Emotion and Communication Behaviors in the Workplace: Supervisor Nonverbal Immediacy, Employee’s Emotional Experience, and Their Communication Motives

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This dissertation titled
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ABSTRACT

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Emotion and Communication Behaviors in the Workplace: Supervisor Nonverbal Immediacy, Employee’s Emotional Experience, and Their Communication Motives

Director of Dissertation: Claudia L. Hale

The current dissertation explores emotion and communication behaviors in the workplace. The project attempts to develop a model, assuming that supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy influences employee emotional experience in the workplace. Emotional experience involves employees’ received emotional support from the supervisor, engaged emotion work, and emotional valence. These experiences, in turn, lead to employees’ diverse motives for communicating with the supervisor. Additionally, employees’ own susceptibility to emotional contagion relates to their emotional experience at work.

Chapter One outlines the rationale and the purpose of the current study. The chapter introduces the concepts of emotion in the workplace, nonverbal immediacy, emotional contagion, and communication motives, as well as the intrinsic linkage among those variables in the organizational context. Chapter Two reviews the theories and literature, and proposes four research questions that are explored in this study. Chapter Three addresses the method, which includes the process of data collection, introduction to the scales, and tests used for data analysis. The primary findings for the relationship among variables and the models are reported in Chapter Four. Finally, Chapter Five discusses these findings, suggests theoretical and practical implications, addresses the
limitations, and provides guidance for the future research relates to the current dissertation.
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still miss the time when you were the graduate director, the time when you taught and worked with us.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Emotion is an essential part of everyone’s life. People experience, realize, manage, and express emotions, from the six “basic” types (love, joy, anger, sadness, fear, and surprise) to a variety of different categories going beyond these (Ekman, 1992). When considering the role of emotions in organizations, scholars from organizational psychology, management, leadership, and communication studies have explored this issue from diverse perspectives. Workers’ emotional experiences are intimately related to their health and quality of life. According to the American Psychiatric Association, in 2000, around 75% of Americans experienced symptoms related to stress within a given month. While a variety of reasons contributed to this phenomenon, it should be realized that work stress has severe consequences for employees, including physical, attitudinal, and emotional consequences (Maslach, 1982; Ray, 1991). Essentially, emotion-relevant experiences at work not only influence an employee’s efficiency and the organization’s productivity, but the employee’s emotional well-being and life in general. In addition, according to a survey on addiction and mental health, the top ten stressors in the workplace include “no feedback,” “no appreciation,” and “lack of communication” (Collie, 2005), showing the need for improved interaction between employees and their supervisors. All of this evidence underscores the value of studying emotion and communication in the workplace.

Identifying Emotion

Emotion should be distinguished from mood and affect. Generally speaking, emotions are short in duration, and have an intimate link with a certain behavior or stimulus. Moods, however, are more enduring and less related to a specific stimulus.
(Frijda, 1993). Affect is more general and can refer to either a person’s emotion or mood (Lord & Kanfer, 2002). In this section, the definition of emotion, the history of studies of emotion, as well as the communication perspective of emotion is discussed.

Defining Emotion

As a fundamental and inseparable part of social life, emotion is an extremely complex concept. This reality makes it hard to reach a consensus on a cohesive definition. In Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary 10th edition, emotion is defined in the following three ways:

   a. the affective aspect of consciousness; b. a state of feeling; c. a psychic and physical reaction (as anger or fear) subjectively experienced as strong feeling and physiologically involving changes that prepare the body for immediate vigorous action. (p. 378)

Additionally, emotional intelligence scholar Daniel Goleman (1995) described emotion as a feeling, and the thoughts related to that feeling, which is composed of biological and psychological states, as well as subsequent behaviors. Other researchers, instead of providing a definition, suggest that the experiential component of emotions (rather than the concept of emotion itself) should be the focus (Izard, 1993). They argue that people’s experience of anger, fear, or joy “manifests itself as an action tendency, as biasing of perceptions, or a feeling state” (Lord & Kanfer, 2002, p. 6).

No matter the conceptual or operational definition, they all reflect the multi-component nature of emotion. According to Scherer (1994), emotions are characterized by four components or factors: first, a cognitive component, or individual’s interpretation of the emotion-arousing stimuli; second, an action readiness component that leads to a
change in one’s desire to act; third, a feelings component which reveals the net positive/negative assessment, or valence, of the emotion; and, finally, a physiological change component that increases or decreases physiological reactions (such as blushing). Thus, although emotions are always believed to be “heavily affect-laden” (Guerrero, Andersen, & Trost, 1998, p.7), they still contain cognitive, behavioral, and physiological elements.

History of Studies on Emotion

Studies of emotion in the scientific discipline date back to the 19th century, when Charles Darwin published the Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals in 1872. His arguments about human emotional reactions were derived from survival and genetic roots (Fineman, 2003). However, it was only in the 1980s that scholars began to seriously explore emotions in social and relational settings (Guerrero et al., 1998). Brief and Weiss (2002) argued that the study of workplace emotion can be traced back to the 1930s and to studies that focused on employee attitudes and job satisfaction (e.g., Hoppock, 1935; Kornhauser & Sharp, 1932). However, it was not until the 1990s that organizational communication research began to transition from a more rational perspective of organizational life to a focus on emotionality in the workplace (Miller, 2007; Miller & Koesten, 2008). For example, scholarship has recently focused on emotional labor (e.g., Sass, 2000; Tracy, 2005; Zhang & Zhu, 2008), emotional work (e.g., Jia, Li, & Titsworth, 2011; Miller, Birkholt, Scott, & Stage, 1995; Miller, Stiff, & Ellis, 1988), and felt and displayed emotion during social interaction with organizational members in situations involving organizational dissent (Kassing, 2008), among other things. Therefore, besides the four elements of emotion mentioned earlier (affective,
cognitive, biological, and physiological), communication scholars agree that emotion owns another important characteristic: as a communicative experience.

*Communication Perspective of Organizational Emotion*

Communication scholar Waldron (2012) argued:

Certainly, emotion is a psychological and biological phenomenon. But it is through communication that emotion is recognized in others, expressed, regulated, interpreted, and elicited. The communication of emotion is an important competency for workers, their leaders, and organizations. (p. xii)

Going along with this perspective, Fiebig and Kramer (1998) integrated workplace emotion and communication in a non-linear model with six components of individual emotional experience. Instead of discussing emotion itself, this model puts employee emotion in a larger context that also includes pre- and post-emotional experiences. The six parts of the model are as follows. First, *expectations* from both employees and organizations build a foundation for an employee’s emotions. Based on expectancy violation theory (Omdahl, 1995), Fiebig and Kramer (1998) suggested that both the individual and the organization have certain expectations concerning the work, occupational roles, and relationships. Strong emotions might be aroused when discrepancy occurs between environmental stimuli and expectations (Kramer & Hess, 2002). Second, *catalysts* are triggering events that can create a discrepancy between reality and expectations or hinder the ability of an employee to fulfill his/her needs. Third, arguably, an event will not result in a strong emotional reaction if the individual is not aware of that event. Therefore, *awareness* is another component that reflects the cognitive element of emotional experience. The fourth and fifth components are *emotion*
management and communication behavior. These components involve the decision making process as to whether to express or disguise felt emotions, as well as how to appropriately externalize those emotions. These final components might be crucial in the workplace setting due to the social expectations associated with occupational roles (Hochschild, 1983). For this reason, people need to manage their emotions carefully and make sure their voice is heard, and simultaneously reduce the potential negative effects on their status and image.

Although abundant studies have explored the emotional labor of frontline workers, scholars have also indicated a need to explore the experiences and communication strategies of a wider range of occupations (Kramer & Hess, 2002). Finally, previous behaviors can have an impact on an employee’s subsequent experiences, creating a “feedback loop that affects future expectations” (Fiebig & Kramer, 1998, p. 544). The above model describes the process of how workplace emotion is triggered, felt, and communicated, as well as its subsequent influence on an employee’s other experiences. Based on the literature cited, there is no doubt that emotions and communication behaviors are strongly linked, making their further exploration a valuable project.

Emotion and Communication Behaviors in the Workplace

The justifications for exploring emotions and communication in the workplace are abundant. First, emotions are “central components of human reactions” to diverse environmental stimuli that can cue, directly and/or indirectly, different communicative behaviors (Lord & Kanfer, 2002, p. 7). The primary function of emotion is to guide behavior (Dillard, 1998). Although emotion is a psychological and biological phenomenon, it is only through communication that this phenomenon can be expressed
and interpreted (Waldron, 2012). Thus, the communication of emotions should be treated as a “meaning-laden social process” (White, 1993, p. 30) that can influence employee actions and, in turn, organizational practices and outcomes. As Lord and Kanfer (2002) suggested, the ultimate goal of understanding emotionality in the workplace is to achieve improvements in employee welfare. Through the employee’s amplification of positive work emotions, people are more likely to own a better working and social experience. The organizations’ productivity should also increase.

Second, from a theoretical perspective, workplace emotion merits attention. Although workplace emotionality is traditionally discouraged by social and occupational expectations (Maiese, 2006; Waldron, 2012), it is widely accepted that reason and emotion are interwoven rather than separate (e.g., Zembylas, 2005). Emotion can be realized and managed through the process of reasoning and appraisal (Long & Brecke, 2003). Thus, the biased focus on the “rational” side of organizational life—such as information flow and decision making—is not sufficient to the study of organizational communication. Therefore, emotion and communication at work are worth studying for both practical and theoretical reasons.

Among all the fragmented but productive arguments about workplace emotion, Miller, Considine, and Garner (2007) offered the most comprehensive investigation of the “terrain of emotion in the workplace” (p. 231). Drawing from the scholarly literature and workplace narratives, they developed a framework of five categories of workplace emotion: emotional labor, emotional work, emotion with work, emotion at work, and emotion towards work. In the following section, these five emotion types are examined in detail.
Five Categories of Communicating Organizational Emotions

According to Miller et al. (2007), the first category of emotion and communication in organizations is emotional labor. As the most prominent type of organizational emotion scholarship, *emotional labor* refers to workers who deal with customers directly and are required to manage their emotion to satisfy a certain expected role (Hochschild, 1983; Kruml & Geddes, 2000; Morris & Feldman, 1996). In the groundbreaking book, *The Managed Heart*, Hochschild (1983) introduced the concept of emotional labor after a series of studies of flight attendants, building a foundation for the studies to come in the decades that followed. Described as “the management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display” (Hochschild, 1983, p. 7), the main characteristic of emotional labor is the need to satisfy a certain occupational expectation. More importantly, the display of that certain emotion usually requires manipulated control or management. In other words, workers have to turn themselves into standardized images through which their displays of emotion are part of the organizational product. For example, a flight attendant must show a smiling face to customers no matter that attendant’s inner state. Therefore, one core element of emotional labor involves emotion management, which is the demonstration of only those emotions that are consistent with socially accepted norms (Hochschild, 1979). The theory of impression management by Goffman (1959) explains emotional labor thorough a performance analogy: Workers, like performers, attempt to influence their audience members’/customers’ impressions and experiences of them so as to achieve a positive social image. Employing diverse perspectives, researchers have investigated the experience of emotional labor, the management of emotions, and the display emotions at
work. To date, most of the studies have focused on frontline occupations such as restaurant workers (Seymour, 2000), cruiseship/flight attendants (Taylor & Tyler, 2000; Williams, 2003), 911 call takers (Tracy & Tracy, 1998), call center workers (Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Mulholland, 2002), teachers (Ogbonna & Harris, 2004), and financial planners (Miller & Koesten, 2008). Research reveals that employees who exhibit non-authentic emotions are more likely to suffer from emotional exhaustion or burnout (Kruml & Geddes, 2000; Zapf, 2002), leading to an increase in turnover (Lewig & Dollard, 2003).

The second category discussed in Miller et al.’s (2007) article is emotional work. Unlike emotional labor, which usually involves the display of inauthentic emotion at work, the second category, that of emotional work, emphasizes workers’ expression of authentic emotions (Miller et al., 2007). Emotional work describes working situations in which “real” emotion plays a central role, and usually involves human service employees involved in health care (Bylund & Makoul, 2005), community service (Miller et al., 1995), and financial professions (Miller & Koesten, 2008), among others. Probably due to a wide belief that human service workers are compassionate with a sense of responsibility to help others (Miller, 2007; Yanay & Shahar, 1998), empathy has been the most frequently explored emotion. While empathic communication is beneficial for care receivers who need social support, the need to display this emotion could be disadvantageous for caregivers (i.e., human service workers). For example, teachers’ displays of empathy have been found to be positively related to students’ motives to talk with those teachers (Jia et al., 2011). However, research also shows that workers’ empathy is related to their work stress and burnout and, in turn, decreases their
occupational commitment (Miller et al., 1995; Miller et al., 1988). However, generally speaking, the domain of emotional work has not received enough attention throughout the decades. Just a few studies explicitly discuss this concept, and most of those studies were conducted by Miller and her colleagues (Jia & Shoham, 2011). Because of this, instead of being an independent category, it is more appropriate to label the studies of emotional work as an accessory of emotional labor.

Miller et al. (2007) labeled the third category “emotion at work.” Although organizations serve as social microcosms, members have diverse social roles as they belong to multiple social groups, making the work environment only a fraction of their life (Jia & Shoham, 2011). Families, friends, and even acquaintances can be stimuli to influence organizational members’ emotions at work. Therefore, the third category of organizational emotion discusses the connection of workers’ social roles/private lives and occupational roles/work lives. Abundant literature has examined how non-work events influence employee emotions and performance at work, relating life experiences to employee moods (Williams & Alliger, 1994), work-family conflicts and emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction (Boles, Johnston, & Hair, 1997), and work and marital satisfaction with mood as mediating factor (Heller & Watson, 2005).

The fourth category in the typology is emotion towards work. The previously discussed categories mostly focus on the process, rather than the final outcome, of workplace emotion. The fourth category, emotion toward work, encompasses emotions about work itself, typically dealing with feelings of job satisfaction and occupational commitment. As an organizational outcome, satisfaction can be achieved or changed based on any emotional experience at work. As one of the most widely investigated
variables in organizational research (Spector, 1997), job satisfaction has historical and conceptual dominance in that it is treated as the outcome variable across many of the previous categories discussed (Jia & Shoham, 2011).

Finally, the category of emotion with work will be the focus of the current study. The first two categories of the typology—emotional labor and emotional work—only focus on the interaction between workers and clients without paying attention to the daily social communication within the organization. We should realize that the organization is a context for emotionality in itself, with that emotionality occurring among relationships, power structures, and expectations (Fiebig & Kramer, 1998). The concept of emotion with work investigates emotions coming from employees interactions with their coworkers and supervisors. The topics range from ordinary emotional experiences, such as leader-member quality and burnout (Becker, Halbesleben, & O’Hair, 2005), to shame and embarrassment when the subordinate has been found to be noncompliant with rules (Kobayashi, Grasmick, & Friedrich, 2001), or even some extreme situations like workplace bullying and abuse (Lutgen-Sandvik, 2003; Tracy, Lutgen-Sandvik, & Alberts, 2006). In other words, this category cares about workplace relationships and the related emotional and behavioral results. To date, within organizational communication literature, this category is still not well developed. However, there is a great potential to explore this area. First, except for service-oriented occupations, opportunities for direct communication between an employee and the client are rare. Interactions with supervisors, subordinates, and co-workers are the center of the workplace experience for many employees. Second, based on Fiebig and Kramer’s (1998) organizational emotional experience model, people bring expectations to the organization. This expectation should
include diverse dimensions, not only about the job itself, but also the relationship quality among organizational members. Third, although to date, most studies of emotional management and display are related to emotional labor, it is necessary to explore daily emotion work within diverse types of occupations (Kramer & Hess, 2002; Waldron, 2012). My dissertation attempts to develop this category in detail.

Scholars have explored workplace emotions through divergent ontologies. All these studies shed a light on our understanding of emotion and communicative behaviors in the organizations. The current dissertation explores the last dimension—emotion with work—which focuses on employee emotion arousal based on interactions with supervisors, and employees’ subsequent communication behaviors. The previous typology provides us a macro and general understanding of how communication and workplace emotion has been studied; however, a more specific theoretical framework is needed to guide the current study to move forward.

*Nonverbal Communication, Emotion, and Subsequent Behaviors*

In order to establish an inherent linkage among nonverbal behaviors, emotions, and subsequent behaviors, a theoretical framework is necessary to examine. This section explores Mehrabian’s theory about nonverbal communication, as well as the Emotional Response Theory based on Mehrabian.

*Mehrabian’s Implicit Messages*

Human communication, both verbal and nonverbal, can express emotional states. However, this dissertation focuses on the outcome of nonverbal behaviors due to their important function in the emotional communication process. According to some psychological literature, humans are more likely to use nonverbal cues (e.g., facial
expressions, gestures) to indicate their emotions (Mehrabian, 1981). For example, smiling could show the emotional state of liking, and movement, such as crossing the arms, could demonstrate a negative attitude. This dissertation will draw on Mehrabian’s theory on implicit/nonverbal behaviors, and the Emotional Response Theory (ERT) (Mottet, Frymier, & Beebe, 2006) based on Mehrabian.

According to Mehrabian (1981), “affect display” is one of the major functions of nonverbal behavior. Further, he explored the nonverbal communication of emotions and attitudes, and established a connection between nonverbal behaviors and emotion:

Any communication act involves, on the one hand, a group of symbols and, on the other hand, the referents (objects, events, or relationships) designated by those symbols…The implicit behaviors are the symbols of communication, and the referents are our emotional states and our attitudes, likes-dislikes, or preferences. (p. 4-5)

To further explain the referents, Mehrabian (1981) used three independent dimensions to describe all emotional states: pleasure-displeasure, arousal-nonarousal, and dominance-submissiveness. These three dimensions, as he argued, are not correlated with one another, but are “both necessary and sufficient” for all emotional situations (p. 5).

When we adopt this measure in the workplace context, the first dimension (pleasure-displeasure) reveals employee emotion in terms of six pairs of words, such as happy-unhappy, relaxed-bored, or satisfied-unsatisfied, etc. Second, the dimension of arousal-nonarousal shows a person’s level of alertness, such as excited-calm, stimulated-relaxed. Finally, the last dimension (dominance-submissiveness) evaluates an employee’s degree
of power or influence in workplace interactions. Examples of adjective pairs include in control-cared for, autonomous-guided, and controlling-controlled, among others.

Additionally, Mehrabian (1981) proposed a series of metaphors underlying nonverbal communication, among which the “approach” metaphor provides a rationale for the inherent linkages among the nonverbal communication of others, employees’ emotional experiences, and their subsequent behaviors. Mehrabian (1981) argued: “People approach and get more involved with things they like, things that appeal to them; and they avoid things that do not appeal to them or that induce pain and fear” (p. 13). In short, people approach things they like and avoid things they do not like. This statement illustrates the behavioral tendency of humans when their emotions are aroused. That is, people are more motivated with respect to approaching behaviors (e.g., talk to someone, get close to someone) when their emotion is positive, and vice versa. These emotions are stimulated by the external environment (Lord & Kanfer, 2002; Mehrabian, 1981) and interpreted by the observer. The environmental stimuli can be very diverse in nature; however, in the current dissertation, supervisor nonverbal immediacy is treated as this “emotion inducing” factor (Dillard, 1998, xxiii).

*Emotional Response Theory (ERT)*

Based on the literature concerning emotional response, particularly Mehrabian’s (1981) focus on implicit communication, Mottet et al. (2006) developed the Emotional Response Theory (ERT) to study teacher-student relationships. They argued that the ERT model is built on the following statements: “1) people pursue things they like; 2) people like things that they feel positive emotions for; 3) people’s emotions are influenced by the implicit messages they receive from others” (p. 262). These statements establish a
theoretical structure of the process in which received external stimuli, emotions, and peoples’ approaching behaviors occur. ERT assumes that teachers’ nonverbal communication behaviors have an effect on students’ emotional reactions, which influence student approaching behaviors. A student’s decision to either approach or avoid the instructor, according to the ERT model, is related to the emotional experience that the student has in response to the instructor’s nonverbal communication behaviors.

Guided by this theory, Titsworth and his colleagues (Titsworth, Quinlan, & Mazor, 2010) developed the Classroom Emotions Scale (CES) to explore connections between teachers’ communication behaviors and students’ emotional reactions to their classroom experience. Based on literature from communication and other fields, Titsworth et al. included three aspects of emotional reactions in the CES: emotional valence, emotion work, and emotional support. Several areas of literature contributed to the rationale used in the development of the CES. First, during interactions, people usually develop a “valence,” which refers to the general judgment of positive/negative responses to other people (Andersen & Guerrero, 1998). The first part of the CES was designed to examine students’ general positive and negative attitudes toward a class and a teacher. Second, many interactive situations involve communicators’ intentional management of their emotion expressions. People sometimes suppress, control, and display their feelings in a certain way to be socially acceptable (Hochschild, 1983; Tracy, 2005), or to foster a better personal impression (Goffman, 1959). Instead of showing the authentic and spontaneous feelings that are experienced, people can feel pressured to fake or manage their true emotions, which is labeled “emotion work” in the CES study. Third, people’s perceptions of emotional support from others are established through interactions. To
date, emotional support (or comforting behavior) has been examined in a variety of communication contexts and is believed to be beneficial to individuals’ physical and psychological health (e.g., Burleson, 2008, 2009; Pauley & Hesse, 2009). This provides the rationale for the third factor of the scale—students’ perceptions of emotionally supportive messages from instructors. Thus, the three-factor structure (emotional valence, emotion work, and emotional support) examines students’ emotional experience in the classroom from various dimensions.

