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The relationships among social exchange, organizational citizenship, and employee behavior

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THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG SOCIAL EXCHANGE, ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP, AND EMPLOYEE BEHAVIOR

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Abstract

This study examined a social exchange approach to influencing employee attitudes, behavior, and performance. Social exchange theory predicts that employees will respond, in kind, to the treatment they receive from the organization. It was proposed, therefore, that organizations can influence the attitudes, behavior, and performance of employees by attending to the relationships that develop between employees and the organization. This study examined the relationships between leader-member exchange, organizational citizenship behavior, and perceived organizational support.

Surveys were administered to 49 employees and their supervisors at three separate country clubs located in the southwestern United States. Perceptions of organizational support, leader-member exchange, and organizational citizenship behavior were assessed. Mean scores, standard deviations, analysis of variance, and Spearman's correlations were calculated to measure the constructs and determine possible relationships.

Overall, employees reported that they believed they received some support from the organization and some support from their manager. Employees' altruistic and general compliance behaviors were rated favorably by their supervisors. Analysis of variance calculations suggested that these variables did not vary by age, gender, education, or tenure.

The research aimed to answer three questions: Does leader-member exchange have a positive relationship on organizational citizenship behavior? Does perceived organizational support have a positive relationship with organizational citizenship behavior? Does leader-member exchange have a stronger relationship to organizational citizenship behavior than perceived organization support to organizational citizenship behavior? The results showed a positive, statistically significant relationship between general compliance and altruism (from the organizational citizenship behavior survey) and between perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange. These results suggest that as altruism increases, general compliance also increases (and vice versa). Similarly, as perceived organizational support increases, leader-member exchange also tends to increase (and vice versa). No other relationships among the variables could be concluded.

Limitations of this study are its small sample, the applicability of organizational citizenship behavior to a hospitality setting, the limitations of quantitative research for complex topics, and the natural conflict between customer service and organizational citizenship behavior.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

It has been argued that the strongest asset a service organization can develop is the ability to provide high-quality customer service. “In the modern, highly competitive business world, the key to sustainable competitive advantage lies in delivering high quality service that will, in turn, lead to satisfied customers” (Sureshchandar, Chandrasekharan, & Anantharaman, 2002, p. 370). High quality service is closely related to customer satisfaction (Gotlieb, Grewal, & Brown, 1994; Liao & Chuang, 2004; Sureshchandar et al., 2002), and customer satisfaction is directly linked to economic performance (Fornell, 2001). Increased customer satisfaction increases the value of a firm’s customer assets and future profitability. Satisfied customers purchase more frequently, purchase in greater volume, and are more inclined to pay for the benefits received (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1994; Liao & Chuang, 2004).

This relationship between customer service, customer satisfaction, and financial performance has managerial implications for service organizations. To achieve customer satisfaction, the organization should develop a service delivery process that addresses the multiple factors influencing the customer’s perception of quality, and that supports the performance of front-line employees (Albrecht & Zemke, 1990; Normann, 1991; Schneider & Bowen, 1995; Sureshchandar et al., 2004).

In most cases, a customer’s encounter with a service company involves an interaction with a front-line employee. The effectiveness of employee performance in these service encounters is the primary determinant of the

customer's assessment of service quality (Gotlieb et al., 1994; Liao & Chuang, 2004). Service workers must demonstrate initiative, flexibility, interpersonal skills, empathy, and cooperation to successfully negotiate these encounters with customers (Schneider & Bowen, 1995). This presents a management challenge for service organizations, as service encounters are typically unsupervised and cannot be directly influenced by the company (Normann, 1991). Front-line employees respond to customer needs under a variety of circumstances without the benefit of direct supervisory oversight.

To recognize the benefits of high levels of customer satisfaction, service organizations will need to develop indirect measures to influence the performance of their employees. Traditional management techniques such as employee selection, training, policies, and procedures may help set a foundation for employee performance, but might have a minimal impact on employee attitudes or discretionary behavior. Research suggests that employers can influence these aspects of employee performance by taking steps to maintain the *psychological contract* (Schneider & Bowen, 1995). Psychological contracts are individual beliefs in reciprocal obligations between employees and employers (Rousseau, 1990). A psychological contract exists when employees believe they are obligated to behave or perform in a certain way, and also believe that the employer has certain obligations towards them. The process of carrying out a psychological contract between person and organization has been defined as fulfilling mutual expectations and satisfying mutual needs (Levinson, 1965).

In their book *Winning the Service Game*, Schneider and Bowen (1995) speculated how a service worker might define the psychological contract:

> I will deliver service quality to customers if you deliver a quality work experience for me. I will be responsive, courteous, reliable, understanding and so forth if you treat me that way too. In other words, I am as important as you want me to feel customers are. But don't take advantage of me. You must not only provide for my security, but also treat me as an adult and facilitate my work, and you must treat me fairly by rewarding me based on my contribution. (p. 170)

This interpretation portrays the reciprocal nature of a psychological contract, which reflects a *social exchange* perspective of organizational behavior. Social exchange theory proposes that social relationships essentially consist of exchanges of both economic and social resources (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1958). A central tenant of social exchange is the *norm of reciprocity* which dictates that individuals who receive benefits from another feel indebted and obligated to reciprocate (Gouldner, 1960). In relationships, the norm of reciprocity is crucial as it perpetuates the ongoing fulfillment of obligations and thus, the relationship itself (Conway & Briner, 2005).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore a social exchange approach to influencing employee attitudes, behavior, and performance. Social exchange theory predicts that employees will respond, in kind, to the treatment they receive from the organization. It was proposed, therefore, that organizations can influence the attitudes, behavior, and performance of employees by attending to the relationships that develop between employees and the organization.

A review of the literature on social exchange in organizations revealed two separate constructs that will be examined in this study. Leader-member exchange theory (LMX) proposes that leaders (supervisors) develop different

relationships with individual workers and the quality of those relationships influences employee behaviors (Graen & Schieman, 1978). Perceived organizational support (POS) theory suggests that employees personify the organizations they work for and develop perceptions about how the organization values their contributions and cares about their well being. It was predicted that higher levels of POS positively influence employee attitudes (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986).

The measure of attitudes and behavior in a service environment is difficult to specifically define. As reviewed previously, service workers will need to demonstrate initiative, flexibility, interpersonal skills, empathy, and cooperation to deliver high quality service. Given the involvement of the customer in service encounters, the service worker's performance behaviors could be considered contextual in nature in that the service worker will adapt to the circumstances presented by the customer. The construct of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) has been identified as a measure of contextual performance (Organ, 1997), and further defined as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the company" (p. 86). OCB has also been theoretically and empirically linked to customer perceptions of service quality (Morrison, 1996; Yoon & Suh, 2003).

This study attempted to determine whether the findings of previous research on the relationships of social exchange in organizations to OCB can be validated in a service environment. Accordingly, the proposed research questions were as follows:

1. Does LMX have a positive relationship on OCB?

2. Does POS have a positive relationship to OCB?

3. Does LMX have a stronger relationship to OCB than POS to OCB?

The following sections provide a theoretical background supporting the social exchange perspective of employee behavior, and an overview of the unique characteristics of customer service and the critical role of front-line employees.

Social Exchange

The likelihood that employees will tend to respond in kind to the treatment they receive from the company is related to the theory of *social exchange* and the concept of reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Homans, 1958). Early discussions of social exchange proposed that social behavior is a give-and-take of material and non-material goods (Homans, 1958). Reciprocity plays a significant role in social exchange. The norm of reciprocity is universal and "makes two interrelated, minimal demands: (1) people should help those who have helped them, and (2) people should not injure those who have helped them" (Gouldner, 1960, p. 171). The norm of reciprocity dictates that one who receives a benefit from another is *obliged* to repay the favor. Reciprocity is loosely governed by the players involved and allows for some variance both in the value of benefits exchanged and the period in which the repayment occurs. Social exchange theory maintains that in society, the exchange relationship often extends beyond things of economic value to assistance, support, regard, and respect and that the significance of the benefits exchanged is linked to the interpersonal relationship of the exchange partners (Blau, 1964).

