1 **When Leaders Self-Sacrifice in Times of Crisis:**

2 **The Roles of Employee Emotional Suppression and Leader Coping Strategies**

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Abstract

While literature articulates the relevance of self-sacrificial leadership to crisis situations, little attention has been paid to employees' attitudinal and behavioral responses to self-sacrificial leadership. This is a particularly salient gap in the scholarship, given the decisions leaders must make to address challenges in the hospitality industry (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic). Drawing on conservation of resources theory, this pair of field and experimental studies examines how individual differences in employee emotional suppression and leader coping strategy moderate the impacts of self-sacrificial leadership on employee perceptions of leader effectiveness. By sampling U.S. hospitality employees, the studies reveal that leaders who display self-sacrificial behaviors received more favorable ratings on leader effectiveness than others, an effect that is contingent on followers' emotional suppression and leaders' coping strategies. The perception of increased leader effectiveness in turn weakened employees' intentions to engage in negative word-of-mouth toward their organizations.

Keywords: self-sacrificial leadership, emotional suppression, coping, conservation of resources theory, leader effectiveness

Introduction

Major crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic can have devastating financial impacts on the hospitality industry, ultimately resulting in business decisions that inevitably impair

61   employees' career development, job security, and overall welfare (Achenbach, 2020; Thompson,

62   2020). Such decisions range from salary cuts and furloughs to large-scale layoffs. For example,

63   Disney laid off 28,000 employees across its parks, experiences, and consumer products segments

64   in October 2020. Marriott had furloughed tens of thousands of employees since March 2020. In

65   the face of threats and uncertainty posed by crises, leaders must communicate their contingency

66   plans and decisions to stakeholders. As Madera and Smith (2009, p. 104) indicated, "During a

67   time of crisis all eyes look to the top and every action is scrutinized." The COVID-19 pandemic

68   has emerged as a "moment of truth" during which the effectiveness of leaders is being

69   scrutinized by employees, especially when it comes to decisions made or messages sent by

70   senior management.

71   One type of leader behavior that is especially relevant in times of crisis is self-sacrificial

72   behavior, referring to a leader's voluntary abandonment of their personal interests for the sake of

73   the collective (Mostafa & Bottomley, 2020). Self-sacrificial leadership (SSL) can be particularly

74   effective when organizational uncertainty is high (e.g., Halverson et al., 2004). Unusual

75   situations such as crisis occurrences require "extraordinary" behaviors from leaders, making SSL

76   situationally relevant (e.g., Mostafa & Bottomley, 2020; Zhang & Ye, 2016). For instance, Arne

77   Sorenson, the former president and chief executive officer of Marriott International, announced

78   to all stakeholders in April 2020 that "both Mr. Marriott and I will not be taking any salary for

79   the balance of 2020, and my executive team will be taking a 50% cut in pay" (Centre for

80   Executive Education, 2020). During COVID-19, other leaders, including executives at Airbnb,

81   Disney, Delta Airlines, and United Airlines, also took salary cuts of varying degrees (Brandt,

82   2020). Although the existing literature has examined the effects of SSL in both crisis and non-

83   crisis situations, the role of SSL has been highlighted in crisis situations due to its conceptual

84 background and magnified effectiveness in times of organizational uncertainty (i.e., followers'

85 increased organizational commitment and perceived leadership charisma; Choi & Mai-Dalton,

86 1999; Halverson et al., 2004). Indeed, SSL is conceptually drawn from the idea that threats

87 derived from the environment call for sacrifice (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999). This paper thus

88 examines the impact of SSL on hospitality employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness and

89 negative word-of-mouth (NWOM) toward their organizations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

90   SSL is fundamentally different from servant leadership. Servant leaders are follower-

91 oriented (Van Dierendonck, 2001), focusing on the personal development of followers by

92 helping them meet their professional needs (Van Dierendonck, 2001). In contrast, self-sacrificial

93 leaders prioritize the collective interest (Jocobson & House, 2001). More specifically, self-

94 sacrificial leaders are inclined to abandon or hold in abeyance their self-interest for the sake of

95 organizational welfare (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999). SSL is characterized by the "abandonment or

96 postponement of personal interests and privileges for the collective welfare" (Choi & Yoon,

97 2005, p. 52), implying the provision of both material (i.e., material sacrifice) and psychological

98 (i.e., trust and loyalty) resources (Iqbal et al., 2022). This resource provision aspect of SSL

99 underscores conservation of resources (COR) theory, which posits that individuals have a

100 tendency to obtain material, psychological, and social resources and act in ways that prevent

101 them from losing these resources (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Iqbal et al., 2022). According to COR

102 theory, followers receive and appreciate the resources provided by self-sacrificial leaders, thus

103 strengthening the leader–follower relationship (Iqbal et al., 2022). This strengthened relationship

104 may lead to higher perceived leader effectiveness (Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012) and less NWOM

105 toward organizations in times of crisis (Zhang & Huang, 2020). We argue that subordinates

106 inclined to emotional suppression are less effective in decoding leaders' self-sacrificial behaviors

107 and therefore are less likely to gain the resources provided by and respond positively to SSL

108 (Gross & John, 2003), thus weakening the salutary relationship between SSL and perceived

109 leader effectiveness. Moreover, we propose that compared to self-sacrificial leaders who adopt

110 avoidance coping, self-sacrificial leaders who use approach coping contribute additional

111 resources (i.e., emotional support) to employees, which in turn fosters higher perceived leader

112 effectiveness and reduces NWOM in the context of organizational crisis (Kim & Duda, 2003).

113   Previous literature has suggested that leaders' self-sacrificial behaviors appeal to

114 employees' emotions. Indeed, part of what makes SSL so powerful is its inherently charismatic

115 nature, which exerts impacts on employees via affective mechanisms (Ashkanasy & Tse, 2000;

116 De Cremer, 2006). De Cremer (2006) found that SSL has significant positive impacts on

117 employees' positive emotions. In light of the emotion-based nature of SSL (Batool, 2013), we

118 argue that perceptions of SSL may be influenced by individuals' dispositional differences in

119 emotion regulation. Emotion regulation is defined as a series of "processes that influence which

120 emotions one has, when one has them, and how one experiences and expresses these emotions"

121 (Gross, 1998, p. 275). Research on emotions has found systematic differences in individuals' use

122 of emotion regulation strategies. One commonly adopted approach to emotion regulation entails

123 emotional suppression, a response-based form of coping activated after emotions have been

124 generated (Gross, 1998; Gross, 2015). Emotional suppression can be viewed as a personal trait

125 that yields meaningful differences in individuals' use of coping strategies in naturally occurring

126 situations (Gross & John, 2003). It is important to investigate how individual differences in

127 emotional suppression influence followers' perceptions of leaders in the hospitality context,

128 which is characterized by both situational relevance (e.g., emotional suppression tendencies) and

129 high uncertainty (e.g., massive layoffs, furloughs, and salary cuts due to COVID-19).

