentions via Regulatory Focus (Study 2)*

Conditional Indirect Effects of IER Strategies on Outcomes Via Regulatory Focus		Prevention Focus		Promotion Focus		
		<i>Coeff. (SE)</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	<i>Coeff. (SE)</i>	<i>95% CI</i>	
REJ - Goal Adjustment	Indirect 1: TRUST	-0.03 (.13)	-.32, .22	Indirect 1: TRUST	-.09, (.20)	-.55, .29
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.06 (.20)	-.56, .28			
	Indirect 2: NA	.04 (.13)	-.20, .35	Indirect 2: NA	.02 (.10)	-.17, .25
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.02 (.14)	-.36, .26			
REJ - Turnover Intentions	Indirect 1: TRUST	.27(.36)	-.43 .99	Indirect 1: TRUST	.60(.32)	-.01 1.27
	Index of Moderated Mediation	.23(.47)	-.58, 1.28			
	Indirect 2: NA	-.20 (.23)	-.71, .22	Indirect 2: NA	-.09(.18)	-.45, .29
	Index of Moderated Mediation	.11 (.30)	-.41, .76			
CGE -Goal Adjustment	Indirect 1: TRUST	.34 (.66)	-.96, 1.68	Indirect 1: TRUST	.31 (.60)	-.85, 1.55
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.03 (.16)	-.56, .28			
	Indirect 2: NA	.30 (.48)	-.62, 1.26	Indirect 2: NA	.39 (.63)	-.82, 1.64
	Index of Moderated Mediation	.10 (.20)	-.25, .57			
CGE - Turnover Intentions	Indirect 1: TRUST	-2.22** (.42)	-3.51, -1.45	Indirect 1: TRUST	-2.06** (.43)	-2.95, -1.27
	Index of Moderated Mediation	.16 (.45)	.73, -1.04			
	Indirect 2: NA	-1.13** (.42)	-1.85, -.57	Indirect 2: NA	-1.46** (.34)	-2.15, -.82
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.33 (.26)	-.86, .17			
DIS - Goal Adjustment	Indirect 1: TRUST	.37 (.71)	-1.02, 1.81	Indirect 1: TRUST	.32 (.61)	-.86, 1.55
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.05 (.16)	-.47, .26			

	Indirect 2: NA	.20 (.34)	-.44, .91	Indirect 2: NA	.27 (.45)	-.59, .20
	Index of Moderated Mediation	.07 (.18)	-.24, .53			
DIS - Turnover Intentions	Indirect 1: TRUST	-2.41** (.41)	-3.26, -1.66	Indirect 1: TRUST	-2.08** (.42)	-2.96, -1.31
	Index of Moderated Mediation	.33 (.42)	-.50, 1.15			
	Indirect 2: NA	-.76* (.26)	-1.32, -.30	Indirect 2: NA	-1.05** (.30)	-1.69, -.52
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.29 (.31)	-.93, .28			
PFE -Goal Adjustment	Indirect 1: TRUST	.35 (.69)	-.95, 1.77	Indirect 1: TRUST	.34 (.66)	-.94, 1.66
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.01 (.15)	-.38, .25			
	Indirect 2: NA	.33 (.53)	-.67, 1.42	Indirect 2: NA	.41 (.66)	-.85, 1.74
	Index of Moderated Mediation	.08 (.18)	-.24, .52			
PFE - Turnover Intentions	Indirect 1: TRUST	-2.31** (.43)	-3.23, -1.52	Indirect 1: TRUST	-2.34** (.42)	-3.26, -1.54
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.03 (.44)	-.93, .81			
	Indirect 2: NA	-1.23** (.33)	-1.95, -.64	Indirect 2: NA	-1.52** (.39)	-2.34, -.83
	Index of Moderated Mediation	-.29 (.29)	-.88, .24			

N= 456. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; The index of moderated mediation is the quantification of the linear association between the indirect effect and the moderators (trust and affect) of that effect. 95% CI = bias-corrected and accelerated 95% confidence interval with a resample procedure of 10000 bootstrap samples. All parameters are unstandardized; PFE = affect-improving affective engagement strategy; DIS = affect-improving distraction strategy; CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; REJ = affect-worsening rejecting strategy; Cont. = control condition (Inaction); RF = regulatory focus; NA = Negative affect; Trust = Trust in manager. Indirect 1: Trust and Indirect 2: NA represent the conditional indirect effects of the relationship between the IER strategy and outcome via trust and negative affect respectively.

4.10 General Discussion

To date, the effects of managers' IER on followers' behavioural intentions is poorly understood. These studies are the first attempt, to my knowledge, to examine the mechanisms through which a proximal leaders' use of IER strategies relates to followers' behavioural intentions, by examining the interrelationships among IER, trust, negative affect, and behavioural intentions. Specifically, I evaluated a theoretical model of how a proximal leaders' (manager) use of IER relates to goal adjustment and turnover intentions, via two parallel pathways, negative affect, and trust, while also seeking to examine individual factors (discrete emotions and regulatory focus) that may function as boundary conditions on the indirect effects of IER. I specifically contextualised IER with a direct focus on negative affect following a work-related threat (failure), given that the use of managers' IER in organisational settings may be primarily focused on negative emotions (Little et al., 2016).

Adopting Niven and colleagues' framework (2009), my aim was to establish whether trust and affect serve as underlying mechanisms that might underpin the relationship between proximal leaders' IER strategies and followers' behavioural intentions. Such an examination represents an important theoretical contribution, as thus far only one empirical study has tested a single mediator (affect) to predict the relationship between IER and performance, thus limiting our understanding of the relative effects of different pathways. An examination of the direct effects of IER strategies on affect and trust (as a first step in my mediation analysis) demonstrated that the proximal manager's use of an affective engagement strategy is associated with lower levels of negative affect. Thus, in 'proximal' (manager-follower) relations, the link between IER and negative affect relates to the use of strategies that *directly* address the problem causing the negative emotion.

While affective engagement strategy was correlated with higher levels of trust in the manager in Study 1, all affect-improving strategies (engagement strategies and the relationship-oriented strategy) positively correlated with trust in Study 2. Theoretically, this finding supports Niven and colleagues' (2012) argument that reducing negative affect through a manager's use of IER may not be a necessary precursor to trust, and demonstrates the value of considering affect, and trust as distinct pathways, through which IER may exert its influence on followers' behavioural intentions.

One plausible explanation for the differential effects of affect-improving strategies on perceptions of managers' trust could relate to the attributions embedded in the experimental manipulation regarding the cause of the failure. Consistent with attribution theory (Weiner, 1985), in Study 1, expressions of anger and sadness caused by a co-worker and the company respectively, may have fuelled inferences that the organisation was responsible for the adverse situation (i.e., salient goal failure). Using an affective engagement strategy as a problem-focused response by the manager may influence affect and trust reactions, by confirming to the follower their interpretation of a situation (*"the organisation has caused my upset; therefore, the organisation should do something to fix it"*). Therefore, affective engagement strategies may be congruent with the followers' external attributions of causality and corresponding inferences around responsibility. Conversely, in Study 2, where the experimental manipulation chiefly reflected internal attributions of causality (*failure to balance work and study*), all affect-improving strategies were related to trust in the manager.

Attributions about one's own accountability for the situation (rightly or wrongly), may have fuelled inferences that the care and consideration shown through the leaders' affect-improving strategies was sufficiently appropriate to elicit perceptions of trust. My results suggest that attribution inferences by the follower may be uniquely associated with IER

and may play an indirect role in the relationship between IER and perceptions of trust.

Turning our attention to *how* IER exerts its influence on behavioural intentions, my model shows that the manager's use of affect-improving strategies (and specifically, the use of affective engagement) was associated with lower turnover intentions through its links with negative affect, and trust, respectively. This finding was replicated across two studies, strengthening the validity of the findings. This finding is the first, to my knowledge, which shows the link between affect-improving strategies and followers' urge to withdraw from the organisation. Additionally, affect-improving strategies were positively correlated with goal adjustment, through its effects on trust. This finding on the centrality of trust for goal adjustment processes is echoed in previous research (e.g., Gagné et al., 2011); however, this is the first study to show the adaptive value of affect-improving IER in supporting adjustment to unattainable goals via trust. Notably, enhancing positive affect, rather than lowering negative affect, appears critical in adjusting to failure, and correlates with findings regarding the mobilising effects of positive affect on goal adjustment capacities (Höpfner & Keith, 2021).

Overall, findings suggest that trust provides the most consistent explanation for understanding the relationship between IER and turnover intentions, and goal adjustment. My evidence shows that feeling better is not necessarily what drives behavioural intentions; rather, trust in the manager predicts the relationship between affect-improving strategies and followers' behavioural intentions. This finding is noteworthy given that the IER research has not systematically explored the importance of IER as a relational process; empirical investigations to date have focused on the primacy of affective change in predicting targets' outcomes (e.g., Niven et al., 2007, 2012). My findings provide empirical support for Williams' (2007) theoretical argument that affect-improving strategies can function as trust-building mechanisms that can arouse behavioural responses

in followers in a context where the follower feels vulnerable. This is an important contribution given that there is a dearth of information regarding how trust can be developed in a context of uncertainty (Dirks & De Jong, 2022; Legood et al., 2021). Indeed, assessment of trust in managers is more critical when the follower feels vulnerable and prone to withdrawal behaviours (Ozkan et al., 2020).

Regarding affect-worsening strategies, a managers' rejecting strategy was comparable to failing to act and was associated with higher levels of negative affect for the follower and undermines trust. Furthermore, while a managers' rejecting strategy exerted direct negative effects on turnover intentions and goal adjustment, these effects were not mediated through negative affect or trust. It is not clear why this is so. Conceptually, this indicates that trust and affect pathways may be more relevant to understanding how affect-improving strategies relate to behavioural intentions. Notably, these findings echo recent research (Vasquez et al., 2020), demonstrating that affect consequences of affect-worsening strategies do not impact work-related behaviour (e.g., task performance). It is important to consider whether contextual variables may influence these findings. Specifically, does the relationship between leaders' affect-worsening strategies and followers' behavioural intentions operate through affect or trust mechanisms in a different threat context, or when distal leaders' implement an affect-worsening strategy?

My third and final aim was to examine whether psychological processes function as a 'person-level' contextual variable that may influence the indirect effects of IER. My moderated mediation analyses demonstrate broad support for the role of discrete emotions as a boundary condition in determining the indirect effects of cognitive engagement on goal adjustment and turnover intentions, via its link with the followers' affect. Findings revealed that for respondents who were exposed to the angry manipulation, angry weakened the relationship between the affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy

and turnover intentions via negative affect; equally for respondents in the sad condition, sad weakened the relationship between cognitive engagement strategy and goal adjustment, through the link between IER and negative affect.

This may be explained by the fact that cognitive engagement strategy (e.g., reappraisal) is highly cognition-focused (Loskot, 2019); having a proximal manager reinterpret an emotion-eliciting situation in a way that alters meaning and changes the emotional impact of failure, may be easier for those who are less emotional. This finding supports prior research that emotions can play a key role in determining whether followers are receptive to advice from others (Gino & Schweitzer, 2008). This finding is novel in IER research and has implications regarding the utility of affect-improving cognitive engagement strategies. Chiefly, it suggests that the benefits of a proximal leader reframing goal failure for followers' behavioural intentions may depend on which emotion is expressed. Contrary to theorising, the indirect effects of IER strategies on followers' goal adjustment or turnover intentions were not conditional on the followers' regulatory focus (Study 2).

4.11 Contributions to Theory and Research

The key contribution of these studies is to elaborate on whether and how IER relates to behavioural intentions within proximal leader relations, and the contextual boundaries that may influence this relationship. Demonstrating how managers can increase perceptions of supportive leadership in a context of threat is critical (Patzelt et al., 2021). For instance, recent research (Andreescu & Vito, 2021; Patzelt et al., 2021) reveals that turnover intentions results from unsupportive supervisors and poor relationships, with supportive leadership identified by both managers and followers as a key strategy to decrease turnover intentions (see Leider et al., 2021). These findings provide timely evidence of the functional importance of IER within organisational research, by showing that affect-improving strategies can be used in response to followers' negative affect to

positively impact turnover intentions and energise goal adjustment capacities.

Theoretically, such an examination shifts the empirical focus of IER beyond hedonistic goals towards a functional perspective of IER in leveraging instrumental outcomes. By highlighting the relative predictive power of trust as an explanatory variable in the relationship between managers' IER and followers' behavioural intentions, my findings demonstrate the importance of the interpersonal process in determining how followers behave in the aftermath of IER. Examination of psychological processes highlight the centrality of the emotional experience prior to IER as an important contextual variable in predicting how cognitive engagement strategy relates to behavioural intentions.

4.12 Practical Implications

In a context of crisis, my findings underscore the importance of the interpersonal process that occurs between the proximal manager and the follower in shaping key organisational outcomes. Findings suggest that the proximal manager's relational behaviours towards the follower in crisis determines whether the follower perceives whether they have a future in the organisation or not. The manager's relational behaviours also predict followers' adjustment to goal failure. Thus, IER may serve as a new paradigm that can provide important (and timely) practical, actionable insights into the ways in which managers can foster trusting relationships in a context of perceived threat.

4.13 Strengths, Limitations, Future Research, and Conclusions

My studies are not without limitations. From a methodological point of view, my studies employed EVM (Atzmüller & Steiner, 2010; Hughes & Huby, 2002) to enhance experimental realism that allowed me to manipulate and control independent variables, thereby simultaneously enhancing both internal and external validity (Aguinis & Bradley, 2014).

However, future research should study real-world contexts and the organic regulation of

emotions to elucidate whether mediating mechanisms (i.e., affect and trust) underpinning IER outcomes remain the same. Real-world evidence is practically, and theoretically important in determining the effectiveness of IER outside of the tightly controlled conditions of randomised experimental studies and will increase the generalisability and external validity of the results. Moreover, all information was gathered based on self-report, resulting potentially in common method bias. However, it has been suggested that such bias is of less concern when significant interaction effects are present (Podsakoff et al., 2003), as is evident in this study.

From a theoretical perspective, trust has emerged as a central concept in my understanding of managers' IER–follower behavioural intentions relationship. Notably, trust was conceptualised as a willingness to rely on and disclose to the manager. This notion of trust captures future-oriented expectations of a willingness to be vulnerable (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011); however, given the fact that IER is a relational process, it may be necessary to capture attributes or characteristics of a manager's state that inspires trust. Future research could examine the influence of trustworthiness assessments (e.g., benevolence, integrity, and competence) to determine whether IER strategies promote certain attitudes towards a manager and whether these attitudes translate into behavioural intentions. Practically speaking, it will also show whether IER is more highly related to expectations regarding competence than expectations regarding concern or values. How IER is evaluated by followers may also depend on how "proximal" or "distal" followers are from managers. It may be worthwhile to examine the effects of IER strategies across distal relations (e.g., distal manager) and in different contexts.

Conclusion

In conclusion, my specific focus on attempting to reduce negative affect through IER is of major practical relevance. Knowing what to do when a follower is distressed and

how the strategies used will influence the follower, the manager-follower relationship and the organisation has obvious benefits. Collectively, these findings suggest that affect-improving strategies can facilitate goal adjustment and turnover intentions when the follower is willing to rely on and disclose to the manager. In sum, the evidence presented here suggests that the impact of altering affect may have a more significant bearing on organisational outcomes through trust, rather than affect mechanisms and requires further investigation.

Chapter 5: Influencing A Nation: How a Leader's Use of Interpersonal Emotion Regulation Influences Citizen's Compliance intention via Trust and Affect during a Global Pandemic

A version of this chapter is currently in press:

Naughton, B., O'Shea, D., Van der Werff, L., & Buckley, F. (in press). National Leaders' interpersonal emotion regulation strategies' impact on trust and compliance with COVID-19 restrictions. *Emotion*, ISI IF 4.329.

Abstract

During crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, it was necessary for distal leaders to influence citizens to comply with public health measures and restrictions. These health measures (e.g., physical distancing, staying at home) had substantial negative effects on individuals' lives and thus were sometimes met with defensive, non-cooperative responses. To influence citizens' compliance intentions with public health guidance and nationally imposed restrictions, political leaders needed to effectively motivate them through their public communications. Studies 3 and 4 extends my prior studies by examining whether the perception of the IER strategies used by distal (government) leaders in ministerial briefings impact citizens' compliance intentions, via either negative affect or perceived trustworthiness. Across two studies based in Western Europe (Study 3 experimental, Study 4 survey), I consistently found that a leaders' affect- improving IER strategies increased compliance intentions via perceived trustworthiness but not via negative affect. Affect-worsening IER strategies demonstrated no effect on the compliance intentions of citizens. My findings highlight the importance of IER strategies in ministerial briefings and perceived trustworthiness of distal leaders in motivating citizens to comply with public

health restrictions during a pandemic.

Keywords: *leader, trust, interpersonal emotion regulation, COVID-19, compliance*

Effective management of crises like the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic requires world leaders to influence citizens to comply with public health measures and restrictions. However, the very restrictions that governments had to place on citizens to safeguard lives (e.g., restricting mobility and economic trade) are perceived as threats to citizens' goals, values, and identity, and thus, are likely to be met with defensive, non-cooperative responses (Williams, 2007). The critical influence of leadership during crises is well established (Bligh et al., 2014), and recent evidence suggests leadership communications have indeed impacted death rates during this pandemic (Sergent & Stajkovic, 2020). Relational communication incorporating sentiments of compassion and caring appear key to addressing the emotional needs of citizens (Post et al., 2019; Sergent & Stajkovic, 2020) and reducing non-cooperative responses. Drawing on IER literature (Madrid et al., 2016; Niven et al., 2009), I consider the impact of the relational strategies employed by a national leader in pandemic communication on citizens' compliance intentions.

As stated, IER is a deliberate goal-directed process, in which a leader manages followers' affect through strategies, in the service of instrumental goals (e.g., altering behavioural intentions; Niven, 2017). While the importance of IER strategies by leaders has been established (e.g., Madrid et al., 2019; Vasquez et al., 2020), the focus of the extant literature is largely on followers' affective outcomes within proximal working relationships which makes it difficult to provide guidance to more distal leaders on which strategies will have the greatest impact on followers' behavioural intentions in a context of threat. In the context of a crisis, trust in a leader is paramount, given the relevance of leaders' actions for citizens' wellbeing (and survival). While IER research has recognised the importance of trust outcomes (Little et al., 2012; Niven et al., 2012), how trust functions in distal relations as a response to IER has received little systematic or theoretical attention. Thus, whether affect and trust can predict *how* or *why* distal leaders'

IER relates to followers' behavioural intention in a context of crisis requires further investigation. A central challenge for IER research, therefore, is to investigate how distal leaders can harness IER to influence followers' behavioural intentions, and the key psychological mechanisms underpinning this relationship.

Leaders are active managers of the emotions of the collective (Pescosolido, 2002), employing affect-improving and/or affect-worsening strategies, to influence followers' intentions (Niven et al., 2009). Integrating theory from the General Process Model of Threat and Defence (GPM; Jonas et al., 2014), I contend that, in a threatening context, appropriate application of IER strategies can reduce followers' negative emotional reactions and enhance perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness. Threat is construed as a conflict or discrepancy (e.g., epistemic, or motivational) between an expectation or desire and the current circumstances that undermine either physical (i.e., bodily harm) or psychological well-being (e.g., self-esteem; Jonas et al., 2014). Motivational discrepancy constitutes a gap between what is and what ought to be (McGregor et al., 2010) and in the context of COVID-19 crisis constitutes a discrepancy between the desire to survive and the finitude of life (Jonas et al., 2014). Threat may be experienced as an epistemic discrepancy that violates an individual's meaning framework (Heine et al., 2006), namely how people understand their experiences and act with purpose in their environment. As such, COVID-19 represents an epistemic discrepancy in that the sense of life purpose and its significance for many people has been adversely affected during the pandemic (De Jong et al., 2020). The loss of normalcy associated with COVID-19 (De Jong et al., 2020), and the sorrow for what is no longer possible, constitute a loss of meaning in life.

The experience of threat for the individual drives a variety of defensive responses including increased emotional arousal, efforts to suppress, and distance oneself from anxiety provoking thoughts (Jonas et al., 2014), biased information processing

(Pyszczynski et al., 1999), and elevated risk-taking behaviours (Norris et al., 2002; Siebenhaar et al., 2020), which can negatively affect citizens' ability to engage in compliance intentions. Notably, defensive responses are elicited not by the threat stimulus itself, but by the associated negative affect it causes (Xu & McGregor, 2018). After a delay, these defensive responses also trigger engagement in social defences (e.g., support seeking behaviours; Jonas et al., 2014) to ameliorate negative affect. Therefore, IER strategies aimed at affect-improving can be considered threat-reducing behaviours (Post et al., 2019; Williams, 2007) that maximise citizens' perceptions of psychological safety, emotional support and dampen negative affect (Williams, 2007). Conversely, affect-worsening strategies are likely to be perceived as threat-enhancing behaviours that amplify citizens' negative emotions, and consequently differentially impact compliance intentions.

My paper makes three important contributions to the literature. First, I contribute knowledge to understanding the pathways that may serve as explanations for the indirect effects of IER on compliance intentions. While an emerging body of COVID-19-related research has shown that leaders' whose relational behaviours focus on the affective experience of citizens can leverage follower compliance (Crayne & Medeiros, 2020; McGuire et al., 2020), little is known about *how* these strategies influence compliance intentions. I introduce a conceptual model (see Figure 5.1) centred on IER to explain how leaders can function as "a stabilizing force, when citizens are in need of support and protection" (Hasel, 2013, p. 268). I isolate the underlying psychological mechanisms (negative affect vs. perceived trustworthiness) of a leaders' use of IER strategies to influence collective compliance intentions with insightful implications for future crisis communication strategies.

Second, I expand the applicability of IER research to threat management, and

beyond a focus on proximal relationships to the more distal contextual level of national leadership and illuminate the perceived utility of IER strategies within this relational context. Psychological distance in leader-follower relations (Napier & Ferris, 1993; Antonakis & Atwater, 2002) may uniquely affect the IER process to the extent that it may limit leaders' ability to accurately appraise citizens' affective states, making it impossible to show individualised consideration and tailored IER responses to distal followers. When distal followers have limited knowledge of the leader, assessments of trust may fundamentally depend on inferences that the leaders' IER responses are not self-serving but intended to serve a common cause (Shamir, 2018). In proximal leaders' contexts, prior relationship history and exchange may influence perceptions of followers' trust (Shamir, 2018). Notably, the use of IER strategies by distal leaders may bridge the hierarchical and psychological distance between leaders and followers.