Research on social exchange in an organizational context suggests that social forces are at play in the workplace and the norm of reciprocity presents itself in the relationships between workers and the organization and between workers and agents of the organization. LMX theory explores the relationship between the worker and supervisor (Eisenberger et al., 1986). POS explores the relationship between the worker and the personified organization (Graen & Schiemann, 1978).

Customer Service

The production and delivery of service presents different challenges than the production and delivery of goods. Services are intangible and typically produced at the moment of delivery. They cannot be inspected, stored, warehoused, or shipped (Albrecht & Zemke, 1990; Normann, 1991; Schneider & Bowen, 1984). Services consist of acts or interactions. Often, the customer is a participant in the delivery process (Normann, 1991). These characteristics suggest that to provide high quality service, the service worker must be capable of producing customized service in response to the circumstances created by the customer and everything essential to the delivery of that service must be immediately at hand.

The need to have everything at hand speaks to the multidimensional nature of service. A number of interrelated organizational conditions and practices contribute to the customer's perception of quality (Normann, 1991; Albrecht & Zemke, 1990; Schneider & Bowen, 1983; Liao & Chuang, 2004; Sureshchandar et al., 2002). Some factors are directly involved in the service encounter, while others provide support. Each element plays a role in shaping

the customers experience. To articulate and categorize the dimensions of service, Sureshchandar et al. (2004) have identified five primary factors that influence customer perceptions of quality:

1. Core service or service product.

2. Human element of service delivery aspects such as reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and service recovery.

3. Systemization of service delivery, including the processes, procedures, systems and technology.

4. Tangibles of service, meaning the manmade physical environment surrounding the service.

5. Social responsibility, meaning the ethical behavior of the service provider.

While it may be difficult to distinguish between the service act and the elements involved in providing the service, the service act itself almost always involves an encounter between the customer and a service worker. This is especially true in service organizations where front-line employees frequently engage with customers to deliver the services offered by the firm (Normann, 1991; Liao & Chuang, 2004; Schneider & Bowen, 1984). These service encounters have been referred to as *moments of truth* (Albrecht & Zemke, 1990; Normann, 1991). The moment of truth is often a social interaction between a service worker and a customer in which the service worker delivers, or fails to deliver, quality customer service (Normann, 1991). “As the customer, or receiver of the service, you experience the moment of truth as *intensely personal*” (Albrecht & Zemke, 1990, p. 32). In most cases, moments of truth are negotiated

by service workers in the absence of supervisory oversight. In these encounters, the service worker reflects the face of the organization and the customer judges the quality of the organization based on his or her perception of the quality of the encounter with the service worker. “Workers are the organization to the customers they serve” (Schneider & Bowen, 1995, p. 237).

It could be argued, then, that among the many factors that influence the perception of quality in a customer’s experience with a company, the *human factor* is one of the most crucial. Therefore, service organizations pursuing the competitive and economic advantages of high quality service would benefit from developing practices that might positively influence the attitudes, behaviors, and performance of service employees.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

This literature review examines research on LMX, POS, and OCB. Additionally, research on the relationship between social exchange and employee attitudes and behaviors is reviewed to identify types and levels of correlations revealed in previous studies.

LMX

LMX theory is a social exchange approach to leadership and explores the development of exchange relationships between supervisors (leaders) and subordinates (members). Leaders develop different relationships with their individual members. The quality of these relationships can range from low to high. Low-quality exchanges are characterized by formal role behaviors and low levels of trust, support, and rewards. High-quality exchanges are those where the relationship extends beyond formal roles and reflects high levels of trust, cooperation, and support. LMX theory proposes that the development of “mature leadership relationships” between supervisors and subordinates support effective leadership processes (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Mature leadership relationships result in trust, respect, and admiration. Leaders can count on followers to provide assistance, take on extra assignments, and provide constructive feedback. Followers can count on leaders for resources, support, encouragement, and career oriented advice (Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1991). The relationship of LMX to employee performance and citizenship behavior has been well established (Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996; Sparrowe, 1994; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997; Wayne, Shore, Bommer, & Tetrick, 2002).

LMX theory is an extension of research on the Vertical Dyad Linkage model of leadership development (Cashman, Dansereau, Graen, & Haga, 1976; Graen, 1976; Graen & Schieman, 1978). The Vertical Dyad Linkage model was investigated as an alternative to the Average Leadership Style, which assumed that leaders display consistent behavior towards all subordinates. Vertical Dyad Linkage theory argues that leaders develop different relationships with different followers and those relationships are focused on the development of leader-member agreement and behavioral interdependencies at the dyadic level. Research on Vertical Dyad Linkage treated the vertical dyad as the unit of analysis and determined that leaders develop different levels of interdependencies with individual followers. These interdependent relationships range from ". . . something approaching a 'partnership' at the high pole, to something approaching an 'overseer' at the low pole" (Graen & Schieman, 1978, p. 206).

Recognizing that some supervisor-subordinate relationships develop into mature leadership relationships and others do not, researchers have investigated the dimensions of LMX to determine what factors might influence the quality of exchange relationships (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen et al., 1982). While there are varied opinions among researchers as to whether LMX is unidimensional or multidimensional (Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995; Schriesheim, Castro, & Cogliser, 1999), scholars have developed compelling arguments to support the multidimensional approach (Deinisch & Liden, 1986; Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995).

In a meta-analysis of LMX research, Graen and Uhl-Bein (1995) proposed that LMX is comprised of three dimensions: respect, trust, and obligation. The

authors suggested that an offer to build a partnership within the dyad “will not be made or accepted without (1) mutual respect for the capabilities of the other, (2) the anticipation of deepening reciprocal trust with the other, and (3) the expectation that the interacting obligation will grow over time” (p. 237). Deinesch and Liden (1986) argued that LMX is a multidimensional construct limited to dimensions that are validated by mutuality. Mutuality is a central concept of social exchange and implies that exchange relationships develop through dimensions that are of consequence to both partners and allow both partners to contribute. Three dimensions, validated by mutuality, are identified in this study: (a) *perceived contribution to the exchange,* meaning the perception of the amount and value of work effort contributed toward mutual goals of the dyad; (b) *loyalty,* “the expression of public support for the goals and personal character of the other member of the dyad” (p. 625); and (c) *affect,* the interpersonal attraction between members of the dyad (aside from work or professional values). The identification of these dimensions articulates the elements of human nature that influence the development of exchange relationships.

The development of work relationships between supervisors and subordinates has been a subject of interest in research on LMX. Employees who arrive as newcomers to organizations face the challenge of new tasks and new relationships. As they work to develop skills and competencies, they also work to establish relationships with members of the workgroup. “People who work together every day do not and cannot treat each other as strangers. People are highly social beings and they form complicated relationships” (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991, p. 26). Of particular interest is how relationships develop between a new

employee and their supervisor, and researchers have attempted to trace this development through models (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1991, 1995).

A developmental process comprised of four transactional phases is presented in a study examining the multidimensional nature of LMX (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). In the *initial interaction,* impressions are formed by the physical characteristics, attitudes, personality, age, and background of each member of the dyad. *Leader delegation* occurs when the leader tests the attributes of a new member by assigning an initial set of duties. *Member behavior and attributions* bring the multidimensional nature of LMX into play as the subordinate demonstrates a range of behaviors beyond task performance to influence the supervisor. *Leader's attributions for member's behavior* reflect the supervisor's evaluation and response to the subordinate's performance and behavior. The authors stress the importance of organizational context and reciprocal influence between the supervisor and subordinate as the relationship matures and stabilizes.

The role-making model proposed by Graen and Scandura (1987) is comprised of three stages. The *role taking* stage is similar to the first two phases of Dienesch and Liden's (1986) model, in that the supervisor assigns tasks to the subordinate and evaluates their performance and behavior. The developmental process continues in the *role making* stage, where the relationship starts to take shape. The supervisor assigns less structured tasks to provide opportunities for the subordinate to continue strengthening the exchange relationship. In the third

stage, role routinization, the relationship stabilizes as the supervisor and subordinate develop mutual expectations and common understandings.

