

The Moderating Role of LMX in the Relationship between Psychological Capital and Overall Job Embeddedness among Employees

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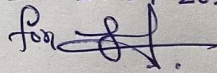
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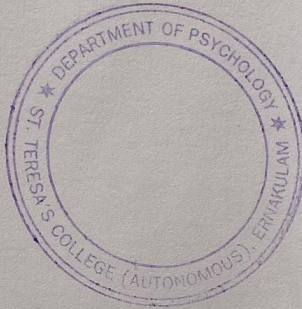


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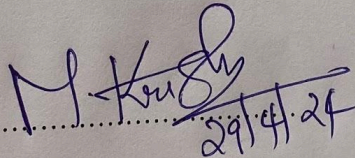
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DECLARATION

I, Suha Abdul Gafoor, do hereby declare that the work represented in the dissertation embodies the results of the original research work done by me in St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Princy Thobias, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, it has not been submitted by me to any other university or institution for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship, title or recognition before.

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Thanking You Suha

Abdul Gafoor

Contents

Introduction.....	8
Review of Literature.....	18
Methods.....	28
Sampling Method.....	29
Procedure.....	32
Statistical Analysis.....	33
Result and Discussion.....	34
Conclusion.....	39
Reference List.....	42
Appendix.....	48

List of Tables

Table No.	Title	Page No.
Table 1	Summary of Kolmogorov- Smirnov Test of Normality	33
Table 2	Scale Descriptive Table Showing Mean and SD of the Participants	35
Table 3	Result of Spearman's rank correlation	36
Table 4	Summary of moderation analysis	37

Abstract

In today's corporate landscape, understanding the intricate dynamics between psychological factors, job embeddedness, and leader-member relationships is crucial for fostering a thriving workplace environment. This study investigates the relationship between Psychological Capital (PC), Overall Job Embeddedness (JE), and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) among corporate employees. The research examines whether LMX moderates the relationship between PC and JE. Standardized questionnaires such as LMX 7 Questionnaire (G. B. Graen and M. Uhl-Bien, 1995), Psy Cap (Luthans et al., 2014), and Overall Job Embeddedness Scale (Mitchel et al., 2018) were used to collect data from a sample of corporate employees, and statistical analyses were employed to test the hypotheses. The findings revealed a positive relationship between PC and JE, with LMX playing a moderating role. These results highlight the importance of promoting psychological resources among employees and fostering positive leader-member relationships to enhance job embeddedness and employee well-being.

Keywords: Job Embeddedness, Psychological Capital, Leader-Member Exchange, Employees

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"In the vast landscape of organizational research, understanding the interplay between variables such as job embeddedness, job satisfaction, employee engagement, psychological capital, and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) holds paramount importance," (Peter Drucker, 2014). These variables serve as significant markers in exploring the complexities of employee engagement, retention, and organizational dynamics. Job embeddedness, with its emphasis on the multifaceted connections individuals develop within their work environment, underscores the importance of social ties, organisational fit, and perceived sacrifices in shaping employee commitment. Meanwhile, psychological capital serves as a source of resilience and optimism, illuminating the pathways through which individuals navigate challenges, cultivate growth, and enhance overall well-being in the workplace.

As researchers study behaviour in organizations, differences between employees from various sectors emerge as a compelling focal point. "In the cloak of societal roles, the distinction between public and private sector employment weaves a tale of divergent motivations, aspirations, and experiences," (Max Weber, 1922). Employee populations, driven by a heterogeneity of motivations, navigate diverse landscapes shaped by organizational culture, job security, and opportunities for professional growth. These pathways are influenced by various factors such as public service, duty, entrepreneurial spirit, market-driven pursuits, and innovation, depending on whether individuals work in government or non-government sectors.

In today's swiftly evolving work landscape, employee retention and organizational commitment are paramount for the continuous success of both government and non-government sectors (Smith & Jones, 2021). Central to this pursuit is the hastiness of how psychological resources, interpersonal relationships, and organizational attachment converge to shape employees' experiences and attitudes towards their jobs. This study delves into the intricate interaction between Psychological Capital (PsyCap), Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), and job embeddedness among government and non-government employees, shedding light on the nuanced dynamics that underpin worker retention and organizational commitment.

Organizations need to understand these factors thoroughly if they want to foster positive workplace

relationships, develop employees' psychological resources, and enhance overall organizational effectiveness. Leader-member exchange (LMX), Psychological Capital, and Overall Job Embeddedness are interconnected constructs that influence each other and collectively contribute to individual and organizational outcomes within the workplace. Leaders who provide support, recognition, belongingness and developmental opportunities tend to cultivate positive psychological states such as hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism among their followers. In turn, employees with increased levels of psychological capital are more likely to engage in positive exchanges with their leaders, contributing to the formation and maintenance of high-quality LMX relationships (Brown & Miller, 2020).

Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-member exchange (LMX) is a theory in organisational behavioural psychology that describes the quality of the relationship between a leader and an individual member of their team. This theory suggests that the quality of this relationship can vary from leader to leader and from member to member and that these variations can have a significant impact on employee attitudes, behaviours, and performance.

High-quality LMX relationships are characterized by trust, support, mutual understanding, and respect. In these relationships, leaders infuse more time and resources into their employees, and employees feel more empowered and committed to their work. Low-quality LMX relationships can be characterized by a lack of trust, respect, and communication. In these relationships, leaders may provide less support and guidance to their employees, and employees may feel less engaged and motivated. It is the attribute of the relationship between a leader and their subordinate, emphasizing the importance of unique interactions and exchanges that occur between them. This concept was first introduced in 1995 by Graen and Uhl-Bien.

