
Effects of a Leader's Faked Emotion on Employees' Promotive Voice- Base on Environmental Service Samples

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Abstract

Based on EASI, this study intends to discuss the effect of a leader's faked emotion on employees' promotive voice. From 229 pairs of superior-subordinate samples of enterprises in Chinese environmental service industry, it is discovered that a leader's faked negative emotion would negatively affect employees' promotive voice. Meanwhile, such an effect would be fulfilled through the mediation of employees' liking to superiors. The research results reveal that a leader should avoid faked emotion in the management and stress on the establishment of subordinate-superior liking. Future research should collect more data and take other factors into account to further define the effect of a leader's faked positive emotion.

Keywords: faked emotion, promotive voice, liking

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INTRODUCTION

Voice could promote organizational development and enhance organizational effectiveness (Detert et al. 2013, Sax and Torp 2015, Weiss et al. 2017); particularly, promotive voice proposes ideas and suggestions from future-oriented aspects to improve the current conditions of an organization (Liang et al. 2012, Van Doorn and Hülshager 2015). Research revealed that promotive voice could enhance organizational citizenship behavior, innovation performance, and task performance (Chamberlin et al. 2017). Research on the antecedents of voice found out the critical function of a leader's emotion (Hess and Bacigalupo 2011, Liu et al. 2017). It was discovered in the research and practice that a leader's task contained emotional labor (Humphrey 2008). For instance, when crises appeared at work, some leaders would cover the anxiety and worries and present confidence in order to encourage employees (Lee et al. 2014). When a leader uses such consciously faked emotion, what would be the effect on employees' promotive voice?

To better respond to such a question, the discussion is expanded based on "emotion as social information" (EASI) model in this study. The model was proposed by Van Kleef (2009) to discuss how individual behaviors were affected by others' emotion. EASI model indicated that emotion was a message; an emotional expresser

delivered message to observers and affected the observers' behaviors. A path of such effects was affective reaction, referring to emotional expression affecting observers' emotion and liking to the expresser. By collecting and statistically analyzing superior-subordinate paired samples, this study intends to discuss the effect of a leader's faked emotional expression on employees' promotive voice of enterprises in Chinese environmental service industry that is a new and promising industry. It is wondered how a leader could acquire the subordinates' liking and enhance the employees' promotive voice by reasonably manage personal emotional expression. With the rich management theory of leader emotional labor, effective suggestions for the management practice of an enterprise are proposed in this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

A Leader's Faked Emotional Expression and Employees' Promotive Voice Behavior

A leader who for work needs has to judge the requirements for the working scene and select suitable emotional expression in practice (Hess and Bacigalupo 2011, Humphrey 2008). Sometimes, a leader has to fake inconsistent emotion to the inner emotion, including faked positive emotion and faked negative emotion.

Such emotional expression contains the following effects on employees' promotive voice.

Effects of faked negative emotion. According to EASI model, an emotional expresser would affect the affective reaction of observers' behaviors by emotional contagion, i.e. people perceiving and automatically imitating other's facial expression, voice, gesture, and action in the interaction (Hatfield et al. 1992, Weiss et al. 2017). In other words, a leader treating subordinates with negative emotion would affect employees to appear negative emotion. Furthermore, promotive voice seeks for improving the current conditions of an organization to cause certain challenge to the authority that it presents certain risks (Detert and Burris 2007). Research proved that negative emotion would have an individual pessimistically predict the possible result in the future and present more risk aversion tendencies (Lauriola and Levin 2001). In other words, individual negative emotion might inhibit the voice decision. In this case, a leader facing employees with faked negative emotion might inhibit employees' promotive voice.