The Leadership Making Model, developed by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1991), describes a life cycle of leadership relationship maturity. The *stranger* phase is similar to Dienesch and Liden's (1986) initial interaction, and Graen and Scandura's (1987) role taking stage. Exchanges between supervisor and subordinate are purely contractual and the leader only provides the information needed to accomplish the task. To progress to the next phase, an offer to improve the relationship must be extended by one party (leader or subordinate) and accepted by the other. When this occurs, the relationship moves into the *acquaintance* stage, where social exchanges increase between the supervisor and subordinate. Greater levels of information and resources are shared and personal interactions start to develop. As mutual respect, trust, and obligation develop between members of the dyad, they enter the mature partnership phase, where reciprocal exchanges are highly developed and influenced by an emotional component.

Research on LMX has provided insights about the dimensions and processes that influence the development of exchange relationships. By establishing the relationship between LMX and employee behaviors, it has also been determined that "mature leadership relationships" support effective leadership processes (Graen & Uhl Bein, 1995). This information contributes to business knowledge in that organizations might adapt leadership training and management practices to increase the number of mature leadership relationships within workgroups.

It also has been theorized that shifting leadership processes from *discriminating* (treating some employees more favorably than others) to *working with* people (to develop more partnerships) could have widespread organizational implications (Cashman et al., 1976; Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995). Organizations do not typically operate strictly within independent workgroups or individual departments. Work is often accomplished through many interactions that occur across workgroups, departments, and divisions. There may be formal rules and processes; but in reality, people tend to leverage their connections and their relationships to get the job done. An informal understructure exists in many organizations (Cashman et al., 1976; Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995). “This understructure is so covert that even the most detailed organization chart fails to even hint at the complex network of relationships which operate over time to facilitate the activities of some of the members of the organization” (Cashman et al., p. 295).

In support of this expansion of LMX theory, it has been suggested that those individuals who acquire the skills to successfully develop high-quality exchange relationships within a dyad might employ those skills and attributes to develop relationships with individuals in other workgroups or departments (Graen & Uhl-Bein, 1995). Presumably, those cross-departmental relationships would facilitate the formation of collaborative networks throughout the organization. Expanding LMX theory to a systems-wide perspective would address some of the emerging questions. Would a leadership process that supported the development of mature leadership relationships increase the number of people engaged in these relationships within the workgroup? Would the increased

number of mature leadership relationships increase the tendency for individuals to develop mature exchange relationships outside of their workgroup? Would these relationship building activities improve organizational effectiveness? Research has not yet provided empirical evidence to answer these questions. While this is not the focus of the present study, these issues bear further investigation.

POS

Organizational support theory applies a social exchange approach to the relationship that develops between employees and the organization. The concept of POS proposes that employees personify the organizations they work for and form global beliefs about the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). POS theory suggests that the norm of reciprocity is present in organizational settings and therefore, an employees' commitment to the organization is strongly influenced by their perception of the organization's commitment to them (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger, Fasalo & Davis-Lamastro, 1990; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

The POS concept was introduced in a study investigating how employees' perceptions of organizational commitment are formed and how these perceptions influence the commitment of employees to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The authors lay a foundation for the POS concept and provide an understanding of its theoretical development.

The context for this study is established in discussions that progress from organizational commitment to social exchange. Two separate forces influence

organizational commitment. Employee commitment based on the *economic cost of leaving* reflects commitment to the organization based on the belief that the employee may not command an equal or higher level of pay and benefits with another organization. Employees with this perspective believe their economic interests are best served with their present employer and their commitment to the organization is primarily determined by economic exchange. *Affective commitment* is based on an employee's emotional ties to the organization. Employees who are committed to an organization on an emotional level identify with the organization and their involvement goes beyond the exchange of work for pay; they feel a positive attachment to the institution. Affective commitment may be influenced by a number of organizational practices that evoke feelings of being valued, cared for, and supported by the organization.

The authors integrate economic and affective interpretations of organizational commitment into a social exchange approach emphasizing employee beliefs about the organization's commitment to them. Referencing the work of Levinson, factors that contribute to employees' personification of organizations are reviewed. Levinson suggested that employees tend to personify the organization and ascribe the actions of agents of the organization to the organization itself. This reasoning is supported by the recognition that (a) organizations are legally, morally, and financially responsible for the actions of its members and its agents; (b) organizational policies, precedents, traditions, and informal norms guide the behavior of agents of the organization; and (c) organizations, through their agents, exert power over employees (Levinson, 1965). The effect of an employee's combined experience with these

organizational elements will contribute to their view of and their relationship with the personified organization.

Eisenberger et al. (1986) proposed that the exchange relationship between an employee and the organization would be influenced by the same processes involved in social relationships and would be influenced by the frequency and sincerity of statements of praise and approval. Perceptions of organizational support would be formed by the organization's response to mistakes and illness, as well as the organization's response to extra effort and outstanding performance. Employee perceptions of favorable responses from the organization would increase POS and increase employee expectations that the organization will reward greater efforts to meet organizational goals (*effort-outcome expectancy*). Perceived support of employee needs such as praise and recognition would tend to strengthen emotional ties and increase levels of affective commitment. "An effort-outcome expectancy and affective attachment would increase an employee's effort to meet organizational goals through greater attendance and performance" (p. 501).

To support these predictions, Eisenberger conducted two studies. In the first study, a 36-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) was developed and tested (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Results of this study indicated that each of the 36 items on the SPOS showed a strong loading on the main factor. Results of this study also indicated that employees develop global beliefs concerning the degree to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well being. These findings have been validated by multiple

studies with employees across a wide range of occupations and organizations (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

The second study was conducted on the effects of POS and exchange ideology on absenteeism. A short version of the SPOS and a 5 question *exchange ideology questionnaire* (measuring the strength of the employee's belief that work effort should be recognized and rewarded by the organization) were completed by 97 high school teachers. The results indicate that POS increases employee efforts to meet organizational goals through greater attendance, and that the strength of this relation depends on the strength of the employee's exchange ideology (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

The article "Perceived Organizational Support" (Eisenberger et al., 1986) established a number of key points in support of the POS concept: (a) the findings support the integration and extension of commitment theory into a social exchange approach; (b) the norm of reciprocity is present in organizational settings, and "employees develop global beliefs concerning the degree to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well being" (p. 503); and (c) POS will tend to increase affective commitment and the expectation that greater work effort will be rewarded. Eisenberger and associates established a theoretical foundation for POS and proposed a process by which organizations might support its development. This process has been extended by subsequent studies identifying *fairness and supervisory support* as additional antecedents that support the development of POS.

Employees evaluate fairness in terms of the discretionary treatment they received from the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Wayne et al.,

1997). Research has determined that organizational justice is a form of discretionary treatment that strongly influences employee perceptions of fairness (Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, & Taylor, 2000; Rhodes & Eisenberger, 2002; Wayne et al., 2002). Organizational justice is comprised of two variables: procedural justice (formal procedures governing decisions) and distributive justice (actions related to the execution of procedures and use of resources). While perceptions of distributive justice are thought to be related to individual agents, research has shown a significant positive relationship between procedural justice and POS (Masterson et al., 2000; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Wayne et al., 2002). Employee perceptions of fair treatment are influenced by their view of the policies and processes that guide employee evaluations, wage increases, disciplinary actions, and grievances.

Inclusion is another form of discretionary treatment that has been shown to influence employee perceptions of fairness (Hutchinson, 1997; Wayne et al., 2002). When employees are included in decision-making processes, they may believe the organization is conveying dignity and respect by providing an opportunity for voice. Participative decision making is perceived by employees as a form of fair treatment, and is also strongly related to employee perceptions of supervisory support (Hutchinson, 1997).

