



Leader-Member Exchange and Job Performance in Municipalities: Mediating Effect of Organizational Commitment¹

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Leader-Member Exchange and Job Performance in Municipalities: Mediating Effect of Organizational Commitment	Belediyelerde Lider-Üye Etkileşimi ve İş Performansı: Örgütsel Bağlılığın Aracı Etkisi
Abstract <p>In this study, the effect of Leader Member Exchange (LMX) behaviors on organizational commitment and job performance in municipalities is discussed. Since the administrations of the municipalities are elected, the administration is not permanent. In such cases, the effect of leader-member exchange on organizational commitment and job performance is not available to the best of our knowledge. For this purpose, the questionnaires collected from the employees of a municipality were analyzed by quantitative methods. As a result, it has been found that Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) has a positive effect on both organizational performance and job performance, and that organizational commitment mediates the effect of LMX on job performance.</p>	Öz <p>Bu çalışmada belediyelerde lider üye etkileşimi davranışlarının örgütsel bağlılık ve iş performansı üzerine etkisi tartışılmıştır. Belediyelerin yönetimlerinin seçime gelmesi nedeni ile yönetim sürekli değildir. Bu tür durumlarda lider üye etkileşiminin örgütsel bağlılığa etkisi ve iş performansına etkisinin ne olacağı literatürde yoktur. Bu amaçla bir belediye kurumunda çalışanlardan toplanan anketler niceliksel yöntemlerle analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçta Lider Üye Etkileşim'in (LÜE) hem örgütsel performansı hem de iş performansını olumlu etkilediği aynı zamanda örgütsel bağlılığın LMX ile iş performansı arasında aracı etkisi olduğu bulunmuştur.</p>
Keywords: Lead Member Interaction, Job Performance, Organizational Commitment, Municipalities	Anahtar Kelimeler: Lider Üye Etkileşimi, İş Performansı, Örgütsel Bağlılık, Belediyeler
JEL Codes: D23, M12, M54	JEL Kodları: D23, M12, M54

Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Beyanı	Bu çalışma Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşerî Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından 2022-01 no'lu toplantı sonucunda alınan etik kurul kararı ile bilimsel araştırma ve yayın etiği kurallarına uygun bulunmuştur.
Yazarların Makaleye Olan Katkıları	Yazar 1'in makaleye katkısı %40, Yazar 2'nin makaleye katkısı %40 ve Yazar 3'ün makaleye katkısı %20'dir.
Çıkar Beyanı	Yazarlar açısından ya da üçüncü taraflar açısından çalışmadan kaynaklı çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

¹ Bu çalışma, Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü İşletme Anabilim Dalı'nda Doç. Dr. Onur DİRLİK danışmanlığında Mehmet Emin TOPBAŞ tarafından "Yerel Yönetimlerde Lider-Üye Etkileşiminin İş Performansı ve Örgütsel Bağlılığa Etkisi" başlığı ile tamamlanarak 27.04.2022 tarihinde savunulan Yüksek Lisans tezinden türetilmiştir.

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1. Introduction

Leadership is one of the most researched topics in organizational behavior studies. Leadership studies are of great importance because leadership is pointed out as a prominent antecedent of organizational performance (Martin et al., 2010). Early studies on leadership generally accepted that the leader had similar relationships with group members and adopted the same behavior. Being one of the modern leadership theories, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) approach suggests that successful leaders evaluate each group member as independent and different individuals, and develop relationships of different qualities. LMX theory is defined as “an interpersonal, unstructured, and informal exchange process between leader and follower in a workplace setting”. Leaders begin to establish tight relationships with some followers, resulting in formation of an in-group and an out-group among followers (Gottfredson et al., 2020). Followers in the in-group increase their performance. At the same time, their commitment to the organization increases with LMX.