Effects of faked positive emotion. Opposite to negative emotion, positive emotion would have an individual tend to take risks (Lauriola and Levin 2001). Some leaders would encourage employees' voice by constantly giving appraisal and incentives in practice. Nonetheless, research on basic psychology revealed that untrained observers could differentiate true and faked happiness (Grandey et al. 2005). When a leader expressed the faked affection, employees might explore the true emotion. When perceiving faked emotional expression of others, an individual might doubt the authenticity of delivered message and the intention to share message (Hu and Shi 2015). In other words, a leader with faked emotion would have employees doubt the leader not being willing to open the mind or share message; individual perception of others' message sharing would largely affect the message sharing behavior (Brock et al. 2005). In this case, when facing a "faked" leader, employees might pull the punch, not be willing to share message, and reduce promotive voice. Faked positive emotion therefore might inhibit employees' voice behavior. Accordingly, the following hypotheses are proposed in this study. H1a: A leader's faked positive emotional expression would negatively affect employees' promotive voice. H1b: A leader's faked negative emotional expression would negatively affect employees' promotive voice.

A Leader's Faked Emotional Expression and Employees' Liking to Superior

Liking means the degree of mutual attraction among people (Tsui and Barry 1986). Research revealed that an individual facing a person with happy emotion would enhance the liking to the person; on the contrary, when facing an angry person, the liking to the person would be reduced (Hess et al. 2000). Nonetheless, subordinates would reduce the liking when a leader did not express the emotion from heart. Research displayed that an individual presenting shallow performance in social interaction, i.e. expressing faked emotion inconsistent to the heart, would not enhance observers' good impression (Bono and Vey 2007). A leader's shallow performance could not acquire good impression from subordinates and might result in unnecessary negative impression that the leader was hypocritical (Gardner et al. 2009). Based on above analyses, the following hypotheses are proposed in this study. H2a: A leader's faked positive emotional expression would negatively affect employees' liking to the superior. H2b: A leader's faked negative emotional expression would negative affect employees' negative liking to the superior.

Subordinates' Liking and Promotive Voice to Superiors

Research discovered that superior-subordinate liking (including reports from the aspects of leaders and subordinates) would significantly affect leader-subordinate exchange relationship and job satisfaction (Dulebohn et al. 2016), and employees' voice, especially promotive voice, would be affected by leader-subordinate exchange (Van Dyne et al. 2008) and job satisfaction (Chamberlin et al. 2017). In other words, subordinates' liking to a superior might promote employee-leader exchange quality and enhance employees' job satisfaction to further facilitate employees positively participating in voice and developing strategies for the organization. In this case, subordinates' liking to a superior might promote subordinates' voice. H3: Subordinates' liking to a superior would positively affect employees' promotive voice.

Mediation on Subordinates' Liking to Superior

EASI model indicated that emotion expressers' affective reaction was implemented through emotional expression to change observers' liking to the expresser (Hareli and Hess 2010). According to previous hypothesis, a leader's faked positive and negative emotion would affect subordinates' liking to the superior, while liking would influence employees'

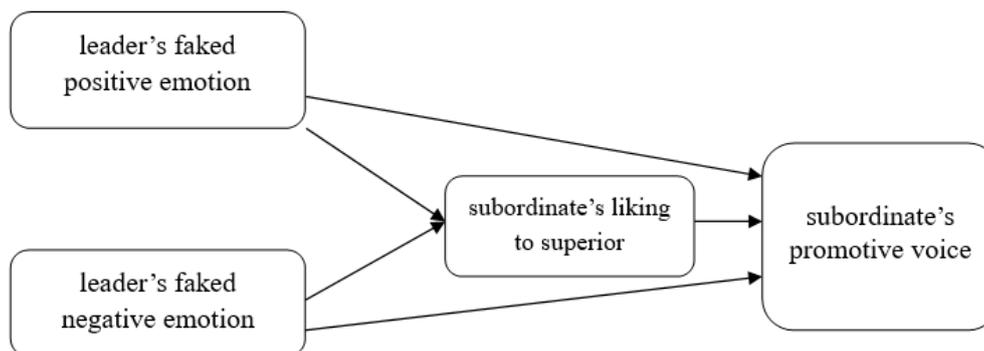


Fig. 1. Research hypothesis model

promotive voice behavior, i.e. employees' liking to a superior as the affective reaction of the effect of a leader's faked emotion on employees' promotive voice. For this reason, the following hypotheses are proposed in this study. H4a: Employees' liking to superiors reveals mediation on a leader's faked positive emotion and employees' promotive voice. H4b: Employees' liking to superiors shows mediation on a leader's faked negative emotion and employees' promotive voice.