In organizational settings, supervisors act as agents of the organization by overseeing and coordinating the work activities of subordinates and by evaluating their performance. Employees develop perceptions of supervisory support based on their experience with the supervisor; but, in part, they tend to attribute their perception of supervisory support to the organization itself. Therefore,

perceptions of supervisory support has a strong influence on POS (Eisenberger, Jones, Aselage, & Sucharski, 2004; Eisenberger, Stinglehamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Perceptions of supervisory support extend beyond the employees immediate supervisor to include agents at different levels of the organization. Studies have shown that the words and actions of agents believed to have a higher status in the organization are more strongly related to perceptions of supervisory support (Eisenberger et al., 2002; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). The supportive behaviors of agents further up the organizational hierarchy also have been shown to have a "trickle down" effect on POS at lower levels of the organization (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). In other words, the strength of the supervisors' POS (presumably developed by interactions with *their* supervisor) has a direct influence on subordinates' perceptions of supervisory support, which in turn, influences their perceptions of organizational support. In a study exploring this relationship, Shanock and Eisenberger (2006) determined that supervisor POS was positively related to subordinates' perceptions of supervisory support. They further concluded that subordinates' perceptions of supervisory support were positively related to POS, in-role performance, and extra role performance. These findings suggest that organizations might enhance the development of POS in lower levels of the organization by cultivating POS in higher levels of the organization (supervisors and managers).

Research has supported the assumption that POS will tend to increase affective commitment and employee performance through a process of

reciprocation (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch & Rhoades, 2001; Eisenberger et al., 2004; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Settoon et al., 1996; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne et al., 1997). When one person receives favorable treatment from another, the norm of reciprocity imposes feelings of obligation to respond in a like manner (Gouldner, 1960). In organizational settings, relationships between the employee and the organization are also governed by the norm of reciprocity. Employee perceptions of the organization's commitment to them (POS) create feelings of obligation to support the interests of the organization (Shore & Wayne, 1993). Perceptions of support from the organization also increase affective commitment from employees by fulfilling employees' socio-emotional needs such as affiliation, esteem, and emotional support (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Eisenberger et al., 2004; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Research also has suggested that POS is related to performance-reward expectancies (Eisenberger et al., 1990). Employees with high levels of POS would have confidence that the organization would reward outstanding performance.

The behavioral outcomes of POS include conscientiousness in the performance of job responsibilities and innovation on behalf of the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1990), organizational spontaneity (extra-role behaviors) and in-role performance (Eisenberger et al., 2001, Settoon et al., 1996), OCB (Shore & Wayne, 1993), and job involvement (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Organizational support theory argues that these behavioral outcomes are related to the psychological outcomes of POS (Eisenberger et al., 2004). Employee feelings of obligation, affective commitment, and performance-reward

expectancies are manifested in behaviors supporting the welfare and objectives of the organization. Accordingly, this review of the literature on POS suggests that organizations might benefit from developing an understanding of an exchange based approach to employee commitment and employee-employer relationships.

OCB

The concept of OCB was developed to explore employee behaviors that are cooperative and helpful, that go beyond normal job requirements, and that provide constructive contributions to the organization. Citizenship behaviors are thought to contribute to organizational effectiveness and have, therefore, received significant attention from both scholars and managers (LePine, Erez, & Johnson, 2002; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997). These behaviors are important "because they lubricate the social machinery of the organization" (Smith et al., 1983, p. 654). They enable employees to negotiate their interdependencies and adapt to changing circumstances in the workplace.

Early discussions portrayed OCB as a form of "extra role behavior" (Smith, et al., 1983; Organ, 1988). OCB was introduced as employee behaviors that extend beyond formal requirements, accommodate the work needs of others, and are not rewarded or enforced by the organization (Smith et al., 1983). A later study defined OCB as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that, in the aggregate, promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988, p. 86). These early descriptions seem to reflect the four dimensions of extra role behavior, which are: (a) voluntary—not part of formal job responsibility, not

formally recognized or rewarded by the organization, and not enforceable by the organization; (b) intentional—an active decision by the employee; (c) positive in its intention; (d) primarily benefits the interest of another (Van Dyne et al., 1995).

While it could be argued that OCB is a form of extra role behavior, other dimensions of OCB emerged early in the research and created definitional uncertainty. Two dimensions of behavior were identified in the initial research on OCB: a*ltruism,* defined as OCB directed toward specific persons, and *compliance* defined as OCB supporting the system rather than an individual (Smith et al., 1983). The observation that citizenship behaviors involve employees helping fellow employees, as well as "good soldier" efforts to do things the right way, suggests that OCB is comprised of different employee activities.

Intuitively, it seems that employees engage in several types of constructive behaviors beyond job requirements to help their organizations. Following this logic, a subsequent study expanded the dimensions of OCB by suggesting that five factors were related to OCB: (a) *altruism* (as defined in the Smith study), (b) *conscientiousness* (a narrower definition of compliance), (c) *sportsmanship* (positive attitude), (d) *courtesy* (keeping co-workers informed), and (e) *civic virtue* (responsible participation in the organization's political process) (Organ, 1988). These five factors introduced dimensions that may not be strictly considered as extra role behaviors. For instance, some employees might demonstrate OCB by conscientiously performing defined job responsibilities, or certain organizations might require employees to participate in organizational affairs. The dimensions of extra role behavior have a strong relationship with OCB, but OCB is related to other factors as well.

As research on OCB has progressed, several studies have attempted to clarify and validate the categories of OCB (LePine et al., 2002; Organ, 1997; Van Dyne et al., 1994). There seems to be agreement among scholars that OCB is a multidimensional construct comprised of several correlated categories and includes all positive organizational behaviors—both in-role and extra-role. Organ's five-dimension framework is still valid (LePine et al., 2002), but OCB is comprised of other categories of behavior that occur under different circumstances or situations.

It has been suggested that OCB is an aggregate multidimensional construct much like *contextual performance* (LePine et al., 2002; Van Dyne et al., 1994). Contextual performance is defined as "the aggregated value to the organization of all the behavioral episodes that have effects on social, organizational, and psychological context of the organizations technical core" (LePine et al., 2002, p. 55). This comparison seems to help clarify the nature of OCB by suggesting that it may be a collection of multiple positive organizational behaviors that provide constructive contributions to the company.

Several conditions have been identified as possible antecedents of OCB. In a review of the literature, Van Dyne et al. (1994) used prior research to identify *personal, situational*, and *positional* factors as antecedents of OCB. Personal factors include the employee's level of satisfaction with job-related circumstances as well as dispositional factors such as positive job attitudes. Situational factors include alignment with organizational values and intrinsic rewards related to the job characteristics, such as autonomy or a sense of personal control. Positional factors include tenure and hierarchical job level. These factors have a positive

relationship with OCB, but they seem to be based on circumstances that may be somewhat fragile. Management might find it difficult to leverage personal, situational, and hierarchical factors to strengthen OCB within an organization.

A better opportunity for organizations to strengthen OCB might be found in literature on the influence of relationships on OCB. Research has demonstrated that OCB is supported by high-quality relationships, both between employees and their organizations, and between employees and their supervisors (Eisenberger et al., 1986; 1990; Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997, 2002). This research is based on the theory of social exchange as represented by POS and LMX and suggests that employees who are treated favorably by their organizations or supervisors tend to feel a sense of obligation to reciprocate by demonstrating behaviors that are supportive and helpful to their organizations or supervisors.

Research has also suggested that *covenantal* relationships have strong mediating effects on OCB (Van Dyne et al., 1994). Covenants are relationships of mutual commitment to serve a common purpose and are characterized by open-ended commitments, mutual trust, and shared values. “They focus on a state of being and involve intrinsically motivated effort” (p. 768). Covenantal relationships may influence OCB in organizations where employees and the agency share a mutual commitment to serve a cause, such as in community service agencies. In conventional organizations, OCB would more likely be influenced by high-quality exchange relationships.

Regardless of which factors serve to promote OCB in organizations, it is believed that these behaviors support organizational effectiveness (Organ, 1988,

1997; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997). Research has suggested that OCB may improve organizational effectiveness by enhancing productivity, coordinating activity within and across work groups, stabilizing organizational performance, and by enhancing an organization's ability to adapt to changes in the environment. These assumptions have been validated by studies testing the relations between OCB and performance measures. "The overall pattern of results provides general support for the hypothesis that OCBs are related to organizational effectiveness" (Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1997, p. 142). In this review of the literature, OCB was related to positive variances in performance quantity, quality of performance, financial efficiency, and customer service indicators.

Social Exchange and Employee Behavior

The constructs of POS and LMX reflect conceptual similarities (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997). Both constructs relate to social exchange in an organizational setting and can influence employees' felt obligations across several dimensions. While the constructs of POS and LMX are overlapping and related, research has demonstrated that different exchange relationships affect different behavior and attitudes.

