

The main takeaways:

Managers' behavior matters and is **contagious**;

Reflection might lead subordinates to alter their (contagious) behavior, BUT the effect of reflection on behavioral contagion depends on **gender differences**

RQs:

- Do people who get promoted copy the behavior of their past managers?
- Does reflection lead to alternative perceptions and behaviors?
- Does effect of reflection on behavioral contagion differ between males and females?

Background:

- A low level of trust can have detrimental effects on the future behavior of employees
- People often behave similarly to socially related persons
- Social role theory of gender differences

Method:

- The experimental setting is based on a lab experiment developed by Fehr & Rockenbach (2003) and is adapted to consist of two phases;
- In both phases, two participants - one acting as a manager and one acting as an employee - play a trust game;
- The employee from phase 1 becomes a manager in phase 2 and is paired with another employee;
- The employee from phase 1 had to answer a reflection question about phase 1 before s/he started phase 2 (Reflection vs No reflection).

Results:

- Past managers influence future behavior of employees which might have detrimental effects on cooperation
- It is hard to mitigate the contagion effect via reflection
- Reflection has different effect for males and females and does not give universal results for all types of employees