Similar to leadership studies, organizational commitment is one of the major organizational problems that attracts great attention in the field of organizational behavior and that managers are trying to solve. It is known that physical and psychological well-being of employees is a major determinant of organizational commitment (Meyer, 2009) and LMX might be considered to increase employee morale in the workplace. Considering that organizational commitment of employees also affects their job performance, the importance of the relationship between organizational commitment and LMX will be comprehended more easily. Therefore, LMX is important not only for employees but also for organizational outcomes (Eisenberger et al., 2010).

The literature suggests that organizations should have employees committed to the organization to survive. Committed employees and their levels of organizational commitment have a crucial effect on job performance (Ahmad et al., 2010; Riketta, 2002; Meyer et al., 1989) and this will ensure the survival of an organization. Thus, understanding organizational commitment with its antecedents might provide some theoretical and practical insights. Whereas the literature is ample with research studying the leadership – organizational commitment relationship, limited research has been done to understand how LMX affects organizational commitment. Besides, although the effect of LMX on job performance is known, there are no studies investigating how organizational commitment affects this relationship.

Although a number of studies investigate the process of leadership, job performance, and organizational commitment, more research is required to analyze the relationship between these three variables. In addition, this study has two different original aspects distinguishing it from other studies. First, the study was carried out specifically in a municipality. Studies in the literature predominantly focused on private sector organizations. There is a need for studies describing how LMX works in municipalities because of its unique characteristics. Despite the studies carried out in some public institutions (like Buch et al., 2014), we did not come across with any research carried out in municipalities. Another important contribution of this study is that organizational commitment is considered as a variable mediating the effect of LMX on job performance. Mayors are elected by local residents, and division managers are appointed by the mayor. In Türkiye, where the research was conducted, local elections are repeated once every 5 years. If a new mayor is elected, that generally means a change of all management teams. This situation necessitates a constant managerial change in municipal

organizations since each new administration comes with new managers. For this reason, an examination of municipalities, where developing LMX is a very challenging work, might provide original contributions to the organizational behaviour field. Moreover, it is meaningful to comprehend the relationship between organizational commitment and job performance in this context, which is two of the most fundamental problems of managers in organizational life. In this study, we explain that LMX affects job performance and organizational commitment in organizations with relative short-term management, and organizational commitment also has a mediating effect in this relationship.

2. Conceptual framework and hypothesis development

In the nearly 50-year history of LMX theory, researchers have benefited from different theories while creating the LMX theoretical background. LMX was quoted as the vertical dyad linkage theory in the early 70s. The core assumption of LMX was based on the role theory, which postulated that employee roles evolve through unofficial procedures and that employees' immediate supervisors play a crucial role in aiding employees in becoming more clear about their tasks. LMX was distinguished from other theories because LMX suggests that leaders differentiate their styles through testing and negotiating with their subordinates, as well as through followers' willingness and capacity to exchange with the leader, and leaders' availability and capacity to exchange with followers. Looking at later developments of the theory, we can point out that the LMX was initially largely defined as a binary structure, as it was largely based on the concepts of mutual exchange. However, with later studies, this perspective changed and the theory was connected with the theory of social exchange (Gottfredson et al, 2020). For the first time, LMX structure and social exchange theory were merged in one article by Dienesch and Liden (1986). LMX became linked with social exchange and has widely been used together.

Unlike other leadership theories, LMX theory is based on relationship in that it assumes different relationship types are developed between leaders and their subordinates. Researchers argue that the leader - member relationship develops around the dimensions of respect, trust, liking, loyalty, support, closeness, honesty, and openness (Graen and Scandura, 1987). Distribution of resources also forms the basis of this relationship. Leaders can use the resources they hold in favor of the member. On the other hand, members can increase their task performance to obtain resource allocation from leaders (Graen and Cashman, 1975). Studies on the theory initially focused heavily on research into what kind of resources the members obtained from the leaders. However, later studies have also been conducted to examine what kind of resources the leader acquires in resource allocation (Wilson et al., 2010).

