

Leader-Member Exchange and Employee Job Performance: Review and Prospect

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Abstract. The research of social relationships on employee performance has received increasing attention from scholars, and the relationship between leadership and employee, as a type of employee relationship, have a "double-edged sword" effect on employee performance. Leader-member exchange is a construct proposed by Western scholars from the perspective of vertical pair relationship between leaders and subordinates, which is influenced by factors such as leader characteristics, member characteristics, leader-member congruence, and leader-member exchange relationship, and also has an impact on employees' work behavior and performance. As an important influencing force in the relationship between leader and employee, leadership-membership exchange has gained momentum in recent years. Therefore, this paper systematically compares domestic and international research on the relationship between leader-member exchange and employee performance between 2013 and 2022; the results of these research pointed out that the existing studies mainly conducted the relationship between leader-member exchange and employee job performance from two perspectives of myopicism and ultravisasim that employees are economic or social people; and accordingly summarized the influence mechanism of leader-member exchange on the relationship between employee job performance from three aspects: individual characteristics, organizational characteristics, and cultural characteristics; finally, this paper supports the deficiencies of the existing research and puts forward the future prospects.

Keywords: LMX; Task performance; Contextual performance; Counterproductive performance.

1. Introduction

Leadership does not happen in a "black box", so the relationship between the leader and the "led" is important and of interest to academics and practitioners alike. In order to theorize the leader-lead relationship, the leader-member exchange became a milestone in the development of leadership research. At its core is the idea that leaders will treat employees differently, creating different qualities of leader-member exchange relationships. Leader-member exchange research has been around for nearly half a century and has yielded a large body of research. The leader-member exchange proposal focuses on the relationship between leaders and employees and how the strength of their relationship leads to some positive and negative changes in employees over time. On the other hand, leaders facilitate some group members by developing high quality relationships and providing guidance or empowerment to them, while providing less incentive to other members. These differences in relationships are referred to as LMX differentiation. Leader-member exchange is an important concept in the literature because it recognizes the importance of interpersonal relationships and employee psychological alignment, rather than focusing solely on monetary incentives [1-2]. The concept of leader-member exchange focuses specifically on those qualitative aspects that are critical to individual performance by influencing the relationship with the leader [3]. These studies are based on other aspects of leader-member exchange such as antecedents and consequences, for example, on employee performance and productivity [4-5]. Previously, researchers focused on understanding the behavioral outcomes of leader-member exchange, for example, regarding citizenship behavior. However, researchers now focus more on psychological outcomes [6].

Therefore, it is important to systematically sort out the relationship between leader-member exchange theory and employee performance. In this paper, we systematically review the literature on related directions from 2013-2022 from two perspectives of short-visionism and far-visionism, sort

out the domestic and international studies on the relationship between leader-member exchange theory and employee performance, and integrate and summarize the mechanisms of leader-member exchange theory on employee performance in different contexts.

2. Leader-Member Exchange

2.1 The Definition of Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-member exchange is rooted in role theory and later developed mainly relying on social exchange theory.

The concept of leader-member exchange was first formally introduced by Western scholars by Graen and Dansereau in 1975 through the construction of a social exchange model, which argues that leaders, due to limited time and energy, treat different employees with different management styles and thus establish different relationships with different employees [7]. As research continues, the connotation of leader-member exchange has become richer. According to Dienesch and Liden's findings, leader-member exchange relationship is the quality of exchange relationship between superiors and their subordinate employees[8]. While Graen and other scholars pointed out in their study that leader-member exchange is an exchange based on social relationship, a social exchange between both leaders and subordinate members in terms of emotions and interests[9], which has been widely accepted by other scholars.