Third, I respond to the call for a more nuanced focus on discrete leader behaviours rather than broad, distal leadership styles (Legood et al., 2021; Wilson, 2013). In doing so, I reveal the importance of relational aspects in leader communication (McCauley & Palus, 2021) to motivate followers to adopt collective responsibility for effective actions (Crevani, 2018; Holm & Fairhurst, 2018). The capacity of leaders to appraise and alter followers' affect through deployment of appropriate IER strategies can mobilise followers' psychological resources to achieve common goals.

5.1 Interpersonal Emotion Regulation

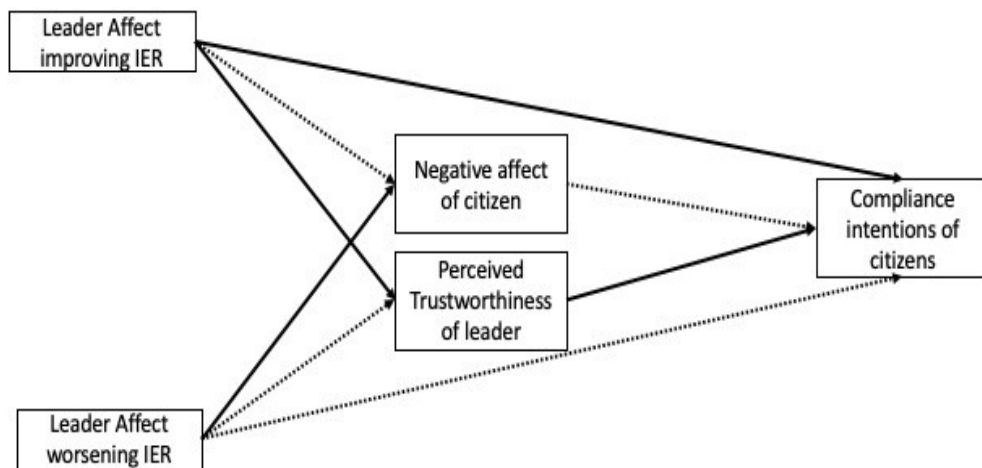
IER is a controlled goal-directed process, distinct from a range of related processes including social support, interpersonal influence, prosocial behavioural intentions, and empathy, in that the primary focus of IER is altering another's emotion. IER strategies describe the efforts undertaken to achieve this change and can be classified as affect-improving or affect-worsening (Niven et al., 2009). While affect-improving strategies

provoke positive feelings in the target or reduce negative affect, affect-worsening strategies elicit the opposite response. Affect-improving strategies can be further delineated into positive engagement strategies or distraction strategy (Niven et al., 2009). Positive engagement strategies include affective engagement and cognitive engagement strategies and are comparable to instrumental or informational forms of support (Niven et al., 2009), with a focus on “helping the person to enhance their sense of competence or efficacy” (Horowitz et al., 2001, p. 50). Although IER engagement strategies have received relatively limited research attention in organisational psychology, evidence from the self-regulation literature suggests that they have the potential to stimulate cognitive processing, reduce negative affect, and improve positive affect (Costanza et al., 1988; Horowitz et al., 2001; Pasupathi, 2003). Moreover, my previous two studies in this thesis suggest that proximal managers’ use of an *affective engagement* is associated with lower levels of negative affect. Thus, in ‘proximal’ (manager-follower) relations, the link between IER and negative affect relates to the use of strategies that *directly* address the problem causing the negative emotion. However, it is unclear if this is the case in distal relations. In contrast, relationship-oriented strategies, such as attention, valuing, and distraction focus on the social ties between individuals (Niven et al., 2009), allowing the follower to feel accepted and valued. Evidence suggests these relationship-oriented strategies can increase positive affect (Pasupathi, 2003) and feelings of emotional proximity (Laurenceau et al., 1998; Horowitz et al., 2001).

In the context of a crisis, affect-worsening strategies might entail leaders’ aiming to involve followers with the situation by amplifying the fear associated with the threat of the crisis. In contrast, affect-improving strategies promote engagement with the crisis by creating a plan of action or highlighting the critical role of social relationships. Attempts to manage citizens’ affect, cognitive, and behavioural responses in this way have been the

hallmark of many governments' recent crisis communications (Oltermann, 2020). In this paper, I examine the distinctive effects of leaders' affect-improving and affect-worsening strategies in communications regarding national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and propose that each strategy will exert a differential influence on citizens' compliance intentions via the mechanisms of trustworthiness and affect.

Figure 5. 1 *Mediation Model with Proposed Relationship between Leaders' IER Strategies and Citizens' Compliance Intentions*



Note. Mediation model with proposed relationship between Leaders' IER strategy and citizen compliance intentions, mediated by leaders' trustworthiness and negative affect. (Solid arrow indicates a proposed positive relationship; dashed arrow indicates a proposed negative relationship)

5.2 Theoretical Model and Hypothesis Development

My model (see Figure 5.1) theorises that the impact of a government leaders' use of IER on citizens' negative affect, and perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness are mechanisms through which citizens decide to comply (or not) with pandemic measures.

Compliance is defined as a person's acquiescence with a request (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), a behavioural intention that is driven by affective and cognitive processes (Forgas, 2008; Slovic et al., 2004). The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted citizens' well-being in many ways including post-traumatic stress symptoms, angry, sleep disturbance, anxiety, and depression (e.g., Altena et al., 2020; Holmes et al., 2020). Contexts of threat and uncertainty increase the salience of negative affect in decision making (Bar-Anan et al., 2009), and enhance the likelihood that those who experience negative affect will evaluate the request and the requester negatively (Forgas & George, 2001). Thus, reducing citizens' negative affect is central to eliciting compliance with restrictive public health measures.

I contend that during a threat such as a pandemic, the use of affect-improving strategies by a government leader that target a resolution of the motivational or epistemic discrepancy will downregulate citizens' negative affect. Conversely, the use of affect-worsening strategies may increase uncertainty and threat and amplify fear. Beyond this dualistic categorisation, affect-improving engagement, and relationship-oriented strategies may serve to ameliorate uncertainty and reduce negative affect along distinct pathways. Affective engagement strategies that target direct resolutions to the problem may restore the sense that the threat is manageable and reduce the discrepant experience between citizens' safety goals and their current situation. For instance, the use of specific IER engagement strategies that provides support and concrete assistance can reduce uncertainty typically associated with threatening situations and thus dampen negative affect. Moreover, IER engagement strategies that advise citizens on measures to safeguard themselves and their families can restore a sense of agency and control, addressing concerns regarding safety of social networks during crises (Hobfoll et al., 2007), thereby ameliorating negative affect. Affect-improving relationship-oriented strategies which emphasise the value of

attachment to important social groups (Hobfoll et al., 2007), or suggest that COVID-19 is a shared problem (e.g., “We’re all in this together”), rather than an individual problem, addresses citizens’ need for social integration and collective efficacy in a time of crisis. Hence, modifying the way in which this crisis is perceived can potentially resolve the epistemic threat posed by COVID-19.

Conversely, in the pandemic context, using affect-worsening strategies (e.g., negative affective engagement) may exacerbate citizens’ negative affect by undermining a sense of safety. For instance, fear appeals produce unintended consequences such as denial, avoidance, defensiveness, anxiety, increased risk behavioural intentions, and a feeling of lack of control (Stolow et al., 2020). Thus, I propose:

Hypothesis 1(H1a): Affect-improving engagement and distraction IER strategies are negatively related to citizens’ negative emotions.

Hypothesis 1(H1b): Affect-worsening IER strategy is positively related to citizens’ negative emotions.

IER is also central to perceptions of leaders’ trustworthiness which crises often erode (Post et al., 2019). Trustworthiness refers to a perception of the characteristics of another party based on an evaluation of their ability, benevolence, and integrity (Mayer et al., 1995). I contend that trust appraisals are assumed not to be a simple function of either the stimulus characteristics (e.g., IER strategies) or the individual’s dispositional characteristics (caring, kindness) (Keller et al., 2012). Rather, appraisals of trust reflect an evaluation of what the stimulus implies for the person’s well-being in relation to the individual’s goals, needs, and resources (Smith & Kirby, 2009). Accordingly, affect-improving strategies can credibly signal perceptions of a leaders’ trustworthiness by demonstrating that a leader is motivated to perceive and manage emotional information and

to execute an effective psychosocial response to threat for citizens. Affect-improving strategies signal to a citizen that the leader is attempting to resolve the discrepant experience between the current circumstances and what citizens desire (i.e., safety and security). Affect-improving strategies may be perceived as benevolent, emotionally supportive actions (Niven et al., 2012), aimed at protecting citizens' welfare. Thus, affect-improving strategies can strengthen affective attachment to the threat regulator (i.e., leader), and signify that the leader is a resource that will help navigate the threat. Conversely, affect-worsening strategies may signal that a leader has little interest in helping citizens manage negative events, which is likely to result in a less favourable evaluation of leaders' trustworthiness (Little et al., 2016):

Hypothesis 2(H2a): Affect-improving IER strategies are positively related to perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness.

Hypothesis 2(H2b): Affect-worsening IER strategy is negatively related to perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness.

I propose that citizens' negative affect and perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness are critical mechanisms through which IER strategies influence compliance. Past research has indicated that trust is a key factor in compliance (Prati et al., 2011; Siegrist & Zingg, 2014) and serves as a crucial antecedent for extra effort behaviours (Mayer et al., 1995). In the face of uncertainty regarding the proper course of action, trust can become a salient cue for decision making (Earle et al., 2007; Siegrist & Cvetkovich, 2002). Recent COVID-19 research, for example, across 19 European countries indicated that in high-trust regions, compliance with mobility restrictions was significantly higher than in low-trust regions (Bargain & Aminjonov, 2020).

Although trust in a leader is critical to ensure a leaders' capacity to secure

compliance with their policies (Haslam et al., 2020), less is known about the effects of trust on compliance with public health measures (Bargain & Aminjonov, 2020). Compliance in this crisis requires that personal interests be sacrificed for the sake of the collective. While leaders can serve as ‘belief managers’ (Gächter & Renner, 2018) who can give meaning to the restrictions by communicating that compliance is a desired behavioural intention to reduce threat, citizens may not be willing to accept the restrictive measures if they do not trust the leader. However, trust has been shown to increase feelings of obligation and a willingness to accept decisions from leaders (Tyler et al., 1997; Ward et al., 2022). Adopting this perspective, demonstrative concern for citizens arising from affect-improving strategies results in perceptions of a leaders’ trustworthiness; in turn, citizens react by reciprocating through compliance with restrictive measures. Conversely, affect-worsening strategies may imply that the leader is not prepared to share the burdens of citizens, thus exerting a corrosive influence on trustworthiness, reducing the obligation to reciprocate and undermining compliance intentions. As such, I expect that affect-improving strategies will be positively related to and affect-worsening strategies negatively related to compliance intentions via perceived trustworthiness.

Hypothesis 3(H3): The relationship between IER strategies and compliance intentions will be mediated by perceived leader trustworthiness.

Affective states are primary motivational systems, and the reduction of negative affect can mobilise energy, organise and motivate cognition constructively to exert behavioural change (Izard, 2010). The elevated levels of experienced negative affect associated with COVID-19 (Zacher & Rudolph, 2021) can increase defensive reactions such as denial of the danger and disregard of compliance communications (Witte, 1992). Heightened levels of anxiety can impair executive functions and diminish cognitive resources (Shields et al., 2016). Therefore, I argue that reducing negative affect through

affect-improving strategies enables citizens to process COVID-19 related information and in doing so, enhances their willingness to comply. Given that the COVID-19 pandemic is associated with higher rates of depression, worry, and lower rates of subjective well-being (Sibley et al., 2020), attempts to exacerbate negative affect through affect-worsening strategies will likely have a negative impact on willingness to comply with public health measures. Therefore, I propose:

Hypothesis 4(H4): The relationship between IER strategies and compliance intentions will be mediated by citizens' negative affect.

In summary, I propose that in the context of a crisis, leaders' affect-improving strategies function as threat-reducing signals to citizens creating an affect attachment to the threat regulator (i.e., the leader) and more positive trustworthiness evaluations (Williams, 2007), while also reducing the levels of negative affect experienced as a result of the pandemic. Conversely, affect-worsening strategies may enhance perceptions of threat, thereby communicating negative social information about the benevolence, integrity, and competence of the leader, diminishing evaluations of trustworthiness, and increasing negative affect.

5.3 Overview of Studies

Across two studies, I investigated the effectiveness of IER strategies in motivating compliance with COVID-19 national restrictions amongst citizens in ministerial speeches of the *Taoiseach* (Prime Minister) of Ireland. The first study (Study 3) experimentally manipulated exposure to a single IER strategy (either affect-improving or affect-worsening) used in a ministerial briefing to investigate its influence on respondents' perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness, negative affect, and compliance intentions during COVID-19. In the second study (Study 4), I conducted a real time survey of Irish citizens' reactions to a subsequent ministerial speech announcing further national restrictions. Study

4 extended Study 3 by additionally examining the simultaneous influence of affect-improving versus affect-worsening strategies (see Figure 5.1) in real time. I tested my model in both studies to examine the replicability of my findings.

Study 3

5.4 Method

5.4.1 *Sample and Procedure*

I content analysed a ministerial briefing from the Taoiseach of Ireland, which was broadcast on 17th March 2020¹, announcing intentions to ‘lock-down’ the country for the first time due to rising COVID-19 cases. I parsed this speech into audio clips of six IER strategies, using the taxonomy developed by Niven and colleagues (2009; see Table 5.1). The audio clips were between one minute and one and half minutes in length. The six IER strategies identified included five affect-improving strategies, of which two were examples of positive engagement strategies (affective engagement strategy and cognitive engagement strategy), and three were relationship-oriented strategies (attention, valuing, and distracting). One affect-worsening strategy (negative affective engagement) was used. My supervisors, blind to the original coding, listened to the recordings and independently coded the IER strategies. Inter-rater reliability was 80%.

Following ethical approval, data collection took place on the 21st of April 2020. Respondents were recruited through Prolific, an online research platform, and rewarded a fee for participation. Prolific combines good recruitment standards with reasonable cost, and explicitly informs respondents that they are recruited for participation in research (Palan & Schitter, 2018). Prolific provides data quality that is comparable or not significantly different than M-Turk’s, however Prolific respondents offer a more diverse population in terms of geographical location, and ethnicity (Palan & Schitter, 2018).

The sample in Study 3 was restricted to UK residents. There were several reasons for choosing a UK sample, primarily related to governance during COVID and the rates of COVID infection. At the point of research planning (March 2020), Ireland and the UK shared similar policy-making responses to the global pandemic (e.g., lockdown) compared to the Trump administration (Unruh et al., 2022) and other countries e.g., New Zealand (McGuire et al., 2020). For example, the management of COVID in the US was heavily criticised with serious issues regarding government interference in public health decisions and guidelines (Unruh et al., 2022). A shortage of medical supplies and poor uptake of COVID testing among US residents increased rates of COVID infection compared to Ireland and the UK (Unruh et al., 2022). Respondents who have been adversely impacted by COVID-19 and, or, who held strong objections to (in)effectual COVID responses (Shanmugam et al., 2022) may hold different views regarding compliance intentions compared to other individuals. These factors may serve as confounds and alternative explanations for observed relations between leaders' IER and follower compliance and compromise external and internal validity of the research. For these reasons, UK respondents were chosen. The sample did not include Irish residents in order to reduce a priori opinions regarding the leader which may have influenced responses. Respondents were asked if they recognised the voice in the audio clips, and only 2.3% (14 people) indicated that they did. However, these individuals did not demonstrate significant differences in any of the study variables, nor demographic variables such as age and educational attainment compared to those who did not recognise the leader, and so, I retained them. The final sample comprised 622 respondents residing in the UK (37 were excluded due to failed attention checks), 59.3% female, 40.2% men, 0.5% non-binary/prefer not to say; $M_{age} = 40.73$ years, $SD = 12.62$; range 18-78 years. Following consent, respondents provided demographic information and responded to questions

regarding the personal impact of COVID-19 on them. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of six conditions reflecting each of the six IER strategies and were instructed to listen to an edited audio recording prefaced by a generic introduction by the Taoiseach, contextualising COVID-19 as a pandemic, followed by a clip with one of the six IER strategies used in the ministerial briefing. After listening to the clip¹, respondents were asked to complete a survey capturing their affect reactions to the audio clip, perceptions of the trustworthiness of the leader, and their intention to comply with the COVID-19 restrictions as a result of the audio clip.

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNmm5OLBx8c>

Table 5. 1 *Interpersonal Affect Regulation Strategies (Niven et al. 2009) identified in the Ministerial Briefing in Study 3*

Type of strategy	Prototype	Trustworthiness Mean (SD)	Negative Affect Mean (SD)	Compliance Mean (SD)	Example quotes from the Ministerial Briefing
Affect-improving strategies					
Affective engagement problem-focused strategy (N = 103)	Talking to the target about their or their problems / Having supportive conversation with the target	3.89 (.584)	2.03 (1.69)	8.52 (2.04)	“I will always put your life and your health before all other concern...al resources I have, both financial and human, are being deployed to serve this great national effort...at all times I will guided and take the experts advice from my public health emergency team lead by the Chief Medical Officer ... I will learn from the experience of other countries affected by COVID-19 before I were, what works and what does not.... I know the best strategies focus on testing, contact tracing, and social distancing, so that’s my strategy...for those who have lost their jobs and had their incomes cut...you will receive income support as quickly and efficiently as possible ... I will do all I can to help you through the time ahead...”
Cognitive-engagement strategy (N = 105)	Giving the target advice	3.80 (.661)	2.37 (2.00)	8.86 (1.48)	“I all need to take steps to reduce proximal human contact, that’s how the virus is spread...I will ask people to curtail or cancel social gatherings, like parties, weddings and celebrations...I need to keep my physical distance to stop the virus.... the most basic messages of washing your hands and practicing good hygiene around sneezing and coughing are still the most important... at a certain point, I will advise the elderly and those with a long- term illness to stay at home for several weeks. ...please only rely on information for from trusted sources.... Please, don’t share information from unreliable sources.”

Relationship-oriented strategy “valuing” strategy (N = 106)	Making the target feel special	3.63 (.689)	2.48 (1.78)	8.42 (2.39)	“I want to send a message around the world-I are in this together, the virus pays no attention to borders, race, nationality or gender -they are the shared enemy of all humanity ...I will get through this, and will prevail ...I are all in this together...”
Relationship-oriented “attention” strategy (N = 105)	Making it clear that you care about the target	3.74 (.594)	2.47 (1.81)	8.75 (1.77)	“I know that many of you are feeling scared and overwhelmed and that’s a normal reaction...some people watching will have seen their jobs lost, businesses closed, and more people will be worried that it might happen to them too...I know this is causing huge stress and anxiety to you and your families on top of the fear of the virus...I know it’s going to be very hard to stay away from my loved ones....to the young people watching, I know that you are probably a bit bored and fed up by now...you want to see your friends...you might even be wishing your back at school tomorrow...”
Relationship-oriented “distracting” strategy (N = 100)	Arranging an activity for the target	3.67 (.751)	2.31 (1.90)	7.80 (2.63)	“I know it is going to be very difficult to stay apart from my loved ones.... Check in with your loved ones on Skype or Facetime and promise them you will see them soon.... to all the young people watching, remember this time is tough on your parents so I am asking you to ask your parents at least once a day what you can do to help them and call your grandparents....”
Affect-worsening strategies					
Negative affective engagement Strategy (N = 103)	Directly trying to worsen the way how the target feels about situation,	3.51 (.721)	3.89 (.676)	8.53 (2.07)	“This is the calm before the storm, before the surge, and when it comes, and it will come, never will so many ask so much of so few many will be hospitalised, sadly some people will die. Corona virus is already having a deep impact on jobs and economic activity and will continue to do so I don’t know when the emergency will end.... the damage will be significant and lasting, the bill will be enormous, and it may take years to pay it....”

5.4.2 Measures

Negative affect was measured using the Discrete Emotions Questionnaire (Harmon- Jones et al., 2016), assessing five negative emotions (4 items per emotion): angry, disgust, fear, anxiety, and sad. Respondents were instructed to respond with reference to how they felt listening to the leaders' speech. Responses were indicated on a visual analogue scale (Snippe et al., 2018) ranging from 0 (*not at all*) to 100 (*an extreme amount*), and I created a mean score for the five negative emotions which I divided by 10 ($\alpha = .91$) so that the range of scores (0-10) were similar to the study's other measurement scales. Visual analogue scales for assessing emotions have been demonstrated to be modestly more reliable than radio button item format in assessing emotional states (Marcus et al., 2017).

Trustworthiness was assessed using the 17-item Mayer and colleagues (1995) measure of ability (6 items), benevolence (5 items), and integrity (6 items) perceptions. The items were edited to reflect a focus on leadership. Examples are "This leader is very capable of performing their job" (ability); "This leader is very concerned about my welfare" (benevolence); "This leader has a strong sense of justice" (integrity). Respondents indicated the extent to which each statement was characteristic of the leader, on a five-point Likert scale anchored by 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) and the components were combined into an overall assessment of perceived trustworthiness ($\alpha = .95$).

Compliance intentions were assessed using six items that reflected the advice issued by the World Health Organisation (WHO) regarding COVID-19 in March-April 2020 and which broadly reflected the behaviours being asked of individuals in Europe at that particular point in time. Respondents indicated the extent to which the leaders' address inspired them to act in accordance with the guidelines on a slider scale anchored from 0

(*not at all*) to 100 (*always*). I divided the mean score for the six items by 10 and log transformed the data as responses were not normally distributed. Sample items included “comply with hygiene regulations (e.g., regularly and thoroughly clean my hands)”, “refrain from visiting family members and friends”, “maintain social distancing”, “avoid public places” ($\alpha = .95$).

Control variables. I controlled for two factors. First, recognition of the voice of the leader with the response options “Yes” or “No,” as personal knowledge of the leader may influence trust perceptions (Kramer & Lewicki, 2010). I also expected that respondents who have been personally impacted by COVID-19 may hold different views regarding compliance intentions than other individuals. As such, I controlled for the personal impact of COVID-19, assessed via respondents’ response to six items regarding whether they or their loved ones had been tested, diagnosed, hospitalised, or among the fatalities (in the case of loved ones), and whether their family or friends were in a vulnerable category or worked in a healthcare setting (no = 0; yes = 1). Answers were summed to give an overall assessment of the personal impact of COVID-19.

