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# It's Unexpected, But Good:

# Leader Traditionality Fuels Greater Follower Reciprocation to Servant Leadership

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# It's Unexpected, But Good:

# Leader Traditionality Fuels Greater Follower Reciprocation to Servant Leadership ABSTRACT

Integrating expectancy-violation theory and social exchange theory, we investigate the role of leader traditionality in augmenting the positive effect of servant leadership in promoting follower reciprocation in three studies. In Study 1, we substantiate in an experiment that individuals indeed expect leaders possessing traditional values to be less likely to engage in servant leadership behaviors compared to leaders who are low in traditionality. Further, we test our full model in an experiment (Study 2) and find support for our hypothesis that the relationship between servant leadership, follower trust in the leader, and subsequent follower organizational citizenship behavior is stronger for leaders higher (vs. lower) in traditional values. Replicating the findings from Study 2, we conduct a field investigation (Study 3) with multi-wave and multi-source data from a Fortune 500 company and obtain full support for our model. The consistent findings across our studies provide strong support for the role of leader traditionality in altering the social exchange relationship between servant leaders and their followers.

*Keywords*: servant leadership, leader traditionality, expectancy-violation theory, social exchange theory, trust, organizational citizenship behavior

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Servant leadership represents a contemporary approach to understanding how influence processes between leader and follower occur and "can deal with challenges of the modern workplace" (Eva et al., 2019: 111). Distinct from a traditional focus on leaders' charisma and a top-down influence process in a power hierarchy (Bass, 1985), servant leadership de-emphasizes status differences and necessitates that leaders prioritize the needs of followers (Greenleaf, 1970; van Dierendonck, 2011). Servant leadership continues to be recognized as a promising holistic leadership approach, as recent reviews and meta-analytic findings provide support for its pivotal role in promoting positive follower attitudes and behaviors, desirable team processes and outcomes, and greater organizational effectiveness (see Eva et al., 2019; Hoch et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2020; Lemoine et al., 2019 for details). A significant driver for such effectiveness is that servant leadership fosters trust. Indeed, building trust has been noted in a seminal essay by Robert Greenleaf (1970) as an essential ingredient of the servant leadership approach. Supporting Greenleaf's notion, empirical research shows that selfless serving of followers enables servant leaders to build trust as a critical channel that translates the impact of servant leadership into follower outcomes (for review, see Eva et al., 2019).

A pivotal question, however, remains unanswered. That is, do leaders who possess characteristics inconsistent with servant leadership achieve similar success in building trust with followers compared to their counterparts whose characteristics are more congruent with this leadership style? On the one hand, it is likely that inconsistencies between leader characteristics and servant leadership may hurt follower trust because behavioral consistency or predictability has long been recognized as a critical antecedent of trust (Gabarro, 1978; Mayer et al., 1995). In the leadership literature, research shows that inconsistent leader characteristics and behaviors are detrimental to effective leadership. For example, Lian et al. (2012) showed that instead of

supervision exacerbates the negative impact of abusive leader behaviors on follower need satisfaction. In a similar vein, leader abuse hurts followers' psychological well-being to a greater extent when accompanied by supportive behaviors from the same leader (Duffy et al., 2002). On the other hand, trust scholars argued that "trust must go beyond predictability" (Mayer et al., 1995: 714) as predictability or consistency of behaviors does not necessarily build trust and inconsistency does not always break trust (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996; Mayer et al., 1995). Particularly, research taking an expectancy-violation perspective suggests that positive leader behaviors inconsistent with follower expectations can be even more effective in promoting desirable follower outcomes than leader behaviors that are expected (Lanaj & Hollenbeck, 2015). Therefore, it is important to examine what effect servant leadership has on followers when leaders possess characteristics that may seem incompatible with this leadership style prior to suggesting that servant leadership is advantageous for all leaders.

In the current investigation, we examine leader traditionality (i.e., an individual's endorsement of, or respect for, traditional hierarchical role relationships) as a critical boundary condition of servant leadership in the context of follower trust for two major reasons (Farh et al., 2007; Spreitzer et al., 2005). First, due to its focus on hierarchical role relationships, traditionality has important implications on leader-follower interactions (Chen & Aryee, 2007; Cheng et al., 2004; Spreitzer et al., 2005). For example, traditionality of a leader's superior affects how the leader's transformational leadership was assessed by the superior (Spreitzer et al., 2005) and traditionality of subordinates affect how they react to paternalistic leadership (Cheng et al., 2004) and delegation from the leader (Chen & Aryee, 2007). Second, it is uniquely vital to understand leader traditionality in relation to servant leadership because the features of servant

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leadership may be incompatible with the characteristics of leaders who possess traditional values. Specifically, compared to conventional leadership approaches, servant leadership requires leaders to put followers first and prioritize followers' interests and needs (Greenleaf, 1970; van Dierendonck, 2011). Instead of guarding their authority, servant leaders leverage their status to serve followers and share power with those they serve (Kermond et al., 2015). In comparison, leaders with traditional values emphasize obedience to authority and "believe that relationships should be hierarchically maintained" (Spreitzer et al., 2005: 210), which may be at odds with the defining features of servant leadership—serving followers and prioritizing their needs (Liden et al., 2008; van Dierendonck, 2011), while those low in traditionality may be perceived as having characteristics that are consistent with servant leadership. Therefore, following the behavioral consistency prediction, leaders who are low in traditionality are more likely to build trust with followers by engaging in servant leadership behaviors (Mayer et al., 1995; Mayer & Davis, 1999). On the contrary, the expectancy-violation perspective would predict that despite some inconsistency, leaders high in traditionality may instead be more likely to earn followers' trust as they display servant leadership (Lanaj & Hollenbeck, 2015). These two theoretical accounts raise a puzzle as to whether servant leadership builds or undermines trust with followers when enacted by leaders high in traditionality.

We submit that inconsistency in leader characteristics and behaviors does not always hurt leader effectiveness. Rather, one needs to examine whether the inconsistent leader behaviors are better or worse than role congruent behaviors. Indeed, expectancy-violation theory (Jussim et al., 1987) contends that people evaluate the extent to which positive behaviors are expected from the actor. Further, it posits that positive behaviors that are not expected of the actor can be viewed more positively and have a greater influence than favorable behaviors that are expected.

Following this expectancy-violation prediction (Jussim et al., 1987), we expect servant leadership to be more positively perceived by followers when leaders are higher in traditionality. Integrating expectancy-violation theory with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), we further reason that servant leadership from leaders with traditional values is unexpected and elicits stronger follower reciprocation in terms of trust in the leader. We propose that follower trust in the leader serves as a mediator that connects servant leadership and follower organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) — "Individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organization" (Organ et al., 2006: 8). See Figure 1 for our theoretical model.

----- Insert Figure 1 about here -----

The current research makes three major contributions. First, in view of the contradictory views discussed in the literature, we address the puzzle as to whether leaders high in traditionality strengthen or hurt trust with followers when exhibiting servant leadership. In doing so, we also contribute to the stream of leadership research that examines expectation-inconsistent leader behaviors. Second, we add to the trust literature by showing that inconsistency does not necessarily hurt trust. We bring expectancy-violation theory to the trust literature to show that favorable behaviors (i.e., servant leadership) that are unexpected from leaders (i.e., from leaders high in traditionality) tend to have a greater positive influence on follower trust in the leader. Lastly, we contribute to the theoretical integration of expectancy-violation theory and social exchange theory by theorizing that when favors received are unexpected rather than expected, social exchange is stronger, and the beneficiary engages in greater reciprocation. Thus, we

identify a potentially salient boundary condition that determines the strength of social exchange relationships, contributing to the precision of social exchange theory (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

# THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Servant Leadership and Follower Trust in the Leader: The Moderating Role of Leader Traditionality

Servant leadership offers a critical examination of the issues of power and authority, such that "people are beginning to learn, however haltingly, to relate to one another in less coercive and more creatively supporting ways" (Greenleaf, 1970: 3-4). Distinct from conventional leadership approaches where the leader is dominant and at the center of leadership influence processes, the central tenet of servant leadership is that prioritizing and satisfying followers' needs, even at the expense of leaders' self-interest, is key to bringing out the full potential in followers while at the same time benefiting other stakeholders (Eva et al., 2019; Greenleaf, 1970). To this end, instead of guarding their higher status, servant leaders make efforts to understand followers' needs and desires, share power with them, and help them grow and succeed (Liden et al., 2008). As Greenleaf (1970: 4) suggests, followers freely choose to be influenced by servant leaders, because they are "proven and trusted as servants." Research has indicated that servant leadership is a desirable leadership approach that fosters follower trust (e.g., Hoch et al., 2018; Lee et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2019; Schaubroeck et al., 2011). Trust— "an expectation or belief that one can rely on another person's actions and words and that the person has good intentions to carry out their promises" (Bligh, 2017: 21)—is an essential conduit that connects leadership and follower positive behavior at work.

While the extant findings generally show that servant leadership behaviors create trusting relationships in the workplace and, therefore, are positive and desirable, we do not know whether

leaders possessing characteristics inconsistent with this leadership style can exert effective influence when engaging in servant leadership behaviors. Specifically, leaders high in traditionality may possess values incongruent with servant leadership because they endorse followers' submission to authority (e.g., the leader) and emphasize the hierarchical relationships in the workplace. In contrast, those low in traditionality values recognize the importance of deemphasizing status differences, seniority, and hierarchical roles at work. Considering leader traditionality in conjunction with servant leadership features (e.g., assuming followers to be equal to them, sharing power with followers, and making followers' needs a priority; van Dierendonck, 2011), it is clear that leaders lower in traditionality possess values that are more consistent with servant leadership. Therefore, followers may be less likely to expect a leader high in traditionality to engage in servant leadership. Thus, we contend that leader traditionality is associated with the extent to which followers expect their leaders to display servant leadership behaviors.

To examine the joint effect of servant leadership and leader traditionality on follower reactions, we draw on expectancy-violation theory (Burgoon, 1993; Jussim et al., 1987), which contends that "individuals who possess more favorable characteristics than expected should be evaluated even more positively than others with similar characteristics whom we expected to rate positively all along. Likewise, individuals who possess more unfavorable characteristics than expected should be evaluated even more negatively than others with similar characteristics whom we expected to rate negatively all along" (Jussim et al., 1987: 537). Expectancy-violation theory has been applied to explaining important phenomena happening in the workplace. For example, studies show that unfavorable behaviors are evaluated more negatively when they are unexpected rather than expected behaviors. Hernandez and colleagues (2019) showed that

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racially biased evaluators expect Black job seekers to be less likely to engage in salary negotiations as compared to their White counterparts. When Black negotiators violate such expectations, they are given lower starting salaries. In another study, Sheldon and associates (2006) found that delays by low-status individuals are unexpected to a greater extent than those by high-status individuals and the greater unfavorable expectancy-violations of low-status individuals more substantially reduce their influence in the workplace. Concerning leadership, researchers have studied anti-stereotypical leader behaviors and suggested that women can benefit from being more agentic and self-reliant in a particular context where such behaviors are positively perceived. For example, in a self-managing team, agentic behaviors such as taskrelated behaviors and boundary-spanning behaviors are perceived favorably and, therefore, women's engagement in these behaviors is considered a favorable expectancy-violation that makes them more likely to emerge as leaders than men whose agentic behaviors are expected (Lanaj & Hollenbeck, 2015). In a similar vein, women's self-reliant traits as favorable expectancy-violations appear to be advantageous to women as they are evaluated more positively in leadership compared to self-reliant men (Schaumberg & Flynn, 2017).

