

Leader–Member Exchange, Work Commitment, And Personnel Performance: The Moderating Role Of Job Satisfaction

Renaldo Sau Galla^{1*}

¹Management Science Doctoral Program, Halu Oleo University, Kampus Hijau Bumi Tridharma, Anduonohu, Kec. Kambu, Kota Kendari, Sulawesi Tenggara
renaldosaugalla@gmail.com

Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and work commitment on personnel performance, as well as examine the role of job satisfaction moderation in strengthening these relationships within the South Sulawesi Regional Police. Using a quantitative approach with the Structural Equation Modeling method based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), this study involved 240 police personnel selected through purposive sampling techniques. The results of the measurement model test showed that all research instruments met strict validity and reliability criteria. The results of the hypothesis test revealed that LMX has a positive and significant influence on work commitment and personnel performance. Similarly, work commitment has been shown to have a significant effect on performance improvement. However, it was found that job satisfaction did not have a significant direct influence on personnel performance. Interestingly, the results of the moderation test showed that job satisfaction played a significant role as a moderator variable that strengthened the influence of work commitment on performance. These findings confirm that to achieve optimal organizational performance, the South Sulawesi Regional Police needs to pay attention to the quality of superior-subordinate relationships and create a satisfactory work environment to convert personnel commitments into real performance.

Keywords: Leader–Member Exchange, Work Commitment, Personnel Performance, Job Satisfaction, SEM-PLS, South Sulawesi Police.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) dan komitmen kerja terhadap kinerja personel, serta menguji peran moderasi kepuasan kerja dalam memperkuat hubungan tersebut di Kepolisian Daerah Sulawesi Selatan. Menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode Structural Equation Modeling berbasis Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), penelitian ini melibatkan 240 personel kepolisian yang dipilih melalui teknik purposive sampling. Hasil uji model pengukuran menunjukkan bahwa semua instrumen penelitian memenuhi kriteria validitas dan reliabilitas yang ketat. Hasil uji hipotesis mengungkapkan bahwa LMX memiliki pengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap komitmen kerja dan kinerja personel. Demikian pula, komitmen kerja telah terbukti memiliki pengaruh signifikan terhadap peningkatan kinerja. Namun, ditemukan bahwa kepuasan kerja tidak memiliki pengaruh langsung yang signifikan terhadap kinerja personel. Sayangnya, hasil uji moderasi menunjukkan bahwa kepuasan kerja berperan signifikan sebagai variabel moderator yang memperkuat pengaruh komitmen kerja terhadap kinerja. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa untuk mencapai kinerja organisasi yang optimal, Kepolisian Daerah Sulawesi Selatan perlu memperhatikan kualitas hubungan atasan-bawahan dan menciptakan lingkungan kerja yang memuaskan untuk mengubah komitmen personel menjadi kinerja nyata.

Kata kunci: Pertukaran Pemimpin-Anggota, Komitmen Kerja, Kinerja Personel, Kepuasan Kerja, SEM-PLS, Kepolisian Daerah Sulawesi Selatan.

Copyright (c) 2026 Renaldo Sau Galla

✉Corresponding author: Renaldo Sau Galla

Email Address: renaldosaugalla (Kampus Hijau Bumi Tridharma, Kota Kendari, Sulawesi Tenggara)

Received 01 January 2026, Accepted 07 January 2026, Published 13 January 2026

INTRODUCTION

Leader Member Exchange is one of the concepts that continues to gain attention in the study of management and organizational behavior because of its significant role in shaping interpersonal relationships between leaders and team members (Chen and Sriphon 2022). In high-pressure organizations such as police institutions, the relationship between superiors and subordinates not only

affects the effectiveness of work, but also has a direct impact on members' loyalty and commitment to the organization. Leaders who are able to build high-quality relationships with their members can encourage greater emotional engagement at work, which ultimately improves commitment and performance.

Other research has confirmed that Leader Member Exchange has an influence on various aspects of work, including job satisfaction, motivation, and organizational efficiency. Strong Member Exchange leaders create mutual trust, respect, and mutual obligations between superiors and subordinates, which significantly contributes to work commitments (Istiningsih et al., 2020). In the context of public organizations such as the police, where compliance and integrity are essential, strong social relationships between leaders and members are needed to create a solid and professional work culture.