5.5 Results

5.5.1. Preliminary Analyses

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations between the study variables are presented in Table 5.2. Prior to conducting my analyses, I conducted confirmatory factor analyses using MPlus version 8.3 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012). The hypothesised three-factor measurement structure, excluding the condition as this was experimentally manipulated, demonstrated an adequate fit to the data, $\chi^2_{347} = 1296$, $p < .01$, RMSEA = .066,

CFI = .931, SRMR = .05.

5.5.2 Hypothesis Testing

To investigate my hypotheses, I first conducted a multivariate analysis of variance to examine the differences across the six IER strategies regarding perceived trustworthiness and negative affect (Hypotheses 1 and 2), using SPSS v.25, while controlling for the impact of COVID-19 and recognition of leader. The multivariate results indicated that there were significant differences across the scenarios (Wilk's Lambda = .884; $F(10, 1226) = 7.81$; $p < .001$; $\eta^2 = .060$), and the between-subjects effects indicated that these were found for both trustworthiness ($F = 3.960$, $df = 5$, $p < .01$, partial eta-squared = .031) and negative affect ($F = 11.827$, $df = 5$, $p < .01$, partial eta-squared = .088).

Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that for negative affect, using the affect-worsening strategy resulted in significantly higher negative affect than all affect-improving strategies: cognitive engagement, mean diff. = 1.48, $p < .05$; affective engagement, mean diff. = 1.825, $p < .05$, attention, mean diff. = 1.378, $p < .05$, valuing, mean diff. = 1.485, $p < .05$, distraction, mean diff. = 1.560, $p < .05$). Thus, I found partial support for H1a and H1b. Pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment indicated that the affect-worsening strategy resulted in significantly lower levels of perceived trustworthiness than the affect-improving engagement strategies (cognitive engagement: mean diff. = -.304, $p < .05$; affective engagement: mean diff. = -.370, $p < .05$). Thus, I found partial support for H2a and H2b. Means and standard deviations for each condition can be found in Table 5.2.

Although I did not hypothesise that the experimental conditions would have a direct effect on the intention to comply, I conducted an additional analysis of variance to examine any potential differences, using the same control variables. The results indicated that there

was a significant difference across the experimental conditions in citizens' intention to comply ($F = 13.752$, $df = 5$, $p < .01$, $\eta^2 = .025$). Looking to the pairwise comparisons with a Bonferroni adjustment, distraction was associated with significantly lower intentions to comply compared to attention (mean difference = $-.932$, $p < .05$) and cognitive engagement strategy (mean difference = -1.07 , $p < .05$).

To examine whether the impact of the conditions on intention to comply with the COVID-19 restrictions was mediated by perceived trustworthiness and negative affect (Hypotheses 3 and 4), I conducted a path analysis using MPlus 8 (V 1.8), with five dummy coded variables to represent the experimental IER conditions. To examine parallel mediation, I used Maximum Likelihood estimation with 10,000 bootstrap simulations to create 95% bias- corrected confidence intervals around my indirect effects (Preacher & Hayes, 2004, 2008). I tested a model with the dummy variables as the predictors, perceived trustworthiness and negative affect as parallel mediators, and compliance intentions as the outcome (see Table 5.3).

The path analysis results reaffirmed the direct effects of conditions on perceived trustworthiness and negative affect, demonstrated by the multivariate analysis of variance. Additionally, both affect-improving engagement strategies had an indirect effect on compliance intentions via perceived trustworthiness. In both the affective engagement strategy condition ($\beta = .081$; $p < .05$) and the cognitive engagement strategy condition ($\beta = .056$; $p < .05$), respondents reported higher perceived trustworthiness in the leader and higher intentions to comply with the COVID-19 restrictions. I did not find this indirect effect for the affect-improving distraction strategy or the affect-worsening strategy. Thus, I found partial support for Hypothesis 3, but Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

5.6 Discussion

Study 3 demonstrated that specific IER strategies used in a government leader speech regarding COVID-19 restrictions are important for influencing compliance intentions.

Although higher levels of negative affect were reported when the leader used an affect-worsening strategy compared to affect-improving strategies, my findings suggest that this affective mechanism is not what drives compliance. Rather, perceived trustworthiness of the leader predicted the effect of IER on intentions to comply. To enhance the perception of trustworthiness in the leader, affect-improving IER strategies are more important, particularly affective engagement, and cognitive engagement strategies. This is the first study to demonstrate that the IER strategies of a nation's leader can influence compliance intentions. In Study 4, I further examine these relationships in a field setting.

Table 5. 2 Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations Between Variables (Study 3)

		Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Rel (Attention) strategy	-	-												
2	AE (PFE)	-	-	-.201**											
3	Rel (Valuing)	-	-	-.204**	-.202**										
4	Rel (Distraction)	-	-	-.197**	-.195**	-.198**									
5	(CGE)			-.203**	-.201**	-.204**	-.197**								
6	Trustworthiness	.70	.676	.024	.104**	-.048	-.02	.065							
7	Negative affect	2.59	2.02	-.026	-.124**	-.024	-.061	-.051	-.026						
8	Positive affect	2.19	1.59	.100*	.056	-.057	.151**	.021	.250**	-.042					
9	Compliance intention	8.48	2.12	.056	.007	-.013	-.142**	.080*	.436**	0.047	.085*				
10	Gender			-.004	.06	-.033	-.084*	.048	-.054	-.082*	.153*	-.065			
11	Age	40.73	12.62	.088*	.000	-.077	.012	-.006	.009	-.031	-.049	.076	.028		
12	Personal impact of COVID-19	1.19	.822	.011	-0.05	.062	-.021	-.047	.090*	.138**	-.037	.077	-.127**	.038	
13	Recognise leader	2.13	.400	.066	-.006	-.107**	-.002	.023	.139**	-.108**	.014	.045	.106**	.184**	-.013

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). N = 622; AE(PFE) = affect-improving affective engagement (problem-focused) strategy; Rel (Valuing) = affect-improving relationship- oriented valuing strategy; Rel (Distraction)=affect-improving distracting strategy; CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; AW-S = affect-worsening rejecting strategy.

Table 5.3 Simultaneous Path Analysis Examining the Indirect Effect of IER Strategies on Compliance Intention via Perceived Trustworthiness and Negative Affect (Study 3)

	Trustworthiness			Negative Affect			Compliance intentions ‡		
	b	SE	□	b	SE	□	b	SE	□
<i>Predictor variables</i>									
Rel (Attention)	.198	.104	.108	-1.55**	321	-.270**	-.025	022	-.047
AE(PFE)	.357**	.101	.197**	-1.98**	318	-.360**	-.033	020	-.063
Rel (Valuing)	.100	.104	.057	-1.49**	316	-.282**	-.054	030	-.108*
Rel (Distraction)	.075	.111	.041	-1.57**	337	-.282**	-.089**	029	-.168**
CGE	.244**	.105	.135**	-1.51**	333	-.275**	-.008	018	-.015
Trustworthiness (TW)							.118**	025	.412**
Negative affect (NA)							.005	004	.058
<i>Control variables</i>									
Personal impact of COVID-19							.012	010	.053
Recognise leader							-.008	046	-.007
<i>Indirect effects</i>									
Rel (Attention) -> TW -> Compliance							.024	013	.044
Rel (Attention) -> NA -> Compliance							-.008	006	-.016
AE(PFE) -> TW -> Compliance							.042**	015	.081**
AE(PFE) -> NA -> Compliance							-.011	007	-.021
Rel (Valuing) -> TW -> Compliance							.012	012	.024
Rel (Valuing)-> NA -> Compliance							-.008	006	-.016
Rel (Distraction) -> TW -> Compliance							.009	006	.017
Rel (Distraction) -> NA -> Compliance							-.009	029	-.016
CGE -> TW -> Compliance							.029*	014	.056*
CGE -> NA -> Compliance							-.008	006	-.016
R ²		.030*			.091**			.202**	
AIC, BIC		2960.40,							
		3067.03							

Note: N = 622. The standardised coefficients, as well as the R² values, were obtained using the STDYX command in Mplus. *p < .05. **p < .01. AE(PFE) = affect-improving affective engagement (problem-focused) strategy; Rel (Valuing) = affect-improving relationship-oriented valuing strategy; Rel (Distraction) = affect-improving relationship-oriented distracting strategy; CGE = affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy; Reference category for dummy condition variables was the affect-worsening condition.

‡ Intention to comply was transformed using the Log10 command.

Study 4

The strength of the experimental design in Study 3 meant that I was able to examine the impact of a single IER strategy on an individual. However, past research indicates that individuals rely on multiple regulatory strategies to manage a given emotional response (Brans et al., 2013), and that the outcome of a regulatory action depends on the interplay amongst the employed strategies (Geisler et al., 2019). Indeed, individuals may also use a combination of IER strategies when generating specific threat-reducing behaviours (Williams, 2007). Thus, my final study focuses on how perceptions of the affect-improving versus affect-worsening IER strategies as a whole influenced compliance intention, via negative affect and leader trustworthiness. Hence, in this study, I focused on the impact of a full ministerial briefing and respondents' perceptions of the IER strategies used in this briefing.

5.7 Method

5.7.1 *Sample and Procedure*

An invitation to participate was distributed via social network platforms, e-mail to university alumni listservs, and to those indicating they were Irish residents on Prolific; 388 respondents agreed to take part. On 1st May 2020, a national ministerial briefing by the Taoiseach of Ireland was broadcast² announcing a further two-week extension of national COVID-19 restrictions. Directly after the broadcast ended, the 388 potential respondents who had signed up for the study were sent a link to the survey via email and text message, in addition to posting the survey on Prolific. The survey was closed on 5th May 2020. After eliminating non-residents ($n = 83$) and those who had not watched the

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NtYYCEg8LAE>

ministerial briefing ($n = 33$), my final sample comprised 272 respondents. Of these, 186 were female, 84 were male, and two were non-binary. The average age was 40.62 years ($SD = 13.19$), ranging from 18-77 years and represented a geographical spread across the country. 75.9% of respondents had a bachelor's degree or higher.

5.7.2 Measures

Negative affect ($\alpha = .91$) and *perceived trustworthiness of the leader* ($\alpha = .95$) were assessed using the same measures as Study 3.

Compliance intention ($\alpha = .73$) were assessed with 6 items capturing the WHO guidelines as implemented in Ireland at that stage of the pandemic. Respondents were asked to what extent they would act in accordance with the restrictions (e.g., stay within 5km of your home, physical distancing), from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*always*). This variable was log-transformed (\log_{10}) as responses were not normally distributed (compliance intentions were high, $M = 4.40$; $SD = .624$).

Leaders' IER strategies were assessed using the Emotion Regulation of Others Scale (Niven et al., 2011). This scale captures affect-improving (6 items, e.g., "Makes citizens see the positive"; $\alpha = .84$) and affect-worsening IER (6 items, e.g., "Talked about shortcomings in citizens' actions"; $\alpha = .73$) strategies. The extent to which citizens perceived the leader to have employed each strategy was captured, from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*a great deal*).

Control variables. I controlled for two factors, first, socio-economic status (SES) with the McArthur scale of subjective social status (Adler et al., 2000), as prior research has shown that SES influences health and illness (Smith, 2004), and second, the extent to which individuals had been personally impacted by COVID-19, using the same measure as Study 3.

5.8 Results

5.8.1. *Preliminary Analyses*

Prior to assessing my hypotheses, I conducted confirmatory factor analyses using MPlus version 8.3 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012), which demonstrated that the hypothesised five- factor measurement structure fit the data adequately, $\chi^2_{715} = 1187$, $p < .01$, RMSEA = .06, CFI = .887, SRMR = .07. Table 5.3 presents the descriptive statistics and bivariate correlations for all variables. Both SES and the personal impact of COVID-19 on the respondents were correlated with compliance intentions, although the pattern of results remains the same whether I included these as control variables or not.

Table 5. 4 Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations Between Study Variables (Study 4)

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Emotion regulation of other extrinsic affect-improving	3.67	0.762									
2 Emotion regulation of other extrinsic affect-worsening	1.29	0.394	-.551**								
3 Trustworthiness	4.21	0.680	.692**	-.554**							
4 Negative affect	21.82	19.951	-.331**	.340**	-.338**						
5 Positive affect	37.68	16.490	-0.006	-0.004	.143*	0.023					
6 Compliance intention	4.40	0.624	.259**	-.281**	.284**	-0.085	0.014				
7 Gender	-	-	-0.109	0.101	-0.048	-0.113	0.086	-0.030			
8 Age	44.59	12.210	0.144	-0.027	0.134	-0.117	-0.059	0.093	0.041		
9 Socio-economic status	6.96	1.495	0.060	-0.102	0.083	-0.128	0.050	-.192**	-0.042	0.082	
10 Personal impact of COVID	1.42	0.769	-0.054	0.010	-0.070	0.055	0.016	.175*	-0.037	-0.045	.016

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). N = 186 - 191

Table 5. 5 Simultaneous Path Analysis Examining the Indirect Effect of IER Strategies on Compliance via Perceived Trustworthiness and Negative Affect (Study 4)

	Perceived Trustworthiness			Negative Affect			Compliance intentions ‡		
	B	SE	β	B	SE	β	B	SE	β
<i>Predictor variables</i>									
IER affect-improving (AI)	.463**	.089	.590**	-6.47**	1.96	.276**	.012	.008	.126
IER affect-worsening (AW)	.055	.233	.140	1.76	3.47	.149**	-.003	.012	-.060
Perceived Trustworthiness (TW)							.030*	.014	.241*
Negative Affect (NA)							.000	.000	.014
<i>Control Variables</i>									
SES							-.012**	.004	-.248**
Personal impact of COVID-19							.018**	.007	.172*
<i>Indirect effects</i>									
Indirect: AI -> TW->Compliance							.014*	.007	.142*
Indirect: AI -> NA->Compliance							.000	.003	.126
Indirect: AW -> TW->Compliance							.002	.007	.034
Indirect: AW -> NA->Compliance							.000	.002	-.002
R ²		.314**			.125*			.170**	
AIC, BIC					1471.06, 1522.24				

Note: N = 181. The standardised coefficients as well as the R² values were obtained using the STDYX command in Mplus. Indirect effects were calculated using the IND command in Mplus. *p < .05. **p < .01. ‡Intention to comply was transformed using the Log10 command

5.8.2 Hypothesis testing

I assessed my conceptual model (see Figure 5.1) using the same path analysis process as that of Study 3. Results are reported in Table 5.5. In line with Hypothesis 1a and 2a, I found that affect-improving IER strategies were positively associated with perceived trustworthiness ($\beta = .590$; $p < .01$) and negatively associated with negative affect ($\beta = -.276$; $p < .01$). However, they did not have a direct effect on compliance intentions. Affect-worsening strategies were not associated with perceived trustworthiness or compliance intentions. Their impact on negative affect was less clear, as the unstandardised effect was non-significant ($B = 1.76$, $p = .812$) while the standardised effect was significant ($\beta = .149$; $p < .05$). Interpreting the unstandardised effect, I conclude conservatively that the affect-worsening strategies were not related to negative affect. Thus, hypotheses 1b and 2b were not supported. Perceived trustworthiness ($\beta = .241$; $p < .05$), but not negative affect, was positively related to compliance intentions. Finally, there was a significant indirect effect from affect-improving IER to compliance intentions via perceived trustworthiness ($\beta = .014$; $p < .05$), in partial support of Hypothesis 3. No support was found for Hypothesis 4.

5.9 Discussion

The findings of Study 4 confirm and extend those of my previous study, demonstrating that the use of affect-improving IER strategies (as perceived by respondents) during a full ministerial briefing were positively related to intentions to comply with COVID-19 restrictions via perceived trustworthiness but not via negative affect. In contrast, affect-worsening IER strategies had neither a direct nor indirect effect on compliance intentions.

5.10 General Discussion

In these studies, I sought to understand the mechanisms through which a distal leaders' use of IER strategies impacted followers' behavioural intentions by examining the interrelationships among IER, trust, affect and behavioural intentions. Specifically, I tested a theoretical model for how IER relates to compliance intentions through its effect on trust and negative affect. My two studies collectively demonstrate that IER strategies of a national leader are important considerations in the context of crisis communications to a nation during a global pandemic. The empirical evidence demonstrates that a leaders' use of IER can influence behavioural intentions of people (e.g., in terms of citizens) by affecting social processes (e.g., public compliance). Affect-improving IER strategies (Post et al., 2019; Williams, 2007) enhance citizens' perceptions of psychological safety and emotional support (Williams, 2007), and dampens negative affect.

Moreover, my studies demonstrated that the leaders' use of affect-improving strategies during crisis communications (and specifically, the use of engagement strategies) were positively related to citizens' perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness, which in turn, increased citizens' intention to comply with national pandemic restrictions. The use of positive engagement strategies provides informational forms of support (Niven et al., 2009); citizens trust leaders, and in turn, are willing to comply with restrictive measures. Affect-improving strategies targeted at strengthening social relationships ("we're all in this together") were less helpful than engagement strategies in promoting compliance (and trust). Consistent with the circumplex model of interpersonal behavioural intentions (e.g., Wiggins, 1979), engagement and relationship-oriented strategies fulfil different social goals, namely control and affiliation respectively (Niven et al., 2012). As such, IER strategies that emphasise affiliative behaviours may be less helpful in contexts of threat where a more authoritative, action-oriented approach may be useful.

Across these two studies, evaluations of the leaders' trustworthiness, but not affect mechanisms predicted the effect of IER strategies on intentions to comply. An interpretation of this result is that, in a crisis, citizens, in recognising their own vulnerability, respond positively to a competent, benevolent leader, regardless of how they are feeling. Trust is likely to reduce complexity and uncertainty (Lewicki & Brinsfield, 2011; Lewis & Weigert, 1985) and provide a solid basis for behavioural intentions irrespective of affect. There was little evidence to suggest that the affect-worsening strategy or negative affect were associated with compliance intentions. Negative affective engagement strategies (e.g., fear-provoking messages) are likely to be perceived by followers as threat-enhancing behaviours that amplify citizens' negative emotions, and consequently negatively impact compliance intentions.

5.11 Contributions to Theory and Research

Leadership represents an intersection of forces and factors associated with the leader, the followers, and the context in which they are embedded (Bligh et al., 2014). I integrated theory and research regarding IER (Madrid et al., 2016; Post et al., 2019; Williams, 2007) with theory from crisis management (Hobfoll et al., 2007) and threat research (Jonas et al., 2014) to understand the impact of leaders' IER on citizens in a crisis context. Although the focus of IER might suggest that the key mechanism underlying its impact is change in affect, my research suggests trustworthiness as the critical underlying mechanism in crisis contexts and provides initial empirical support for theoretical relationships proposed by Williams (2007), and Niven and colleagues (2012). In doing so, I build on the IER literature by expanding understanding of the impact of leaders' IER on citizen behavioural intentions during crisis. My findings position IER strategies as important and specific behaviours enacted by leaders that can help push the leadership literature beyond broad leadership styles to an understanding of the value of specific behaviours (Legood et al., 2021; Van

Quaquebeke & Felps, 2018).

5.12 Practical Implications

Leaders need more than effective communication skills in a crisis. They need a framework that can guide IER strategy choice so that the emotional and cognitive meaning conveyed through crisis communications can instrumentally support effective governance. As IER strategies clearly vary in their effectiveness, these studies offer guidance to leaders facing dire circumstances regarding the relational behaviours that can be used to foster trust in leadership and motivate compliance intentions amongst citizens. Recent research has found that such relational behaviours may be more frequent in female leaders (e.g., Post et al., 2019; Sergent & Stajkovic, 2020). However, attempts to explain such effects through leader gender confounds the effects of gender and relational skills (Post et al., 2019). Rather, my studies demonstrate that IER can serve as a useful framework to understand and describe relational leadership behaviours in crisis communications.

5.13 Strengths, Limitations and Directions for Future Research

Study 3 identified the merits of examining specific IER strategies within the affect-improving and affect-worsening categories and identified that affect-improving engagement strategies may be particularly worthy of further investigation. This set of studies are also among the first to investigate the impact of leaders' IER strategies in a distal relationship, rather than in proximal interpersonal interactions. However, this distance between the agent (i.e., the leader) and the target of the regulation process may have an impact on the regulation strategies used and how they are perceived. Future research should examine this and extend my findings with a broader range of national and distal leaders (e.g., CEO's).

In my research, I captured compliance intentions rather than actual compliance behaviours. However, the compliance intentions reported from the respondents of Study 4

align well with national surveys conducted on a weekly basis by the Department of Health in Ireland at that time³, as well as with analysis conducted by the National Public Health Emergency Response Team (NPHE) using Google location data⁴ and research conducted by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS) demonstrating decreases in human-made seismic-noise starting from the first national lock-down in March 2020⁵. Thus, I can be cautiously confident that my measure of compliance intentions reflected actual behaviours.

Finally, while the cross-sectional design in Study 4 limits the extent to which I can infer causality, the use of a real leader speech combined with the timing of the data collection (immediately following the leader speech) meant I captured ‘live’ reactions to the ministerial briefing. Furthermore, the order of variables in the study were theoretically derived (Little et al., 2016; Niven et al., 2012) and the experimental nature of Study 3 presents reasonable evidence of the replicability of these effects.

Conclusion

IER strategies used by national leaders are important for perceived trustworthiness and compliance intentions and have significant implications for national leaders in times of national crisis. My evidence from experimental and field settings suggests that affect-improving engagement strategies, are a critical tool for influencing citizen behavioural intentions during crisis.

³ These reports can be access via the Government of Ireland’s website here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/6b4401-view-the-amarach-public-opinion-survey/>

⁴ <https://www.rte.ie/news/coronavirus/2020/0403/1128229-google-location-data/>

⁵ <https://www.dias.ie/2020/04/08/dias-seismologists-detect-decrease-in-human-made-noise-across-ireland-due-to-covid-19-lockdown/>

Chapter 6: General Discussion

The overarching aim of this thesis was to develop a model that can explain the impact of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions, the key psychological mechanisms that underpin this focal relationship, along with an understanding of contextual factors that may relate to outcome variability. IER is an active, intentional, conscious process initiated by another as a response to displays of emotion (Niven et al., 2017). While the primary purpose of IER is to alter affect, most recently, scholars have argued that IER can serve instrumental purposes beyond hedonistic goals such as improving performance (Vasquez et al., 2020).