In sum, the hypothesis model of this study is shown in **Fig. 1**.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Sample and Data Collection

With questionnaire survey, the questionnaire design and arrangement are hidden the meanings and the data are collected from leaders and employees of enterprises in order to avoid common method variance (CMV). The leaders would select 1-3 subordinates and fill in the "leader questionnaire" according to the interaction with different subordinates, including leader faked emotion scale and subordinate promotive voice scale. The researcher then has the picked employees fill in the "subordinate scale", containing liking to superior scale". Total 267 pairs of questionnaire are distributed. The samples are from environmental service industry in China. By selecting, clearing, and removing invalid copies, total 229 valid copies are retrieved, with the retrieval rate 85.8%. Among the valid participants, the average age of leaders is 33.6, males appear 56.2%, and 69.4% leaders present the education of bachelor degree and above. The average age of subordinates is 26.3, females appear 52.1%, and 47.4% employees show college and bachelor degrees. Among those with college and bachelor degrees, 49.2% employees present the seniority 1-3 years, and the average superior-subordinate cooperation period is 1.67 years.

Measurement Scale

Leader faked emotional expression scale is referred to DEELS scale (the Discrete Emotions Emotional Labor Scale) proposed by Glomb and Tews in 2004. The faked positive emotion display subscale and the faked negative emotion display subscale are applied to this study. In the questionnaire, leaders are requested to carefully recall the work experience in past six months about the emotion expression to certain subordinates, including physical language, facial expression, and tone. 14 common positive/negative emotions are listed in the scale (9 negative emotions and 5 positive emotions), and the participants are requested to choose the frequency. The Cronbach's α of the faked positive emotion display subscale and the faked negative emotion display subscale appears 0.868 and 0.964, respectively. The employee promotive voice scale is referred to the scale developed by Liang et al. (2012). It contains 5 items, such as "he/she positively develops and proposes suggestions influential to the job". Likert 5-point scale is utilized for the measurement (1 standing for complete inconformity and 5 for complete conformity). The Cronbach's α of the scale shows 0.861. The superior liking scale is referred to the scale developed by Wayne and Ferris (1990). The scale is composed of a single dimension with 4 items, and the Cronbach's α reveals 0.920. Based on past research results, some variables which might potentially affect voice behavior, including employees' age, gender, and seniority, are selected as the control variables.

RESEARCH RESULT

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Four variables in this study (leader's faked positive emotion, leader's faked negative emotion, subordinate's liking to superior, and subordinate's promotive voice) are first preceded confirmatory factor analysis. The benchmark model is a four-factor model, and each variable is a factor. One-factor model contains all variables, and two-factor model combines leaders' faked

Table 1. Confirmatory factor analysis result (N=229)

model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	$\Delta\chi^2$	RMSEA	GFI	AGFI
One-factor model	1800.445	230	7.828		.179	.514	.417
Two-factor model	1139.685	229	4.977	660	.136	.628	.551
Three-factor model	731.345	227	3.222	408	.102	.743	.688
Assumed four-factor model	490.489	224	2.190	240	.075	.832	.793

Table 2. Regression analysis result

variable	Employees' promotive voice				Employees' liking to superior	
	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
leader's faked positive emotion	.077				-.147*	
leader's faked negative emotion		-.140*		-.056		-.360***
employees' liking to superior			.254***	.234**		
R ²	.006	.020	.065	.067	.022	.129
Adj.R ²	.001	.015	.060	.059	.017	.125
F	1.267	4.248*	14.724***	7.654**	4.712*	31.660***

Note: * stands for P < 0.05, ** for P<0.01, and *** for P<0.001

positive and negative emotion as a factor and subordinates' liking to superiors and voice as a factor. Three-factor model combines leaders' faked positive and negative emotion as a factor. From **Table 1**, the assumed four-factor model presents better fit than other models ($\chi^2=490.489$, $df =224$, $RMSEA=0.075$, $GFI =0.832$, $AGFI = 0.793$), and the 4 variables show better discriminant validity for the next research.