With the purpose of expanding this framework to organizational settings, the current dissertation adopts these three dimensions to examine employees’ emotional experience interacting with their supervisors. More specifically, this study attempts to examine whether supervisor nonverbal behaviors will influence these three areas of employees’ emotion in the workplace (valence, emotion work, and emotional support), and in turn their behaviors. Although teacher-student and supervisor-subordinate relationships might not be directly interchangeable, this framework is potentially applicable for at least three reasons. First, the emotional valence, or the overall positive or negative evaluation of emotions, has been widely used in industrial psychology studies, although not in the organizational communication discipline yet. For example, the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) and the Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE) (Diener, Wirtz, Tov, Kim-Prieto, Chio, Oishi, & Biswas-Diener, 2009) are both based on the assumption of the importance of emotional valence. Second, studies have established relationships between supervisor’s social support skills and employees’ perceptions of their relationship quality (Jia & Shoham, 2012). Due to workplace stress and burnout, social support resources
should be available to improve workers’ emotional states. Employees, as students, might also expect to receive emotional support from people with more authoritative power (supervisor) to reduce stress. Finally, as mentioned in the previous section, the concept of emotion work has been frequently investigated in studies of organizational communication as emotional labor (for review, see Kruml & Geddes, 2000). The central focus of emotion work is the intentional management and expression of emotions due to social expectations (Hochschild, 1979, 1983). Emotional management and display are particularly salient issues within the topic of emotional labors, and have captured the attention of scholars for decades. However, it is arguable that individuals all experience emotion management to some extent in their social interaction. For example, people need to show a positive image to maintain relationships with others. Similarly, employees in a wide range of occupations experience emotion work when dealing with their supervisors or colleagues, if not directly with clients. Therefore, the biased emphasis on emotional labor is not fair. Emotion work in employees’ normal work is also necessary. The above arguments indicate the potential validity of the CES for use in the workplace.

The previous part outlines the potential relationship between nonverbal communication and emotional experiences. Along with the influence of supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy, it is reasonable to believe that an employee’s emotions are related to his/her own characteristics as well. For example, the degree of easiness of one’s emotional arousal, i.e., how easy is it that others influence one’s emotions, might also influence employee emotional experience. Thus, the concept of susceptibility to emotional contagion will be discussed in the next section.
In the current dissertation, emotional contagion (EC) is studied as one’s “susceptibility to emotional contagion;” in other words, in this research, the term “emotional contagion” refers to an individual’s level of contagion to negative affect. Thus, emotional contagion is a personal trait or characteristic rather than an understanding of social processes. In order to better understand this concept, the following section will first introduce how emotional contagion is studied in general as a process and phenomena, and then focus on how this concept is used as a personal trait in this study.

Emotional contagion is defined as “a process in which a person or group influences the emotions or behavior of another person or group through the conscious or unconscious induction of emotion states and behavioral attitudes” (Schoenewolf, 1990, p. 50). As a ubiquitous daily phenomenon (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994), emotional contagion is a diffusion of emotions passed along from one person to another. From a social contagion perspective, an individual can serve as a stimulus for another’s imitative action, thus causing a wider spread of affect or behavior (Marsden, 1998). Therefore, an employee’s emotion at work might be influenced through contagion with others in the same social environment (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) and, in turn, influence work outcomes (George & Brief, 1992). The spread of emotions, which are usually expressed through nonverbal messages such as facial expressions, gestures and tones, reflects the previously mentioned theories about nonverbal behaviors. According to both Mehrabian and Emotional Response Theory (ERT), nonverbal behavior is an important medium for expressing emotions. Peoples’ evaluations of their emotional experience usually come
from the received nonverbal/implicit messages of others. Thus, the whole process of an employees’ emotional experience as influenced by supervisor nonverbal immediacy can be treated as a contagion process during which a supervisor’s positive emotions are transmitted to the employee.

While most studies in psychology and management (which will be reviewed more thoroughly in chapter two) have focused on the potential of a supervisor’s emotional expression to influence others, the current dissertation is interested in employee susceptibility to emotional contagion. (In what follows in this dissertation, “EC” and “susceptibility to EC” will be used interchangeably). In previous research, communication scholars viewed emotional contagion as a negative trait, arguing that if individuals are too vulnerable to their environment, this can lead to inappropriate emotional expression and feedback. In other words, emotional contagion in these studies (as well as the current study) is understood as “suffering with” another (Miller, 2009, p. 227). For example, if an individual gets upset easily when people around him/her are upset, he/she might have high susceptibility to emotional contagion. On the other hand, if an individual can remain calm no matter how upset other people around him/her, he/she has a low susceptibility to EC because his/her emotions are not easily aroused by the environment.

The theoretical linkage between emotional contagion and some outcome variables, such as response appropriateness and general emotional experience, is apparent in previous studies. Maslach (1982) suggested that, if a person’s feelings are easily aroused but not easily controlled, he/she is more likely to be emotionally exhausted. Therefore, emotional contagion could result in negative outcomes in the communication process.
Similarly, Miller and her colleagues (1995) indicated that emotional contagion could be an obstacle to effective interaction. More recent studies establish a negative relationship between teachers’ emotional contagion and students’ overall classroom emotion well-being, and a positive correlation with students’ emotion work (Titsworth, Jia & Li, 2012). The result indicates that, when teachers are believed to be susceptible/responsible to emotion-triggering events, students are more likely to engage in careful emotion management when interacting with those teachers, thus leading to a negative assessment of their emotional experience. However, whether individual susceptibility to emotional contagion influences organizational outcomes in the workplace is still unknown. The current dissertation attempts to examine employees’ susceptibility to emotional contagion in the workplace, and whether this personal trait will influence their emotional experience at work.

Based on previous literature and argument, the current study intends to build connections among the following variables: supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy during supervisor-subordinate communication, employees’ susceptibility to emotional contagion, employees’ emotional experience emerging from an interaction, and employee’s communication tendencies toward a supervisor. One way to assess the tendency is one’s motive to talk with others. As a starting point for any communication behaviors, communication motive, or why people talk to someone, is the variable used in the current project.

Emotion and Communication Motives

According to Mehrabian (1981), a person’s feeling of “liking” leads to approaching behaviors. Thus, when employees experience positive emotions when
dealing with their supervisor, it is more likely that they will be willing to communicate with that supervisor. In other words, their motives for communicating with their supervisor might increase if they enjoy talking with that supervisor. However, people talk with each other for a wide variety of reasons. Employees might also talk with their supervisor for different purposes due to their experience of emotions at work. The following section introduces the theoretical background with respect to people’s motives for talking with others.

*Interpersonal Communication Motives (ICM) and ICM in the Workplace*

Scholars interested in communication motives typically hold the belief that human behaviors are goal-oriented (Chaffee & Berger, 1987) and people attempt to fulfill these goals through their involvement in social interactions (Rubin & Rubin, 1992). Abundant literature has explored human motives for communicating, or reasons why people talk. Among all of the approaches and theories, Schutz’s (1966) fundamental interpersonal relations orientation (FIRO) and the gratification theory in media studies have been recognized as the most important frameworks.

Through a psychological approach to the study of communication needs, Schutz (1966) suggested that peoples’ behavior is generally influenced by three interpersonal needs: inclusion, affection, and control. Similarly, uses and gratifications theory provides a social-psychological approach to the study of people’s motives for using mass media. Scholars (e.g., Rubin, 1994) have argued that media use is a motivated and purposeful behavior; people choose from among diverse types of media in an effort to best satisfy their goals and needs. Through the investigation of media use and interpersonal communication, Barbato (1986) suggested that interpersonal motives reflect self-
confirmation, inclusion, and emotion-expression, which are consistent with Schutz’s theory.

Based on these theoretical frameworks, Rubin, Perse, and Barbato (1988) identified six primary motives for interpersonal communication (ICM): pleasure, affection, inclusion, escape, relaxation, and control. Pleasure refers to the need for fun, excitement, and entertainment; affection considers communication to be a need to express caring and love; inclusion reflects the need to participate, maintain relationships with and share feelings with others; escape focuses on the avoidance of other activities; relaxation involves the need to unwind and rest; and individuals who are motivated to talk for control aim to assert power and influence on others. These individual motives influence who we talk to, how we talk, and what we talk about (Graham, Barbato, & Perse, 1993).

To date, most of the studies employing this framework have been conducted in the family or friendship context. A few studies have explored employee’s motives and other organizational variables. Anderson and Martin (1995a) reported that employees have high satisfaction with superiors, as well as moderate satisfaction with work and moderate commitment to their organization, when interacting with superiors for pleasure, affection, and inclusion. Employees also show their satisfaction towards work when communicating with coworkers for affection reasons. Another study (Walter, Anderson, & Martin, 2005) found that there is a negative relationship between employees’ levels of Machiavellianism and the affection motive for communicating; however, the escape, relaxation, and control motives for communicating are positively related to Machiavellianism. When exploring motives and supervisor-subordinate satisfaction, one study found that employees’ affection and pleasure motives directly influenced their
satisfaction with their supervisors (Walter et al., 2005). Similarly, a study by Jia and Shoham (2012) demonstrated that employees' communication motives of pleasure, affection, inclusion, and relaxation are positively related to supervisor-subordinate relationship satisfaction.

Summary of Supervisor Nonverbal Immediacy, 

Employees’ Susceptibility to Emotional Contagion, 

Employee’s Emotional Experience, and 

Their Motives for Communicating with Supervisors

When considering this “implicit message/nonverbal behavior—emotion—subsequent behaviors” process in the workplace context, the relationship between employee emotion and communication behavior is clear. If an employee’s emotional experience is treated as the center of this research, then that employee’s emotions can be induced and influenced by the supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy. As a result, to the extent possible, employees’ emotional experience at work will lead to either approaching or avoiding behaviors with respect to the employee’s supervisor. For example, the employee might be more motivated to talk with his/her supervisor if his/her (the employee’s) emotional experience is positive, or the employee might talk with his/her supervisor for more positive reasons (such as pleasure or relaxation, rather than escape or control). Additionally, the susceptibility to emotional contagion of employees themselves can influence their emotional experience as well. Since this study focuses on the communication behaviors in relate to emotions rather than the personal trait, employee susceptibility to emotional contagion is not shown in the proposed model. Figure 1 provides the potential connections among these factors based on the theories.
To date, communication scholars have explored teacher nonverbal immediacy and students learning, and examined communication motives in interpersonal contexts, such as between family members and with close friends. However, the previous literature fails to address the relationship between supervisor communication behavior and employee emotions, as well as subsequent employee behavior. Emotion and communication in the workplace between supervisor and subordinates are important to study because of the great impact on their relationship, as well as the organizational ecology. This study offers an important extension to the Emotional Response Theory and Classroom Emotion Scale by exploring supervisor-subordinate interaction in the workplace. Consequently, the overall goal of the current study is to answer the following research questions: 1) What is the relationship among supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience at work, and the communication motives of an employee when communicating with his/her supervisor? 2) Does an employee’s level of susceptibility to emotional contagion influence his/her emotional experience at work?
Summary and Preview of Chapters

Chapter One has presented the basic problem statement and rationale for this dissertation. Relevant theories that provide a conceptual foundation for the study were identified and discussed as a starting point for a detailed review in the second chapter.

In Chapter Two, I will present a comprehensive review of literature with the specific hypotheses and research questions. The literature review will follow the process of the hypothesized model, which involves the relationship among supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee degree of emotional contagion, employee experiences of emotions at work, and employee communication motives.

Chapter Three will describe the methods used to collect and analyze the data. Participant identification, data collection procedures, measurements of each variable, as well as the methods for analyzing the data are offered.

Chapters Four and Five will present the result findings and discuss those findings. In these two chapters, a finalized model of supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience at work, and employee communication motives will be developed. Theoretical and applied implications as well as any limitations of the research will also be addressed.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to provide a strong argument reflecting workplace emotion and communication behaviors, a detailed and structured review of literature is necessary. The purpose of this chapter is to look at the body of literature that establishes linkages among supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience, employee susceptibility to emotional contagion, and employee communication motives.

Supervisor’s Nonverbal Immediacy

Immediacy, which includes both verbal and nonverbal immediacy, is the “degree of perceived physical or psychological closeness between two people” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000b, p.195). Most scholars who focus on nonverbal immediacy (NI) agree that this concept was introduced and conceptualized by social psychologist Albert Mehrabian (1967, 1969, 1971, 1981), and then extended to the communication discipline beginning in the 1980s. Mehrabian (1967) described NI as communicative behaviors people use to increase closeness and reduce distance (physical or psychological) between individuals. Immediacy cues are indicated by behaviors such as sitting close to, touching, nodding, smiling, using eye contact, being vocally expressive, and gesturing, among others. Each of these behaviors can be observed separately; however, in a typical interaction people evaluate and get impressions of immediate behaviors in a holistic manner (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000b). Thus, instead of examining each behavior in isolation, researchers usually study nonverbal immediacy as a collective concept. As a widely studied concept, this dissertation is particularly interested in the NI in communication studies and the organizational context.
Identifying Nonverbal Immediacy in Organizational Communication

Originally developed in social psychology, the concept of NI has been rapidly adopted by researchers interested in interpersonal communication. When introducing the background of the study of NI in different disciplines, Richmond and McCroskey (2000a) stated:

While the disciplines overlap occasionally, generally under the psychological approach nonverbal behavior serves as a means for understanding the motivations and internal states of the individuals engaging in those behaviors. Communication scholars, in contrast, view nonverbal behaviors as potential messages which humans can use to communicate with and influence each other. (p. 86)

Thus, communication researchers have been interested in the following question: in the process of interpersonal interaction, how does the use of nonverbal immediacy influence the communicators and their relationship? For decades, a large amount of literature regarding NI and its effects on communication can be found, demonstrating the central role that nonverbal behaviors play between individuals. Further, Mehrabian (1971) suggested a behavioral pattern that “people are drawn towards persons and things they like, evaluate highly, and prefer; and they avoid or move away from things they dislike, evaluate negatively, or do not prefer” (p. 1). Research has consistently provided evidence that nonverbal immediacy relates to liking towards the immediacy user (Hinkle, 1999, 2001; Teven, 2007). These findings reflect the principle of immediacy. Stated as the reverse of Mehrabian’s conceptualization, the principle of immediacy asserts:

The more communicators employ immediate behaviors, the more others will like,
evaluate highly, and prefer such communicators; and the less communicators employ immediate behaviors, the more others will dislike, evaluate negatively, and reject them. (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000b, p. 196)

To date, NI research has been explored across various contexts, particularly between spouses, teacher-student relationships, and supervisor-subordinate relationships. Although studies in the classroom and family settings have yield important results, the current dissertation focuses on the vertical organizational relationship—between supervisor and subordinate.

In the organizational context, NI was described as a “repertoire of nonverbal behaviors which supervisors may or may not use as messages to signal liking, positive evaluation, and positive affect (or their opposites) for their subordinates” (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000a, p. 86). Although not all supervisors are able or willing to show immediacy to their employees, it is true that the supervisor’s use of NI influences his/her perceived image (Hinkle, 2001). Scholars also suggest that, from the subordinate’s standpoint, having a supervisor who communicates affinity is desirable for any organization (Goodboy & McCroskey, 2008).

Communication scholars reported the relationship between supervisor’s NI and outcome variables, which involve employee’s attitudes/perceptions toward the supervisor, and employee’s own workplace experience. Some studies emphasize the supervisor’s perceived image and the relationship satisfaction, while others focus on the employees’ overall work enjoyment. McCroskey et al. (1998) found that supervisor immediacy is positively related to perceived competence, interpersonal attraction, and affect for interacting with the supervisor. In addition, a study by Richmond and McCroskey (2000a)
indicates that supervisor immediacy enhances perceived credibility, as well as subordinate motivation and job satisfaction. The relationship between NI and motivation was also suggested by Kay and Christophel (1995) whose study demonstrated that managers who employ open communication are more likely to motivate their workers. Similarly, Teven (2007) discovered employee’s self-report of liking for the supervisor and work enjoyment relate to supervisor immediacy.

The literature reviewed above provides us a general understanding about the function of supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy in the workplace. The following part will introduce the central concept of the current dissertation—employees’ emotional experience in the workplace.

Employee Experience of Emotion in the Workplace

Organizational communication researchers increasingly recognize the significance of exploring emotions at work. Brief and Weiss (2002) argued that employee emotions are an essential component of a more holistic ecosystem of organizational behavior because an organization and its members’ emotions influence each other. As mentioned in Chapter One, emotion has multiple components, or factors, including a variety of behavioral tendencies (Scherer, 1994). An employee’s emotional state is, arguably, a powerful force, guiding his/her behavior at work, and thus affecting organizational outcomes. Of course, we should realize that, although episodic changes are possible, these organizational changes are more likely to do happen through a process in which relationships among an organization’s members change. In another word, employees’ individual emotions usually do not directly influence the workplace, but follow a process: employees experience emotions when communicating with supervisors—these emotions
are related to the employee’s attitudes and behaviors toward the supervisor (approaching or avoiding)—supervisor-subordinate relationship quality changes (or can change)—and these changes (or lack of change) eventually affect the overall organizational atmosphere. When discussing emotional regulation in the workplace, Lord and Kanfer (2002) suggested that the expression of emotion is a multilevel phenomenon that involves individual-, dyadic-, group-, and organizational-levels. The employee’s emotions at work, therefore, should be investigated through his/her interaction with other members, which reflects the “emotion with work” category of Miller et al.’s (2007) typology. Ultimately, a specific examination of employee emotions arising from supervisor-subordinate communication, as well as the subsequent behaviors towards the supervisor, is an important focus for investigation.

**Employee’s Emotional Valence, Emotion work, and Emotional Support**

Using a functional approach, Titsworth and his colleagues (2010) developed the Classroom Emotion Scale (CES) to measure students’ emotional reactions toward their teacher and their learning experience. Attempting to apply this framework in the workplace context, this dissertation uses the three areas of emotional experience adopted from the CES. The first area reflects employees’ *emotional valence*, or the net positive/negative assessment toward the supervisor and workplace emotion. The second refers to *emotion work*, showing the extent to which employees need to manage their “true” emotions when interacting with their supervisor. Finally, *emotional support* focuses attention on employees’ perceptions of how much emotional support they receive from the supervisor. In the following section, all the three areas will be developed in a detailed manner.
Emotional Valence

Valence, as widely used in the psychology discipline when discussing emotions, refers to the “intrinsic attractiveness (positive valence) or aversiveness (negative valence) of an event, object, or situation” (Frijda, 1986, p. 207). In other words, people tend to develop a binary positive/negative evaluation of their environment and the people who are part of that environment. Involved with interpersonal communication, Andersen and Guerrero (1998) suggested that people develop this valence to assess other people and their relationships. The “emotional valence” section of the CES (Titsworth et al., 2010) includes two items, one that focuses on the general emotion felt toward the class, and the other focusing on the valence of the emotion felt about the instructor. One study related teachers’ empathic communication skills, reporting that two types of empathy correlated, in opposite ways, with students’ emotional valence. Teachers’ empathic concern (which will be introduced in the following section on employee contagion) was found to be related to positive valence, while teachers’ emotional contagion was negatively related to students’ general emotional reactions (Titsworth et al., 2012).

Considering emotional valence in the workplace context, employees have a general assessment of their feelings toward their supervisor, and how they feel about their work experience. As a result, the first dimension of employee emotion examined in this dissertation is the valence coming from daily supervisor-subordinate interaction.

Emotion Work

A flight attendant should be smiling when speaking with customers, and 911 call center employees should be calm and serious—no matter how they “really” feel. The
careful management of authentic emotions and the display of a particular emotion (usually inauthentic) in the workplace is known as emotional labor (Hochschild, 1983).

Before Hochschild’s (1983) publication outlining emotional labor, she offered the term “emotion work” to describe the management of emotion in general:

By “emotion work” I refer to the act of trying to change in degree or quality an emotion or feeling…note that “emotion work” refers to the effort—the act of trying—and not to the outcome, which may or may not be successful. Failed acts of management still indicate what ideal formulations guide the effort, and on that account are no less interesting than emotion management that works. (1979, p. 561)

As argued by Hochschild (1979), the nature of emotion work is one’s intention to and actions involved with controlling emotions so as to be seen as following conventional rules in society. For example, in order to satisfy the “convention of feeling” that is socially appropriate (p. 552), people should feel happy at parties and sad at funerals. The core idea is emotion management, which refers to an expression of emotions that is consistent with publically accepted norms. However, it was not until 1983 that Hochschild combined emotion work with occupations, and introduced the concept of “emotional labor.” To date, most organizational communication literature, when exploring employee management of emotion at work, invokes the concept of emotional labor.