To date, we know little about the effect of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions. This is a critical gap in IER research given the propensity of negative affect to adversely alter followers' behavioural intentions (Patzelt et al., 2021; Scott & Barnes, 2011; Shepherd et al., 2009, 2011, 2014; Shockley et al., 2012). Theoretically, such an examination shifts the empirical focus of IER beyond hedonistic goals towards a functional perspective of IER in leveraging instrumental outcomes. Embracing a functional perspective to IER as a general meta-theoretical framework can inspire new developments and research. The premise here is that IER is functional for an individual's behavioural intentions and serves as means towards desired end states (*function-for*). Practically, knowing how IER can frame followers' behavioural intentions in specific contexts is insightful for leaders.

Moreover, the question of *how* IER exerts its effect on the target has been poorly specified. Accordingly, a crucial next step in IER research, which this current thesis addresses, is testing for theoretically driven, causal mechanisms explaining the IER-behavioural intentions relationship. By doing so, new insights are provided regarding how IER correlates with behavioural intentions, which may potentially resolve the inconsistent

findings regarding the link between specific affect-improving strategies and outcomes (cf., Little et al., 2012, 2013). Drawing on previous empirical and conceptual insights regarding IER, followers' trust in the leader as well as affective responses to IER appear crucial when seeking to understand how IER transmits its effect on followers' behavioural intentions.

Integrative examination of the contextual conditions that frame the utility of IER strategies in certain circumstances has also been absent in research. To understand the role of context in the IER-behavioural intentions relationship comprehensively, my model adopts a polycontextual approach with my empirical enquiry nested in environmental, relational, and person-level contextual conditions. Such an examination will contribute to enhancing the explanatory potential of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions and in doing so, lay the foundations for new and refined context-bound theories of IER and contextualised explanations of IER effects. It will also enhance the field's impact on practice by helping leaders to make informed choices regarding the use of IER in specific circumstances.

In framing the environmental context, a paradigm that lends itself well to the examination of IER based on context cues is the experience of perceived threat. Integrating Jonas and colleagues' (2014) General Process Model of Threat and Defence (GPM) with Niven and colleagues' (2009) Classification Model of Interpersonal Affect Regulation, I investigate the effects of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions in a context of perceived threat (Salient goal failure: Study 1 and 2; COVID-19: Study 3 and 4).

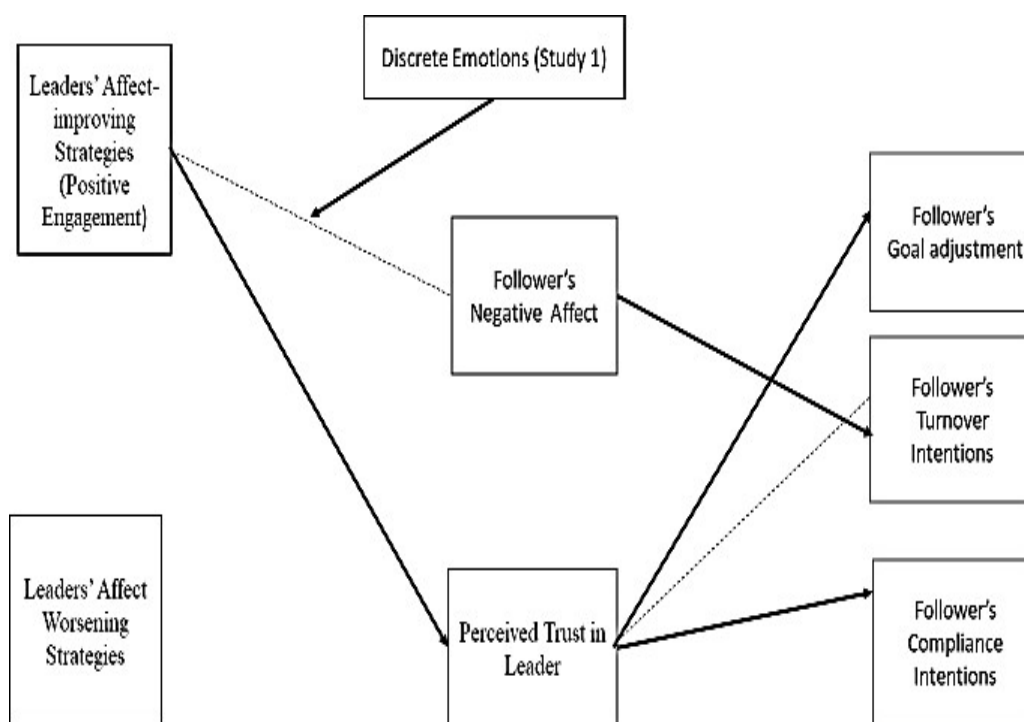
Adopting a distal–proximal leadership framework in the design of my studies, I also consider how the relational context may influence the link between leaders' IER and followers' affect, trust, and behavioural intentions. Based on prior leadership theory (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002; Vidyanthi et al., 2014), I theorised that the dynamics of the

influencing process may differ depending on how “proximal” or “distal” followers are from their leader.

As a third contextual variable, I examine how psychological processes frame followers’ responses to leaders’ IER. Accordingly, my first two studies test whether individual factors theorised as pertinent to salient goal failure: regulatory foci and the affective state of the follower, moderate the followers’ affect and trust responses to IER, and in doing so, shape behavioural intentions. Prior research demonstrates that people use their regulatory focus (Higgins, 1997) and emotions (Wang et al., 2020) as information resources that prompt specific action tendencies (Frijda et al., 1989). These action tendencies prime individuals to behave in certain ways as well as providing information regarding what feels wrong and right to them. I theorised that IER strategies that align with specific action tendencies (arising from emotions and regulatory focus, respectively) would prime IER strategy preference for the follower, and as such, exert a stronger positive influence on affect and trust responses. Accordingly, I proposed that discrete emotions and regulatory focus could function as person-level contextual conditions, which would moderate the indirect effects of followers’ affect and trust.

The research presented in this thesis addressed these stated aims. Across four studies, using a mixture of experimental (Study 1-3), and survey (Study 4) design, I tested and supported a mediation model in which leaders’ attempts to improve followers’ negative affect were positively related to followers’ behavioural intentions, primarily through followers’ trust in the leader. Although leaders’ affect-worsening strategies were positively related to followers’ negative affect, and negatively related to trust in leader respectively, neither affect nor trust predicted followers’ behavioural intentions (Figure 6.1). An overview of the studies and their key findings are summarised below.

Figure 6. 1 *Mediation Model Demonstrating Empirical Relationships between Leaders' IER Strategy and Followers' Behavioural Intentions via Followers' Affect and Trust in Leader*



Note. Solid arrow indicates a significant positive relationship between variables; a dashed arrow indicates a significant negative relationship.

6.1 Overview of Individual Studies

The first two studies presented in this thesis entitled, “*Influencing reactions to goal failure: how a proximal leaders' use of IER influences followers' work behaviours via trust and affect*” represented the first randomised experimental studies to investigate how a managers' IER will facilitate or impede followers' behavioural intentions along two parallel pathways: followers' affect following IER and trust in the manager. Using Niven and colleagues' (2009) framework, these studies examined whether IER strategies used by proximal leaders (e.g., managers) were related to followers' goal adjustment and turnover

intentions in a context of salient goal failure. The importance of examining the effect of leaders' IER on these behavioural intentions is underscored by prior research (Carver, 2004b; Grandey et al., 2002; Ntoumanis et al., 2014; Shepherd et al., 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014) which attests to the negative impact of salient goal failure on followers' goal adjustment and turnover intentions. In addition, I investigate whether the indirect effects of IER on behavioural intentions are moderated by the followers' discrete emotions (angry /sad) (Study 1), and the followers' regulatory focus (prevention/promotion) (Study 2).

These studies were the first to consider trust as an important psychological mechanism to predict the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions. Such an examination represents an important theoretical contribution, as thus far only one empirical study (Vasquez et al., 2020) has tested a single mediator (affect) to predict the relationship between IER and performance, thus limiting scholarly understanding of the relative effects of different pathways on behavioural intentions.

The remaining two studies presented in this thesis entitled "*Influencing a nation: how a distal leaders' use of IER influences citizens' compliance intentions during a global pandemic*" investigated whether and how perceived IER strategies used by a government leader in ministerial briefings impacted citizens' compliance intentions. Across these two studies based in Western Europe (Study 3 experimental; Study 4 survey), I explored whether a leaders' use of perceived IER strategies increases citizens' compliance intentions via perceived leaders' trustworthiness and/or affective states. These studies highlighted the importance of IER strategies of distal leaders in motivating citizens to comply with public health restrictions during a pandemic. Using Niven and colleagues' framework (2009), Study 3 experimentally manipulated exposure to a single IER strategy used in a ministerial briefing to investigate its influence on respondents' perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness, negative affect, and compliance intentions during COVID-19. In Study 4, I conducted a real-time survey of Irish citizens' reactions to a subsequent ministerial speech announcing

further national restrictions. Study 4 extended Study 3 by additionally examining the respondents' perceptions of affect-improving versus negative affect-worsening strategies.

6.2 Overview of Empirical Findings

To conceptualise how leaders' IER might impact on followers' behavioural intentions, I drew on two distinct pathways: affect and trust and examined the direct effects of IER strategies on followers' affect and perceptions of leader trust, as the first step in my model.

Notably, my results indicated that there were statistically significant differences in the direct effects of affect-improving strategies on affect and trust. As theorised, my findings show that contextual conditions influence followers' perceptions of IER and shape their affect and trust responses. For instance, my results suggest that the link between affect-improving strategies and affect correlates differently depending on the relational context (e.g., leadership distance). Specifically, there appears to be fundamental differences between the process of influencing the negative affect of proximal followers who are in direct contact with their leader, and the process of influencing a larger group of followers who do not have direct contact with the leader. In a 'proximal' leader relational context (i.e., manager-follower relationship), a manager's use of an affective engagement strategy was most strongly associated with improvements in followers' negative affect compared to other affect-improving strategies. Respondents reported feeling better when the proximal leader uses IER strategies that directly address the problem causing the negative emotion. Redirecting attention away from emotional aspects of the situation (distraction strategy) or formulating a plausible narrative to change the emotional impact of the threat experience (cognitive engagement strategy) were not significantly associated with lower levels of negative affect for proximal followers compared to affective engagement. In contrast, for the distal follower, all affect-improving strategies were associated with

lowering negative affect.

Consistent with leadership distance theory and research (Shamir, 1995), one plausible explanation for these findings, is that followers have beliefs regarding a leaders' relational behaviours that may influence the extent to which leaders' IER strategies predict followers' affect. My findings potentially support prior research that demonstrates that proximal followers judge leaders' (relational) behaviours based on *how* the leader addresses the problem (Bligh & Riggio, 2012; Shamir, 1995, 2012). For instance, proximal followers expect their leaders to actively resolve the situation causing the negative emotions (Little et al., 2016); fulfilling this expectation through concrete action (Shamir, 2012) correlates with lower levels of negative affect. Given that the distal followers' relationship with their leader is based on a more simplified schematic image of a leader rather than experience-based, expectations regarding relational behaviours may be less specific and rooted in value judgments regarding the distal follower (Bligh & Riggio, 2012). Therefore, the symbolic value of care and consideration inherent in affect-improving IER ensures that distal followers feel supported by the readiness of the leader to recognise the emotional significance of the threat and a corresponding willingness to improve their affective state. This support was linked to lower levels of affect in distal followers. In sum, the relational context can shape followers' affective responses to receiving IER support.

While there are differences in how the relational context influenced followers' affective responses to leaders' IER, the influence of context on the connection between IER strategies and perceptions of leader trust may be more complex. For proximal followers, affective engagement strategy correlated with trust in the leader in Study 1, whilst all affect-improving strategies under examination were associated with proximal followers' perceptions of leaders' trust in Study 2. For the distal follower, affect-

improving engagement strategies (affective engagement and cognitive engagement) correlated with trust in Study 3.

Although not directly examined in this research, this may suggest that attributions of causality and leaders' responsibility embedded within the environmental and relational context could explain the variability in the effects of affect-improving strategies on trust. Attribution theory and models (e.g., Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1967; Weiner, 1986) focus on how individuals make sense of events in general and are particularly relevant when individuals are threatened by unexpected or negative events (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Attributions of causality focuses on understanding who or what caused the event, while attributions of responsibility refer to who or what can be held accountable for the event (Shaver & Drown, 1986). Accordingly, the circumstances that led to the elicitation of IER may fuel inferences regarding who caused the negative affect (attributions of causality) and relatedly, role expectations may determine who can be held accountable (attributions of responsibility). Followers' attributions of causality and responsibility may determine perceptions of leaders' IER. For instance, the experimental manipulation primed external attributions of causality regarding followers' negative affect (Study 1) and may fuel inferences that organisation (and its' agents: co-workers) caused the adverse situation (i.e., salient goal failure). Hence, the agent of the organisation (the manager) is responsible for alleviating the negative affect. Following this logic, external attributions of causality and responsibility may prime preferences for affective engagement (problem-focused) strategies. Similarly, engagement strategies were linked to higher levels of trust in Study 3. Likewise, followers' beliefs that the government was responsible for the coordinated management of COVID-19 (Ahern & Loh, 2021) may have influenced expectations around leaders' relational behaviours.

Conversely, in Study 2, where the experimental manipulation chiefly reflected

internal attributions of responsibility (*failure to balance work and study*), all affect-improving strategies were related to trust in the manager. In this instance, attributions about one's own responsibility for the situation (rightly or wrongly) may have fuelled inferences that the care and consideration demonstrated by the leaders' affect-improving strategies were sufficiently appropriate to elicit trust. Overall, these findings are important given that they demonstrate that how affect-improving strategies and specifically, cognitive engagement and relationship-oriented strategies relates to followers' affect and trust varies as a function of contextual factors.

Alongside the importance of the environment and the relational context, my findings show that followers' discrete emotions function as a contextual variable that determines variability in IER effects. Results from a moderation-mediation analysis (Study1) revealed that the effect of leaders' cognitive engagement strategy on followers' goal adjustment and turnover intentions varies as a function of the discrete emotion experienced post-failure. Specifically, for respondents in the angry condition, the positive relationship between cognitive engagement strategy and negative affect was weaker, which in turn, was associated with higher turnover intentions. Similarly, for those in the sad condition, the positive relationship between cognitive engagement strategy and negative affect was weaker, which in turn, was associated with lower levels of goal adjustment.

The use of discrete emotions as a basis for analysis offer initial insight into the notion that discrete emotions may benefit from different interpersonal regulatory strategies. My results offer some support for the notion that IER strategies which fit with emotion-specific action tendencies of the follower primes strategy preference for the latter, and as such, exerts a stronger positive influence on affect and trust responses. For instance, angry individuals who are eager to make decisions and are unlikely to want to stop and ponder or

carefully analyse (Lerner & Tiedens, 2006), were less receptive to a manager's attempt at reappraisal as the strategy is incongruent with angry-specific action tendencies. My findings support Little and colleagues (2011) contention that reframing the situation may be perceived as an intention to help, but for the angry individual, it does not actually solve the problem. Sadness, on the other hand, is accompanied by the action tendency to withdraw from the problem (Lerner et al., 2015). My findings are consistent with the idea that fostering a new narrative does not facilitate the desire to withdraw, and potentially sustains the negative affect for those in the sad condition.

While my evidence offers some support for the notion that perceptions of IER are motivated by a respondent's emotion-specific action tendencies, my results also suggest that the observed effect may relate to the levels of emotional intensity. Although angry is higher on the activation dimension than sadness (Scott et al., 2020), in my study the intensity with which respondents experienced angry or sad were comparable. As cognitive engagement strategy (e.g., reappraisal) is highly cognition-focused (Loskot, 2019); having a proximal leader reinterpret an emotion-eliciting situation in a way that alters meaning and changes its' emotional impact may be easier for those who are less intensely emotional. Evidence from the intrapersonal regulatory domain suggest that reappraisal is more effortful (Shafir et al., 2015) and harder to utilise under stress when prefrontal cortex function may be compromised (Moodie et al., 2020). I cautiously suggest that my research may offer preliminary evidence that emotional intensity may influence interpersonal reappraisal processes. Overall, the finding regarding the effects of discrete emotions is novel in IER research and has implications regarding the utility of cognitive engagement strategy; chiefly it suggests that followers who are very distressed may be less able to harness the benefits of a leaders' affect-improving cognitive engagement strategy.

To summarise, the effects of affect-improving distraction and cognitive

engagement strategies on negative affect correlate differently depending on the relational context. Moreover, the indirect effects of cognitive engagement on followers' behavioural intentions via affect also vary depending on the discrete emotions experienced. The effects of affect-improving strategies on trust appear to reflect environmental and relational factors including attributions of causality and responsibility.

Turning our attention to *how* IER exerts its influence on behavioural intentions, trust provides the strongest explanation for understanding the relationship between IER and compliance intentions, turnover intentions, and goal adjustment. Across my four studies, affect-improving strategies (specifically engagement strategies) were positively related to trust, which in turn, was positively related to turnover intentions (Study 1 & Study 2), goal adjustment (Study 1 & Study 2) and compliance (Study 3 & Study 4). Negative affect explained the relationship between affect-improving strategies and turnover intentions only. The importance of trust as an explanatory mechanism is underscored by my findings that affect-improving strategies (except for affective engagement strategy: Study 1) do not *directly* correlate with any of the behavioural intentions, under examination. The influence of IER on behavioural intentions depends entirely on how IER strategies influence the followers' affect, and perceptions of trust. Finally, across my four studies, affect-worsening strategies exerted a positive and direct relationship with turnover intentions, and a negative and direct relationship with goal adjustment and compliance intentions, respectively; however, these effects were not mediated through affect or trust mechanisms. It is unclear why reduced trust in the leader or enhanced negative affect does not explain negative behavioural intentions. My results point to the presence of unexamined mediators and highlights the critical importance of investigating the complexity of destructive relational behaviours on followers' responses.

6.3 Theoretical Contribution to the IER Literature

My key contributions are to elaborate on IER theory by differentiating between the effects of specific leaders' IER strategies on followers' behavioural intentions, integrating theory to understand the key mechanisms that underpin this relationship, and examining the contextual scope of IER to include environmental, relational, and person-level conditions, as discussed below.

6.3.1 *The Influence of Leaders' IER on Followers' Behavioural Intentions*

My first contribution is to extend IER scholarship by examining how leaders' IER correlates with followers' behavioural intentions. There is a dearth of research examining specific relational behaviours that leaders can employ that could potentially mitigate the adverse behavioural intentions associated with negative emotions (e.g., Little et al., 2013, 2016; Patzelt et al., 2021; Shepherd et al., 2011). My research addresses this critical gap in the literature. Conducting four studies, using a mixture of experimental and survey methods, my research models the effects of leaders' IER on a full set of behavioural intentions and provides unique insight into the way in which followers' negative affect may be regulated by a leader in threatening environments.

Overall, my findings demonstrate that how a leader responds to a followers' negative affect defines how the follower feels, how they view their leader and how they intend to (re)act to the leaders' relational behaviours. Prior research has shown that occupying the 'IER space' can be difficult for followers and leaders alike. Processing negative emotions with others can be risky (Nils & Rime, 2012), particularly where there are power differences within the relationship; the potential for leaders to exploit the vulnerability of emotionally distressed followers is always present, and followers appear acutely aware of that (Toegel et al., 2013). Equally, in crisis conditions, leaders struggle to be "authentic about compassion" (Goulding, 2020), with leaders' being progressively

judged by the impact that they have on their followers. Knowing how to occupy that space in a supportive manner can be crucial for leaders who wish to use IER to positively influence behavioural intentions.

A key strength of this research includes the relevance of the behavioural intentions under examination. For instance, turnover represents a significant challenge to corporations (Stone, 2021), particularly after a salient negative work event (Patzelt et al., 2021). Recent research (Andresescu & Vito, 2021; Patzelt et al., 2021) confirms that turnover intentions results from unsupportive supervisors and poor relationships, with supportive leadership identified by both managers and followers as critical to decrease turnover intentions (see Leider et al., 2021). These findings extend the functional importance of IER for turnover intentions in two ways. First, they clearly demonstrate that how a leader handles failure signals to the follower whether they desire a future in the organisation, or not. Secondly, my findings show that affect- improving strategies (particularly affective engagement strategies) can be used in response to followers' negative emotion to positively impact perceptions of trust and reduce negative affect, which in turn, lowers turnover intentions. In doing so, this research offers clear guidance regarding how supportive leadership can promote follower retention.

Addressing how to facilitate goal adjustment following failure is poorly understood, yet remains central to followers' wellbeing (Mens et al., 2015). Using affect- improving engagement and relationship-oriented strategies, which demonstrates that a manager can be trusted, shapes a followers' ability to recover from and adjust to failure. This finding is timely given the most recent call for research on interventions to facilitate goal adjustment capacities for those who encounter unattainable salient goals (Hamm et al., 2022).

The role of IER in influencing citizens' behavioural intentions is understudied. Given the many societal changes that governments and institutions aim to facilitate (e.g., not only COVID-related, but also regarding sustainability, integration, etc.), it is crucial to better understand how distal leaders best influence citizens' emotions to foster compliance. In this research, I elucidate the mechanisms through which a national leaders' use of extrinsic IER strategies (Niven et al, 2009; Zaki & Williams, 2013) impacted followers' behavioural intentions by examining the relationships among IER, trust, negative affect, and compliance intentions. My research shows that attempts to improve affect (particularly through engagement strategies), can strengthen followers' resolve to comply in a manner that is of instrumental value to the collective through its effects on trust. It is therefore theoretically and practically useful to understand the different influences that distal leaders' relational behaviours have in this regard.

6.3.2 Understanding the Key Psychological Mechanisms that Underpin the IER-Behavioural Intentions Relationship

I have advanced IER theory by developing a theoretical model that elaborates on *how* leaders' IER influences followers' behavioural intentions in a context of threat. The current state of IER research is such that the mechanisms underpinning this focal relationship are poorly understood. To conceptualise how IER might impact on behavioural intentions, I drew on two distinct pathways: affect and trust. Such an examination represents an important theoretical contribution, as no empirical study to date has evaluated parallel mediators to explain the effects of IER, leaving it unclear as to which theoretical lens best explains how leaders' IER translates into followers' behavioural intentions. The current studies were unique for its inclusion of trust as a mediating variable that aids in understanding why IER affects outcomes.