These prior studies provide support to expectancy-violation theory that compared with expectancy confirmations, positively valenced expectancy-violations tend to elicit greater favorable results. In contrast, negatively valenced expectancy-violations result in more unfavorable outcomes (Sheldon et al., 2006). Applying expectancy-violation theory to a servant leadership context, we reason that servant leadership behaviors are perceived more positively when unexpected than expected. Because leaders higher in traditionality value relationship hierarchy, recognize status differences and endorse follower submission to leaders, followers are less likely to expect them to engage in servant leadership, which features power-sharing with

followers, prioritizing followers' needs, and eliminating status differences necessarily assumed between leaders and followers. Following expectancy-violation theory (Jussim et al., 1987), therefore, we propose that the extent to which followers develop trust in their leaders based on favorable servant leadership behaviors is influenced by leader traditionality. When leaders possess highly traditional values, followers do not expect these leaders to engage in positive servant leadership behaviors, but when they do, followers perceive these leaders more favorably. We further contend that with servant leadership being perceived more positively, its positive impact in fostering a trusting relationship becomes stronger.

Hypothesis 1(H1): Leader traditionality moderates the positive relationship between servant leadership and follower trust in the leader, such that the relationship is stronger when leader traditionality is high (vs. low).

# **Integrative Model**

High quality social exchange relationships are characterized by a long-term socioemotional connection and a high level of trust between the parties (Blau, 1964). When servant leaders promote followers' trust in them, they cultivate strong positive social exchange relationships with their followers. Consistent with theory, empirical findings have demonstrated that individuals in a positive social exchange relationship filled with trust are willing to go above and beyond what is required (Colquitt et al., 2007; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002) by engaging in OCB. Despite not being explicitly stated in job descriptions or rewarded by formal remuneration systems (Williams & Anderson, 1991), discretionary OCB can directly or indirectly support others and promote overall effectiveness in the organization (Organ, 1988). Because of the altruistic and discretionary nature of OCB, it aligns with servant leadership as servant leaders encourage followers to engage in behaviors that benefit others (Greenleaf, 1970; Wu et al., 2021).

Uniquely relevant to a leader-follower context, Dirks and Ferrin (2002) have found that followers are more likely to engage in OCB when they trust their leaders. Indeed, it is widely supported that followers engage in OCB to reciprocate the favorable treatment they receive from the leader (Wayne et al., 1997). Considering the features of servant leadership, we expect a positive relationship between servant leadership, trust in the leader, and OCB based on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), such that followers who feel well treated by their servant leader tend to reciprocate for the favorable treatment by enhancing their trust in the leader and engaging in subsequent OCB. Our prediction is consistent with the response types and causal order specified by social exchange theory, such that there are two types of responses, relational and behavioral (Cropanzano et al., 2017: 2), and that "one type often causes the other."

Integrating expectancy-violation theory (Jussim et al., 1987) and social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), we contend that positive behaviors will likely breed a stronger social exchange relationship between the benefactor and the beneficiary when the favorable behaviors are unexpected rather than expected. That is, the effect of positive behaviors on eliciting reciprocation from the beneficiary becomes stronger when they are not expected of the benefactor. Following this theoretical integration, we consider the positive effect of servant leadership on OCB via trust in the leader in conjunction with the moderating role of leader traditionality we theorized in H1. When leaders possess higher traditionality values, followers expect them to be less likely to be servant leaders. When leaders high in traditionality unexpectedly engage in servant leadership behaviors, they have a stronger positive impact on follower trust and subsequent OCB. Therefore, we propose that the social exchange relationship between servant leadership, follower trust in the leader, and follower OCB is stronger when leaders are high (vs. low) in traditionality.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Leader traditionality moderates the positive indirect relationship between servant leadership and follower OCB via trust in the leader, such that the indirect relationship is stronger when leader traditionality is high (vs. low).

## **OVERVIEW OF OUR RESEARCH**

We conducted three studies to test our hypotheses. To enable causal inferences and enhance generalizability, we included two experiments and one field study. Also, to test the generalizability of our findings, we recruited participants from different cultural settings. A critical step in testing the expectancy-violation effect proposed in our theoretical model is to examine whether leader traditionality influences the degree to which followers expect leaders to engage in servant leadership behaviors. Therefore, in Study 1, we designed an experiment with participants from a large public university in the United States to test whether individuals expect leaders with less traditional values to exhibit higher levels of servant leadership. Then, with participants from another large public university in the United States, we tested the full model in an experiment in Study 2 to assess evidence for internal validity. In Study 3, we conducted a field investigation to test our full model and to examine external validity in a multi-wave and multi-source sample from a Fortune 500 company in China.

#### STUDY 1

## Method

**Participants and Design**. We invited students from a large public university in the U.S. to participate in this study as an opportunity to earn extra credit for a course. We used a between-subject experimental design consisting of two leader traditionality conditions (i.e., high vs. low). In total, 53 students participated. On average, participants were 21.32 years (SD = 1.41) old and 49.1% were female. The mean full-time working experience was 1.49 years (SD = 1.79).

**Procedure**. We designed a study named "Perceptions of Leadership" online and invited students to participate. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions of leader traditionality. Participants were instructed to imagine that they had been working with their manager Pat for six months. Then, they were directed to read a scenario assigned to their condition and asked to answer several survey questions. The manipulation materials and items for all measures used in Study 1 are presented in Appendix A.

**Measures**. We measured servant leadership by adapting the 7-item scale (SL-7) from Liden et al. (2015) ( $\alpha = .83$ ).

**Manipulation check**. To check our manipulation, we asked participants to think about the leader in the scenario and respond to questions that measured their perceptions of leader traditionality. We used the 5-item measure ( $\alpha$  = .96) from Farh et al. (2007). An independent sample *t*-test on participants' perceptions of leader traditionality shows a significant mean difference between the two conditions, t(51) = 8.77, p < .001, with  $M_{\text{high leader traditionality}} = 5.87$  and  $M_{\text{low leader traditionality}} = 2.69$ , supporting our manipulation.

## **Results**

We conducted an independent sample t-test to examine whether there is a significant mean difference between the two groups of participants regarding their expectations of servant leadership. Results show that participants in the high leader traditionality group reported a lower level of servant leadership (M = 3.68) than those in the low leader traditionality group (M = 4.59), with t(51) = -2.87, p < .01. Thus, the results showed that individuals expect leaders possessing high traditionality values to be less likely to engage in servant leadership than leaders low in traditionality.

# Discussion

Consistent with our theoretical argument, we found in the experiment that leader traditionality contributes to followers' expectations of servant leadership behaviors, with higher leader traditionality being associated with lower levels of servant leadership. Because the sample size of Study 1 was relatively small, we collected a separate and larger sample to assess whether the findings in Study 1<sup>1</sup> could be replicated. Supporting replication, the results from Supplemental Study 1 were consistent with Study 1's findings. Detailed information pertaining to Supplemental Study 1 is presented in Appendix B. Considering these results, we designed a second experiment to fully test our theoretical model.

## STUDY 2

#### Method

**Participants and Design**. Ninety-six students from a large public U.S. university participated voluntarily in the study. Each student received \$15 for their participation. We used a 2 x 2 between-subject experimental design. The mean age of participants was 25.63 years (SD = 2.06) and 34.4% were female. On average, the participants had 2.58 years (SD = 1.69) of working experience.

**Procedure**. We invited participants to take part in a paper-and-pencil study on "Leadership and Decision Making." Upon arrival in the laboratory, participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions determined by high and low levels of servant leadership and leader traditionality (i.e., high-high, high-low, low-high, low-low). Participants were asked to imagine that they had been working with their leader Pat for six months and were directed to read a scenario preassigned to their condition. We used the same manipulation of leader traditionality as the one in Study 1. To manipulate the high and low levels of servant leadership,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In Supplemental Study 1, we also explored whether individuals' expectation of paternalistic leadership is associated with their perception of leader traditionality. See Appendix B for details. We thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

we adopted the servant leadership scenario materials from Wu et al. (2021). For each condition, we integrated the manipulation materials into one scenario with the leader traditionality manipulation presented before the servant leadership manipulation. Please see Appendix A for the manipulation materials and the items of all measures used in Study 2.

**Measures**. Trust in the leader was assessed with the 10-item measure by Mayer and Gavin (2005) on a 7-point scale (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree) ( $\alpha = .79$ ). To measure OCB, we adopted the 14-item scale from Williams and Anderson (1991) ( $\alpha = .81$ ). The response scale ranged from  $1 = not \ likely \ at \ all$  to  $7 = very \ likely$ .

**Manipulation check**. To check our manipulations, we asked participants to think about the leader in the scenario and then measured their perceptions of servant leadership ( $\alpha$  = .94) and leader traditionality ( $\alpha$  = .91) using the same measures as the ones used in Study 1. An independent sample *t*-test on participants' perceptions of servant leadership indicated a significant mean difference, t(94) = 29.87, p < .001, with  $M_{\text{high servant leadership}}$  = 5.60 and  $M_{\text{low}}$  servant leadership = 2.10. Likewise, there was a significant mean difference between participants' perceptions of leader traditionality, t(94) = 12.46, p < .001, with  $M_{\text{high leader traditionality}}$  = 5.60 and  $M_{\text{low leader traditionality}}$  = 2.85. These results support the effectiveness of our manipulations.

## **Results**

We estimated our path model with SPSS PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2022). As shown in Table 1, servant leadership related positively to trust in the leader (b = .91, SE = .21, p < .001), while trust in the leader had a positive relationship with OCB (b = .26, SE = .10, p = .01). The interaction term of servant leadership and leader traditionality was a significant predictor of trust in the leader (b = .62, SE = .30, p = .04), providing initial support for H1. Further supporting H1, simple slope analysis shows that the relationship between servant leadership and trust in the

leader was stronger when leader traditionality was high (b = 1.52, SE = .21, p < .001) than when leader traditionality was low (b = .91, SE = .21, p < .001). The interaction plot is presented in Figure 2. Therefore, H1 received full support.

----- Insert Table 1 and Figure 2 about here -----

In H2, we proposed that leader traditionality moderates the positive indirect effect between servant leadership and OCB via trust in the leader. To test this hypothesis, we used bootstrapping to estimate the indirect effect and obtain its associated confidence intervals (CIs) (Hayes, 2022; MacKinnon et al., 2004). As shown in Table 2, results based on 5,000 bootstrapping samples indicate that the indirect effect was greater when leader traditionality was high, estimate = .40 (CI<sub>95%</sub> = .14, .69), than when leader traditionality was low, estimate = .24 (CI<sub>95%</sub> = .08, .43). The difference between the two indirect effects at high and low levels of leader traditionality was .16 (CI<sub>95%</sub> = .01, .38). Thus, H2 was fully supported.

----- Insert Table 2 about here -----

## **Discussion**

This experimental study provides full support for our hypothesized model. However, while an experimental study has relatively higher internal validity to establish causal relationships than a field study, it is generally considered to have low external validity. To enhance the generalizability of our findings, therefore, we conducted a third study, with multiwave surveys administered to employees and their managers in a company.

## STUDY 3

#### Method

**Sample and procedures**. The participants in this study were 462 employees and their managers in a Fortune 500 company's large manufacturing division in China. Employees and

managers who participated in this study responded to our surveys voluntarily. To reduce common method bias, we adopted a time-lagged design by administering a paper-and-pencil questionnaire at three points in time (Podsakoff et al., 2003). At Time 1, employees evaluated their manager's servant leadership, while managers reported their traditionality. Both employees and managers provided demographic information at Time 1. At Time 2, three months after Time 1, employees completed a survey with questions concerning their trust in the leader. Finally, at Time 3, one month after Time 2, managers evaluated employees' OCB. At each wave of data collection, the participants completed and returned their questionnaires during their paid work hours. As a token of appreciation, we gave each participant a small gift (worth about \$5 USD) at each time period.

Our final sample consisted of 397 employees (response rate = 85.93%) and their 89 managers (response rate = 93.68%). On average, four employees worked with one manager in our sample, ranging from 2 to 6. With respect to employees' demographic information, 21.9% were female. The average age was 29.82 years (SD = 4.89). Employees' average organizational tenure was 4.76 years (SD = 3.05). Their education levels were as follows: 0.5% had a middle school degree, 23.1% had a high school degree, 10.4% had an associate degree, 42.0% had a bachelor's degree, and 24.1% had a master's degree or higher. Regarding the managers, 24.1% were female. The average age was 34.37 years (SD = 6.51). On average, managers had worked for the organization for 9.49 years (SD = 4.52). Their education levels were as follows: 15.2% had a high school degree, 17.0% had an associate degree, 42.4% had a bachelor's degree, and 25.4% had a master's degree or higher.