According to Hochschild (1983), several characteristics help us to identify emotional labor. First, consider work (occupations) during which much inauthentic emotion is expressed. Second, consider work that is commodified and controlled by the...
management, again potentially producing inauthentic emotions. Third, the rules contained within a typical employee manual often reference, explicitly or implicitly, “correct” emotions for display in the workplace. In other words, emotional labor in terms of facial and bodily expression is controlled and “sold” as an organizational product (Hochschild, 1983). In the formal and professional context, employees (particularly those who deal directly with customers) must manage their displays of emotion, often expressing an inauthentic emotion in order to satisfy both their organizational role and social expectations. For example, research on emotional labor in the airline industry explores the service-orientation that must be enacted through the management of a friendly and other-oriented disposition despite the employees’ inner states (Taylor & Tyler, 2000; Williams, 2003).

Goffman (1959) explained emotional labor by using a performance analogy: workers engage in surface acting and deep acting to induce build positive images. An individual is involved in surface acting when he/she intentionally fakes or suppresses a felt emotion and displays, instead, the required feelings (Zapf, 2002). Generally speaking, the displayed emotion should be positive, such as a smiling and friendly waitress even if he/she does not experience happiness during services. On the other hand, deep acting involves more quasi-authentic emotions, during which the individual imagines the scenario and attempts to actually feel the emotion in the ideal situation. According to Hochschild (1983), that person is “deceiving [him/herself] as much as deceiving others” (p. 33). For example, a flight attendant imagines that the flight cabin is a comfortable working environment and the travelers are his/her good friends, so that that flight attendant is more likely to display a positive emotion in a spontaneous manner.
A substantial number of studies have explored emotional labor across frontline occupations, such as restaurant workers (Seymour, 2000), cruise ship/flight attendants (Taylor & Tyler, 2000; Williams, 2003), 911 call takers (Tracy & Tracy, 1998), call center workers (Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Mulholland, 2002), teachers (Ogbonna & Harris, 2004; Richardson, Alexander, & Castleberry, 2008), and financial planning workers (Miller & Koesten, 2008), among others. Scholars have attempted to understand emotional labor by exploring its antecedents (Diefendorff, Croyle, & Gosserand, 2004; Diefendorff & Gosserand, 2003) and consequences (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2000; Erickson & Ritter, 2001; Pugliesi, 1999) in the workplace. Through various perspectives and methods, scholars have examined how emotional labor workers experience, manage, disguise, and express themselves in the workplace.

Scholars have not only studied emotional labor as a phenomenon, but have also noticed negative psychological effects associated with it (e.g., Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Zapf, 2002; Zhang & Zhu, 2008). The outcome is usually emotive dissonance, which refers to the discrepancy between inner feelings and the displayed feelings. This dissonance is typically experienced by workers who engage in surface acting (Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Richardson et al., 2008, Zapf, 2002). Research showed that employees who exhibit non-authentic emotions are more likely to suffer from increased emotional exhaustion, which is the core of burnout (Kruml & Geddes, 2000; Richardson et al., 2008; Zapf, 2002). Moreover, studies found that burnout had negative correlations with employees’ turnover rates (Ellis & Miller, 1993; Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Richardson et al., 2008).

Based on studies led by Hochschild (1979, 1983), emotion work and emotional labor both share the core nature of emotional management; however, the former is the
general action in all social interactions while the latter only involves worker-customer communication. The term “emotion work” is used in the current dissertation because this study focuses on employees from diverse occupations dealing with supervisors rather than only frontline workers interacting with customers. The study focuses on the supervisor-subordinate relationship, which belongs to “emotion with work” according to Miller et al.’s (2007) typology.

The current dissertation adopts the term emotion work to examine how much emotional effort an employee expends in order to maintain a relationship with his/her supervisor. Typically, the more emotion work an employee engages in when talking with a supervisor, the more dissonance he/she probably experiences. This, in turn, will probably be related to some avoidance behavior or other negative outcomes. Of course, one of the sources of employees’ engaged emotion work might come from the supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy.

*Emotional Support*

The third proposed component for understanding an employee’s emotional experience in the workplace is the perceived emotional support that he/she gets from his/her supervisor. As one type of social support (informational, emotional, and tangible) (for review, see Miller, 2009), emotional support refers to the communication behaviors that are intended to help the other “cope effectively with emotional distress” (Burleson, 2003, p. 552) through expressions of love, empathy, and concern (Cutrona, 1996). If provided appropriately and skillfully, emotional support has been consistently found to be beneficial to individuals’ health, both physical and psychological (Burleson & MacGeorge, 2002; Pauley & Hesse, 2009). One study revealed that emotional support
was more likely to be sought than other forms of support during stress or difficulties (Feng & Burleson, 2006). This demonstrates the importance of emotional support to the enhancement of well-being. Burleson (2003) also argued that, although other types of social support are useful in coping with stressful events, the effect of emotional support is particularly salient. It is noteworthy that emotionally supportive interactions have proven to be most effective when the recipient does not recognize the support (Bolger, Zuckerman, & Kessler, 2000). If an individual is forced to receive support or the provision of support is too obvious or public, a negative consequence could follow that hampers the recipient from dealing with the situation (Feng & Lee, 2010).

To date, communication scholars have been interested in what verbal messages and nonverbal cues contribute to the improvement of emotional well-being. Extensive research has demonstrated that both verbal person centeredness (the degree to which a helper recognizes and legitimizes the distressed person’s feelings) and nonverbal immediacy (behaviors that show interpersonal warmth) can enhance emotional states (Jones & Wirtz, 2006). According to Burleson (2009), high person-centeredness (HPC) messages are perceived as words explicitly recognizing and legitimizing the other’s feelings by helping the other to articulate the feelings, elaborating the reasons for those feelings, and exploring how those feelings fit in a broader context. A series of studies (Burleson, 2003, 2009; Kunkel & Burleson, 1999) has shown that HPC messages are evaluated more positively and effectively than are low and medium person-centered messages. In addition, users of HPC messages have been found to be more likeable (Samter, Burleson, & Murphy, 1987).
Although most scholars have focused on investigating verbal comforting messages, research suggests that nonverbal cues also play an important role in the process of emotional support communication (Yakeelov, Barbee, Cunningham, & Druen, 1995). Nonverbal immediacy behaviors, which include forward body lean, body orientation and gestures, facial expressiveness, among others (Andersen, Andersen, & Jensen, 1979; Jones & Wirtz, 2006), are perceived to communicate approach (in contrast to avoidance) (Barbee, Rowatt, & Cunningham, 1998) so that the immediacy providers are viewed as likeable and attractive (Jones, 2004; Jones & Burleson, 2003).

Among the studies of emotional support, diverse types of relationships and situations have been investigated in association with other variables. In the relationship of family members and friends, cancer patients perceive family emotional support, such as showing concern, encouragement, empathy, reassurance, or merely physical presence, as more helpful than other types of social support (Fisher, 2010). The patients were reported to experience less mood disturbance (Figueiredo, Fries, & Ingram, 2004) and less depression (Edwards & Clark, 2004). In addition, participation in online communities and using Facebook has been found to be effective in reducing stress (Wright, 2002, 2012). In the classroom context, teachers’ emotional contagion is negatively related to the emotional support they provide to their students. In contrast, students reported experiencing more emotional support from teachers who demonstrated empathic concern (see the following “emotional contagion” section) (Titsworth et al., 2012).

Evidence of emotional support within supervisor-subordinate relationships has not been well developed. This is probably due to the traditional perspective that emotional support occurs among intimate individuals (friends and family) (Miller, 2009),
but not within formal and vertical organizational relationships. Miller (2009) suggested that, in the workplace context, employees are more likely to receive informative and tangible support from their supervisor, and more emotional support from co-workers, family and friends. However, a more recent study demonstrates that supervisors indeed provide all three types of social support, and supervisors’ emotional support is perceived as particularly crucial in contributing to relationship satisfaction with subordinates (Jia & Shoham, 2012). In sum, as a part of employee’s emotional experience, the emotional support from a supervisor could derive from certain communication behaviors displayed by that supervisor and, finally, relate to the employee’s subsequent approach/avoidance actions. Literature on supervisor nonverbal immediacy demonstrates the effectiveness of supervisor nonverbal immediacy on increasing interpersonal affect with subordinates and achieving a positive organizational outcome. However, no study has examined the relationship between supervisor NI and employee emotions at work. Thus, the first research question in this study is proposed as follows:

RQ1: What is the relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy (subordinates’ perception) and employee emotional experience in the workplace (subordinate emotional valence, subordinate emotion work, and perception of received emotional support)?

The previous section addressed the literature on supervisor nonverbal immediacy and employee emotional experience in the workplace. In the following section, employees’ own susceptibility to emotional contagion will be examined. The model proposed in the current study pays more attention on the emotions and communication
behaviors in the workplace rather than personal traits; however, it is still worthwhile to examine if employees’ own characters influence their experience at work.

Employee’s Susceptibility to Emotional Contagion

Since supervisor-subordinate communication is an interactive process, it is not fair to say that an employee’s emotional experience is influenced exclusively by his/her supervisor’s behaviors. Instead, some employee characteristics should also play a role in influencing emotional reactions. Although it is possible that gender, personality, and cognitive skills can influence how people perceive their workplace feelings, emotional contagion (EC) might directly function in this process. This concept has been explored from distinct perspectives according to different academic disciplines. In the following section, two perspectives will be briefly reviewed, among which the emotional contagion in communication studies will be the focus in the current dissertation.

*Emotional Contagion as a Process in Psychology, Management, and Leadership*

Emotional contagion (EC) has been widely explored in applied psychology, management, and leadership disciplines, but is still understudied in the communication discipline. This is probably because emotional contagion is a social process during which people’s psychological states change and, in turn, influence their subsequent behaviors. As a result, the spread of this state and tendency can be used as a means of management, as well as a form of effective leadership. For example, the spread of negative emotions among workers would influence the group climate, as well as leader-member relationships (Dasborough, Ashkanasy, Tee, & Tse, 2009). Similarly, charismatic leaders influence their followers through the expression of positive emotions (Bono & Ilies, 2006). Both situations involve emotional contagion. Therefore, most psychology and
management related research considers EC a process, and attempts to build connections with identified individual and organizational outcomes. Since emotions (either positive or negative) are intimately interwoven with nonverbal cues, these scholars take social contagion perspective to examine how peoples’ emotional experiences are influenced from one another through nonverbal communications. This perspective echoes with Mehrabian’s theory and with Emotional Response Theory, suggesting that human emotions are influenced by the nonverbal messages received from others, and then guide approach or avoidance behaviors.

In general, EC can be defined as “a process in which a person or group influences the emotions or behavior of another person or group through the conscious or unconscious induction of emotion states and behavioral attitudes” (Schoenewolf, 1990, p. 50). This general definition reveals two ways of examining this concept as a process: as subconscious primitive contagion and conscious emotional comparison (Barsade, 2002; Cardon, 2008).

Primitive emotional contagion refers to the tendency that people will automatically and unintentionally imitate and synchronize with others, including facial expressions, vocalizations, posture, and movements; as a result, they converge emotionally (Hatfield et al., 1994). When people observe and automatically imitate another, such as smiling, their enjoyment is increased due to the self-perception of the meaning of smiling behavior (Chartrand & Bargh, 1999; Neumann & Strack, 2000). So far, most studies cite Hatfield et al.’s (1994) work, Emotional Contagion, when examining this concept. In the first three chapters of Emotional Contagion, Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson (1994) proposed and elaborated the following three propositions:
Proposition 1: In conversation, people tend automatically and continuously to mimic and synchronize their movements with the facial expressions, voices, postures, movements, and instrumental behaviors of others.

Proposition 2: Subjective emotional experiences are affected, moment-to-moment, by the activation and/or feedback from such mimicry.

Proposition 3: People tend to “catch” others’ emotions, moment to moment. (p. 10-11)

These three propositions, as the authors suggest, are the three components of a process of how people understand each other’s emotions: mimicry—activating self-emotion—understand other’s feelings. The authors argued that people can never know what another feels simply through reasoning; they can only know by feeling themselves into the other’s feelings. That is, through observing and automatically imitating the other, we create, in ourselves, “inner cues” that contribute to understand other’s affect.

Literature has consistently provided evidence that emotional mimicry occurs between supervisors and employees, and has a positive relationship with organizational outcomes. For example, Barsade (2002) explored the effect of group emotional contagion—the transfer of moods among group members—suggesting that positive group emotions contribute to enhanced cooperation, decreased conflict, and increased task performance. Similarly, Bono and Ilies (2006) found a positive relationship among leader positive emotions and follower mood, resulting in improved effectiveness and follower attraction to the leader. While most studies focus on the face-to-face communication...
context, emotional influence has also been applied to virtual teams (Cheshin, Rafaeli, & Bos, 2011).

As a ubiquitous daily phenomenon of emotion and social interaction (Hatfield et al., 1994), primitive emotional contagion is helpful to our understanding of organizational practices and outcomes. Although this mimicry is enough to make emotional contagion occur (Cardon, 2008), it is not sufficient to study contagion comprehensively. Emotional comparison, an expansion of social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), explains how individuals consciously experience emotional contagion. From the emotional comparison perspective, employees intentionally compare their emotions with relevant others, such as supervisors, and treat the result as social information that helps them to understand their feelings (Barsade, 2002), particularly in ambiguous and physiologically arousing situations (Schachter, 1959). Scholars have argued that collective moods within a work group can be created through emotional comparison, thus a normative affective culture is established and maintained (Hackman, 1992). Bartel and Saavedra (2000) also examined group mood as a collective property and found a positive relationship between members’ moods and membership stability, as well as task and social interdependence. Additionally, researchers investigated the transference of passion in entrepreneurial firms, building a model that connects supervisor passion, transformational leadership, social comparison, and employee positive feeling, as well as high organizational meaningfulness (Cardon, 2008).

Although emotional contagion as a process is crucial to our understanding of its nature, it is hard to operationalize as a variable, and the degree to which a person is susceptible to EC is unknown. Communication scholars are interested in the individual’s
trait—the susceptibility to emotional contagion—and need to investigate its roles in the social interaction.

EC as a Characteristic in Communication Studies

As argued by Hatfield et al. (1994), people “tend to ‘catch’ others’ emotions, moment to moment” (p. 11). In order to understand why some people are more easily affected by the people around them, the last section of this chapter explores the characteristics of people who are susceptible to emotional contagion. These factors include, but are not limited to, gender, individual personality, self-construal, genetic heritage, and early experiences.

To date, most communication research involving emotional contagion has explored this issue via the concept of emotion work (see Chapter One) as a type of empathy. Among a series of studies about human service workers (Miller et al., 1988; Miller et al., 1995; Miller, 2007), empathy has been the primary focus of workplace emotions, as well as an important characteristic of hospital staff (Miller et al., 1988), health care (Bylund & Makoul, 2005), community service workers (Miller et al., 1995), and financial professions (Miller & Koesten, 2008), among others. In these studies, two aspects of empathy, emotional contagion and empathic concern, have been illustrated (Stiff, Dillard, Somera, Kim, & Sleight, 1988). The former is described as people to “feel[ing] one’s way into” another person’s experience (Hatfield et al., 1994, p. 81). In communication research, scholars usually study emotional contagion in situations where individuals are affected too much by others’ emotions so that they experience difficulty managing and expressing their own emotions appropriately. In other words, emotional contagion can be understood as “suffering with” another (Miller, 2009, p. 227) and, in
turn, is a counter-productive factor in communication. On the other hand, scholars explain how individuals can “feel for” another without getting completely infected. Hatfield et al. (1994) suggested that some emotional experiences, such as therapists’ reactions toward clients, occur in the following stages: clinicians move in close enough to identify the emotions of their clients, incorporate their feelings, and then move back far enough, making sure that the extent of their emotional detachment allows them to deal with the client in an appropriate manner. This “nonparallel” psychological phenomenon is called empathic concern (see Miller et al., 1988; Miller et al., 1995). As illustrated above, these two concepts differ in that, if the observer’s emotion is always parallel with the person observed, which can directly decide individual’s ability to offer appropriate response. It has been claimed that, if a person’s feelings are easily aroused but not easily controlled, he/she will be more likely to suffer from emotional exhaustion (Maslach, 1982). Thus, emotional contagion can result in negative outcomes during the emotional work process, while empathic concern can enhance effective interaction (Miller et al., 1995). Researchers have also examined teacher-student interaction, suggesting that teachers who display higher levels of emotional contagion are perceived by students as less responsive due to a lack of control (Jia et al., 2011). A subsequent study indicated that teachers’ emotional contagion is positively correlated with students’ perceptions of their emotion work, negatively associated with perceived emotional support, and associated with negative overall emotional experience toward that teacher (Titsworth et al., 2012).

The previous section reviewed the studies about emotional contagion in various disciplines, particularly individuals’ susceptibility to emotional contagion in
communication studies. However, employees’ susceptibility to EC in the workplace context, as well as whether this characteristic is related to their emotional experience, is still understudied. Although as a personal trait, this variable is not examined in the proposed model in this study, it is still important to explore employees’ contagion in relate to their emotions at work. Thus, the second research question to be explored is:

RQ2: What is the relationship between employees’ susceptibility to emotional contagion and employees’ emotional experience in the workplace (subordinate emotional valence, subordinate emotion work, and perception of received emotional support)?

In general, the current dissertation attempts to build a model showing the relationships among supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience, and employee motives for communicating with the supervisor. The last section in this literature review will pay attention to the communication motives in the workplace.

Interpersonal Communication Motives (ICM) and Employee Motives for Communicating with Supervisors

As mentioned in Chapter One, employee emotional experience can influence their approach-avoidance actions towards their supervisor. That is due to the powerful influence of people’s emotional states on their behaviors. As Scherer (1994) suggested, emotion includes the component of action readiness, which shows the potential of emotion to guide subsequent behaviors. Scholars of social behavior reviewed the relationship between emotional response and behavior, reporting that human emotion accounted for at least 40% of the variance in predicting behavior (Biggers & Rankis, 1983). Generally speaking, a rational action usually derives from an intention, or a
motive. More specifically, if an individual decides to start a conversation with others, he/she should have a reason (or reasons) for that talk—to get information, show love and concern, or just to relax and have fun. As a starting point for an employee’s decision to approach, or talk with a supervisor, the concept of interpersonal communication motives (ICM) merits attention.

Interpersonal communication motives (ICM) is an important concern to many scholars involved with interpersonal communication over the past two decades. Generally speaking, motives refer to “relatively stable, personal variables explaining why one chooses to communicate” (Anderson & Martin, 1995a, p. 250). Rubin et al. (1988) reviewed interpersonal communication research, suggesting that previous studies have focused on how interpersonal interaction occurs but do not examine the reasons why people are involved in conversations with others. Guided by the functional approaches, Rubin et al. (1988) developed the ICM scales and argued that people talk for the following reasons: pleasure, affection, inclusion, relaxation, escape, and control. These motives influence the target of conversation, the manner of talk, and the content of the talk (Graham et al., 1993). In the following section, the theoretical background will be discussed, followed by a review of how ICM has been studied by communication researchers, and finally the application of ICM to the organization context.

Theoretical Frameworks

Scholars who study communication motives usually hold the view that human behaviors are guided by particular goals (Chaffee & Berger, 1987). People’s communication and their involvement in social interaction function as a means to fulfill these goals (Rubin & Rubin, 1992). According to Rubin and Rubin (1992), this need
fulfillment perspective roughly centers around three approaches. The first approach features reciprocity of needs (Roloff, 1987). In this theory, communication is treated as an instrument via which individuals negotiate and exchange resources, and during which a reciprocal identification and fulfillment of each other’s needs is achieved. Therefore, people initiate and respond to a conversation for the needs of their partner.

In the second approach, Schutz (1966) examined fundamental interpersonal relations orientation (FIRO) through a psychological approach to the study of communication needs. He argued that peoples’ behavior is generally influenced by three interpersonal needs: to include and be included by others, to control situations/others, and to express and get affection from others. A lack of fulfillment of these needs—inclusion, control, and affection—can result in counterproductive behaviors, which can subsequently lead to undesirable consequences (Schutz, 1966).

The third approach involves the uses and gratifications theory drawn from mass media research. This theory provides a social-psychological approach to study this issue. As one of the most frequently published mass communication theoretical perspectives over the past 50 years (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974), uses and gratifications examines why people use mass media. Rubin (1994) proposed assumptions about the relationship between people and media, arguing that media use is motivated, goal-directed, and purposeful. Moreover, individuals initiate media use in response to felt needs, after comparing with other types of communication and deciding which is to best to satisfy needs. Researchers investigated media use and interpersonal communication (e.g., Barbato, 1986), suggesting that interpersonal motives reflect self-confirmation, inclusion, and emotion-expression, which is consistent with previous findings by Schutz.
In addition, Barbato (1986) noted motives of social utility, personal identity, and entertainment functions in mass media studies (e.g., Katz et al., 1974). Collectively, these findings demonstrate the similar functions between motives for using media and motives for engaging in interpersonal communication. Thus, in attempting to better understand interpersonal communication choices and outcomes, scholars integrated media and socio-psychological theories to explore the reasons of why people talk (Rubin et al., 1988).