Hypothesis Test

SPSS hierarchical regression analysis is applied in this study to test the hypotheses, **Table 2**. In model 1, a leader's faked positive emotion does not significantly affect employees' promotive voice that H1a and H4a are not confirmed. In model 2, a leader's negative emotion negatively affects employees' promotive voice ($\beta=-.140$, $p<0.01$) that H1b is confirmed. In model 5, a leader's fake positive emotion negatively affects employees' liking to superior ($\beta=-.147$, $p<0.05$) that H2a is confirmed. In model 6, a leader's faked negative emotion negatively affects employees' liking to superior ($\beta=-.360$, $p<0.001$) that H2b is confirmed. In model 3, employees' liking to superior notably and positively affect the promotive voice ($\beta=0.254$, $p<0.001$) that H3 is confirmed. In model 4, a leader's faked negative emotion does not significantly affect employees' promotive voice after adding employees' liking to superior, while employees' liking to superior still remarkably affect the promotive voice ($\beta=0.234$, $p<0.01$). It explains the full mediation of employees' liking to superior on a leader's faked negative emotion and employees' promotive voice that H4b is confirmed.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Result Discussion

First, the function of a leader's faked negative emotion is confirmed. A leader's faked negative

emotion would reduce employees' liking to further inhibit employees' promotive voice. Such a path conforms to the affective reaction in EASI model, expands the theory of research on a leader's emotional labor, and enriches the effect on voice from the aspect of emotion.

Second, the effect of a leader's faked positive emotion on employees' promotive voice is not confirmed. According to previous research findings, an individual would expect the true emotional expression of the opposite party in the internal organizational interaction (superior-subordinate) (Hu and Shi 2015). When intending to show faked emotion, an individual would "divulge" something with which an observer would notice the unauthentic expression (Ekman and Friesen 1969). However, it is different among people identifying others' emotion; such emotion identification ability is the composition of emotional intelligence, referring to the ability of people comprehending others' non-verbal behaviors (Groth et al. 2009). The effect of a leader's faked positive emotion on employees' promotive voice being insignificant might be related to individual emotion identification ability. Successive research could take relevant factors into account.

Management Implication

First, a environmental service leader should avoid using faked emotional expression in order not to smother employees' promotive voice. According to the research results, employees would reduce the liking because of a leader's "fake" to further inhibit the promotive voice. A leader facing employees with true emotion might be considered as sincere. For this reason, a business should reduce the faked emotional expression to enhance employees' voice in environmental service companies.

Second, the superior-subordinate liking should be established. In this study, subordinates' liking to a superior is a primary mediator to promote employees' positive voice. It also reminds a business manager of paying attention to rational and irrational factors in the management practice of environmental service companies.

Limitation and Future Research Suggestion

This study is a cross-section research collecting data at the same time that it could not accurately present the causal relationship. The interaction among internal organizational members occurs every day, and the previous interaction would affect the following interaction (Hu and Shi 2015). For this reason, the successive research could apply longitudinal research to collect data at various time points to more accurately explain the causal relationship in environmental service companies. Furthermore, EASI is applied in this study. It is considered in EASI that individual emotional

expression would affect observers through the routes of 1. inferential processes and 2. affective reactions. This study focuses on affective reactions to study the effect of a leader's faked emotion on employees' promotive voice. The successive research could discuss the inferential processes and propose other explanations to enrich relevant theories. Moreover, the effect of individual emotion identification ability could be taken into account to discuss the factors in a leader's faked emotion affecting employees' promotive voice to further comprehend the function of a leader's faked emotion, particularly the faked positive emotion function in environmental service companies.

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