The current set of studies is grounded in COR theory and conceptualizes of leadership as

a process. The studies examine followers' perceptions of SSL and investigate the contingencies

of individual characteristics (from both the follower and leader perspectives) in the leadership

process based on the key characteristics of SSL. Leadership is defined as "the process (act) of

influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal setting and goal

achievement" (Stogdill, 1950, p. 4). In line with this view, leadership entails the transmission of

information through leaders' words and deeds to followers for their interpretation, which in turn

affects followers' attitudes and behaviors (Tannenbaum et al., 1961). Throughout this process,

individual factors of both followers and leaders shape leadership outcomes by altering (1)

followers' interpretations of leader behaviors and (2) leaders' characteristics along with the

specific leadership behaviors they perform (Fischer et al., 2017). Previous literature has revealed

a few contingency factors that alter the effectiveness of SSL, including follower power-distance

beliefs (Yang et al., 2021), leader self-confidence (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004), and

leader prototypicality (Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005). However, as a leadership

style that involves the provision of salient emotional cues and is often implemented in

challenging circumstances, SSL has not been explored in a way that addresses these core

characteristics. First, SSL involves emotional cues that elicit followers' appraisal and regulation

process with regard to emotional and attitudinal development as well as behavioral responses. In

line with this view, followers' emotion regulation may significantly alter their interpretation of

the emotional cues transmitted by SSL, thus influencing their subsequent work attitudes and

behaviors. However, research has not explored the potential moderating role of followers'

emotion regulation on their reactions to SSL. Second, although the existing literature has

examined the significant effects of SSL in both crisis and non-crisis situations, SSL has been

153 highlighted in crisis situations due to its magnified effectiveness in times of organizational

154 uncertainty (i.e., followers' increased organizational commitment and perceived leadership

155 charisma; Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999; Halverson et al., 2004). Indeed, SSL is conceptually drawn

156 from the idea that threats derived from the environment call for sacrifice (Choi & Mai-Dalton,

157 1999). In a moment of crisis or organizational uncertainty, leaders encounter stressors and

158 challenging circumstances that require coping strategies. These coping strategies vary based on

159 individual preferences. Yet the impacts of leaders' coping strategies on the effects of SSL have

160 not been examined.

161   To address these important research gaps, this set of studies draws upon COR theory and

162 takes a leadership process perspective to propose that followers' reactions to SSL are contingent

163 on followers' emotional suppression (follower perspective) and leaders' coping strategies (leader

164 perspective). First, we posit that followers' emotional suppression alters their reactions to SSL,

165 namely, their perceptions of leader effectiveness and subsequent NWOM toward the

166 organization. We propose that differences in followers' emotional suppression are likely to result

167 in varied interpretations of self-sacrificial leaders' emotional cues conveyed in their words and

168 deeds, thereby inducing different attitudinal outcomes (Mostafa & Bottomley, 2020). Second, we

169 contend that followers' perceptions of SSL are contingent on leaders' coping strategies,

170 including approach coping and avoidance coping, thereby shaping followers' attitudes and

171 behaviors during the interpersonal process (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004; Van

172 Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005). Examining these contingent factors that influence

173 followers' assessments of self-sacrificial leaders allows us to attend to the dynamic work

174 environment in the hospitality industry and hospitality employees' general propensity for

175 emotional suppression. We advance the existing research on SSL, emotion regulation, and

176 coping in the following ways. First, considering the general propensity for emotional suppression

177 among hospitality employees (e.g., Von Gilsa et al., 2014), we identify followers' individual

178 differences in emotional suppression as a moderator, thereby shifting the focus to employees and

179 helping to elucidate for whom SSL is likely to be most effective. Second, we address the

180 boundary condition of leaders' coping strategies that interacts with emotional suppression to

181 influence followers' assessments of leader effectiveness. Third, we explore the underlying

182 process by which the impacts of SSL spill over into hospitality employees' NWOM toward their

183 organizations via employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness. Last but not least, we offer a

184 combination of field and experimental studies to (1) establish causal relationships and (2)

185 strengthen the external validity of the research findings. Figure 1 depicts the conceptual model

186 for each study.

187
188 **Literature review and hypothesis development**

189 *Self-sacrificial leadership*

190 SSL is a form of leadership that entails "an abandonment orpostponement of personal interests

191 and privileges for the collective welfare" (Choi & Yoon, 2005, p. 52). Leaders' self-sacrificial

192 behaviors can take different forms in terms of the division of labor, distribution of rewards, and

193 exercise of power (Hoogervorst et al., 2012). Employees appreciate self-sacrificial leaders'

194 charisma and legitimacy and are motivated to reciprocate by engaging in behaviors that help an

195 organization to achieve its goals (Choi & Mai-Dalton, 1999).

196   In the leadership process, leaders' words and deeds convey emotional cues that elicit

197 followers' appraisal and regulation process as to emotion generation as well as attitudinal and

198 behavioral responses (Sy et al., 2018). For instance, servant leadership triggers followers'

199 appraisal of emotional cues by promoting adaptive emotional responses (e.g., Sun et al., 2019).

200 As a leadership approach sharing characteristics of charismatic and altruistic leadership with

201 servant leadership and entailing salient emotional cues, SSL has been found to exert significant

202 influence on employees' emotional experiences (i.e., feelings of gratitude; Mostafa & Bottomley,

203 2020), attitudinal outcomes (i.e., felt obligations and job satisfaction; Wu et al., 2022; Turki

204 Alshahrani, 2022), and behavioral responses (i.e., prosocial behaviors, innovation behaviors,

205 taking charge, job performance, and intentions to reciprocate leaders' behaviors; Choi & Mai-

206 Dalton, 1999; De Cremer et al., 2009; Li et al., 2016; Park & Choi, 2018; Shin & Shin, 2022).

207 Previous research has also suggested that SSL can be particularly effective and relevant

208 in situations in which organizations experience high uncertainty or unusual circumstances (e.g.,

209 Zhou et al., 2016). Self-sacrificial behaviors convey leaders' deep emotional attachment to an

210 organization, showing that the leaders are willing to put aside their personal interest for the

211 benefit of the organization. During the COVID-19 pandemic, hospitality employees' livelihoods

212 were especially precarious, resulting in feelings of anxiety and a need for trustworthy

213 relationships between employees and employers (e.g., Guzzo et al., 2020; Trougakos et al.,

214 2020). In such an exceptional context, self-sacrificial behaviors can be regarded as an exemplary

215 initiative to unite helpless individuals and motivate them to take heart (Hao et al., 2014). In other

216 words, self-sacrificial behaviors are characterized by intense emotional elements that leaders try

217 to convey to their employees. Such messaging can motivate employees (Chung et al., 2011; Sy et

218 al., 2018).

219 *Leader effectiveness*

220 Perceived leader effectiveness, referring to employees' perceptions of leaders' ability to

221 fulfill their leadership roles, is a crucial factor affecting employee performance and shaping

222 organizational success (Bowers & Seashore, 1966; Tsui, 1984; Wang et al., 2018; Yukl, 2008).

223   Previous research has indicated a wide range of factors contributing to leader effectiveness,

224   including leaders' characteristics such as personality and ability (Hoffman et al., 2011; Judge et

225   al., 2002), employees' characteristics and their social interactions with leaders (Deluga, 1998;

226   Hamstra et al., 2014; Shin et al., 2017), and leaders' behavioral styles (Awamleh & Gardner,

227   1999; Brown et al., 2005). As leadership can be viewed as a process of social influence,

228   employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness, which reflect the degree to which the employees

229   view their leaders as valid sources of managerial influence, may strengthen or limit the leaders'

230   capacity to fulfill their leadership roles (Lord & Maher, 2002; Meindl, 1995). An effective leader

231   can foster employees' willingness to collaborate on collective goals and promote employees'

232   positive orientations toward their jobs and the organization, resulting in improved employee job

233   performance and organizational productivity (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Shamir et al., 1993; Van

234   Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005).

235   Leader effectiveness is critical in helping an organization and its employees manage

236   challenges. In a crisis situation, individuals are more inclined to be affected by their leaders and

237   to ascribe leaders' displays of favorable treatment to positive attributes of the leaders (Halverson

238   et al., 2004; Hamblin, 1958). For instance, in the context of downsizing, leaders' high-level

239   communication transparency and positive psychological capacities have been found to instill

240   high levels of trust in employees and lead to employees' heightened perceptions of leader

241   effectiveness (Norman et al., 2010). Consistent with this view, we expect that self-sacrificial

242   leaders who consider the collective interest to be important and exhibit enhanced commitment to

243   the mission of the organization and the welfare of their employees are viewed as more

244   trustworthy and effective than other leaders by their employees (e.g., Halverson et al., 2004).