LMX theory suggests that there are two different groups, in-group and out-group, which are established according to the quality of the interaction between leaders and followers. The leader treats the followers of the ingroup with more sincerity, friendliness, and respect. Members in this group gain the leader's trust because they are in a closer relationship. At the same time, the leader asks these members to do the tasks they deem important. They have more responsibilities and are rewarded more. The leader's relationship with in-group members develops on loyalty. In contrast, the leader communicates within the framework of formal business rules, as s/he interacts less with the out-group members. These members act within the framework of their current duties. At the same time, these members are rewarded less than the others (Deluga and Perry, 1994). It is possible to define the leader - in-group

member relationship as high-quality interaction, and the relationships with the out-group members as low-quality communication. The interaction between the leader and the groups is in a constantly changing structure. Groups or their members may change in the process (Phillips and Bedeian, 1994: 990).

The first stage of the process between the leader and the member is the first interaction stage. This stage is the first contact between the leader and the member in their current positions, and their interaction levels and expectations are low. Both parties act in the maximization of their own interests. The initial interaction, that is, the first contact, is of great importance as it will determine the future of the intercourse between the leader and the member. Since the first social interaction takes place at this stage, the trust between the people is very low. Both the leader and the member bring their physical characteristics, personalities, professional and social skills and abilities, experiences, attitudes and behaviors and expectations with them to the first interaction phase. The quality of the initial interaction, as well as the personal characteristics and equipment possessed, will determine how the leader- member interaction process will continue. The fact that the leader and the member have similar age, education, gender and ethnicity helps to establish better relations in the first stage of interaction and increases the possibility of the member to be included in the in-group.

The leader, who makes the first interaction with the member, is the stage where s/he evaluates the member from different perspectives by assigning some duties and responsibilities in the second phase. The leader has little information about the member's performance. The success of performing the tasks given within the framework of the position he/she wants to evaluate will determine whether the member will be in the in-group or out-group. This is the phase where the member is tested. In this phase where interaction and sharing are limited, the parties mutually evaluate each other and start getting to know each other. This evaluation helps both parties decide how to treat each other. As the recognition process progresses, the trust level between the leader and the member begins to increase. In the third phase of the interaction process, mutual attitudes and behaviors of both the leader and the member, and the answers given by the leader to the member as a result of this interaction emerge. At this stage, the expectations of each party start developing as a result of the interaction beyond the standard job descriptions. If the member has positive feelings and thoughts towards his/her leader, he can take actions outside his field of duty to impress him. On the other hand, either leader or member may not respond positively to the other party's effort to engage at a high level, and the level of interaction may remain low as a result. The important point for the continuity of the interaction is the compatibility of the behavior and attitudes of the leader, the member and the performance shown. These will determine which group the member will belong to. In the fourth and the last phase of the interaction process, the leader and the member get to know each other well as a result of their interaction. Through the course of this process, a shared past has been built, and as a result, it has started to behave with a common denominator. The goals and expectations of the two parties become interconnected. At this stage, the quality of the interaction between the leader and the member is determined, and as a result, the degree of the transaction between the leader and the member become different. High-quality interaction increases trust, respect, loyalty and performance. At the same time, the relationship between the two parties transforms companionship. The leader positions this member in his immediate environment,

that is, in the inner group, and assigns him the duties he deems important, rewards him, and gives priority to him in terms of promotion. In addition, attitudes and behaviors are constantly repeated, that is, routinized, which increases the degree of high-quality interaction (Dienesch and Liden, 1986).

There are many studies on the predecessors of LMX in the literature. The findings on LMX's antecedents can be grouped into four categories. These groups are classified as "subordinate characteristics, leader characteristics, interactional variables, and contextual variables" (Liden et al., 1997). Moreover, studies can be defined as individual level, dyad level, and organizational level according to the analysis levels. Although they predominate in this subject, investigations defined at the organizational level are mostly studies on the impact of organizational outputs. Studies are mostly on the positive effects of leadership. Research on individual-level outputs study employee job satisfaction, job-related well-being, low stress, increased organizational commitment, innovative behaviors, increased time and effort dedicated to the job, positive self-efficacy, employee empowerment, and decreased turnover intention with LMX. At the dual level, it is about workplace friendships, perceived leader support, and perceived leader empowerment and counseling behaviors. At the organizational level, it is associated with concepts such as perceived justice, job breadth, reduced actual turnover, and perceived transformational leadership (Martin et al., 2010).