**Measures.** Following the commonly used translation-back translation procedure, we translated the scales into Chinese (Brislin, 1980). We used 7-point Likert-type scales (1 =

strongly disagree to  $7 = strongly \ agree)$  for all measures. The items for all measures appear in Appendix A. At Time 1, employees reported managers' servant leadership using the same 7-item scale ( $\alpha = .88$ ) as the one used in Study 1 and Study 2, while managers reported their traditionality values with the same 5-item scale ( $\alpha = .74$ ). At Time 2, employees reported their trust in the leader with the 11-item scale ( $\alpha = .93$ ) from McCallister (1995). Finally, managers reported employees' OCB at Time 3 with the same 14-item scale ( $\alpha = .92$ ) as the one used in Study 2. Organizational tenure is important to OCB and was controlled for in previous servant leadership research (Hu & Liden, 2011). Further, researchers have suggested that dyadic tenure can influence how followers react to leadership (e.g., Bauer et al., 2006; Wu et al., 2021). Therefore, we controlled for followers' organizational tenure and dyadic tenure in the analysis<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Results**

Means, standard deviations, bivariate correlations, and internal consistency coefficients appear in Table 3.

Multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA). We conducted a series of MCFA to evaluate whether the measures included in our study captured distinct constructs as anticipated. Servant leadership was modeled at level 1, and leader traditionality was modeled at level 2. Trust in the leader and OCB were modeled at both level 1 and level 2. For the multidimensional scales (i.e., trust in the leader and OCB), we have followed the item-parceling approach that maximizes internal consistency by using dimensional scores to indicate the constructs (Kishton & Widaman, 1994), while unidimensional scales were indicated by their items. Following Larson et al. (2020) and the recommendations by Muthén and Muthén (2012), we allowed the residuals of factor indicators at level 1 to be freely estimated while fixing the residuals of factor indicators at level 2 to zero. No latent regression path was specified besides the paths linking indicators to their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The result patterns remained consistent with or without the inclusion of the control variables.

respective latent variables. Results show that the hypothesized model had an acceptable fit, with  $\chi^2$  (148,  $N_{\text{level-1}} = 397$ ,  $N_{\text{level-2}} = 89$ ) = 165.65, CFI = .95, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .06, SRMR<sub>within</sub> = .05, and SRMR<sub>within</sub> = .12. In addition, we compared our hypothesized model to two alternatives. In the first alternative model, servant leadership and trust in the leader were specified to correlate at 1.0 at level 1. The model had a worse fit than the hypothesized model,  $\Delta\chi^2(3, N_{\text{level-1}} = 397, N_{\text{level-2}} = 89) = 198.53$ . In the second alternative model, we specified trust in the leader and OCB to correlate at 1.0 at both level 1 and level 2. The resulting model again had a worse fit,  $\Delta\chi^2(6, N_{\text{level-1}} = 397, N_{\text{level-2}} = 89) = 599.22$ . In sum, we found evidence supporting the expected factor structure of the observed variables. Table 4 presents the details of the MCFA results.

----- Insert Tables 3 and 4 about here -----

Model estimation. To account for the nesting structure in our data, we estimated the hypothesized model with multilevel path modeling<sup>3</sup> in Mplus 7.3 with scale-level listwise deletion (Kraimer et al., 2022), which was based on a sample of 297 employees and 71 managers. To specify the interaction between servant leadership and leader traditionality, we followed Raudenbush and Bryk (2002) and included a direct path from leader traditionality to follower trust in the leader. Further, the relationship between servant leadership and trust in the leader was modeled as a random slope that varies as a function of leader traditionality, while the relationship between servant leadership and OCB and the one between trust in the leader and OCB were specified as random. Theoretically, because there may be omitted leader-level variables that are associated with the random slopes, we allowed residuals of random slopes to correlate with each other at the leader level. Analytically, this is also consistent with the suggestion by Preacher and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Trust in the leader and OCB were modeled at both levels. The follower level variance components were .72 and .25, while the leader level variance components were .04 and .23 for the two variables respectively.

colleagues (2016). In addition, following Hofmann and Gavin (1998), we grand-mean centered leader traditionality and group-mean centered servant leadership, while controlling for the mean of servant leadership at the group level. The pseudo  $R^2$  ( $\sim R^2$ ) calculated using Snijders and Bosker's (2012) formula was .31 for trust in the leader, and .08 OCB at the follower level, which is the level of theoretical interest. Additionally, following Lang et al. (2021), the overall likelihood ratio-based  $R^2$  was .45 for our model.

**Hypothesis testing**. Table 5 presents the coefficient estimates for all direct paths in the hypothesized model. As expected, servant leadership was positively related to trust in the leader (b = .40, SE = .06, p < .001). Also, there was a positive relationship between trust in the leader and OCB (b = .15, SE = .07, p = .04). The initial support for H1 came from the positive interaction term between servant leadership and leadership traditionality in predicting trust in the leader (b = .11, SE = .05, p = .04). Further, simple slope analysis shows that the relationship between servant leadership and trust in the leader was stronger when leader traditionality was high (b = .52, SE = .06, p < .001) than when it was low (b = .28, SE = .10, p = .004). Figure 3 presents the interaction plot. In sum, we found full support for H1.

Because bootstrapping for multilevel models is unavailable through Mplus, we tested H2 by conducting 20,000 Monte Carlo replications (Preacher et al., 2010) to obtain 95% confidence intervals for the indirect effects. As shown in Table 6, the overall indirect effect for servant leadership  $\rightarrow$  trust in the leader  $\rightarrow$  OCB was positive (*estimate* = .06, CI<sub>95%</sub>: .01, .12). Further, the indirect relationship was stronger when leader traditionality was high (*estimate* = .08, CI<sub>95%</sub>: .01, .16) than when it was low (*estimate* = .04, CI<sub>95%</sub>: .002, .10). The difference between the two indirect effects was significant (*estimate* = -.04, CI<sub>95%</sub>: -.09, -.001). Thus, H2 also received full support.

----- Insert Tables 5 and 6 and Figure 3 about here -----

## **Discussion**

In Study 3, we found full support for our proposed model. Results from Study 3 support the consistency of our findings in a field setting from an Eastern cultural context, providing evidence supporting the external validity of our research. However, in Study 3, traditionality was reported by leaders, raising the question of whether the interactive effect holds when followers report leader traditionality. To address this issue, we collected a separate sample to test the findings for H1 by measuring leader traditionality from the follower's perspective (Supplemental Study 2<sup>4</sup>). Results from Supplemental Study 2 supported the interactive effect between servant leadership and leader traditionality on trust in the leader. Details about this supplemental study are presented in Appendix C. In addition, despite our theory suggesting the role of follower perceptions of expectancy violation, we did not test this variable empirically. We also did not test the effect of repeated expectancy violations. To resolve these two concerns, we conducted Supplemental Study 3 and found that follower perceptions of expectancy violation mediate the joint effect of servant leadership and leader traditionality on trust in the leader. Further, the effect of expectancy violation was consistent across two rounds of experiments. See Appendix D for details of Supplemental Study 3.

#### **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

With three studies, we contribute to the stream of leadership research that sheds light on expectation-inconsistent leader behaviors and followers' reactions. Specifically, in the servant

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> In Supplemental Study 2, we included paternalistic leadership to explore whether paternalistic leadership interacts with leader traditionality in predicting follower trust in the leader. Among the three components of paternalistic leadership, we found there was a significant interaction between paternalistic leadership-authoritarianism and traditionality such that the negative effect of paternalistic leadership-authoritarianism on trust in the leader was weaker when leader traditionality was high. See Appendix C for details of this supplemental analysis. We thank an anonymous reviewer for this suggestion.

leadership literature, questions remain regarding whether leaders possessing characteristics inconsistent with servant leadership are equally effective in enacting this leadership style. With the increasing adoption of servant leadership practices in modern organizations (Lichtenwalner, n.d.), a pressing question that remains unanswered is whether highly traditional managers can benefit from this leadership style in building trusting relationships with followers. As a contemporary leadership approach, servant leadership theory challenges the conventional conceptualization of leadership, where a top-down leader-centric process is emphasized. However, the unique features of servant leadership (i.e., sharing power with followers, deemphasizing status differences, and putting followers first) also make it incongruent with the characteristics of traditional leaders who endorse hierarchical relationships and value selfprotection of status. Supporting expectancy-violation theory (Jussim et al., 1987), we found that when leaders high in traditional values engage in desirable servant leadership, they positively violate followers' expectations, leading to a stronger relationship between servant leadership and trust in the leader. Therefore, contributing to expectancy-violation theory in the leadership literature (e.g., Lanaj & Hollenbeck, 2015), our findings suggest that when leader behaviors positively violate followers' expectations, the positive influence of such behaviors becomes stronger. Our Supplemental Study 3 also provided an empirical examination of the role of follower perceptions of expectancy violation, filling a gap in the current research. Overall, we provide an answer to the question that leaders high in traditionality can benefit even more from engaging in servant leadership to boost trust and OCB than their counterparts who are low in traditionality.

Relatedly, the current research contributes to our knowledge of boundary conditions of servant leadership effects. Moving from a focus on the main effects of servant leadership,

researchers have begun to develop an important and promising stream of research that unpacks the boundary conditions of servant leadership functioning (Eva et al., 2019; Liao et al., 2021a). Contributing to this stream of research, our current investigation identifies leader traditionality as a relevant leader characteristic that alters the strength of relationships between servant leadership and follower outcomes. Therefore, our research echoes prior findings (e.g., Liao et al., 2021b, Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2017; Williams et al., 2017) and confirms the advantages of considering leaders' own characteristics when exploring how servant leadership impacts followers.

Second, our research contributes to the trust literature by underscoring a situation where inconsistency leads to more trust. Consistency or predictability of behaviors has long been considered a precursor of trust (Gabarro, 1978; Mayer et al., 1995). However, as Mayer et al. (1995) noted, predictability is insufficient to build trust, as a trustee's consistent self-interested behaviors are unlikely to make a trustor willing to take a risk by trusting the person. Similarly, Lewicki and Bunker (1996) stated that knowledge-based trust is not necessarily hurt by inconsistent behavior, and one can accept this inconsistency if they have a sufficient understanding of the behavior. In line with expectancy-violation theory, our findings extend this line of thinking by showing that when inconsistency is characterized by positively valenced expectancy-violations, it has the potential to boost trust. In our research, it is likely that when servant leadership is enacted by highly traditional leaders, followers develop an understanding that their leaders are, in fact, concerned about their interests and desires, substantiating their trust in the leader. We suspect that positively valenced expectancy-violations may contribute to the benevolence component of trustworthiness, and thus encourage future research to provide a more

nuanced explanation for how positively valenced expectancy-violations affect different components of trustworthiness (i.e., ability, integrity, and benevolence; Mayer et al., 1995).

Providing additional evidence to this discussion, in Supplemental Study 3b, we demonstrate that participants in the positive violation condition reported a higher level of trust in the leader than those in the positive consistency condition, suggesting that unexpected benevolence may have a greater influence on trust than predictability. Meanwhile, participants in the negative violation condition reported a lower level of trust in the leader than those in the negative consistency condition, providing another piece of evidence that unexpected negative behaviors may undermine trust to a greater extent than negative behaviors that are expected. Overall, supporting expectancy violation theory, when inconsistent leader behavior is a better alternative than the expected leader behavior, trust in the leader is not hurt. In fact, followers develop stronger trust in the leader. However, when the inconsistent leader behavior is a worse alternative than expected behaviors, trust in the leader suffers more. Bringing expectancy-violation theory to the trust literature, our findings provide nuanced evidence that when unpredictability or inconsistency is characterized by positively valenced expectancy-violations, it has the potential to boost trust, whereas negatively valenced expectancy-violations lower trust.