The previous perspectives provide a theoretical framework for interpersonal motives. Rubin et al. (1988) also briefly reviewed other functional approaches that have contributed to the development of motives theory. These functional analyses include the bonding function of communication advanced by Dance and Larson (1976), five interpersonal bonding functions identified by Bochner (1984), three interpersonal objectives identified by Clark and Delia (1979), the four functions relationship typology developed by Bennis, Schein, Steele, and Berlew (1968), and nonverbal communication studies. Although a great deal of literature has been mentioned that relates to the study of interpersonal motives, Schutz’s (1966) FIRO, as well as the uses and gratifications theory have been recognized as the most important frameworks. Based on these theories, communication scholars have identified six motives for interpersonal communication. These will be discussed in the next section.

ICM in Communication Research

In order to inspect people’s communication motives, Rubin et al. (1988) initially listed 18 possible interpersonal motives in their preliminary study. These motives were organized in two groups. The first group involves nine motives derived from television viewing, and include relaxation (need to rest and feel less tense), companionship (social
need to be a group member), passing time (have nothing else to do), habit (individualized rule to talk), entertainment (to have fun), social interaction (share information about oneself), receiving information, arousal (thrill and stimulation), and escape (avoid other activities).

The second group comes from other related sources, some of which were not discussed in the previous sections. For example, Rubin and Rubin (1982) studied television use and yielded the following factors: self-learning (get information to guide one’s behavior), convenience (easy to do), social norms (implicit societal rules), and altruism (communicate to make others feel better). Additionally, Maslow (1954) provided perspectives such as self-esteem (to feel good about oneself) and safety (to feel safe reacting to dangers). Finally, emotional expression (the need to talk), along with affection and control, mentioned in Schuz’s (1966) study, were included in the initial pool of interpersonal motives.

After a series of statistical analyses, the final version of the ICM scale consisted of 28 items, yielding six primary motives for interpersonal communication: pleasure, affection, inclusion, escape, relaxation, and control. Pleasure emphasizes the need for fun, excitement, and entertainment (e.g., “I talk to that person because I enjoy it.”); affection considers communication as a need to express caring and love (e.g., “I talk to that person to let others know I care about his/her feelings.”); inclusion refers to the need to participate, maintain relationships with and share feelings with others (e.g., “I talk to that person because I just need to talk about my problems sometimes.”); escape references the desire to avoid other activities (e.g., “I talk to that person to get away from pressures and responsibilities.”); relaxation involves the need to unwind and rest (e.g., “I talk to that
person because it allows me to unwind.”); and finally, individuals who are motivated to talk for reasons of control aim to assert power and influence over others (e.g., “I talk to that person because I want someone to do something for me”).

Expanding Rubin et al.’s findings, Graham et al. (1993) identified the Interpersonal Communication Motive Model, suggesting that individual motives influence who we talk to, how we talk, and what we talk about. According to the model, during social interaction, people select different conversational partners, with that selection related to their motives on a relationship level. Moreover, using Norton’s (1978) conceptualization of communicator style, Graham et al. (1993) predicted that peoples’ motives are related to the way they talk. Finally, a person’s self-disclosure is affected by his/her motives, so that the content of conversation, as well as the intimacy of that dialogue, are related to the reasons for communicating. Accordingly, three premises are established by ICM: 1) communication is goal-directed, 2) communication with others is based on six motives, and 3) these motives can influence peoples’ communication outcomes. Following these premises, later scholars further developed the ICM concept by relating motives to the final action and competence. For example, Rubin and Martin (1998) expanded the interpersonal communication motives model, demonstrating that needs lead to motives, goals, plans, strategies, and finally action. Afterwards, Hullman (2004) took the message design logic process into consideration. He argued that goals are designed to achieve an outcome, such as competence used in his study. Thus, the motives model he identified included the following steps: needs, motives, message design logic, message, and competence.
All these theory-building attempts shed light on our studies of basic approaching behavior—communication motives. Since Rubin et al. (1988) published their findings on ICM, communication researchers have not stopped their investigation of this concept through building relationships with other variables. These studies have added building blocks to the ICM literature, and enhanced our understandings of how peoples’ communication motives relate to biological and social characteristics, communication behaviors, and contexts.

**ICM with Biological and Social Characteristics**

Research has consistently provided evidence that communication motives are related to age, gender, and communication partner. Generally speaking, people were most likely to communicate with their spouses/lovers, close friends, and family members for reasons of pleasure and affection, and least likely to talk with strangers for these two reasons. Similarly, people have reported talking with spouses/lovers, close friends, and family members most often for reasons of inclusion and are less likely to seek inclusion from strangers and co-workers. The relaxation motive was found to be mostly used for interactions with co-workers, family members, and spouses/lovers, and again, least likely when talk is with strangers (Graham et al., 1993).

To date, most of the motive studies have examined family contexts. Scholars have suggested that family members communicate with each other for pleasure, affection, inclusion, and relaxation needs (Graham et al., 1993). In a study of family climate and ICM, Barbato, Graham, and Perse (2003) found that fathers are marginally more likely to communicate with their children for pleasure. On the other hand, mothers are more likely to talk with their children for reasons of inclusion, when they need to be with others, or to
overcome a sense of loneliness. Mothers are reported to communicate more in order to control their children. However, research has also indicated that, in general, women talk more to express emotions and for reasons of affect whereas men communicate more for controlling reasons (Barbato & Perse, 1992). This result was supported by Anderson and Martin (1995b) who noted that affection is important for mothers. Considering the motives in other cultural contexts, researchers found that people from China more frequently communicate with best friends for needs for inclusion and because of the similarities people share in personality and interests (Anderson, Martin, & Zhong, 1998).

Looking at age as a factor in motives, younger adults aged 18-25 have been found to communicate more for pleasure, inclusion, relaxation, and escape than middle-aged or older adults (Javidi, Long, Long, & Javidi, 1990).

Another study took a communi-biological perspective (Paulsel & Mottet, 2004) to explore how individual temperament traits are related to motives. As the findings indicate, one’s extroversion is positively correlated with all motives except for control. Moreover, neuroticism has a positive relationship with inclusion, escape, and control, and is negatively correlated with pleasure. Finally, a positive correlation has been found between psychoticism and control, and a negative relationship reported with pleasure, affection, inclusion, and relaxation. Scholars have also emphasized life position as a predictor of interpersonal motives, finding that those with a positive life position interact more for pleasure and affection reasons. In contrast, those with a negative life position communicate more for control and combined inclusion/relaxation (Barbato & Perse, 1992). Results from Rubin and Rubin (1992) demonstrated that individuals who are less
socially interactive, less satisfied, and less healthy do not communicate for affection, pleasure, and inclusion motives.

To better understand the nature of these motives, scholars have categorized the six motives into two types. Affection, pleasure, inclusion, and relaxation have been labeled *relationally-oriented motives* because they “function to facilitate positive encounters with others” (Barbato et al., 2003, p. 127). On the other hand, control and escape have been termed *personal-influence motives* since they are “manifestations of desire for interaction management” (p. 127). Research employing this perspective has reported that parents talk with their children primarily for relationally oriented reasons (to show affection, for pleasure, or to relax) (Barbato & Perse, 1999).

*ICM with Communication Behaviors and Outcomes*

Substantial research demonstrates that ICM has been linked to a variety of communication variables, which are divided into two general categories: communication characteristics/strategies/styles and outcome (satisfaction). Some studies have examined individual communicative characteristics, such as communication apprehensiveness (Kondo, 1994; Rubin et al., 1988) as the predictor. Kondo (1994) found that both high and low CA groups interact due to pleasure, affection, inclusion, and relaxation reasons; however, high CAs are more likely to use escape and low CAs more likely to employ pleasure and relaxation. In addition, when exploring family communication climate, evidence suggests that family members with conversation orientation talk for pleasure, affection, and relaxation. A positive relationship has been found between conformity orientation and control, escape, and inclusion, whereas a negative correlation was found with pleasure (Barbato et al., 2003). Considering communication competence as an
important element involved in interpersonal motives, Anderson and Martin (1995c) stated that competent communicators (high in assertiveness and responsiveness) talk for the purpose of affection, pleasure, and inclusion more than noncompetent communicators (low in assertiveness and responsiveness), submissive communicators (low in assertiveness and high in responsiveness), and aggressive communicators (high in assertiveness and low in responsiveness).

Other communication strategies or behaviors that have been studied in relationship to ICM include relational maintenance behaviors (Myers, Brann, & Rittenour, 2008), nonverbal immediacy (Myers & Ferry, 2001), attachment styles (Punyanunt-Carter, 2007), and social support (Frisby & Martin, 2010). Specifically, the affection motive is reported as a significant contributor to a variety of types of relational maintenance behaviors. Studies of nonverbal immediacy indicate that the general use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors has a positive correlation with pleasure and affection; whereas, the use of nonverbal immediacy behaviors is negatively related to escape and control motives (Myers & Ferry, 2001). When employing attachment theory in families, Punyanunt-Carter (2007) stated that attachment styles were used in a similar way for all communication motives. Additionally, social support has recently been recognized as another factor that is relevant to interpersonal motives. Examined among family members and friends, scholars found that parents who reported being higher in their affection and pleasure motives were more likely to provide emotional and social support. Friends who talk for reasons of affection, inclusion, and pleasure were more inclined to offer each other emotional support. Advice support is more likely to be provided by individuals who are higher in their affection and control motives (Frisby & Martin, 2010).
The outcome variables usually involve communication satisfaction (Anderson et al., 1998; Rubin et al., 1988; Step & Finucane, 2002). As a socioemotional outcome relevant to the fulfillment of a message exchange process (Hecht, 1978), communication satisfaction has been used as a benchmark to understand the effectiveness of different motives. In the original ICM scale development project, Rubin et al. (1988) noted that this outcome variable was best predicted by pleasure, affection, relaxation, and escape motives. This finding was partially supported by Step and Finucane (2002), who found that communication satisfaction was closely related to three of the four motives mentioned, with the exception being pleasure. Interestingly, a study investigating Chinese adults’ motives for talking with parents and their satisfaction reported that all significant relationships were in a negative direction (Anderson et al., 1998). One of the reasons, according to the authors, might be that the scale lost validity during the translation process. Despite this result, they still encouraged other scholars to continue motive research in China with a more culturally specific scale.

**Employee’s Communication Motives with Supervisors**

ICM provides a conceptually rich and valuable lens for understanding the process of human social interaction, particularly within families and among friends. The contextual nature of communication motives should lead us to consider this concept among other social relationships. To date, ICM is treated as an important concept in the interpersonal communication process, particularly in family communication; however, its effect in the organizational context is still understudied. This is surprising because the workplace is an important location where people establish their social ties. A full-time employee usually spends at least eight hours at work, during which communication
occurs on various topics, at a variety of levels, and for different reasons. Within the communication literature, a few studies can be found that have explored employee motives for communicating with supervisors. For example, Anderson and Martin (1995a) reported that employees had high satisfaction with superiors, as well as moderate satisfaction with work and commitment, when interacting with superiors for pleasure, affection, and inclusion. Employees also reported satisfaction towards work when communicating with coworkers for affection reasons. Another study indicates that the level of Machiavellianism evinced by employees was found to have a negative relationship with the affection motive for communicating; however, escape, relaxation, and control motives were positively related to Machiavellianism. In addition, affection and pleasure motives directly influence employees’ satisfaction with supervisors (Walter et al., 2005). Jia and Shoham (2012) investigated supervisors’ social support skills, employees’ communication motives, and supervisor-employee relationship satisfaction. Perceived social support skills of immediate supervisors (emotional, informative, and instrumental combined) were positively related to employees’ communication motives of pleasure, affection, inclusion, and relaxation. The escape motive was also significant but to a lesser degree, and the control motive was not significantly related to support skills. Additionally, employees’ communication motives of pleasure, affection, inclusion, and relaxation were positively related to supervisor-subordinate communication satisfaction. The remaining communication motives of escape and control did not yield any significant results.

The current dissertation assumes that an employee’s emotions arising from a supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy will affect his/her (the employee’s) motives for talking
with that supervisor. Based on the theory and literature discussed above, the following research question is proposed:

RQ3: What is the relationship between employees’ emotional experience (subordinate emotional valence, subordinate emotion work, and perception of received emotional support) and employees’ motives for communicating with their supervisor (pleasure, affection, inclusion, relaxation, escape, and control)?

Further, the three areas of employee emotional experience are considered mediating factors for supervisor nonverbal immediacy. The current study speculates that supervisor NI would be mediated by employee emotional experience on the path to employees’ motives for communicating with the supervisor. The path is:

Supervisor NI → Employee Emotional Experience → Employee Communication Motives

RQ4: Will employee emotional experience mediate the relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy and employee communication motives?

Overall Summary of the Literature

This chapter has reviewed the body of literature concerning supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience, susceptibility to emotional contagions, as well as employee communication motives. Guided by Mehrabian’s (1981) theory of nonverbal communication, the research questions the model propose that supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy will influence employees’ emotional experience, which includes emotional valence, emotion work, and received emotional support. Employees’ emotions, in turn, should affect their motives for communicating with their supervisors. Furthermore, employees’ susceptibility of emotional contagion should also relate to their
emotional experience. In the chapter that follows, the method for data collection, including the participants, procedures, measurements, as well as the data analysis, will be described.
CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

The rationale presented in Chapter One described the inherent linkage among supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience, and employee communication motives toward a supervisor. In addition, employee susceptibility to emotional contagion was postulated as another factor that influences employee emotional experience. Chapter Two provides a thorough review of literature, along with identifying the research questions and the hypothesized model that will guide this study. This chapter describes the method to be used for data collection and analysis. The first section introduces the participants and procedures for collecting the data, followed by the measurement of each variable. Finally, the tests to be used for data analysis are identified.

Participants and Procedures

The procedures were approved through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) in February 2013. The participants were recruited from three sources: users of online academic networks, family members or friends of students enrolled in communication courses at Ohio University, and Ohio University faculty and staff. All participants needed to fall within the following criteria: 1) they had to be 18 years old or above, 2) they had to be currently employed full time.

This study included Likert-type style survey questions that the participants needed to complete according to their experience (see Appendix D for a copy of the survey). The online survey was constructed within qualtrics. A recruiting email (see Appendix A Part One for a copy) was sent to the following academic networks: Communication Research and Theory Network (crtnet@natcom.org) and Emotion in the Organizations Network (EMONET-L@AOMLISTS.PACE.EDU). The email included a brief description of the
study and a link to the survey. In addition, students in a variety of communication courses were asked to send the online survey link to any two people they know (usually parents or other family members, friends) who met the inclusion criteria. In other words, these participants were recruited through the students (students were not participating directly unless they were adults and working full time). The students who forwarded the survey received extra credit from their instructors. The third source of data collection was through the Ohio University faculty and staff listserv (see Appendix A Part Three for a copy of the email). A short description with the survey link was sent to all OU employees. The recruiting email to the academic network and OU employees was sent only once; for the participants recruited through students, one face to face class visit (see Appendix B for the email sent to instructors for a class visit) and a recruiting email (see Appendix A Part Two for a copy) were completed to achieve the best response rate.

Ultimately, participants were N = 608. The sample consisted of 211 males and 375 females (an additional 22 respondents did not report their sex), with an average age of 42.9 years (ranging from 18 to 70 years, SD = 12.4 years, 23 people did not report their age). As for the level of education, 13.3% of the participants had a high school degree; 42.5% had a college degree, and 44.2% had a graduate degree (20 people did not report their education). When asked their position in the organization, 12.4% were executives; 27.3% were managers, and 60.3% were general staff members (26 people did not report their position). Of their supervisors, 348 were male, and 239 were female (21 people did not report their supervisor’s sex). Among the categories of occupation, 67 reported they were officials and/or managers; 328 identified themselves as professionals (such as teachers, counselors, etc), 13 as technicians, 48 as sales workers, 65 as
administrative support workers, 17 as craft workers (such as carpenters and electricians),
11 as operatives (such as drivers), 5 as laborers and helpers (such as fishing and hunting
workers), and 29 as service workers (such as police officers, waiters, cooks, etc). Twenty-
five people did not report the nature of their occupation.

Upon linking to the survey, participants were instructed to read an Institutional
Review Board (IRB) approved consent form with waived signature (see Appendix C for
the copy of Consent Form). Once participants had indicated their agreement to participate,
they were instructed to complete the survey in Qualtrics. The first part of the survey
asked participants to evaluate their supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy. The second part
contained questions about participates’ own emotional experience at work, including the
emotional support they have received from their supervisor, their level of emotion work,
and the valence of the emotions experienced. Participants then completed questions
regarding their motives for communicating with their supervisor. The fourth section of
the survey involved questions about the participant’s susceptibility to emotional
contagion. Finally, participants were asked to provide their demographic information,
including age, biological sex, occupation, years of working in the current organization,
size of organization, and supervisor’s sex. These demographics were not the focus of this
study so they were not reviewed in Chapter Two. However, these demographic questions
could provide important information about whether nonverbal immediacy, emotional
experience, communication motives and emotional contagion are affected by biological
sex or position, among other things. The results concerning this information will be
discussed in the results and discussion chapters. The instruments/items are further
described in the Instruments section below.
Measurements

Quantitative measures of supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience in the workplace, employee communication motives toward the supervisor, and employee emotional contagion, and demographic questions were employed in the study.

*Supervisor Nonverbal Immediacy*

Richmond, McCroskey, and Johnson (2003) developed the Nonverbal Immediacy Scale-Observer Report (NIS-O) to assess an individual’s perception of the other’s immediate or non-immediate behaviors. Reliabilities and validities from different data set were shown in the original scale development study, while the result from “data set supervisor” was reported in the current dissertation. This 26-item Likert-type instrument is the most up-to-date version, with reported alpha reliability at approximately .93 (Richmond et al., 2003). The predictive validity of the instrument was .77 in correlation with warmth/approachability. Employee participants were asked to evaluate their immediate supervisor’s nonverbal behavior (facial and vocal expressions, gestures, etc.), from 1 = Never to 5 = Very Often. For example, “He/she frowns while talking to people,” “He/she gestures when he/she talks to people,” and “He/she uses a monotone or dull voice while talking to people.” In this study, the reliability was alpha = .92.

*Employee Emotional Experience in the Workplace*

The three areas of employee emotional experience in the workplace were assessed by a revised version of the Classroom Emotion Scale (CES) (Titsworth et al., 2010). The original scale includes 14 Likert-type items to test students’ emotional responses to a teacher and a class. The reliability reported in Titsworth et al.’s (2010) study was:
emotional valence alpha = .89, emotional support alpha = .92, and emotion work alpha = .78. In the validity test, all three factors on the scale showed consistent and strong correlations with students’ perceptions of affect, perceived learning, motivation, and indicators of learning. The classroom emotion scale was revised to fit the organizational context in the current study by changing the title from “instructor” to “supervisor,” and “classroom” to “workplace.” The new scale consisted of three factors: emotional valence, which shows the employee’s net positive/negative assessments toward an immediate supervisor. For example, “I would generally describe the emotions I feel toward my supervisor as positive.” Higher averages for emotional valence statements indicate a positive valence, whereas lower values are associated with a negative valence. Emotional support is how much assistance an employee gets from a supervisor, in order to help the employee deal with distressful events. For example, “I get the emotional help and support I need from my supervisor.” Emotion work refers to the extent an employee perceives he/she needs to manipulate emotions and display them in the “right” way. For example, “I wish I could better express my true feelings with my supervisor.” In this study, the reliability for emotional valence was alpha = .74, emotional support alpha = .92, and emotion work alpha = .80.

Employee Communication Motives

Rubin et al.’s (1988) Interpersonal Communication Motives Scale (ICMS) received wide spread of use when it was developed to measure six different motives for interpersonal communication. Statements were slightly revised for the workplace setting: pleasure (e.g., “I talk to my supervisor because it is fun”), affection (e.g., “I talk to my supervisor because I am concerned about him/her”), inclusion (e.g., “I just need to talk
about my problems sometimes”), escape (e.g., “To get away of what I am doing”), relaxation (e.g., “It allows me to unwind”), and control (e.g., “I want my supervisor to do something for me”). The original scale had 28 items to assess employees’ motives for talking with their supervisor, ranging from 1 = not at all like me, to 5 = exactly like me. The original alpha reliability for the six motives ranged from .75 to .89. To test the convergent validity, correlations with communication apprehension and communication satisfaction were tested. Results showed that individuals’ motives of pleasure, affection, and control were negatively correlated with CA, and motives of pleasure, affection, inclusion, and relaxation were positively related to satisfaction. In the current dissertation, a Principal Component Analysis was conducted and the measure was re-categorized into five factors rather than six. Motive of pleasure and motive of relaxation were in the same factor, labeled as “motive of enjoyment” in the current study (see Appendix E for the PCA output). The reliability in this study was alpha = .96 for enjoyment, alpha = .89 for affection, alpha = .91 for inclusion, alpha = .90 for escape, and alpha = .75 for control.