Theories and Model associated with Leader-Member Exchange

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory delves deeper into the quality of relationships between leaders and individual followers, offering profound insights into organizational dynamics. At its core, the

Vertical Dyad Linkage (VDL) Model explains how leaders form inner circles ("in-groups") characterized by trust, respect, and support, while others fall into "out-groups" with lower-quality exchanges (Graen & Cashman, 1975). This differentiation profoundly affects members' job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Complementing this, Social Exchange Theory underpins LMX dynamics by emphasising the reciprocal exchange of resources between leaders and followers based on perceived benefits and costs (Blau, 1964). The quality of this exchange directs the level of trust, obligation, and satisfaction within the relationship, shaping its trajectory.

Expanding the scope, the LMX-Multidimensional Model proposes three key dimensions of LMX: decision-making influence, role clarity, and relationship quality (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Each dimension intricately influences various aspects of follower outcomes, including satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Moreover, viewing LMX as a developmental process, the LMX Leadership Development Model focus on the leaders' role in offering "informal apprenticeships" to high-potential followers (Graen et al., 2016). These relationships involve challenging tasks, mentorship, and close bonds, fostering leadership skill development and emotional attachment. Furthermore, the Vertical Dyadic Leader-Maker Relationships model sheds light on LMX's specific role in leadership development (Dansereau et al., 1994). Leaders mentor select followers, providing career guidance, opportunities, and emotional support, thereby accelerating followers' leadership growth and career advancement. Through these theories and models, a deeper understanding of leader-member relationships emerges, offering invaluable insights into individual and organizational dynamics.

Factors Contributing to Leader-Member Exchange

Several factors contribute to the formation and quality of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) relationships. Individual characteristics, such as leader and follower personalities, play a pivotal role (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Leaders with traits like extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness tend to be more inclined toward building strong relationships, while followers who

exhibit proactivity, dependability, and emotional intelligence are often deemed more suitable for high-quality LMX. Additionally, shared values, backgrounds, or experiences between leaders and followers foster rapport and trust, enhancing LMX (Graen et al., 2004). Situational factors, like task demands and organizational structure, also shape LMX dynamics. Complex or uncertain tasks encourage closer collaboration, while flat hierarchies and open communication channels facilitate more equal interactions, improving LMX potential (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Dansereau et al., 1994). Leadership behaviours, including supportive, transformational, and empowering styles, are associated with higher-quality LMX (Yukl, 2013). Time and interaction further influence LMX development, as consistent communication and positive interactions build familiarity and trust over time (Graen et al., 2004; Liden et al., 1993). Moreover, organizational context, such as culture and formal policies, also plays a crucial role. Cultures that emphasize collaboration and respect for individuals support high-quality LMX, while organizations promoting teamwork, mentoring, and open communication create conducive conditions for strong LMX (House et al., 1996; Dansereau et al., 1994). Understanding these factors empowers leaders and organizations to cultivate positive LMX relationships, resulting in a more engaged and productive workforce.

Psychological Capital

Fred Luthans defined psychological capital as "an individual's positive psychological state of development." Psychological capital (PsyCap) is a positive psychological state that is characterized by four key resources:

- Hope: A belief that you can achieve your goals and that things will work out for the best.
- Efficacy: A sense of confidence in your ability to succeed.
- Resilience: The ability to bounce back from setbacks and challenges.
- Optimism: A positive outlook on life and the ability to see the good in even difficult situations.

Research suggests that high levels of PsyCap are associated with several positive outcomes, including

better job performance, increased job satisfaction, and lower levels of stress and burnout.

Theories and Models associated with Psychological Capital

Several psychological theories elucidate the concept and mechanisms underlying Psychological Capital (PsyCap). Psychological Capital Theory, as proposed by Luthans, Youssef-Morgan, and Avolio (2007), defines PsyCap as a positive state comprising four key resources. It posits three mechanisms driving the positive effects of PsyCap: malleability, emphasizing the belief that resources can be developed through effort; agency, reflecting a sense of control and influence over one's life; and sociability, highlighting the importance of positive relationships and social support. Fredrickson's Broad-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions (2001) suggests that positive emotions, akin to those underpinning PsyCap, broaden an individual's cognitive, emotional, and behavioural repertoire, fostering better problem-solving, resilience, and goal pursuit. The conservation of resources theory by Hobfoll (1989) proposes that individuals strive to acquire and maintain resources to cope with life's demands. PsyCap resources aid in conserving cognitive and emotional resources by promoting positive coping mechanisms and reducing stress, thus contributing to overall well-being. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) underscores the significance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in motivation and well-being, with PsyCap resources aligning with these needs. Finally, the Job Demands-Resources Model (Demerouti et al., 2003) emphasizes the importance of balancing job demands with resources to prevent burnout and promote well-being, with PsyCap acting as a resource buffer against stressful job demands, enabling effective coping strategies.

Factors Influencing Psychological Capital

Various factors influence the components of Psychological Capital (PsyCap), namely hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism. Individual factors, such as personality traits, self-esteem, mindset, and coping mechanisms, play crucial roles (Peterson & Seligman, 2008; Kernis et al., 2009; Dweck, 2006; Carver & Scheier, 1994). Situational factors, including stress levels, social support networks, work

environments, and financial security, also impact PsyCap (McEwen & Gianaros, 2010; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Luthans et al., 2007; Taylor et al., 2014). Additionally, developmental factors like upbringing, education, training, and life experiences contribute significantly to PsyCap development (Werner & Smith, 1992; Luthans, 2002; Bandura, 1997). Interventions such as positive psychology interventions, mindfulness training, and leadership development programs have been identified as effective strategies to enhance PsyCap (Seligman et al., 2005; Brown & Kasser, 2011; Luthans et al., 2008). Understanding these factors and implementing appropriate interventions can promote the development and maintenance of high levels of PsyCap, which in turn can enhance individual well-being and organizational effectiveness.