Regarding the moderating role of leader traditionality, we found that the magnitude of the relation between servant leadership and trust in the leader changes significantly depending on the level of leader traditionality. Yet, overall, servant leadership remains a positive correlate of trust. Indeed, trust has been shown to be a central mechanism for servant leadership (Eva et al., 2019). Despite prior research, the question of whether unanticipated servant leader behaviors undermine follower trust remains a critical one that cannot be answered by extant empirical evidence from the literature. Therefore, our findings are necessary for attesting to the stability of servant

leadership effects on follower trust in the leader. Specifically, without our findings, it would remain unclear whether traditional leaders would foster trust when they enact servant leadership. Our findings not only provide an affirmative answer to this question but also show that when engaging in servant leadership, traditional leaders can benefit from building stronger trust.

Lastly, we contribute to theory building by integrating social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) with expectancy-violation theory (Jussim et al., 1987). Specifically, our findings collectively suggest that social exchange relationships become stronger when one party (i.e., the target) does not expect the other party (i.e., the actor) to engage in certain positive behaviors that benefit the target. Providing useful insights notwithstanding, social exchange theory as a broad conceptual paradigm has been criticized in a recent review for its "theoretically imprecise behavioral predictions" (Cropanzano et al., 2017: 1). Part of the reason that social exchange theory is not as precise as desired is due to the lack of theoretical development of its boundary conditions. Addressing this issue, Cropanzano and colleagues (2017) suggest that individual differences, such as the targets' beliefs in the norm of reciprocity, determine their likelihood of repaying the positive treatment. Following the same logic, yet focusing on the characteristics of the actor instead, we draw from expectancy-violation theory to investigate how targets respond to positive behaviors based on the extent to which such positive behaviors are expected from the actor. Our finding of leader traditionality as an important theoretical condition that bounds the effect of social exchange between servant leaders and their followers suggests that in the context of social exchange processes, such positive inconsistencies are perceived more favorably by followers.

# **Implications for Practice**

Our results provide encouraging news to inspiring traditional managers who may be reluctant to overcome their tendency to protect hierarchy, to enact servant leadership to harness the benefits of follower trust. In addition, while the current research focuses on the moderating role of leaders' traditionality, it is important to note that the relationship between servant leadership, trust, and subsequent follower OCB was positive for leaders with varying degrees of traditionality. Thus, we recommend that managers exhibit servant leadership behaviors, regardless of their traditionality level.

## **Limitations and Future Research**

We note some limitations of our research and suggest directions for future research. First, there are two empirical observations that deserve to be highlighted in Study 3. The variance components for trust in the leader in Study 3 indicated that the majority of the variance was at the follower level. This is consistent with the variance components for servant leadership such that the majority of the variance in followers' perceptions of servant leadership was at the follower level rather than the leader level. Our result may suggest the value of understanding followers' individual perceptions of servant leadership. In addition, we note that for both theoretical and analytical reasons, we allowed residuals of random slopes to correlate with each other at the leader level (Preacher et al., 2016). We advise readers to exercise caution when interpreting our study findings in light of these considerations.

Second, we only examined the social exchange mechanism as captured by trust in the leader in the current research. We focused on trust in the leader because trust has been considered an essential element in servant leadership since its inception (Greenleaf, 1970). We acknowledge that other social exchange mechanisms are not examined in the current research (e.g., obligation, reciprocation), and future research could extend our findings by investigating

alternative social exchange processes (Colquitt et al., 2014). For example, the social learning perspective (Liden et al., 2014; Wu et al., 2021) posits that by observing leaders' behavior, followers learn "the kinds of actions in which they should engage" (Antonakis et al., 2016: 304). According to the unexpected events theory of learning (Frensch et al., 2003), when followers actively search for a cause for unexpected servant leader behaviors from their leader who possesses traditional values, the social learning process becomes more effective, leading to greater follower serving behavior.

Third, an exciting and fruitful direction is to explore the duration of the expectation violation effect. The promise is that as individuals experience unexpected leader behaviors repeatedly, they may gradually adjust their expectations, resulting in expectancy violation diminishing over time. In our current research, we investigated this idea by administering two rounds of expectancy violation manipulation to the participants in a supplemental analysis.

While we observed expectancy violation across both rounds of experiments, we note that the magnitude of the effect is descriptively smaller in the second round, suggesting that the impact of expectation violation can potentially diminish over time. Further, in the workplace, employees may adjust their expectations and react accordingly, raising questions regarding the consistency of the expectancy violation effect. Therefore, we caution that our results regarding the repeating effect are suggestive rather than conclusive. Indeed, comprehending the duration of the expectancy violation effect may require a dynamic perspective and a longitudinal field study design that tracks the changes in the effect over time.

#### Conclusion

The current research, consisting of three primary studies (two experiments and a field investigation) and three supplemental studies, offers evidence supporting the moderating effect

of leader traditionality in enhancing the positive association between servant leadership, follower trust in the leader, and their subsequent OCB. Our findings propose an opportunity to enhance social exchange theory by integrating it with expectancy-violation theory to identify crucial boundary conditions that determine the strength of social exchange relationships.

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#### APPENDIX A: MANIPULATION MATERIALS AND MEASURES

### **Manipulation Materials in Study 1**

High Leader Traditionality Condition. In this simulation, imagine you have been working in a consulting firm for six months. Pat is your director. As you and your coworkers observe, Pat is a traditional leader who respects hierarchical relationships in life. Within the organization, Pat addresses the leaders of the upper management by title (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr.) instead of first name and insists that you and your coworkers do the same (i.e., address Pat by title). In terms of work, Pat believes that senior management and those with authority have higher status and greater power and, therefore, always defers to them and follows their instructions. Pat is not comfortable handling disputes when senior persons are present. Outside of work, Pat has commented that children should respect people who are respected by their parents and that citizens should obey the decisions made by the chief government official. In addition, you once heard Pat's comment stating, "Really? Stephanie did not change to Ryan's [her husband] last name? That is so inappropriate."

Low Leader Traditionality Condition. In this simulation, imagine you have been working in a consulting firm for six months. Pat is your director. As you and your coworkers observe, Pat is not a traditional leader who is constrained by hierarchical relationships in life. Within the organization, Pat addresses the leaders of the upper management by first name instead of title (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr.) and insists that you and your coworkers do the same (i.e., address Pat by first name). In terms of work, Pat believes in the value of speaking up to senior management and those with authority and does not always rely on them to handle disputes. Outside of work, Pat has commented that children do not always have to agree with their parents and that citizens should feel free to openly criticize the decisions made by the chief government official. In addition, you once heard Pat's comment stating, "I'm aware that Stephanie did not change to Ryan's [her husband] last name. I think that is becoming more understandable."

## Measures in Study 1

# Servant leadership (Adapted from Liden et al., 2015 to measure expectation of servant leadership)

- 1. I expect that Pat would be able to tell if something work-related is going wrong.
- 2. I expect that Pat would make my career development a priority.
- 3. I expect that I would seek help from Pat if I had a personal problem.
- 4. I expect that Pat would emphasize the importance of giving back to the community.
- 5. I expect that Pat would put my best interests ahead of his/her own.
- 6. I expect that Pat would give me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.
- 7. I would not expect Pat to compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.

### Traditionality (Farh et al., 1997)

- 1. Pat believes the best way to avoid mistakes is to follow the instructions of senior persons.
- 2. Pat probably believes before marriage, a woman should subordinate herself to her father, after marriage, to her husband.

- 3. Pat believes that the chief government official is like the head of a household and that the citizen should obey his/her decisions on all state matters.
- 4. Pat believes those who are respected by parents should be respected by their children.
- 5. Pat believes when people are in dispute, they should ask the most senior person to decide who is right.

## Manipulation Materials in Study 2 (Wu et al., 2021)

**High Servant Leadership Condition.** Specifically, you have experienced the following in your interaction with Pat since you started in your position. Your father broke his arm and needed some extra help during a few weeks of recovery. Your supervisor Pat allowed you to work some flexible hours during that time, while putting greater effort to coordinate teamwork and make sure that everyone is cooperative of your new work schedule. Four months ago, a new project became available which you knew would be a good career-related experience for you, but you were on another project which better fit your current skills. You asked Pat to be moved to the new project even though it meant that you would be working more slowly until you learned the new set of skills. You were happy when Pat showed total support for your career development and allowed you to move to the new project, without mentioning the challenge to find a replacement person for your current project. Not long after you started working on the new project, you encountered an unexpected challenge that threatened to delay the completion date. Pat was quick to recognize that there was a problem with the project even though you had not yet fully understood the fact that the project had encountered a major problem. Despite the high profile nature of the project, Pat showed confidence in you by empowering you to find and implement your solution for the problem. Twice during the past few months, Pat has had the opportunity to fulfill self-interest by making ethically questionable decisions that may affect you negatively. In both cases Pat clearly refused to bend any ethical rules, setting a good example for you. In addition to your regular jobs, Pat encourages you to spend time volunteering for causes that give back to the community, even if those volunteer opportunities are small or unrelated to official corporate programs.

Low Servant Leadership Condition. Since you started in your position, you have experienced the following in your interaction with Pat. You have noticed that your supervisor Pat is usually fair, but that decisions are made to maximize how upper management views the productivity of the team and, by extension, Pat. Sometimes this makes you look less productive to upper management, but Pat does not believe that personal or professional concern for you should get in the way of meeting group performance benchmarks. Four months ago, a new project became available which you knew would be good career experience for you, but you were already on another project which better fit your current skills. You asked Pat to be moved to the new project, but Pat kept you on the old project because it would hurt the company if you worked more slowly as you tried to learn the skills needed for the new project. More recently, you started to encounter a number of work-related problems that threatened to seriously delay a delivery deadline. Initially, Pat failed to recognize that something was going wrong at work. Then, after you explained the problems and suggested some solutions, Pat refused to let you handle the situation in your own way, telling you what to do instead. As part of the solution, Pat lied to the client about what your team was delivering to them. Although this tactic did result in successfully meeting the deadline, you believe that it did not adhere to the ethics training that you regularly receive. In addition to your regular jobs, you would like to spend time volunteering for causes that give back to the community. However, Pat was not supportive and told you that those volunteer opportunities were small or unrelated to official corporate programs.

## Measures in Study 2

## Trust in the leader (Mayer & Gavin, 2005)

- 1. If I had my way, I wouldn't let Pat have any influence over issues that are important to me. (R)
- 2. I would be willing to let Pat have complete control over my future in this company.
- 3. I really wish I had a good way to keep an eye on Pat. (R)
- 4. I would be comfortable giving Pat a task or problem which was critical to me, even if I could not monitor his/her actions.
- 5. I would tell Pat about mistakes I've made on the job, even if they could damage my reputation.
- 6. I would share my opinion about sensitive issues with Pat even if my opinion were unpopular.
- 7. I would be afraid of what Pat might do to me at work. (R)
- 8. If Pat asked why a problem happened, I would speak freely even if I were partly to blame.
- 9. If someone questioned Pat's motives, I would give Pat the benefit of the doubt.
- 10. If Pat asked me for something, I would respond without thinking about whether it might be held against me.

## OCB (Williams & Anderson, 1991)

Because of my interaction with Pat, I would...

- 1. Help others who have been absent.
- 2. Help others who have heavy workloads.
- 3. Assist Pat with his/her work (when not asked).
- 4. Take time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries.
- 5. Go out of way to help new employees.
- 6. Take a personal interest in other employees.
- 7. Pass along information to co-workers.
- 8. Make sure my attendance at work is above the norm.
- 9. Give advance notice when unable to come to work.
- 10. Take undeserved work breaks. (R)
- 11. Spend a great deal of time with personal phone conversations. (R)
- 12. Complain about insignificant things at work. (R)
- 13. Conserve and protect organizational property.
- 14. Adhere to informal rules devised to maintain order.

