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- Hunker, H.L. and A.J. Wright (1963), "Factors of Industrial Location in Ohio" Ohio State University, Nigeria.

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- Garg, Sambhav (2011): "Business Ethics" Paper presented at the Annual International Conference for the All India Management Association, New Delhi, India, 19–23

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- Garg, Bhavet (2011): Towards a New Gas Policy, Political Weekly, Viewed on January 01, 2012 <http://epw.in/user/viewabstract.jsp>



**LEADER MEMBER EXCHANGE QUALITY INFLUENCING COMMITMENT AND TRUST AMONG EMPLOYEES****OWAIS AHMED****Ph. D. RESEARCH SCHOLAR****I. K. GUJRAL PUNJAB TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY  
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UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR  
HAZRATBAL****ABSTRACT**

*Leader-Member Exchange refers to relationships between immediate supervisor and subordinate. Supervisors form high quality and low quality relationships with their subordinates. High quality relationships are characterized by mutual sharing of resources, responsibility, access to confidential information, participation in decision making etc while as low quality are characterized by contractual commitments and obligations. LMX influences employee trust and commitment, besides other favourable job attitudes and outcomes. The study examined relationship between LMX, organizational commitment and employee trust.*

**KEYWORDS**

leader member exchange, organizational commitment and employee trust.

**INTRODUCTION**

**L**eader Member Exchange Theory explains that there exists a relationship between supervisor and his immediate subordinate based on the principle of reciprocity that each party exchange favours for one another (Martin, et al., 2005). Relationships that may be established between leader and his members may vary from high quality to low quality relationships. High quality relationships are characterised by more trust, autonomy, responsibility, resources, assistance, feedback, etc. given by supervisors to their close or chosen few subordinates and in turn subordinates reciprocate by fulfilling their assigned tasks, delivering on their promises, performing extra role tasks in addition to their formal inrole tasks, imbibing sportsmanship characteristics like helping their colleagues, performing tasks of other colleagues when they are not present, showing courtesy to their colleagues as well as to their customers not mentioned in their formal job contracts etc. Low quality relationships, on the other hand include the features like low trust, less responsibility, no autonomy, less or no feedback, no assistance, etc. exhibited by supervisors towards their subordinates, who in turn reciprocate by performing tasks mentioned in their formal contracts restricting activities to inrole only thereby not performing any extra role task, less innovative, less motivated, less engaged, etc. Members who are involved in high quality relationships form 'in-group' while as members in low quality relationships form 'out-group'. In-group and out-group members, are usually selected by their supervisors on the basis of merit, competence, skills, personality, education, gender, race, ethnicity etc. Members whom their supervisors found performing challenging tasks, able to take responsibility, performing innovative tasks or suggesting innovative solutions, establishing better interpersonal relationships, managing their time well, showing competence while performing their day to day tasks at work, etc. usually are considered to be in-group members while as members who lack all these attributes may form out-group members. Lack of Time and scarcity of resources may also form the essential ingredients for low quality relationships, narrowing the scope for supervisors to expand the reach of high quality relationships beyond the existing in-group circles.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Leader Member Exchange theory (Dansereau, Graen and Haga, 1975; Graen and Cashman, 1975), is based on the principle of reciprocity i.e leaders and members share mutual understanding and responsibility of each other's needs and authority (Graen and Cashman), i.e both parties exchange favours for each other either simultaneously or expectation of receiving in future. LMX suggests that leaders form different relationships with their subordinates in the form of high and low quality relationships. High quality relationships are characterized by more leader attention, loyalty (Dansereau, Graen and Haga, 1975), trust, autonomy, resources, respect, etc (Graen and Scandura, 1987; Liden, Wayne and Stillwell, 1993) given by leader to his immediate subordinate. Cooperation, compliance etc, is exchanged by subordinate (Graen and Scandura; Sparrowe and Liden, 1997) in return and thus form in-groups. Low quality relationships are controlled by formal contracts and economic exchanges (Graen and Scandura; Sparrowe and Liden, 1997) like routine tasks, role defined, etc (Liden, 1993) and thus form out-groups. In-groups are preferred by leaders by finding personality identification match in terms of characteristics like aggression, extroversion, agreeableness, emotional stability etc. Out-groups are being perceived as lacking competence, abilities, skills, responsibility, decision making etc. Also, constraints like time, scarce resources, personality clash etc, limits the scope for forming high quality relationships.

*Organizational commitment* refers to an employee's emotional attachment with an organization. Organizational commitment comprises of affective, continuance and normative components. Affective commitment is based on emotions that binds an employee to an organization, continuance commitment refers to the binding based on costs and benefits approach for leaving an organization, while as normative commitment refers to the binding based on feeling of obligation perceived by an employee towards an organization (Boehman, 2006; Canipe, 2006; Meyer and Allen, 1991; Allen and Meyer, 1996; Karrasch, 2003).