Although the conceptualisation of IER might suggest that the key mechanism

underlying the impact of IER on the follower is a change in affect, my research suggests that affective mechanisms are *not* the key driver of behavioural intentions in a context of threat. Instead, I uncovered that trust provides the strongest explanation for understanding the IER– behavioural intentions relationship. Thus, an important contribution of my study was to demonstrate that trust is the core psychological pathway that explains the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' goal adjustment, turnover intentions, and compliance intentions, using parallel analysis to determine the significance of the mediating variables.

In distinguishing between two distinct pathways that explain the influence of IER on behavioural intentions, namely affect and trust, I offer clear empirical evidence regarding how followers perceive and respond to leaders' IER. In doing so, I not only demonstrate the importance of the interpersonal nature of IER, but I also explicitly connect it to behavioural intentions, by showing that when a leader alters negative affect, it is the *interpersonal* nature of the regulatory process that defines followers' behavioural intentions. This investigation is the first to demonstrate that improving negative affect is not enough to foster positive behavioural intentions; rather, followers' behavioural intentions are based on whether the IER strategy used signifies that the follower can trust the leader.

There are several reasons why trust may play such a pivotal role in the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' behavioural intentions. First, trust cues arising from IER strategies may be particularly salient in predicting followers' behavioural responses to IER within relationships where one party (e.g., leader) has a hierarchical advantage over another (e.g., follower) (Niven et al., 2012). As stated earlier, processing negative emotions with others can be risky (Nils & Rime, 2012), particularly where there are power differences within the relationship. Trust may also be particularly important in a context of

vulnerability and uncertainty when perceived threats fundamentally jeopardise core psychological needs for belonging, trust in others, self-worth, and influence over the environment (Aquino & Thau, 2009).

6.3.3 *The Contextual Nature of IER*

A third contribution of this work is to demonstrate that IER is context-specific, as the efficacy of IER strategies changes, according to the contextual features. Consistent with repeated calls (Kukull & Ganguli, 2012; Shoda et al., 2014; Simons et al., 2017), for better specification of the target population for generalisability and for clearer identification of the study's parameters, my research clearly identifies the target population (those who experience a threat), the relational context (close/distance leadership), and the person-level characteristics (psychological processes) critical for observing IER effects. As the first study (to my knowledge) to simultaneously examine both mediating mechanisms and boundary conditions, my research is fundamental to our comprehension of what strategies work best for whom, why, and when.

Adopting a polycontextual approach, my research demonstrates that IER outcomes is a function of contextual characteristics; specifically, that context constrains the types of IER strategies (e.g., affect-improving) that may be considered prototypically effective in altering followers' affect, trust, and behavioural responses. In other words, there is variation in how respondents view the same IER strategies depending on the context in which the IER are embedded (e.g., affect-improving cognitive engagement and relationship-oriented strategies). Understanding the contextual nature of IER has important implications for theory development and empirical testing, as well as the ability of IER researchers to provide practical and actionable advice to leaders. My research demonstrates what most scholars have intuitively known that a strategy that is successful in one context may be inert or result in failure in another. My research highlights the

importance of emotion regulation flexibility, conceptualized as the ability to switch between strategies in response to changing contextual demands (Bonanno & Burton., 2013). Importantly, this research will serve as direct evidence that the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' outcomes is driven by contextual factors, including the nature of the emotion-eliciting event, the leader-follower relationship and the followers' psychological processes as discussed below.

Adopting Niven and colleagues' (2009) framework, my research extends existing knowledge by demonstrating a more nuanced understanding of the differential effects of IER strategies on followers' outcomes. By focusing on the specific means by which the leader regulates affect (e.g., engagement versus relationship-oriented strategies), my research complements existing scholarship (e.g., Madrid et al., 2020; Vasquez et al., 2020), which focuses primarily on the motive of the regulator (to improve or worsen affect) to understand followers' behavioural intentions. Accordingly, my findings advance existing theoretical and empirical understanding of IER by showing that distinct affect-improving strategies trigger differential effects on followers' responses. Relatedly, there is contextual variability in how affect-improving strategies relate to affect, and trust responses even among 'nested' strategies with conceptual equivalence (positive affective and cognitive engagement strategies). For example, for the proximal follower, there was a distinction between positive cognitive engagement, and affective engagement (problem-focused) strategies, with the latter being more strongly related to lower levels of negative affect and trust outcomes. Indeed, the efficacy of cognitive engagement strategies on affect and trust are contingent on factors related to the relational context (leadership distance), and person-level context (discrete emotions) and potentially, the environmental context (e.g., perceived attributions of causality and responsibility). Simply put, how a leader 'engages' (i.e., with the situation or the followers' cognition) to alter negative affect

has divergent implications for followers' trust and affect responses, with the efficacy of these strategies' dependant on context.

I was also interested in whether there might be synergies and differences among IER strategies, according to how they work. Currently, there is a lack of empirical research on whether engagement strategies or relationship-oriented strategies exert their effects primarily through similar mechanisms. I did not find direct evidence to support this. Overall, these results demonstrate the practical and theoretical value of considering the hierarchical distinctions among affect-improving strategies offered by Niven and colleagues' (2009) classification. Using a more nuanced classification will enable researchers to predict the utility of these strategies among individuals, and across contexts.

6.3.3.1 The Impact of the Environmental Context on IER

My studies are the first, to my knowledge, to assess the effects of IER in a context of threat while measuring key affective, relational, and behavioural outcomes. In doing so, this research broadens our understanding of how IER can operate in threat contexts to impact followers' outcomes. Sensitivity to the potential role of context and "situational linking" improves the accuracy, interpretation, and robustness of IER findings (Rousseau & Fried, 2001; Shepherd et al., 2023). For instance, by examining IER in a context of threat across four studies, my research evidence produced three interesting findings regarding IER and the environmental context: first, affect-improving affective engagement (problem-focused) strategies were most consistently and significantly correlated with lower levels of negative affect and higher levels of leader trust. In line with Williams' (2007) theorising, these effects are likely because engagement with the problem reduces the impact of the threat experience. Affect-improving affective engagement strategies enhances perceptions of psychological safety and emotional support (Post et al., 2019; Williams, 2007), and dampens negative affect. Second, by

examining IER in a threat context across four studies, what is also apparent is that the environmental context shapes the causal mechanisms through which leaders' IER transmits its effects on followers' behavioural intentions. Trust is activated to generate outcomes in a context of threat as it is likely to reduce complexity and uncertainty (Lewicki & Brinsfield, 2011) and provide a solid basis for behavioural intentions irrespective of affective change. Third, my results suggest that causal attributions around the emotion-eliciting event may play a role in determining strategy preference. The causal influences of the emotional experience may direct followers' expectations regarding the appropriateness of IER strategies.

By capturing the utilisation of IER strategies by leaders in real time in a crisis (Study 3 and 4), an ecologically valid account of the effects of IER on behavioural intentions was created. In doing so, I was able to demonstrate that the effects of affective engagement strategies on behavioural intentions and the mediating mechanisms evident in between-person experimental vignette methodology (EVM) (Study 1 and 2) can be generalised to real-world experiences of threat (Study 3 and 4), which gives my research an applied contextual relevance.

6.3.3.2 The Impact of the Relational Context on IER

The current findings also offer potential insight into the role of leadership distance as a relational variable within IER research. Conceptual consideration of the nature of the leader-follower relationship permitted comparisons of findings regarding the influence of the relationship across distinct studies. Specifically, my research shows that there are fundamental differences between the process of influencing the affective responses of proximal followers (or followers) who are in direct contact with the leader, and the process of influencing a larger circle of followers who do not have direct contact with the leader. While it must be acknowledged that other factors could account for these findings,

it is entirely conceivable that the relational context constrains the predictability of affect-improving strategies (particularly distraction and cognitive engagement strategies) on followers' affective responses. Variations in the relational context appears to be correlated with variations in the affective responses to IER. Moreover, by combining knowledge regarding the relational context and followers' responses, scholars have a better understanding of what specific IER strategies really mean to the follower. These findings suggest that a more differentiated IER model for future research is required.

Clarifying the impact of IER on distal followers' affect, trust, and behavioural intentions, represents a key contribution of my thesis. While strides have been made in previous studies (Little et al., 2012) to understand the impact of leaders' IER on proximal followers, the impact of IER on distal followers is less well understood. By studying IER processes in distal relationships, my research extends the field (and relevance) of IER for distal leaders. My findings challenge the dominant assumption inherent in leadership theory (Antonakis & Atwater, 2002; Collinson, 2005; Napier & Ferris, 1993; Shamir, 2018; Vidyarthi et al., 2014), that leader distance may impair levels of influence, and trust development and neutralise leadership effectiveness. Rather, I demonstrate that distal leaders can successfully use affect-improving strategies (and specifically, engagement strategies) in their communications to influence followers' trust and in turn, behavioural intentions.

6.3.3.3 The Impact of the Person Context on IER

Our findings extend IER research by examining psychological processes as person-level' contextual conditions that may predict how IER strategies relates to followers' behavioural intentions. To my knowledge, my results represent the first empirical evidence to demonstrate that discrete emotions (anger and sadness) function as a boundary condition in the relationship between cognitive engagement strategy and followers' goal adjustment, and

turnover intentions, respectively through its effects on followers' affect. This is an important finding given that cognitive engagement strategy is a common IER strategy aimed at targeting cognitions (Niven et al., 2009); however, this observation highlights the necessity of modifying IER attempts based on followers' emotions. Strategies that require less cognitive effort may be more helpful to those who are angry or sad and may reflect Reeck and colleagues' (2016) contention that leaders' reappraisal of the negative event may be perceived as a direct challenge to a followers' existing view, negating any potential gain to the latter. However, the finding also mirrors empirical evidence from intrapersonal regulatory research (Moodie et al., 2020; Raio et al., 2013), in that reappraisal is less effective at reducing negative affect for those who are very emotional. From this perspective, effective emotional management may not be a product solely of IER, but instead results from the ability to integrate moments of intrapersonal and interpersonal regulation (Chesney, 2018). Indeed, Chesney (2018) has argued that scholars may need to break from the binary view of emotion regulation as intrapersonal or interpersonal, instead employing person-centred analysis that represent both levels as an interdependent system. Further research is warranted. Nonetheless, this finding adds to the domain of theorising regarding the effects of IER and reveals the increased complexity of cognitive engagement strategies on followers' affective and behavioural responses. Notably, the findings from Study 1 and 2 regarding the influence of psychological processes on outcomes points towards the possibility that person-variables play a smaller role in the relationship between leaders' IER and followers' outcomes than might be theoretically assumed. Apart from the effects of cognitive engagement strategy, discrete emotions did not alter the relationship between any other IER strategies and followers' outcomes. Moreover, the moderating effects of regulatory focus on the IER-behavioural intention relationship was not evident. Due to the lack of published non-significant findings, it is difficult to discern meaning from these non-significant findings.

However, what these non-significant findings may indicate is that they may be less relevant in certain contexts (i.e., threat). From the perspective of boundary conditions, these non-significant findings contain valuable information in that they highlight the generalisability of certain IER strategies (particularly affective engagement strategies) for followers' affect, trust, and behavioural intentions with respect to the tested context dimension (Busse et al., 2017).

6.4 Theoretical Contribution to Trust Literature

In terms of trust research, this research contributes to the field in two ways: First, I introduce trust as an insightful construct into IER research to explain how IER can act as a valuable tool for building trust in crisis/threat situations. Specifically, I provide empirical evidence for Williams' (2007) contention that leaders' affect-improving strategies and particularly, engagement strategies, function as *trust building cues* that reduce followers' sense of perceived threat. The primary aim of trust building (or trust development) is to increase trust to a future higher state, in recognition that the current state of trust in the relationship is in some way limited (Hernandez et al., 2014; Kramer & Lewicki, 2010; Lewicki & Brinsfield, 2011).

Thus far, most research on trust building makes little reference to how trust can be fostered in heightened vulnerability (Gustafsson et al., 2021), or the intentional interpersonal actions leaders can take to build trust (Dirks & De Jong, 2022; Williams, 2007). This is a critical gap in the literature, considering that leadership success during heightened vulnerability depends on leaders' ability to build trust (Stickel et al., 2022). Current scholarship concurs that trust in organisations and political systems are at an all-time low (Stickel et al., 2022). Therefore, uncovering how leaders can harness trust when it is most needed is a critical and timely endeavour.

My second contribution to trust research is to advance understanding of the role of

affect in trust judgements. This is significant given that the regulation of affect is a relatively unexplored direction for trust research and mirrors the deficit in our understanding of affect bases for trust (Legood et al., 2022). Exploring the idea that trust can be motivated through affect regulation opens significant avenues for further understanding of the affective processes governing why followers choose to trust. My empirical evidence demonstrates that *attempts* to improve affect through IER positively shapes the content of trust cognitions grounded in followers' judgments about the leaders' characteristics of ability, benevolence, and integrity (Mayer, 1995), as well as a willingness to rely on and disclose to the leader. What is interesting here, is that attempts to improve affect may not necessarily be significantly related to reducing negative affect, but nonetheless can foster trust. Consistent with Emotions as Social Information (EASI; Van Kleef, 2009) theory, this suggests that leaders' attempts at improving affect provide the follower with cognitive information about the intentions/character of the leader and directs the follower towards a propensity to trust. As such, this study provides tangible evidence that affect influences on trust can occur via cognitive interpretation. This underscores Legood and colleagues' contention (2022) that trust research is best served by examining the intertwined role of affect and cognition as influencing the trust process.

6.5 Contribution to Practice

Aside from the theoretical contributions, my empirical evidence supports the notion that IER is an important relational behaviour through which supportive leadership can be realised during a time of crisis. In 'proximal' (manager-follower) relations, the need for IER is activated when a follower communicates distress to their manager. I theorised in chapter one that what a manager does as the agent of the organisation, in that 'space' can define how the follower feels, whether they trust their manager and how they intend to (re)act to the negative affective event. My findings demonstrate this. This research offers practical advice

for proximal leaders' occupying that space. Knowing that distinct IER strategies impact followers differently has important implications for practice. Managers will therefore be able to understand IER in a more nuanced manner and specifically, they can be clear regarding the rationale for using specific IER strategies. My results clearly show that in a context of threat (failure of a salient goal), IER strategies that *directly* address the problem causing the negative emotion are most strongly related to lower levels of negative affect. However, it is the *interpersonal* nature of the regulatory process that predominantly defines how followers intend to act. Showing a willingness to improve affect through relationship-oriented strategies (e.g., through giving the follower attention) as well as engagement strategies (e.g., talking to the follower about their problem or trying to change how they thinks about a situation) builds trust, and this in turn, shapes followers' behavioural intentions. Therefore, where there are concerns about withdrawal intentions or poor goal adjustment, using affect-improving strategies can serve as a mechanism through which supportive leadership can be realised to counteract attrition rates and facilitate adjustment. Notably, for followers who are particularly distressed, attempts at improving their affect through reframing the problem is less helpful for them. My research has implications for the distal leader. In the context of a crisis, distal leaders can effectively use engagement strategies in crisis communications to attain compliance. Engagement strategies enhance perceptions of leaders' trustworthiness, and in turn enhance compliance.

Both close and distal leaders need to understand that there are considerable psychological, relational, and behavioural costs associated with affect-worsening strategies.

Using negative affective engagement or rejecting a followers' emotional distress is linked with lower levels of trust and affect, lower levels of goal adjustment and compliance, and higher levels of turnover intentions. Because threat experiences can severely negatively impact followers, specific training in IER may be an appropriate way to ensure supportive leadership is realised.

6.6 Strengths, Limitations & Future Research

Although my study has many strengths and is the first to conceptualise and empirically examine a comprehensive IER model, my results should be interpreted cautiously until they have been replicated in a variety of settings and with multiple methodologies. The body of work presented in this thesis opens a host of future research directions. Much research and theorising remain to be done in uncovering how IER can be harnessed to predict followers' affect, relational, and behavioural outcomes. I discuss strengths and limitations of the research and offer, where applicable, suggestions regarding further IER research relating to (a) the relationship between IER and behavioural intentions, (b) the underlying psychological mechanisms that may underpin IER effects, (c) the contextual variables that may act as potential boundary conditions and, (d) methodological considerations.

First, given that I have used subjective measures to examine behavioural intentions in my empirical investigations, I cannot draw firm conclusions regarding objective behavioural outcomes. While intentions are a strong predictor of actual behavioural outcomes (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1991), there are complicating factors that may influence the link between intentions and behaviour. For instance, goal adjustment was measured as an intent to adjust rather than actual goal adjustment. However, the inclination towards goal adjustment may be confounded by work-related and individual factors that are not currently examined in this research. From a work perspective, there may be considerable

variance in the degree to which followers feel (and have) control over disengaging from a work-related goal and re-engaging in another. Moreover, there may be individual factors that complicate the intent to adjust, including a lack of self-efficacy in the aftermath of failure. However, prior research confirms that trust in management strengthens the relationship between self-efficacy and work-related outcomes (Ozyilmaz et al., 2018). This is encouraging given that affect-improving strategies was positively correlated with leaders' trust across my studies, and as such may promote self-efficacy; however, this was not directly examined. Future research should take account of these factors in assessing the relationship between IER and goal adjustment.

Similarly, prior analysis confirms that turnover intentions is the strongest predictor of actual turnover behaviour (Cho & Lewis, 2012; Cohen et al., 2016); however, the strength of the relationship may vary (Griffeth et al., 2000), depending on circumstances such as job security (Lee & Jeong, 2017; Li, et al., 2020), and affective commitment (Rubenstein et al., 2018). While this research has established that leaders' IER influences intention to quit, future research should assess whether these results apply to actual turnover behaviours with ratings gathered across multiple time points, which could allow researchers to assess the temporal effects of leaders' IER on the process of followers' withdrawal (Rubenstein et al., 2018).

In the case of compliance, for instance, some of the compliance behaviours (e.g., mixing with other households) were forbidden by law in the sample, whereas others were emphasised as part of the public health guidance (e.g., washing hands). It would be preferable to capture actual behaviour in future, gathering more objective ratings of compliance, or ratings from multiple sources, which could allow researchers to understand differences in subjective and objective ratings of behavioural outcomes.

Second, despite the progress in this research, there is room for future work accounting for the indirect effect of affect-worsening strategies and behavioural intentions. Affect or trust did not explain this focal relationship. In searching for additional mediators, future research could concentrate on whether perceived control (Chipperfield et al., 2017) acts as a potential explanatory variable in the relationship between affect-worsening strategies and behavioural intentions. Perceived control can be conceptualised as a trait or a state that can act as a cognitive resource to preserve and promote resilience (Chipperfield et al., 2017). Arguably, leader affect-worsening strategies may lower perceived control and in turn prompt withdrawal behaviours, poor compliance, and an inability to adjust to goals. Indeed, evidence from emotion regulation research has found that suppression as an affect-worsening strategy is linked with lower levels of perceived control as measured by levels of self-efficacy (Zhao et al., 2021). Examining the impact of distinct IER strategies on perceived control may provide insight regarding how IER may strengthen self-regulatory processes and begin a timely examination of the connections between IER and ER.

Third, while my studies demonstrate that IER is contextually sensitive, formulations of theories in future research should consider other contextual factors that determine the link between IER and followers' behavioural intentions. For instance, this study design adopted an event-based approach (threat) to assess how specific IER strategies relate to behavioural intentions. In doing so, I have provided a clear understanding of the relationship between IER strategies and behavioural intentions, indicating the relevance of affect-improving affective engagement strategies on followers' trust and affect. However, in real-world conditions, the link between affective engagement strategies and followers' behavioural intentions would be conditional on the perception that the action taken is appropriate, which would be judged by distinct factors

e.g., expectancy goals) that not currently examined in this research.

Relatedly, this study found that the effects of IER strategies on affect correlate differently depending on the relational context. Consistent with prior research, it is likely that followers have expectations concerning leaders' IER and these expectations are influenced by contextual conditions. While it is possible to infer what followers' expectations were, based on their affect, and trust and behavioural intentional responses, an explicit examination of expectancy goals, alongside the contextual conditions that shape these goals should be considered in future studies.

A related line of enquiry may be followers' attributions of causality and responsibility that may determine the efficacy of IER strategies. As discussed earlier in this chapter, attributions of causality and leader responsibility embedded within the environmental and relational context could explain the variability in the effects of affect-improving strategies on leader trust. Although potential outcomes of responsibility and causal attribution have been studied in a variety of contexts, the influence of attributions on IER has not been directly examined in empirical investigations. The potential links between IER theory and followers' attributions can offer new opportunities to generate more sophisticated hypotheses than those previously advanced regarding how IER is perceived, and my studies may provide initial observations for theorising that can make a significant contribution in this regard.

Regarding Study 1 and 2, I did not find that the regulatory focus of the follower moderated the indirect effects of IER strategies on behavioural intentions via trust or affect. There may be a few reasons for that. My experimental manipulation had respondents read a vignette to prime their situational or temporary regulatory focus; however, it could be the case that individuals' chronic focus may have trumped the situationally induced regulatory

focus and obscured the results. Moreover, while affect-improving (engagement) strategies correlated with lower levels of negative affect and higher levels of trust for respondents in both conditions, it may still be the case that the function of those strategies mean something different depending on how the strategy is perceived. For example, for those in the promotion-focused condition, affective engagement strategy may be related to lower levels of negative affect because it helps the individual reach their goals. This aligns with prior research that individuals with a promotion-focused mindset perceive interpersonal assistance as an opportunity to acquire information that can help them to reach their goal (Righetti et al., 2011). The prevention-focused mindset is especially sensitive to rejection (Keller & Pfattheicher, 2013; Pfattheicher & Sassenrath, 2014) and feels highly responsible for problems (Higgins, 1997; Molden et al., 2008); leader efforts to solve the problem may have correlated with lower levels of negative affect due to concerns about impression management. Therefore, while there was little variance in individuals' response to IER strategies, future work could explicitly examine the interpersonal regulatory fit between IER and regulatory focus to tease out any potential interactive effects.