Job Embeddedness

Mitchell and colleagues describe job embeddedness as the strength of the forces that tie an employee to their job. These forces can include:

- **Links:** The connections that an employee has to their job, such as their relationships with colleagues, their sense of belonging to the organization, and their investment in their career development.
- **Fit:** The degree to which an employee's skills, abilities, and values are a good match for the demands of their job.
- **Sacrifices:** The things that an employee has given up to take their current job, such as time, money, or opportunities in other organizations.

High levels of job embeddedness are associated with lower levels of turnover and higher levels of job satisfaction and performance.

Job embeddedness includes both quantitative and qualitative aspects of an employee's attachment to their job and organization. Employees with higher levels of job embeddedness are less likely to turnover. They are also more likely to engage in discretionary efforts that benefit the organization, such as helping

coworkers, advocating for the organization, and contributing innovative ideas (Crossley et al., 2007).

Theories and Models associated with Job Embeddedness

A multitude of theories and models contribute to our understanding of job embeddedness, offering diverse perspectives on why employees remain with their organizations. Job Embeddedness Theory, proposed by Mitchell et al. (2001), serves as the foundational framework, highlighting three dimensions—links, fit, and sacrifice—that influence an employee's attachment to their job. Building upon this theory, the Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover, as outlined by Holtom et al (2005), explains turnover as a response to negative events, with embeddedness acting as a protective buffer. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) underpins the concept of job embeddedness, emphasizing the exchange of resources and the perceived costs and benefits associated with leaving a job. Similarly, Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) underscores the psychological attachment individuals develop with their organization, making departure emotionally challenging for those deeply embedded. The Investment Model of Commitment (Porter et al., 1974) highlights the investments individuals make in their jobs, with higher embeddedness representing greater investment and thus increased costs associated with leaving.

Additionally, the Model of Career Satisfaction and Retention (Clark et al., 2011) identifies job embeddedness as a key factor influencing career satisfaction and retention, emphasizing the importance of fit and support networks. Supplementary models, such as the Job Characteristic Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) and Person-Environment Fit Theory (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), further contribute by emphasizing enriched jobs and alignment between individual needs and organizational factors in reducing turnover. Understanding these theories and models offers valuable insights into the factors influencing employee retention and provides a roadmap for organizations to foster job embeddedness, thereby creating a work environment conducive to employee satisfaction and engagement.

Factors Influencing Job Embeddedness

The level of job embeddedness experienced by an employee is influenced by various factors across

different categories. Individual factors such as personality traits, career stage, values and goals, and job skills and knowledge play significant roles (Hom & Kinicki, 2001; Mitchell et al., 2001; Porter et al., 1974; Clark et al., 2011). Organizational factors, including the work environment, leadership style, career development opportunities, compensation and benefits, and social networks, also contribute significantly to embeddedness (Liden et al., 1997; Mitchell et al., 2001; Clark et al., 2011). Moreover, community factors like location and industry ties, as well as external factors such as the job market and economic climate, further impact an employee's embeddedness level (Hom & Kinicki, 2001; Mitchell et al., 2001). These factors interact in complex ways, influencing each other and shaping an individual's overall embeddedness experience. Addressing multiple factors through organizational interventions and individual career development efforts can effectively build stronger job embeddedness, fostering greater employee retention and engagement in the workplace.

Rationale of the Study

The rationale for the study lies in the growing recognition of the importance of psychological capital (PsyCap) and leader-member exchange (LMX) in influencing employee job embeddedness.

Psychological capital refers to an individual's positive psychological state characterized by hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism, which has been linked to various positive work outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance (Luthans, 2002). On the other hand, the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory focuses on the quality of the relationship between leaders and their subordinates, emphasizing trust, respect, and mutual exchange, which also influences employee attitudes and behaviours (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Existing research has examined the separate relationships between PsyCap, LMX, and job embeddedness. However, there is a gap in understanding how LMX moderates the relationship between PsyCap and job embeddedness. By investigating this moderation effect, the study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the mechanisms underlying employee job embeddedness.

Prior studies have shown that LMX can enhance the positive effects of individual-level resources on work outcomes. For example, Wang et al. (2014) found that LMX moderates the relationship between employee proactive personality and job performance. Similarly, Dirani et al. (2017) demonstrated that LMX moderates the relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviour. Building on these findings, the proposed study seeks to extend this line of research by examining the moderating role of LMX in the relationship between PsyCap and overall job embeddedness.

By investigating this moderation effect, the study aims to contribute to both theory and practice. Theoretically, it will advance our understanding of the boundary conditions under which PsyCap translates into job embeddedness, shedding light on the interplay between individual-level and relational factors in shaping employee attitudes and behaviours. Practically, the findings could inform organizational interventions aimed at enhancing employee job embeddedness by targeting both individual PsyCap and leader-member relationships.