In comparison, the study of leader-member exchange is relatively late in China. In the local Chinese context of "relationship orientation", Chinese scholars have also conducted in-depth research on leader-member exchange based on foreign scholars' research. Guo Xiaowei and Li Chengyan argue that leader-subordinate exchange relationships are a key factor in explaining employee behavior [10]. Based on their findings, Yu Da and Liang Junping pointed out that the exchange relationship formed between organizations and employees on the basis of employment agreements is an economic exchange relationship, while leader-member exchange is a social exchange relationship between leaders and their subordinate members in organizations, which is based on the former economic exchange relationship [11]. Jin-Yun Duan and Qian Zhang pointed out that in formal organizational power systems, leaders tend to establish different exchange relationships with different subordinate members, and there are differences in the formation of such exchange relationships [12]. Xin Wang proposed that the exchange relationship of leadership members in an organization is the economic and social exchange relationship established between leaders and subordinate members on the basis of work, while subordinate employees are divided into "insiders" and "outsiders" based on the closeness of the exchange relationship between them. The two types of groups are "insiders" and "outsiders".

By summarizing and organizing the domestic and foreign literature, we found that the connotation of leader-member exchange is getting richer and richer as the research continues to deepen. With the in-depth study of this concept, it is gradually recognized that the subordinate relationship between leaders and subordinate members in an organization is a dynamic exchange process, and this exchange from the subordinate relationship will have an impact on employee innovation performance. However, the above studies all conceptualize leader-member exchange as a holistic concept. It has not been defined more deeply in terms of the characteristics of LMX.

2.2 The Structure of Leader-Member Exchange

Since the concept of leader-member exchange was proposed, different scholars have studied it from different perspectives and divided the dimensions of leader-member exchange according to its research content. At present, scholars' dimensional division of LMX is mainly divided into unidimension and multidimension.

2.2.1 Single dimensional structure

Graen proposed that leader-member exchange is a unidimensional concept, and they considered the relationship between leaders and subordinate employees as a work-based exchange relationship, with the quality of exchange ultimately being high quality in-circle exchange and low quality out-of-circle exchange [13]. The "in-circle employee" receives trust and attention from the leader, more autonomy, flexibility and privileges at work, and more opportunities for promotion. In exchange, leaders will also get the love, respect and trust of such employees. In this way, leaders and employees are attracted to each other, trust each other, understand each other, and influence each other, thus establishing a high-quality leader-member exchange relationship. On the contrary, the "outsiders" will not receive special attention from the leader, and they will only maintain normal organizational working relationships, a top-down contractual relationship, a hierarchical relationship, and a low-quality leader-member exchange relationship. Based on this research, scholars designed a variety of scales with different topics to facilitate the research in practice, among which the more widely used is the 7-item unidimensional scale, which has been widely borrowed and applied by many scholars since then.

2.2.2 Multidimensional structure

Later, scholars conducted more in-depth research on the measurement dimensions of leader-member exchange relationships, gradually exploring towards a multidimensional structure; Dienesch's study pointed out that the dimensions of leader-member exchange relationships were classified in terms of three dimensions: emotion, loyalty, and contribution [8]; Graen and other scholars proposed a different view, arguing that leader-member exchange contains three dimensions such as respect, trust, and loyalty. Based on the findings of these scholars [14], Liden et al. added the dimension of "professional respect" to this research variable through further research, thus classifying the leader-member exchange relationship from four factors: emotion, loyalty, contribution, and professional respect. In this way, the exchange relationship of leadership members was classified by four factors: emotion, loyalty, contribution, and professional respect, and a measurement scale was developed with three items for each dimension and 12 items in total [15].

Based on the research of foreign scholars, many domestic scholars have gradually conducted more in-depth research on this research variable and its dimensional division, and developed corresponding measurement scales. Based on the Chinese local context, Wang Hui et al. added a measurement question item for each dimension based on previous studies, forming a measurement scale of 16 items suitable for the Chinese local context [16]. Table 1 summarizes the division of leader-member exchange from unidimensional to multidimensional.

Table 1. Leader-member exchange dimension division

Dimension	Author	Dimensional division
Single dimension	Graen(1975)[13]	High Quality Leader-member exchange
Three-dimensional	Dienesch & Linden(1986)[8]	Emotion, Loyalty, Contribution Trust, Respect, Loyalty
	Graen & Uhi Bien(1995)[9]	Emotion, Professional Respect and Contribution
Four-Dimensional	Liden & Maslyn(1998)[15]	Emotion, Contribution, Loyalty, Professional Respect, 12 entries.
	Hui Wang(2004)[16]	Emotion, Contribution, Loyalty, Professional Respect, 16 entries.

