

Leader-Member Exchange: an Integrated Conceptual Model Study of Antecedents and Outcomes Variables in the Social Exchange Perspectives

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Abstract: *This study develops and tests integrated models of the antecedents and consequences of LMX, based on social exchange theory. The survey was carried out by taking samples of paramedics in Yogyakarta. Results indicate that LMX have unique antecedents (liking, expectations, and Dyad tenure) and outcomes (favor doing, OCB, and performance rating)*

Keywords: *LMX, Antecedent, Outcomes*

BACKGROUND

An important factor in the leadership process is a relationship, this is because a leader has their followers /subordinates. Practices and previous studies have shown that the success of the interaction between leaders and their followers is a central function of a company in general. The high level of relationship between leaders and followers has been proven to have a large impact on employee performance, organizational commitment, *empowerment*, and job satisfaction (Vatanen, 2003; Marstand, Martin, & Epitropaki, 2017).

Harris, Harris, & Eplion (2007) suggest that, the relationship of superiors and subordinates provides a useful framework for knowing the quality of their relationship closeness and becoming a focus on many empirical studies. Changes in the quality of leader-member relationships (for example, in work and other social interactions) are common between them. Workers who have a good quality relationship with their superiors will get many benefits and benefits compared to their colleagues who have a lower quality relationship. These findings highlight that although members are universally sensitive to how their leaders treat them, members' responses in the Asian context can also be influenced by collective interests and role-based obligations. (Rockstuhl, Dulebohn, Ang, & Shore, 2012).

Organizational researchers have realized the importance of the concept of *leader-member exchange* (LMX) which is one concept of social exchange that attracts their attention. Scandura and Graen (1984) define LMX as an exchange between workers and their leaders. According to Sparrowe and Liden (Wayne, et al., 1997), LMX theory reveals an interpersonal relationship involving supervisors and subordinates within the framework of a formal organization. The relationship is based on social exchange, where each party must offer something to the other party and each party must see the exchange rationally and equitably (Scandura & Graen, 1984; Lou, Song, Marnburg, & Øgaard, 2014).

Research on LMX itself has reached its momentum in recent years trying to investigate various aspects of LMX. For example, *Vertical Dyad Linkage* (VDL *Theory*) approached the previous ALS (*Average Style Leadership*) model and stated that, rational behavior of leaders is consistent with all subordinates. Physically, this VDL specifies that *unit analysis* the

corresponding *vertical dyad* is not on the *workgroup*, and operationally the condition requires *within-group* relationships that support the LMX approach rather than the relationships between groups that support ALS (Nelson, 2014).

Analyzing aspects (variables) that might influence or be influenced by LMX variables is an important study to obtain certainty whether the concept has a unique / specific contribution to the literature. For example, if the exchange of an employee with a leader (LMX) is more influential on the attitudes and behavior of workers than other social exchanges, then future research should focus on LMX (O'Donnell, Yukl & Taber, 2012).

Observing some interesting concepts revealed by these experts, by taking paramedics (nurses and doctors) at several Puskesmas in Yogyakarta as research subjects, this study tried to develop and test a conceptual model to be able to study more deeply about the LMX concept. The purposes of this study are:

1. Analyzing the integrated relationship model of LMX variables with *antecedents* variables and *outcomes* variables
2. Analyzing the effect of *antecedents* variables (*liking, expectations, dyad tenure*) on LMX, and the influence of LMX on variable *outcomes* (*performance ratings, OCB, favor doing*).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS

LMX Antecedent Variables

Consistent with research on the study of interpersonal relationships in subordinate supervisor relationships, according to Byrne (Wayne et al., 1997), investigations conducted by organizational researchers have shown a growing influence relationship between their leaders and followers. A (*liking*) is a significant predictor for LMX on experimental laboratory study (Wayne & Ferris, 1990; Joseph, Newman, & Sin, 2011). Research Brown, Chen, & O'Donnell (2017), also found the same things that taste like the perceived superior-subordinate relationship determines the quality of maraca. Thus, it is expected that the leader's preference for a subordinate will be related to the perception of subordinates on LMX quality.

A number of substantial studies of expectations and their impact on behavior have been carried out. According to Liden, Wayne, and Stilwell (1993), most of the research is concentrated in fields: education, military and business; all of which still lead to a Pygmalion effect and measure expectations by manipulating it. They argued that there were only a few studies on expectations that were carried out in the actual workplace, especially for the level of *dyad* analysis. A positive expectation of a leader on a subordinate will emerge through translation of leader's behaviors such as delegating challenging tasks, and providing constructive feedback, desired rewards, and training.

Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997) estimate that leader expectations for a subordinate will relate to LMX quality. The study that addresses this problem is carried out by Merton (1984) and Oren, Tziner, Sharoni, Amor, & Alon (2012), who find the impact of the power of expectations on behavior. According to Liden, Wayne, and Stilwell (1993), research on expectations and their impact on behavior has been carried out over the past 30 years. In natural settings where expectations cannot be manipulated, individuals often form expectations targets based on the availability of information. Information provided by leaders about members may be indirectly derived from these sources such as test scores, recommendations, or interviews or from direct sources such as members for the first few days they work (Rockstuhl et al., 2012).

Liden et al. (1993) also viewed that the relationship between leaders and workers will have a positive effect on the quality of LMX. According to them, at least a long time the subordinate-

subordinate relationship will increase mutual trust, high *feedback*, and increasing attention between the two.

- Hypothesis 1:** The passions (*liking*) leader on a worker positive effect on the quality of LMX.
2: Leaders' expectations for a worker have a positive effect on LMX quality.
3: The length of relationship between leaders and workers (dyads tenure) has a Positive effect on the quality of LMX

Consequence variables (outcomes) of LMX

According to Liden and Graen (in Wayne et al. 1997), workers who have high LMX quality levels, can do work other than what they normally do, while workers who have low LMX levels are more likely to show more routine work than a work group. *Organizational Matching Behavior* (OCB) can be defined as behavior done more than just basic behavior in accordance with a contract agreed upon by a worker (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This shows that LMX is positively related to OCB, and directs the field of investigation that provides evidence of this relationship (Khalid, Muqadas, Farooqi, & Nazish, 2014). Rupp, Shao, Jones, & Liao (2014) found that LMX has a significant effect on OCB that leads to leadership

The results also quite consistently show a positive relationship between LMX and performance ratings (Wayne & Ferris, 1990; HM Tse, 2014) Subordinates with high quality LMX relationship levels may actually have better performance, due to additional support, feedback, resources, and opportunities. Given to them (Fledman, 1986). In addition, as a result of the generosity of the bias (*leniency*) to encourage high performance ratings for workers with high-quality LMX relationship (Li, Sanders, & Frenkel, 2012).

Schraeder (2006), found that the better the quality of supervisor and subordinate relationships turned out to bring bias in performance appraisal. Subordinates who have good relations with many superiors who get a positive assessment of their performance.

- Hypothesis 4:** LMX has a positive effect on performance appraisal.
5: LMX has a positive effect on OCB.

Based on social exchange theory, Wayne et al. (1997) revealed that the quality of exchanges that develop between a leader and members will influence the real behavior of a leader. This is because LMX influences the leader's support and direction given to members, for example members will reciprocate the treatment by making a relationship that benefits the leader. These preferences improve balance in a relationship that benefits the leader. Therefore, it is estimated that high LMX quality will affect the actions of members who are favored by the leader (Khalid et al., 2014).

- Hypothesis 6:** LMX positively influences the actions of members who are favored by the leader.

The relationship of influences between variables as hypothesized in this study will be apparent in the research model, as shown in Figure 1