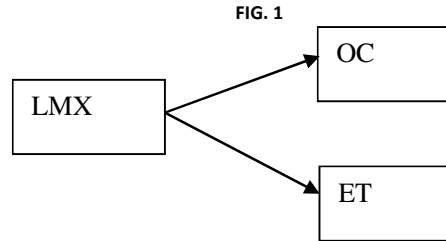
*Employee Trust* refers to the expectation of an individual that the words or promises of another individual can be relied upon. Trust is a multidimensional construct and include dimensions like integrity, competence, benevolence, affective, cognitive (McEvily and Tortoriello, 2010), loyalty, fairness, reliability, openness. Integrity involves honesty, ethics, and faithfulness. Affective represents emotions for others like taking care. Cognitive include rational dimensions like ability, competence. LMX and OC relationship has been well documented in the literature. Research study by L. K. Loong in Malaysian Institute of Accounts, examined the impact of LMX and mentoring on organizational commitment of employees. The results revealed significant relationship between LMX and affective as well as normative organizational commitment, while as partial positive relationship exists between LMX and continuance organizational commitment. Another study by Simon Tagger (2008) in Institute of Public Administration in Canada, examined the impact of job characteristics like autonomy, task identity, task significance, skill variety, feedback etc on LMX and OC. The results revealed positive relationships between job characteristics and LMX. LMX in return found positively influencing organizational commitment of employees. Therefore, taking cognizance of the above literature review, we, hypothesize that LMX positively influence organizational commitment of employees.

*H1: LMX positively influences employee organizational commitment.*

Research study by Scandura and Pelligrini, 2008 examined the relationship between LMX and trust (calculus and identification based trust). The results revealed significant relationship between them. Also, high quality LMX relationships tend to have economic element as well besides social, due to high demands and responsibilities on subordinates. Another study by Yuntao and Heping, 2013 examined the impact of leadership behavior on trust and service performance of

employees. The results revealed positive relationship between leader honesty, LMX and service performance of employees. Therefore, after taking into consideration the above discussion, we, hypothesize that LMX positively influence trust between employees.

**H2: LMX positively influences employee trust.**



\*LMX- Leader Member Exchange, OC- Organizational Commitment and ET- Employee trust

**METHODOLOGY**

**Sample size**

A sample size of 100 respondents includes employees from different hierarchies like middle management, frontline and lower level staff, customers.

**Data Collection Method**

Survey method was used as data collection method where in techniques like structured questionnaires and interviews were used for data collection purposes.

**Research Instruments**

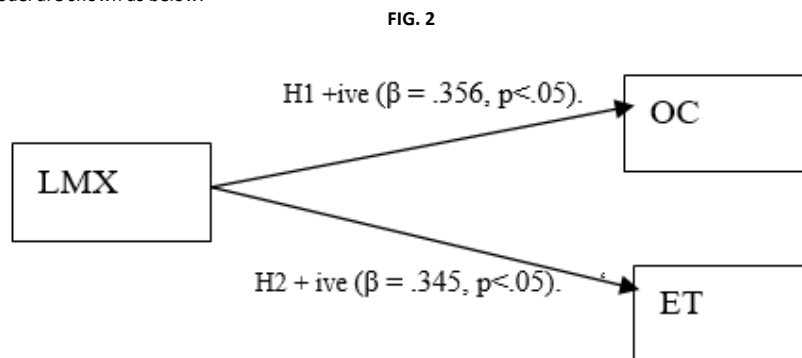
LMX was measured using 7-item scale to ascertain the quality of LMX between subordinates and supervisors. Responses were recorded on Likert 5 point scale, ranging from 1- rarely to 5- very often. Cronbach’s alpha as reliability estimate was at 0.68 for current study. Also, the standardized estimate of its constituent items ranged from 0.42 to 0.81.

Organizational Commitment was measured by using Porter et al., (1974) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire. The scale consists of 9- items. Likert 5-point scale is used to record responses ranging from (1) - strongly disagree to (5) - strongly agree. Reliability and validity has been proved by Porter et al., (1974), Steers (1977) and Stone and Porter (1975). The Coefficient of alpha ranges from .81 to .87 in these studies. Coefficient of alpha for the present study is .66

Employee Trust between supervisor and subordinate was measured by using Tzafirir and Dolan, 2004 multi-item scale. Three dimensions of trust that are benevolence, competence and integrity were measured by 9-items, 3 from each. Likert 5 point scale was used to measure responses ranging from 1- strongly disagree to 5- strongly agree. Cronbach alpha for Tzafirir and Dolan study was at .92. However, for current study it is estimated at .65.

**DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

Data were analysed through various techniques in order to test the hypothesized model. The path model depicting the impact of LMX on employee trust and organizational commitment is examined through structural equation modelling. SEM enable to test the extent to which variables in the hypothesized model is consistent with the data. The maximum likelihood estimation technique is used to estimate the model as the given technique generates reliable results. Measurement model was first confirmed using factor analysis, and then SEM was performed based on the measurement model to estimate the fit of the hypothesized model to the data. The structural modeling suggest that the hypothesized model fit the data well with  $\chi^2$  statistically significant ( $\chi^2 = 913.1$ ,  $df = 391$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $RMR = 0.043$ ,  $GFI = 0.831$ ,  $AGFI = 0.787$ ,  $CFI = 0.913$ ). The goodness-of-fit index (GFI) and the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) were 0.812 and 0.795, respectively. The CFI showed a high value of 0.923. Each and every hypothetical relationship of present study is well supported by structural modelling results. The path coefficients for the hypothesized model are shown as below:



\*LMX- Leader Member Exchange, OC- Organizational Commitment and ET- Employee trust

**LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

The current study may be vulnerable to various discrepancies that may include issues like, data collection techniques, geographic reach, etc. Although, data is collected from different companies like banking, insurance and postal sectors. But, lack of representation from other fields like health, tourism, hospitality, education, may limit the scope of application to these sectors of service economy. Data collection techniques apart from structured questionnaires and interviews, like observations, could add subjective dimension, besides having objective results. Future researchers can contribute to the LMX construct by exploring LMX across different sectors of service economy like, hospitality, health, non-banking, travel, utility services, fire services, etc. Also, service organizations operating in different countries should be made part of the research study. The different geographical, cultural, political and demographic factors may influence the results in a different way.

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