2.3 Further Development of Leader-Member Exchange

Over the past three decades, leader-member exchange theory has examined leader-member pair relationships in an isolated manner. In essence, within the same team, leader-member exchange pairs of varying quality are co-located and interconnected, forming a system of leader-member exchange or an aggregate network of pair relationships.

In a team situation, the quality of leadership exchange is not only absolute but also relative. As a member of a team, employees not only pay attention to their own leader-member exchange formed by their interaction with the leader, but also may pay attention to their colleagues' leader-member exchange and consciously or unconsciously evaluate their own leader-member exchange in comparison with their colleagues. Relative leader-member exchange is the difference between the individual employee's leader-member exchange and his or her colleagues, but not the multiple differences formed by comparing with each colleague, but a single difference resulting from comparing with the average level of leader-member exchange in the team, which is divided into two categories: objective and subjective. Objective relative leader-member exchange is the actual difference between individual leader-member exchange and the mean level of team leader-member exchange, while subjective relative leader-member exchange is the individual's subjective perception of this difference, called relative leader-member exchange [17].

Relative leadership membership exchange is one of the constructs arising from the expansion of LMX theory from the individual level to other levels. Henderson et al. noted that researchers can study LMX at multiple theoretical levels, including the individual level, the within-pair individual level, the within-group individual level, and the group level. Among them, research at the within-group individual level focuses on the dynamic process of comparing individual members with their colleagues regarding the content and quality of LMX, that is, the study of the effects and mechanisms of RLMX's effects on employees. Therefore, the essence of RLMX theory is the LMX theory at the individual level within a group.

3. Employee Job Performance

3.1 Interpreting Employee Performance Based on Behavior and Outcomes

Psychologists have a long history of concern about defining, understanding, and assessing "job performance". Currently, there are many different definitions of individual performance, with the main difference being whether performance is an outcome or a behavior. The "performance as a result" view holds that performance is the result of work achieved and is a record of one's performance. This view tends to equate performance with responsibility, goals, and tasks. The "performance as behavior" view is that performance is behavior with evaluable elements that have a positive or negative effect on individual and organizational effectiveness. As shown in Table 2.

Table 2. An overview of definition of employee job performance

Perspective	Author	Definition
Outcome-based definitions	Kane(1976)[18]	Performance is something that one leaves behind, something that exists relatively independently of purpose.
	Rong Yang(2002)[19]	Performance is the result of various actions taken by individuals to achieve their goals, and this result is objective and can be identified by people.
	Bernardin&Beatty(1984)[20]	The result of a specific job function, activity, or behavior at a specific time.
Behavior-based definition	Campbell(1990)[21]	Performance is defined as behaviors or actions related to organizational goals over which an individual has control.
	Motowidlo(2003)[22]	All discrete behavioral events that an individual engages in during a standard time interval that have expected value to the organization.

Therefore, this paper argues that defining performance purely as both outcomes and behaviors is biased, and that performance is a combination of outcomes and behaviors.

3.2 Dimensions of Job Performance

After the landmark introduction of the concept of organizational citizenship behavior in 1983, the scope of job performance was expanded. They argued that organizational citizenship behavior should be included in job performance and defined it as an extra-role behavior that benefits the organization and consists of a set of informal, cooperative behaviors. Such behaviors, although not mandated by the organization and not associated with rewards and rewards, are equally important to the organization and can enhance the effectiveness of the organization's operations, a form of farsightedness in the management of employee performance. Therefore, many scholars have started to study different dimensions of job performance, classifying it into different dimensions such as two-dimensional, three-dimensional, and four-dimensional. Table 3 summarizes the different dimensions of job performance measurement.