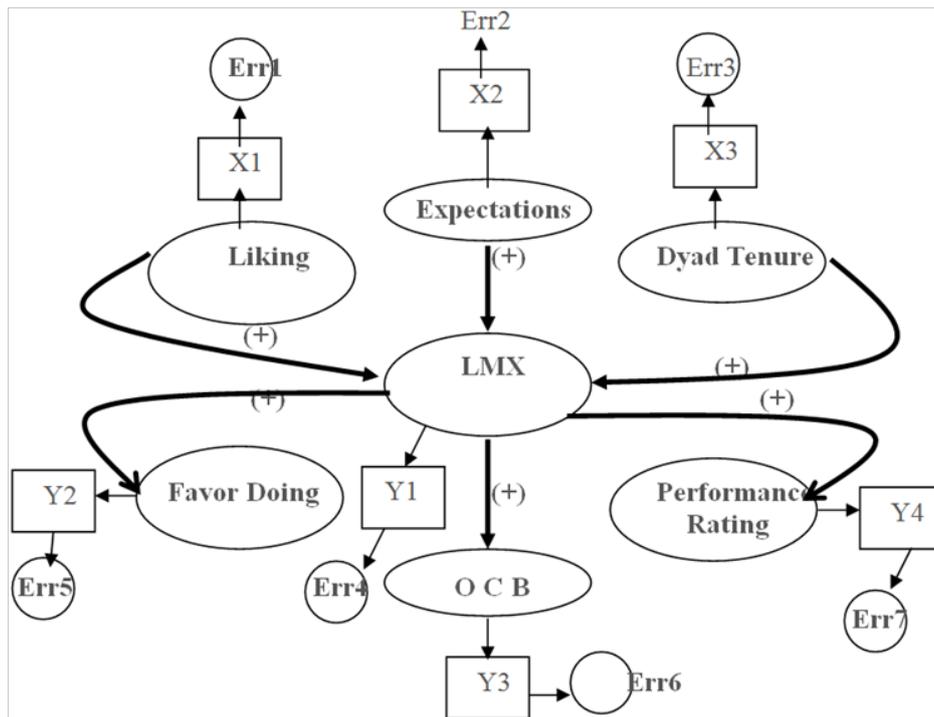


Figure 1. Estimated Model Relationship between Variables in Hypothesis

RESEARCH METHODS

The method used for data collection in this study is a survey method with a questionnaire. Samples were taken using *purposive sampling method*, by selecting research subject groups based on the characteristics of the population, namely: active employees of health centers in DIY, a minimum work period of 5 years, the head of the puskesmas will be chosen to represent the organization's leaders, paramedics (nurses and midwives) chosen to represent subordinates (members of the organization).

Direct visits were made to get the desired respondents in five districts in DIY, successfully obtaining 28 Puskesmas which stated they were willing to participate in this study. Of the 28 health centers, 175 respondents were taken (147 dyads). A total of 18 dyads (12.2%) included various kinds of errors so that the raw data could not be used further.

Measurement

All measurements in this variable were developed by several experts in the organizational field with several adjustments in relation to the chosen study subjects.

1. *Liking*. This variable is measured using three statements developed by Wayne and Ferris (1990). The head of the puskesmas responds to these three statement items on a seven scale, with distances starting from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7).
2. *Expectations*. This variable is measured from the estimation of the head of the puskesmas on the wages that should be received by a paramedic for the next five years or at the end of his career, which is then reduced by the average salary received by the current paramedics (Wayne et al., 1997).
3. *LMX*. This variable is measured by seven statements but developed by Scandura and Graen (1984). Paramedics respond to the nine statement items on a seven scale, with distances starting from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7). ($\alpha = 0.9363$)

4. *Performance ratings*. This variable is measured from the results of the performance rankings done by chief paramedic clinic. The criteria used by the head of the puskesmas to rank paramedic’s performance is with 5 questions. Two questions were developed by Tsui (1984). One statement item was developed by Heilman, Block, and Lucas (1992). Two other items were developed by Wayne et al. (1997). The whole question item uses a five scale, with distances starting from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). ($\alpha = 0.9569$)
5. *Organizational citizenship Behavior (OCB)*. This variable is measured by modifying seven questions developed by Smith, Organ, and near (1983). The head of the puskesmas indicated the paramedic ‘s level of frequency that became his subordinate was related to seven items of organizational membership behavior. All items are responded to on a seven scale, with distances ranging from “never” (1) to “always” (7). ($\alpha = 0.7307$)
6. *Favor doing*. This variable is measured by three questions developed by Kumar and Beyerlein (1991). Paramedics indicate their level of frequency on these behaviors on a seven scale, with distances starting from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7). ($\alpha = 0.8866$)

RESULTS

The results of conformity measurement criteria using Amos are shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Evaluate Hypothesis Models with Goodness-of-Fit Measures

Goodness Of Fit Measures	Calculation Of Measures	Acceptability
Chi-square test	83,370	Marginal
Goodness-of-fit index	0.837	Marginal
Normed fit index	0.673	Marginal
Comparative fit Index	0.695	Marginal

Table 1 shows the calculation of the criteria for *fit* model hypotheses resulting in a marginal level of acceptance. These results indicate that the proposed hypothesis model has not been able to optimally explain the phenomena that occur, so it is necessary to make a comparison model in the hope that a more *fit* model can be obtained.

Table 2. Maximum Likelihood Estimation Results

Regression Weights	Estimate	SE	CR	Information
LMX <----- Liking	0.586	0.220	2,647	Significant
LMX <----- Expectations	0.526	0.222	2,372	Significant
LMX <----- Dyads tenure	0.352	0.172	2,043	Significant
Rating <----- LMX	0.343	0.026	13,304	Significant
OCB <----- LMX	0.156	0.035	4,504	Significant
Favor <----- LMX	0.101	0.04	2,425	Significant

Critical ratios are obtained from the quotient between parameter estimates divided by the standard errors. The significance level used is 95%, with the t table value of 1.645. If the *critical ratio* value is greater than the t table value, then the parameter estimation is significant.