To examine these different exchange relationships, Settoon et al. (1996) reviewed the relative contribution of POS and LMX to in-role behavior, citizenship behavior, and organizational commitment. In this study, the authors predicted (a) a positive relationship between POS and organizational commitment, (b) a positive relationship between LMX and citizenship behavior, and (c) positive

relationships between POS and in-role behaviors and between LMX and in-role behaviors.

The organization selected for Settoon et al.'s (1996) study was a regional hospital located in a large metropolitan area in the South. Separate surveys were distributed to non-supervisory employees and their supervisors. Supervisors used two scales to measure citizenship, which is defined as "the degree to which subordinates engaged in behaviors that aided them and other coworkers but were not . . . required duties" (p. 222) and formal job-required duties. Non-supervisory employees were asked to complete a short version of Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) SPOS and two additional surveys to measure leader member exchange and organizational commitment.

Results indicated that LMX had a stronger relationship to both in-role and extra-role citizenship behavior than did POS (Settoon et al., 1996). Conversely, organizational commitment was more closely related to POS. These observations indicate that performance behaviors are influenced by supervisor-employee relationship, while the felt obligation of commitment is linked to the organization-employee relationship.

Settoon et al.'s (1996) findings were supported by additional research exploring the antecedents and consequences of LMX and POS (Wayne et al., 1997). Wayne et al.'s study predicted that (a) both LMX and POS will have a positive relationship to performance ratings and OCB, (b) leader liking and expectation of an employee will be positively related to LMX quality, (c) LMX will be positively related to the member doing favors for the leader, (d) numbers of developmental experiences and promotions will be positively related to POS, and

(e) POS will be positively related to effective commitment and negatively related to intentions to quit.

Salaried employees with 5 years tenure were randomly selected from a large corporation to participate in the study. In total, surveys were completed by 252 leader-member dyads. Using well-recognized scales developed in previous research, a questionnaire was designed to gather responses from salaried employees and their managers.

Consistent with the study conducted by Settoon et al. (1996), LMX had a positive relationship to performance and OCB. POS did not seem to have a direct relationship to job performance but was linked to the organizational obligations of effective commitment, intentions to quit, and citizenship behavior. Wayne et al.'s (1997) study also seemed to confirm "a distinct pattern of antecedents and outcomes for POS and LMX" (p. 104) and supported the relationship between and influence of POS and LMX. Specifically, it was found that the quality of LMX may have a strong influence on POS and, to a lesser degree, POS may affect the quality of LMX. This study also revealed a significant relationship between the antecedents of leaders' expectations and perception of liking to the quality of LMX.

Settoon et al.'s (1996) and Wayne et al.'s (1997) findings clarified some of the distinctions between POS and LMX as well as established understanding of their relative influence within the organization.

A new set of antecedents based on fair treatments and rewards were introduced in a study by Wayne et al. (2002). This study was designed to identify

factors that contribute to an employee's felt sense of obligation by examining the relationship of fair treatment and favorable rewards to POS and LMX.

The antecedents hypothesized by the authors proposed that (a) procedural justice, distributive justice, inclusion, and recognition are positively related to POS; (b) distributive justice and supervisor-contingent rewards are positively related to LMX; (c) non-contingent punishment is negatively related to LMX; and (d) there is a positive and reciprocal relationship between POS and LMX (Wayne et al., 2002).

The consequences hypothesized by the authors suggested that (a) POS is positively related to employee commitment and to OCB, (b) LMX is positively related to OCB and to in-role performance ratings, (c) OCB is positively related to manager-rated employee in-role performance (Wayne et al., 2002).

Participants included 31 supervisors and 211 employees at two plants operated by a large national firm. A number of measures were employed in this study including established surveys validated in previous research, along with other measures developed by the authors. Before testing the hypothesized model, the measurement model was tested for validity (Wayne et al., 2002).

The findings of Settoon et al. (1996), and Wayne et al. (1997) were confirmed by the distinct patterns of antecedents and consequences of POS and LMX identified in Wayne et al.'s (2002) study. Also confirmed were the relationships of POS to organizational commitment and to OCB, and of LMX to employee performance behaviors. The findings related to fairness and rewards showed a significant relationship between POS and procedural and distributive justice, but not to LMX. The authors suggested that employees in this work

environment were subject to rules and policies and may, therefore, perceive that supervisors have limited discretion regarding distributive justice. Organizational context may also have influenced the absence of a relationship between LMX and POS. Inclusion and recognition were positively related to POS, but not to LMX. Contingent rewards were related to LMX, but not to POS.

Integrating procedural fairness and interactional fairness with social exchange, Masterson et al. (2000) conducted a study to explore the mediating variables of LMX and POS on the effects of employees' judgments of organizational justice. In this study, they predicted that (a) employees' perceptions of *interactional* justice will be related to their performance, citizenship behaviors, and job satisfaction; (b) employees' perceptions of *procedural* justice will be related to their citizenship behavior and organizational commitment; (c) the relationship between perceptions of interactional justice and performance, citizenship behavior, and job satisfaction will be mediated by LMX; and (d) the relationship between perceptions of procedural justice and citizenship behaviors, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction will be mediated by POS. Questionnaires were developed using accepted measures employed in previous research and were voluntarily completed by 650 employees of a large public university. The results suggested that relationships between perceptions of organizational justice and employee reactions are indirect and mediated by social exchange. Masterson et al. (2000) explained,

> LMX fully mediated the relationships between interactional justice perceptions and both job satisfaction and supervisor directed OCB, and POS fully mediated the relationship between procedural justice and both job satisfaction and intentions to quit, and partially

> mediated . . . relationships with both organizational commitment and organization-directed OCB. (p. 746)

These findings further confirmed the pattern of relationships between LMX and POS and outcomes as revealed in previous studies (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997).

Exploring the antecedents and outcomes of employee empowerment in the hospitality industry, Sparrowe (1994) conducted an exploratory study to determine the impact of constructive organizational culture and LMX on employee empowerment. This research was guided by two questions: “Does empowerment [as a form of motivation] lead to positive outcomes? And, if so, to which factors (antecedents) should management turn in order to foster greater employee empowerment?” (p. 51).

Sparrowe (1994) defined empowerment as “a form of motivation engendered by task assessments concerning choice, impact, meaningfulness, and competence” (p. 53). Recognizing that empowerment and organizational citizenship both reflect behaviors and attitudes that benefit the organization and that constructive organizational culture and POS both reflect organizational context, a review of this study is in order. Data for this study were collected from 182 individuals selected from multiple hotels and food service operations. A survey was developed incorporating accepted measures of the related constructs based on previous research. Work groups of 5 to 10 line-level employees from 33 different firms participated and surveys were administered by students in a college hospitality program.

The results of this study suggested that empowerment is positively related to behaviors and attitudes that benefit the organization—specifically, promotion satisfaction, and intent to turnover. The study also demonstrated that LMX as well as constructive cultural norms and shared behavioral expectations have a significant positive effect on empowerment. The influence of LMX on employee behaviors and attitudes as revealed in this study supports the findings of other studies. Although constructive organizational culture is not a construct typically associated with social exchange theory, the importance of organizational context is supported in this study by the relationship of cultural norms to positive employee outcomes.

The relationship between the supervisor and the employee can influence performance behaviors and may be strengthened by supervisors' expectations and affective behavior. Organizational support tends to create a sense of commitment and behaviors that support the goals of the company.

Summary

Based on this review, leaders develop different relationships with individual workers and the quality of those relationships influences employee behaviors—this is the essence of LMX (Graen & Schieman, 1978). POS suggests that employees personify the organizations they work for and develop perceptions about how the organization values their contributions and cares about their well being. It was predicted that higher levels of POS positively influence employee attitudes (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The next chapter describes the methods used in this study.

Chapter 3

Methods

This study attempted to determine whether the findings of previous research on the relationships of social exchange in organizations to OCB can be validated in a service environment. The research questions defined for this study were:

1. Does LMX have a positive relationship on OCB?
2. Does POS have a positive relationship to OCB?
3. Does LMX have a stronger relationship to OCB than POS to OCB?

This chapter describes the methods used in this study. A description of the sample, procedure, measures, and data analysis steps are described below.