Tabel 3. Job performance dimension division

Dimension	Author	Dimensional division
Two-dimension	Borman & Motowidlo(1997)[23]	Task Performance, Contextual performance
	VanScotter & Motowidlo(1996)[24]	Task performance, contextual performance (interpersonal facilitation, job dedication)
	Schmitt et al(2012)[25]	Task performance, Contextual performance (taking initiative to perform tasks that are not one's own, demonstrating exceptional work ethic at work, helping and working with others at work, strictly enforcing organizational rules and regulations, fulfilling, supporting and maintaining organizational goals)
Three-dimension	Dienesch & Linden(1986) [8] Graen & Uhi Bien(1995) [9]	Interpersonal Citizenship Performance Organizational Citizenship Performance Work-Task Responsibility Performance
	Rotundo & Sackett(2002) [28]	Task performance, organizational citizenship performance, and counterproductive performance
Four-dimension	Yi Han&Jian qiao Liao(2007) [29]	Task performance, contextual performance, learning performance, and innovation performance
Eight-dimension	Campbell(1990)[21]	Job-specific task proficiency, non-job-specific task proficiency, written and verbal communication proficiency, demonstrated effort, maintaining individual discipline, promoting colleague and team performance, supervision and leadership, and management and execution

4. Research on LMX and Employee Job Performance From Different Perspectives

LMX theory states that leaders and employees develop exchange relationships of varying quality depending on the leader, the employee, and a range of factors in the relationship between the two. With the development of theoretical and empirical studies, LMX research increasingly relies on social exchange theory as its theoretical foundation. According to social exchange theory, the subject matter being exchanged can be either economic or social resources, or both. Economic exchange relationships tend to be more short-term, while social exchange tends to be more long-term, so this paper delineates the relationship between leader-member exchange and employee performance from two perspectives: myopicism and ultravisasim.

4.1 Intra-Role Behavior of Employees Based on "Economic Man"— Myopicism

The "economic man" perspective cannot be separated from the application of resource conservation theory and equity theory.

According to resource conservation theory, individuals not only have a tendency to try to conserve existing resources and acquire new ones, but also try to avoid depletion of their own resources. Resource conservation theory asserts the importance of resources in employee performance. From the perspective of employees as "economic agents": when employees are not provided with sufficient resources, the level of commitment decreases [31], and even affects employees' innovative behavior. In contrast, high-quality LMX facilitates the creation of new and valuable resources for the organization [32], because providing resources makes them feel valuable and psychologically connected to the organization.

Equity theory explains the importance of fair treatment of employees, and it argues that employees have a psychological perception of organizational fairness through the reality of whether the distribution of material resources with other members of the team is reasonable, and this perception will have a great impact on employees' motivation and initiative in the organization. Moreover, employees' perceptions of fairness in resource allocation also affect the quality of leadership exchanges [33].

Therefore, the "economist" perspective of leader-member exchange affects employees' intra-role behaviors such as task performance and innovation performance. Scholars have tested these ideas through a series of experimental and empirical studies. It has been suggested that the demonstration of innovative behaviors requires individual resources and that high-quality leader-member exchange relationships can complement the depletion of innovative behaviors by not only supporting innovation, providing more job autonomy, or giving tangible or intangible resources [34]. Studies point out that resourceful environments are conducive to improved employee performance because employees are better resourced and thus perform better in high-quality leader-member exchanges [35-36]. Leader-member exchange is enhanced through employees' trust levels and perceptions. Thus, employees' perceptions also manipulate their performance [37]. It has also been noted through empirical studies that if the level of LMX differentiation within a team is high, then a sense of inequity among team members will likely be experienced, which could potentially lead to potential conflict and less collaboration, thereby harming employees' innovative performance [38].