245   *Emotional suppression*

According to the process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 2015; Gross & John, 2003),

emotion is modulated at different points during the process of emotion generation. Emotion

regulation is defined as a series of "processes that influence which emotions one has, when one

has them, and how one experiences and expresses these emotions" (Gross, 1998, p. 275). These

processes govern one's ability to monitor, distinguish among, and express feelings and emotions

(Newman et al., 2010; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). One emotion regulation approach is emotional

suppression, which is a response-based form of coping that entails inhibiting the expression of

experienced emotions (Gross, 1998; Gross, 2015; Gross & John, 2003). The trait of emotional

suppression reflects individual differences in terms of emotion regulation and the behavioral

tendency toward inhibiting ongoing emotional expression (Newman et al., 2010). For instance,

Gross and John (2003) posited that suppressors are less likely to engage in social sharing

behavior when exposed to both positive and negative emotional cues in daily life. One related

but distinct concept is emotional labor, which refers to the process of managing feelings and

expressions to fulfill the emotional requirements of a job based on the expectations of one's

organization and occupation (Hochschild, 1979). Although both emotional suppression and

emotional labor relate to one's emotion-expressive behavior in that genuinely experienced

emotions are restrained, they are distinct from one another for several reasons. First, emotional

suppression suggests a relatively stable personal trait with regard to individuals' tendency to

manage and express emotions based on cognitive ability and emotion stability (Joseph &

Newman, 2010), whereas emotional labor is conceptualized as a process of evoking or shaping,

as well as suppressing, one's feelings (Hochschild, 1979). In this regard, emotion suppressors

habitually and proactively choose to inhibit their authentic emotions and refrain from engaging

in social sharing behaviors with peers (Gross & John, 2003). In contrast, emotional labor

269 emphasizes that individuals are regulated by organizations' display rules and external factors

270 (i.e., organizational support and job characteristics; Hur et al., 2013; Gursoy et al., 2011) that

271 require them to manifest discrete emotions. Second, emotional suppression is broader in nature.

272 Although existing research has revealed the prevalence of emotional labor in a wide array of

273 work settings, the research is restricted to certain employment sectors with display rules.

274 Emotional suppression, however, can occur in individuals during both work and non-work time

275 regardless of industry of employment. In support of this view, researchers have argued that

276 emotional labor is usually performed as a part of a work role and to meet interpersonal goals at

277 work. In contrast, emotional suppression does not necessarily assume the existence of display

278 rules and work goals (Grandey, 2015; Grandey & Melloy, 2017). Thus, emotional suppression

279 may represent a more universal phenomenon.

280 Empirical evidence reveals that individuals differ systematically in the extent to which

281 they adopt emotional suppression. Habitually masking experienced emotions leads individuals to

282 regard themselves as inauthentic; they feel that they are intentionally misleading others by not

283 being true to themselves. In the workplace, employee emotional suppression is positively

284 associated with emotional exhaustion, emotional dissonance, negative affect, and affective

285 delivery to customers (Bal et al., 2011; Chau et al., 2009; Chi & Liang, 2013; Kafetsios et al.,

286 2012) and negatively related to employee job satisfaction and job autonomy, as well as customer

287 satisfaction with service (Bal et al., 2011; Cossette & Hess, 2012; Wang & Groth, 2014). Despite

288 its prevalence among hospitality frontline employees, emotional suppression, conceptualized as a

289 form of individual difference, has rarely been investigated in hospitality settings. One exception

290 is Cheng et al. (2020), who found that emotional suppression strengthened the association

291 between customer incivility and revenge motivation and the resultant service sabotage. The role

292   of employee emotional suppression in the leader–employee relationship is especially overlooked

293   in research on the hospitality industry.

294   In this regard, we propose that employee emotional suppression significantly shapes

295   employees' perceptions of and reactions to SSL. Emotional suppression is a response-based form

296   of coping in which employees inhibit their ongoing emotions. Compared with individuals who

297   rarely use emotional suppression, individuals with the characteristic of high emotional

298   suppression deliberately deceive others about their true feelings, attitudes, and beliefs (Gross &

299   John, 2003). Therefore, they tend to experience inconsistency and inauthenticity between their

300   actual experienced feelings and outward expression, thus leading to an exacerbated negative

301   cognitive experience (Chi & Liang, 2013). Drawing upon COR theory, emotion suppressors

302   continually modulate emerging suboptimal emotions, which may result in a downward spiral of

303   energy loss and the consumption of individual cognitive resources (Chi & Liang, 2013; Gross &

304   John, 2003). Furthermore, the cognitive cost of emotional suppression may prevent individuals

305   from effectively understanding and responding to others' information (Arnold et al., 2015).

306   Taken together, subordinates with higher emotional suppression tendencies are less effective in

307   decoding leaders' self-sacrificial behaviors. They are less likely to benefit from the resources

308   provided by SSL, and they respond less positively to SSL (Gross & John, 2003). Thus, the

309   following hypothesis is proposed:

310   **H1:** Employee emotional suppression moderates the positive impacts of self-sacrificial

311   leadership on employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness such that the positive impacts are

312   stronger when employees have lower levels of emotional suppression.

313   *Negative word-of-mouth (NWOM)*

314   Word-of-mouth (WOM) refers to "oral, informal, person-to-person communication

315   between a perceived non-commercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product,

316   an organization, or a service" (Eisingerich et al., 2015, p. 121). WOM exerts more substantial

317   impacts on employer brand, corporate reputation, and organizational prestige today than it did in

318   the past (Charbonnier-Voirin et al., 2017; Uen et al., 2015). Negative events deplete employees'

319   intrinsic resources (e.g., self-regulatory resources) and weaken internal constraints, leading to an

320   increased likelihood of negative work behavior such as NWOM (e.g., DeWall et al., 2007; Lee &

321   Suh, 2020; Liu et al., 2015). In critical periods such as the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations

322   have to make decisions (e.g., layoffs, furloughs, salary cuts) that may greatly undermine

323   employees' interests, resulting in an increased tendency for employees to speak negatively about

324   their organizations, namely, to engage in NWOM. More importantly, leaders' self-sacrifices put

325   pressure on employees emotionally and cognitively to reciprocate or imitate such self-sacrifices.

326   In other words, SSL becomes behavioral modeling, with leaders displaying exemplary practices

327   for meeting their organizations' best interests in the context of a crisis (Yukl, 2008). Employees'

328   intentions to reciprocate SSL may take various forms such as organizational citizenship behavior

329   and reciprocal self-sacrifice (e.g., Vondey, 2010). This study posits that the more favorably

330   employees rate the effectiveness of their leaders because of their SSL, the more willing the

331   employees are to identify themselves with their organizations (Edwards, 2005). This increased

332   identification tempers employees' tendency to speak negatively about their organizations despite

333   the challenges. Moreover, according to organizational support theory (Eisenberger &

334   Stinglhamber, 2011; Eisenberger et al., 2020), employees view leaders as agents of the

335   organization. Therefore, leaders' words and deeds are not only the products of their own will but

336   also a reflection of organizational will. For example, previous research found that employees

337   tend to form favorable attitudes toward the organization when receiving favorable treatment from

338   the leader (Eisenberger et al., 2002) and blame the organization when experiencing abusive

339   supervision (Shoss et al., 2013). In line with this view, leaders' self-sacrificial behaviors,

340   characterized by proactive resource provision toward employees, can lead to enhanced

341   perceptions of leader effectiveness, which in turn exerts a significant influence on followers'

342   behavioral reactions toward the organization. Given the contextual relevance of leadership to this

343   study's context of COVID-19, employee NWOM is considered a response to unfavorable

344   treatment by organizations (i.e., layoffs, furloughs, salary cuts). When leaders, as organizational

345   agents, engage in self-sacrifice, they weaken employees' tendency to engage in NWOM toward

346   organizations following organizational decisions injurious to employees' personal interests. With

347   this in mind, the following hypothesis is formed:

348   **H2**: Employee emotional suppression moderates the strength of the mediated relationships

349   between SSL with NWOM via perceptions of leader effectiveness, such that the mediated

350   relationship is weaker under high emotional suppression than under low emotional suppression.