Member Exchange leaders have proven to play an important role in creating positive and productive working conditions. The quality of interaction between leaders and members has a significant impact on organizational commitment, ultimately influencing members' decisions to stay, excel, or even leave the organization (Won Ho et al., 2022). Windeler and Riemenschneider add that a positive LMX relationship can lower work stress and improve performance directly, which is especially important in organizations with high external pressure such as the police (Windeler and Riemenschneider, 2013). Volmer et al.'s research also found that LMX contributes to the creation of greater work autonomy and satisfaction, which strengthens employee commitment and work engagement (Volmer et al., 2012).

Work commitment is also one of the important variables that mediates the relationship between leadership and employee performance outcomes. A leader's high expectations of his subordinates through LMX can increase commitment and work performance through the Pygmalion effect, where subordinates seek to meet the leader's expectations because they feel valued and trusted (Khan et al., 2022). Gerstner and Day in their meta-analytical study assert that high commitment as a result of positive LMX relationships directly contributes to improved organizational civic performance and behavior (Gerstner and Day, 1997). Thus, these two variables are not only theoretically relevant, but also very useful practically in shaping human resource management strategies in the public sector.

Although many studies have discussed the influence of Leader Member Exchange on work commitment and performance, there are still limitations in understanding how this relationship occurs across the board in the context of public sector organizations that have bureaucratic structures and hierarchical leadership such as police institutions. Most previous studies have focused only on the private sector or civil institutions with more flexible organizational structures. This creates a theoretical gap in explaining the dynamics of leader-member relationships in the context of high-pressure work, tight command structures, and high public expectations. In addition, most studies did not include other psychological variables that could potentially affect the relationship, such as job satisfaction as an important determinant factor in strengthening or weakening commitment.

Most of the solutions proposed in the literature still emphasize on strengthening leadership styles and communication training as the primary approach in improving the relationship between leaders and subordinates. This approach is indeed useful, but it is not enough to answer the complexity of interpersonal relationships in organizations with high social and political pressures such as the police. Formal communication is not enough to form loyalty and optimal performance, as emotional interactions and a sense of being valued have a stronger impact (Dirlik et al., 2023). Therefore, a more comprehensive and integrated approach is needed to clarify and improve the relationship between leaders and subordinates in the context of dynamic and high-risk public service organizations.

This study tries to answer the existing gap by developing a conceptual model that tests the influence of Leader Member Exchange on personnel performance through work commitment as a mediation variable. This model is based on empirical evidence showing that positive interpersonal relationships between leaders and members encourage a sense of emotional attachment to the organization, which directly increases work commitment and loyalty (Tümekaya and Sarpkaya, 2022). Work commitments then play an important role in determining how much an employee is involved in his or her duties, even beyond the formal role he or she holds. Organizational commitment is an important bridge in transferring the effects of leadership into real performance (Wahid and Afifah, 2022).

In addition, this model also introduces job satisfaction as a moderation variable that plays a role in strengthening or weakening the relationship between LMX and work commitment. Job satisfaction contributes greatly to strengthening the positive effects of LMX on various work outcomes, including commitment and performance (Megheirkouni, 2017). Research by Richter and Volmer also reinforces that positive leader behavior increases employee daily satisfaction, which in turn has an impact on increasing their engagement and commitment (Richter and Volmer, 2022). By including job satisfaction in the model, this study provides a more complete theoretical framework in explaining the conditions that affect the effectiveness of LMX on personnel performance in police institutions.

This research was carried out on Muna Police personnel under the Southeast Sulawesi Regional Police. The Muna Police has organizational characteristics with a strict command structure and high task complexity, ranging from patrols, public services, to law enforcement. Muna Police personnel face work challenges that are not only technical, but also psychological and social, especially in maintaining security stability and public order. This makes the organization an ideal place to examine the dynamics of the relationship between leaders and members and how those relationships affect commitment and performance.

In addition, in recent years, the Muna Police have faced various pressures from the public and the media who demand professionalism and transparency of the work of the apparatus. This condition requires high work involvement, dedication, and a management system that is able to build trust between leaders and members. Therefore, examining how Leader Member Exchange contributes to work commitments and personnel performance in this context becomes important to produce findings

that are not only academically relevant but also applicable in the improvement of human resource management systems in police institutions.