LMX, Organizational Commitment, and Job Performance

An individual's bond with the organization and willingness to remain a member are both examples of organizational commitment. To put it another way, organizational commitment is described as the belief of a person in the organisational values and goals, willingness to work toward those goals, and desire to continue belonging to the organization (Hunt and Morgan, 1994). According to previous studies, people who have a high level of organizational commitment are more motivated to carry out their responsibilities and exert a lot more effort. Those with higher levels of organizational commitment allegedly work there longer and have good interactions with the company. In addition, some studies have shown that higher organizational commitment leads to lower levels of intention to leave (Oberholster & Taylor, 1999). Another important concept for organizations is the job performance of individuals. Job performance is the sum of the individual's efforts in a given time period. High level of employee job performance increases productivity, quality and organizational effectiveness. The survival of the organizations and the achievement of the determined goals and objectives depend on high employee performance. The important point here is related to the benefit that employees get from the organization. The literature has verified the positive and significant relationship between LMX and performance (Vecchio and Gobdel, 1984; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Gerstner and Day 1997).

An important variable of study is job performance. Katz & Kahn (1978) call job performance as the very essence of a social system in an organization (Giri and Kumar, 2010). Job performance is the ability of a person to do his/her job in an efficient and effective way. There are many factors that affect the improvement of job performance in organizations. Organizational commitment and leadership behaviors are among the main factors affecting job performance (Al-Malki and Juan, 2018). The behavioral aspect refers to what people do while at work, the action itself. Based on definition, it is implied that only actions that can be scaled are considered performance activities. The performance concept is explicitly limited to behaviors which are goal-oriented, i.e. behaviors which are the result of the organization's

hiring the employee in order for them to perform well. A person's behavior is reflected in the outcome aspect (Sonnentag et al, 2008).

The organizational commitment framework suggested by Allen and Meyer consists of three aspects: "affective, continuance and normative commitment" (Allen and Meyer, 1990). The common feature of all three dimensions of organizational commitment is that they emerge as a psychological state. Although they emerged psychologically, their psychological structures are different from each other in three dimensions. In addition, according to the model, individuals in the organization can experience these three dimensions at different levels.

Affective commitment is the situation in which the goals, values and beliefs of the individual are compatible, similar or identified with the goals, values and beliefs of the organization. Emotional commitment is mutually compatible. Therefore, an emotional bond will be formed between the individual and the organization, and at the same time, the individual will embrace the organization. Individuals with emotional attachment are happy in their environment and feel that they belong there. There is a strong bond between the organization and the individual. Affective commitment is established on the identification of the individual with the organization, participation and loyalty. Since the individual sees himself as a part of the organization, it has an important place in his life. Therefore, according to affective commitment, individuals stay in the organization not because they feel obliged to, but because they desire it. They are in great effort and desire for the organization's goals and objectives and interests. Therefore, it is the type of commitment that leaders or managers want individuals to have. Among the three dimensions, it is stated that the most effective commitment dimension for an individual's performance is emotional commitment. Shaw et al. (2003) stated that there is a direct relationship between emotional commitment and performance, and that individuals with emotional commitment outperform other employees. Continuance commitment refers to the state of knowing the cost that the individual will face if he leaves the organization. In other words, it is the state of being aware of the consequences and maintaining membership in case of leaving the organization (Meyer Allen &, 1997). The commitment in question here is not an emotional one, but rather an instrumental one. The individual calculates the scenarios and consequences that he will encounter in case of leaving the organization. The reason for the individual's continuing membership is that staying in the organization will provide more benefits than leaving it.

Current study, thus, examines the effect of LMX on job performance and organizational commitment in municipalities. Appointment of administrators for a certain period of time in municipalities is a problem for the sustainability of the administration.