351   *Coping Strategies*

352   The literature on stress and coping suggests two distinct cognitive and behavioral handling

353   tendencies when confronted with stressful situations: approach and avoidance coping (Elliot &

354   Harackiewicz, 1996). Coping refers to processes of handling both stressors and emotional

355   reactions. Characterized by positive assessment, approach coping focuses on information

356   awareness and problem-solving (Larsson et al. 1988). By contrast, avoidance coping emphasizes

357   the intentional suppression of cognitive as well as emotional reactions triggered by a perceived

358   threat (Anshel & Anderson, 2002). Previous literature has revealed that compared to avoidance

359   coping, approach coping is more effective in resolving stressors to reduce distress, as it is a more

360   positive and active way to handle stressful situations. However, avoidance coping is effective in

361   certain circumstances, such as uncontrollable situations in which one has a shortage of emotional

362   resources. The adoption of different coping strategies not only directly influences one's

363   responses to stressors but also interacts with other factors to jointly impact one's attitudes and

364   assessment. Avoidance coping may cause maladaptive psychological functioning that manifests,

365   for example, in burnout and depression (Loton et al., 2016; Polman et al., 2010). Approach

366   coping, on the other hand, may result in better long-term psychological outcomes, such as

367   playfulness and high spirits (Kim and Duda, 2003).

368   Indeed, leaders adopt coping strategies to help organizational members rise to the

369   challenge based on situational contexts and followers' personal characteristics. For instance,

370   Sverdlik et al. (2020) found that problem-focused coping is positively related to, whereas

371   emotion-focused coping is negatively related to, leaders' initiation of change. Though it is a

372   leadership style closely related to crisis in which stressors predominate, SSL has not been linked

373   to the coping context. As indicated by COR theory, leaders who adopt approach coping eliminate

374   stressors through emotional support or active planning, which requires leaders' input of personal

375   resources (e.g., time and energy; Hutchins et al., 2018). Accordingly, employees are likely to

376   gain additional resources when supervised by self-sacrificial leaders with approach coping. In

377   contrast, avoidance coping emphasizes alleviating suboptimal emotions derived from a stressor

378   instead of dealing with the stressor itself. For instance, when encountering the stressor of

379   organizational uncertainty, leaders who use the avoidance coping strategy are likely to simply

380   tell subordinates to push through the tough time without providing any practical solutions for

381   handling either the stressor or employees' negative emotions triggered by the stressor. Hence,

382   from the COR perspective, leaders' avoidance coping strategy reflects the tendency to conserve

383 personal resources through actions such as disengagement for transitory relief (Hutchins et al.,

384 2018). Employees cannot gain additional resources from leaders who adopt avoidance coping.

385 Moreover, they may need to consume their own cognitive resources to cope with the increased

386 deleterious emotions derived from leaders' avoidance coping tendencies (i.e., emotional

387 exhaustion; Bakker et al., 2022; Hutchins et al., 2018). Therefore, the following hypothesis is

388 formed:

389 **H3:** Leaders' coping strategies influence the interactive effect of SSL and emotional suppression

390 on followers' perceptions of leader effectiveness, such that SSL is more positively related to

391 leader effectiveness when emotional suppression is low and leaders adopt approach coping.

392
393 **Overview of the present research**

394   The goal of the current research is to examine how employees' emotional suppression

395 and leaders' coping strategies moderate the impacts of SSL on employees' perceptions of leader

396 effectiveness and engagement in NWOM. A multi-method approach combining cross-sectional

397 and experimental designs was adopted. Study 1 uses a cross-sectional design in which employee

398 emotional suppression as an individual difference, perceived SSL, and the outcome variables

399 were measured based on hospitality employees' actual work experiences (Hypotheses 1 & 2).

400 However, a cross-sectional design cannot provide strong evidence of the direction of causality,

401 and leaders' adoption of particular coping strategies is often contingent on specific situations.

402 For example, the messages hospitality leaders delivered to employees during the COVID-19

403 pandemic often took on different tones depending on the coping strategy the leaders

404 recommended employees adopt: approach coping or avoidance coping, with the former focusing

405 on problem-solving and the future and the latter focusing on emotional and cognitive avoidance

406 of the problem (Aspinwall & Taylor, 1997; Polman et al., 2010). To explore these impacts, in

407   Study 1, we designed scenarios in which different coping strategies were applied to resemble

408   leaders' actual messages and investigated how the use of these coping strategies influenced the

409   proposed relationships.

410   We then conducted a second, between-subjects experimental study in which SSL and

411   coping strategies were manipulated to examine how the interactive effect between SSL and

412   emotional suppression is affected by leaders' coping strategies (Hypothesis 3). Specifically, the

413   purpose of Study 2 was twofold: (1) to examine whether we could replicate Study 1's finding of

414   a moderating effect of employee emotional suppression on the relationship between SSL and

415   leadership effectiveness; and (2) to explore further how the moderating effect of employee

416   emotional suppression is contingent upon leaders' different coping strategies (i.e., approach

417   coping vs. avoidance coping). The adoption of both correlational and experimental research

418   designs not only enabled us to replicate the research findings but also allowed us to test the

419   causal relationship (experimental design) while reducing artificiality and maintaining high

420   external validity (cross-sectional design; e.g., King & Datu, 2018).

421

422   **Study 1**

423   **Methodology**

424   *Participants and Procedure*

425   Participants were 575 respondents from the U.S. who completed the survey through the

426   MTurk website. We used the default MTurk setting of only surveying respondents who have a 95%

427   approval rate (i.e., 95% of their previous survey responses have been approved for payment by

428   researchers) in order to obtain a representative sample of typical MTurk samples (e.g., Barger &

429   Sinar, 2011; Feitosa et al., 2015). We also required the respondents to have at least one-year

430 experience working in the hospitality industry to assess the role of SSL in the hospitality industry

431 specifically during COVID-19. The data collection included the use of several quality control

432 items (e.g., Select agree for this question). Respondents who failed to answer any of the quality

433 control items correctly were eliminated from the final sample used in the data analysis. The 279

434 respondents left in the final sample were paid $0.77 for participation in the survey. Of these

435 participants in our final sample, 62% were female, with an average of 35.9 (SD = 10.5). 39.6% of

436 the participants had an organizational tenure of more than 5 years; 26.6% had a tenure of 3-5 years,

437 and the rest had a tenure of fewer than 3 years.

438 *Measures*

439 All measures, unless otherwise indicated, used a seven-point Likert scale: 1 = strongly

440 disagree to 7 = strongly agree.

441 *Self-sacrificial leadership* (α = .92). Five items were used to measure employees'

442 perceptions of their leaders' SSL behavior (De Cremer & Van Knippenberg, 2004). A sample

443 item is "My supervisor is willing to make personal sacrifices in the team's interest."

444 *Emotional suppression* (α = .81). Four items created by Gross and John (2003) were used

445 to measure employees' individual differences in controlling the expression of unpleasant

446 emotions by suppressing such emotions. A sample item is "When I am feeling negative

447 emotions, I make sure not to express them."

448 *Leader effectiveness* (α = .95). We used the six items developed by Mayer and Davis

449 (1999) to assess employees' confidence in their leaders' integrity as a reflection of the level of

450 leader effectiveness in the current study. A sample item is "I feel quite confident that my

451 supervisor will always try to treat me fairly."

452   *Negative word-of-mouth* (α = .90). Three items adopted from Eisingerich et al. (2015)

453   were utilized to examine employees' tendency to make negative comments on their organizations

454   in interpersonal communication (Weinberger, Allen, & Dillon, 1981). A sample item is "To what

455   extent is it likely that you say negative things about your current organization?"

456   *Covariates.* Employee age and tenure were controlled because the two demographic

457   characteristics were found to play an important role in the quality of employees' relationships

458   with their leaders (e.g., Epitropaki & Martin, 1999), which in turn may affect employees'

459   judgment of the leaders' effectiveness. Employee cognitive reappraisal (α = .81; Gross & John,

460   2003) was also controlled, given that emotional suppression and cognitive reappraisal were

461   found to be positively related, thereby isolating the effect of emotional suppression (Matsumoto

462   et al., 2008)

463   *Study 1 Results*

464   We conducted a path analysis using Mplus 8.0 to test our hypothesized moderated

465   mediation model (Muthén & Muthén, 2017). Percentile bootstrapping with 10,000 repetitions

466   was used to estimate the conditional indirect effect of SSL on negative word-of-mouth via leader

467   effectiveness.