In modern organizations, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), Psychological Capital, and Overall Job Embeddedness are crucial components that shape employee experiences and organizational outcomes. LMX emphasizes the significance of fostering high-quality relationships between leaders and followers, which leads to trust, communication, and mutual respect. Psychological Capital brings attention to positive psychological resources, such as hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism, which enhance employee well-being, engagement, and performance. Overall Job Embeddedness focuses on the attachment and integration of employees within their jobs and organizations, affecting turnover intentions and organizational citizenship behaviours. By recognizing the interdependence of these variables and understanding the factors that influence them, organizations can create strategies to cultivate positive work environments, improve employee satisfaction and commitment, and ultimately achieve sustainable success in today's competitive landscape.

Statement of the problem

The problem statement involves investigating how leader-member exchange (LMX) moderates the relationship between psychological capital and overall job embeddedness.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The complex interplay between individual resources, work environment, and employee well-being has garnered significant research attention. Within this domain, the potential for leader-member exchange (LMX), psychological capital (PC), and job embeddedness (JE) to work in concert has emerged as a particularly intriguing area of inquiry. While existing research acknowledges the individual relationships between these constructs, understanding how LMX mediates the association between PC and JE offers the potential for deeper insights into employee engagement, retention, and overall well-being.

Hsieh and colleagues (2023) investigated the moderated mediation model involving psychological capital (PsyCap), leader-member exchange (LMX), career self-efficacy, and career satisfaction among 321 employees. Their findings revealed that LMX moderated the indirect effect of PsyCap on career satisfaction through career self-efficacy, with a stronger effect observed at higher levels of LMX. This suggests that high-quality leader-member relationships facilitate the leveraging of PsyCap to enhance career self-efficacy and, consequently, career satisfaction. The study utilized structural equation modelling (SEM) to analyze the hypothesized relationships.

Wu et al., 2022) explored the moderating role of leader-member exchange (LMX) in the relationship between psychological capital (PsyCap) and employee voice behavior in a sample of 289 employees. They found that LMX moderated the indirect effect of PsyCap on voice behavior through job satisfaction, with a stronger effect observed at higher levels of LMX. This suggests that high-quality leader-member relationships create a supportive environment conducive to fostering employee voice behaviour. The study utilized Hayes' process macro analysis to examine the moderation and mediation effects.

Brinkerhoff and Kanfer (2021) investigated the joint impact of psychological capital (PsyCap), perceived organizational support (POS), and leader-member exchange (LMX) on employee engagement. Through structural equation modelling with a sample of 224 employees, they found that PsyCap positively influenced engagement directly, while LMX moderated the indirect effect of POS on engagement,

particularly at higher levels of LMX. This implies that LMX quality can enhance the positive impact of organizational support on employee engagement, highlighting the importance of supportive leader-member dynamics.

Wayne, Shore, and Liden (2020) explored the interactive effects of perceived organizational support (POS) and leader-member exchange (LMX) on employee outcomes. Although not directly focusing on PsyCap, their findings indicated that high LMX combined with high POS led to more favourable employee outcomes compared to the effects of each variable alone. This suggests that fostering supportive leader-member relationships within a supportive organizational context may amplify positive organizational outcomes, potentially including those related to psychological capital.

Gong and colleagues (2019) examined the combined effects of psychological capital (PsyCap) and leader-member exchange (LMX) on employee well-being and performance in a Chinese sample. Their analysis, based on data from 274 employees, revealed direct positive effects of both PsyCap and LMX on well-being and performance. Additionally, they found that LMX strengthened the positive association between PsyCap and well-being, emphasizing the importance of fostering high-quality leader-member relationships to maximize the beneficial effects of psychological resources on employee outcomes.

Hallier, Holland, and Ladge (2018) directly probe into the mediating effect of job embeddedness on the relationship between psychological capital and work performance. Their empirical study reveals that psychological capital exerts a positive influence on job performance through the mechanism of job embeddedness. By illuminating the significance of job embeddedness in understanding employee outcomes, the research contributes to a nuanced understanding of the interplay between psychological capital and job performance.

Lee and Johns (2018) delve into the intricate interplay between psychological capital, job embeddedness, and employee engagement. Through their research, they unveil a moderated mediation model wherein Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) moderates the indirect effect of psychological capital

on employee engagement via job embeddedness. This highlights the pivotal role of high-quality leader-member relationships in fostering employee engagement through enhanced job embeddedness.

Sosik and Jung (2018) investigate the nuanced dynamics among psychological capital, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), and turnover intentions. Their study unveils a moderated mediation model wherein LMX moderates the indirect effect of psychological capital on turnover intentions through job satisfaction. By highlighting the intricate interplay between these variables, the research sheds light on the mechanisms through which LMX influences employee turnover intentions within the organizational context.

In their study, Ashkanasy and Trevor (2018) explored the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI), leader-member exchange (LMX), and the moderating role of psychological capital (PsyCap). Through hierarchical regression analysis with a sample of 170 employees, they discovered that individuals with higher PsyCap exhibited a stronger positive association between EI and LMX. This finding suggests that employees with enhanced psychological resources are better equipped to cultivate high-quality relationships with their leaders, thereby potentially fostering more positive organizational dynamics.

Philip and Johns (2018) delved into the relationship between psychological capital (PsyCap), employee engagement, and the moderating role of leader-member exchange (LMX). Analyzing data from 202 employees, they uncovered that LMX strengthened the indirect effect of PsyCap on engagement through job embeddedness. This implies that high-quality relationships with leaders play a crucial role in leveraging the positive influence of PsyCap on employee engagement, underscoring the significance of supportive leader-member dynamics in organizational settings.