4.2 Extra-Role Behavior of Employees Based on "Social Man"— Ultravisasim

The "social man" perspective is inseparable from the application of job embeddedness theory. Job embeddedness theory is an important element of organizational attachment theory. Organizational attachment represents the degree of emotional connection of an individual to the organization, which is directly expressed as trust and dependence of the individual on the organization. They define job embeddedness as each employee in the organization is caught in an invisible network, and when the employee is caught in a deeper degree, he/she has a stronger connection with the organization, he/she has established a stronger attachment with the organization, and this invisible network is called job embeddedness. Therefore, some scholars have proposed the concept of contextual performance. If task performance refers to the behavior that employees have a direct connection with the organization and technology, reflecting the maintenance and service work to achieve the needs of technology. Then contextual performance is that which is not directly related to technology but provides broad organizational-level support for technology activities. Contextual performance specifically includes spontaneous behaviors, organizational citizenship behaviors, pro-social organizational behaviors, organizational commitment, and informal work activities. Contextual performance does not directly generate benefits for the company, but in the long run (i.e., farsightedness), it contributes to sustaining the company's long-term growth. As the controller of organizational or team resources and the allocator and supervisor of employees' work, the relationship status between leaders and employees is an important factor affecting contextual performance.

From the perspective of organizational attachment, on the one hand, when leaders and employees establish a high-quality leader-member exchange relationship based on trust, support and understanding, it helps employees develop a higher degree of trust and dependence on their superiors and the organization, which helps employees increase their sense of responsibility and mission for

their own work, and thus motivates them to engage in more spontaneous positive behaviors to reward the On the other hand, a good relationship between superiors and subordinates helps the organization and team management, and superiors are willing to provide employees with as many work resources and development opportunities as possible, which helps to enhance employees' loyalty to the organization and stimulate employees' work motivation and potential.

Therefore, leadership membership exchange from a "social person" perspective influences extra-role behaviors such as organizational citizenship, counterproductive behaviors, and pro-organizational behaviors. The degree of attachment and emotional commitment to the organization is positively related to performance compared to the actual work process [39], with three specific effects.

a. The quality of leader-member exchange affects employees' organizational citizenship behavior through the degree of organizational attachment [40].

b. The quality of leader-member exchange affects employees' counterproductive behavior through the degree of organizational attachment.

c. The quality of leader-member exchange affects employees' pro-organizational behavior through the degree of organizational attachment. The findings of some empirical studies also support the above view.

Therefore, in response to the above descriptions, this paper summarizes in Figure 1 the generalized model of existing research that addresses the impact of LMX theory on employee job performance.