468   *Measurement Model*

469   We first conducted confirmatory factor analyses to examine the discriminate validity of

470   SSL and leader effectiveness. The two-factor model fit the data well (χ^2 (43) = 97.16, p < .001;

471   CFI = .98, TLI = .98, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .02) and provided better fit than the single-factor

472   model (χ^2 (44) = 212.77, p < .001; CFI = .94, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .12, SRMR = .04). The

473   results indicated that SSL and leader effectiveness should be two distinct constructs.

474   Next, we performed confirmatory factor analyses to determine the discriminate validity

475   and convergent validity of all the four constructs involved in the current study: SSL, emotional

476   suppression, leader effectiveness, negative word-of-mouth. The results suggested that the four-

477   factor model provided good fit (χ^2 (129) = 245.22, $p < .001$; CFI = .97, TLI = .97, RMSEA = .06,

478   SRMR = .05). As shown in Table 1, all factor loadings for items were greater than 0.5 and were

479   statistically significant ($p < .001$). Also, the average variance extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.54

480   to 0.76. These results provided evidence for convergent validity (Hair et al., 2010). In terms of

481   discriminate validity, the four-factor model and provided better fit than the alternative models

482   based on Chi-square difference tests (three-factor model combining SSL with leader

483   effectiveness: χ^2 (132) = 362.15, $p < .001$; CFI = .94, TLI = .93, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .05;

484   two-factor model also combining emotional suppression and negative word-of-mouth into one

485   factor: χ^2 (134) = 704.39, $p < .001$; CFI = .76, TLI = .84, RMSEA = .12, SRMR = .10; and the

486   single-factor model: χ^2 (135) = 1265.81, $p < .001$; CFI = .72, TLI = .68, RMSEA = .17, SRMR

487   = .14). Also, the AVE values for any two constructs were greater than the square of the

488   correlation estimate between them (see Tables 1 and 2), indicating discriminate validity (Hair et

489   al., 2010).

490   *Hypothesis Testing*

491   Descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and validity indicators are reported in Table 1. As

492   shown in Table 2, the interaction between SSL and emotional suppression was significantly

493   related to leader effectiveness ($b = -.09$, $SE = .04$, $p = .031$), which, in turn, was negatively

494   related to negative word-of-mouth ($b = -.29$, $SE = .09$, $p = .001$). Figure 2 shows the simple

495   slopes of the relationship between SSL and leader effectiveness at ±1 *SD* of emotional

496   suppression. The simple slopes test showed that the effect of SSL on leader effectiveness was

497   stronger at low emotional suppression (b = 1.31, SE = .06, p < .001) than at high emotional

498   suppression (b = 1.13, SE = .08, p < .001), although the relationship was still statistically

499   significant at high emotional suppression. The results support Hypothesis 1.

500   We then tested the conditional indirect effects using percentile bootstrapping. The

501   indirect effects of SSL on negative word-of-mouth via leader effectiveness were stronger for

502   employees with low emotional suppression (*Unstandardized estimate* = -.39, 95% CI [-.61, -.18])

503   than for those with high emotional suppression (*Unstandardized estimate* = -.33, 95% CI [-.55,

504   -.14]), supporting Hypothesis 2. Given that all the data were self-reported and collective at the

505   same time point, it is possible that the significance of our findings is due to common method

506   variance (Podsakoff, 2003). Therefore, we assessed the common method variance in the current

507   study to rule out this possibility. Following the recommendations by Williams et al. (1989) and

508   Podsakoff (2003), we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis where the indicators of each

509   variable were loaded on their own factors as well as a common method factor. We found that the

510   method factor explained an average of 23.11% of the total variances in all the items, which was

511   lower than the median amount of method variance of 25% reported by William et al. (1989),

512   suggesting that common method bias should not be a major issue in the current study. In general,

513   the findings of the present study show that employees with low emotional suppression tend to

514   appreciate more SSL behaviors and judge such leaders to be more effective, contributing to

515   reduced negative word-of-mouth.

516

517   **Study 2**

518   *Participants*

519   We used a similar process to recruit participants through MTurk website. Of the 311

520   participants who participated in the experiment, 182 participants have correctly answered all of

521   the control questions and thus are kept in our final sample. Moreover, 63% of the participants are

522   male, with an average age of 37.0 ($SD = 10.3$). 24.2% of the participants had an organizational

523   tenure of more than 5 years; 28.0% had a tenure of 3-5 years, and the rest had a tenure of fewer

524   than 3 years.

525   *Design and procedure*

526   The present study used a 2×2 between-subjects design, with SSL (self-sacrificial vs. no

527   self-sacrificial behaviors) as the first factor and coping strategies (approach coping vs. avoidance

528   coping) as the second factor. Participants were asked to read a selected news clip that a

529   multinational diversified hospitality company has laid off 30% of employees whose jobs are not

530   necessary during the COVID-19 pandemic. Then, they were asked to read a message of support

531   from the CEO of the company to all the employees and stakeholders. After reading the news and

532   the message from the CEO, the participants completed a survey including questions on

533   manipulation checks, leader effectiveness, and trait emotional suppression and reappraisal.

534   *Vignette*

535   The vignette was presented in the form of a message of support of the CEO of the

536   company in which the CEO described: 1) the measures the management team would implement

537   to help the organization survive in the pandemic and suggestions; and 2) the strategies the

538   employees may take to relieve the anxiety and better cope with the adverse situation. The self-

539   sacrificial behaviors of the CEO and the coping strategies were manipulated through the body of

540   the text. For instance, it was mentioned in the message that the CEO had decided to "forgo 100%

541   of my salary and would not receive any bonuses or legal benefits for the whole year of 2020"

542 (i.e., SSL condition), and the CEO told the employees to "ignore the negative feelings/emotions

543 if you have any… not let fear and anxiety become pandemics" (avoidance coping condition).

544 The Appendix presents a sample scenario.

545 *Measures*

546 *Leader effectiveness* (α = .78). Since the current study is an experiment, it is hard to make

547 the participants build confidence in the CEO just by reading the message. There, we used a

548 different set of items to measure leader effectiveness. Seven items were used to assess

549 employees' perceptions of the competence and legitimacy of the leader (Madera & Smith, 2009)

550 with four items from Tiedens (2001) and three items from Halverson et al. (2004). Previous

551 studies have shown that the seven items are highly correlated with one another and are loaded on

552 a single factor (e.g., Madera & Smith, 2009). Sample items are "The CEO of my organization is

553 a strong leader (Tiedens, 2001)," and "I would want him/her to continue to be the CEO of the

554 company (Halverson et al., 2004)".

555 The same items were used to measure trait emotional suppression (α = .87) and

556 reappraisal (α = .87), as in Study 1. Cognitive reappraisal was also controlled.

557

558 *Study 2 Results*

559 *Realism and Manipulation Check*

560 We included two questions to assure the scenario realism, including "I think this is a

561 scenario that could occur in real life" and "I think that it is easy for me to understand what

562 happened in the scenario." Participants were asked to indicate their agreement to the statements

563 on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree, 7 = Strongly agree). Results show that, on

564 average, the participants tend to agree that the scenario could occur in real life (M = 5.98, SD =

565   1.03) and think it is easy to understand what was described in the scenario (M = 6.16, SD = .94).

566   Based on the results of an independent sample t-test (t(180) = 6.52, p < .001), the participants

567   assigned to the SSL condition were more likely to rate the CEO as engaging in self-sacrificial

568   behaviors (*M* = 3.82, *SD* = 1.07; a 5-point Likert scale was used; 3 = *Moderately agree*). Also,

569   the participants assigned to the avoidance coping condition were likely to agree that the CEO

570   asked them to avoid negative thoughts (*M* = 3.12, *SD* = 1.18; t(180) = 3.39, p = .001), whereas

571   those of the approach coping condition were more likely to agree that the CEO encouraged them

572   to cope with the challenges proactively (*M* = 3.41, *SD* = 1.08; t(180), = 2.20, p = .029).