#### Servant leadership (Liden et al., 2015)

- 1. Pat can tell if something work-related is going wrong.
- 2. Pat makes my career development a priority.
- 3. I would seek help from Pat if I had a personal problem.
- 4. Pat emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.
- 5. Pat puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.
- 6. Pat gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.
- 7. Pat would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.

## Measures in Study 3

### Servant leadership (Liden et al., 2015)

- 1. My supervisor can tell if something work-related is going wrong.
- 2. My supervisor makes my career development a priority.
- 3. I would seek help from my supervisor if I had a personal problem.
- 4. My supervisor emphasizes the importance of giving back to the community.
- 5. My supervisor puts my best interests ahead of his/her own.
- 6. My supervisor gives me the freedom to handle difficult situations in the way that I feel is best.
- 7. My supervisor would NOT compromise ethical principles in order to achieve success.

## Traditionality (Farh et al., 1997)

- 1. The best way to avoid mistakes is to follow the instructions of senior persons.
- 2. Before marriage, a woman should subordinate herself to her father, after marriage, to her husband.
- 3. The chief government official is like the head of a household, the citizen should obey his/her decisions on all state matters.
- 4. Children should respect those people who are respected by their parents.
- 5. When people are in dispute, they should ask the most senior person to decide who is right.

## Trust in the leader (McCallister, 1995)

- 1. My supervisor and I have a sharing relationship. We can both freely share our ideas, feelings, and hopes.
- 2. I can talk freely to my supervisor about difficulties I am having at work and know that (s)he will want to listen.
- 3. My supervisor and I would both feel a sense of loss if one of us was transferred and we could no longer work together.
- 4. If I shared my problems with my supervisor, I know (s)he would respond constructively and caringly.
- 5. I would have to say that my supervisor and I have both made considerable emotional investments in our working relationship.
- 6. My supervisor approaches his/her job with professionalism and dedication.
- 7. Given my supervisor's track record, I see no reason to doubt my supervisor's competence and preparation for the job.
- 8. I can rely on my supervisor not to make my job more difficult by careless work.
- 9. Most people, even those who aren't close friends of my supervisor, trust and respect him/her as a coworker.
- 10. Other work associates of mine who must interact with my supervisor consider him/her to be trustworthy.
- 11. If people knew more about my supervisor and his/her background, they would be more concerned and monitor his/her performance more closely. (R)

## OCB (Williams & Anderson, 1991)

This employee...

- 1. Helps others who have been absent.
- 2. Helps others who have heavy workloads.

- 3. Assists me with my work (when not asked).
- 4. Takes time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries.
- 5. Goes out of way to help new employees.
- 6. Takes a personal interest in other employees.
- 7. Passes along information to co-workers.
- 8. Attendance at work is above the norm.
- 9. Gives advance notice when unable to come to work.
- 10. Takes undeserved work breaks. (R)
- 11. Spends a great deal of time with personal phone conversations. (R)
- 12. Complains about insignificant things at work. (R)
- 13. Conserves and protects organizational property.
- 14. Adheres to informal rules devised to maintain order.

## Additional Measures in Supplemental Study 1

# Paternalistic leadership (Adapted from Cheng et al., 2004 to measure expectation of paternalistic leadership)

### **Authoritarianism**

- 1. I expect that Pat would ask me to obey his/her instructions completely.
- 2. I expect that Pat would determine all decisions in the organization whether they are important or not.
- 3. I expect that Pat would always have the last say in the meeting.
- 4. I expect that Pat would always behave in a commanding fashion in front of employees.
- 5. I expect that I would feel pressured when working with Pat.
- 6. I expect that Pat would exercise strict discipline over subordinates.
- 7. I expect that Pat would scold us when we can't accomplish our tasks.
- 8. I expect that Pat would emphasize that our group must have the best performance of all the units in the organization.
- 9. I expect that we would have to follow Pat's rules to get things done. If not, Pat would punish us severely.

### **Morality**

- 1. I expect that Pat would not avenge a personal wrong in the name of public interest when he/she is offended.
- 2. I expect that Pat would employ people according to their virtues and would not envy others' abilities and virtues.
- 3. I expect that Pat would not use his/her authority to seek special privileges for himself/herself.
- 4. I expect that Pat would not take the credit for my achievements and contributions for himself/herself.
- 5. I expect that Pat would not take advantage of me for personal gain.
- 6. I expect that Pat would not use *guanxi* (personal relationships) or back-door practices to obtain illicit personal gains.

#### Benevolence

- 1. I expect that Pat would be like a family member when he/she gets along with us.
- 2. I expect that Pat would devote all his/her energy to taking care of me.
- 3. I expect that beyond work relations, Pat would express concern about my daily life.
- 4. I expect that Pat would ordinarily show a kind concern for my comfort.

- 5. I expect that Pat would help me when I'm in an emergency.
- 6. I expect that Pat would take very thoughtful care of subordinates who have spent a long time with him/her.
- 7. I expect that Pat would meet my needs according to my personal requests.
- 8. I expect that Pat would encourage me when I encounter arduous problems.
- 9. I expect that Pat would take good care of my family members as well.
- 10. I expect that Pat would try to understand what the cause is when I don't perform well.
- 11. I expect that Pat would handle what is difficult to do or manage in everyday life for me.

## Additional Measures in Supplemental Study 2

# Paternalistic leadership (Cheng et al., 2004)

#### **Authoritarianism**

- 1. My supervisor asks me to obey his/her instructions completely.
- 2. My supervisor determines all decisions in the organization whether they are important or not.
- 3. My supervisor always has the last say in the meeting.
- 4. My supervisor always behaves in a commanding fashion in front of employees.
- 5. I feel pressured when working with him/her.
- 6. My supervisor exercises strict discipline over subordinates.
- 7. My supervisor scolds us when we can't accomplish our tasks.
- 8. My supervisor emphasizes that our group must have the best performance of all the units in the organization.
- 9. We have to follow his/her rules to get things done. If not, he/she punishes us severely.

### **Morality**

- 1. My supervisor would not avenge a personal wrong in the name of public interest when he/she is offended.
- 2. My supervisor employs people according to their virtues and does not envy others' abilities and virtues.
- 3. My supervisor would not use his/her authority to seek special privileges for himself/herself.
- 4. My supervisor doesn't take the credit for my achievements and contributions for himself/herself.
- 5. My supervisor does not take advantage of me for personal gain.
- 6. My supervisor does not use *guanxi* (personal relationships) or back-door practices to obtain illicit personal gains.

#### Benevolence

- 1. My supervisor is like a family member when he/she gets along with us.
- 2. My supervisor devotes all his/her energy to taking care of me.
- 3. Beyond work relations, my supervisor expresses concern about my daily life.
- 4. My supervisor ordinarily shows a kind concern for my comfort.
- 5. My supervisor will help me when I'm in an emergency.
- 6. My supervisor takes very thoughtful care of subordinates who have spent a long time with him/her.
- 7. My supervisor meets my needs according to my personal requests.
- 8. My supervisor encourages me when I encounter arduous problems.
- 9. My supervisor takes good care of my family members as well.
- 10. My supervisor tries to understand what the cause is when I don't perform well.

11. My supervisor handles what is difficult to do or manage in everyday life for me.

# Traditionality (Adapted from Farh et al., 1997 to measure leader traditionality from the follower's perspective)

- 1. My supervisor believes the best way to avoid mistakes is to follow the instructions of senior persons.
- 2. My supervisor believes before marriage, a woman should subordinate herself to her father, after marriage, to her husband.
- 3. My supervisor believes that the chief government official is like the head of a household and that the citizen should obey his/her decisions on all state matters.
- 4. My supervisor believes those who are respected by parents should be respected by their children.
- 5. My supervisor believes when people are in dispute, they should ask the most senior person to decide who is right.

## Additional Manipulation Materials in Supplemental Study 3a

High Servant Leadership Condition (Second Manipulation). Today, you experienced the following in your work environment. Chris's 4-year-old child was not feeling well and had to stay home. Your supervisor Pat granted remote work right away so that Chris could better balance work and family needs. Also, you were interested in attending a conference that can help develop your professional network. You approached Pat and asked for permission to take three days off next week to attend the conference. Despite having your team project due in two weeks, Pat happily agreed and helped to coordinate with the team to ensure timely completion of the project. Upon coordinating the tasks, Pat discovered that there was a problem in the project report. Instead of blaming the team and telling you what to do, Pat showed understanding and allowed the team to resolve the issue in your own way. While reviewing an invoice with you, you and Pat noticed that a client had overpaid for a duplicate item without discovery of the mistake. Pat immediately asked you to contact the client and issue a refund. At the end of the day, Casey asked to leave early for a volunteering job at a local public school. Pat agreed and encouraged everyone to give back to the community as much as possible.

Low Servant Leadership Condition (Second Manipulation). Today, you experienced the following in your work environment. Chris's 4-year-old child was not feeling well and had to stay home. Your supervisor Pat did not allow Chris to work from home and insisted that Chris get a sitter to take care of the child. Also, you were interested in attending a conference that can help develop your professional network. You approached Pat and asked for permission to take three days off next week to attend the conference. However, Pat denied your request and said that your team project would be due in two weeks. While discussing the team project, Pat discovered that there was a problem in the project report. Rather than showing understanding and allowing the team to resolve the issue in your own way, Pat blamed the team and told you what to do. While reviewing an invoice with you, you and Pat noticed that a client had overpaid for a duplicate item without the discovery of the mistake. Pat said there was no need to do anything as the client did not catch the mistake. At the end of the day, Casey asked to leave early for a volunteering job at a local public school. Pat did not approve Casey's request and said that community volunteering activities were not work-related.

# Additional Measures in Supplemental Study 3

# Expectancy violation (Adapted from Jacoby-Senghor et al., 2015) in Supplemental Study 3a

- 1. Today, Pat acted in ways that are inconsistent with what I expect based on the scenario.
- 2. Considering the scenario, Pat acted in an unexpected way today.
- 3. Considering the description of Pat in the scenario, Pat's behavior today was not typical.
- 4. Based on the scenario, Pat behaved in ways that are unexpected today.

## Valenced expectancy violation (manipulation check items) in Supplemental Study 3b

- 1. Today, Pat exhibited positive behaviors that exceeded my expectation based on the scenario.
- 2. Today, Pat exhibited negative behaviors that failed my expectation based on the scenario.
- 3. Today, Pat exhibited positive behaviors that were consistent with my expectation based on the scenario.
- 4. Today, Pat exhibited negative behaviors that were consistent with my expectation based on the scenario.

#### **APPENDIX B: SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY 1**

### Method

**Participants, Design and Procedure**. We collected a separate and larger sample to (1) replicate the findings in Study 1 and (2) test whether people's expectation of paternalistic leadership is influenced by leader traditionality. To this end, we included paternalistic leadership to explore whether the findings also apply to paternalistic leadership. We recruited working employees from the United States via Prolific.co using the custom-screening function provided by the platform. Responses from 200 participants were collected. Thirteen were excluded as they did not pass our careless-response check questions. Our final sample consisted of 187 participants (86.6% female; 69.0% White/Caucasian). Their average age was 24.55 years (*SD* = 6.58). Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions of leader traditionality using the same manipulation materials employed in Study 1. They first read a scenario that was assigned to their condition and then provided their responses to the survey questions.

**Measures**. We measured servant leadership by using the same 7-item scale in Study 1 ( $\alpha$  = .92). Paternalistic leadership was measured by adapting the 26-item scale from Cheng et al. (2004) including 9 items for authoritarianism ( $\alpha$  = .96), 6 items for morality ( $\alpha$  = .91), and 11 items for benevolence ( $\alpha$  = .96). All 26 items are presented in the Appendix A.