In their study, Hallier and colleagues investigated the role of leader-member exchange (LMX) and job control in moderating the relationship between psychological capital (PsyCap), job embeddedness, and turnover intentions among 302 employees. Their findings indicated that LMX moderated the indirect effect

of PsyCap on turnover intentions through job embeddedness, with a weaker effect observed at lower LMX levels. Additionally, they found that job control moderated the direct effect of LMX on turnover intentions, suggesting that the positive impact of LMX on retention is more pronounced when employees have some control over their work environment. Statistical analysis using Hayes' process macro revealed these moderation and mediation effects (Hallier et al., 2018).

Huang and his team examined the moderated mediation model involving psychological capital (PsyCap), leader-member exchange (LMX), work engagement, and employee performance in a sample of 387 employees. Their research revealed that LMX moderated the indirect effect of PsyCap on performance through work engagement, with a stronger effect observed at higher levels of LMX. This suggests that high-quality leader-member relationships enhance the link between PsyCap and performance by fostering greater work engagement. The study utilized structural equation modelling (SEM) to analyze the hypothesized relationships (Hung et al., 2018).

Newman and Millette (2017) investigated how psychological capital (PsyCap) moderates the relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX) and employee responses to organizational change among 218 employees. Their findings demonstrated that PsyCap buffered the negative effects of low LMX on employee well-being and performance during organizational change, indicating the protective role of psychological resources in challenging situations. The study employed hierarchical regression analysis to examine the moderation effect.

Crawford and LePine (2017) explored the link between employee perceptions of organizational politics, psychological contract fulfilment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions in their study titled "A Configural Theory of Organizational Commitment". Although not directly focused on LMX, their findings suggested potential boundary conditions for the moderating effect of LMX. The study involving 230 employees discovered that the positive effects of LMX on employee outcomes were weaker in highly political organizational contexts. This implies that the effectiveness of LMX may be contingent on the

broader organizational environment. Hierarchical regression was used for statistical analysis.

Luthans and Youssef-Morgan (2017) conducted a meta-analysis across various industries and organizations, finding a significant positive correlation between employee outcomes and psychological capital. To examine this relationship, they used different statistical techniques, including correlation analysis and regression modelling in their study titled "Psychological Capital: A Multi-Disciplinary Analysis".

Griffin and Hu (2017) investigated how psychological capital and perceived supervisor support interact and influence job satisfaction and turnover intention in their study titled "The Impact of Psychological Capital on Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intentions: Exploring the Moderating Role of Perceived Supervisor Support." Their study included a sample of employees from different industries, and hierarchical regression was used for statistical analysis.

Avey et al. (2016) conducted a meta-analysis titled "The Impact of Positive Psychological Capital on Employee Attitudes, Behaviors, and Performance" which revealed a strong positive correlation between psychological capital and various employee outcomes, including attitudes, behaviours, and performance. The meta-analysis used rigorous statistical techniques to synthesize findings across multiple studies and industries.

Walumbwa et al. (2016) explored the relationships among leader and follower psychological capital, service climate, and job performance in their study titled "Linking Psychological Capital to Better Performance through Positive Organizational Climate among Chinese Employees: A Multilevel Analysis". Their findings suggest that psychological capital plays a crucial role in shaping service climate and job performance. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was used to analyze data collected from service employees.

Nielsen and Munir (2015) investigated how transformational leadership influences followers' affective well-being, mediated by self-efficacy in their study titled "Transformational Leadership and

Psychological Capital: The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy." Although not directly related to job embeddedness, the study contributes to understanding the psychological processes underlying leadership and employee outcomes. The study used mediation analysis with a sample of employees from various sectors.

The study by Hobfoll (2015), titled "Social and Psychological Resources and Adaptation," explored the concept of conservation of resources theory and its implications for individuals in stressful situations. Although not specifically focused on job embeddedness, this study established a theoretical foundation for understanding the importance of resources in organizational settings.

Eisenberger et al. (2014) examined how perceived supervisor support impacts perceived organizational support and employee retention in their study titled "Perceived Organizational Support: Fostering Enthusiastic and Productive Employees." Their study included a sample from diverse industries, and regression analysis was used to establish that supervisor support significantly contributes to organizational support and retention.

Dutton and Jacqueline (2014) shed light on the pivotal role of leadership in cultivating psychological capital among employees. Although not empirically investigating LMX, their study proposes a theoretical framework elucidating how leaders can foster an environment conducive to the growth of psychological capital. By creating such an atmosphere, leaders can facilitate employee thriving, ultimately leading to positive outcomes such as job embeddedness. This theoretical framework underscores the importance of leadership in shaping organizational dynamics and employee well-being.

Tims and Derks (2013) investigated how job crafting impacts job demands, job resources, and well-being in their study titled "Job Crafting and Its Impact on Work Engagement and Job Satisfaction in Dutch Work Organizations". They found that job crafting positively influences well-being by increasing job resources and challenging job demands. The study used longitudinal data and structural equation modelling techniques with a sample from various occupations.

Cropanzano and Mitchell (2012) provided a comprehensive review of social exchange theory and its interdisciplinary nature and applicability across various contexts, including organizational settings, in their study titled "Social Exchange Theory: An Interdisciplinary Review". Although not directly examining job embeddedness, the study offers insights into the theoretical underpinnings of exchange relationships in the workplace.

Halbesleben and Wheeler (2010) compared the roles of engagement and embeddedness in predicting job performance and intention to leave in their study titled "The Relative Roles of Engagement and Embeddedness in Predicting Job Performance and Intention to Leave". Their findings highlight the unique contributions of each construct, with embeddedness being a stronger predictor of turnover intention. Hierarchical regression was used for statistical analysis with a sample of employees from diverse industries.