Municipalities in Türkiye carry out important functions in meeting local needs and occupy a predominant place in the local government system of the country. There are two types of municipalities in Turkey. The first of these is the municipalities operating in the districts, and the second is the metropolitan municipalities that operate only in big cities and that have a different status. In this study, the municipalities in the first group were examined. There are three organs of municipal government in Turkey. The first two are the mayor the municipal council, which are directly elected by the people within the boundaries of the municipality, and third is the municipal committee, which consists of the chief executives of the municipal service units and the members elected by the municipal council. The mayor is the executive body of the municipality, and the municipal council and the municipal committee are the

decision-making bodies. The mayor is the head and representative of the municipal government, as well as the executive body. The mayor is elected by the majority of the people for five years.

The mayor, as the highest supervisor of the municipal organization, manages the municipality in accordance with the strategic plan, creates the institutional strategies of the municipal administration, implements, monitors, and evaluates the budget, and prepares performance criteria for municipal activities. Also, s/he presents the relevant reports to the assembly, chairs the assembly and the committee, manages the movable and immovable properties of the municipality, and tracks and collects the revenues and receivables of the municipality. S/he implements the decisions of the council and the committee, implements the budget, appoints the municipality personnel, inspects the municipality and its subsidiaries and businesses, and has a mandate and authority (İnanç and Ünal, 2007). This situation, which is specific to the organizational forms of municipalities, brings about periodic changes in managers and personnel.

The organizational commitment and job performance of the employees will be affected by the periodic management. Based on previous studies, in this study, we first claim that LMX positively affects organizational commitment (OC) and job performance (JP) (H1 and H3). Again, grounding on the literature, we claim that organizational commitment in municipalities will positively affect job performance (H2). We also argue that increased organizational commitment behavior with LMX practices mediates the relationship between LMX and job performance (H4). With these hypothesis these hypotheses, we aim to emphasize once again the importance of LMX behaviors of managers in municipalities in short-term administrations.

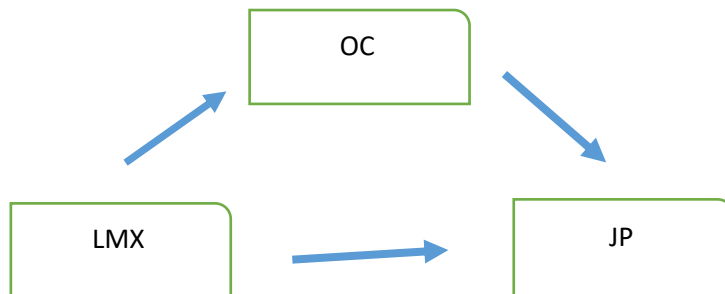
H1: LMX positively influences organizational commitment.

H2: Organizational commitment positively influences job performance.

H3: LMX positively influences job performance.

H4: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between leader member exchange and job performance

Figure 1: Research model and hypothesis



3. Methodology

3.1. Participants and procedures

Municipal employees in Türkiye were the target participants of the study. 228 of the 1,200 employees who volunteered to take part in the study returned the surveys in 2022. The data were collected in 2022. Valid surveys were decreased to 221 through data cleaning. Detailed information about the participants is provided in Table 1.

Table 1: Sample Characteristics

Characteristics	Sample (n=221)	Characteristics	Sample (n=221)
<i>Gender</i>			
Female	80 (%36.2)	<i>Total duration of work</i>	
Male	141 (%63.8)	Less than 1 year	10 (%4.5)
Missing	0	Between 1-5 years	39 (%17.6)
<i>Age</i>			
18-24	18 (%8.1)	Between 6-10 years	75 (%33.9)
25-34	71 (%32.1)	Between 11-15 years	31 (%14)
35-44	56 (%25.3)	Between 16-20 years	17 (%7.7)
45-54	70 (%31.7)	More than 20 years	24 (%10.9)
55 +	6 (%2.7)	Missing	25 (%11.8)
Missing	0	<i>Total duration of current work</i>	
<i>Marital Status</i>			
Married	144 (%65.2)	Less than 1 year	14 (%6.3)
Single	76 (%34.4)	Between 1-5 years	50 (%22.6)
Missing	1 (%0.5)	Between 6-10 years	84 (%38)
<i>Education Level</i>			
Elementary	8 (%3.6)	Between 11-15 years	12 (%5.4)
Mid-school	29 (%13.1)	Between 16-20 years	19 (%8.6)
High School	78 (%35.3)	More than 20 years	16 (%7.2)
Two-year degree	33 (%14.9)	Missing	26 (%11.8)
Undergraduate	63 (%28.5)		
Graduate	9 (%4.1)		
Missing	1 (%0.5)		