This study aims to examine the influence of Leader Member Exchange on the performance of Muna Police personnel through the role of work commitment mediation and job satisfaction moderation. This research tries to answer the question of the extent to which the quality of relationships between leaders and members is able to create better commitment and performance, as well as how job satisfaction strengthens those relationships. With this approach, this research makes a theoretical contribution in enriching the understanding of the dynamics of social relations in the workplace and its contribution to productive work behavior.

Practically, the results of this study are expected to be the basis for policy-making in improving the performance and loyalty of police personnel through improving the quality of the working relationship between superiors and subordinates. The implications of these findings can be applied in leadership training programs, organizational culture development, and performance evaluation systems that are more oriented towards relational and psychological aspects. This research also provides strategic recommendations to strengthen work commitment and job satisfaction of personnel as an effort to increase overall organizational effectiveness.

METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with the Structural Equation Modeling analysis method based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) as the main design to explore the relationship between Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), Work Commitment, and Personnel Performance, as well as test the influence of moderation from Job Satisfaction. The selection of the SEM-PLS method is considered the most appropriate because it is able to simultaneously estimate complex causality relationship models, integrate latent variables with various indicators, and has good predictive power even under conditions where data is not normally distributed. Primary data was obtained through the distribution of questionnaire instruments to 240 police personnel in the South Sulawesi Regional Police who were selected using the purposive sampling technique. Certain criteria were set in this sampling to ensure that respondents had relevant work experience and interactions with leaders, so that the data produced was truly representative of the dynamics of the organization in the police environment. The research instrument was developed using the five-point Likert scale, which has gone through a process of adaptation from previous studies to ensure its validity and reliability scientifically. The data processing process is carried out through SmartPLS software by applying two main evaluation stages: first, measurement model (outer model) assessment to test convergent validity, discriminant validity, and construct reliability; and second, the assessment of the structural model (inner model) through a bootstrapping procedure to measure the statistical significance of the path coefficient as well as the power of the moderation of Job Satisfaction in strengthening or weakening the relationship between the latent variables studied.

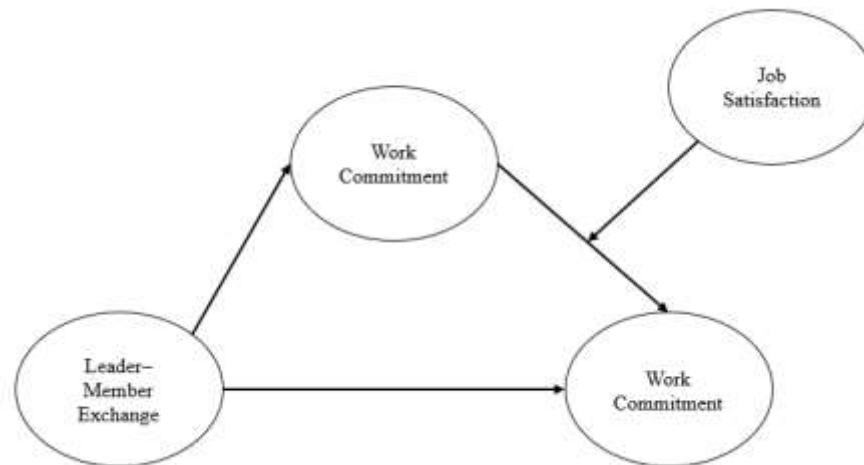


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Profile of Respondents

This study involved 240 respondents from police personnel within the scope of the South Sulawesi Police with diverse demographic characteristics. By gender, the majority of respondents were male, who made up (192 people; 80%) of the total sample, while the rest (48 people; 20%) were women. In terms of age, the majority of respondents were in the age range of 31 to 40 years old (108 people; 45%), followed by the age group of 20 to 30 years old (72 people; 30%), and the least were the age group over 40 years old (60 people; 25%). Regarding the level of education, the majority of respondents (156 people; 65%) have a Bachelor's education background (S1), followed by (60 people; 25%) with high school/equivalent education, and a small percentage (24 people; 10%) have taken Postgraduate education. Regarding the service period, most respondents (120 people; 50%) had a service period of more than 10 years, followed by (72 people; 30%) with a service period of 5 to 10 years, and (48 people; 20%) with a service period of less than 5 years. Finally, based on rank, the majority of respondents came from the Bintara group (180 people; 75%), while the rest (60 people; 25%) were from the Officers group.