573   *Hypothesis Testing*

574   Means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and the intercorrelations of the continuous

575   variables are reported in Table 3. We conducted a multigroup analysis using Mplus 8.0 (Muthén

576   & Muthén, 2017) to examine whether the pattern of the moderating effect of emotional

577   suppression on the relationship of SSL on leader effectiveness may vary as the leader encouraged

578   different coping strategies. Table 4 presented the unstandardized path coefficients of the

579   multigroup analysis results.

580   The results suggest that when the leader encouraged approach coping, the interaction of

581   SSL and emotional suppression is significantly related to leader effectiveness (*b* = -.31, *SE* = .16,

582   *p* = .040). However, the moderating effect is not significant when avoidance coping strategy is

583   encouraged (*b* = -.03, *SE* = .11, *ns*). As shown in Figure 3, simple slope tests revealed that the

584   effect of SSL on leader effectiveness was stronger at low emotional suppression (*b* = -.72, *SE*

585   = .44, *p* =.099) than at high emotional suppression (*b* = .25, *SE* = .41, ns) at approach coping

586   condition. The results support Hypothesis 3. Moreover, in the context where avoidance coping

587   was encouraged, SSL was not significantly related to leader effectiveness as well (*b* = -.24, *SE*

588   = .20, *ns*). The results support Hypothesis 3. This may indicate that employees would no longer

589   appreciate SSL behaviors when the leader asked them to avoid negative thoughts and emotions.

590   **Discussion**

591   Integrating SSL with the social interactional model, this set of studies represents one of

592   the first explorations of how individual differences in hospitality employees' emotional

593   suppression and leaders' coping strategies influence employees' assessment of SSL in the

594   context of a crisis (in this case, COVID-19). There are two main findings. First, the positive

595   impacts of SSL on employees' perceived leader effectiveness were stronger among employees

596   who had lower levels of dispositional emotional suppression and when leaders adopted approach

597   coping rather than avoidance coping. Second, the conditional indirect effect of SSL on

598   employees' NWOM about their organizations through leader effectiveness was stronger for

599   employees with lower levels of dispositional emotional suppression. Ultimately, this study

600   provides insight into the role SSL plays in times of crisis and how employees' dispositional

601   emotion regulation as well as leaders' coping strategies can influence employees' responses to

602   SSL in hospitality work settings characterized by dynamic leader–employee social interactions.

603   *Theoretical implications*

604   This research advances our understanding of hospitality employees' responses to SSL by

605   showing how both employees' emotional suppression and leaders' coping strategies alter the

606   influence of SSL on employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness and employees' behavioral

607   outcomes (namely, NWOM toward their organizations). First, to gain insight into both leaders'

608   and employees' contingencies on followers' perceptions of SSL, this study conceptualized of

609   leadership as a process using the framework of COR. Specifically, through the lens of COR

610   theory, this study proposed that resources transmitted by leaders' self-sacrificial behaviors

611 enhance employees' positive resource spiral (Ahmad et al., 2021; Hobfoll, 1989; Iqbal et al.,

612 2022). Moreover, because leadership is a process, both followers' and leaders' individual factors

613 shape leadership outcomes and are integral in understanding the effects of leadership (Bass,

614 1990). In the case of SSL, leader characteristics (i.e., coping strategy) and employee

615 characteristics (i.e., emotional suppression) moderate the relationship between SSL and

616 employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness and subsequent NWOM toward the organization.

617 In arriving at these findings, this study extends the research on SSL through the lens of COR

618 theory and leadership-as-a-process perspective.

619   Second, the present research contributes to the literature on SSL by considering leader

620 characteristics (i.e., coping strategy) as a contingency variable in the relationship between SSL

621 and perceived leader effectiveness. Drawing on COR theory, employees do not gain additional

622 resources but in fact experience cognitive resource loss in responding to self-sacrificial leaders

623 who adopt avoidance coping. Specifically, our study shows that the positive impacts of SSL on

624 employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness were weaker when leaders adopted avoidance

625 coping compared to approach coping. Although previous studies have examined the moderating

626 effects of leader characteristics in the SSL process (i.e., leaders' self-confidence, De Cremer &

627 Van Knippenberg, 2004; leader prototypicality, Van Knippenberg & Van Knippenberg, 2005),

628 the current set of studies is the first to investigate coping strategy as a leader characteristic

629 altering the effects of SSL, thus extending the understanding of how leader characteristics

630 influence employees' perceptions of self-sacrificial leaders from the stressor resolution and COR

631 perspectives.

632   Finally, the current research explored the moderating effect of employees' characteristics

633 of emotion regulation (i.e., emotional suppression) on the SSL process. According to the COR

634   theory, emotional suppression affects employees' ability to recognize and willingness to

635   reciprocate the good intentions (e.g., resources provided by leaders) of others, thereby affecting

636   the outcomes of SSL (i.e., perceived leader effectiveness and WOM). Researchers have

637   suggested that the impacts of SSL on employee outcomes differ according to followers'

638   characteristics (Mostafa & Bottomley, 2020). For example, Howell and Shamir (2005)

639   investigated whether followers' self-concept determines the type of charismatic leadership

640   (Howell & Shamir, 2005). Similarly, previous research has found that psychological

641   empowerment (Iqbal et al., 2022) and collective identification (De Cremer et al., 2006) alter

642   employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness. Nonetheless, given that SSL entails significant

643   emotional cues in the leadership process, it is necessary to explore how followers' characteristics

644   of emotion regulation influence the effects of SSL. In this regard, this research examines how

645   emotional suppression, as an employee factor, shapes employees' perceptions of self-sacrificial

646   leaders, thus contributing to a more comprehensive scholarly understanding of SSL.

647   *Practical implications*

648   The current research helps illustrate the nature of the leader–employee relationship

649   during a time of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. First, managers should consider crises as

650   windows of opportunity to earn employees' appreciation and recognition. It is in times of crisis

651   that employees attend most closely to what leaders say and do (Madera & Smith, 2009). The

652   messages that leaders deliver to employees in crisis situations often include emotional elements,

653   and employees scrutinize the information contained in the messages and respond to it via their

654   job attitudes, emotions, and behaviors (Brotheridge & Lee, 2008). For example, Guzzo et al.

655   (2020) found that managers' messages that were aligned with the U.S. Centers for Disease

656   Control and Prevention's recommendations during COVID-19 led hospitality employees to feel

657   grateful and develop more organizational trust. Leaders need to realize that they are perceived as

658   representatives of the organization and their words and deeds can influence employees'

659   attitudinal and behavioral reactions to the organization. Therefore, it is recommended that

660   organizations implement leader communication training to help leaders develop communication

661   skills with regard to offering assistance, controlling emotions, organizing work, and listening to

662   employees (Raley et al., 2017). Given the importance of communication, it is necessary for

663   organizations to develop an inclusive organizational communication strategy to cultivate mutual

664   listening, understanding, and trust between themselves and employees during times of crisis

665   (Jouany & Martic, 2022). First, CEOs and senior managers need to link communication to

666   business strategy (i.e., vision and mission statements), thereby cultivating an organizational

667   culture that recognizes the importance of communication. Second, human resources managers

668   must take responsibility for encouraging all employees' engagement and establishing effective

669   voice channels within the organization to regularly collect employees' feedback and suggestions.

670   Finally, supervisors and team leaders must communicate daily with their followers, whether

671   formally or informally, in order to understand their thoughts, possible concerns, and any negative

672   emotions in a timely manner. In addition, organizations can organize mindfulness and meditation

673   trainings for both leaders and employees. Studies have found that regular mindful meditation

674   among teams are significantly advantageous to enhance empathy, improve collaboration,

675   promote organizational identity, and increase emotion regulation ability (Sage, 2020). Leaders

676   could schedule a brief mindfulness and meditation session once a day and encourage followers to

677   participate in the session as a team. Doing so may help to weaken employees' tendencies toward

678   emotional suppression.