Sample

The three organizations that participated in this study are high-end private country clubs featuring championship golf courses, fitness facilities, tennis courts, swimming pools, full-service spas, and multiple dining facilities. Each club is situated within a master planned residential community and offers a variety of social and recreational programs for its members.

The participants in this study included supervisors and their work groups employed at three separate country clubs located in the southwestern United States. The work groups selected were comprised of front-line personnel (employees engaged in direct customer contact) and their immediate supervisors.

A total of 49 employees (29 men, 20 women) completed the surveys. Data related to employee age, educational attainment, and tenure with the company

are presented in Table 1. The majority of the respondents were 30-years-old or younger, had completed 1 to 3 years of college, and had been with the company more than 2 years.

Table 1

Employee Respondent Demographics

Demographic	Data
Age	18-24 years: 19 respondents 25-30 years: 12 respondents 31-36 years: 7 respondents 37-45: 3 respondents 46-55: 4 respondents Over 55: 4 respondents
Educational Attainment	8-11 grade: 4 respondents High school: 10 respondents 1-3 yrs college: 26 respondents 4-year degree: 4 respondents Graduate school: 5 respondents
Tenure with Company	6 months or less: 1 respondent 7-12 months: 9 respondents 1-2 years: 11 respondents More than 2 years: 28 respondents

N = 49

Procedure

Survey packets were distributed to separate work groups within each of the three hospitality organizations. The work groups were comprised of front-line employees and their supervisors. Surveys were distributed to 12 supervisors and 64 employees. Completed surveys were retuned by 8 supervisors and 49 employees, for a return rate of 67% for supervisors and 77% for employees. Managers of each organization selected the work groups that were surveyed in a random fashion and assured the participants that their individual survey responses would remain confidential. Survey packets were distributed to the

selected work groups by representatives from their human resource departments. Survey packets for each work group were coded to identify the link between the supervisor and employee. A cover letter and consent form (see Appendix) accompanied the survey packets and provided instructions for completing the surveys. The letters also reassured participants that the individual surveys would remain confidential.

The raw data was kept for 6 months after collection by the researcher, after which time it was destroyed. All guidelines established by Pepperdine University Institutional Review Board for human subject research were followed. Participants were required to provide written consent to participate before taking part in the study. The consent form (see Appendix) advised each participant that their participation was strictly voluntary, that they had the right to discontinue the survey at any point, and that the individual information collected would remain anonymous. Participants faced minimal risk in taking part in this study.

Measures

Three measures were used to assess the constructs examined in this study. The assessments measured POS, LMX, and OCB and are described in detail below.

POS

POS refers to employees' perceptions about the degree to which their organization values their contributions and cares about their well being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). POS was measured in this study using the 8-item version of Eisenberger et al.'s 36-item SPOS. The 8-item version of this survey was introduced by Eisenberger et al. (1997) in a study investigating the

relationship between POS and employee perceptions of job conditions and freedom of action. The eight items selected were “found to load highly on the main factor” (p. 814). In Eisenberger et al.’s study, the Cronbach’s alpha found for this scale was .90. The measure consists of eight questions with responses rated on a 5-point Likert scale. A sample question is “My organization would forgive an honest mistake on my part.” Possible responses to this item, on a 5-point Likert Scale, range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

LMX

LMX theory explores the relationship between the worker and supervisor (Eisenberger et al., 1986) and proposes that leaders develop different relationships with individual workers and that the quality of the leader-employee relationship influences employee behaviors (Graen & Schieman, 1978).

The seven-item LMX measure (Graen et al., 1982) was used in this study to assess leader-member relationships. In their review of LMX theory over a 25-year period, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) recommended the seven-item LMX as the most appropriate measure of the variable. Graen and Uhl-Bien reported that the experimental items added in larger measures were “highly correlated with the more concise seven-item LMX and produced the same effects” (p. 236). The questions are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. A sample question is “How well does your manager understand your job problems and needs?” Possible responses to this item on the 5-point Likert scale ranged from “not a bit” to “a great deal.”

OCB

OCB refers to “individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that, in the aggregate, promotes the effective functioning of the company” (Organ, 1997, p. 86). OCB was assessed in this study with 15 questions taken from the 16-item scale developed by Smith et al. (1983). The questions on the 16-item scale measure two dimensions of OCB (altruism and compliance) and seemed well designed to assess citizenship behaviors from line-level workers such as those who were involved in this study. The question “Attend functions not required but that help company image” was excluded, as it was not applicable for the study setting. In a study on commitment and employee behavior, Shore and Wayne (1993) used the 16-item scale and reported Cronbach’s alphas of .88 for altruism and .87 for compliance. A sample question is “Volunteers for things that are not required.” Possible responses to this item on a 5-point Likert scale range from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Altruism items were Questions 1, 3, 5, 7, 12, 13, and 15, while generalized compliance items were Questions 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 14, and 15.

Analysis

Data were analyzed for each survey. Mean and standard deviation scores were calculated for each survey and scale. An analysis of variance was run to determine whether the mean scores were statistically different from each other based on age, gender, education, or tenure. Spearman’s rho correlation was calculated to determine the relationships between the constructs examined in the study. The next chapter reports the results

Chapter 4

Results

This study attempted to determine whether the findings of previous research on the relationships of social exchange in organizations to OCB can be validated in a service environment. The research questions were:

1. Does LMX have a positive relationship on OCB?
2. Does POS have a positive relationship to OCB?
3. Does LMX have a stronger relationship to OCB than POS to OCB?

POS

Employees rated the amount of support they believed they received from the organization (see Table 2). Overall, employees reported that they believed they received some support from the organization (mean = 3.98, *SD* = 1.01). Individual item scores across participants ranged 3.73 for “my organization cares about my opinions” to 4.24 for “my organization would forgive an honest mistake on my part.” An analysis of variance was run to determine whether these mean scores were statistically different. Results were $F(8, 432) = 1.51$, $p = 0.15$, suggesting they were not.

LMX

Employees also were asked to rate the amount of support they believed they received from their managers (see Table 3). Overall, employees reported that they believed they received some support from their manager (mean = 3.83, *SD* = 0.91). Individual item scores across participants ranged from 3.59 for “Again, regardless of the amount of formal power your manager has, what are the chances that he/she would “bail you out” at his/her expense?” to 4.04 for

"How would you characterize your working relationship with your manager?" An analysis of variance was run to determine whether these mean scores were statistically different. Results were F(5, 288) = 1.17, p = 0.32, suggesting they were not.

Table 2

Perceived Organizational Support Survey Results

Item	Mean	*SD*
My organization cares about my opinions.	3.73	1.00
My organization cares about my well being	4.12	1.18
My organization considers my goals and values	3.82	1.05
Help is available from my organization when I have a problem	4.06	0.90
My organization would forgive an honest mistake on my part	4.24	0.78
If given the opportunity, my organization would take advantage of me. (R)	3.84	1.16
My organization shows little regard for me. (R)	3.88	1.03
My organization is willing to help me if I need a special favor	4.12	0.83
Overall	3.98	1.01

N = 49; 1 = no perceived support, 2 = low perceived support, 3 = neutral, 4 = some support, 5 = high perceived support

Table 3

Leader-Member Exchange Survey Results

Item	Mean	*SD*
Do you know where you stand with your manager . . . do you usually know how satisfied your manager is with your job performance?	3.94	0.77
How well does your manager understand your job problems and needs?	3.84	1.07
How well does your manager recognize your potential?	3.82	0.86
Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, what are the chances your manager would use their power to help you solve problems in your work?	3.80	0.96
Again, regardless of the amount of formal power your manager has, what are the chances that he/she would "bail you out" at his/her expense?	3.59	0.96
I have enough confidence in my manager that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so.	3.80	0.91
How would you characterize your working relationship with your manager?	4.04	0.76
Overall	3.83	0.91

N = 49; Scale: 1 = low perceived support from manager; 5 = high perceived support from manager

OCBs

The supervisor for each employee respondent was asked to evaluate the employee in terms of his or her OCBs. The first group of questions evaluated employees on their altruistic behaviors (see Table 4). Overall, across participants, employees' altruistic behaviors were rated favorably by their supervisors (mean = 3.75, *SD* = 0.75). Individual item scores across participants ranged from 3.51 for "Makes innovative suggestions to improve departments" to 3.98 for "Helps others who have a heavy workload." An analysis of variance was run to determine whether these mean scores were statistically different from each other based on age, gender, education, or tenure. The analysis suggested the results did not vary by these demographic groupings.