Table 1. Results of the Measurement Model

Variables	Items	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Job Satisfaction	M.1	0,922	0,946	0,956	0,821
	M.2	0,897			
	M.3	0,922			
	M.4	0,877			
	M.5	0,911			
Leader–Member Exchange	X.1	0,938	0,955	0,955	0,847
	X.2	0,926			
	X.3	0,902			

	X.4	0,923			
	X.5	0,912			
	Y.1	0,937			
Personal Performance	Y.2	0,925			
	Y.3	0,907	0,962	0,962	0,867
	Y.4	0,945			
	Y.5	0,941			
	Z.1	0,914			
Work Commitment	Z.2	0,940			
	Z.3	0,956	0,966	0,967	0,882
	Z.4	0,932			
	Z.5	0,952			

Based on the results of data analysis using SmartPLS, measurement model testing was carried out to ensure that each research instrument met the validity and reliability criteria set before hypothesis testing. In the Job Satisfaction variable, all indicators (M.1 to M.5) showed a very strong loading factor value, ranging from 0.877 to 0.922, with an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value of 0.821 which is far above the minimum threshold of 0.50. Furthermore, the Leader–Member Exchange variable also showed excellent quality with a loading factor value between 0.902 to 0.938 and an AVE value of 0.847. For the Personnel Performance variable, the loading value of the indicator is in the range of 0.907 to 0.945 with an AVE value of 0.867, while the Work Commitment variable recorded the highest loading value between 0.914 to 0.956 with an AVE value of 0.882. Overall, all variables in the study showed a very high level of reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.946 to 0.966 and Composite Reliability being in the range of 0.956 to 0.967, all of which exceeded the ideal standard of 0.70. These results confirm that all statement items in this questionnaire are very reliable and have good internal consistency to measure the variables of Job Satisfaction, Leader–Member Exchange, Personnel Performance, and Work Commitment in the context of personnel in the South Sulawesi Police.

Table 2. HTMT result

	1	2	3	4
Job Satisfaction (1)	0,906			
Leader–Member Exchange (2)	0,380	0,920		
Personal Performance (3)	0,352	0,760	0,931	
Work Commitment (4)	0,421	0,802	0,804	0,939

After evaluating the reliability of the construct, the next test was focused on the discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method to ensure that each latent variable was completely empirically different from each other. Based on the data presented in Table 3, the results of the analysis show that all correlation values between variables are far below the conservative threshold of 0.90 and the liberal limit of 0.85. Specifically, the relationship between Job Satisfaction and other variables showed a low HTMT value, namely with Leader–Member Exchange (0.380), Personnel Performance (0.352), and Work Commitment (0.421). Meanwhile, the correlation between Leader–Member Exchange and Personnel Performance was recorded at 0.760, and the relationship with Work Commitment was 0.802. The Personnel Performance and Work Commitment variables showed an

HTMT value of 0.804, which despite having a stronger correlation, remained within the permissible limits to prove good discriminant validity. Thus, it can be concluded that each construct in this research model has a unique identity and there is no overlap problem between variables, so that the structural model can proceed to the hypothesis testing stage with full confidence in the integrity of the data measurement.

Table 3. R-Square

	R-square
Personal Performance	0,705
Work Commitment	0,642

Based on the results of the structural model test, the value of the determination coefficient (R²) is used to measure the extent to which the independent variables in the model are able to explain the variance of the dependent variables. The results of the analysis showed that the Personnel Performance variable had an R² value of 0.705, which indicated that 70.5% of the variance in personnel performance could be explained together by the variables Leader–Member Exchange, Work Commitment, and Job Satisfaction, while the remaining 29.5% was influenced by other factors outside this study model. This value shows that the model has strong predictive power in explaining the performance of personnel in the South Sulawesi Police. Meanwhile, the Work Commitment variable recorded an R² value of 0.642, which means that 64.2% of the variance of work commitments was influenced by independent variables in the model, while the other 35.8% was explained by other external variables. Overall, these results confirm that the constructed structural model has a substantial level of predictive accuracy and is relevant in describing the factors that affect the performance and commitment of personnel in the police organization.