Ashkanasy and Trevor (2009) investigated how psychological capital moderates the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and leader-member exchange (LMX) in their study titled "Emotions in the Workplace: Research, Theory, and Practice". Their study revealed that psychological capital strengthens the positive association between EI and LMX. The study involved 170 employees, and hierarchical regression analysis was used to examine the moderation effect.

Bakker and Demerouti (2006) proposed the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) model, which provides a theoretical framework for understanding the role of job resources, such as LMX, in buffering the negative effects of job demands on employee well-being and performance in their study titled "The Job Demands-Resources Model: State of the Art". Although not directly investigating LMX, this seminal work laid the foundation for understanding how job resources can influence employee outcomes. The study focused on theoretical development rather than empirical data analysis.

In their review paper, John and Leiter (2002) delineate the concept of work engagement, which plays a pivotal role in understanding the interrelationship between psychological capital and job

embeddedness. While not directly exploring Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), their work sets the foundation for comprehending how work engagement mediates these relationships. By emphasizing the multidimensional nature of work engagement and its influence on employee retention and well-being, the study underscores its significance in the broader context of organizational dynamics.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Aim

To investigate the influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on the relationship between Psychological Capital and Overall Job Embeddedness.

Objectives

- To study the relationship between Psychological Capital (PC) and Overall Job Embeddedness (JE).
- To examine whether LMX will mediate the Relationship between Psychological Capital (PC) and Overall Job Embeddedness (JE).

Hypotheses

- H1 There is a significant relationship between Psychological Capital (PC) and Overall Job Embeddedness (JE) among employees
- H2 LMX will moderate the relationship between Psychological Capital (PC) and Overall Job Embeddedness (JE) among employees

Research Design

To accomplish the objectives, a cross-sectional study was used and to find the relationship between the variables, Spearman's rank correlational research design was employed as the data was not normally distributed. Moderation analysis was used to determine the moderating effect of LMX on psychological capital and job embeddedness. These designs are effective methods for identifying relationships between variables, which was essential for meeting the goals of the study.

Sample and Sampling Design

The sample for the present study comprises employees from different sectors. The research includes 150 employees, selected from both public and private sectors, without any regard to gender. To draw a sample from the population, a purposive sampling method is used.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Full-time employees with at least one year of tenure.
2. Employees across various departments within the organisation.
3. Those who have completed at least one performance appraisal.
4. Individuals are willing to participate voluntarily in the study.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Part-time or temporary employees.
2. Employees with less than one year of tenure.
3. Individuals who have not undergone a performance appraisal.

Tools Used

1. Socio-demographic sheet

Socio-demographic sheets were used to collect information regarding age, gender and type of organization working.

2. Psycap Questionnaire (PCQ 12)

It was developed by Luthans et al., in 2014 and has 12 items on a six-point Likert scale from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The term "PCQ" refers to the 12 specific questions used to measure hope, efficacy, resiliency, and optimism. All PCQ scales are scored using a 6-point Likert scale. Each scale measures its unique dimension of PsyCap. An overall PsyCap score is calculated by taking the sum of all the items in the PCQ. It has good internal consistency and construct validity, making it a reliable measure for assessing psychological capital.

3. LMX 7 Questionnaire

It was developed by G. B. Graen and M. Uhl-Bien was developed in 1995 and has 7 items on a five-point scale from 'rarely' to 'very often'. An overall LMX score is calculated by taking the sum of all the items in the LMX. It exhibits good internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's alpha >.80) and

convergent validity confirmed by correlations with other tools measuring various aspects of the Leader and follower relationship.

4. Job Embeddedness Scale

It was developed by Mitchell et al., 2018 has 15 items on a five-point scale from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. The dimensions of the scale are link, fit, and sacrifice. The score is calculated by summing all the items. It is known for its strong internal consistency and construct validity, making it a reliable tool for assessing job embeddedness.

Operational Definition

1. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)

The term LMX, or leader-member exchange, denotes the perception held by employees regarding the quality of their relationship with their immediate supervisor. This perception is typically evaluated using a tool that scrutinizes various elements, including the frequency of one-on-one interactions, the level of supportiveness demonstrated by the supervisor, the degree to which the employee is involved in decision-making, and the extent of trust in information sharing. Such evaluations are highly relevant in assessing the quality of organizational relations and can provide valuable insights into employee engagement and job satisfaction (G. B. Graen and M. Uhl-Bien, 1995).

2. Psychological Capital

Psychological capital refers to an individual's positive psychological state, which can be evaluated through a survey that focuses on four key components: hope, optimism, self-efficacy, and resilience. These components measure an individual's belief in achieving their goals, their positive outlook on the future, their confidence in their abilities, and their capacity to overcome challenges. Psychological capital is a critical element in an individual's personal and professional development, as it enables them to cope with adversity, navigate change, and achieve success. By fostering these four components, organizations can enhance their employees' psychological capital, which can lead to improved job performance, job

satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Luthans et al., 2014)

3. Job Embeddedness

Job embeddedness is a construct used to measure the extent to which employees experience a deep sense of connection to their jobs and organizations. This construct is evaluated using a scale that considers three key aspects: the strength of the employee's relationships with colleagues and the organizational challenges and costs that would accompany leaving the job (Mitchell et al., 2018).

Procedure

The participants in this study were chosen based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents before data collection. Questionnaires assessing Psychological capital and leader-member Exchange were provided to participants along with the socio-demographic datasheet. Participants filled out the questionnaire. Also, the respondents were assured by the ethical guidelines of this study. Later the data was analyzed statistically using SPSS (Version 25).