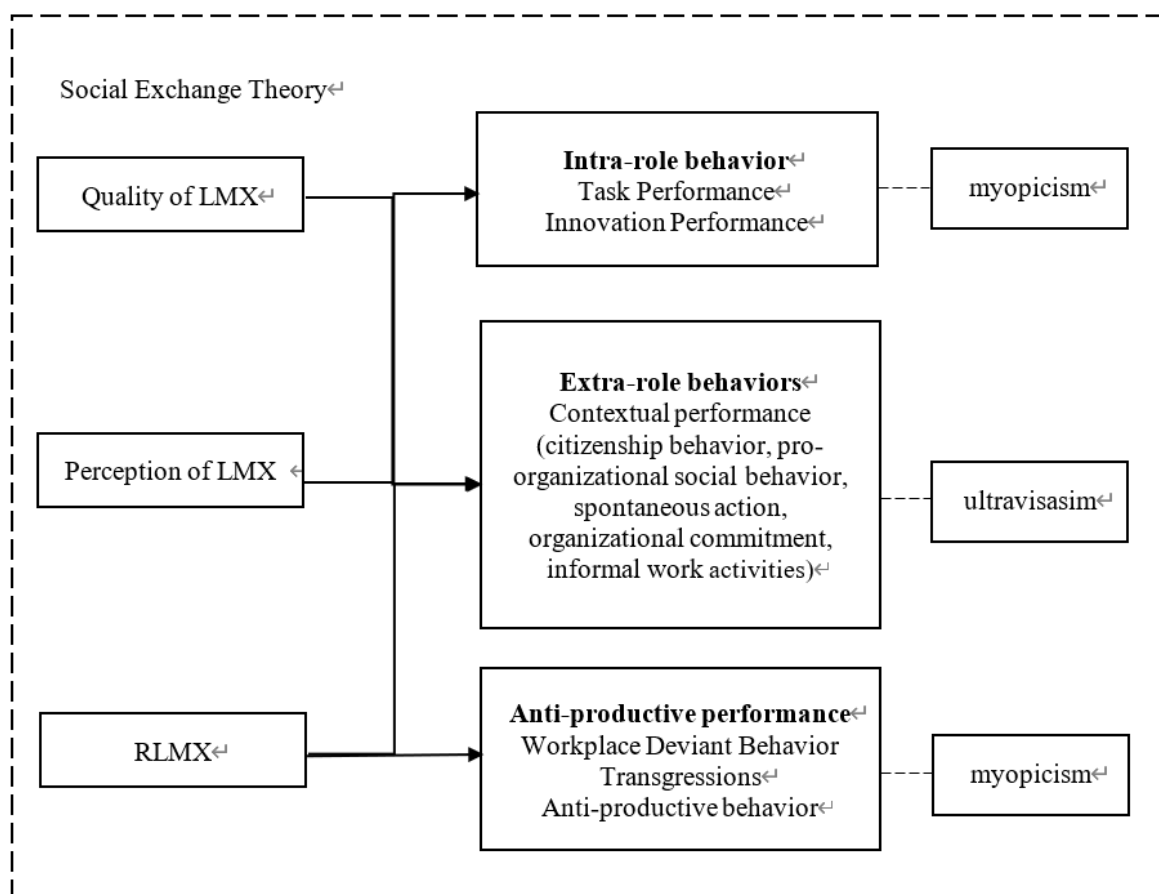


Figure 1. Model of the impact of LMX on employee job performance

5. The Influence Mechanism under Different Situations

More researchers have begun to explore the unique role played by external environmental factors and individual factors on employee performance and the combined effect of these factors.

5.1 Individual Characteristics

5.1.1 Employee emotional and affective characteristics

The leader-member exchange relationship is shaped by a series of pleasant or annoying events accumulated in the interaction between the two parties, so LMX can be viewed as an important emotional event in the organization. During the work process, leaders' behaviors and emotional expressions can consciously or unconsciously influence changes in subordinates' emotional states, which in turn affect their attitudes, behaviors, and innovative performance [41]. In addition, organizational commitment as an affective characteristic of employees, which also influences their performance and behavior, differs for each employee-supervisor relationship, and those employees who have a high-quality LMX relationship with their supervisors have higher levels of organizational commitment compared to those with low-quality LMX [42]. Emotionally rich employees are more responsive to organizational challenges and have a higher level of commitment to the organization because they are open-minded, which facilitates their good understanding of critical situations [31]. Affective commitment is related to employees' emotional bonding with the organization. the relationship between LMX and affective commitment is also mediated by the quality of engagement [43]. LMX plays a key role in promoting employee performance by increasing employees' level of affective commitment [44]. When employees perceive politics in the organization, they can effectively deal with it through high quality LMX and feel a high sense of connectedness [45].

5.1.2 Job Crafting

Job crafting is a set of behaviors that individuals spontaneously implement at work to change task or relationship boundaries - potentially facilitating the organizational socialization of new employees. It has been suggested that employees' self-expression is influenced by interpersonal relationships [46]. Job crafting positively affects new employees' work engagement, which in turn affects their task performance and creativity [47].

5.1.3 Individual trust, motivation, and evaluation

Martin's analysis examined the relationship between the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship and a multidimensional model of job performance (task, citizenship, and counterproductive performance). Trust, motivation, empowerment, and job satisfaction mediated the relationship between LMX and task and citizenship performance, with trust in the leader having the greatest impact [48]. Core self-evaluation has also been used as a mediating variable to study the relationship; core self-evaluation refers to the basic evaluation that employees hold about their abilities and values, and this evaluation contains four traits: self-efficacy, locus of control, neuroticism, and self-esteem, which can effectively influence employees' intrinsic motivation and predict their behavior [49]. Saeed B B scholars studied how leader-member how communication between them is linked to subordinates' innovative work performance through core self-evaluation, domain knowledge, and innovation processes [50].