Table 4. Hypotheses relationship testing

	Original sample	T statistics	P values
Job Satisfaction -> Personal Performance	0,082	1,604	0,109
Leader–Member Exchange -> Personnel Performance	0,300	2,483	0,013
Leader–Member Exchange -> Work Commitment	0,802	16,870	0,000
Work Commitment -> Personal Performance	0,482	3,997	0,000
Job Satisfaction x Work Commitment -> Personal Performance	0,143	2,854	0,004

Table 5 shows the results of a hypothetical relationship test that tested five paths of influence between variables in the research model. The following is the interpretation for each of the tracks tested, starting from the relationship between Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) and Work Commitment: The test results showed that LMX had a very significant positive influence on Work Commitment with an original sample value of 0.802 and a P-value of 0.000 (less than 0.05). This means that the better the quality of interaction between superiors and subordinates, the higher the work commitment of police personnel in the South Sulawesi Police. This relationship shows that LMX plays a very crucial role in shaping the emotional attachment of personnel to the organization. Furthermore, the relationship

between Work Commitment and Personnel Performance showed a significant positive influence with an original sample value of 0.482 and a P-value of 0.000. This indicates that a strong commitment from personnel is a key driver in improving their overall work performance. Regarding the relationship between LMX and Personnel Performance, the test results showed a significant positive effect with an original sample value of 0.300 and a P-value of 0.013, which confirmed that supportive leadership had a direct impact on the effectiveness of members' work in the field.

On the other hand, the results showed that the direct influence of Job Satisfaction on Personnel Performance was not statistically significant, with an original sample value of 0.082 and a P-value of 0.109 (greater than 0.05). This shows that job satisfaction independently does not necessarily improve personnel performance without being supported by a commitment factor or good leadership. However, testing on the interaction pathway (moderation) between Job Satisfaction and Work Commitment on Personnel Performance showed a significant influence with an original sample value of 0.143 and a P-value of 0.004. These results interpret that Job Satisfaction acts as a moderation variable that strengthens the influence of work commitment on personnel performance. For example, when personnel have a high commitment and are accompanied by a good level of job satisfaction, the positive impact on performance improvement in the South Sulawesi Regional Police will be much greater than if they only rely on commitment.

Discussion

The results of the study show that Leader Member Exchange has a significant effect on the work commitment of personnel. These findings support the theory and results of previous studies that suggest that quality relationships between leaders and members can foster loyalty, emotional attachment, and responsibility to the organization. When personnel feel appreciated, trusted, and supported by their superiors, their work commitment increases. This is in line with the findings of Istiningsih et al. (2020) and Won Ho et al. (2022), who affirm that high-quality LMX strengthens employee engagement in their work and increases a sense of belonging to the organization.

In addition, work commitment has been proven to have a significant influence on personnel performance. The higher a person's level of commitment to their work, the greater their tendency to work optimally, maintain discipline, and complete tasks well. These findings reinforce Meyer and Allen's theory of the importance of affective and normative commitment in determining an employee's tangible contribution to the achievement of organizational goals. In the context of the police, work commitment is an important factor because it concerns moral and professional responsibility in carrying out service and law enforcement functions.

This study also found that Leader Member Exchange has a significant direct influence on personnel performance. This shows that a positive relationship with the employer not only increases commitment, but is also able to directly improve the quality of the member's work. These findings are consistent with the results of studies by Martin et al. (2014) and Windeler and Riemenschneider (2013) which stated that LMX is positively correlated with proactive work behavior and performance output.

In a command-to-command work environment such as the police, strong interpersonal relationships between leaders and members can create a sense of security, clarity of roles, and high morale.

The role of job satisfaction as a moderation variable has also been shown to be significant in strengthening the relationship between Leader Member Exchange and work commitment. When personnel feel satisfied with their work—both in terms of the work environment, reward system, and social relations—the positive effect of relationships with superiors on work commitment becomes stronger. This indicates that LMX does not work in a vacuum, but is strongly influenced by a positive perception of the overall work experience. These findings are in line with studies by Megheirkouni (2017) and Richter and Volmer (2022), which found that job satisfaction amplifies the positive influence of leadership relationships on engagement and commitment.