**Manipulation check**. We used the same 5-item measure ( $\alpha$  = .97) from Farh et al. (1997) to check the effectiveness of our manipulation. An independent sample *t*-test on participants' perceptions of leader traditionality shows that there was a significant mean difference between the two conditions, t(185) = 28.22, p < .001, with  $M_{\text{high leader traditionality}} = 6.42$  and  $M_{\text{low leader traditionality}} = 2.40$ , providing support for the effectiveness of our manipulation.

#### **Results**

We conducted an independent sample t-test to examine whether there is a significant mean difference between two groups of participants regarding their expectations of servant leadership. As shown in Table A1, results indicate that participants in the high leader traditionality condition reported a lower level of expectation of servant leadership ( $M_{\text{high leader}}$  traditionality = 2.84) than those in the low leader traditionality condition ( $M_{\text{low leader traditionality}} = 5.20$ ), with t(185) = -16.69, p < .001. Thus, the results replicated the findings in Study 1. In terms of paternalistic leadership, participants in the high leader traditionality condition reported a higher level of expectation of the authoritarianism dimension of paternalistic leadership ( $M_{\text{high leader}}$  traditionality = 5.86) than their counterparts in the low leader traditionality condition ( $M_{\text{low leader}}$  traditionality = 2.87), with t(185) = 19.86, p < .001. In addition, high leader traditionality condition was associated with lower levels of expectation of the morality and benevolence components of paternalistic leadership ( $M_{\text{high leader traditionality}} = 3.47$  and 2.68, respectively, for morality and benevolence) than the low leader traditionality condition ( $M_{\text{low leader traditionality}} = 5.29$  and 4.87, respectively, for morality and benevolence). The t test results were t(185) = -11.38, p < .001 and t(185) = -15.06, p < .001, for morality and benevolence, respectively.

Table A1. Leader traditionality and expectations of servant leadership and paternalistic leadership (Supplemental Study 1)

High	Low	t tosts
 traditionality	traditionality	t tests

Servant leadership	M = 2.84	M = 5.20	t(185) = -16.69, p < .001
Paternalistic leadership- Authoritarianism	M = 5.86	M = 2.87	t(185) = 19.86, p < .001
Paternalistic leadership- Morality	M = 3.47	M = 5.29	t(185) = -11.38, p < .001
Paternalistic leadership- Benevolence	M = 2.68	M = 4.87	t(185) = -15.06, p < .001

#### Discussion

In sum, results of Supplemental Study 1 were successful in replicating our findings in Study 1 regarding the effect of leader traditionality on followers' expectations of servant leadership. That is, when followers perceive higher leader traditionality, they expect leaders to be less likely to engage in servant leadership behaviors. Further, considering the theoretical relevance of paternalistic leadership to leader traditionality, we explored whether followers' perceptions of leader traditionality also influence their expectation of leaders' engagement in paternalistic behaviors. Results showed that when followers perceive leaders to be higher in traditional values, they expect their leaders to be more likely to engage in authoritarian paternalistic leadership behaviors and less likely to exhibit the other two dimensions of paternalistic leadership (i.e., morality and benevolence). Given these findings, we conducted a second supplemental study, Supplemental Study 2, to explore whether paternalistic leadership also interacts with leader traditionality in predicting follower trust in the leader.

#### APPENDIX C: SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY 2

#### Method

**Participants, Design and Procedure**. We collected a separate sample to replicate the findings for H1 (i.e., the interactive effect between servant leadership and leader traditionality on trust in the leader) by measuring leader traditionality from the follower's perspective. In addition, we included paternalistic leadership as a theoretically relevant leadership style in our data collection to explore whether the findings also apply to paternalistic leadership. Using the custom-screening function of Prolific.co, we recruited U.S.-based full-time employees who had a supervisor. The participants were instructed to complete an online survey which included our study measures and a demographic survey. They were asked to answer the questions based on their work experiences with their current supervisors. Responses from 120 participants were collected. Data from three participants were excluded as they did not pass our careless-response check questions. The final sample consisted of 117 participants (72.6% female; 79.5% White/Caucasian). Their average age was 29.21 years (SD = 6.81); average organizational tenure was 3.86 years (SD = 3.25); average dyadic tenure was 2.65 years (SD = 2.43).

**Measures**. We measured servant leadership by using the same 7-item scale in Study 3 ( $\alpha$  = .83). Paternalistic leadership was measured by using the 26-item scale from Cheng et al. (2004), including a 9-item scale for authoritarianism ( $\alpha$  = .90), a 6-item scale for morality ( $\alpha$  = .85), and an 11-item scale for benevolence ( $\alpha$  = .92). Leader traditionality was measured by adapting the same 5-item scale in Study 3 to capture followers' perspective ( $\alpha$  = .82). Trust in the leader was measured by using the same 11-item scale in Study 3 ( $\alpha$  = .88). All survey items are presented in Appendix A.

### **Results**

Table A2 presents the results. We found a positive interaction term between servant leadership and leadership traditionality in predicting trust in the leader (b = .11, SE = .04, p = .01), providing initial evidence to replicate our support for H1. Further, simple slope analysis shows that the relationship between servant leadership and trust in the leader was stronger when leader traditionality was high (b = .89, SE = .06, p < .001) than when leader traditionality was low (b = .63, SE = .08, p < .001). Figure A1 presents the interaction plot. Therefore, consistent with our findings in Study 1 and Study 2, results from Supplemental Study 2 lend support for H1.

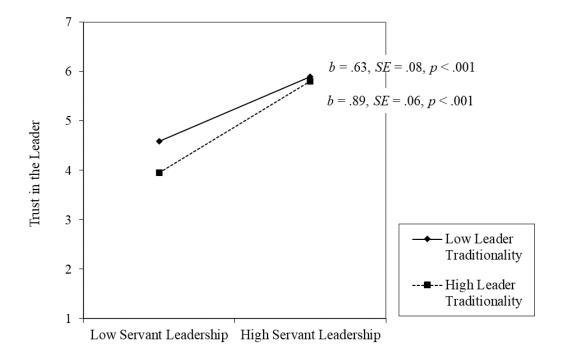
Table A2. Regression analysis for the interaction effect of servant leadership/paternalistic leadership and leader traditionality on trust in the leader (Supplemental Study 2)

	Trust in the Leader			
Variables	$\overline{b}$	SE		
Organizational tenure	00	.03		
Dyadic tenure	.04	.03		
Servant leadership	.76***	.05		
Leader traditionality	15**	.05		
Servant leadership * leader traditionality	.11**	.04		
$R^2$		74		
Organizational tenure	02	.05		
Dyadic tenure	.12	$.06^{*}$		

Leader traditionality.02.11Authoritarianism * leader traditionality.17**.05 $R^2$ .20Organizational tenure.03.03Dyadic tenure.06.04Morality.63**.06Leader traditionality11.06Morality * leader traditionality.10*.05 $R^2$ .62Organizational tenure.002.03Dyadic tenure.02.04Benevolence.72***.05Leader traditionality20***.05Benevolence * leader traditionality.09*.04 $R^2$ .74	Authoritarianism	38**	.11
$R^2$ .20         Organizational tenure       .03       .03         Dyadic tenure       .06       .04         Morality       .63***       .06         Leader traditionality      11       .06         Morality * leader traditionality       .10*       .05 $R^2$ .62         Organizational tenure       .002       .03         Dyadic tenure       .02       .04         Benevolence       .72***       .05         Leader traditionality      20***       .05         Benevolence * leader traditionality       .09*       .04	Leader traditionality	.02	.11
Organizational tenure.03.03Dyadic tenure.06.04Morality.63***.06Leader traditionality11.06Morality * leader traditionality.10*.05 $R^2$ .62Organizational tenure.002.03Dyadic tenure.02.04Benevolence.72***.05Leader traditionality20***.05Benevolence * leader traditionality.09*.04	Authoritarianism * leader traditionality	.17**	.05
Dyadic tenure.06.04Morality.63***.06Leader traditionality11.06Morality * leader traditionality.10*.05 $R^2$ .62Organizational tenure.002.03Dyadic tenure.02.04Benevolence.72***.05Leader traditionality20***.05Benevolence * leader traditionality.09*.04	$R^2$	••	20
Morality $.63^{***}$ $.06$ Leader traditionality $11$ $.06$ Morality * leader traditionality $.10^*$ $.05$ $R^2$ $.62$ Organizational tenure $.002$ $.03$ Dyadic tenure $.02$ $.04$ Benevolence $.72^{***}$ $.05$ Leader traditionality $20^{***}$ $.05$ Benevolence * leader traditionality $.09^*$ $.04$	Organizational tenure	.03	.03
Leader traditionality11.06Morality * leader traditionality.10*.05 $R^2$ .62Organizational tenure.002.03Dyadic tenure.02.04Benevolence.72***.05Leader traditionality20***.05Benevolence * leader traditionality.09*.04	Dyadic tenure		.04
Morality * leader traditionality $.10*$ $.05$ $R^2$ $.62$ Organizational tenure $.002$ $.03$ Dyadic tenure $.02$ $.04$ Benevolence $.72^{***}$ $.05$ Leader traditionality $20^{***}$ $.05$ Benevolence * leader traditionality $.09*$ $.04$	Morality	.63***	.06
$R^2$ .62Organizational tenure.002.03Dyadic tenure.02.04Benevolence.72***.05Leader traditionality20***.05Benevolence * leader traditionality.09*.04	Leader traditionality	11	.06
Organizational tenure .002 .03  Dyadic tenure .02 .04  Benevolence .72*** .05  Leader traditionality .09* .04  Benevolence * leader traditionality .09* .04	Morality * leader traditionality	.10*	.05
Dyadic tenure .02 .04 Benevolence .72*** .05 Leader traditionality20*** .05 Benevolence * leader traditionality .09* .04	$R^2$	.(	62
Benevolence .72*** .05 Leader traditionality20*** .05 Benevolence * leader traditionality .09* .04	Organizational tenure	.002	.03
Leader traditionality20*** .05 Benevolence * leader traditionality .09* .04	Dyadic tenure	.02	.04
Benevolence * leader traditionality .09* .04	Benevolence	.72***	.05
2	Leader traditionality	20***	.05
$R^2$ .74	Benevolence * leader traditionality	.09*	.04
N 117 * . 07 ** . 01 *** . 001	_ = -	•	74

Note. N = 117. p < .05; p < .01; p < .001.

Figure A1. The interactive effect of servant leadership and leader traditionality on trust in the leader (Supplemental Study 2)



Next, we explored whether paternalistic leadership interacted with leader traditionality in predicting trust in the leader. As shown in Table A2, we found a significant interaction between

paternalistic leadership and leadership traditionality on trust in the leader, with b = .17, SE = .05, p < .001 for authoritarianism, with b = .10, SE = .05, p = .03 for morality, and with b = .09, SE = .04, p = .03 for benevolence. Simple slope analyses show that the effect of authoritarianism is negative when leader traditionality was low (b = -.58, SE = .15, p < .001) and nonsignificant when leader traditionality was high (b = -.18, SE = .11, p = .12). Meanwhile, when leader traditionality was low, the effect of morality (b = .50, SE = .10, p < .001) and benevolence (b = .62, SE = .09, p < .001) were weaker than when leader traditionality was high, with b = .75, SE = .07, p < .001 for morality and b = .82, SE = .05, p < .001 for benevolence.

### **Discussion**

Taken together, we found evidence in Supplemental Study 2 that servant leadership interacts with follower perceptions of leader traditionality in predicting follower trust in the leader. It is noteworthy that by measuring leader traditionality from the followers' perspective, we achieve a research design that complements Study 3, where leader traditionality was reported by leaders, solidifying support for our H1.

The second purpose of our Supplemental Study 2 was to investigate whether paternalistic leadership also interacts with leader traditionality in impacting follower trust in the leader.