5.1.4 Employee social network

Relationships with leaders do not occur in isolation from one's relationships with peers. Studies point out that the core person in a workflow network actually has relatively more resources, such as skills, knowledge, and expertise [51-52]. Therefore, Gerdien scholars have studied the effect of leader-member exchange on follower performance based on the larger social network in which the followers are embedded [53], and there is a positive relationship between leader-member exchange and follower performance when follower workflow network centrality and/or follower friendship network centrality are high, but when they are both low there is not. Employees will build different relationship networks through their own collectivist tendencies in the network building process, and employees with high collectivist tendencies consider themselves as part of the team, will follow the daily norms of the team more, work harder, and have better job performance than employees with low collectivist tendencies, but if there is a high-quality exchange relationship between employees and leaders [54]. Choi et al. introduced the mediating variable of individual relational conflict to

explore the impact of relational conflict on individual employee performance due to the high quality of team member exchange of other members perceived by the employee [55].

5.2 Organizational Environment Characteristics

5.2.1 Team climate

The team climate in which employees work can positively and negatively influence the effect of leader-member exchange on employee performance behavior. Based on an empirical study, Yufang Huang and Fei Wu found that the relationship between the leader and the overall team members, i.e., the quality of leader-member exchange, in the supervisory behavior of colleagues towards low-performing employees affects the effect of this supervisory behavior, which in turn inhibits the free-riding behavior of low-performing employees [56]. Chih-Ching Teng scholars concluded through an empirical study that organizational identity mediates the positive relationship between ethical work climate and employees' organizational citizenship behavior, and that leader-member exchange relationships moderate the indirect effect of ethical work climate on organizational citizenship behavior through organizational identity [57]. YJ Tang noted that employees' organizational-level citizenship behavior toward the organization is influenced by both leader-member exchange and team member exchange, and employees' job performance is influenced by leader-member exchange, while leader-member exchange is influenced by leadership input as well as organizational network structure [58]. A resourceful environment is also conducive to employee performance because employees are better resourced in a high-quality LMX, which results in better performance. Chen Xiaotun noted that the leader implicit followership prototype has a facilitative effect on work engagement, and the stronger the mediating effect of leader-member exchange for highly committed employees and the better the organizational climate [26].

However, the sense of competition among team employees may hinder the performance of some employees. High leader-member exchange relationships among some team members may increase insecurity among other team members, leading to their poor performance.

5.2.2 The style of leader

In organizational situations, organizational values and norms are often a reflection of the leader's values. Therefore, the mechanisms of leader-member exchange on employee performance may be interpreted differently under different leadership styles, such as authentic leadership, spiritual leadership, harmonious management, and leader power distance.

Su Tsung-Wai pointed out that moral pushback and leader-member exchange relationship play a mediating role in the double-edged influence of benevolent leadership on employees' work deviant behavior [14]. Scholars such as Desheng Wang proposed that authentic leadership has a significant negative effect on employees' counterproductive behaviors, while also confirming that authentic leadership has a significant facilitating effect on leader-member exchange [59]. Wang Minghui scholars proposed that spiritual leaders create a good team atmosphere for their subordinates through the spirituality of the workplace and promote employee performance by developing a sense of value and pride through employees' positive interactions and help to others in the work environment [60]. In addition, the leader's entitlement distance industry can have an impact on leader-member exchange relationships and employee extra-role performance (organizational citizenship behavior) [27]. TRAN et al. noted a significant relationship between leader's personality traits, LMX and social capital. Responsible and easy-going leaders always build good relationships with their subordinates, thus influencing employee organizational citizenship behavior and job performance [30].

5.3 Cultural Characteristics

Ethnic culture is defined as a collective identity that includes subjective factors such as norms, values, and beliefs. As in the current study, ethnic culture is often used as a proxy for culture, and research has shown that employees from different ethnic cultures differ in the way they view organizational phenomena, such as leadership and organizational fairness. Research has also shown

that ethnic culture is the primary boundary condition that influences relationships at the individual level. According to Smith and colleagues, within a given culture, individuals' behaviors or ways of handling situations are considered effective only when they are consistent with deep-seated cultural beliefs.