The proof of hypothesis based on table 2, is shown in table 3

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing Results

No.	Hypothesis	Information
1	The preference of a leader in a worker will have a positive effect on the quality of LMX	Supported
2	Leaders' expectations for a worker have a positive influence on the quality of LMX	Supported
3	The relationship between leaders and workers has a positive effect on the quality of LMX	Supported
4	LMX has a positive effect on performance appraisal	Supported
5	LMX has a positive effect on OCB	Supported
6	LMX has a positive effect on the actions of members that the leader likes	Supported

Model Modified

At this stage modifications will be made to the hypothesized model. Modifications are done for example by changing the connectivity model between variables or with the *null / independence* model. This step is intended to strengthen support for the hypothesis model after comparing it with the modified model. Aderson & Gerbing (Wayne, et al., 1997), recommends a comparison of hypothetical models with the model they call “next *most likely constrained and unconstrained alternative* “. *Constrained models* are models in which one or more *paths* in the hypothesis model are omitted. Changes in the *chi-square value* between the hypothetical model and the *constrained model*, shows the effect of removing the *paths* and at the same time is testing the significance of the modification model to the hypothesis model. If *chi-square changes are* significant, this indicates that removal of these *paths* is important and simultaneously supports the hypothesis model. Conversely, an *unconstrained model* is a model formed by adding *paths* to the hypothesis model. If the *chi-square* difference between the hypothetical model and *uncontained the model* is not significant, it shows the hypothesis model is more appropriate because it is considered more *parsimony*.

1. Constrained model

When viewed from the level of significance, the influence of *dyad tenure* on LMX compared to the relationship of other variables is the weakest. Therefore the modification-1 model is created by removing the path from *dyad tenure* to LMX eliminated

2. Unconstrained model

An employee who has a strong organizational membership behavior will likely get special attention from the leader. So that in this modification-2 model, it adds the *path* from OCB to performance appraisal. Another possibility is that the more favored an employee is by his leader, the more he will get a high performance assessment. This arises because of subjectivity, which results in bias in making judgments. On this basis, a 3-modification model is formed by adding the *path* from *liking* to performance appraisal.

Table 4. Comparison Results between Models

Models	X ²	df	GFI	NFI	CFI	Acceptability
Hypothesis	171,696	48	0.831	0.723	0.772	Marginal
Modification 1	60,288	8	0.873	0.730	0.749	Marginal
Modification 2	72,358	11	0.868	0.716	0.738	Marginal
Modification 3	35,874	11	0.916	0.859	0.894	Applicable

Table 4 shows a comparison of measurement of conformity between hypothetical models and modification models. From the three modification models, it can be seen that the modification-3 model is better than the other 2 modification models, including better than the hypothesis model.

DISCUSSION

Three LMX antecedents' variables were examined in this study: perceptions of the preferences of the head of the puskesmas for paramedics, expectations, and the length of their relationship. Consistent with prior research (Wayne et al., 1997; Joseph et al., 2011), variables *liking* and expectations, both of which are important components that significantly influence the quality of the relationship between paramedics and the head of the puskesmas. For example, the head of the puskesmas who has hopes for their subordinates to reach a high position in the puskesmas is very likely they will build a high quality superior-subordinate relationship.

LMX has a significant influence on performance appraisal, OCB, and *favor doing*. These results support the perspective of social exchange in which a worker might help a leader by doing the desired jobs well, and even doing work better than they should, hoping to get rewards from leaders through LMX (Joseph et al., 2011).

LMX turns out to be a significant predictor of performance appraisal. This may occur because paramedics consider that the work they are doing is an obligation to the head of the puskesmas as their leader. So, when paramedics have a strong relationship with the head of the puskesmas, they will be more motivated to work well (showing high performance).

One thing that was unexpected was the significant influence of the perception variable of the head of the puskesmas on paramedics on the performance appraisal variable. Even this additional path can increase the model *fit* from moderate level to *applicable* level.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the results of this study reveal that there are several unique antecedents' variables on LMX. *Antecedent's* variables that may be important for LMX are the characteristics of interpersonal relationships, the duration of the leader-member relationship, and the expectations of workers in the future.

In exchange for the high quality of relationships with their superiors, workers will try to show good performance and behave in a good organizational membership to fulfill their obligations to their leaders and co-workers.

SUGGESTION

Before providing some recommendations for future research, some limitations that need to be improved in this study include:

1. The study carried out has a *cross-sectional* time dimension, so that the relationship pattern studied is a momentary portrait that describes the relationships that occur during data collection.
2. Sampling of 129 *dyads* is from the same organization (puskesmas).

The results of this study provide a number of recommendations for future research:

1. Future research should examine how to develop LMX through data series (all the time) by involving new workers. Particularly LMX changes as a result of the transfer of relationships (dyad) of a subordinate from a superior to another boss, for example when there is a change of leader

2. Sampling should be improved in terms of the number and variety of the organization. The addition of the number and variety of organizations is important given the complexity of the hypothesis model. Research subjects should be taken from workers in private companies so that variable measurements will be better.
3. The modification 3 model is recommended to replace the hypothesis model, because it is proven to increase the level of fit (suitability) of the model with the actual phenomenon.

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