Employee Emotional Contagion

The Measure of Emotional Contagion (Dillard & Hunter, 1989) includes 7 statements describing an individual’s susceptibility to emotional contagion, or how likely one is to be emotionally influenced by the social environment. The scale was adapted to report an employee’s own feelings of vulnerability in the environment and with the people around him/her. For example, “I tend to lose control when I am bringing bad news to people,” and “I CANNOT continue to feel okay if people around me are depressed.” This study has a reliability of alpha = .72 in this study.
Demographic Information

The Census Job Classification Guide was used to identify occupation types according to the following 9 categories: officials and managers, professionals, technicians, sales workers, administrative support workers, craft workers, operatives, labor and helpers, and service workers. Organizational level was measured along three levels: executives, managers, and general staff. In addition, participant biological sex, age, length of working in the current organization, as well as supervisor sex and age were requested. This information was necessary in the preliminary tests, which will be addressed in chapters four and five.

According to Warner (2008), the formula to calculate a minimum desirable sample size for a significant multiple regression model is $104 + N$ (number of the predictor variables). To achieve a statistical power of $>.80$ and a medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$) (Cohen, 1988; Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003) for multiple regression with five predictor variables (supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional contagion, employee emotional valence, received emotional support, emotion work), a minimum of desirable sample size of 109 is required to detect a significant model (Warner, 2008). However, followed by the suggestions of Warner (2008), researchers need a sample size larger than the minimum values to “provide reasonably precise estimates of slopes” (p. 451). The final sample was 608, which was highly satisfying for the study.
Data Analysis

In Chapter Two, the following research questions were proposed:

RQ1: What is the relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy (subordinates’ perception) and employee emotional experience in the workplace (subordinate emotional valence, subordinate emotion work, and perception of received emotional support)?

RQ2: What is the relationship between employees’ susceptibility to emotional contagion and employees’ emotional experience in the workplace subordinate emotional valence, subordinate emotion work, and perception of received emotional support)?

RQ3: What is the relationship between employees’ emotional experience (subordinate emotional valence, subordinate emotion work, and perception of received emotional support) and employees’ motives for communicating with their supervisor (pleasure, affection, inclusion, relaxation, escape, and control)?

To test these research questions, simple correlations were conducted. The detailed results, as well as the table of correlation, are reported in Chapter four. The last research question asked if supervisor nonverbal immediacy would be mediated by the employees’ emotional experience on the path to employees’ communication motives. To test the mediating model, the following procedure which include two multiple regressions was followed: First, three areas of supervisor emotional experience—received emotional support, emotion work, and emotional valence—were regressed on a linear combination of supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy. Then, five hierarchical multiple regressions were
conducted with subordinate communication motives as the dependent variables, and the sequential block entry was computed with supervisor nonverbal immediacy as first block and subordinate emotional experience as the second block. What described above was the first round of test which only includes the core variables (emotions and communication behaviors variables) in this study in order to keep the model parsimonious. A second round of tests were completed that added demographic information and employee susceptibility to emotional contagion as the control variables in the first two sequential blocks, followed by the predictor and mediating variables in the third and fourth block. Chapter four will introduce the detailed process and criteria to establish a mediating model and the model building for the current dissertation.

Summary

The primary purpose of this chapter was to outline the selection of participants and the data collection procedures for this dissertation. Specifically, this chapter introduced the process of recruiting participants, described the measurement of supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience, susceptibility to emotional contagion, and employee communication motives toward their supervisor. In addition, the method of data analysis was explained. The next chapter will report the findings.
CHAPTER 4: PRIMARY STUDY RESULTS

The primary results and findings are reported in this chapter. The first issue described is that of the preliminary analyses which involve demographically based comparisons. Then the research questions that were proposed in Chapter Two are addressed, and finally, the model that emerged from the data is depicted.

Preliminary Analysis

Prior to conducting the tests associated with the research questions, some preliminary tests were completed, including tests for normality, principal component factor analysis, independent t-test, and one-way ANOVA. Tests for normality, which included kurtosis and skewness measures and visual inspection of histograms, were within normal ranges. In order to confirm whether the measurements in this study have the same number of components as the original scale, a principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted. A different number of components for the communication motive scale were found. The original ICM scale (Rubin et al., 1988) was reported as having six components, identified as being the six primary types of communication motives in social interaction: pleasure, affection, inclusion, escape, relaxation, and control. In the current study, however, five components fit Kaiser’s rule of an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. These components explained 73% of the total variance. Interestingly, the loading combined all the items for pleasure (item 1-8) and relaxation (item 22-25) into one factor (see Appendix E for the PCA output). For the purposes of this study, this factor was labeled “enjoyment,” showing that an individual is willing to talk with another because this activity is relaxing, pleasant, and fun.
A series of independent t-tests were conducted to determine whether a supervisor’s and/or a subordinate’s biological sex influenced the variables in this study. The results indicated significant differences in nonverbal immediacy based upon the supervisor’s biological sex: \( t(585) = -3.10, p < .01 \). Female supervisors (\( M = 3.54, SD = .55 \)) were reported as displaying higher nonverbal immediacy than male supervisors (\( M = 3.40, SD = .53 \)). Emotional contagion was associated with subordinates’ biological sex [\( t(583) = -4.17, p < .001 \)], with female employees (\( M = 2.56, SD = .61 \)) reporting a significantly higher susceptibility to emotional contagion than male employees (\( M = 2.35, SD = .56 \)). Among the five types of motives that prompt subordinates to talk to their supervisor, only the escape motive was found to be significantly different based on subordinate biological sex: \( t(581) = 2.95, p < .01 \). Male employees (\( M = 2.05, SD = .89 \)) reported being more likely to talk with their supervisor as a result of the motive of escape than were females (\( M = 1.83, SD = .86 \)). Finally, one-way ANOVAs were run for each variable across participant position (executive, manager, general staff) in the organization. Participants reported significant differences in susceptibility to emotional contagion across the three positions: \( F(2, 579) = 4.29, p < .05 \). Tukey post-hoc comparisons of three groups indicated that general staff (\( M = 2.54, SD = .61 \)) had significantly higher emotional contagion than executives (\( M = 2.32, SD = .60, p < .05 \)). Other variables were not found to be significantly different across positions.

Research Question Findings

Means, standard deviations and Pearson correlations for all variables appear in Table 1. Missing cases were excluded listwise in this study.
Table 1. *Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pearson Correlations of All Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Nonverbal Immediacy</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Emotional Contagion</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>.60</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Emotional Support</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Emotional Work</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>-.29**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.62**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Emotional Valence</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>.73**</td>
<td>-.61**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Enjoyment Motive</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.68**</td>
<td>-.49**</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Affection Motive</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.66**</td>
<td>-.36**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.71**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Inclusion Motive</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.51**</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>.37**</td>
<td>.73**</td>
<td>.59**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Escape Motive</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Control Motive</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01
The first research question asked about the relationship between employee perceived supervisor nonverbal immediacy ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .54$) and subordinate emotional experience, which includes subordinate perception of emotional valence ($M = 3.73$, $SD = .97$), reported level of emotion work ($M = 2.73$, $SD = .91$), and received emotional support ($M = 3.50$, $SD = .90$). A Pearson Correlation indicated that supervisor nonverbal immediacy was positively related to subordinates’ perceived emotional support ($r = .50$, $p< .001$), negatively related to their level of emotion work ($r = .29$, $p< .001$), and demonstrated a positive relationship with emotional valence ($r = .39$, $p< .001$).

The second research question attempted to examine whether subordinates’ own emotional contagion ($M = 2.49$, $SD = .60$) is related to the three areas of their emotional experience. The Pearson Correlation showed a positive relationship between participants’ susceptibility to emotional contagion and their engagement in emotion work with their supervisor ($r = .21$, $p< .001$) and a negative relationship with emotional valence ($r = -.11$, $p< .01$). Received emotional support from a supervisor was not significantly related to participants’ emotional contagion.

The third research question addressed the relationship between subordinate emotional experience and their motives for communicating with their supervisor. The mean and standard deviation for each of the motives are as follows: enjoyment ($M = 2.63$, $SD = .93$), affection ($M = 3.16$, $SD = .87$), inclusion ($M = 2.27$, $SD = .97$), escape ($M = 1.91$, $SD = .87$), and control ($M = 2.27$, $SD = .87$). Subordinates reported their received emotional support as being either highly or moderately related to the communication motives of enjoyment ($r = .68$, $p< .001$), affection ($r = .66$, $p< .001$), and inclusion ($r$
Additionally, employees' emotion work was moderately related to three communication motives in a negative manner: enjoyment (r = -.49, p < .001), affection (r = -.36, p < .001), and inclusion (r = -.27, p < .001). Finally, emotional valence was positively related to enjoyment (r = .57, p < .001), affection (r = .53, p < .001), and inclusion (r = .37, p < .001).

Regression Models

The fourth research question asked whether supervisor nonverbal immediacy would be mediated by employee emotional experience on the path to employee communication motives. This dissertation followed the criteria for establishing mediation advocated by Baron and Kenny (1986) and Warner (2008). In their classic article, Baron and Kenny (1986) suggested the procedure and the conditions that should be met:

To test for mediation, one should estimate the three following regression equations: first, regressing the mediator on the independent variable; second, regressing the dependent variable on the independent variable; and third, regressing the dependent variable on both the independent variable and on the mediator. Separate coefficients for each equation should be estimated and tested… To establish mediation, the following conditions must hold: first, the independent variable must affect the mediator in the first equation; second, the independent variable must be shown to affect the dependent variable in the second equation; and third, the mediator must affect the dependent variable in the third equation. (p. 1177)
Based on Baron and Kenny, Warner (2008) argued that three conditions should be satisfied. First, a significant correlation between predictor and dependent/outcome variable \(X_1\) and \(Y\) is needed. Second, a significant correlation between predictor and mediator \(X_1\) and \(X_2\) should exist. She also stated that the first two steps could be addressed by regressions for the predictions of \(X_1\) and \(Y\), and \(X_1\) and \(X_2\). The third condition is the need for a predictive relationship (by regression) between \(X_2\) and \(Y\) when \(X_1\) is statistically controlled. A mediating model can be built if the previous three conditions are met; however, a fourth condition, which shows if the predictor \(X_1\) still significantly predicts the dependent variable \(Y\) after the mediator \(X_2\) is controlled, determines whether the model is full mediation or partial mediation. When \(X_2\) is statistically controlled, full mediation exists when the beta coefficient between \(X_1\) and \(Y\) “[is not] significantly different from 0” (p. 455) \(p\) is not significant). This means the effect of the predictor occurs entirely through the effect of the mediator. Partial mediation, on the other hand, is established when the beta coefficient is still significantly greater than 0 \(p\) is significant), but the beta coefficient is smaller. These two approaches are essentially the same; but the current dissertation employed the procedure introduced by Warner (2008) because the last two conditions were explained in a more specific and clear manner.

The previous discussions provide a rationale to test and establish the potential mediating model proposed by the fourth research question in this study. To test the relationship of supervisor nonverbal immediacy \(X_1\), employee emotional experience \(X_2\), and employee communication motives \(Y\), a four-step procedure was completed.
accoding to Warner’s (2008) discussion. The procedure included four tests indicating a predictive relationship between $X_1$ and $X_2$, $X_1$ and $Y$, $X_2$ and $Y$ when $X_1$ was controlled, and $X_1$ and $Y$ when $X_2$ was controlled. These steps led to some redundant results. In order to avoid redundancy and maintain clarity, this study re-organized the procedure with two steps that combined all the results to test whether all the conditions were satisfied.

First, three separate multiple regressions were conducted to predict three areas of employee emotional experience (dependent variable) from supervisor nonverbal immediacy (predictor variable). The first regression revealed that supervisor nonverbal immediacy positively predicted the emotional support that subordinates perceived themselves as receiving from their supervisor: $\beta = .50, R^2 = .25, F (1, 606) = 206.1, p < .001$. The second regression revealed that supervisor nonverbal immediacy negatively predicted an employee’s reported level of emotion work: $\beta = -.29, R^2 = .08, F (1, 606) = 53.62, p < .001$. The third regression revealed that employee emotional valence was positively predicted by supervisor nonverbal immediacy: $\beta = .39, R^2 = .15, F (1, 605) = 106.66, p < .001$. Based on these results, the condition of $X_1$ predicts $X_2$ is met.

Next, five separate hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted. Five types of communication motives were regressed on a linear combination of supervisor nonverbal immediacy and three areas of employee emotional experience in the following steps. Specifically, step 1 involved supervisor nonverbal immediacy; step 2 involved supervisor nonverbal immediacy, received emotional support, emotion work, and emotional valence. The results of the first regression model (with the communication motive of enjoyment as the dependent variable) indicated that 21.6% of the variance in an
employee’s motive of enjoyment was predicted by supervisor nonverbal immediacy (adjusted $R^2 = .22$, $F [1, 601] = 165.46$, $p < .001$). Thus, the condition of $X_1$ predicts $Y$ was met. In the second step, after statistically controlling for supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience resulted in a significant change, uniquely accounting for an additional 27.7% of the variance, $\Delta F (3, 598) = 109.10$, $p < .001$. This step indicated a predictive relationship between $X_2$ and $Y$, when $X_1$ was controlled. This satisfied Warren’s (2008) third condition. Analysis of regression coefficients revealed that emotional support, $\beta = .45$, $t = 9.43$, $p < .001$, emotion work, $\beta = -.08$, $t = -2.12$, $p < .05$, and emotional valence, $\beta = .13$, $t = 2.82$, $p < .01$, are all significant predictors of the enjoyment motive. Finally, the regression coefficients table showed that, after the three areas of emotional experience were added in the model, the beta coefficients dropped from .47 to .17, but were still significant, $p < .001$. This indicated that when emotional experience, defined as a mediator, was controlled, supervisor nonverbal immediacy was still a significant predictor of employee motive of enjoyment. The effect of supervisor immediacy on employee enjoyment communication motive was partially mediated, or accounted for, by employee emotional experience. Complete results for the regression are shown in Table 2, and the mediating model shown in Figure 2.
Table 2. Hierarchical Regression on Subordinate Communication Motive of Enjoyment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>First Block</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Second Block</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal Immediacy</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Support</td>
<td>.47</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.45**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion Work</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.08*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Valence</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
R^2 \quad \text{Adjusted } R^2 \\
.22 \quad .22 \quad .49 \quad .49
\]

\[
\Delta R^2 \\
.22 \quad .28
\]

\[
F \quad 165.46 \quad 145.51
\]

Note. An * indicates a unique significant predictor variable at \(p < .05\), ** \(p < .01\) (N =603)
The second regression model (employing the communication motive of *affection* as the dependent variable) demonstrated that supervisor nonverbal immediacy accounted for 17.8% of variance in the dependent variable: $\textit{adjusted } R^2 = .18$, $F(1, 601) = 130.48$, $p < .001$. Thus, the condition of $X_1$ predicts $Y$ was met. In the second step, after statistically controlling for supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employees’ emotional experience resulted in a significant change, accounting for an additional 27.3% of the variance: $\Delta F (3, 598) = 99.02$, $p < .001$. The predictive relationship between $X_2$ and $Y$, was established when $X_1$ was controlled, which satisfied the third condition. Analysis of regression coefficients indicated that emotional support, $\beta = .56$, $t = 11.32$, $p < .001$, emotion work, $\beta = .10$, $t = 2.49$, $p < .05$, and emotional valence, $\beta = .13$, $t = 2.86$, $p < .01$, were all significant predictors of the affection motive. Finally, after the three areas of emotional experience were added in the model, the beta coefficients dropped from .42 to .12, but were still significant, $p < .01$. This leads to the same conclusion as the previous...
regression model. The effect of supervisor immediacy on employee affection communication motive was partially mediated by employees’ emotional experience. See Table 3 for complete results, and Figure 3 for the mediating model.

Table 3. Hierarchical Regression on Subordinate Communication Motive of Affection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>First Block</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Second Block</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE B$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE B$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal Immediacy</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.17**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Support</td>
<td></td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.56**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion Work</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Valence</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2$ .18          .45

adjusted $R^2$ .18          .45

$\Delta R^2$ .18          .27

$F$ 130.48          122.85

*Note. An * indicates a unique significant predictor variable at $p < .05$, **$p < .01$ (N =603)
The third regression model (employing the communication motive of inclusion as the dependent variable) revealed that supervisor nonverbal immediacy accounted for 8.6% of the variance in the dependent variable: \( \text{adjusted } R^2 = .09, F(1, 595) = 56.30, p < .001 \). Thus, the condition of \( X_1 \) predicts \( Y \) was met. In the second step, after supervisor nonverbal immediacy was statistically controlled for, employees’ overall emotional experience resulted in a significant change, accounting for an additional 18.2% of the variance: \( \Delta F(3, 592) = 49.22, p < .001 \). The third condition was met because \( X_2 \) predicted \( Y \) when \( X_1 \) was controlled. Analysis of the regression coefficients revealed that emotional support (\( \beta = .53, t = 9.23, p < .001 \)) was the only variable that significantly predicted the communication motive of inclusion. Finally, after the three areas of emotional experience were added in the model, a dramatic change occurred. The beta coefficients dropped from .29 to .04, \( p > .05 \). This indicated that, when emotional experience, as a mediator, was controlled, supervisor nonverbal immediacy no longer predicted employee
communication motive of inclusion. The effect of supervisor immediacy on employee 
inclusion communication motive was entirely mediated by employee emotional 
experience. As such, this was a fully mediated model. See Table 4 for the complete 
results.

Table 4. Hierarchical Regression on Subordinate Communication Motive of Inclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>First Block</th>
<th></th>
<th>Second Block</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE B</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonverbal Immediacy</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Support</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotion Work</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Valence</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ R^2 \quad 0.09 \quad 0.27 \]
\[ adjusted \, R^2 \quad 0.09 \quad 0.26 \]
\[ \Delta R^2 \quad 0.09 \quad 0.18 \]
\[ F \quad 56.30 \quad 54.41 \]

*Note. An * indicates a unique significant predictor variable at p < .05, ** p < .01 (N = 597)*
Since emotional support was the only significant mediating factor within the three areas of emotional experience, the regression for this model was re-run with emotion work and emotional valence removed from the model. The regression was conducted as follows: step one involved supervisor NI; step two involved perceived emotional support, and motive of inclusion served as the dependent variable. Emotional support positively predicted the motive of inclusion ($\beta = .49, t = 12.01, p < .001$). See Figure 4 for the full mediation model.

![Figure 4](image_url)

*Figure 4. Full Mediating Model of Supervisor Nonverbal Immediacy, Subordinate Emotional Experience, and Communication Motives of Inclusion*

The last two regressions, with the communication motives of escape and control serving as dependent variables, were not shown as significant mediating models, so are not reported here.