679   Second, hospitality leaders and employees, especially those working on the front lines,

680   are expected to consistently demonstrate positive emotions and "to treat others as we'd wish to

681   be treated ourselves" (as the "golden rule" of Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts indicates). The

682   tendency to suppress genuinely experienced emotions is prevalent among hospitality employees

683   (Shani et al., 2014). However, emotional suppression has been found to exert broad negative

684   effects on individuals' moods, self-assessment, cognitive functioning, social behaviors, and

685   psychological well-being (e.g., Butler et al., 2007; Trougakos et al., 2011). According to the

686   process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 2015), emotional suppression is the last step of

687   emotion regulation and occurs after emotions have been generated. To reduce individual

688   tendencies toward emotional suppression, organizations can provide resources to help employees

689   shift their perceptions of certain events or reappraise situations, which may mitigate the

690   generation of negative emotions. For instance, employers might offer a perspective-taking

691   intervention in which managers provide guidance on how employees can show understanding

692   and sympathy for customers' situations using cognitive skills (Lee et al., 2020). Perspective-

693   taking connotes an individual competence of understanding another person's psychological

694   viewpoint (Parker & Axtell, 2001). In service encounters, employees demonstrate sympathy

695   toward customers through high levels of perspective-taking (Lee et al., 2020). It has been found

696   that employees' better understanding of customers' situations effectively regulates employees'

697   emotions before suboptimal feelings are generated, thus mitigating employees' tendencies to

698   engage in emotional suppression (Rupp et al., 2008). In this regard, hospitality managers need to

699   make efforts to enhance followers' perspective-taking skills for the sake of reducing their

700   emotional suppression intentions. More specifically, managers can conduct regular empathy

701   trainings for employees that include role-playing activities encouraging them to consider the

702   perspective of customers. For instance, to improve its booking system, Carnival Cruise Line

703   created a game in which employees acted as customers engaged in the organizational booking

704   process (Henkel & Grant, 2018). As a result, a technologically sophisticated and team-based call

705   center was created, which assisted in boosting organizational sales and improving customer

706   satisfaction (Henkel and Grant, 2018). Supervisors should also attend to employees' emotional

707   states and needs, recognize employees' efforts and achievements, and provide help when

708   employees need to use emotion regulation to handle difficult customers.

709   Third, we chose to study SSL given its relevance to crisis situations occurring in the

710   hospitality industry, and we examined its effectiveness in the particular context of COVID-19.

711   The current research reveals that in the wake of the massive layoffs, furloughs, and salary cuts

712   among hospitality employees due to the devastating financial impacts of COVID-19, leaders'

713   self-sacrificial behaviors helped employees recognize their leaders' effectiveness and avoid

714   engaging in NWOM about their organizations. The typical self-sacrificial behavior that was

715   relevant during COVID-19 is the sacrifice of personal financial gains, given that most hospitality

716   employees lost their jobs and financial stability. Other possible self-sacrificial behaviors include

717   (1) sacrificing paid time off and privileges for the sake of one's organization, such as giving up

718   vacation to help lead the organization out of the crisis; (2) advocating for employees' interests

719   even though doing so may risk the leaders' own status and positions; and (3) helping employees

720   in need even if it comes at a cost to the leaders themselves. Leaders should adopt an approach

721   coping strategy characterized by active solution seeking and a future orientation as well as SSL

722   in crisis situations in order to clearly signal their determination to ameliorate stressors instead of

723   skirting around problems.

724   *Limitations and Future Studies*

725   In spite of its advanced design that encompasses both field and experimental studies, the

726   current research has the following limitations. First, the research findings are based exclusively

727   on U.S. samples. Future research should seek to replicate the results in Eastern cultural contexts

728   where emotional suppression may be even more salient. Gross (2003) found that European

729   Americans had significantly lower levels of emotional suppression than Latinx, Asian, and

730   African Americans. Second, cognitive appraisal is another commonly used emotion regulation

731   strategy. Unlike emotional suppression, cognitive reappraisal is a form of antecedent-focused

732   emotion regulation that considers the cognitive reconstruction of affective events that may alter a

733   person's emotional experiences (Feinberg et al., 2020). Research has shown that individuals

734   differ systematically in their use of cognitive reappraisal as an emotion regulation strategy

735   (Gross, 2005). It would be interesting to examine whether cognitive appraisal serves as a variable

736   influencing employees' perceptions of leadership. Third, the current research investigated the

737   effectiveness of SSL on employees' perceptions of leader effectiveness and NWOM via self-

738   reported data. Future research might measure performance-related behavioral outcomes (i.e., task

739   performance or problem-solving; Yukl, 2012) of SSL from supervisor ratings and eliminating

740   social desirability bias caused by self-rating. Finally, another pathway to understanding the

741   potential negative effects of SSL is that followers may experience emotional and cognitive

742   pressure to reciprocate or imitate leaders' self-sacrificial behaviors, resulting in suboptimal

743   outcomes (e.g., negative job performance and negligent behaviors) among followers. (Choi &

744   Mai-Dalton, 1998; Yang & Chen, 2021). Future research should consider this potential

745   disadvantage of SSL by investigating the effects of SSL from a social exchange perspective.

746

747

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Tables and Figures

Table 1. Study 1 Descriptive Statistics, Convergent and Discriminate Validity Test Results

Construct	Indicator	Loadings	Mean	SD	CCR	AVE
Self-sacrificial Leadership			4.81	1.43	0.92	0.71
	1	0.86				
Cronbach's alpha=.92	2	0.84				
	3	0.78				
	4	0.86				
	5	0.86				
Emotional suppression			4.08	1.42	0.82	0.54
	1	0.85				
Cronbach's alpha=.81	2	0.65				
	3	0.83				
	4	0.55				
Negative Word-of-mouth			2.17	1.25	0.90	0.76
	1	0.88				
Cronbach's alpha=.90	2	0.86				
	3	0.87				
Leader Effectiveness			5.18	1.46	0.95	0.75
	1	0.81				
Cronbach's alpha=.95	2	0.83				
	3	0.90				
	4	0.91				
	5	0.86				
	6	0.89				

Note. SD = standard deviation; CCR = composite construct reliability; AVE = average variance extracted

Table 2. Study 1 Mplus Path Analysis Results

	Leader Effectiveness	Negative Word of Mouth
Intercept	3.77***(.51)	5.16***(.18)
Covariates		
Age	.06 (.10)	-.08 (.14)
Tenure	.001 (.06)	-.01 (.08)
Cognitive Reappraisal (C)	-.02 (.05)	-.04 (.07)
A × C	-.03 (.05)	-.05 (.06)
Main effects and interaction		
Self-sacrificial Leadership (A)	1.22***(.05)	.07 (.13)
Emotional Suppression (B)	-.01 (.05)	.33***(.07)
A × B	-.09*(.05)	.14*(.07)
Leader Effectiveness		-.29**(.09)
R^2	.22***	.72***

1196 Note. Unstandardized path coefficients are presented. Standard errors are shown in the
1197 parentheses. *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$.

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1201 Table 3. Study 2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1 Cognitive Reappraisal	5.30	1.02	(.87)		
2 Emotional Suppression	4.62	1.44	.10	(.87)	
3 Leader Effectiveness	5.02	1.02	$.21^{**}$	-.08	(.78)

1202 *Note.* $N = 182$. *SD* = standard deviation. Cronbach's alphas are reported on the diagonal.