Table 4

Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Altruism

Item	Mean	*SD*
1. Helps others who have been absent.	3.96	0.76
3. Volunteers for things that are not required.	3.80	0.71
5. Orients new people even though it is not required.	3.59	0.73
7. Helps others who have heavy work loads.	3.98	0.75
12. Assists supervisor with his or her work.	3.73	0.86
13. Makes innovative suggestions to improve departments.	3.51	0.65
15. Does not spend time in idle conversation.	3.65	0.72
Overall	3.75	0.75

N = 49; 1 = no altruism; 5 = high altruism

The second group of questions evaluated employees on their general compliance behaviors (see Table 5). Overall across participants, employees' general compliance behaviors were rated favorably by their supervisors (mean = 3.96, *SD* = 1.00). Individual item scores across participants ranged from 3.65 for spending time in idle conversations to 4.20 for making personal phone calls. An analysis of variance was run to determine whether these mean scores were

statistically different from each other based on age, gender, education, or tenure. The analysis suggested the results did not vary by these demographic groupings.

Table 5

Organizational Citizenship Behavior: General Compliance

Item	Mean	*SD*
2. Is punctual.	4.14	0.65
*4. Takes undeserved breaks.	4.08	0.81
6. Attendance at work is above the norm.	3.78	0.74
*8. Coasts towards the end of the day.	4.04	0.71
9. Gives advance notice if unable to come to work.	4.20	0.68
*10. Great deal of time spent with personal phone conversations.	3.84	0.62
11. Does not take unnecessary time off work.	3.96	0.61
14. Does not take extra breaks.	3.65	0.72
15. Does not spend time in idle conversation.	3.96	0.71
Overall	3.96	1.00

N = 49; 1 = low general compliance; 5 = high general compliance; *indicates item was reverse scored

Relationships Among Variables

The relationships among the variables of COB, POS, and LMX were determined for the sample as a whole (see Table 6). The results showed a positive, statistically significant relationship between general compliance and altruism (from the OCB survey) and between POS and LMX. These results suggest that as altruism increases, general compliance also increases (and vice versa). Similarly, as POS increases, LMX also tends to increase (and vice versa). No other relationships among the variables could be concluded.

Table 6

Relationships Among Variables

	OCB-A	OCB-GC	POS	LMX
OCB-A	1			
OCB-GC	0.79 (0.00)	1		
POS	0.09 (0.55)	0.05 (0.71)	1	
LMX	0.12 (0.40)	0.03 (0.83)	0.67 (0.00)	1

Chapter 5

Discussion

This chapter provides a discussion of the results generated for the study. Conclusions, recommendations to the case organization, limitations, and directions for additional research are presented.

Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn for each research question. These are discussed in detail below.

Relationship Between LMX and OCB

OCB was comprised of two constructs: altruism and general compliance. As a whole population, no relationship was found between LMX and OCB. However, significant relationships were found between LMX and general compliance when the variables were examined based on employee demographic groupings. First, a statistically significant positive relationship was found for LMX and general compliance among employees who had been with the company 7 to 12 months. Additionally, a statistically significant but negative relationship was found for LMX and general compliance among employees who had been with the company more than 2 years. Only one participant had been with the company less than 7 months and no relationship between LMX and compliance was found for employees who had been with the company 1 to 2 years.

These findings agree in part with past studies, which found that LMX was associated with higher compliance. For example, Graen and Uhl-Bien (1991, 1995) found that high quality exchange relationships (characterized by higher levels of trust, support, attention, and information) between managers and

employees result in follower performance that exceeds contractual obligations. Additionally, Settoon et al. (1996) concluded based on survey data from hospital managers and employees that high LMX was associated with strong OCB. It is important to note that the settings for at least some of these previous findings included hierarchical organizations. Thus, compliance may be naturally higher due to the organizational culture.

These findings suggest that the dynamics of supervisory relationships and employee behavior may be different in the hospitality industry versus other organizations that have been studied in the past. For example, hospitality employees often are of a different culture than their supervisors, are of a low socioeconomic status, and take hospitality jobs because they fit unique circumstances or schedules (e.g., in the case of college students). Additionally, hospitality jobs typically offer limited career growth opportunities. Thus, this industry tends to attract only certain groups of employees. As a result, they may have unique characteristics and findings generated using employees from other industries might not readily apply to hospitality employees. Therefore, findings from other industries should be applied to the hospitality industry with caution and vice versa.

Additionally, high LMX was associated with strong OCB in this study for employees with a tenure of 7 to 12 months; this suggests that during this relatively early stage of employment, employees and their supervisors are in a type of honeymoon phase. In the study organizations, during this time period, supervisors tend to exhibit more support for these newer employees to help them succeed. During this training and indoctrination period, employees may be

complying due to the quality of support or simply because they receive close oversight during this stage and often have less opportunity to be noncompliant. Employees who remain with the organization beyond 2 years tend to be experienced and operate autonomously. At this stage, compliance is less important than meeting the expectations of the customer. In fact, meeting these expectations may actually require bending (rather than the complying with) the rules. Ultimately, the lack of meaningful relationships between LMX and OCB suggests that OCB might not be a useful measure of achieving excellent customer service in the hospitality industry. Therefore, it is important to further examine what appropriate measures of customer service are and what factors act upon those measures.

Relationship Between POS and OCB

Findings from this study suggested that a statistically significant positive relationship exists between POS and altruism among employees aged 18 to 24. No relationship was found between POS and altruism for any other demographic grouping. Additionally, no relationships were found between POS and general compliance. These findings suggest several possibilities. First, it could be that these young employees display altruistic behaviors when they believe the organization supports them. Alternately, their practice of altruism might influence their perceptions that the organization supports them. A third possibility is that another external factor influences both their POS and their display of altruistic behaviors. Further research is needed to determine the direction of causality and what external factors might act upon both these constructs.

These findings depart from the work of Eisenberger et al. (1990), who found that perceptions of being valued and cared about by the organization were positively related to conscientious employee behaviors. Additionally, Wayne et al. (1997) found in their study of 1,413 salaried employees with at least 5 years tenure at a single large corporation that POS was strongly related to OCB. The difference between the present study's findings and previous literature again emphasizes the potential differences between employees in a hospitality setting and employees in other industries.

Ultimately, more research is needed to understand why the younger employees display a relationship between POS and altruism while employees in other age groups did not report similar results. Recommendations to deliberately bolster these employees' perceptions of organizational support in an effort to increase altruism would be premature at this point.

Relationship Between LMX and POS

Study results showed a statistically significant positive relationship between LMX and POS across all employees. Wayne et al. (1997) found support for this relationship, although Wayne et al. (2002) did not find a significant relationship of LMX to POS. They speculated that the context of the organizations they studied (two metal fabricating plants) might have influenced the 2002 results.

On the surface, based on these results, it appears that working to enhance one construct (e.g., LMX) may have a beneficial impact on the other (e.g., POS). Reflecting on earlier findings from this study, this may, in turn, have an impact on employee behaviors such as compliance or altruism. However, as

the discussions earlier in this chapter have emphasized, further research is needed to more deeply understand what factors ultimately act upon OCB and whether OCB behaviors, in fact, are the best means for enhancing customer service in a hospitality setting.

Recommendations to the Case Organizations

Analysis of the overall survey results in this study did not establish a statistically significant relationship between LMX and OCB, or between POS and OCB. However, employees did report that they received some support from both their supervisors and from the organization. Additionally, employee citizenship behaviors were rated favorably by their supervisors. Given these results, it is not clear that the current employee-employer relationships are adequately supporting efforts to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction. As suggested earlier, the case organizations may need additional qualitative information to help make this determination.