Discrete emotions moderated the indirect effects of cognitive engagement strategy on behavioural intentions via negative affect. As discussed earlier in this chapter, one plausible explanation for the observation of this boundary effect on cognitive engagement strategy is related to respondents' levels of emotional intensity. For instance, prior studies have found that discrete negative emotions can be so highly intercorrelated that they lack discriminant validity (e.g., Bagozzi, 1993; Bagozzi et al., 1998). The current research also struggled with this issue. Consistent with findings from self-regulatory research, future studies should control for affect intensity as it appears to predict variability in the relationship between cognitive engagement strategies and followers' affective reactions. (Moodie et al., 2020). In sum, I suggest three potential boundary conditions: expectancy

goals, attributions of responsibility and interpersonal regulatory fit.

Fourth, regarding methodological considerations, Study 3 and 4 were conducted with reference to one political leader in an anglophone European country, and while some cross-cultural research has indicated that non-western samples have been under-represented in pandemic related research (e.g., Conway et al., 2022), others (e.g., Wang et al., 2021, 87 country study) have reported only negligible cultural differences in emotional reactions to emotion regulation strategies. However, wider evidence (e.g., Knoll et al., 2021) of significant cultural differences on intrapersonal issues such as silence motives and behaviour (withholding voice/opinion) would suggest that future research consider the cultural norms of the populations they research. For instance, would respondents from collectivist cultures perceive leaders' IER differently than those in an individualist society (Minkov et al., 2017)? A further constraint on generalisability is that the distal leader in the Study 3 and 4 research was a male, European leader with a stable parliamentary democracy. Accordingly, the findings may not transfer seamlessly to different political and socio-cultural contexts, where alternative leadership models apply and where diverse cultural norms with reference to leadership pertain. Future research will benefit from specifically examining samples representing diverse cultural and political norms, and how IER strategies employed by political leaders are perceived in these different contexts.

To extend our understanding of political leaders' IER effects on citizens' behavioural intentions, researchers might focus on other global challenges such as climate change and decarbonisation, as areas that require significant popular behaviour change and adaptation. How might leaders' IER influence societal perceptions of the need for immediate versus longer term actions, where benefits may not accrue for this generation but for future generations?

Finally, in considering methodological limitations, all information was gathered based on self-report, resulting potentially in common method bias. However, it has been suggested that such bias is of less concern when significant interaction effects are present (Chan, 2009). Moreover, across my four studies, all the variables and outcomes were measured at the same time point. Additionally, single-source data can contribute to potential common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). To overcome this, I used a mix of four-, five-, six- and seven-point Likert response scales with different anchors to minimise common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). A further methodological limitation is in Study 3 and 4, where I assessed compliance with a self-generated scale, which was not yet well-validated. To my knowledge, there was no established scale to measure compliance during a pandemic. However, the compliance intentions reported from the respondents of Study 1 aligns well with national surveys conducted on a weekly basis by the Department of Health in Ireland at that time⁶, as well as with analysis conducted by the National Public Health Emergency Response Team (NPHER) using google location data⁷ and research conducted by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS) demonstrating decreases in human-made seismic-noise starting from the first national lock-down in March 2020⁸. Thus, I can be cautiously confident that our measure of compliance intentions reflected actual behaviour.

6.7 Conclusion

This dissertation presents the theoretical development and testing of a conceptual model that examines the differential effects of specific leaders' IER strategies on followers' behavioural intentions, examining the psychological mechanisms that underpin the relationship, and the contextual boundaries that explain when the impact of IER on followers is more or less pronounced. Despite the empirical evidence regarding the importance of leaders' IER for follower outcomes, we currently know little about the

effects of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions. This research utilised the comprehensive classification of regulatory strategies offered by Niven and colleagues' (2009) to test the means used by the leader to achieve regulation (e.g., strategies that either focus the target on their situation or affective state or strategies that target the relationship), as well as the motives of the IER (affect-improving or affect-worsening). In doing so, this research demonstrated the relationship between distinct IER strategies, particularly engagement strategies and followers' negative affect and trust. This research was novel in that it illuminated synergies and differences between affect-improving strategies. Knowing how different IER strategies are linked to key outcomes provides a clear rationale for employing certain strategies over others. Accordingly, leaders can better leverage specific strategies to optimise followers' affect, and trust in a crisis.

Clarifying the key psychological mechanisms that underpin the IER-behavioural intentions relationship is important for advancement of IER theory. Unique for its inclusion of trust as a potential mediator, my research found novel evidence explicating trust as a key process transmitting the effects of leaders' IER on followers' behavioural intentions. Accordingly, the key strength of the model is not only its parsimony, but also its generalisability in that, although varying in strength, the indirect effects of IER (particularly engagement strategies) on behavioural intentions via trust held across distal relations and contextual differences. This research shows that the interpersonal dynamic inherent in IER attempts also appears to be a crucial antecedent to enhancing behavioural intentions.

By adopting a polycontextual framework in the design and investigation of my studies, my research has addressed past scholarly criticism centred on the absence of contextual conditions, namely, environmental, relational and person-level contextual conditions that may influence IER outcomes. Moreover, all this was accomplished through

employing rigorous experimental randomised controlled designs.

In closing, the ever-increasing importance placed on leaders' relational behaviours to alter negative affect is placing leaders under increasing pressure. However, my research shows that proximal and distal leaders can use an IER framework deliberately for executive advantage. My findings are practically useful to leaders in that they can give leaders unambiguous guidance about what IER strategies work for whom, when and why. In sum, this thesis offers robust and theoretically driven empirical evidence, illuminating the relationship between IER and behavioural intentions, how, and when IER works best, and as such demonstrates the value of IER for supportive leadership.

⁶ These reports can be access via the Government of Ireland's website here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/6b4401-view-the-amarach-public-opinion-survey/>

⁷ <https://www.rte.ie/news/coronavirus/2020/0403/1128229-google-location-data/>

⁸ <https://www.dias.ie/2020/04/08/dias-seismologists-detect-decrease-in-human-made-noise-across-ireland-due-to-covid-19-lockdown/>

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Psychophysiological effects of downregulating negative emotions: insights from a meta-analysis of healthy adults. *Frontiers of Psychology* 11, 470.

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00470>

APPENDIX A: EXPERIMENTAL MANIPULATIONS

Experimental Manipulation (Study 1)

Angry inducement

Instructions: *Please think about how you would feel if you were actually living through this experience. Try to imagine the feeling you would have if you were actually in this situation.*

You are an employee working on an idea for a new major project for a number of months now. The project requires funding from the company you work with. You are investing so much time, energy, and effort in this project. You are working weekends and nights in the hope that you will secure funding to get this project off the ground. You are missing family time, coming home late in the evenings, and feeling pretty shattered. But this project could be a real success. It would mean so much to you. Better salary. Better hours. Better prospects. It is going to be worth it. An opportunity has now arisen where funding is available for your project, and you are really hoping to secure it! Over coffee you seek advice from a co-worker Samantha, who has more experience in seeking funding for these types of projects. She told you she is not applying for funding on this occasion. Samantha seemed really interested in your project and quizzed you about the details. The following day, you find out that Samantha has submitted a funding application for a project that seems identical to the one you had just described to her over coffee! There is only funding for one project. As Samantha is the more experienced researcher, she receives it. Your application is turned down. Your project will not go ahead despite the time, effort, and investment you put in. Through gritted teeth, you glare at Samantha as the funding coordinator notes in the meeting that “Samantha’s project will make a significant contribution to the company”. Samantha had completely stabbed you in the back. You are

really angry. You remember that you have a meeting with your manager, Rob later that afternoon. He has been your manager for a number of years. You decide to share your emotion with Rob in the meeting.

Affect-improving affective engagement manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob agrees to review your funding application and will call an urgent meeting between you, him, and Samantha to sort this matter out.

Affect-improving relationship-oriented (Distraction) manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob tries to take your mind off the situation. Rob suggests that you both grab a coffee and distracts you by talking about your potential involvement in an upcoming event later that year.

Affect-improving cognitive engagement manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob tries to offer you a different perspective on the situation. Rob suggests to you that although you failed to secure funding on this occasion, you may have gained valuable knowledge around the entire funding process which may assist you in future funding applications.

Affect-worsening rejecting manipulation: As you begin to express how you were feeling, Rob cuts you off by saying "don't be upset about it, don't think about the project, just forget about it and move on".

Inaction manipulation: Rob does not say or do anything in response to your expression of emotion and you leave the office.

Sad inducement

Instructions: *Please think about how you would feel if you were actually living*

through this experience. Try to imagine the feeling you would have if you were actually in this situation.

You are an employee working on an idea for a new major project for a number of months now. The project requires funding from the company you work with. You are investing so much time, energy, and effort in this project. You are working weekends and nights in the hope that you will secure funding to get this project off the ground. You're missing out on family time, coming home late in the evenings, and feeling pretty shattered. But this project could be a real success. It would mean so much to you. Better salary. Better hours. Better prospects. It is going to be worth it. Two weeks before the project is due before the funding committee, you are sitting at work when the phone rings. It's a colleague who sits on the funding committee. The minute you talk to their, you know by their strained voice that something is very wrong. With a heavy heart, you listen as she tells you there has been a serious setback in the company. Major funding cuts are inevitable. With a lump in your throat, you ask them about your own project. Rather, slowly, she reveals "I'm really sorry, I know how hard you've worked on your project but it's not going to happen. The funding is pulled for all projects. It is no-one's fault; the company has hit a rocky patch. I'm sorry but it's over". You can barely speak. All that time. All that effort. Missing your son's concert. Your heart sinks.

Chin trembling, you put down the phone and slouch into the chair. *"What will I do now?"* You are really sad. You remember that you have a meeting with your manager, Rob later that afternoon. He has been your manager for a number of years. You decide to share your emotion with Rob in the meeting.

Affect-improving affective engagement manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob agrees to speak to the funding committee to see if any funds could be made available to support your project allowing it to proceed.

Affect-improving relationship-oriented (Distraction) manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob tries to take your mind off the situation. Rob

suggests that you both grab a coffee and distracts you by talking about your potential involvement in an upcoming event later that year.

Affect-improving cognitive engagement manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob tries to offer you a different perspective on the situation. Rob suggests to you that although you failed to secure funding on this occasion, you may have gained valuable knowledge around the entire funding process, which may assist you in future funding applications.

Affect-worsening rejecting manipulation: As you begin to express how you were feeling, Rob cuts you off by saying "don't be upset about it, don't think about the project, just forget about it and move on".

Inaction manipulation: Rob does not say or do anything in response to your expression of emotion and you leave the office.

Neutral inducement

Instructions: Please think about how you would feel if you were actually living through this experience. Try to imagine the feeling you would have if you were actually in this situation.

You are an employee working on an idea for a new major project for a number of months now. The project requires funding from the company you work with. Despite help from more experienced colleagues and time and energy on your behalf, your application was turned down due to the apparent lack of funding. The project failed to get the go ahead. You have a meeting with your manager, Rob later that afternoon. He has been your manager for a number of years. You decide to share your emotion with Rob in the meeting. In response to your expression of emotion, Rob agrees to speak to the funding committee to see if any funds could be made available to support your project allowing it

to proceed.

Affect-improving affective engagement manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob agrees to speak to the funding committee to see if any funds could be made available to support your project allowing it to proceed.

Affect-improving relationship-oriented (Distraction) manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob tries to take your mind off the situation. Rob suggests that you both grab a coffee and distracts you by talking about your potential involvement in an upcoming event later that year.

Affect-improving cognitive engagement manipulation: In response to your expression of emotion, Rob tries to offer you a different perspective on the situation. Rob suggests to you that although you failed to secure funding on this occasion, you may have gained valuable knowledge around the entire funding process which may assist you in future funding applications.

Affect-worsening rejecting manipulation: As you begin to express how you were feeling, Rob cuts you off by saying "don't be upset about it, don't think about the project, just forget about it and move on".

Inaction manipulation: Rob does not say or do anything in response to your expression of emotion and you leave the office.

Experimental Manipulation (Study 2)

Promotion Focus Experimental Manipulation

Instructions: in this section, you are asked to read a hypothetical scenario. Based on this scenario, please answer all the survey questions that follow:

Imagine, you are an employee in a company and some months ago, you availed of a company scheme to undertake a part-time master's degree to enhance your existing occupational skills. You always wanted to do a master's degree. It was part of your hopes and aspirations. For you, it was an exciting opportunity to self-improve, to learn new ideas, and enhance your professional network and promotional prospects. You have now completed one year of the master's degree course. However, you failed your first-year exams and are unable to advance to year two to complete the Master's. You found it hard to balance studying and working full- time. You request a meeting with your manager, Sam who agrees to see you before the scheduled appointment, you review your last performance appraisal as a reminder of how you are doing at work.

*Meeting with Sam: **You:** "thanks for seeing me.... I just found out that I failed my master's exams, and I can't go on to year 2 unless I repeat the exams. I'm pretty disheartened at not passing". **Sam:** "ok, tell me what happened"? **You:** "yeah ... well. I was struggling trying to juggle college, work, and family even though i was very hopeful I could manage everything, and I'd hoped for the best. I'm afraid i didn't succeed. I'm feeling pretty down and disappointed in me.....".*

Your manager, Sam, listens to you and offers a temporary reduction in your workload to give you the opportunity to study more and resit the exams next term.

Prevention Focus Experimental Manipulation:

Instructions: In this section, you are asked to read a hypothetical scenario. Based on this scenario, please answer all the survey questions that follow:

Imagine that you are an employee in a company and some months ago, you availed of a company scheme to undertake a part-time master's degree to enhance your existing occupational skills. When you signed up for the course, you felt that having a master's degree would protect your present position (your role and salary) in the company and safeguard against any possible downsizing or demotion in the future. You also believed that gaining extra knowledge and skills was a necessary part of your duties and a core responsibility of your job. You, therefore, saw a master's degree as something you should do or ought to do. You have now completed one year of the master's degree course. However, you failed your first-year exams and are unable to advance to year two to attain your master's degree. You request a meeting with your manager, Sam who agrees to see you. Before the scheduled appointment, you review your last performance appraisal as a reminder of how you are doing at work:

Meeting with Sam: you: "thanks for seeing me.... I just found out that i failed my master's exams, and I can't go on to year 2 unless I repeat the exams. I'm pretty upset at not passing". Sam: "ok, tell me what happened"? You: "yeah ... well...I was struggling trying to juggle college, work, and family and I was very anxious that i wouldn't manage everything but i really stuck at it. I'm afraid I didn't succeed. I'm really upset about failing."

Affect-improving affective engagement manipulation: your manager, Sam, listens to you and offers a temporary reduction in your workload to give you the opportunity

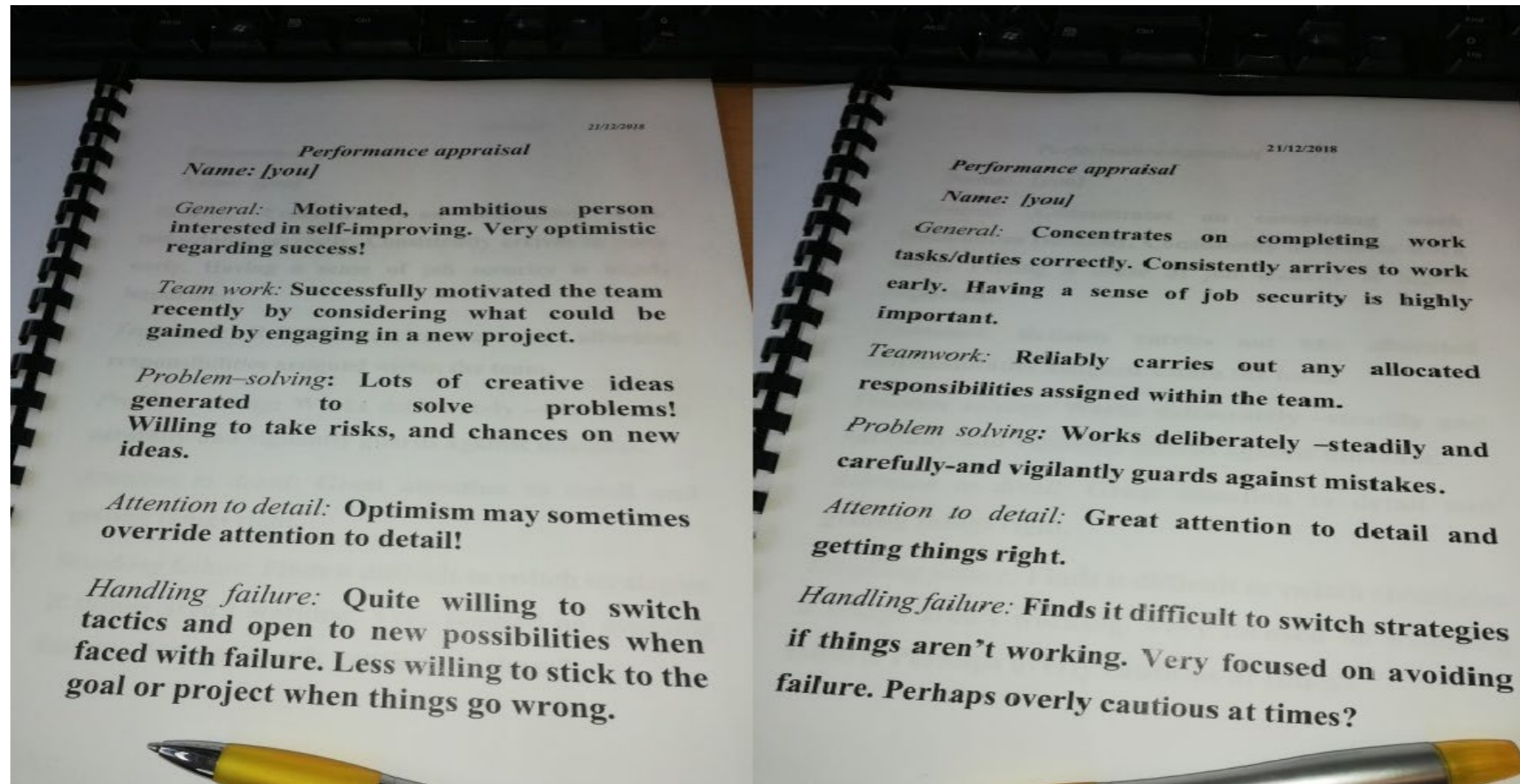
to study more and resit the exams next term.

Affect-improving relationship-oriented (Distraction) manipulation: your manager listens to you and then tries to take your mind off the exam failure. Your manager suggests that you both grab a coffee and distracts you by talking about your potential involvement in an upcoming work project.

Affect-improving cognitive engagement manipulation: your manager, Sam, listens to you and tries to offer another way to look at the exam failure. Sam suggests to you that notwithstanding failing the exams, you have gained knowledge that perhaps can be applied in the current position.

Affect-worsening rejecting strategy: as you begin to express how your feeling, your manager, Sam cuts you off by saying “it’s not that big of a deal” and advises you to “forget about it” and “move on”.

Inaction strategy: your manager, Sam listens to you and acknowledges what you are saying but you leave the office without any clear direction.

Visual Representation of Performance Appraisal to Induce Regulatory Focus (Study 2).

Experimental manipulation (Study 3)

Instructions: You will hear a short audio clip of a leader addressing the nation regarding the current pandemic (COVID-19).

The voice has been altered to disguise who the leader is. Please immerse yourself in what the leader is saying, listening carefully to answer all the questions that follow. Based on the clip you just heard, please indicate your understanding of what the leader was trying to achieve in this clip by ticking ONE of the following responses.

Affect-worsening Affective Engagement strategy (Fear): *Emphasising to the nation that the crisis is very serious threat and going to get so much worse before it gets better.*

Affect-improving Relationship-oriented Acceptance Strategy (Attention): *Showing a level of understanding regarding how people might be feeling during the crisis and expressing acceptance of people's emotional experience.*

Affect-improving Relationship-oriented Acceptance Strategy (Solidarity): *Emphasising that COVID-19 is a shared national and global crisis not simply a personal crisis and I should work together to resolve the crisis.*

Affect-improving Affective Engagement Strategy: *Suggesting alternative ways of doing business, working, engaging in daily activities, and ways of contacting family during isolation.*

Affect-improving Distraction strategy (Valuing strategies): *Recalling thoughts of family, family relationships and family obligations.*

Affect-improving Cognitive Engagement Strategy: *Offering reassurance to the public.*

APPENDIX B: SCALES

Interpersonal Emotion Regulation (Little et al., 2012)

Based on the hypothetical scenario presented above, please indicate your understanding of how Sam responded to you when you told Sam of your failure:

Affect-improving Affective engagement (Affective engagement) strategy	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My manager changed my workload to help me achieve my master's degree.							
My manager worked out a plan to alter the reasons why I was failing my exam.							
My manager reduced my workload which was causing the failure.							
My manager addressed the source of the failure to alter its emotional impact.							
My manager acted to address my exam failure.							
Affect-Improving Distraction(Distraction) Strategy	Strongly	Disagree	Somewhat	Neither agree	Somewhat	Agree	Strongly

	disagree		disagree	nor disagree	agree		agree
When my exam failure was disturbing me, my manager focused my attention away from it.							
My manager redirected the conversation towards something more appealing.							
My manager diverted my attention away from the exam failure which was causing my undesired emotions							
My manager refocused me by discussing positive work issues.							
My manager distracted me from focusing on the negative aspects of my failure.							
Affect-Improving Cognitive Engagement Strategy	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
When my manager wanted me to feel better, Sam put my exam failure into perspective.							

My manager tried to influence my emotions by changing how I thought about the exam failure.							
When my manager wanted me to feel less negative emotion (such as angry and sad), Sam tried to change the meaning of the failure for me.							
When my manager wanted me to feel more positive emotion (such as joy or amusement), Sam tried to change how I made sense of my exam failure.							
When my manager wanted me to feel less negative emotion (such as sad or angry), Sam put my exam failure into perspective.							
Affect-worsening (Rejecting) strategy	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
When I was experiencing negative emotions, my manager didn't give me a chance to express my emotions.							
My manager encouraged me to keep my emotions to myself.							
When I tried to speak about my exam failure, my manager cut me off.							
When I was feeling undesirable emotions around my exam failure, my manager told me to "don't be upset about it, forget about it" and "move on".							

My manager encouraged me not to express my emotions.							
Inaction (Neutral Condition)	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
My manager did not change my workload to help me achieve my Master's degree.							















