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Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic

Abstract

Purpose – Build on the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), this study investigates dispositional (need for affiliation, positive affectivity and proactive personality) factors' moderation effect on the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables (leader-member exchange and perceived supervisor support) and affective commitment to supervisor.

Design/methodology/approach – In total, 359 employees in Indonesia participate as the study's respondents. This study employs hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

Findings – The results show that need for affiliation and positive affectivity moderate the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and affective commitment to supervisor. In addition, all dispositional factors positively influence affective commitment to supervisor as independent variables. This study's findings depict the social exchange theory in practice.

Originality/value – The present study contributes to theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study extends the knowledge on at least four domains: leader-follower relationship; affective commitment particularly aimed at the supervisor; the roles of dispositional variables on leader-member interactions; and empirically demonstrate social exchange theory. Practically, this study shows which factors are relevant to shaping positive leader-member interactions. Such results are potentially of value for the leader, the organization, and those responsible for recruiting prospective employees.

Keywords: Dispositional variables; Leader-follower relationship; Affective commitment to supervisor.

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Studies (e.g., Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) have emphasized the importance of positive leader-follower relationships (LFR) to generate productive outcomes within the organizations. Morgeson et al. (2005) particularly highlight social skills, personality characteristics, and teamwork knowledge as the factors to look out on forming a positive relationship in an interdependent collaborative relationship setting. Social skills and teamwork knowledge factors are changeable, meaning that the lack of these two aspects should be 'fixable' by either the leader or the organization. Meanwhile, dispositional characteristics is relatively stable (Miller *et al.*, 1981), making the failure of understanding employees' personality characteristics leave leader and organization slight room for improvements in creating a positive leader-follower relationship. That being said, personality characteristic should receive as much (if not more) attention as the other two aspects in leader-follower interaction's discourses. Therefore, the present study is particularly interested in testing employees' dispositional characteristics within a leader-follower dyadic relationship setting.

In particular, the present study examines three personality characteristics: the need for affiliation (NAFL), positive affectivity (PA), and proactive personality (PP). NAFL is among individual factors receiving little attention in leader-follower discourses, with only a few studies (e.g., Kong et al., 2017; Mathieu, 1990) investigating this variable. In fact, NAFL is among the crucial elements determining employees' work motivation and behavior, which to some extent will also influence employees' attitude toward their leader (Jha, 2010). On the other hand, individuals with a high degree of PA are typically socially attractive and likable. Researchers (e.g., Vandenberghe et al., 2019; Yoon & Thye, 2000) confirm that PA directly contributes to the positive LFR. Previous studies (e.g., Wijaya, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021) also concluded the connection between PP and LFR variables. Nevertheless, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no studies position NAFL, PA and PP as the moderating variables for LFR variables. This positioning is essential as such a model could further illuminate how employees' dispositional variables contribute in forming positive leader-follower interactions.

To measure a positive LFR, the authors place affective commitment to supervisor (ACS) as the dependent variable. Popularized in the '80s (McGee and Ford, 1987; Meyer and Allen, 1984), the affective commitment construct was further distinguished into several foci (for a detailed review,

see Vandenberghe et al., 2004) including the affective commitment to supervisor. The present study approach to use specific affective commitment focus within one research frame aligns with the experts' (e.g., Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) suggestion. As a result, the authors expect this study to better exhibit employees' relevant behavior toward the target (in this study's context, the supervisor).

Social exchange norm stands as the main theoretical argument basing the hypothesized correlations between independent and dependent variables within this study. Blau (1964) asserts that employees' commitment to the supervisor is likely to be paid back reciprocally. Chughtai (2013) argues that supervisors may give tangible and intangible resources like support, feedback, and more control in the workplace to their employees, in return for their commitment. This study will put this theory into test, whether it is true that the positive leader-member exchange (LMX) and perceived supervisor support (PSS) will be exchanged with ACS.

After all, this study aims to examine the moderating effects of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) on the relationship between leader-follower interaction (LMX & PSS) and ACS. In so doing, the present study contributes to multiple facets. First, on leader-follower discourses, this study extends the use of social exchange theory in the context of leader-follower interaction. Additionally, the present study also answers Graen & Uhl-Bien's (1995) calls to further explore the stages of LMX theory development. Second, on affective commitment facade, this study adds more variables on ACS' nomological network as a distinct focus of affective commitment. The authors also offer a unique proposition that this study's results might illuminate the interaction pattern of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) and ACS. Finally, on the practical level domain, the findings might shed light on the aspects recruiters should pay attention to upon recruiting prospective employees.

Literature Review

Independent and dependent variables

The authors frame two independent variables, namely leader-member exchange (LMX) and Perceived supervisor support (PSS), as variables reflecting the leader-follower relationship (LFR). Most literature (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Matta et al., 2015) solely focuses on LMX as the

variable depicting LFR, while as a matter of fact, essentially LFR has a much broader scope beyond only LMX. Dansereau et al. (1975) associate many variables to what they call ‘a superior and a member’ dyadic relationship, including leadership, supervision, and vertical support. Pulakos & Wexley (1983) also translate dyad as something different from LMX. They assert that support, work facilitation, goal emphasis, and interaction facilitation reflect the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers. Furthermore, Yammarino et al. (1998) distinguish LFR into two types: ‘within group dyads’, which are typically formal and managed by a superior; and ‘between dyads’ reflecting interpersonal relationship independent of the formal workgroup. From these argumentations, as both LMX and PSS involve the interactions between leaders and followers, for the sake of the simplicity of later discourses, the authors will also use the ‘LFR’ term to refer to these two variables.