Ethical Considerations

- The study adhered to all ethical principles and procedures, including obtaining informed consent from the participants.
- Participants had the freedom to withdraw from the study without any negative consequences.
- The participants were not subjected to any physical or mental harm during the study.
- The collected data was exclusively utilized for research and academic purposes and kept confidential at all times.

Statistical Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 was used for analysis. The data was collected using physical forms and entered into Excel and the coding was also done in the same. A test of normality (Kolmogorov- Smirnov Test) was done to check if the data was parametric or not, and based on the nature of the data the appropriate statistical tools were selected. To describe the demographic details of the participants, the study used descriptive statistics such as mean and SD. Spearman's rank correlation

was used to find relationships between variables. Moderation analysis was used to determine the moderating effect of LMX on psychological capital and job embeddedness.

Normality Analysis

Table 1

Summary of Kolmogorov- Smirnov Test of Normality

Variables	Sig.
Leader-Member Exchange	0.000
Psychological Capital	0.000
Overall Job Embeddedness	0.000

Table 1 shows the results of the normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov. Leader-member exchange, psychological capital and Overall Job Embeddedness scales were found to be not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$) in the sample. Since the data is not distributed normally, a non-parametric test will be used to establish the correlation between the variables.

CHAPTER IV

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. The study aims to investigate how Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) influences the relationship between Psychological Capital and Overall Job Embeddedness. Specifically, it examines the correlation between Psychological Capital (PC) and Overall Job Embeddedness (JE), and whether LMX moderates the relationship between PC and JE.

Table 2

Mean and standard deviation of Leader-Member Exchange, Psychological Capital and Overall Job Embeddedness

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Leader-Member Exchange	150	21.94	5.786
Psychological Capital	150	93.93	16.831
Overall Job Embeddedness	150	57.25	10.711

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of variables among 150 respondents who are employees working in various sectors. The table reports the descriptive statistics of three variables, namely, leader-member exchange (LMX), psychological capital (PsyCap), and overall job embeddedness (OJE). The mean and standard deviation (SD) of LMX was found to be 21.94 and 5.786, respectively. Similarly, the mean and SD of PsyCap were found to be 93.93 and 16.831, respectively. Lastly, the mean and SD of OJE were 57.25 and 10.711, respectively. These descriptive statistics provide critical insights into the distribution and variability of the three variables and can be used to

make informed decisions in the realm of employee management and organizational behaviour.

H1: There is a significant relationship between Psychological Capital (PC) and Overall Job Embeddedness (JE) among employees

Table 3

Spearman's rank correlation between Psychological Capital and Overall Job Embeddedness among employees from various sectors.

	Overall Job Embeddedness
Psychological Capital	.646**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows Spearman's rank correlation coefficient depicting a statistically significant and positive relationship between psychological capital and overall job embeddedness, [$r(148) = .646, p = .001$]. The result indicates that there is a positive correlation between psychological capital and overall job embeddedness. Thus the hypothesis is not rejected which states that there is a relation between psychological capital and overall job embeddedness.

The present discovery is consistent with earlier studies that have indicated a positive correlation between increased psychological capital and increased job embeddedness (Avey et al., 2011; Newman et al., 2014). Because of their increased resilience, optimism, and self-efficacy, people with higher psychological resources may feel more firmly anchored and dedicated to their work, as suggested by this positive correlation (Luthans et al., 2007).

H2: LMX will moderate the relationship between Psychological Capital (PC) and Overall Job Embeddedness (JE) among employee

Table 4

Summary of moderation analysis examining the moderating effect of Leader-Member Exchange in the relationship between Psychological Capital and Overall Job Embeddedness

Model	R ²	R ² Change	F	T	Sig.	Coeff
Model Summary			23.0243		0.0000	
Leader-Member Exchange x Psychological Capital *	0.2102	0.0286	4.4289	1.1352	0.0000	
Int_1					0.0000	0.0002

. *Product of Independent and moderator variable

Table 4 shows the results of the moderating effect of Leader-Member Exchange in the relationship between Psychological Capital and Overall Job Embeddedness. The result shows that the predictor collectively predicts 0.2 per cent variance (R Square=.002) in the dependent variable overall job embeddedness. Especially since the p-value was found to be less than 0.01, thus the result can be considered significant. The result indicates that LMX moderates the relationship between psychological capital and overall job embeddedness. Thus the hypothesis stating LMX will moderate the relationship between Psychological Capital (PC) and

Overall Job Embeddedness (JE) is not rejected. It emphasizes how crucial it is to take into account how well leaders and their subordinates get along to shape how attached employees are to their work and companies.

Organizational psychology research has repeatedly shown how important LMX is in affecting a range of employee outcomes, including performance, organizational commitment, and work satisfaction (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Erdogan & Bauer, 2009). According to the LMX hypothesis, good connections between leaders and followers promote mutual respect, trust, and communication, which in turn raises employee engagement and loyalty to the company (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Furthermore, research has demonstrated that LMX can function as a boundary condition for other variables' effects on worker outcomes (Newman et al., 2014). Research by Erdogan and Bauer (2009), for example, showed that LMX impacted the link between employee performance and perceived organizational support, such that employees with high-quality leader-member relationships experienced a greater positive impact from perceived support.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the moderating role of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) in the relationship between Psychological Capital (PC) and Overall Job Embeddedness (JE). The results highlight the significance of fostering positive leader-member relationships and enhancing employees' psychological capital for promoting job embeddedness. Effective leadership, characterized by trust, respect, and support, amplifies the positive impact of psychological resources on employees' attachment to their jobs and organizations. Practically, organizations should prioritize leadership development initiatives aimed at enhancing interpersonal skills and promoting positive leader-member relationships. Additionally, investing in employee well-being programs can empower individuals to utilize their psychological resources effectively, leading to increased job embeddedness. In conclusion, by understanding the interplay between PC, LMX, and JE, organizations can develop targeted interventions to enhance employee commitment, satisfaction, and retention, ultimately contributing to organizational success.