3.2. Measurements

Leader Member Exchange Scale (Liden and Maslyn, 1998), Organizational Commitment Scale (Allen and Meyer, 1990), Job Performance Scale (Kirkman and Rosen, 1999) and a demographic information form were administered to the participants by researchers. The researcher created a demographic information form that was used to gather details about participants, which composed of questions about participants' age, gender, marital status, total duration of work, and total duration of current work in a public institution.

LMX Scale has four subscales namely "affect, loyalty, contribution, and professional respect". Affect has 3 items such as "I like my supervisor very much as a person.", loyalty has 3 items such as "My supervisor would come to my defense if I were "attacked" by others", contribution has 3 items such as "I do work for my supervisor that goes beyond what is specified in my job description", and professional respect has 3 items such as "I am impressed with my supervisor's knowledge of his/ her job". Each subscale is rated on a 1 (strongly

disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale and scored separately. Internal reliabilities of the subscales were .89, .77, .85, .88 respectively. Internal reliability of overall scale was .91.

To measure organizational commitment, Organizational Commitment Scale (Allen and Meyer, 1990) which is adapted to Turkish by Çöl (2008), was used. The scale has three subscales namely “affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment”. Affective commitment has 8 items such as “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization”, normative commitment has 8 items such as “Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now”, and continuance commitment has 8 items such as “I was taught to believe in the value of remaining loyal to one organization”. Each subscale was rated on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scale. Two affective commitment items and one normative commitment item were eliminated from the scale since they loaded onto more than one factor. Following that, each subscale is scored separately. The subscales’ internal reliabilities were, .90, .87, .92 respectively, and the entire scale’s internal reliability was .94.

Job Performance Scale was used to measure job performance. The scale consists of 5 items, one of which is “I complete my tasks on time”. The items were assessed by the respondents on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Internal reliability of the scale was .86.

3.3. Data Analysis

SPSS was used to examine respondents’ demographic characteristics, descriptive statistics of the construct variables, to make preliminary outlier and multicollinearity checks, to perform exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to test the factor structure and to make reliability analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in Smart PLS was used to examine the measurement model in order to determine the causal relationship between items and constructs. PLS-SEM was used to test the hypotheses in SmartPLS (Ringle et al., 2015).

3.4. Results

Measurement Model

The data were normally distributed as the kurtosis and skewness values were below 3.00 (Kline, 2011). VIF values indicating multicollinearity in the data ranged between 1.28 and 4.96 which is below the suggested value of 10 (Hair et al., 2018). To ensure the factor structures, EFA was performed and for all items, except 2 items in affective commitment and 1 item in normative commitment sub-dimensions, factor loadings ranged from .42 to .89. Then, measurement model was performed using Smart PLS to test the construct validity of the measurement scale. Item loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average extracted variance (AVE) were used to evaluate the measurement model for convergent validity. As presented in Table 2, all factor loadings were higher than the suggested value of 0.7, CR values were higher than 0.7, and AVE was higher than 0.5 for all latent constructs (Hair et al., 2018). In addition, all dimensions and sub-dimensions had Cronbach’s α values higher than .70 which is a sign to the satisfactory internal reliability (Pesämaa et al., 2021).