We found an interesting moderating role of leader traditionality for the effect of paternalistic leadership on trust in the leader, such that the negative effect of authoritarianism and on follower trust in the leader are augmented when followers perceive their leaders to be lower in traditionality values, while the positive effects of morality and benevolence are stronger when followers perceive their leaders to be higher in traditionality. Overall, our findings in Supplemental Study 2 provide support for expectancy-violation theory that unfavorable behaviors are more negatively perceived when they are unexpected than expected, while favorable behaviors are more positively perceived when unexpected than expected (Hernandez et al., 2019; Sheldon et al., 2006).

#### APPENDIX D: SUPPLEMENTAL STUDY 3

This supplemental study has two major purposes. First, we aim to empirically assess perceptions of expectancy violation induced by the interactive effect of servant leadership and leadership traditionality as the drive for trust in the leader. Second, we aim to explore the effects of repeated violations. Additionally, to strengthen the validity of findings, we include follower trust in coworkers as an outcome that is unlikely to be subject to the expectancy violation effect we proposed. We take an experimental-causal-chain design (Spencer, Zanna, & Fong, 2005) to provide causal evidence for the role of expectancy violation as the mechanism. Specifically, we first recruit a sample (Study 3a) to verify that servant leadership and leader traditionality interactively influences follower perceptions of expectancy violation. Then, in a separate sample (Study 3b), we examine how valenced expectancy violation (positive violation, positive consistency, negative violation, and negative consistency) influences follower trust in the leader.

# Supplemental Study 3a: Servant Leadership, Leader Traditionality, and Follower **Perceptions of Expectancy Violation**

### Method

Participants, Design and Procedure. Following the procedure in Study 2, we employed a 2 x 2 between-subject experimental design to manipulate servant leadership and leader traditionality and measure follower perceptions of expectancy violation directly. Furthermore, to explore the possibility of repeated violations, we added another round of servant leadership manipulation and measured participant perceptions of expectancy violations for a second time. We used the custom-screening function of Prolific.co to recruit US-based full-time employees who had a supervisor and collected responses from 200 participants. After removing responses from participants who did not pass our careless-response check questions, the final sample consisted of 191 participants (45.5% female; 76.4% White/Caucasian). Their average age was 36.72 years (SD = 10.13); average organizational tenure was 5.11 years (SD = 11.95); 99% had a High School Diploma or above.

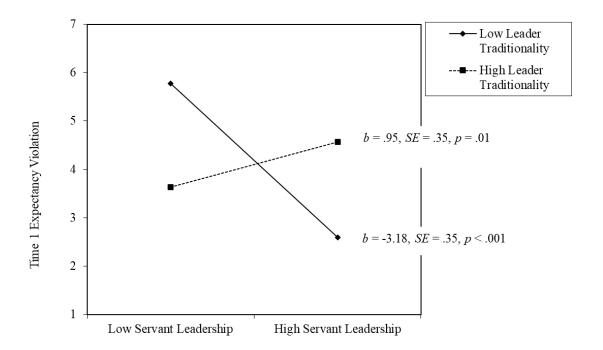
**Measures**. We measured manipulation checks for servant leadership ( $\alpha = .95$ , time 1;  $\alpha$ = .97, time 2) and leader traditionality ( $\alpha$  = .98) with the same scales as in Study 2. Perceptions of expectancy violation ( $\alpha = .98$ , time 1;  $\alpha = .99$ , time 2) was measured with 4 items by adapting the scale from Jacoby-Senghor et al. (2015). A sample item is, "Today, Pat acted in ways that are inconsistent with what I expect based on the scenario." The manipulation materials and survey items are presented in Appendix A in the revised paper.

Manipulation check. To check our manipulation of leader traditionality, we ran an independent sample t-test. The result shows that there was a significant mean difference between the two conditions of participants' perceptions of leader traditionality, t(189) = 33.43, p < .001, with  $M_{\text{high leader traditionality}} = 6.49$  and  $M_{\text{low leader traditionality}} = 2.13$ . Then, we ran two t-tests and found that there was a significant mean difference between the high servant leadership (M = 5.27, time 1; M = 5.72, time 2) and low servant leadership conditions (M = 2.40, time 1; M = 1.73, time 2) for both rounds of servant leadership manipulations, with t(189) = 18.69, p < .001 for the first round and t(189) = 34.08, p < .001 for the second round. Overall, the results provide support for the effectiveness of our manipulations of leader traditionality and servant leadership.

### Results

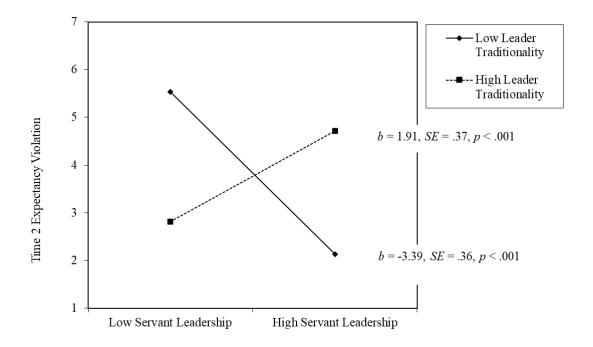
We found a significant interaction term between servant leadership and leadership traditionality in predicting follower perceptions of expectancy violations (b = 4.12, SE = .50, p < .001) for the first-round manipulation. Simple slope analysis shows that the relationship between servant leadership and perceptions of expectation violation was positive when leader traditionality was high (b = 0.95, SE = .35, p = .01) and it was negative when leader traditionality was low (b = -3.18, SE = .35, p < .001). Figure A2 presents the interaction plot.

Figure A2. Interactional Effect between Servant Leadership (First Manipulation) and Leader Traditionality on Perceptions of Expectancy Violation



With respect to the second-round manipulation, we again found the interaction between servant leadership and leader traditionality to be significant in predicting follower expectancy violation (b = 5.30, SE = .52, p < .001). Further, simple slope analysis confirms that the relationship between servant leadership and perceptions of expectation violation was positive when leader traditionality was high (b = 1.91, SE = .37, p < .001) and it was negative when leader traditionality was low (b = -3.39, SE = .36, p < .001). Figure A3 presents the interaction plot.

Figure A3. Interactional Effect between Servant Leadership (Second Manipulation) and Leader Traditionality on Perceptions of Expectancy Violation



# Supplemental Study 3b: Valenced Expectancy Violation and Trust in the Leader

#### Method

**Participants, Design and Procedure**. With the confirmation that servant leadership and leader traditionality interactively influence follower perceptions of expectancy violation, we proceeded to test how valenced expectancy violation and consistency are related to follower trust in the leader. To do so, we adapted the scenario materials from Supplemental Study 3a to create four valenced expectancy violation conditions, i.e., positive violation, positive consistency, negative violation, and negative consistency. We again recruited US-based full-time employees who had a supervisor via Prolifics.co. In total, we collected responses from 600 participants and retained 574 in the final sample after removing responses that failed our careless-response check questions. With respect to the final sample, 45.5% of the participants were female and 71.3% were White/Caucasian. Their average age was 38.20 years (SD = 11.51); average organizational tenure was 6.69 years (SD = 7.33); 99.5% had a High School Diploma or above.

**Measures**. We measured valenced expectancy violation with four items that correspond to each of the four conditions. For example, the item for the positive violation condition was, "Today, Pat exhibited positive behaviors that exceeded my expectation based on the scenario." All four items are presented in Appendix A. Trust in the leader ( $\alpha = .92$ , time 1;  $\alpha = .95$ , time 2) was accessed with the same scale as in Study 2. To test the possibility that expectancy violation effects only apply to outcomes that are relevant, we adapted trust in the leader to create a trust in coworkers measure and included it in the survey ( $\alpha = .80$ , time 1;  $\alpha = .85$ , time 2).

**Manipulation check**. To check our manipulation of valenced expectancy violation, we ran a series of ANOVAs to first verify that there were significant mean differences among the four conditions regarding each of the valenced expectancy violation items. Then, we conducted post-hoc comparisons. Tables A3 and A4 present the results of manipulation checks for the first

and second manipulations. The ANOVA results show that there were significant mean differences across the four experiment conditions on all valenced expectancy violation manipulation check items across two rounds of manipulations. Further, Tukey's post hoc multiple comparisons show that the mean differences between the target experiment condition and the other three conditions on the respective manipulation check item were significant as expected for both rounds of manipulations. Overall, the results provide support for the effectiveness of our manipulations of valenced expectancy violation.

Table A3. Results of the First Manipulation Check

		Manipulation check items					
Conditions	N	Positive violation	Positive consistency	Negative consistency	Negative violation		
Positive violation	146	6.28	4.14	1.88	1.68		
Positive consistency	145	4.76	5.61	2.43	2.36		
Negative consistency	143	2.94	3.95	5.06	3.23		
Negative violation	140	1.76	1.70	4.16	6.26		
F		284.49	135.83	102.79	305.65		
df		3, 570	3, 570	3, 570	3, 570		
p		<.01	<.01	<.01	<.01		
Tukey's*		1.52 < diff < 4.52, <i>p</i> s < .01	1.46 < diff < 3.91, <i>p</i> s < .01	0.90 < diff < 3.18, <i>p</i> s < .01	3.02 < diff < 4.57, <i>p</i> s < .01		

*Note. N* is the sample size for each condition. The numbers reported in the table are the mean scores of manipulation check items for the experiment conditions. ANOVA results indicate the overall differences among experiment conditions for each manipulation check item. Tukey's post hoc comparisons indicate the mean differences between the target experiment condition and the other three conditions on the respective manipulation check items.

Table A4. Results of the Second Manipulation Check

		Manipulation check items						
Conditions	N	Positive violation	Positive consistency	Negative consistency	Negative violation			
Positive violation	146	6.25	4.67	1.65	1.61			
Positive consistency	145	5.42	5.50	2.26	2.13			
Negative consistency	143	2.17	2.33	5.76	4.10			
Negative violation	140	1.76	1.68	4.16	5.99			
F		450.94	202.98	184.82	243.33			
df		3, 570	3, 570	3, 570	3, 570			
p		<.01	<.01	<.01	<.01			
Tukey's*		0.83 < diff < 4.38, ps < .01	0.83 < diff < 3.82, ps < .01	1.59 < diff < 4.10, ps < .01	1.89 < diff < 4.38, ps < .01			

*Note. N* is the sample size for each condition. The numbers reported in the table are the mean scores of manipulation check items for the experiment conditions. ANOVA results indicate the

overall differences among experiment conditions for each manipulation check item. Tukey's post hoc comparisons indicate the mean differences between the target experiment condition and the other three conditions on the respective manipulation check items.

#### Results

Our Hypothesis 1 states that the positive relationship between servant leadership and follower trust in the leader is stronger when leader traditionality is higher. Because the proposal of this hypothesis is based on the premise of expectancy violation theory, we designed this supplemental study to specifically test the idea that participants in the positive violation condition would perceive a higher level of trust in the leader than the ones in the positive consistency condition. Likewise, we expect the participants in the negative violation to perceive a lower level of trust in the leader than the ones in the negative consistency condition. Therefore, we conducted ANOVA with planned contrasts between positive violation and positive consistency conditions and between negative violation and negative consistency conditions. For the first-round manipulation there was a significant mean difference in trust in the leader between the positive violation (M = 5.16) and the positive consistency (M = 4.79) conditions, t(570) = 3.27, p < .001. Also, the difference between the negative violation (M = 2.74) and the negative consistency (M = 3.38) conditions for the first-round manipulation was significant, t(570) = -5.64, p < .001.

The same pattern existed for the second-round manipulation. Specifically, in the second-round manipulation, trust in the leader was significantly greater for the positive violation condition (M = 5.29) than the positive consistency condition (M = 4.98), t(570) = 2.67, p = .008. Also, the difference between the negative violation (M = 2.42) and the negative consistency (M = 2.74) conditions was significant, t(570) = -2.70, p = .01. Overall, these results show support to our expected relationship between valenced expectancy violation and follower trust in the leader. Further, we demonstrate that the effect of expectancy violation can occur for more than one time.