Overall, the results of this study show that high-quality management of superior-subordinate relationships, accompanied by the creation of a satisfactory work environment, is able to increase work commitment as well as personnel performance directly or indirectly. The implications of these findings emphasize the importance of strengthening leadership competencies and managing work well-being as a strategy to improve organizational effectiveness. In the context of the Muna Police, these findings can be the basis for policymakers to design interventions based on interpersonal relationships to strengthen institutional performance.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that the Leader Member Exchange has a significant effect on work commitment and personnel performance. Work commitment has also been shown to mediate the relationship between LMX and performance, which shows that a good interpersonal relationship between leaders and members not only has a direct impact but also indirectly improves performance through strengthening commitment. In addition, job satisfaction has been shown to strengthen LMX's influence on commitment, indicating that a pleasant work environment can magnify the positive impact of leader-member relationships on a personnel's emotional attachment to their work.

The implications of these findings show that organizations, especially police institutions such as the Muna Police, need to pay serious attention to the development of leadership quality and improving personnel job satisfaction as a strategy to improve performance. Leadership training is needed that emphasizes the importance of communication, empathy, and trust between superiors and subordinates. For further research, it is recommended that the model be developed by considering other variables such as work stress, workload, or organizational culture, as well as expanding the research object to different regions or institutions so that the generalization of findings becomes broader and more representative.

REFERENCE

- Atwater, L. and Carmeli, A. (2009). Leader–member exchange, feelings of energy, and involvement in creative work. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20(3), 264-275. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.07.009>
- Chen, J. K., & Sriphon, T. (2022). Authentic leadership, trust, and social exchange relationships under the influence of leader behavior. *Sustainability*, 14(10), 5883.
- Istiningsih, I., Sugandini, D., & Wahyuni, P. (2020). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement in the smes of crafts. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science (2147-4478)*, 9(7), 23-31. <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v9i7.924>
- Won-Ho, S., Baek, W., & Byon, K. (2022). Effects of sports center employees' self-leadership on organizational commitment: mediating effects of leader-member exchange. *Sustainability*, 14(18), 11343. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su141811343>
- Windeler, J. and Riemenschneider, C. (2013). Organizational commitment of it workers., 3-14. <https://doi.org/10.1145/2487294.2487298>
- Volmer, J., Spurk, D., & Niessen, C. (2012). Leader–member exchange (lmx), job autonomy, and creative work involvement. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(3), 456-465. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.10.005>
- Khan, N., Michalk, S., Sarachuk, K., & Javed, H. (2022). If you aim higher than you expect, you could reach higher than you dream: leadership and employee performance. *Economies*, 10(6), 123. <https://doi.org/10.3390/economies10060123>
- Gerstner, C. and Day, D. (1997). Meta-analytic review of leader–member exchange theory: correlates and construct issues. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82(6), 827-844. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.82.6.827>
- Dirlik, O., TOPBAŞ, M., & Ömüriş, E. (2023). Leader-member exchange and job performance in municipalities: mediating effect of organizational commitment. *Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi*, 18(2), 381-396. <https://doi.org/10.17153/oguiibf.1256794>
- Tümkiye, S. and Sarpkaya, A. (2022). The mediating role of leader-member exchange on the relationship between organizational commitment and organizational cynicism among school counselors. *International Journal of Contemporary Educational Research*, 9(2), 346-358. <https://doi.org/10.33200/ijcer.1008007>
- Wahid, A. and Afifah, V. (2022). Mediating of organizational commitment in improving employee performance. *International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary*, 1(3), 270-274. <https://doi.org/10.38035/ijam.v1i3.204>
- Megheirkouni, M. (2017). Revisiting leader-member exchange theory: insights into stadia management. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 8(3), 244-260. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijefm-03-2017-0022>

- Richter, S. and Volmer, J. (2022). How leaders benefit from engaging in high-quality leader-member exchanges: a daily diary study. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 37(7), 605-623. <https://doi.org/10.1108/jmp-06-2021-0370>
- Martin, R., Guillaume, Y., Thomas, G., Lee, A., & Epitropaki, O. (2014). Leader-member exchange (lmx) and performance: a meta-analytic review. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 2014(1), 12416. <https://doi.org/10.5465/ambpp.2014.12416abstract>