Findings

1. There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between psychological capital and overall job embeddedness.
2. LMX moderates the relationship between psychological capital and overall job embeddedness.

Implications

- The research could offer deeper insights into retention mechanisms within organizations, providing a comprehensive understanding of factors influencing employee longevity.
- It may emphasize the critical role of positive leader-member relationships (LMX) in fostering job embeddedness and psychological capital among employees.
- The study could advocate for tailored leadership development programs aimed at improving supervisor-subordinate dynamics and enhancing overall retention rates.
- Identification of effective psychological capital interventions could be a key outcome,

offering actionable strategies to nurture employee resilience, optimism, hope, and self-efficacy.

- Sector-specific retention strategies may emerge, recognizing the need for tailored approaches to address unique challenges and opportunities across different industries.
- Cultivating a supportive organizational culture could be highlighted as a crucial aspect, emphasizing the importance of creating an environment where employees feel valued and committed.
- Ultimately, the research findings could contribute to long-term organizational performance enhancements by boosting employee satisfaction, reducing turnover costs, and fostering a more resilient and engaged workforce.

Limitation

- Small sample size may hinder representativeness.
- External factors not fully accounted for in the research design.
- Addressing these limitations is vital for accurate interpretation and meaningful conclusions.

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Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

Greetings,

I'm Suha Abdul Gafoor an MSc Psychology student, from Ernakulam, Kerala. I am conducting a study to understand the moderating role of LMX in the relationship between Psychological Capital and Overall Job Embeddedness as part of my research. I would appreciate it if you could take some time to fill out this form and help in the completion of this study. The information provided will be kept confidential and used for research purposes only.

Thanks in advance!

Consent Form

I consent to participate in the research project and I understand the general purposes, risks and methods of this research. I consent to participate in the research project and the following has been explained to me:

- the research may not be of direct benefit to me
- my participation is completely voluntary
- my right to withdraw from the study at any time without any implications to me
- what I am expected and required to do.
- security and confidentiality of my personal information.

I'm willing to participate in the study: YES / NO

Appendix B: Socio-Demographic Form

Social Demographics

Initials (Optional): _____

Age _____

Gender _____

Appendix C: Psychological Capital Questionnaire

General Instructions

The study will involve you filling out this form. You need to respond to each statement in each given section. Please answer each statement as it most relates to you.

	Items	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Somewhat disagree	4 Somewhat Agree	5 Strongly Agree	6 Agree
1	I feel confident in representing my work area in meetings with management.						
2	I feel confident contributing to discussions about the company's strategy.						
3	I feel confident presenting information to a group of colleagues.						
4	If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it.						
5	Right now I see myself as being pretty successful at work.						
6	I can think of many ways to reach my current work goals.						
7	At this time, I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself.						
8	I can be "on my own "so to speak at work if I have to.						
9	I usually take stressful things at work in stride.						
10	I can get through difficult times at work because I've experienced difficulty before.						
11	I always look on the bright side of things regarding my job.						
12	I'm optimistic about what will happen to me in the future as it pertains to work.						

Appendix D: Job Embeddedness Questionnaire

Below are statements about you with which you may agree or disagree. Using the following scales, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement.

	Items	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Strongly Agree	5 Agree
1	My job utilizes my skills and talents well					
2	I feel like I am a good match for this organization					
3	I feel personally valued by (name of the organization)					
4	I like my work schedule (e.g. flextime, shift)					
5	I fit with my organization's culture					
6	I like the authority and responsibility I have at this company					
7	I have a lot of freedom on this job to decide how to pursue my goals					
8	The perks of this job are outstanding					
9	I feel that people at work respect me a great deal.					
10	I would incur very few costs if I left this organization. (reverse).					
11	I would sacrifice a lot if I left this job					
12	My promotional opportunities are excellent here					
13	I am well compensated for my level of performance					
14	The benefits are good on this job					
15	I believe the prospects for continuing employment with this company are excellent					

Appendix E: LMX Questionnaire

This questionnaire contains items that ask you to describe your relationship with your leader. For each of the items, indicate the degree to which you think the item is true for you by ticking one of the responses that appear below the item.

	Items	1 Rarely	2 Occasionally	3 Sometimes	4 Fairly	5 Often	6 Very Often
1	Do you know where you stand with your leaders and do you know how satisfied your leaders are with what you do?						
2	How well do your leaders understand your job problems and needs?						
3	How well does your leader recognize your potential?						
4	Regardless of how much formal authority your follower has built into his or her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his or her power to help you solve problems in your work?						
5	Again, regardless of the amount of formal authority your leader has, what are the chances that he or she would "bail you out" at his or her expense?						
6	I have enough confidence in my leaders that I would defend and justify his or her decision if he or she were not present to do so.						
7	How would you characterize your working relationship with your leaders?						



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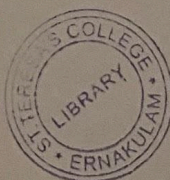
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