What deserves mention is that the preliminary analyses showed that demographic variables and personal traits (such as susceptibility to emotional contagion) were associated with the predictor and/or criterion variables. Specifically, supervisors’ biological sex influenced subordinates’ perceptions of received nonverbal immediacy; subordinate emotional contagion and escape motive was associated with subordinates’ biological sex; and susceptibility to emotional contagion differed across three organizational positions (executive, manager, and general staff). These variables should
be controlled in the regression model to guarantee the effect of the predictor and mediating variables. The previous regression models did not include these variables for clarity and parsimony purposes. In order to examine whether demographic and personal traits variables influence the models, a second round of regression tests was completed. The second round of tests was conducted through the sequential block entry with the three demographic variables (biological sex of subordinate, biological sex of supervisor, and organizational position) in the first block, contagion in the second block, and the predictor and mediator variables in the third and fourth block. However, the results from the second round did not lead to a dramatic change in the models proposed earlier except the slight change of the numbers. Since the demographic factors and personal traits in this study did not influence the model, the following discussion will focus on the model results from the first round of regression tests.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to report the primary findings of the current dissertation. The research questions proposed in chapter two were answered and the mediating model was tested through the procedure introduced by Baron and Kenny (1986), and refined by Warner (2008). Tests were conducted for two rounds, without and with the demographic variables and employee susceptibility to emotional contagion as control variables. Both tests resulted in the same mediating models. The next chapter discusses the findings and the implications, as well as limitation and direction for future research.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Emotions pervade social interactions. The history of the study of emotions can be traced back to the 19th century (e.g., Darwin, 1872); and the study of emotions within the context of the workplace began approximately 30 years ago (Hearn, 2008; Miller, 2008). For a long time, the workplace has been positioned as a professional and rational setting where emotions are discouraged. The expression of, as well as the influence of employee emotions has been absent as a topic in most organizational literature because the organizational socialization processes typically discourage the expression of unmanaged emotions (Musson & Marsh, 2008). As such, the workplace is a site of powerful constraints on how emotions are experienced and displayed (Pugh, 2002). However, scholars gradually realized that the interwoven nature of emotion and reason makes it impossible to separate the two concepts:

“emotion” and “cognition” are intrinsically related, because cognition already presupposes emotion—what is cognitive depends on emotional preferences—and emotion presupposes cognition—our emotions require cognitive mechanisms to be processed and expressed. (Zembylas, 2005, p. 93)

For this reason, all interpersonal relationships, including organizational relationships, have the potential for emotion-guided elements within the interactions that occur. Despite the “professional” culture advocated for a workplace, people who are involved in organizations experience various feelings based on their verbal and nonverbal communication with other organizational members. Feelings of satisfaction, frustration, happiness, or disappointment influence peoples’ behavior, and the wellbeing of both the
individual members of the organization and the organization as a whole. A better understanding of emotion and communication in the workplace is, therefore, of value. As discussed in chapter two, Miller et al. (2007) categorized emotion in the workplace into five types: emotional labor, emotional work, emotion with work, emotion at work, and emotion towards work. To date, most literature concerning workplace emotion has focused attention on emotional labor, i.e., the efforts of workers who perform emotionally demanding tasks and need to display (or hide/disguise) emotions in a certain way for professional purposes (Hochschild, 1983). The current dissertation focuses attention on the third type of workplace emotion: emotion with work. This research examines emotions and communication behaviors between supervisors and employees. This area has been unfairly neglected in the past. Waldron (2012) argued, based on the narratives he studied concerning workplace emotion, that the supervisor and co-worker relationship, rather than the task itself, is the most common source of intense feelings (see, also, Waldron & Krone, 1991). Employee emotions arising from daily interactions with supervisors demonstrate that emotions are not simply personal and psychological but “are intensely social in form, content, [and] experience” (Hearn, 2008, p. 185). Emotional communication between employees and supervisors plays a powerful role in building and maintaining their relationships, as well as their overall experience in the workplace (Waldron, 2012). Therefore, supervisor-subordinate relationships should be considered an important context of emotional interaction, despite the traditional emphasis on reason and professionalism.
The previous section reviewed the rationale for the current study. What follows outlines the findings of this dissertation and discusses the significance of those findings in relationship to prior research and theories. This discussion also addresses the theoretical and practical implications of this research for organizations, followed by the limitations and directions for future research.

Discussion of Findings

The primary purpose of this study was to develop a model that addresses employee emotional experience in the workplace as influenced by supervisor nonverbal immediacy and employee motives for communicating with their supervisor. The results support three models illustrating these relationships. Before the general models were constructed, several separate correlations were computed to explore the relationships among the variables that built the fundamental structure for the models. These relationships, which answered the three research questions that were posed, will be discussed thoroughly in the following section.

**Supervisor Nonverbal Immediacy and Employee Emotional Experience**

The results relevant to the first research question revealed that supervisors who are perceived as more nonverbally immediate are more likely to influence their subordinates’ emotional experience. More specifically, the results indicate that, when a supervisor is perceived as nonverbally immediate, subordinates tend to report: 1) they (the subordinates) generally evaluate their experiences with both their supervisor and their job as positive and satisfactory; 2) they (the subordinates) do not need to engage in intense emotion work during their interactions with their supervisor; and 3) their
supervisor is more emotionally supportive when they (the subordinates) need help. These findings, along with previous literature concerning workplace nonverbal behavior, indicate how supervisor nonverbal immediacy contributes to subordinates’ perceptions of their supervisor, supervisor-subordinate relationships, and overall experience in the workplace.

Part of communication behavior, as argued by scholars, is a recognition and interpretation of the nonverbal cues associated with different feelings (Burgoon & Le Poire, 1999; Planalp, 1999; Waldron, 2012). This study reflects that sentiment through explaining that employees interpret the meaning of organizational interactions based, at least in part, on their supervisor’s nonverbal messages, and their understanding of those nonverbal messages influences their emotional experience of the workplace as well as their experience of the supervisor-subordinate relationship. Employee emotional experience is reflected in three areas in the current study. The first area is that of emotional valence, or the general positive or negative evaluations of the feelings being experienced. A supervisor’s friendly nonverbal behaviors, such as touching an employee’s shoulder while talking, a relaxed body position, and smiling, can directly influence an employee’s interpretation of his/her overall experience in the workplace as positive. This finding is consistent with previous studies. Specifically, employee work enjoyment and liking for his/her supervisor are affected by supervisor immediacy (Richmond & McCroskey, 2000a; Teven, 2007). Thus, for most subordinates, if not all, having a supervisor who displays affinity behaviors usually results in desirable outcomes (Goodboy & McCroskey, 2008). Another interesting point worth mentioning is that the
quality of nonverbal immediacy demonstrated by the supervisor is affected by whether that nonverbal immediacy is perceived as being sincere:

The instinctual response to smiling behavior is to interpret it as a sign of liking, cooperation, or even safety. However, over time employees come to recognize the leader’s pattern of nonverbal behavior as a kind of façade, a way to avoid conflict while leaving everyone with a pleasant feeling. Employees learn to question their instinctual emotional responses to nonverbal cues and to make social judgments about [those cues]. (Waldron, 2012, p.43)

This is not surprising because people in most interpersonal contexts would expect a sincere positive emotion being addressed toward them. However, no study was found that addressed whether and how much credibility is reduced when employees believe the immediacy communicated by their supervisor is insincere. One possibility would be that subordinates are discouraged by what they believe is false nonverbal immediacy because they might view the immediacy as insincere or routine. Yet, it is also possible that they still appreciate their supervisor’s nonverbal display of immediacy because at least the supervisor is attempting to convey attentiveness and presence. Empirical research is needed to provide evidence concerning this issue.

The second area of employee emotional experience in relation to supervisor nonverbal immediacy is the amount of emotion work involved in the supervisor-subordinate interaction. The relevant research reported in this dissertation expands prior literature in at least two ways. First, the data echo the recommendation from Kramer and Hess (2002) that studies of emotion in the workplace should go beyond emotional labor
and expand to a wider range of occupations. Along with the growing attention devoted to emotions and communication in organizations, there has been a great deal of interest in emotionally demanding jobs and how workers who occupy such jobs experience and manage their emotions. Usually found under the label “emotional labor,” studies of how employees respond to and/or negotiate emotionally demanding interactions have been the focus of research concerning organizational emotions for decades. This is probably due to the large amount of emotion work engaged in during worker-client interactions—the efforts of employees to manipulate, manage, and display “appropriate” feelings as defined by the product and the need to satisfy customers (Hochschild, 1983). However, we cannot deny the existence and function of emotion work in daily supervisor-subordinate interactions. Employees attempt to maintain relationships with their managers and create positive impressions. Although usually not the kind of highly emotionally charged contexts that have traditionally captured the attention of researchers interested in emotional labor, supervisor-subordinate interactions are, in general, not emotion free. An employee’s unpracticed or uncontrolled display of “inappropriate” emotions, such as anger, unhappiness, or tiredness, when communicating with a supervisor is not only a sign of lack of normal organizational socialization, but extremely unprofessional and unacceptable in the workplace. As Waldron (2012) argued, workplace relationships are “emotionally unique” (p. 104). The first reason for this uniqueness is the risk involved—employee expression of emotion is directly related to their income, promotions, and other outcomes in the organization. Power dynamics between supervisor
and subordinates demand that employees carefully edit their emotions to avoid undesirable results.

The second way the findings of this research expand literature is the relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy and employee involvement in emotion work. Although the effort in emotion work is a social routine or even mandatory in some workplaces, that effort is not cost free. Emotion work usually involves a discrepancy between an inner feeling and the expressed feeling, thus causing negative psychological effects, such as exhaustion and, perhaps, the intention to leave (e.g., Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Zapf, 2002; Zhang & Zhu, 2008). For most employees, some level of emotional regulation when interacting with supervisors is necessary, but too much or too frequent emotion work could add stress to their interactions. Imagine an employee who always has to fake his/her real emotions when talking with his/her supervisor. This extra effort and energy would be stressful and lead to burnout. In the current study, supervisor nonverbal immediacy was found to alleviate employee emotion work. Subtle emotionally expressive cues from a supervisor, such as leaning forward, smiling, maintaining direct eye contact, and speaking in a lively vocal tone, could contribute to a natural and comfortable supervisor-subordinate interaction.

The last area of employee emotional experience is that of the emotional support received from a supervisor. As a type of social support, emotional support from supervisors in the workplace is not yet well explored. For employees suffering from workplace stress, supervisors are typically considered a source of information and advice (informational support), while families and friends are the “shoulder(s) to cry on”
(emotional support) (Miller, 2009, p. 212). However, employees not only talk with their supervisors about work-related issues, but also about personal and social matters (Amason, Allen, & Holms, 1999). Emotional support from the supervisor, which includes expressing concerns and affect toward a distressed individual, as well as affirming other’s behavior, has a great value. Employees perceive and appreciate support from their supervisors, even if that support exists in the form of very minor behaviors, such as caring about someone’s health, noting a job well done, or just asking how the employee is doing (Amason et al., 1999). A simple concern or encouragement from the supervisor can bolster a subordinate’s self-esteem (Miller, Zook, & Ellis, 1989), enhance worker health (Allen, Amason, & Holmes, 1998), improve supervisor-subordinate relationship satisfaction (Jia & Shoham, 2012), and more effectively reduce burnout than the comforting messages received from family and friends (Brown, Prashanthan, & Abbott, 2003).

Although some studies have touched on the topic of workplace emotional support, no studies were found that establish a direct relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy and employee perception of emotional support received from their supervisor. The current study fills this gap and shows that a supervisor who is more nonverbally immediate will be perceived as better at offering emotional support to his/her employees. This is probably because nonverbal cues are the primary means of delivering emotions (Mehrabian, 1981). Employees who receive smiles, affirming tones, and encouraging gestures from a supervisor would be likely to perceive the messages and the supervisor as emotionally supportive. When communicating with these nonverbally immediate
supervisors, subordinates should feel free to discuss work-related and personal issues, and should receive more responsive feedback from their supervisor. As long as the personal issues are controlled in an appropriate manner, this emotional communication in the workplace could be beneficial to a healthy supervisor-subordinate relationship and employee emotional wellbeing.

Finally, although this study focuses on nonverbal immediacy and its influence on the emotions, we should also realize that nonverbal cues are only part of the immediacy behaviors. Verbal immediacy, or the content of a message, should not be separated from the nonverbal part of communication behaviors because they function altogether to influence an individual’s emotions and subsequent actions (Jones & Guerrero, 2006). For example, social support scholar Burleson studied verbal immediacy in the form of the person centeredness of supportive communication (for review, see Burleson, 2009). Future study could examine both verbal and nonverbal immediacy at the same time and their effect on employees’ workplace experience.

Employee Susceptibility of Emotional Contagion and their Emotional Experience

The previous section discussed the relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy and the three dimensions of subordinates’ emotional experience. This dissertation also examined the role of employees’ susceptibility to emotional contagion, as proposed by the second research question. The result found that subordinates’ emotional contagion positively related to emotion work and negatively related to emotional valence. Emotional contagion (EC) has been investigated as a process in which a person/group influences the emotion and behavior of another (Schoenewolf, 1990).
Compelling evidence from prior research in social psychology, leadership, and management points to the existence of this phenomenon among group members (Barsade, 2002; George & Brief, 1992), between employees and customers (Barger & Grandey, 2006), and between leaders and members (Bono & Ilies, 2006; Fredrickson, 2003). However, emotional contagion in communication studies, instead of being considered a process of influence, is usually examined as a personal trait. In other words, emotional contagion refers to how likely an individual is to be aroused and influenced by another’s emotions, known as susceptibility to emotional contagion (Hatfield et al., 1994). From Measure of Emotional Contagion (Dillard & Hunter, 1989), we can see that scholars have paid particular attention to the negative emotions being aroused, such as depression (e.g., I cannot continue to feel okay if people around me are depressed), upset (e.g., I don’t get upset just because a friend is acting upset—reverse coded), and nervousness (I become nervous if others around me seem to be nervous). This is probably because the effect brought about by contagion when negative affect is present is more salient and detrimental to organization practices. Therefore, susceptibility to emotional contagion in all communication research is usually equal to individual vulnerability to the negative emotions that are present.

Since this study was more interested in emotions and communication behaviors than the influence of personal traits, emotional contagion was not included in the model but only as a control variable. However, the correlation demonstrated that employee emotional contagion, along with supervisor nonverbal immediacy, did have an impact on employee emotional experience in the workplace. Looking further into the aspects of
emotional experience, emotional contagion of the employees was found to influence their emotion work, i.e., the more easily they were influenced by people and their environment, the more likely they were to hide and fake their true emotions when dealing with their supervisor. Too much effortful emotion work, as discussed in the previous section, is harmful to an employee’s emotional wellbeing. Effortful emotion work confirms that employee emotional contagion, revealing vulnerability to other’s emotions (usually negative emotions) and a lack of control of personal emotions, is not a positive characteristic in the workplace. Maslach (1982) pointed out that, if a person’s feelings are easily aroused but not easily controlled, he/she might be more likely to suffer from emotional exhaustion, which could result in negative outcomes as an emotion-work process. Prior research supports this claim, reporting that human service workers who are high on EC (emotional contagion) find it difficult to provide effective feedback to clients (Miller et al., 1995; Snyder, 2009); similarly, instructor high EC is associated with less satisfactory classroom experience on the part of students (Jia et al., 2011). Thus, the findings in the current study provide additional evidence in support of the negative effect of susceptibility to emotional contagion on employees. For this reason, we can conclude that employees need their own agency to decide the quality of their emotional experience in the workplace, rather than totally relying on a supervisor’s behaviors. This agency includes employee willingness and ability to learn how to increase their tolerance and flexibility with respect to emotions, and how to manage and abandon negative emotions at work. For example, Tracy (2009) called for “emotionally savvy” employees, who are able to learn how to recalibrate their emotional involvement in work relationships and
tasks as a method of managing stress. Buzzanell and her colleagues (Buzzanell, Shenoy, Remke, & Lucas, 2009) also described some employees as resilient followers due to their optimistic and emotionally flexible traits. These employees are more likely to take actions that might produce positive emotions, like admiration, hope, and satisfaction, and abandon harmful emotions such as despair (Buzzanell et al., 2009). Overall, increasing employees’ capability of emotion management, coupled with appropriate supervisor behavior, should contribute to employee emotional wellbeing in the workplace.

**Employee Emotional Experience and Communication Motives**

The third research question sought to explore the relationship between employees’ three dimensions of emotional experience and their motives for communicating with their supervisor. Among the five types of communication motives, escape and control motives were not significantly related to any area of emotional experience on the part of the employees. The fact that employees do not talk to their supervisor for escape reasons might be explained by the unique culture of the workplace. Unlike interpersonal relationships, such as friends and family members who are more casual and informal, people in formal organizations are usually more cautious about what they should say to their supervisors. People could talk to their friends and family members just because they feel bored or have nothing else to do. Conversations in this situation are usually random chats without substantive content. However in the workplace, talking to escape usually refers to an employee talking about non-work related issues because he/she does not want to focus on work. This situation might rarely occur in the workplace because employees would believe it inappropriate to randomly “chat” with their supervisor when at work as
this might leave the impression that they have nothing to do. Employees might feel bored or seek to do something else as a temporary “escape” from their current task, but talking to their supervisor about random topics to escape current work is typically not a wise decision.

In addition, the findings of this research reveal that the communication motive of control is somewhat unlikely to guide the communication of subordinates when they talk to supervisors. Talking for the purpose of control usually involves power. As Schutz (1966) argued, control is usually transmitted by “behavior involving influence, leadership, power, coercion, authority, accomplishment, intellectual superiority, high achievement, and independence” (p. 23). (Control is involved in the theory about interpersonal needs, which will be discussed more specifically in the paragraph that follows.) From this point of view, the motive of control is more likely to exist in the downward communication that occurs, like parents to children, and supervisors to subordinates rather than in the opposite direction. Although this situation is affected by organizational culture (e.g., imagine an organization that encourages open discussion and decentralized communication) and the positions of the individuals, generally speaking, due to a lower status in the power dynamic, employees rarely communicate with their supervisor for control purposes. However, at least two exceptions are possible.

First, according to Schutz (1966), peoples’ need for power is mutual; that is, when people express the desire for power to influence others, they might simultaneously want to be controlled in a similar fashion. For a supervisor, having others control him/her, or having responsibilities taken away can emerge from (and be communicated to a
subordinate through) a willingness to comply and/or a submissive personality. Second, the need for power also includes rebellion and resistance (Schutz, 1966). As suggested, situations occur when a subordinate might want to challenge the established authority structure by not following the rules. Organizational communication researchers have examined employees’ expressions of dissent and resistance (Gosset & Kilker, 2006; Kassing, 2008; Kassing & Armstrong, 2002) as mechanisms for communicating their power in the face of authority. Theoretically, employees have the potential to communicate to their supervisor for control purposes; however, in the current research project, this motive for communicating was not mentioned by respondents. Future research might explore this issue further by addressing, in part, clarification of the circumstances in which subordinates talk to supervisors for control reasons.

The other three types of communication motives—enjoyment, affection, and inclusion—were all found to be positively related to received emotional support and emotional valence, but negatively related to emotion work. That is, especially when employees perceive a supervisor as providing emotional support, then the employees will talk to that supervisor for pleasure, to express concerns, and to achieve a sense of belonging. Under these circumstances, subordinates express general satisfaction with their emotional experiences at work. Conversely, when subordinates feel that dialogues with their supervisor are highly emotionally demanding, communicating for positive purposes is not likely to happen. A possible way to understand these findings might be through reference to Schutz’s (1958, 1966) Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO), which explicates interpersonal needs in social interactions.
According to the first postulate of the theory, individuals have certain interpersonal needs (in contradiction to biological needs, such as air), and these needs can be attained only through satisfactory relationships with others. Schutz (1966) suggested:

Interpersonal need is a requirement to establish a satisfactory relation between the individual and his [sic] human environment… Nonfulfillment of an interpersonal need leads to mental illness… (and) unsatisfactory personal relations lead directly to difficulties associated with emotional illness. (p. 16)

This statement emphasizes the importance of communication behaviors in fulfilling social needs for individuals, and essentially explains the interpersonal motives of communication. The reason why we talk to others is largely dependent on what kind of needs we want to achieve. Schutz (1966) identified three interpersonal needs— inclusion, control, and affection. The control motive was touched on earlier, so the following discussion focuses on how the needs of inclusion and affection can help us understand employees’ communication motives in relation to their emotional experiences.

The current study indicates that, when supervisors build a comfortable working environment for their employees (high emotional support, high valence, and low emotion work), employees are more motivated to talk so as to achieve inclusion, affection, and enjoyment. With regard to inclusion, employees find their conversations with their supervisor can achieve satisfactory feelings, like attention, acknowledgement, and recognition. They are willing to participate in a dialogue because they believe that their supervisor is an understanding person and is mutually interested in that interaction. Similarly, the motive of affection is usually embodied in situations involving showing
and attaining emotional closeness and intimacy with another (in this case, a supervisor). Finally, although the motive of enjoyment (pleasure and relaxation) is not included in Schutz’s theory of interpersonal needs, that motive expands employees’ basic needs even further to obtain a happy, entertaining, and relaxing experience. FIRO provides a plausible explanation for this research finding by claiming that employees are motivated to attain inclusion, affection, and enjoyment needs through their satisfactory emotional experiences in the workplace.

**Synthesis: Models of Workplace Emotion and Communication**

The previous discussion builds a foundation for constructing models through a detailed examination of the relationships among the variables in this study. The last research question, which aimed at synthesizing these relationships into a whole process, established the models of workplace emotion and communication behaviors between supervisor and subordinates. In line with Mehrabian’s (1981) theory of nonverbal behavior and Emotional Response Theory in the classroom (Mottet et al., 2006), three mediating models were built in this study. Since the primary relationships in the models were discussed earlier, I will not repeat that discussion at this point. Instead, the following section will first provide a brief summary of these models, followed by a general synthesis of the guiding theories and literature.

The first model demonstrated that employee emotional experience partially mediates the relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy and employee communication motive of enjoyment. Supervisor NI should positively predict subordinates’ perceptions of emotional support and emotional valence. In turn,
subordinates’ perceptions of emotional support and emotional valence contribute positively to the motive of enjoyment. Additionally, supervisor NI negatively predicts employee emotion work, which finally impedes the communication motive of enjoyment. That is, a supervisor who is perceived as more nonverbally immediate is more likely to influence a subordinate’s emotional experience. More specifically, when subordinates perceive that their supervisor is more emotionally supportive, they (the subordinates) are less effortful when it comes to emotional regulation during subordinate-supervisor conversations, and will generally evaluate those communicative experiences as positive.

Two areas of emotional experience—received emotional support and emotional valence—lead to the communication motive of enjoyment. That is, employees talk to their supervisor because they anticipate that the resultant conversation will be fun, pleasant, and relaxed. Conversely, if subordinates anticipate that a dialogue with their supervisor will be emotionally intense, they will not be likely to talk with that supervisor if that conversation can be avoided. Furthermore, supervisor nonverbal immediacy can contribute directly to a subordinate’s motive of enjoyment. This shows that a nonverbally immediate supervisor would directly influence subordinates’ pursuit of social needs of enjoyment and happiness.