Thus many scholars have studied the role of cultural values in explaining leadership differences by using national culture as a mediating variable and the role of cultural values in explaining the relationship between equity, LMX, and motivation to improve performance [61]. It has also been further studied that the effect of LMX on leadership trust is weaker in collectivist and high-powered cultural societies; the relationship between LMX and performance is stronger in horizontal individualistic cultures [62].

In China, the Chinese society is a "relational" society, and organizational leaders generally adopt a "pseudo-kinship" approach to differentiate employees into their own, acquaintances, and outsiders based on a differential order pattern, in which their own people are similar to the role of organizational insiders, so scholars argue that After controlling for LMX, insider identity perception mediates the relationship between differences in leader-member exchange relationships and task performance [63].

6. Insufficient Research and Future Prospects

Despite the wealth of previous research on the relationship between leader-member exchange and employee performance, critical issues have not received sufficient attention and some important research questions remain to be addressed. Based on our review of the literature, this section offers specific recommendations.

First, in terms of the selection of research scenarios, researchers usually investigate the results of leader-member exchange on employee performance in the same context. Leader-member exchange, as a research theory, is more likely to be used as a mediating variable to explore the impact on performance management [64]. The process of reviewing the results suggests that new results can be studied in the future as well, otherwise the research will revolve around the same things. Future trends in performance management focus more on the process of managing contextual performance, but only a few of the prior studies have focused on the results of the impact of leader-member exchange on employee contextual performance, including organizational citizenship behavior. This type of research direction should need to be investigated in a different context in order to understand the outcomes of leadership member relationships on employee performance from a new perspective. Therefore, in future research, studies can be conducted around the impact of leader-employee relationships on employee contextual performance in different management scenarios.

Second, in terms of specific types of leader-employee relationships, although I-deals have been previously suggested as an alternative to LMX. Research on I-deals can examine their possible consequences and how they can improve employee performance with their help. Researchers have provided evidence that leaders have different quality types of leadership member relationships with each follower. Therefore, future research needs to examine how employee performance and behavior differs compared to employees who have high quality leadership member relationships.

Third, current research has focused on the effect of leader-member exchange on employee performance, but leaders, as one of the company's employees, can also be affected by changes in their own performance as a result of follower relationships. Future research will also need to examine the effect of leader-membership on leader performance.

Fourth, in terms of the selection of mediating variables, researchers should focus on understanding the entire cognitive process that leads to changes in emotions over time and how these emotions further lead to other positive and negative performance outcomes for employees over time. In addition, there is very little research on the negative effects of high-quality exchanges, and only a few articles have identified negative effects of LMX on employee performance, such as employee counterproductive behavior as an important factor that harms organizational performance, but few of the existing studies address the mechanisms by which leader-member exchanges affect employee

counterproductive behavior. Future research can combine many negative effects into one model to explain the whole mechanism.

Fifth, regarding the choice of theory, LMX focuses on dyadic relationships, while social network theory deals with employees' informal networks and relationships. Employees can improve performance by strengthening their strong networks, but this goes beyond leadership member relationships. Therefore, future research could examine how leadership member relationships and larger social networks can lead to different performance impact outcomes. In addition, future research could focus on the integration of resource theory to deepen understanding of the impact of psychological resources on employee performance and how leaders provide the necessary resources to employees. Future research could also use equity theory to understand the impact of employees' sense of fairness on their overall relationships and outcomes.

Finally, regarding the adaptation of research methods. Most previous research on the role of Leader-member exchange has been conducted in behavioral laboratories, attempting to find the true relationship between Leader-member exchange and employee performance. However, the laboratory differs from workplace contexts that may influence the relationship between Leader-member exchange and employee performance. This simplified experimental manipulation or variable measurement approach may reveal only one side of the story while ignoring its double-edged sword effect. Future research may consider a longitudinal tracking approach in the work context.

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