My manager did not work out any plan to address the reasons for failing.	
My manager did nothing to alter the negative impact of the failure.	
My manager did not try to encourage any positive emotion.	
My manager did not take any action to help me.	

Affect Scale (Van Katwyk et al., 2000)

Affect was assessed using the Job-related Affect Well-being Scale (JAWS) (Van Katwyk et al., 2000), a 30-item scale designed to assess people's emotional reactions to their job. In this study, respondents were instructed to respond with reference to how they felt *after the manager* engaged in the IER strategy. The response scale consists of 15 positive feelings (e.g., calm, contented, relaxed, cheerful, enthusiastic, optimistic) and 15 negative ones (e.g., tense, uneasy, worried, depressed, gloomy, miserable). Responses were indicated on a visual analogue scale (Snippe et al., 2018) ranging from 'not at all' = 0 to an 'extreme amount' = 100.

Below are a number of statements that describe different emotions. Please indicate how you feel after the manager engaged in the IER strategy. Drag the slider to the position that determines the extent you feel each of the following emotions with '0' indicating "not at all" to '100' indicating "an extreme amount".

	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
angry	
Dread	
Sad	
Easy-going	
Grossed out	
Terror	
Rage	
Grief	
Nausea	
Anxiety	
Chilled out	
Nervous	
Lonely	
Scared	
Mad	
Sickened	
Empty	

Panic	
Calm	
Fear	
Relaxation	
Revulsion	
Worry	
Pissed off	
Wanting	
Desire	
Craving	
Longing	
Happy	
Satisfaction	
Enjoyment	
Liking	

Behavioural Trust Inventory (Gillespie, 2003)

The BTI is a standardised instrument (Gillespie, 2003) that measures reliance and disclosure dimensions of trust on a seven-point rating scale ranging from ‘*completely unwilling*’ = 1 to ‘*completely willing*’ = 7. Respondents were requested to rate their willingness to demonstrate trusting behaviours towards the manager on this 7-point rating scale. [Study 2: Following the meeting with Sam regarding your exam failure, please rate how willing you would be to do each of the following based on Sam's response to you]:

How willing are you to	<i>completely unwilling</i> ’ = 1 to <i>completely willing</i> ’ = 7.
Rely on your manager’s work-related judgments.	
Rely on your manager’s task-related skills and abilities.	
Follow your manager’s advice on important issues. /Trust that this member will ask for help when needed.	
Depend on your manager to handle an important issue on your behalf.	
Rely on your manager to represent your work accurately to others. Depend on your manager to back you up in difficult situations.	
Ask this member to make work-related decisions for you in your absence/Ask your manager to be a referee, when applying for	

another job.

Rely on your manager's people skills at work.

Share your personal feelings with your manager.

Confide in your manager about personal issues that are affecting your work.

Discuss how you honestly feel about your work, even negative feelings, and frustration.

Discuss work-related problems or difficulties that could potentially be used to disadvantage you.

Share your personal beliefs with your manager.

Goal Adjustment Scale (Wrosch et al., 2003)

Below are a number of statements which describe how people react when they cannot attain their goals. Following your meeting with your manager Sam, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree or disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I would be inclined to reduce my effort toward my master's degree.					
I would stay committed to my master's for a long time.					
I would find it difficult to stop trying to achieve my Masters.					
I would be inclined to stop thinking about my master's and let it go.					
I find it difficult to stop achieving the goal and let it go.					
I think about other meaningful goals to pursue					
I seek other meaningful goals					

It's easy for me to stop thinking about my master's and let it
go

I tell myself that I have a number of other new goals to draw
upon

I put effort towards other meaningful goals

Turnover Intentions Scale (Kelloway et al., 1999)

The statements below reflect a person's intention to leave their job. How likely would you be to consider each of the actions below if your manager reacted to you in the manner described in the scenario? Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements

	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree o disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I would think about leaving this organisation.					
I would plan to look for a new job.					
My intention would be to ask people about new job opportunities.					
I wouldn't plan to be in this organisation much longer.					

Trustworthiness Scale (Mayer et al., 1995)

Trustworthiness was assessed using the 17-item Mayer and colleagues (1995) measure of ability (6 items), benevolence (5 items), and integrity (6 items) perceptions. Respondents indicated the extent to which each statement was characteristic of the leader, on a five-point Likert scale anchored by 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) and the components were combined into an overall assessment of perceived trustworthiness ($\alpha = .95$).

Indicate the extent to which each statement was characteristic of the leader	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree or disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
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The leader is very capable of performing [the leaders'] job.

The leader is known to be successful at the things The leader expertise tries to do.

The leader has much knowledge about the work that needs done.

I feel very confident about [the leaders'] skills.

The leader has specialized capabilities that can increase our performance.

The leader is well qualified.

The leader is very concerned with my welfare.

My needs and desires are very important to the leader.

The leader would not knowingly do anything to hurt me.

The leader really looks out for what is important to me.

The leader will go out of [the leaders'] way to help me.

The leader has a strong sense of justice.

I never have to wonder whether the leader will stick to [the leaders'] word.

The leader tries hard to be fair in dealing with others.

[The leaders'] actions and behaviours are not very consistent.

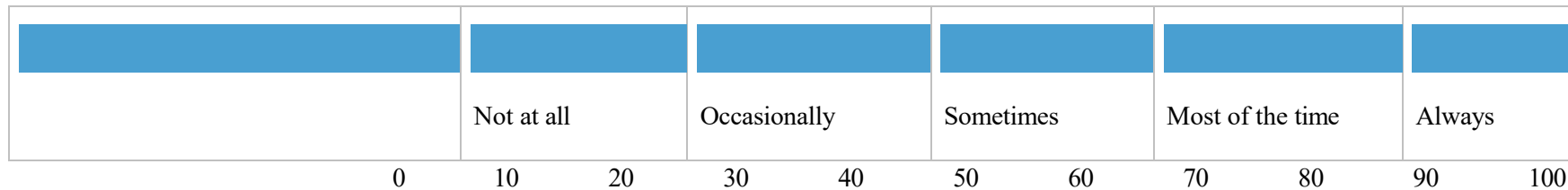
I like [the leaders'] values.

Sound principles seem to guide [the leaders'] behaviour






Compliance (World Health Organisation, 2020)

The questions that follow consider the effects of the leaders' speech on you. Listening to the leaders' speech, to what extent do you feel the following emotions? **Does this leaders' address inspire you to act in accordance with the following guidelines issued by WHO and your government?** (Drag the bar to the position that determines your intention to comply with government/WHO regulations with '0' indicating "not at all" to '100' indicating "extremely".)

The leader inspires me to.....



Comply with hygiene regulations (e.g., regularly and thoroughly clean my hands, Cover my nose and mouth when coughing /sneezing with my elbow)	
Refrain from visiting family members and friends	

	
Maintain social distancing	
Only go outside once a day to exercise, collect food or medicine or to care for a vulnerable person	
Work from home unless it is essential to do otherwise (10)	
Avoid public places (11)	

The Discrete Emotions Questionnaire (DEQ; Harmon-Jones et al., 2016),

Please indicate your response using the scale provided.

When reading the vignette, to what extent do you feel the following emotions?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Moderately	Quite a bit	Very much	An extreme amount

angry (Ag)

Scared (F)

Wanting (Dr)

Mad (Ag)

Dread (Ax)

Satisfaction (H)

Sad (S)

Sickened (Dg)

Easygoing (R)

Empty (S)

Grossed out (Dg)

Craving (Dr)

Happy (H)

Panic (F)

Terror (F)

Longing (Dr)

Rage (Ag)	Calm (R)
Grief (S)	Fear (F)
Nausea (Dg)	Relaxation (R)
Anxiety (Ax)	Revulsion (Dg)
Chilled out (R)	Worry (Ax)
Desire (Dr)	Enjoyment (H)
Nervous (Ax)	Pissed off (Ag)
Lonely (S)	Liking (H)

Ag = angry items, Dg = Disgust items, F = Fear items, Ax = Anxiety items, S = Sad items, Dr = Desire items, R = Relaxation items, H = Happiness items.

IER Manipulation check (Study 3 and 4)

Please indicate your understanding of what the government officials were trying to achieve in the ministerial briefing you recently saw:	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	A lot (4)	A great deal (5)
Emphasizing that the crisis is really serious and going to get much worse. (IER_1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	
Showing a level of understanding regarding how people might be feeling during the crisis and expressing acceptance of people's emotional experience (IER_2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offering reassurance to the public (IER_3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Emphasizing that COVID-19 is a shared national and global crisis not simply a personal crisis and we should work together to resolve the crisis (IER_4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Bringing to mind the particular importance placed on close family relationships, family obligations and caring for each other now more than ever. (IER_5)

The leader is taking action to address the crisis, has worked out a plan and is giving advice on how to handle the crisis. (IER_6)



Studies 3 and 4: EROS Measure: Adaptation to government leader

context

Original Items

(Madrid, Niven & Vasquez, 2019)

Adapted to government leader context

(Studies 1 and 2)

Team members were asked to rate the extent to which their leader uses behaviors to influence the way they feel.

Instructions: As you watched the ministerial briefing, to what extent did the minister(s) use the following strategies to influence the way the public felt?

Improving

Discusses team members' positive characteristics

Discussed citizen's positive characteristics

Makes team members laugh

Makes citizen's see the positive

Listens to team members' problems

Indicated that they had listened to citizen's problems

Gives team members helpful advice

Gave helpful advice to citizens

Spends time to listen team members

Indicated that they had spent time listening to citizens

Shows him/herself as a nice person within the team

Showed themselves as a reasonable person

Worsening

Talks about team members' shortcomings

Acts annoyed towards team members

Makes unpleasant comments within the team

Shows him/herself unfriendly towards team members

Uses the cold shoulder within the team

Makes team members feel guilty

Likert Scale response:

1: not at all – 5: a great extent.

Talked about shortcomings in citizen's actions

Acted annoyed towards citizens

Made unpleasant comments with regard to citizens

Showed themselves as unfriendly towards citizens

Demonstrated a coldness in their communication

Made citizen's feel guilty

Likert Scale response:

1; not at all to 5: a great deal

APPENDIX C: DEMOGRAPHICS

Study 1 and 2:

Please state your gender

Male Female Nonbinary

Please state your age Please state your ethnicity:

Caucasian

Black or African American American Indian or Alaska Native Asian

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander Other

Please state your highest level of education:

Less than high school

Some high school, no diploma High school graduate

Trade/technical/vocational training Bachelor's degree

Master's degree Doctorate degree

Which of the following best describes your role within your organisation/industry?

Senior Management Middle Management Junior Management

Employee

Please specify your current employment status: Employed full time (over 30 hours per week)

Employed part-time (less than 30 hours per week) Employed on a casual basis.

Not working at the moment

How long have you worked at your current organisation (in years)?

Please specify your area of employment

agriculture, forestry, farming, and gardening

construction, architecture, surveying, and technical building services production of raw materials and goods, and

manufacturing

Services

maintenance, service, or sales clerical technical administrative education other

Study 3 and 4:**What is your gender?**

Male Female Non-binary

Prefer not to say. Other (Please specify)

Please state your age.**What is your country of origin? What is your ethnic background?**

English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Ireland, British Irish

Romani or Irish Traveller

Oceanian (e.g., Australian Peoples, New Zealand Peoples, Melanesian and Papuan, Micronesian, Polynesian)

North-West European

Southern And Eastern European (e.g., Southern European, Southeastern European, Eastern European)

North African and Middle Eastern (e.g., Arab, Jewish, Peoples of the Sudan, other North African and Middle Eastern)

South-East Asian (e.g. Mainland South-East Asian, Maritime South-East Asian) North-East Asian (e.g. Chinese Asian,

Other North-East Asian) (10)

American (e.g., North American, South American, Central American, Caribbean Islander) Sub-Saharan African (e.g., Central and West African, Southern and East African)

Other (Please specify) _____

How would you best describe your current household?

Live alone

Cohabiting (with partners/ friends/ house share) Cohabiting (with partner and children)

Cohabiting (with children)

Cohabiting (with parents)

Please state your highest level of education attainment.

Primary education (elementary school)

Second level education intermediate certificate (e.g Junior Cert, GCSE)

Second level education higher certificate (e.g., Leaving Certificate, A levels, SSCE) Higher Education certificate / Associate degree /Advanced diploma (Level 6) Bachelor's degree (Level 7)

Graduate diploma / Graduate Certificate / Bachelor Honours degree (Level 8) Postgraduate Master's -level degree (Level 9)

Postgraduate doctoral degree (Level 10)

Please specify your current employment status:

Employed but working from home due to COVID-19 Employed but workplace closed due to COVID-19 Employed, and going to work.

Unemployed due to COVID-19 Currently not seeking work Student

Retired

Are you working in the health care services?

Yes No

Are you an essential services worker?

Yes No

Not sure what this means.

I would like to ask you about the impact of COVID -19 on your income. Are you in receipt of COVID-19 pandemic financial support from the Government?

Yes No

Prefer not to say.

Prior to COVID-19, were you in receipt of any income related welfare benefits?

Yes No

Prefer not to say.

I would like to ask you about the impact of COVID -19 on your income.

	A great deal	A lot	A moderate amount	A little	None at all
How much damage has the crisis done to your financial situation?					
Have you lost your job or business?					

I would like to ask you questions about your health. Have you been tested or are currently waiting to be tested for COVID-19?

Yes No

Have you been diagnosed with COVID-19?

Yes No

I would like to ask you about the impact of COVID-19 on your wellbeing.	Yes	No
Have any of your loved ones been among the fatalities?		
Have you been hospitalised?		
Are any of your family or friends among the most vulnerable?		
Are any of your family or friends working in health care settings (including nursing homes)?		

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly agree (5)	Somewhat agree (4)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
COVID-19 is threat to the health of people in the national community					
COVID-19 is threat to my health					
COVID-19 is threat to the health of the people living in my household					

Since the COVID-19 crisis began, please indicate how often you felt or thought a certain way. How often have you.....

	Very often	Fairly often	Sometimes	Almost never	Never
felt upset because of COVID-19?					
felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life because of COVID-19?					
felt nervous and “stressed” during this crisis?					
felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems during this time?					

felt that things were going your way?					
found that you could not cope with all the things you had to do?					
been able to control irritations in your life during this time?					
felt that you were on top of things?					
been angered because of thing that were outside of your control?					
felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could no overcome them?					

APPENDIX D: ETHICS APPLICATION PROCESS

Study 1: Ethics Application form



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK
O L L S C O I L L U I M N I G H

Kemmy Business School Research Ethics Committee

Application Form

The completion of this form is only necessary where the proposed research involves working with human subjects.³

PhD Research Students

(Please note that your answers must be typed)

Name:	Bernadette Naughton
Student ID:	17257719
Date:	21/11/2018
Title of Project: (please do not use acronyms)	Interpersonal Emotional Regulation and Goal Failure: Examining Affective, Cognitive and Behavioural Outcomes for Followers.
Name of Supervisor(s)	Dr. Deirdre O'Shea (KBS) Dr. Lisa Van der Werff(Dublin City University)

PART A

³ Examples of research involving human subjects include (but are not limited to): carrying out interviews; conducting a survey; distributing a questionnaire; using focus groups; and the observation of individuals or groups.

Research Purpose: (50-100 words)

Using goal failure as the context for analysis, this study examines how a manager's use of interpersonal emotional regulation (IER) strategies influences affect, trust, and behavioural intentions for the follower. More specifically, it analyses the interactive effects of IER strategies used by manager and the followers' expressed emotions on affect, trust, goal adjustment and turnover intentions.

The current study hypothesises that the interaction effect between type of emotion experienced by follower following goal failure and strategy deployed by the manager will be statistically significant.

There will be a statistically significant relationship between the type of IER strategies employed by the manager affecting trusting relations, affect and behavioural intentions

Research Methodology: (100-150 words)

800 respondents will be recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (M-Turk), an online portal operated by Amazon to complete an experimental study.

Design. This study adopts an experimental vignette design.

The study uses a 3 (emotions: angry, upset, neutral) x 5 (interpersonal emotional regulation strategies (IER): situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, modulation of the emotional response or a control condition) experimental design.

Respondents be randomly assigned to one of the experimental conditions and I will assess the following dependent variables: trust of the manager, affect, turnover intentions and goal disengagement

1. Human Subjects

Does the research proposal involve:

		Yes	No
--	--	------------	-----------

(a)	Any person under the age of 18?		X
(b)	Adult patients?		X
(c)	Adults with psychological impairments?		X
(d)	Adults with learning difficulties?		X
(e)	Adults under the protection/ control/influence of others (e.g., in care/ in prison)?		X
(f)	Relatives of ill people (e.g., parents of sick children)?		X
(g)	People whose comprehension of the research and its requirements might be compromised by their linguistic competence? (e.g. individuals whose mother tongue is another language, who are being asked to participate in research in English)		X

2. Subject Matter

Does the research proposal involve:

		Yes	No
(a)	Sensitive personal issues? (e.g., suicide, bereavement, gender identity, sexuality, fertility, abortion, gambling)?		x
(b)	Illegal activities, illicit drug taking, substance abuse or the self reporting of criminal behaviour?		x
(c)	Any act that might diminish self-respect or cause shame, embarrassment or regret?		x
(d)	Research into politically and/or racially/ethically sensitive areas?		x

3. Procedures

Does the proposal involve:

		Yes	No
(a)	Use of personal or company records without consent?		x
(b)	Deception of respondents?		x
(c)	The offer of disproportionately large inducements to participate?		x
(d)	Audio or visual recording without consent?		x
(e)	Invasive physical interventions or treatments?		x
(f)	Research which might put researchers or respondents at risk?		

4. (a) Who will your informants be?

The inclusion criteria are as follows:

Informants will be 18 years and over, both male and female and those who identify as non-binary, who have self-identified as working or having worked within the last 3-6 months. The respondents will be recruited through an online survey.

(b) Do you have a **pre-existing relationship** with the informants and, if so, what is the nature of that relationship?

No

(c) How do you plan to gain **access to /contact/approach** potential informants?

Through M-Turk. The respondents will receive a small monetary compensation to thank them for their participation. Payments are made via Amazons payment system.

(d) In line with UL data protection policies and GDPR regulation, please confirm (by ticking the box) that you will appropriately manage and uphold **respondent anonymity and confidentiality**

Please refer to UL Data Protection guidelines

<https://ulsites.ul.ie/corporatesecretary/data-protection>

and KBS Privacy Notice & Consent Form templates

https://www.ul.ie/business/kbs_research_ethics

which must be completed with and signed by respondents in advance of the commencement of the study.

- (e) In line with UL data protection policies and GDPR regulation, please confirm (by ticking the box) that you will appropriately and securely manage the **storage and protection of personal data**.

Please refer to UL Data Protection guidelines

<https://ulsites.ul.ie/corporatesecretary/data-protection>

and KBS Privacy Notice & Consent Form templates

https://www.ul.ie/business/kbs_research_ethics

which must be completed with and signed by respondents in advance of the commencement of the study.

- (f) If not identified previously in this form, might there be any other **particular vulnerabilities among your informants**?

No obvious risks identified beyond those associated with normal computer use, however respondents will be advised in the consent form of having the option of opting out of the study at any point during the research process and instructed on how to do so.

- (g) What arrangements are in place to ensure that informants know the **purpose of the research** and what they are going to inform about?

Purpose of research:

1. A brief description of the experiment will be given.
2. The title of the research will be slightly amended in the questionnaire to ensure that the title doesn't bias the results as follows: "Interpersonal emotional regulation and goal failure: examining followers' outcomes".

- (h) How will you ensure that informants are aware of their **right to refuse** to participate or **withdraw** at any time?

All the respondents be recruited on a voluntary basis and will be informed that they are free to withdraw from the research at any time. Respondents will be asked to review and indicate their consent by ticking a box on the online questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity not to consent. If they select this option, they will automatically exit from the survey. The consent form will be in English, and difficulties in comprehension are not anticipated.

- (i) How would you handle any unforeseen **safety issues** should they arise?

The informed consent form will contain my contact email details for any concerns or complaints

As part of ethics approval, please indicate by **ticking** the following boxes if you agree to the following conditions:

I confirm that I will inform all respondents that this research is being conducted as part of a UL project. X

I confirm that no individuals who directly report to me will be asked to participate in this research X

If this involves a company specific research project, please confirm that appropriate permission and access will be sought and secured from the company (e.g. via the HR Department) before any followers are contacted to participate N/A

I confirm that I am aware of and will abide by my legal responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation and GDPR X Relevant documentation and guidance is available at www.ul.ie/dataprotection. All applicants must complete the relevant KBSREC research ethics application form (either the Faculty and PhD students' form or the FYP and taught postgraduate students' form). All questions on this form must be answered. **All answers must be typed – handwritten applications cannot be processed. Forms must be signed by the faculty supervisor.** KBSREC is only accepting electronic submissions of research ethics application

forms. Signatures can be added to forms in one of two ways. First, applicants may print out a typed form, sign it, and then scan the signed form and submit this signed version. Alternatively, applicants may insert electronic signatures into the form directly. Forms should be emailed to KBSResearchEthics@ul.ie. You will receive an acknowledgement of your application at this point. **This form must be submitted before the research begins.**

Signature of PhD Student: _____ **Date:** _____

***Signature of Supervisor:** _____ **Date:** _____

Study 1: Ethics Approval

From: kbsresearchethicsapplication@ul.ie <kbsresearchethicsapplication@ul.ie>

Date: Friday, 21 December 2018 at 09:22

To: Bernadette Naughton <bnaughton@AIT.IE>

Cc: Deirdre.O'Loughlin <Deirdre.OLoughlin@ul.ie>, Deirdre.OShea <Deirdre.OShea@ul.ie>

Subject: Research Ethics Application: 2018_12_KBS_04

Dear Bernadette

Thank you for your Research Ethics Application which was reviewed by the KBS Research Ethics Committee on the 19th December 2018. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been given research ethics approval.