The second model showed that subordinates’ workplace emotion partially mediates the relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy and subordinates communication motive of affection. Supervisor NI positively predicts subordinates’ perceptions of emotional support and emotional valence, and negatively predicts their emotion work, all of which enhance their motive of affection. Compared with the
enjoyment motive, the affection motive, for a subordinate, is more strongly influenced by received emotional support from a supervisor. Employees choose to talk to a supervisor because of concerns and for emotional closeness and because they believe that the supervisor is good at providing comforting messages and creating a positive environment. Interestingly, subordinate emotion work was found to positively lead to the communication motive of affection. This is somewhat unexpected because, in a normal situation we would assume that, when an individual feels he/she should conceal “real” (i.e., “true”) emotions and perform in a certain manner, logically it should be difficult to talk with that other about personal problems (even if work related) or for encouragement purposes. However, the current study found that subordinates communicate with their supervisor for affection reasons even if they engage in emotion work during that interaction. One possible explanation is that subordinates are extending greater effort to address their emotional needs when they engage in high emotion work in order to relieve the intensity of their dialogue with their supervisor. Even if an employee does not feel totally at ease and comfortable when talking with a supervisor, that employee might still strive to achieve a sense of emotional comfort and to be at ease in the situation. Future research should investigate this issue further to explore other possible explanations. Finally, supervisor nonverbal immediacy has a positive effect on subordinate communication motive of affection. With a function of expressing positive emotions, nonverbal immediacy from supervisors plays an important role in influencing employees’ social needs of concern and encouragement.
In the last regression model, supervisor nonverbal immediacy was fully mediated by employees’ received emotional support on the path to the communication motive of inclusion. Supervisor NI positively predicts subordinates’ perception of emotional support and, in turn, increases, their inclusion motives. This full mediation pointed towards the important function of emotional support from a supervisor as a bridge between supervisor nonverbal immediacy and subordinate inclusion needs for belonging and prominence.

The core of this study is founded on Mehrabian’s (1981) study of nonverbal behaviors and emotions. As Mehrabian suggested, all communication behaviors involve symbols and referents, that is, nonverbal cues (implicit messages in his words) and emotional states, respectively. He also illustrated the potential linkages among a person’s received implicit messages, emotions, and behavioral tendencies. In essence, individuals pursue things they like and avoid things they do not like. These “liking” or “disliking” feelings/emotions are usually aroused by the nonverbal cues received and interpreted from others. Thus, the general linkage of nonverbal communication, emotions, and subsequent behaviors is established. Based on these arguments from Mehrabian and literature concerning emotional responses in diverse contexts (e.g., Biggers & Masterson, 1983; Russell & Mehrabian, 1974), instructional communication scholars (Moette et al., 2006) developed the Emotional Response Theory (ERT). ERT posits that teacher immediacy cues can trigger students’ emotional responses and, in turn, enhance their (the students’) approach behaviors toward that teacher. However, prior research has not explored how this process works in other relationships or situations. The three models
generated in the current study add empirical data to the literature, showing the relationships among nonverbal communication, emotions, and subsequent communication behaviors in the workplace. According to Scherer’s series of articles (e.g., 1994, 2007) about emotion theories developed in psychology, one’s emotion should include several components. The emotion not only involves the component of subject feelings, but also the potential action or behavior readiness/ tendencies. The componental nature of emotion also explains peoples’ motives of communicating with the other that are involved with their feelings and experiences. Taken together, the results suggest that the power of supervisor nonverbal immediacy bears a strong influence on subordinate emotional experience, which motivates subordinates to fulfill their needs of inclusion, affection, and enjoyment through talking with their supervisor.

*Supervisor and Subordinate Biological Sex, and Positions in the Organization*

Although not included in the formal model or as the focus of this study, some demographic variables, such as biological sex and position in the organization, were also examined in the data analysis. It has been demonstrated in previous studies that female supervisors are more nonverbally immediate than male supervisors (Madlock, 2006). The result in the current study is consistent with that literature. Furthermore, the vulnerability of emotional contagion was tested based on biological sex. Not surprisingly, more so than male subordinates, female subordinates are easily emotionally influenced by others.

Emotions are historically believed gendered in nature and associated with women (Musson & Marsh, 2008). As a common stereotype, females are more “emotional” than males, and are better at “doing emotion” (Musson & Marsh, 2008; Pugh, 2002). On the
one hand, females are more susceptible to other emotions for at least two reasons. First, compared with males, they are more attentive to others’ emotional expressions. Second, they are better at accurately interpreting others’ nonverbal cues of emotion (Hatfield et al., 1994). On the other hand, females are more emotionally expressive than males. Literature about nonverbal behaviors and gender has consistently provided evidence that females express more emotions through nonverbal cues, including smiles and laughs, eye contact, touching, and body movement (Hall, 1984; Hatfield et al., 1994; LaFrance & Banaji, 1992). However, some scholars argue that at least some feminine traits have been inhibited when a woman occupies a management position:

… management is a “masculine” activity that takes place in a male dominated environment, and requires women to construct themselves in line with masculine stereotypes to be successful. (Musson & Marsh, 2008, p. 123)

The findings concerning nonverbal immediacy in the current study revealed female supervisors as doing “better” emotion jobs, i.e., they were good at providing nonverbal immediacy, which is a major means of emotion delivery. Therefore, even in the workplace, female leaders do not entirely follow the “masculine” stereotypes of management but still maintain some “feminine” styles. This could be a “real” reflection of their nature of being more emotionally expressive. Another possibility is that women supervisors intentionally utilize this “soft” style of management to achieve their goals.

Despite the gender differences with respect to nonverbal immediacy and vulnerability to emotional contagion, employee emotional experience in the workplace was not found to be different. In the current study, the three areas of employee emotional
experience at work—received emotional support, engaged emotion work, and emotional valence—did not differ significantly for men or women. This finding indicates that, in general, biological sex is not a significant factor in deciding a person’s feelings. This echoes previous research demonstrating that males and females do not differ from each other in terms of emotional experience (LaFrance & Banaji, 1992). Therefore, it is the supervisor’s behavior, such as nonverbal immediacy, rather than the biological sex of the subordinates, that influences subordinates’ feelings in the workplace.

Besides gender, a person’s position in the organizations was also examined in the current study in an effort to determine whether any emotion and/or communication variables differed based on organizational status. The positions were categorized into three levels: general staff, managers, and executives. General staff reported a higher susceptibility to emotional contagion than executives, that is, lower workers are more likely to suffer from contagion of negative affect. Conversely, as the top management in an organization, the executives were not likely to feel and/or display their vulnerability to any negative emotions around them (at least, they do not believe that they do). This finding can be explained by leadership and management literature concerning peoples’ expectations for a successful leader. Fredrickson (2003) suggested that positive emotions expressed by leaders are especially influential to their members due to their (the leaders’) position in the power hierarchy. Additionally, the passion of a leader can be transferred to employees (Cardon, 2008). Bono and Ilies (2006) also suggested that leaders’ positive emotions are contagious, affecting employees’ moods, and positive emotions are a result of leader charisma. Taken together, these findings indicate that employees are very likely,
or willing, to be influenced by their leader’s positive emotions. The capability of expressing these positive emotions is believed to be an important trait for being a successful leader. For the same reason, if a leader fails to be a powerful sender of positive emotions but, instead, is easily frustrated, sad, upset, and lacks control of these negative emotions, this could bring detrimental impact on the employees’ mood and performance. The contagion of negative affect would be considered as weakness and a lack of charisma, which is not acceptable for an organization’s leader. The executives in this study showed significantly lower levels of contagion of negative emotions than did the general staff, showing leaders’ awareness of employees’ expectations as to their (supervisors) leadership style.

Revised Interpersonal Communication Scale

A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted before all the tests and yielded different numbers of components for the communication motive scale. As indicated in the literature review and method chapter, the original ICM scale (Rubin et al., 1988) expands Schutz’s (1966) three basic needs and includes six components showing the six primary types of communication motives in interpersonal interaction: pleasure, affection, inclusion, escape, relaxation, and control. The current study found five components fitting Kaiser’s rule of an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. More specifically, all the pleasure items (item 1-8) and relaxation items (item 22-25) were loaded into one factor. Considering the characteristics of pleasure and relaxation, which both involve feelings of happiness and being at ease, this factor was labeled “motive of enjoyment” in this study. Interestingly, the same situation was reported by Step and Finucane (2002)
who also combined pleasure and relaxation motives to form a new factor they labeled “enjoyment.”

Re-categorization of pre-existing scales is not new in research. Scholars sometimes conduct a PCA test to investigate whether a current scale fits a different research context. For the Interpersonal Communication Motive (ICM) scale, different versions have been examined and used in several empirical studies. Besides the 18-item short form (Rubin, Palmgreen, & Sypher, 1988), accumulating evidence suggests that individual motives do not always load as expected with the original six-factor solution. For example, in Hosman’s (1991) research, the factor analysis extracted five factors instead of six, combining pleasure and affection into one subscale. Barbato and Perse (1992) found a new motive—comfort—among elders, with this factor replacing the original inclusion and relaxation motives. Rubin and Rubin (1992) removed the relaxation factor altogether from the scale because the canonical factor was not significant. Some recent studies provide more support for the necessity of re-developing the ICM scale. When relating motive to message design logic, Hullman (2004) added two new elements: information-seeking and social ritual, expanding the scale into eight factors. He also categorized control, affection, inclusion, and information seeking into instrumental motives, whereas pleasure, escape, relaxation, and social ritual were labeled as ritualistic motives. Another newly developed ICM scale was used to examine communication among siblings (Fowler, 2009). The final scale included five factors: comfort (center on the peacefulness and happiness), control/escape, intimacy, (mainly involves affection, maintenance, and pleasure), obligation (the sense of responsibility for
siblings to talk with each other), and mutuality (motives to achieve mutual goals). As shown, the pre-existing scales, despite of their validity in the original literature, are flexible and open to change in different contexts.

Implications

As discussed in this chapter, this dissertation has several contributions. In the following section, both theoretical and practical implications will be addressed.

Theoretical Implications

Emotions evolve in the presence of social interaction (Dillard, 1998). In the workplace, employees’ daily interactions with their supervisor can evoke various emotional states, and these emotional experiences guide employees’ subsequent communication behavior. The current dissertation contributes to scholarly dialogues in the following ways: 1) it is the first to explore different aspects of employees’ emotional experience as a whole (both positive and negative) in the context of interactions with their supervisor; 2) it provides empirical evidence supporting Mehrabian’s (1981) arguments concerning nonverbal behaviors and emotions in the workplace; and, 3) it expands Emotional Response Theory (ERT) into organization settings, suggesting that supervisor nonverbal behavior affects subordinates’ emotions and, in turn, their (the subordinates’) motives for communicating with their supervisor. The following section will address each of these points.

The first theoretical implication presented in this study addresses a wide spectrum of employee emotional experience in the workplace. Since communication scholars began devoting attention to emotion and the workplace, research in this area has
blossomed. Unfortunately, the decades of research in this arena have not yielded a synthesized view of the emotional experience of employees, but only investigated emotion management (i.e., facework) or specific types of emotions.

The first of these lines of prior research has focused on emotional labor: how “frontline” workers regulate and display their private feelings when dealing with customers and the related effects on their health. Emotional labor research has examined different occupations, including restaurant workers (Seymour, 2000), cruise ship/flight attendants (Taylor & Tyler, 2000; Williams, 2003), call center workers (Lewig & Dollard, 2003; Mulholland, 2002), teachers (Ogbonna & Harris, 2004), and financial planners (Miller & Koesten, 2008). Additionally, the psychological effects brought about by engaging in emotion work have been identified as hurting employees’ emotional wellbeing. From Hochschild’s first publication on emotional labor in 1983, studies have flourished but have also reached a bottleneck. There is decreasing space and potential with respect to this topic, particularly the type of emotional labor that requires workers to show emotions in a positive fashion (e.g., flight attendant, bartender). Removing our narrow sight from emotional labor, this study asserts that workers in all occupations have to engage in a certain level of emotion work with other members in the organization. Emotion work, which can add stress and tension to employees’ lives, and impedes their communication motives of inclusion and enjoyment, represents a negative area of their experience in the workplace. Meanwhile, this study adds richness to Miller et al.’s (2007) typology for communicating emotions in the workplace. As indicated a couple of times in this study, emotional labor has been the most studied typology but “emotion with work”
has not received enough attention. The current study deals with employees’ emotions surrounding their relationship with their supervisor. This provides empirical data concerning the “emotion with work” typology.

The second mainstream touches on specific types of emotions that employees experience at work, particularly stress and burnout. Burnout, as a dark side of organizations, has received attention probably because of its direct effect on organizational outcomes. Employee mental wellness, low productivity, and turnover all relate to stress and burnout at work. However, this line of research shows just a tip of the iceberg since it only involves negative feelings. Interestingly, as indicated in a content analysis (Jia & Shoham, 2011), virtually no research efforts have focused on positive emotions in the workplace and their functions with respect to organizational outcomes. The reason that studies about positive emotions are underdeveloped is easy to understand. When people are calm or at least slightly satisfied, they are rarely willing to probe into the reasons for that calmness or positive experience; however, when serious problems emerge and people’s emotional wellbeing is threatened, they begin to be aware of the situation and explore solutions to prevent further loss.

Although the dark side of organizational life is always noticeable, positive workplace emotions should receive scholarly attention as well (Jia & Shoham, 2011). Instead of letting unexpected emotions occur and seeking solutions, people should pay more attention to why and how positive emotions can be shaped and maintained. The positive side of emotional experience, as examined in the current study when employees’ reported receiving emotional support, confirmed the influence of supervisor nonverbal
immediacy on employee wellbeing and their achievement of social needs. More specifically, these social needs, including the communication motives of inclusion, affection, and enjoyment, were led by this positive experience.

In conclusion, the current study sheds light on employee emotional experience as a whole by exploring both the negative (emotion work) and positive (received emotional support) sides. This study did not focus on a certain type of emotion, or explore emotions coming from one specific event; instead, this research suggests that the social interaction at work in general can bring about employee evaluations on various areas of their experience. This research also shows the possibility of adopting a scale developed in the study of emotion within the classroom (Titsworth et al., 2011), although there are limitations and needs for improvement (which will discussed in the limitation section).

The second and third implications arising from the current investigation concern the guiding theories in this study, including Mehrabian’s research and the Emotional Response Theory. Mehrabian’s series of studies on nonverbal (implicit) behaviors from the 1960s (e.g., Mehrabian, 1968; Mehrabian & Wiener, 1967; Mehrabian & Williams, 1969) established a foundation for later studies of nonverbal immediacy and peoples’ attitudes, emotions, and behaviors. Results from other studies have consistently provided evidence of this linkage. For example, Biggers and Rankis (1983) reported that emotion accounts for more than 40% of the variance in predicting people’s behavior. Mottet et al. (2006) developed ERT based on the assumption that human emotional response serves as a predictor of approaching and avoiding behaviors, and these emotional responses are usually generated by implicit messages from others. In the ERT model, they proposed
that teacher nonverbal and affinity seeking behaviors engender students’ emotional responses (pleasure, arousal, and dominance), and result in their approach or avoidance actions. These actions, which contribute to effective learning, point towards the value of studying emotion and behavior. This study provides evidence concerning Mehrabian’s theory and related emotional response theories, and expands ERT from the context of the classroom to that of the workplace. The models confirm that employee attitudes and emotional experiences are influenced by supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy and, in turn, influence their communication motives. The motives of inclusion, affection and enjoyment have been found to be related to supervisor-subordinate relationship satisfaction (Jia & Shoham, 2012), which directly enhance organizational practices.

Mehrabian (1981) also argued that all emotional states involve three independent dimensions: pleasure-displeasure, arousal-nonarousal, and dominance-submissiveness. These dimensions describe a continuum showing the nature of one’s emotional state, the intensity of that state, as well as the power and control of that emotion. The dimensional method indicates another possibility to measure employee emotional experience in the workplace, which involves their general evaluations of their emotions, the extent of these feelings, and how much control they own over these emotions. The current study did not utilize this dimensional method, but future studies might attempt to measure employee emotional experience in this way, exploring the nature of employee emotions in a detailed manner.
Practical Implications

An article from the American Institute of Stress reported that job stress is the major source of stress for American adults, with the trend over the past few decades escalating. According to the 2005 Stress Pulse Survey, although many factors could relate to the presence of stress, such as workload and work-life balance difficulties, 28% of work stress comes from “people issues” (Workplace Stress, nd). This statistic reveals the important role of supervisor-subordinate relationship in an employee’s emotional experience in the workplace. In light of the findings in the current study, two practical implications are proposed to both managers and subordinates: 1) Managers and supervisors should realize that the workplace can be a context for emotional exchange rather than just a “rational” setting. Paying attention to supervisors’ nonverbal behaviors could improve subordinates’ emotions at work. 2) Subordinates should be aware of their own susceptibility to emotional contagion, particularly their contagion to negative affect. Trying to make themselves less vulnerable could also lessen their negative emotional experience when dealing with supervisors.

First, for supervisors in organizations, it is time to change the mindset that emotions can be ignored and minimized if not abandoned in the workplace. Instead, emotion can largely contribute to employee performance. In order to improve subordinates’ emotional experience, supervisors should improve their nonverbal immediacy during the interactions. According to Richmond et al. (2003), the nonverbal immediacy scale has two different versions, which are “observer-report” and “self-report.” This distinction shows a possible discrepancy between one individual’s evaluation on his
or her own immediacy and the observer’s perception. In the current study, supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy is the *subordinate’s perceptions* of immediacy, rather than supervisor’s own report. It is true that the supervisor cannot control how employees think of his/her immediacy behaviors; however, the supervisor does have the ability to improve his/her immediacy with the *potential to influence* others’ perceptions. Therefore, the following suggestions are still worth the effort. The supervisor does not have to be an emotional person, but does need to pay attention to the subtle nonverbal cues, for example, avoiding monotones (paralanguage), smiling (kinesics), and touching shoulders of subordinates when talking (haptics), among others. Of course, supervisors should be aware of the appropriate way of using some nonverbal cues (e.g., touching behaviors), particularly between a male supervisor and a female subordinate, to avoid sexual harassment. This “soft” way of management might be beneficial to enhancing the supervisor-subordinate workplace relationship and organizational productivity as a whole. Thus, the executive training workshops could educate leaders on how to improve nonverbal behaviors.

Meanwhile, employees themselves have agency to improve their emotional experience. The findings of this study show that both supervisors’ nonverbal immediacy and employees’ own ability to control their emotions play roles in deciding the quality of the workplace experience. Tutorial lessons could focus on teaching employees to increase their tolerance and flexibility with respect to the communication of emotions. In addition, they should also attempt to learn how to maintain positive attitudes, like hoping, and moderate negative emotions, such as desperation, when at work. This type of
“emotionally savvy” worker (Tracy, 2009) is able to adapt to new environments and deal with different kinds of supervisors and co-workers.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Overall, this dissertation has sought to explore the relationship among supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience, and subordinate motives for communicating with a supervisor. Despite the contributions discussed earlier, this study is not without limitations. In the following section, three limitations are identified, as well as the guidelines for future research: 1) measurement tools for employee emotional experience and communication motives need to be redesigned for the workplace setting; 2) future research could investigate the evolution of different types of employee emotions and the intensity of these emotions for a deeper understanding of this issue; 3) future research could explore the gender issue in a more detailed manner, with the combination pairs of male-female supervisors-subordinates.

First, the scales used in the current study have the potential to be revised so as to better fit the context. As indicated earlier, the Interpersonal Communication Motive (ICM) instrument was revised slightly due to the results from the principle component analysis. According to the Kaiser’s rule of eigenvalues greater than 1.0, five components instead of the original six were identified, with pleasant and relaxation motives combined into the single motive of “enjoyment.”

Even though ICM is an important concept in the interpersonal communication processes, its influence on the organization is still understudied. To date, only a few studies can be found that have explored employees’ motives and other organizational
variables, such as satisfaction (Anderson & Martin, 1995a; Jia & Shoham, 2012) and
Machiavellianism (Walter et al., 2005). However, studies call for the development of a
specific scale for organization settings. When discussing workplace support, Miller (2009)
stated that supervisors are more likely to provide instrumental and informational support,
such as clarifying job expectations to reduce employees’ role ambiguity. In an empirical
study of supervisors’ social support and employees’ communication motives, authors
have also found that information support from supervisors was significantly correlated
with subordinates’ motives and their relationship satisfaction (Jia & Shoham, 2012). Thus,
for employees, asking for support, or seeking information to reduce uncertainty might be
another possible motive for communication in organizations. In addition, greetings
exchanged with co-workers and extended to supervisors might become more products of
ritual or habit than true expressions of interest/immediacy. As Waldron (2012) argues,
sometimes workplace conversations are not voluntary; instead, employees must talk with
supervisors and co-workers for politeness (and of course, for work-related issues) to
maintain the relationship. Therefore, talking for ritual or basic politeness, sometimes
without the intension for inclusion, may occur in the workplace. Furthermore, in an
instructional study, Martin, Myers, and Mottet (1999) addressed students’ motives for
communicating with instructors and demonstrated the possibility of sycophancy motives
(talk to flatter the teacher and make him/her happy), particularly when a power distance
exists. Consequently, the current interpersonal communication motives scale, which
includes basic human social needs like enjoyment, affection, inclusion, escape, and
control, does not cover some communication situations at work. Because of the
contextual nature of interpersonal communication and the uniqueness of the workplace, a specific scale of employees’ communication motives (toward supervisors) is worth developing.