1203 $^{*} p < .05$; $^{**} p < .01$

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1225   Table 4. Study 2 Mplus Multigroup Analysis Results

	Approach Coping Condition	Avoidance Coping Condition
Intercept	3.77***(.33)	3.69***(.34)
Covariates		
Cognitive Reappraisal (C)	-.43 (.27)	-.04 (.36)
A × C	.47†(.27)	-.36 (.35)
Main effects and interaction		
Self-sacrificial Leadership (A)	.09 (.22)	-.24 (.20)
Emotional Suppression (B)	-.22 (.31)	-.12 (.38)
A × B	-.63*(.31)	-.49 (.38)

1226   *Note.* The dependent variable is leader effectiveness. †$p < .10$, *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

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1244   Figure 1. The conceptual models

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Study 1
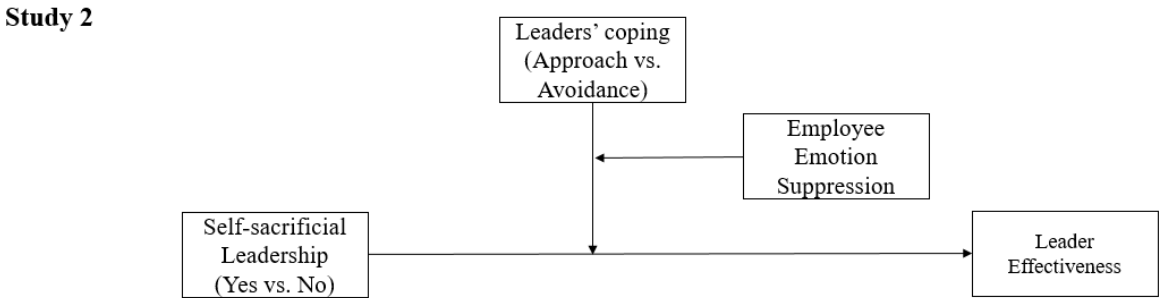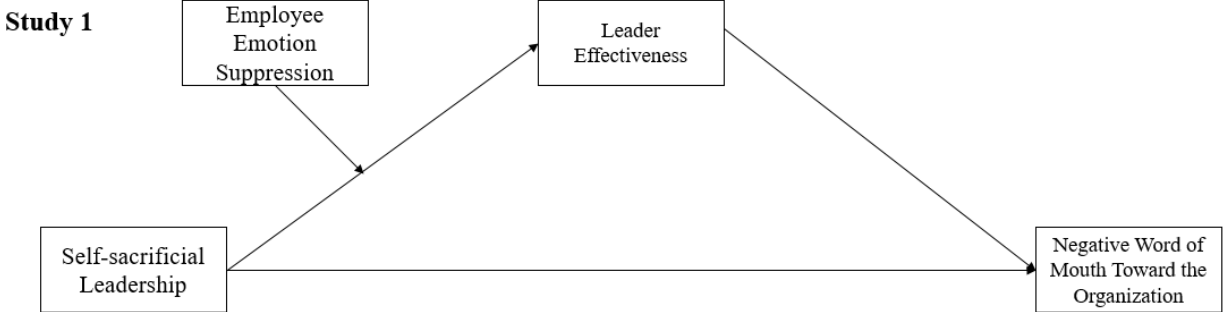
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1249   Figure 2. Interaction between self-sacrificial leadership and emotional suppression on leader
1250   effectiveness

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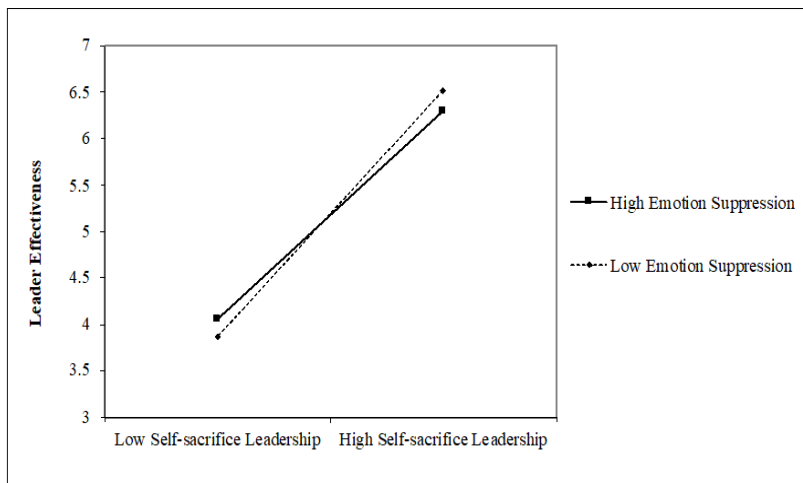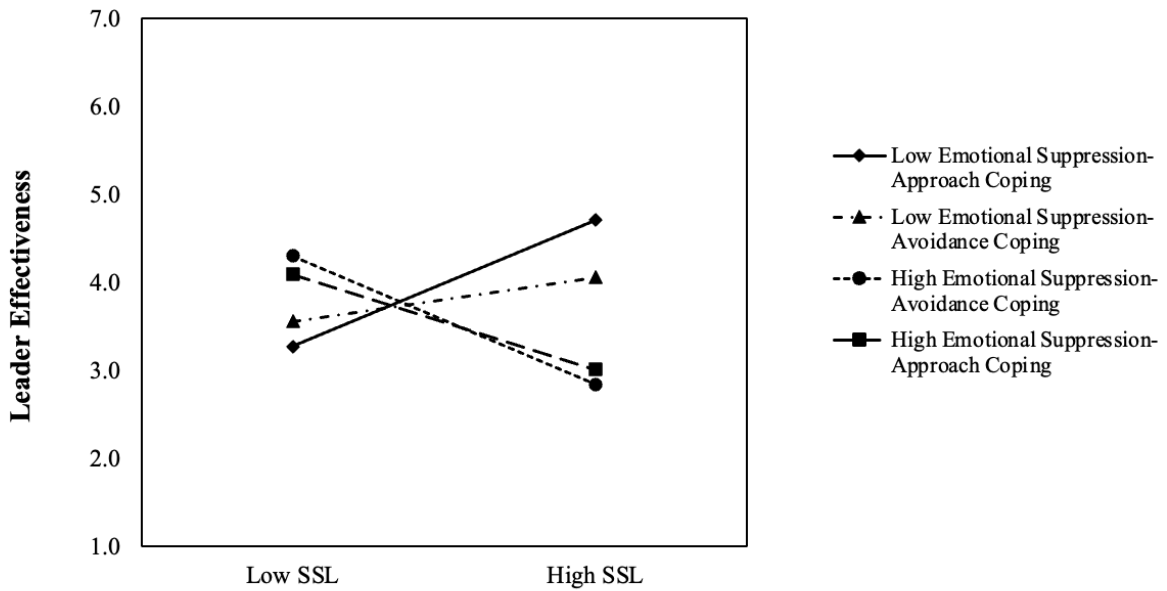1252

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1261   Figure 3. Three-way interaction among self-sacrificial leadership, emotional suppression, and
1262   coping strategies on leader effectiveness

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Appendix

Sample scenario with the presence of self-sacrificial leadership and avoidance coping

Background: Founded in 1950, the Buffardi Hotel International is an American multinational diversified hospitality company that manages 25 brands with more than 5,000 properties in 135 countries and territories around the world. The Buffardi Hotel International has 150, 000 employees by the end of 2019.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, it's been reported that Buffardi Hotel International has **laid off 30%** employees whose jobs aren't necessary at this time.

Below is a message of support from Mr. Bob Buffardi, the CEO of the Buffardi Hotel, to all the employees and stakeholders.

Dear Fellow Employee,

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a devastating impact on the global and U.S. economies, and it's hitting businesses like ours particularly hard.

In light of this, we are going to be implementing necessary measures designed to better position us to weather these extraordinary challenges. Among them, **I have decided to forgo 100% of my salary and will not receive any bonuses or legal benefits.**

At the same time, **I know that if we dwell on this unfortunate situation it will do no good. I'm trying to maintain a positive attitude through it all and I would encourage you to do the same. We still have many things to do. Don't let this situation interfere with them. Don't let fear and anxiety become pandemics, too. You will get through this challenging period and emerge even stronger.**

This is a trying period for all of us and as we navigate these challenging times together and make adjustments in our daily lives, we're grateful for everyone's continued flexibility and understanding.

Best,
Bob