To strengthen the validity of our test, we included follower trust in coworkers as an outcome that is less likely to be influenced by the expectancy violation effect we theorized. The results show that there was no significant difference in follower trust in coworkers between the positive violation (M = 4.11) and the positive consistency (M = 3.93) conditions, t(570) = 1.67, p = .10 for the first-round manipulation, nor was the difference significant for the second-round manipulation,  $M_{\text{positive violation}} = 4.17$  and  $M_{\text{positive consistency}} = 4.01$ , t(570) = 1.41, p = .16. In addition, the difference in follower trust in coworkers was nonsignificant between the negative violation (M = 3.77) and the negative consistency (M = 3.78) conditions, t(570) = -0.06, p = .96 during the first-round manipulation. A similar nonsignificant difference was found during the second-round manipulation,  $M_{\text{negative violation}} = 3.58$  and  $M_{\text{negative consistency}} = 3.49$ , t(570) = 0.78, t(

#### Discussion

Taken together, the evidence from our Supplemental Study 3 confirms that servant leadership and leader traditionality interactively predict follower perceptions of expectancy violation. When leader traditionality is high, the relationship between servant leadership and follower expectancy violation is positive, while this relationship is negative when leader traditionality is low. Further, we tested the effect of valenced expectancy violation on follower trust in the leader. Specifically, we showed that trust in the leader is greater when high servant

leader behavior elicits perceptions of positive violation than positive consistency, while trust in the leader is lower when low servant leader behavior results in perceptions of negative violation than negative consistency. These results provide more refined empirical support for the premise of expectancy violation theory. Contributing to the research that examines how leader behavior may be associated with expectancy violation effects (e.g., Lanaj & Hollenbeck, 2015; Schaumberg & Flynn, 2017), our supplemental analysis moves a critical step further by empirically showing the occurrence of expectancy violation and its impact on critical follower outcomes. Lastly, through repeated manipulations, we demonstrated that the expectancy violation effects can occur more than once. Yet, we note that repeated manipulations in a scenario study setting may not realistically reflect the duration of expectancy violation effects in the workplace. Therefore, we encourage researchers to specifically incorporate the time element in their future assessment of expectancy violation effects.

## **APPENDIX E: CORRELATION TABLES**

Table A5

Study	1
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Variable	1	2
1. Servant leadership	.83	
2. Leader traditionality manipulation check	.58**	.96
M	4.13	4.31
SD	1.24	2.07

Note. N = 53. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) are reported in bold on the diagonal.

**Table A6** 

# Study 2

Variable	1	2	3	4
Servant leadership     manipulation check	.94			
<ol><li>Leader traditionality manipulation check</li></ol>	12	.91		
3. Trust in the leader	.72**	16	.79	
4. OCB	.30	.09	.38**	.81
M	3.89	4.22	4.29	5.30
SD	1.85	1.75	0.96	0.74

Note.  $N = 9\overline{6}$ . Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) are reported in bold on the diagonal. OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior.

<sup>\*</sup> *p* < .05 \*\* *p* < .01

<sup>\*</sup> p <.05

<sup>\*\*</sup> p <.01

Table A7
Supplemental Study 1

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Servant leadership	.92				
2. Leader traditionality manipulation check	82**	.97			
3. Paternalistic leadership – authoritarianism	81**	.88**	.96		
4. Paternalistic leadership – morality	.80**	74**	76**	.91	
5. Paternalistic leadership – benevolence	.90**	80*	79**	.81**	.96
M	4.07	4.33	4.31	4.41	3.81
SD	1.53	2.23	1.82	1.42	1.48

Note. N = 187. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) are reported in bold on the diagonal.

Table A8
Supplemental Study 2

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Leader traditionality	.82					
2. Servant leadership	07	.83				
3. Paternalistic leadership – authoritarianism	.71**	19*	.90			
<ol> <li>Paternalistic leadership – morality</li> </ol>	15	.62**	37**	.85		
5. Paternalistic leadership – benevolence	.03	.77**	09	.60**	.92	
6. Trust in the leader	14	.83**	29**	.74**	.82**	.88
M	3.78	4.87	3.23	5.43	4.70	5.09
SD	1.21	1.04	1.27	1.14	1.12	1.06

Note. N = 117. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) are reported in bold on the diagonal.

<sup>\*</sup> p <.05

<sup>\*\*</sup> p <.01

<sup>\*</sup> *p* < .05

<sup>\*\*</sup> p <.01

Table A9 Supplemental Study 3a

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
Leader traditionality     manipulation check	.98				
2. Expectancy violation (time 1)	02	.98			
3. Servant leadership manipulation check (time 1)	15*	19*	.95		
4. Expectancy violation (time 2)	.01	.78**	08	.99	
5. Servant leadership manipulation check (time 2)	05	24**	.86**	17*	.97
M	4.34	4.14	3.82	3.79	2.72
SD	2.36	2.07	1.79	2.24	2.16

Note. N = 191. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) are reported in bold on the diagonal.

Table A10 **Supplemental Study 3b** 

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Trust in the leader (time 1)	.92			
2. Trust in coworkers (time 1)	.35**	.80		
3. Trust in the leader (time 2)	.90**	.30**	.95	
4. Trust in coworkers (time 2)	.41**	.87**	.40**	.85
M	4.03	3.90	3.88	3.82
SD	1.38	.91	1.62	1.03

Note. N = 574. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) are reported in bold on the diagonal.

<sup>\*</sup> *p* < .05 \*\* *p* < .01

<sup>\*</sup> p <.05

<sup>\*\*</sup> p <.01

Table 1
Study 2 Results

	Trust in t	Trust in the Leader (M)		(DV)
Variable	b	SE	b	SE
Servant leadership	.91***	.21	.08	.18
Leader traditionality	43*	.21		
Trust in the leader			.26**	.10
Servant leadership * leader traditionality	.62*	.30		
$R^2$	.43***		.14***	

*Note.* N = 96. OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior. M = Mediator. DV = Dependent variable. Servant leadership and leader traditionality were treated as dichotomous variables, with l = high and l = low for the two conditions of each variable. p < .05. \*\*\* p < .01. \*\*\* p < .001.

Table 2
Summary of Indirect Effects (Study 2)

Indirect Path (Servant Leadership → Trust in the Leader → OCB)	Indirect Effects [95% Confidence Interval]			
Low leader traditionality (-1 SD)	.24 [.08, .43]			
High leader traditionality (+1 SD)	.40 [.14, .69]			
Difference between indirect effects at high vs. low leader traditionality	.16 [.01, .38]			

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, Bivariate Correlations, and Internal Consistency Coefficients (Study 3)

Variable	M (Follower- level)	SD (Follower- level)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Dyadic tenure (years)	3.42	2.25	_	.70**	13	09	.02	.08
2. Organizational tenure (years)	4.76	3.05	.60**	_	23*	16	32**	03
3. Servant leadership (time 1)	4.91	1.12	03	15**	.88	.62**	.14	.14
4. Trust in the leader (time 2)	5.05	0.88	03	11*	.51**	.93	.23	01
5. OCB (time 3)	5.80	0.68	.07	06	.02	.20**	.92	.17
6. Leader traditionality (time 1)	_	_						.74
M (Leader-level)			3.51	4.86	4.89	5.08	5.83	4.29
SD (Leader-level)			1.74	2.07	0.65	0.52	0.55	1.07

Note. N = 311-397 for follower-level variables. N = 72-89 for leader traditionality. Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's alphas) are reported in bold on the diagonal. OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior. Follower-level correlations are below the diagonal. Leader-level correlations are above the diagonal. Dyadic tenure, organizational tenure, servant leadership, trust in the leader, and OCB are aggregated to the leader level.

<sup>\*</sup> *p* <.05

<sup>\*\*</sup>p < .01

Table 4

Multilevel Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results (Study 3)

	$\chi^2$	df	Δχ <sup>2</sup>	$df(\Delta \chi^2)$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMRwithin	SRMR <sub>between</sub>
Hypothesized model	165.65	67	-	-	.95	.94	.06	.05	.12
Alternative model 1	364.18	70	198.53	3	.86	.82	.10	.09	.19
Alternative model 2	764.87	73	599.22	6	.67	.59	.16	.15	.28

Note.  $N_{\text{level-1}} = 397$ ,  $N_{\text{level-2}} = 89$ . df = Degrees of freedom. CFI = Comparative fit index. TLI = Tucker-Lewis index. RMSEA = Root-mean-square error of approximation. SRMR = Standardized root-mean-square residual. For multidimensional scales (i.e., trust in the leader and OCB), higher order factors were created to represent overall constructs.

In each of the alternative models, the correlation between two theoretically relevant factors was fixed to 1.0. Below is the information on the two variables for each alternative model.

Alternative model 1: servant leadership and trust in the leader at level 1.

Alternative model 2: trust in the leader and OCB both level 1 and level 2.

Table 5

Multilevel Path Analysis Results (Study 3)

	Trust in the	Leader (M)	OCB (DV)		
Variable	b	SE	b	SE	
Follower level					
Constant	5.04**	.08	5.01**	.39	
Dyadic tenure	.00	.02	.02	.02	
Organizational tenure	.01	.01	.00	.02	
Servant leadership	.40**	.06	07	.06	
Trust in the leader			.15*	.07	
Leader level					
Servant leadership group mean	.45**	.09	05	.12	
Leader traditionality	05	.04			
Cross-level interaction					
Servant leadership * leader traditionality	.11*	.05			
$pseudo-R^2$ follower level	.3	1	.0	8	

*Note.* OCB = Organizational citizenship behavior. M = Mediator. DV = Dependent variable. p < .05. \*\* p < .01.

Table 6
Summary of Indirect Effects (Study 3)

Indirect Path (Servant Leadership → Trust in the Leader → OCB)	Indirect Effects [95% Confidence Interval]			
Overall	.06 [.01, .12]			
Low leader traditionality (-1 SD)	.04 [.002, .10]			
High leader traditionality (+1 SD)	.08 [.01, .16]			
Difference between indirect effects at low vs. high leader traditionality	04 [09,001]			

Figure 1
Theoretical Model

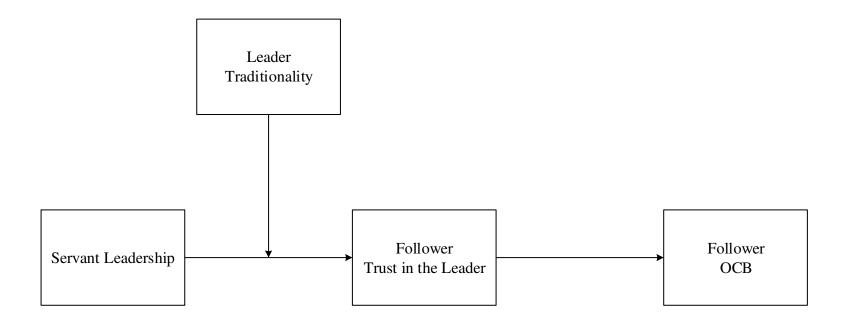


Figure 2

The Interactive Effect of Servant Leadership and Leader Traditionality on Trust in the Leader (Study 2)

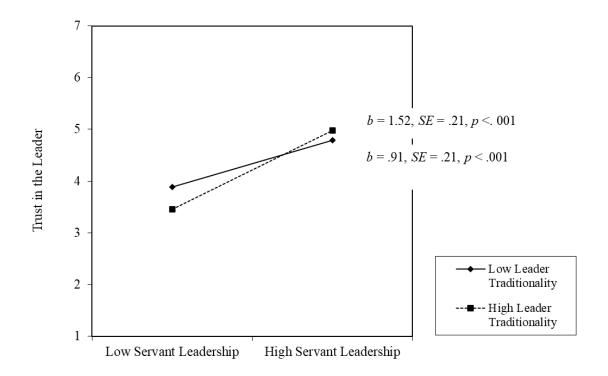


Figure 3

The Interactive Effect of Servant Leadership and Leader Traditionality on Trust in the Leader (Study 3)