Kind regards

Rebecca**Rebecca Gachet**

KBS Research Office KB2-14

Scoil Ghnó Kemmy | Kemmy Business School

Ollscoil Luimnigh | University of Limerick

Telephone: 061 202256 Email: rebecca.gachet@ul.ie

Study 2: Ethics Application form



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK

OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

Kemmy Business School Research Ethics Committee

Application Form

The completion of this form is only necessary where the proposed research involves working with human subjects.⁴

PhD Research Students

(Please note that your answers must be typed)

Name:	Bernadette Naughton
E-mail Address:	bnaughton@ait.ie
Date:	27/01/2020
Title of Project: (please do not use acronyms)	The effect of interpersonal emotion regulation strategies on affective and behavioural outcomes at work: The role of regulatory foci
Names of other researchers involved:	Dr. Deirdre O'Shea (University of Limerick, Ireland) Dr. Lisa Van der Werff (Dublin City University)

⁴ Examples of research involving human subjects include (but are not limited to): carrying out interviews; conducting a survey; distributing a questionnaire; using focus groups; and the observation of individuals or groups.

PART A

Research Purpose: (50-100 words)

Using goal failure as the context for analysis, this study addresses the question: does a followers' regulatory focus (prevention /promotion) affect responses to interpersonal emotional regulation (IER) strategies employed by the manager? The study examines the relationship between a manager's use of IER strategies and the followers situationally induced regulatory foci on affect and trust as well as the followers' behavioural intentions. The current study hypothesises that there will be a statistically significant interactive effect between the followers' regulatory foci and the type of IER strategies employed by the manager affecting perceptions of trust, affect, and behavioural intentions (turnover intentions and goal adjustment).

Research Methodology: (100-150 words)

500 respondents will be recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk (M-Turk), an online portal operated by Amazon to complete an experimental vignette study.

Design: This study adopts an experimental vignette design. The study uses a 2 (regulatory foci: prevention versus promotion) \times 5 (Interpersonal Emotional Regulation Strategies (IER): situation modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, modulation of the emotional response or control condition) experimental design.

Respondents will be randomly assigned to one of the experimental conditions and I will assess the following dependent variables: trustworthiness of the manager, affect and behavioural intentions

1. Human Subjects

Does the research proposal involve:

		Yes	No
(a)	Any person under the age of 18?		X
(b)	Adult patients?		X
(c)	Adults with psychological impairments?		X
(d)	Adults with learning difficulties?		X
(e)	Adults under the protection/ control/influence of others (e.g., in care/ in prison)?		X
(f)	Relatives of ill people (e.g., parents of sick children)?		X
(g)	People whose comprehension of the research and its requirements might be compromised by their linguistic competence? (e.g. individuals whose mother tongue is another language, who are being asked to participate in research in English)		X

2. Subject Matter

Does the research proposal involve:

		Yes	No
(a)	Sensitive personal issues? (e.g., suicide, bereavement, gender identity, sexuality, fertility, abortion, gambling)?		X
(b)	Illegal activities, illicit drug taking, substance abuse or the self reporting of criminal behaviour?		X
(c)	Any act that might diminish self-respect or cause shame, embarrassment or regret?		X
(d)	Research into politically and/or racially/ethically sensitive areas?		X

3. Procedures

Does the proposal involve:

		Yes	No
(a)	Use of personal or company records without consent?		X
(b)	Deception of respondents?		X
(c)	The offer of disproportionately large inducements to participate?		X
(d)	Audio or visual recording without consent?		X
(e)	Invasive physical interventions or treatments?		X
(f)	Research which might put researchers or respondents at risk?		X

4. (a) Who will your informants be?

The inclusion criteria is as follows: Informants will be 18 years and over, both male and female and those who identify as non-binary, who have self-identified as working or having worked within the last 3-6 months. The respondents will be recruited through an online survey.

(b) Do you have a **pre-existing relationship** with the informants and, if so, what is the nature of that relationship?

No

(c) How do you plan to gain **access to /contact/approach** potential informants?

Through M-Turk. The respondents will receive a small monetary compensation to thank them for their participation. Payments are made via Amazon's payment system

(d) What arrangements have you made for **anonymity and confidentiality**?

The researcher will provide an Informed Consent sheet outlining the purpose of the research to the respondents and the procedure involved. The information sheet will outline the risks (none anticipated)

and the potential benefits of the respondent's involvement. This information sheet will also include a separate section titled "Voluntary participation and right to withdraw" detailing the respondent's right to withdraw any time from the research. It will include instructions of how to withdraw from the research if desired e.g. "to stop, click on the "Return HIT" button, or close your window browser". The Informed consent form will be devoid of vague and ambiguous language and at a comprehension level that is understandable for the intended respondent population. The following sentence will be added to the informed consent sheet: "Please be aware that any work performed on Amazon M-Turk can potentially be linked to information about you on your Amazon public profile page, depending upon the settings you have for your Amazon profile. I will NOT be accessing any personally identifying information about you that you may have put on your Amazon public profile page. I will store your M-Turk worker ID separately from the other information you provide us. M-Turk worker ID's will only be collected for the purpose of distributing compensation and will not be associated with your survey responses. Additionally, Amazon will NOT have access to your responses on the questions being hosted at the Qualtrics link" Respondents will be reassured that IP addresses will not be tracked by the researchers, maximising the anonymity and confidentiality of the survey. Respondents will have an opportunity to give their consent. Respondents will be informed that the results of the study will be published and used in conferences for learning purposes.

- (e) If not identified previously in this form, might there be any other **particular vulnerabilities among your informants?**

No obvious risks identified beyond those associated with normal computer use, however respondents will be advised in the consent form of having the option of opting out of the study at any point during the research process and instructed on how to do so.

- (f) What arrangements are in place to ensure that informants know the **purpose of the research** and what they are going to inform about?

Purpose of research: A brief description of the research will be provided. The title of the research will be slightly amended in the questionnaire to ensure that the title doesn't bias the results as follows:
 "Strategies that employers use to help workers overcome failure responses".

(g) How will you ensure that informants are aware of their **right to refuse** to participate or **withdraw** at any time?

1. All the respondents will be recruited on a voluntary basis and will be informed that they are free to withdraw from the research at any time.
2. Respondents will be asked to review and indicate their consent by ticking a box. They will also be given the opportunity not to consent. If they select this option, they will be exited from the survey.
3. The consent form will be in English, and difficulties in comprehension are not anticipated.

(h) How would you handle any unforeseen **safety issues** should they arise?

The informed consent form will contain my contact email details for any concerns or complaints.

As part of ethics approval, please indicate by **ticking** the following boxes if you agree to the following conditions:

I confirm that I will inform all respondents that this research is being conducted as part of a UL project.

I confirm that no individuals who directly report to me will be asked to participate in this research

I confirm that I am aware of and will abide by my legal responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation and GDPR Relevant documentation and guidance is available at www.ul.ie/dataprotection

If you have answered **YES** to any of the questions in **PART A, sections 1-3**, you will also need to **comply**

with the requirements of **PART B** of this form.

If you have answered **NO** to all of the questions in **PART A, sections 1-3** above, please **ignore PART B** of the form.

All applicants must complete the relevant KBSREC research ethics application form (either the Faculty and PhD students' form or the FYP and taught postgraduate students' form). All questions on this form must be answered. **All answers must be typed – handwritten applications cannot be processed. Forms must be signed by the faculty supervisor.** KBSREC is only accepting electronic submissions of research ethics application forms. Signatures can be added to forms in one of two ways. First, applicants may print out a typed form, sign it, and then scan the signed form and submit this signed version. Alternatively, applicants may insert electronic signatures into the form directly.

Forms should be emailed to KBSResearchEthics@ul.ie. You will receive an acknowledgement of your application at this point. **This form must be submitted before the research begins.**

Signature of PhD Student: Bernadette Naughton **Date:** 29th November 2018

***Signature of Supervisor:** _____ **Date:** _____

Study 2: Ethics Approval

From: kbsresearchethicsapplication@ul.ie <kbsresearchethicsapplication@ul.ie>

Date: Thursday, 20 February 2020 at 09:33

To: bnaughton@AIT.IE <bnaughton@AIT.IE>, ULStudent:BERNADETTE.NAUGHTON
<17257719@studentmail.ul.ie>

Cc: Deirdre.OShea <Deirdre.OShea@ul.ie>

Subject: KBS Research Ethics application 2020_02_KBS_05

Dear Bernadette,

Thank you for your Research Ethics Application, which was reviewed by the KBS Research Ethics Committee on the 19th February 2020. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been given research ethics approval.

Kind regards

Deirdre O'Shea

Dr. Deirdre O'Shea, F.Ps.S.I., C.Psychol.Ps.S.I.

Senior Lecturer in Work and Organisational Psychology

Chair, KBS Research Ethics Committee

Course Director, M.Sc. in Work & Organisational Psychology/ Work & Organisational
Behaviour

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University of Limerick, Limerick, V94 T9PX

Ollscoil Luimnigh, V94 T9PX, Éire



Study 3 & 4 Ethics Application form



UNIVERSITY of LIMERICK

OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

Kemmy Business School Research Ethics Committee

Application Form

The completion of this form is only necessary where the proposed research involves working with human subjects.⁵

(Please note that your answers must be typed)

Faculty

Name:	Dr Deirdre O'Shea
E-mail Address:	deirdre.oshea@ul.ie
Date:	6 th April 2020
Title of Project: (please do not use acronyms)	Trust, emotion regulation and compliance
Names of other researchers involved:	Bernadette Naughton, PhD researcher, KBS Dr Lisa Van der Werff, DCU Business School Dublin City University Dr Finian Buckley, DCU Business School Dublin City University

PART A

⁵ Examples of research involving human subjects include (but are not limited to): carrying out interviews; conducting a survey; distributing a questionnaire; using focus groups; and the observation of individuals or groups.

Research Purpose: (50-100 words)

The concepts of trust and compliance have come to the fore in the current pandemic. The extent to which individuals trust in leaders and experts is likely a substantial determinant of whether they will comply with restrictions on movement and lifestyle activities in an effort to ‘flatten the curve’. While this seems effective in the short-term, will the public tire of these messages over time, or will the toll on other aspects of quality of life and mental health degrade the impact of these messages in the medium to long term. I propose to investigate this in a series of studies.

Research Methodology: (100-150 words)

Study 1: In the first study, I will investigate the interpersonal emotion regulation (IER) strategies used in leader speeches (e.g. Leo Varadkar’s “St. Patrick’s Day” speech announcing the restrictions on movement etc) on reactions such as listener’s emotional reactions, social identity, trust in leader, and compliance behaviour. In times of crisis, leaders’ make an appeal to the people of their nations but the way in which they do this and the extent to which they are trusted is likely to substantially impact subsequent behaviours. This study will take the form of an experimental vignette study where I compare various IER strategies in leader speeches in response to the COVID-19 crisis to consider their varying effect on respondents. I will source respondents from M-Turk, Prolific or similar providers to ensure respondents are not from the same country as the leader speech being used (e.g. if using text from the Irish Taoiseach, I will target English speakers from other countries such as the UK or Australia).

Study 2: In a follow-up to study 1, I will send a survey to Irish adults after each subsequent government briefing to gain insights into the immediate reaction of the Irish public to any future

decisions with regard to restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in order to gain an real-time insights into the public's reaction to and subsequent compliance with continued measures.

Study 3: As yet, there is only anecdotal and hypothetical suggestions for the longer-term impact of the social distancing and travel restrictions to stem the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, successfully flattening the curve will extend the timeframe exposure control. In the interim, people's lives and work are changed dramatically, feelings of social isolation are high, mental health is impacted, leading to high levels of anxiety (especially also in the case of loss of employment). For many who work in contact facing positions, there is a daily worry of contracting the virus. The extent to which individuals are able to cope and tolerate these changes will likely impact their continued compliance with lifestyle changes. Will trust in leaders and experts or appeals to our social identity as a nation be enough to motivate the continued compliance with whatever actions continue to be necessary to stem the COVID-19 virus?

In the third study, I propose to conduct a longitudinal study where I ask respondents to complete 1-2 surveys per month for 6-12 months (timeframe not definitively set due to the nature of the pandemic)

I will contract with a market research team to source a representative sample of Irish respondents (500-1000, depending on funding) and assess a wide battery of measures (e.g. demographics measures, family status, employment status, well-being measures including concepts such as resilience, PTSD, emotions, well-being, mental health), trust, compliance behaviours, COVID-19 diagnosis of respondent or their family members).

As well as providing information on the success of further restrictions and continued compliance with measures, this research will enable us to track the psychological effects of the pandemic over time, including the impact of social isolation, cocooning and lock-down, as well as different forms of working (e.g. working in the front line or in contact with the public, working from home, unemployed). This has important public health and policy implications.

--

1. Human Subjects

Does the research proposal involve:

		Yes	No
(a)	Any person under the age of 18?		X
(b)	Adult patients?	X	
(c)	Adults with psychological impairments?		X
(d)	Adults with learning difficulties?		X
(e)	Adults under the protection/ control/influence of others (e.g., in care in prison)?		X
(f)	Relatives of ill people (e.g., parents of sick children)?	X	
(g)	People whose comprehension of the research and its requirements might be compromised by their linguistic competence? (e.g. individuals whose mother tongue is another language, who are being asked to participate in research in English)	X	

2. Subject Matter

Does the research proposal involve:

		Yes	No
(a)	Sensitive personal issues? (e.g., suicide, bereavement, gender identity, sexuality, fertility, abortion, gambling)?	X	
(b)	Illegal activities, illicit drug taking, substance abuse		X

	or the self reporting of criminal behaviour?		
(c)	Any act that might diminish self-respect or cause shame, embarrassment or regret?		X
(d)	Research into politically and/or racially/ethically sensitive areas?		X

3. Procedures

Does the proposal involve:

		Yes	No
(a)	Use of personal or company records without consent?		X
(b)	Deception of respondents?		X
(c)	The offer of disproportionately large inducements to participate?		X
(d)	Audio or visual recording without consent?		X
(e)	Invasive physical interventions or treatments?		X
(f)	Research which might put researchers or respondents at risk?		X

4. (a) Who will your informants be?

I will source a representative sample of Irish adults. Pending funding success, I will contract an Irish market research company who will source 500-1000 respondents who are willing to partake in the survey. Respondents will receive a small payment from the research company for their participation.

- (b) Do you have a **pre-existing relationship** with the informants and, if so, what is the nature of that relationship?

No

- (c) How do you plan to gain **access to /contact/approach** potential informants?

Study 1 – through Prolific or M-Turk or similar

Study 2 – through personal contacts, snowball sampling, and social media

Study 3 - Pending funding success, I will contract an Irish market research company who will source 500-1000 respondents who are willing to partake in the survey. Respondents will receive a small payment from the research company for their participation.

If I am not successful in funding, I will source respondents via social networking sites (e.g. twitter, linkedin) and by asking our social networks to distribute the invitation to partake through a snowball sampling approach.

- (d) In line with UL data protection policies and GDPR regulation, please confirm (by ticking the box) that you will appropriately manage and uphold **respondent anonymity and confidentiality**

Please refer to UL Data Protection guidelines

<https://ulsites.ul.ie/corporatesecretary/data-protection>

and KBS Privacy Notice & Consent Form templates

https://www.ul.ie/business/kbs_research_ethics

which must be completed with and signed by respondents in advance of the commencement of the study

- (e) In line with UL data protection policies and GDPR regulation, please confirm (by ticking the box) that you will appropriately and securely manage the **storage and protection of personal data**.

Please refer to UL Data Protection guidelines

<https://ulsites.ul.ie/corporatesecretary/data-protection>

and KBS Privacy Notice & Consent Form templates

https://www.ul.ie/business/kbs_research_ethics

which must be completed with and signed by respondents in advance of the commencement of the study

- (f) If not identified previously in this form, might there be any other **particular vulnerabilities among your informants**?

Given the longitudinal nature of the research, it is possible that respondents (or their families or close friends) may contract or be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. They may also be experiencing stress and anxiety with regard to the pandemic and its impacts (e.g. on work, life, health etc).

- (g) What arrangements are in place to ensure that informants know the **purpose of the research** and what they are going to inform about?

This will be clearly articulated in the invitation to partake and in the information and consent form which will be included at the start of the surveys.

- (h) How will you ensure that informants are aware of their **right to refuse** to participate or **withdraw** at any time?

This will be clearly articulated in the information and consent form which will be included at the start of the surveys.

- (i) How would you handle any unforeseen **safety issues** should they arise?

The research team comprises experienced and chartered work and organisational psychologists who will assess any unforeseen safety issues if and when they arise. The research team will develop resolutions to such unforeseen safety issues if/when they arise.

- (j) If conducting research on students attending your modules, what mechanisms will be put in place to ensure **your students do not feel pressure to participate** in data collection?

N/A

As part of ethics approval, please indicate by **ticking** the following boxes if you agree to the following conditions:

I confirm that I will inform all respondents that this research is being conducted as part of a UL project.

X

I confirm that no individuals who directly report to me will be asked to participate in this research X

If this involves a company specific research project, please confirm that appropriate permission and access will be sought and secured from the company (e.g. via the HR Department) before any followers are contacted to participate X

I confirm that I am aware of and will abide by my legal responsibilities under Data Protection Legislation and GDPR X Relevant documentation and guidance is available at www.ul.ie/dataprotection

If you have answered **YES** to any of the questions in **PART A, sections 1-3**, you will also need to **comply with** the requirements of **PART B** of this form.

If you have answered **NO** to all of the questions in **PART A, sections 1-3** above, please **ignore PART B** of the form.

All applicants must complete the relevant KBSREC research ethics application form (either the Faculty and PhD students' form or the FYP and taught postgraduate students' form). All questions on this form must be answered. **All answers must be typed – handwritten applications cannot be processed. Forms must be signed by the principal investigator or faculty supervisor where relevant.** KBSREC is only accepting electronic submissions of research ethics application forms. Signatures can be added to forms in one of two ways. First, applicants may print out a typed form, sign it, and then scan the signed form and submit this signed version. Alternatively, applicants may insert electronic signatures into the form directly.

Forms should be emailed to KBSResearchEthics@ul.ie. You will receive an acknowledgement of your application at this point. **This form must be submitted before the research begins.**

Signature of Faculty: _____ **Date:** _____

PART B

This part of the application form is only relevant where researchers have answered **'YES'** to any of the questions in **sections 1-3 of PART A**. Please attach a report to this application addressing the following questions with a maximum of 300 words per question.

You **must** answer the following questions:

What are the ethical issues involved in your research?

Q1. Due to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that this research aims to develop an understanding of the short- and medium-term impact of this on individuals, it is quite possible that respondents (and/or their family or friends) may contract the virus some time during the investigation. Thus, it is possible that individuals may be adult patients at some stage during the longitudinal study, may be a relative of sick people. As I want to obtain a representative sample of the Irish population, it is also likely that people who immigrated to Ireland may take part, and in such cases, English would not be their mother tongue.

Q2 (a). Again, given the nature of the global pandemic, I cannot say that individuals will not have experienced a bereavement (e.g., due to a family member contracting COVID-19) at some stage during the study.

2. Explain why the use of human respondents is essential to your research project.

The psychological focus of the research requires human respondents.

3. How will you ensure that informed consent is freely given by human respondents?

As above

Answer the following questions **where relevant** to your research project and after consultation with your supervisor (where relevant) **and** a member of the KBS Research Ethics Committee:

4. How will you protect human respondents if your research deals with sensitive issues?

Respondents will be provided with a list of psychological support services at the end of each survey that they can contact if they are affected by any sensitive issues.

All scales used will be psychometrically validated and I will only ask what is needed to complete the study and provide insights into the impacts of COVID-19 on Irish people and Irish society.

5. How will you ensure that vulnerable research respondents are protected? (Please state clearly if you abide by the Child Protection Guidelines and/or have Garda Clearance where necessary)

As the design of the research pertains to the completion of online surveys, there will be no undue pressure upon individuals to partake in the study if they or their relatives are unwell at any particular timepoint. They can simply delete the e-mail with the invitation to complete a survey if they are unable to or do not wish to.

6. How will you protect human respondents if your research deals with sensitive research procedures?

N/A

7. Outline how you intend to comply with any established procedures which have been approved by ULREG for your research.

N/A

8. How will you manage data protection issues?

In line with UL GDPR guidelines.



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Study 3 & 4: Ethics Approval

From: kbsresearchethicsapplication@ul.ie <kbsresearchethicsapplication@ul.ie>

Date: Friday, 17 April 2020 at 15:38

To: Deirdre.OShea <Deirdre.OShea@ul.ie>, Bernadette.Naughton

<Bernadette.Naughton@ul.ie>

Subject: KBS Research Ethics Application: 2020_04_KBS_26

Dear Deirdre & Bernadette

Thank you for your Research Ethics Application, which was reviewed by the KBS Research Ethics Committee on the 16th April 2020. I am pleased to inform you that your application has been given research ethics approval.

Kind regards

Rebecca

Rebecca Gachet

KBS Research Office KB2-14

RESEARCH PRIVACY NOTICE

(UL template Version 3: 05-07-19)

This Privacy Notice governs the use and storage of your personal data by the University of Limerick (the University). The processing of this data is carried out in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) / Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 (“Data Protection Law”) and in accordance with this Data Protection Privacy Notice. The University is the Data Controller for personal data I process about you.

The purpose of this Data Protection Privacy Notice is to explain how the University uses and processes personal data I collect and hold about you as a research respondent (“you”, “your”). This notice extends to all your personal data as defined under Article 2(1) of the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

1. Title and Purpose of the research project

1.1 Examining Interpersonal Emotional Regulation During COVID-19: A Leader’s Response to The Nation.

1.2 Potential benefits that may arise from the research project

There is a scarcity of research examining how people cope during a pandemic. This research offers potential insight into how a leader engages interpersonal emotional regulatory strategies to address a nation during the COVID-19 pandemic and the affective, behavioural, and cognitive outcomes associated with each of these strategies for the citizens. The current research will enlighten government and organisational leaders about how best to respond to negative emotions expressed in the context of crisis. Hence, the results will enhance greater understanding of the impact of interpersonal emotional regulatory strategies on citizens’ wellbeing, behaviours, and cognitive processes.

2. Research Ethics Committee

- 2.1 Ethical approval was granted by the KBS Research Ethics Committee on the 16th April 2020.

3. Identity of the Data Controller(s)

- 3.1 The Data Controller is the University of Limerick, Plassey, Limerick.

4. Identity and Contact Details of the Data Protection Officer of the Data Controller(s)/

- 4.1 You can contact the University of Limerick’s Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@ul.ie or by writing to Data Protection Officer, Room A1-073, University of Limerick, Limerick.

5. The Identity of the Principal Investigator

- 5.1 The Principal Investigators for this Research Project are
- Ms. Bernadette Naughton, Lecturer, Athlone Institute of Technology & Ph.D. scholar, Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick, Ireland