Table 2: CFA Results, AVE and Reliability

Constructs	Sub-constructs	Indicators	Loadings (t-values)	CR	α	AVE				
LMX	Affect	A1	.91 (71.43)	.89	.89	.81				
		A2	.89 (42.95)							
		A3	.90 (54.62)							
	Loyalty	L1	.81 (23.24)							
		L2	.87 (57.59)							
		L3	.80 (24.94)							
	Contribution	C1	.87 (46.06)							
		C2	.90 (56.00)							
		C3	.85 (37.04)							
	Professional Respect	PR1	.90 (49.61)							
		PR2	.89 (27.86)							
		PR3	.90 (58.60)							
	OC	Affective Commitment	AC1				.56 (10.33)	.92	.90	.68
			AC2				.77 (22.46)			
			AC3				.84 (29.86)			
AC4			.90 (62.99)							
AC5			.90 (60.64)							
AC6			.89 (60.16)							
Continuance Commitment		CC1	.74 (16.75)							
		CC2	.78 (26.02)							
		CC3	.85 (44.66)							
		CC4	.83 (34.70)							
		CC5	.80 (27.52)							
		CC6	.83 (32.96)							
		CC7	.785(24.11)							
		CC8	.77 (24.70)							
Normative Commitment		NC1	.48 (6.71)							
	NC2	.66 (13.45)								
	NC3	.86 (39.58)								
	NC4	.85 (38.61)								
	NC5	.77 (17.28)								
	NC6	.82 (28.85)								
	NC7	.78 (23.21)								
Job Performance	JP1	.72 (16.62)	.88	.86	.63					
	JP2	.85 (43.25)								
	JP3	.84 (28.62)								
	JP4	.80 (22.64)								
	JP5	.75 (18.57)								

The discriminant validity of the constructs was assessed using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion. As seen in Table 3, each construct's square root of AVE in the diagonal of the matrix is larger than the related correlation (off-diagonal) in the corresponding rows and columns, demonstrating that a sufficient level of discriminant validity has been attained. The

heterotrait monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations is another technique for evaluating discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015). The more conservative HTMT criterion is thought to be a more accurate method of evaluating discriminant validity. The association between the LMX and the organizational commitment has the highest HTMT of .612 (Table 3), conforming the expectation for HTMT coefficients being less than 0.9 (Ab Hamid et al., 2017).

Table 3: Reliability and Validity Scores for Constructs

	HTMT			Composite Reliability	AVE
	1.	2.	3.		
1. LMX				.91	.51
2. Organizational Commitment	.612			.94	.46
3. Job Performance	.532	.484		.88	.63

Structural Model

SmartPLS was employed to evaluate the structural model and the hypotheses. Tenenhaus et al. (2005) GoF measure was used to evaluate the model's fit for PLS. GoF is a better index because it considers the PLS algorithm's predictive capabilities. The values of the GoF index over 0.36 indicate a high fit, as is the case in the current study with a value of 0.40. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Model Fit and Goodness-of-Fit Index

	AVE	R ²
LMX	.51	N.A.
Organizational Commitment	.46	.32
Job Performance	.63	.30
Mean	.5333	.31
Goodness of Fit ($\sqrt{AVE \times R^2}$)		.40657
SRMR		0.00
NFI		1.00

The values of R² and results of the hypotheses testing are presented in Table 4. According to the results, leader member exchange explains 32% of organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.566$; $t = 10.768 < .001$) and directly affects job performance ($\beta = 0.333$; $t = 3.677 < .001$). Furthermore, organizational commitment has significant effects on job performance ($\beta = 0.287$; $t = 3.677 < .001$). Therefore, organizational commitment is a partial mediator between leader member exchange and job performance ($\beta = 0.162$; $t = 3.472 < .001$). Leader member exchange and organizational commitment explain 29% of Job performance. Hence, H1, H2, H3 and H4 were supported.