Morrison (1996) argued that employees would engage in more OCB and, hence, deliver higher quality service, when the employee-employer relationship establishes three conditions: social exchange, identification with organizational objectives, and empowerment. The presence of social exchange has been established in this study, but the case organizations will need to determine if employees feel identified with organizational objectives and feel empowered to respond to the specific needs of customers. Based on these findings, additional actions may be implemented to help bring core values and objectives into alignment.

Recognizing that every inquiry is an intervention, the information gathering process should be part of an overall planned initiative to strengthen the employee-employer relationship and to develop a shared service philosophy. Accordingly, employee involvement and company-wide communication would be important elements of this initiative.

As suggested by Schneider and Bowen (1995), a coordination team should be formed to help plan and administer this effort. The coordination team would be comprised of representatives from management, marketing, and human resources, as well as employee representatives from the customer contact divisions (golf, food and beverage, spa, and recreation). The team would start the communication process by sending an initial message to all employees that introduces the members of the coordination team and the team's purpose and activities (i.e., gathering information related to employee-employer relationships, employee perceptions of organizational objectives and feelings of empowerment).

The next step would involve developing questions and conducting employee focus groups. An evaluation of the information collected in focus groups should help determine if there is a significant gap between the current state and the desired state. After the information has been analyzed, another communication would be sent to the employees informing them of the team's findings and advising them of the next step in the process.

If the desired state has not been achieved (as confirmed through the data collection and analysis), the coordination team would develop a program for departmental meetings focused on closing the gap between the current and

desired state. To support employee inclusion and organizational alignment, these departmental meetings should be conducted in a fully participative fashion. To set the context in these meetings, the coordination team might provide a statement of the organization's service philosophy (e.g., the XYZ Club will provide exceptional member experiences through warm, attentive service). The facilitator would then post three questions on flip charts: (a) what do we do in our department to create exceptional member experiences, (b) how do we do it, and (c) how are our efforts supported by our supervisors and by the company? As a group, members of the department would be asked to provide answers to each question and the responses would be recorded on the flipcharts.

It is anticipated that these sessions would start the alignment process and provide information about how the organization might provide additional support (and, thereby, improve the employee-employer relationship). It also is anticipated that common themes will emerge from these department meetings, which will provide information to support further progress. Again, to facilitate employee inclusion, it would be important to communicate what was learned in these sessions to all employees.

At this point, the coordination team would need to determine how progress will be measured and communicated. Employee and member surveys might prove helpful, as would some kind of employee forum to gather information and suggestions from front-line employees. A consistent process of measuring results, combined with a communication process to keep employees informed would be recommended to help these organizations maintain momentum.

Limitations

A primary limitation of this study is its use of a relatively small sample. This was particularly true for the analysis by demographic groupings that was performed. For example, only one person had been employed for 6 months or less. The small sample size detracted from the strength and generalizability of the findings. To generate stronger conclusions, it is necessary to perform this study again using a large sample size (e.g., 100 or more respondents).

A second limitation is that it is questionable whether OCB is a valuable measure in a hospitality setting. Organization commitment, continuance commitment, or employee performance might be better measures of employees' commitment to the organization. Accordingly, more significant relationships might be found between the constructs.

Third, the benefit of quantitative studies is quickly generating measures of constructs and gauging the relationships between these constructs. However, quantitative methods cannot produce an in-depth understanding of complex phenomena such as commitment. Therefore, a mixed-method approach might be a better design for this study. This kind of design could include focus groups or interviews with employees to gain their perspectives combined with a survey. This study might better produce insights about the actions that the organization and supervisors have taken to influence employee performance, customer service performance, and actual behaviors.

A final limitation of the present study is that there is a natural conflict between the relationship with the customer and the relationship with the supervisor. That is, pleasing the customer might require crossing the supervisor

and breaking company requirements, policies, and rules at times. Therefore, delivering high customer service might mean having lower OCB, for example. This natural tension imposed a confounding variable for the study. A mixed-method study might be a better approach for assessing the relationships between variables and understanding the role and impact of any confounding issues.

Directions for Additional Research

A primary direction for additional research is to further examine what the appropriate measures of customer service are and what factors act upon those measures in hospitality. This could be done through an exploratory qualitative study, followed by a quantitative study to confirm the variables and any relationships between them.

Further research is needed to determine the direction of causality between POS and altruism and what external factors might act upon both these constructs. This could be done through repeated quantitative studies using a large sample and appropriate survey instruments.

More research is needed to understand why younger employees display a relationship between POS and altruism while employees in other age groups did not report similar results. It is likely that this would best be accomplished through a mixed-method study that utilizes large sample of each age group combined with interviews or focus groups that reveal the complex perspectives and realities of individuals from each age group.

Summary

This study examined a social exchange approach to influencing employee attitudes, behavior, and performance. Social exchange theory predicts that employees will respond, in kind, to the treatment they receive from the organization. It was proposed, therefore, that organizations can influence the attitudes, behavior, and performance of employees by attending to the relationships that develop between employees and the organization. This study attempted to determine whether the findings of previous research on the relationships of social exchange in organizations to OCB can be validated in a service environment. Accordingly, the proposed research questions were as follows:

1. Does LMX have a positive relationship on OCB?
2. Does POS have a positive relationship to OCB?
3. Does LMX have a stronger relationship to OCB than POS to OCB?

A quantitative study of 49 employees and their supervisors at three separate country clubs located in the southwestern United States was performed. Surveys were administered to assess POS, LMX, and OCB. Mean scores, standard deviations, analysis of variance, and Spearman's correlations were conducted to measure the constructs and determine the relationships between them.

Overall, employees reported that they believed they received some support from the organization. Employees also reported they received some support from their manager. Employees' altruistic and general compliance behaviors were rated favorably by their supervisors. Analysis of variance

calculations suggested that these variables did not vary by age, gender, education, or tenure.

As a whole population, no relationship was found between LMX and OCB, although significant relationships were found between LMX and general compliance when the variables were examined based on employee tenure. These findings suggest that the dynamics of supervisory relationships and employee behavior may be different in the hospitality industry versus other organizations. The relationship dynamics also might vary based on employee tenure.

A statistically significant positive relationship was found between POS and altruism among employees aged 18 to 24. No relationship was found between POS and altruism for any other demographic grouping. Additionally, no relationships were found between POS and general compliance. it could be that these young employees display altruistic behaviors when they believe the organization supports them. Alternately, their practice of altruism might influence their perceptions that the organization supports them. A third possibility is that another external factor influences both their POS and their display of altruistic behaviors. Further research is needed to determine the direction of causality and what external factors might act upon both these constructs.

A statistically significant positive relationship also was found between LMX and POS across all employees. It might be possible that enhancing LMX might have a beneficial impact on other constructs; however, more research is needed to more deeply understand what factors ultimately act upon OCB and whether

OCB behaviors, in fact, are the best means for enhancing customer service in a hospitality setting.

Limitations of this study are its small sample, the applicability of OCB to a hospitality setting, the limitations of quantitative research for complex topics, and the natural conflict between customer service and OCB.

Directions for additional research are to identify the appropriate measures of customer service in the hospitality industry, determine the direction of causality between POS and altruism, and examine why younger employees display a relationship between POS and altruism while employees in other age groups did not report similar results.

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Appendix

Study Invitation and Consent Form

Dear Prospective Participant,

My name is Gordon Carter and I am a student in the MSOD (Masters of Science in Organization Development) program at Pepperdine University. I am seeking your participation in a study designed to explore how the quality of employee-supervisor relationships influence citizenship (helpful behavior) in the workplace. Your participation is strictly voluntary and involves completion of the brief questionnaire enclosed in this packet. This questionnaire is part of my thesis research, conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master's degree in Organization Development.

Research for this study is being conducted within work groups, and the selection of work groups is based primarily on the number of staff members. Each member of the workgroup will be asked to spend 10 to 15 minutes to complete a survey form. Should you decide to participate by answering the questions on the survey form, you do not have to answer any question you prefer not to answer and you have the right to discontinue at any point without being questioned about your decision.

Your employer has agreed to assign a representative from the Human Resources Department to administer the survey, and to allow participating staff members to complete the survey on company time. Information collected from these surveys will be held in strictest confidence, and will only be reported in the aggregate. If you are willing to participate in this survey, please acknowledge your consent by signing below.

Participant signature _____Date _____