Additionally, the current study employed a revised version of the Classroom Emotion Scale (Titsworth et al., 2010) to measure employee emotional experience in the workplace. The original scale was developed to address student perceptions of the emotional support received from a teacher, their (the students’) emotion work, and students’ general evaluation of their experience of the teacher and the class. Chapter two illustrated the rationale and possibility for adopting this scale from the instructional context to the organizational context. However, the adoption of this measurement was not without problems. The original study (Titsworth et al., 2010) found 14 items loading on three factors that, to some extent, met the standard 60/40 (primary loading above .60 and secondary loading below .40) criterion. The final scale included two items concerning emotional valence, four items concerning emotion work, and eight items addressing emotional support from the instructor. However, when adopting this scale into the current dissertation, the PCA resulted in a different factor loading. Three factors were found, but the combination of items did not satisfy the “emotional support,” “emotion work,” and “emotional valence” categories. Some of these items were intertwined. So far, an explanation for this situation has not been found. Since the reliability of the scale is fairly high in this study (alpha for emotional valence = .74, emotional support = .92, and emotion work = .80), the use of this scale is still reasonable. However, future research
should attempt to develop or refine the emotional experience scale to fit the organizational setting.

Second, a suggestion for future research is to explore the different types and the intensity of the emotional experiences of organizational members, particularly in a longitudinal manner. With an exploratory nature, the current study is a “snap shot” about emotional experience and communication in the workplace, rather than a “movie.” The longitudinal studies in the future could help people better understand the process of how emotions are experienced and changed during workplace interactions. Further, Mehrabian (1981) stated that all emotional states involve three independent dimensions of pleasure-displeasure, arousal-nonarousal, and dominance-submissiveness. This three-way dimension provides the possibility for examining employees’ workplace emotions in a more specific way. Future studies could adopt this three-dimension measurement to examine employees’ emotional situations when communicating with their supervisor, particularly before or after certain events or dialogues. Collectively, a more detailed and situational emotional experience could be evaluated, which will add richness to understanding workplace emotion and communication behaviors.

Finally, although demographic variables were not the focus of current study, it would be interesting and meaningful to explore the gender issue in a more detailed manner. The current dissertation only examined the difference between male and female supervisors with respect to perceived nonverbal immediacy, and between male and female subordinates as to their emotional contagion, emotional experience, and communication motives. However, the results might change if we explored the different
combinations of gender and position (male subordinates—male supervisors, male subordinates—female supervisors, female subordinates—male supervisors, and female subordinates—female supervisors). For example, when the supervisor’s biological sex is female, male and female subordinates might have different perceptions of and/or reactions to the supervisor’s communication of nonverbal immediacy. Potentially, a female subordinates’ emotional experience might differ from that of male subordinates when dealing with female supervisors. Future research could try to investigate the mentioned variables in this study based on more detailed combinations of gender and positions.

Conclusion

The emotional experience of employees guides their behaviors and influences their performance in the workplace. Prior studies of supervisor-subordinate communication in organizations have traditionally focused on outcome variables, such as employee job satisfaction, occupational commitment, and relational satisfaction, among other outcomes, but have rarely paid attention to employee emotional experience at work. The emotion in the workplace literature is mostly limited within a small area of emotional labor and lacks a systematic exploration of different dimensions of employee emotional experience, as well as their subsequent behavioral tendencies. The current dissertation fills this gap and found that both supervisor nonverbal immediacy and subordinate susceptibility to emotional contagion influence subordinate’s emotional experience in their organization. An employee’s emotional experience, in turn, guides his/her communication motives of inclusion, enjoyment, and affection with his/her supervisor.
This study sheds light on the emotional side of organizational life and adds richness to the current literature about emotion and communication in the workplace. Future studies could examine more specific types of emotions during supervisor-subordinate interactions. Additionally, trainers/consultants could design training workshops for supervisors concerning nonverbal immediacy and tutorials for subordinates on how to reduce their susceptibility to the contagion of negative affect.
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APPENDIX A: RECRUTING EMAILS

Part One: Email to Academic Network Users

Title: Emotion in the Workplace Research Need Your Help

Dear Crtnet/Emonet professors and graduate students:

Hope your Spring semester is going well! I am a fourth-year doctoral student in Communication Studies at Ohio University in the U.S., and currently working on my dissertation. I sincerely hope that I can get your help to complete an online survey for my study. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. I appreciate your willingness to participate!

This research is about employee emotional experience in the workplace. In particular, I am interested in the relationship between supervisor nonverbal immediacy and subordinate emotions at work, and also employee motives for communicating with his/her supervisor. To participate the study, you should be 1) more than 18 years old and 2) currently employed full-time. The online survey link is:

https://ohioscripps.us2.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_5heZa1hk9bs8ztz

I look forward to your participation in my research!

If you have any questions, please contact me at mj377209@ohio.edu. Again, thanks for your generous help and time.

Respectfully,

Moyi Jia

School of Communication Studies
Ohio University
Part Two: Email to Students

Title: Please Forward the Survey Link

Dear student,

Thank you for your time to listen to my description of my research in class today! As you know, this study is to explore employees’ emotional experience in the workplace, especially when they are interacting with their supervisor. Your help is very important to me!

Again, you are not doing the survey; instead, please forward this online survey link to two people you know who are 1) over 18 years old 2) is working full-time (such your parents, siblings, friends, etc). Please tell them that the whole study is online and should take them about 20-25 minutes to complete. The deadline for this survey is February 28, 2013. Here is the survey link:

https://ohioscripps.us2.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_5heZa1hk9bs8ztz

For the classes in which the instructor provides extra credit: at end of the online survey, the participant will be asked the question: “who forwarded the link to you?” Make sure your participants write down your name below the question. Your name will be shown so that you can get the extra credit. Participation is totally voluntary. You can sign up to complete another assignment with your instructor to get the same credit.

For the classes in which extra credit is not offered: I sincerely appreciate your help on my study! You and the participant’s generous help is extremely important to me. Thank you for your contribution to academic research!

Please let me know if you have any additional questions. Thank you in advance for your help in my research!

All the best,
Moyi Jia
Part Three: Email to OU Staff

Title: Emotion in the Workplace Research Need Your Help

Dear OU staff:

Hope your Spring semester is going well! I am a fourth-year doctoral student in Communication Studies at OU and currently working on my dissertation. Now I sincerely hope that I can get your help to complete an online survey for my study. The whole survey will take you approximately 20 minutes to finish. I would really appreciate your participation!

This research is about employees’ emotional experience in the workplace. In particular I am interested in the relationship between a supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy and a subordinate’s emotions at work. I am also interested in employee motives for communicating with his/her supervisor. To participate the study, you should be 1) more than 18 years old and 2) currently working full-time. The online survey link is:

https://ohioscripps.us2.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_5heZa1hk9bs8ztz

I look forward to your participation in my dissertation! This study is completely anonymous and voluntary, and there are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with this project.

If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact me at mj377209@ohio.edu. I truly appreciate your help.

Respectfully,

Moyi Jia

School of Communication Studies
Ohio University
APPENDIX B: EMAIL TO INSTRUCTORS ASKING FOR CLASS VISIT

Dear Dr.xx

I hope your Spring semester is going well. I am working on my dissertation advised by Dr. Hale about emotional experience in the workplace, particularly the correlation between supervisor’s nonverbal immediacy and subordinate’s emotions at work, and finally employees’ motive to talk with the supervisor. I really hope that I can invite your students to recruit participants in my study. What your students need to do is, they will be asked to forward an online survey link to any two people they know (parents, friends) who are currently employed full time as participants. If you are considering using some extra credits for your students’ help in COMS research, that would be wonderful!

I wonder if I could get 5 minutes to visit your class, briefly introducing my study and asking students for help. I am really looking forward to your students’ indirect participation in this project! There are no anticipated risks or discomforts associated with this project. The results of this research will help me better understand employees’ emotions at work, and the communication that occurs superior and subordinates

If you are interested, or if you have any questions regarding my dissertation, please let me know. I would really appreciate your help!

Respectfully,

Pony Jia
Title of Research: Emotion and Communication Behaviors in the Workplace: Supervisor Nonverbal Immediacy, Employee’s Emotional experience, and their Communication Motives

Researcher: Moyi Jia
You are being asked to participate in research. For you to be able to decide whether you want to participate in this project, you should understand what the project is about, as well as the possible risks and benefits in order to make an informed decision. This process is known as informed consent. This form describes the purpose, procedures, possible benefits, and risks. It also explains how your personal information will be used and protected. Once you have read this form and your questions about the study are answered, you will be asked to agree to participate. This will allow you to participate in this study. You should print a copy of this document for your records.

Explanation of Study
This study is being conducted to understand the following: 1) What is the relationship among supervisor nonverbal immediacy, employee emotional experience at work, and the communication motives of an employee when communicating with his/her supervisor? 2) Does an employee’s level of emotional contagion influence this process? At the end of the survey, you will be asked to provide the name of the student who forwarded the link to you, so that he/she can get extra credit for the study. Your participation in the study will last about 20-25 minutes.

You should not participate in this study if you are 17 years old or younger, or if you are not a full-time employee in an organization.

Risks and Discomforts
No risks or discomforts are anticipated.

Benefits
This study will help scholars understand factors that contribute to employees’ positive emotional experience at work.

Confidentiality and Records
All data collected for this study will be kept in a password-protected computer file and will not be seen by anyone who is not directly working on the project. No summaries or other reports of the study’s findings will contain information that permits identification of particular individuals; information will only be reported in a summary format.
While every effort will be made to keep your study-related information confidential, there might be circumstances where this information must be shared with:
* Federal agencies, for example the Office of Human Research Protections, whose responsibility is to protect human subjects in research; or
* Representatives of Ohio University (OU), including the Institutional Review Board, a committee that oversees the research at OU.

**Compensation**
No direct compensation will be provided.

**Contact Information**
If you have any questions regarding this study, please contact Moyi Jia, mj377209@ohio.edu.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact Jo Ellen Sherow, Director of Research Compliance, Ohio University, (740)593-0664.

**By clicking on “I agree” below, you are agreeing that:**
- You have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.
- You have been informed of potential risks and they have been explained to your satisfaction.
- You understand Ohio University has no funds set aside for any injuries you might receive as a result of participating in this study.
- You are 18 years of age or older.
- Your participation in this research is completely voluntary.
- You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

☐ I agree.
☐ I do not agree.

Version Date: 01/20/2013
This research project is being administrated by a doctoral student in the Communication Studies at Ohio University. Your participation in this project is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from participation at any time. All information collected will remain confidential. If you have questions, please contact Moyi Jia at mj377209@ohio.edu.

SECTION 1: Supervisor Nonverbal Immediacy
The following statements describe the ways some people behave while talking with or to others. Please think about your immediate supervisor, and indicate in the space at the left of each item the degree to which you believe the statement applies to him/her. Please use the following 5-point scale:

1 = Never; 2 = Rarely; 3 = Occasionally; 4 = Often; 5 = Very Often

1. He/she uses her/his hands and arms to gesture while talking to people.
2. He/she touches others on the shoulder or arm while talking to them.
3. He/she uses a monotone or dull voice while talking to people.
4. He/she looks over or away from others while talking to them.
5. He/she moves away from others when they touch her/him while they are talking.
6. He/she has a relaxed body position when he/she talks to people.
7. He/she frowns while talking to people.
8. He/she avoids eye contact while talking to people.
9. He/she has a tense body position while talking to people.
10. He/she sits close or stands close to people while talking with them.
11. Her/his voice is monotonous or dull when he/she talks to people.
12. He/she uses a variety of vocal expressions when he/she talks to people.
13. He/she gestures when he/she talks to people.
14. He/she is animated when he/she talk to people.
15. He/she has a bland facial expression when he/she talks to people.
16. He/she moves closer to people when he/she talks to them.
17. He/she looks directly at people while talking to them.
18. He/she is stiff when he/she talks to people.
19. He/she has a lot of vocal variety when he/she talks to people.
20. He/she avoids gesturing while he/she is talking to people.
21. He/she leans toward people when he/she talks to them.
22. He/she maintains eye contact with people when he/she talks to them.
23. He/she tries not to sit or stand close to people when he/she talks with them.
24. He/she leans away from people when he/she talks to them.
25. He/she smiles when he/she talks to people.
26. He/she avoids touching people when he/she talks to them.
SECTION 2: Employees’ Emotional Experience in the Workplace

In this series of questions please indicate how strongly each statement describes your feelings toward your immediate supervisor. These questions are not tied to a particular conversation, but rather are about your feelings in general toward your supervisor. Read each question carefully and use the following scale to respond:

1 = Strongly Disagree  2 = Disagree  3 = Neither agree or Disagree  4 = Agree  5 = Strongly Agree

1. I get the emotional help and support I need from my supervisor.
2. Interacting with this supervisor requires a lot of emotional energy.
3. My supervisor is willing to help me make decisions about work-related issues.
4. When talking to my supervisor I have to conceal or fake my emotions.
5. My supervisor is willing to discuss my feelings and emotions about work.
6. It is difficult to talk about work-related problems with my supervisor.
7. I can count on my supervisor when things go wrong in my personal life.
8. I wish that I could better express my true feelings with my supervisor.
9. I can talk with my supervisor about my personal problems.
10. Being in this workplace requires a lot of emotional energy.
11. My supervisor is NOT responsive to my concerns and feelings.
12. I can count on my supervisor when things go wrong with work-related issues.
13. I CANNOT talk about personal problems with my supervisor.
14. I would generally describe the emotions I feel toward my supervisor as positive.
15. I would generally describe the emotions I feel toward this workplace as positive.
16. The emotions I display in the workplace do not represent my true feelings.

SECTION 3: Interpersonal Communication Motives

Below are descriptions of why you might want to talk with your immediate supervisor. Please read through each description carefully. Then, write down the number for the response which best represents your feelings regarding your motives to talk with your supervisor.

1 = Not At All Like Me  2 = Not Like Me  3 = Sometimes Like Me  4 = Like Me  5 = Exactly Like Me

I talk to my supervisor:
  1. Because it’s fun
  2. Because it’s exciting
  3. To have good times
  4. Because it is thrilling
  5. Because it’s stimulating
  6. Because it’s entertaining
7. Because I enjoy it
8. Because it peps me up
9. To help him/her
10. To let him/her know I care about his/her feelings
11. To thank him/her
12. To show him/her encouragement
13. Because I’m concerned about him/her
14. Because I need someone to talk to or be with
15. Because I just need to talk about my problems sometimes
16. Because it makes me feeling less lonely
17. Because it’s reassuring to know someone is there
18. To put off doing something I should be doing
19. To get away from what I’m doing
20. Because I have nothing better to do
21. To get away from pressures and responsibilities
22. Because it relaxes me
23. Because it allows me to unwind
24. Because it’s a pleasant rest
25. Because it makes me feel less tense
26. Because I want someone to do something for me
27. To tell him/her what to do
28. To get something I don’t have

SECTION 4: Employee’s Emotional Contagion

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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>A lot like</td>
<td>Exactly</td>
</tr>
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<td>like me</td>
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<td>like me</td>
</tr>
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</table>

I think myself:

1. I often find that I can remain cool in spite of the excitement around me.
2. I tend to lose control when I am bringing bad news to people.
3. I cannot continue to feel OK if people around me are depressed.
4. I don’t get upset just because a friend is acting upset.
5. I become nervous if others around me seem to be nervous.
6. The people around me have a great influence on my moods.

SECTION 5: Demographics

1. What is your sex (circle one)? FEMALE  MALE
2. What best describe your level of education in school?
   High School _____  College _____  Graduate school _____
3. What was your age on your last birthday? ______
4. How long have you been working? ___year(s) ____month(s)
5. How long have you been employed by the current organization? ____year(s) ____month(s)
6. What is your position in the current organization?
Executive _____ Manager _____ General Staff_____
Please specify your position/job title and provide a brief description ______
7. What is your best estimate of the number of people employed in your organization? ______
8. What is your immediate supervisor’s sex (circle one)?  FEMALE    MALE
9. Please check one category that best describes the nature of your work:
    ___ Officials and managers
    ___ Professionals (such as financial analysts, human resources specialists, computer programmers, teachers, counselors, etc.)
    ___ Technicians (such as biological technicians, clinical laboratory technologists, etc.)
    ___ Sales workers (such as cashiers, retail salespersons, travel agents, etc.)
    ___ Administrative support workers (such as legal assistants, bill collectors, telephone operators, etc.)
    ___ Craft workers (such as carpenters, electricians, boilermakers, etc.)
    ___ Operatives (such as bus drivers, transportation and material moving workers, etc.)
    ___ Laborers and helpers (such as fishing and hunting workers, construction laborers)
    ___ Service workers (such as fire fighters, police officers, cooks, waiters and waitresses, etc.)
9. On a typical day, I communicate with my immediate supervisor ____ hour(s) ____ minute(s)
10. In general, I communicate with my immediate supervisor:
    A. several times a day
    B. once or twice a day
    C. several times a week
    D. once or twice a week
    E. less than once a week
### APPENDIX E: PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS FOR THE ICM SCALE

#### KMO and Bartlett's Test

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#### Total Variance Explained

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<th>Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings</th>
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Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

### Component Matrix

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<tr>
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<th>Component 1</th>
<th>Component 2</th>
<th>Component 3</th>
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<td>Section 3: Below are descriptions of why you might want to talk with your immediate supervisor. Please...</td>
<td>.818</td>
<td>-.249</td>
<td>-.054</td>
<td>.241</td>
<td>-.081</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Because it's exciting.</td>
<td>.802</td>
<td>-.236</td>
<td>-.061</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>-.107</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. To have good times.</td>
<td>.838</td>
<td>-.187</td>
<td>-.116</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>-.045</td>
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<td>4. Because it is thrilling.</td>
<td>.752</td>
<td>-.068</td>
<td>-.109</td>
<td>.054</td>
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<td>5. Because it's stimulating.</td>
<td>.751</td>
<td>-.260</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>-.160</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Because it's entertaining.</td>
<td>.807</td>
<td>-.148</td>
<td>-.081</td>
<td>.263</td>
<td>-.077</td>
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<td>7. Because I enjoy it.</td>
<td>.793</td>
<td>-.327</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>-.059</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Because it peps me up.</td>
<td>.808</td>
<td>-.248</td>
<td>-.053</td>
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<td>-.125</td>
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<td>9. To help him/her.</td>
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<td>-.239</td>
<td>.381</td>
<td>.070</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. To let him/her know I care about his/her feelings.</td>
<td>.740</td>
<td>-.203</td>
<td>.213</td>
<td>-.135</td>
<td>.296</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. To thank him/her.</td>
<td>.634</td>
<td>-.326</td>
<td>.311</td>
<td>.052</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. To show him/her encouragement.</td>
<td>.716</td>
<td>-.296</td>
<td>.317</td>
<td>.016</td>
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<td>13. Because I'm concerned about him/her.</td>
<td>.662</td>
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<td>.236</td>
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<td>14. Because I need someone to talk to or be with.</td>
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<td>15. Because I just need to talk about my problems sometimes.</td>
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<td>16. Because it makes me feeling less lonely.</td>
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<td>-.439</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Because it's reassuring to know someone is there.</td>
<td>.775</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>-.048</td>
<td>-.407</td>
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<td>18. To put off doing something I should be doing.</td>
<td>.416</td>
<td>.702</td>
<td>-.085</td>
<td>.271</td>
<td>.213</td>
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<td>19. To get away from what I'm doing.</td>
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<td>.688</td>
<td>-.116</td>
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<td>20. Because I have nothing better to do.</td>
<td>.275</td>
<td>.730</td>
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<td>21. To get away from pressures and responsibilities.</td>
<td>.410</td>
<td>.726</td>
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<td>.063</td>
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<td>22. Because it relaxes me.</td>
<td>.816</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>-.188</td>
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<td>23. Because it allows me to unwind.</td>
<td>.818</td>
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<td>-.207</td>
<td>-.042</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. Because it's a pleasant rest.</td>
<td>.816</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>-.220</td>
<td>-.011</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Because it makes me feel less tense.</td>
<td>.808</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>-.183</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>-.098</td>
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<td>26. Because I want someone to do something for me.</td>
<td>.352</td>
<td>.492</td>
<td>.492</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>-.282</td>
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<td>27. To tell him/her what to do.</td>
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<td>28. To get something I don't have.</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.471</td>
<td>.563</td>
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Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
a. 5 components extracted.