Table 5: Hypotheses Testing

Direct Hypotheses							
H	Path	Std. β	Std. Er.	t value	Decision	Confidence Int.	
						2.5%	97.5%
H ₁	LMX \rightarrow OC	.566	.053	10.768*	Supported	.460	.664
H ₂	OC \rightarrow JP	.287	.078	3.677*	Supported	.128	.439
H ₃	LMX \rightarrow JP	.333	.079	4.238*	Supported	.185	.495
Mediating Effect of Organizational Commitment							
H	Path	Std. β	Std. Er.	t value	Decision	Confidence Int.	
						2.5%	97.5%
H4	LMX \rightarrow OC \rightarrow JP	.162	.047	3.472*	Supported (partial mediation)	.073	.258

LMX: Leader Member Exchange; OC: Organizational Commitment; JP: Job Performance
 * p < .01 (t > 2.58); **p < .05 (t > 1.96)
 R² (Organizational Commitment = 0.32; Job Performance = 0.29)

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Employees follow the people they see as leaders and focus on the goals and outputs they set. Increasing the quality of LMX has an impact on outcomes. Today, it is possible for organizations to be superior in competition and to act in line with their interests, with the human resources they have. Correctly managing and directing human resources and obtaining maximum efficiency and output will provide competitive advantage. Therefore, it is very important for organizations to have the right human resources, manage them correctly and increase their performance. On the other hand, employees will want to maximize their performance in the context of realizing their own goals. High organizational commitment will increase the motivation of people, integration with the organization will be ensured and productivity will increase.

In the study, the effect of leader-member exchange on job performance and organizational commitment in municipalities was examined. First of all, the reason why the concept of organizational commitment is examined in the study is the expectation that the performance of the personnel working in municipalities will increase as they feel connected to the organization. Second, the reason why organizational commitment was chosen as a variable is the thought that it is more difficult to develop organizational commitment because the political identity of local governments is more prominent. Municipalities differ from other public institutions, especially due to the staff replacements after the general elections. The management/leadership of the municipality representatives and the mayor is periodic because of this situation. In this respect, one of the important problems faced by local governments is to create a sustainable management group. It is more difficult to increase the commitment of the employees to the organization in local municipalities where the personnel turnover rate is high and the management staff changes periodically. For this reason, this study found it meaningful to examine the relationship between commitment and leadership practices, and job performance, which is the output, while understanding the organizational commitment dynamics of the municipalities. Although the variables of the research, leader-member exchange organizational commitment and job performance, have been tested with different variables in various studies, no study has been found on the interaction of these

three variables at the same time. Furthermore, the current study is conducted in a specific context of municipalities.

In this respect, the model put forward in the study has the potential to fill a theoretical gap. At the same time, it has succeeded in producing practical information due to the fact that it explains the effect of leadership processes in a short time in the organizational practices of local governments whose management changes periodically. The findings of the hypotheses developed within the research model resulted in supporting “H1: LMX positively influences organizational commitment.”, “H2: Organizational commitment positively influences job performance”, “H3: LMX positively influences job performance” and “H4: Organizational commitment is a partial mediator between leader member exchange and job performance”.

The supported hypotheses expand the widely accepted knowledge in the organizational behavior literature that commitment drives job performance (Yahaya& Ebrahim, 2016; Turgut et al., 2015, Clinebell et al., 2013). As a result of the research, it is seen that organizational commitment alone increases the job performance output it provides when the right leadership type is applied. For this reason, it is possible to say that the leadership style is important as well as the institutional practices and policies that cause organizational commitment. The study specifically shows the importance of leader-member exchange for managers and organizations. Managers can increase the interaction with the members of the organization in order to increase job performance of the working personnel and to ensure organizational commitment. In today’s world where human capital is very important for organizations (Whipp, et al., 1992; Khatri, 2000), the nature of these relationships should be determined and negative situations that may arise in terms of work performance and commitment can be eliminated accordingly.

In the future studies, the sample selection, data collection method and the differences in the variables will increase the contribution of the research to the literature. On the other hand, the effect of demographic characteristics on the relationship between these three variables can be investigated. However, it can be examined whether there are differences in the context of the results emerging between local governments in different geographies. In addition, the results between different departments can be compared and it can be examined whether there is a connection between the distance of these departments to the management and the variables. The results of the LMX depending on the culture can also be revealed by research.

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