The authors particularly set affective commitment to supervisor as the dependent variable. Studies (e.g., Perreira et al., 2018; Siders et al., 2001) have underlined the value of differentiating the use of multiple affective commitment foci as each focus bears different antecedents and consequences. For instance, aligns with affective commitment to organization which linearly leads to organizational level-outcomes, ACS is also predictive of supervisor-related outcomes like citizenship behavior towards supervisor (Wasti and Can, 2008). The more detailed argumentations of each hypothesis will be further elaborated in the following sections.

LFRs to ACS

Leader-member exchange (LMX) reflects the dyadic relationship between leaders and their subordinates where the two parties form and advance their bond through the sequence of interactions during a particular timespan (Graen & Scandura, 1987). Meanwhile, affective commitment is ‘a psychological state that binds the individual to the organization’ (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 14). Referring to the global definition of affective commitment, ACS could be loosely translated as a psychological state binding the followers to their supervisor/boss. According to the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), the extent to which a leader interacts with the followers frames the two parties in a reciprocal social-exchange connection. Previous studies (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Graen & Cashman, 1975) asserted that among the resources appreciable by the leader that employees could offer is their dedication and commitment. These theoretical and empirical bases lead to a postulate that LMX influence ACS.

Like LMX, perceived supervisor support (PSS) also plays a crucial role in shaping employees' affective commitment to supervisor by generating a reciprocity mechanism. PSS is the degree to which supervisors value employees' contributions and are attentive toward employees' conditions (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2002). Supervisors' support indicates their care toward employees' well-being which, as previous studies (e.g., Li *et al.*, 2018; Ng & Sorensen, 2008) suggest, will increase employees' affective commitment.

Both LMX and PSS suggest positive reinforcement leaders give to their followers, which leads to a rationale postulating that these two variables will make the followers more affectively committed to their supervisor. The more supervisors positively interact, understand and support their followers, the more the followers meet their leaders and consequently, the more the proximity among the two. Becker (2009) Suggests that proximity and visibility might enhance supervisors' influence leading to subordinates' commitment. Based on these arguments, we hypothesize:

H1. LMX positively relates to ACS.

H2. PSS positively relates to ACS.

The moderating role of NAFL

The need for affiliation is the desire to acquire a sense of belonging and connecting with others (McClelland, 1985). Individuals with a high degree of need for affiliation tend to form a connection with their leaders and peers (Cole *et al.*, 2002), making NAFL potentially moderates the relationship between LFR and ACS. Even when the supervisor is somewhat aloof, the authors still hypothesize that the moderating role of NAFL still stands. This assumption is based on Kong *et al.*'s (2017) assertion that individuals with a high need for affiliation are disposed to take up actions for the sake of collective interest. When the supervisor does not initiate the interaction with the employees, those employees with high NAFL will embark a dyadic relationship with the supervisor. Henceforth, we hypothesize:

H3a. NAFL strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H3b. NAFL strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of PA

Positive affectivity is an individual propensity to encounter affirmative emotions and will influence how individuals interact with the environment (Ashby *et al.*, 1999). The authors argue that PA will moderate the relationship between LFR variables and followers' affective commitment to supervisor. Since PA provides an individual with a good state of focus and abundant social, intellectual and psychological resources (Fredrickson, 2001), higher PA will likely ease them to connect with the supervisor and consequently enhance the effects of LFRs and ACS. Even in a condition where the supervisor is challenging to cope with, individuals with high PA will see difficulties as challenges and tend to manage them positively (Kaplan *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, a meta-analysis involving 35 studies conducted by Bowling *et al.* (2008) reveals that PA positively and significantly relates to satisfaction with supervision and co-workers, suggesting that PA is a pertinent element in leader-follower dyadic relationships. Therefore, the hypotheses are:

H4a. PA strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H4b. PA strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of proactive personality

Proactive personality is defined as the personality that “.is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and who effects environmental change” (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). Proactive individuals tend to play an active role in interacting with their surroundings. This feature will consequently enhance their closeness with their workplace counterparts (Yang *et al.*, 2011), including their leader. Additionally, Crant (2000) asserts that proactive individuals will generally produce a higher performance level than those less proactive. Such a feature potentially increases the interaction time between proactive individuals and their leaders, in which the authors argue that the higher interaction potentially entails a higher affective commitment. Bernerth *et al.* (2008) also suggest that leaders tend to create closer relationships with followers who have similar personalities to theirs. As generally proactive individuals will stand out among others in their workplace, this might situate them as having leadership quality which may further adorn their relationship with the leaders. Based on these argumentations, the authors hypothesize that:

H5a. PP strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H5b. PP strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

Data collection and method

The data for the study was collected through an online survey with 366 respondents in different cities in Indonesia participating. After outlier check, 7 responses were dropped, making 359 responses finally being processed for data testing. This number adequately fits the authors' plan to process the data using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) (Hair *et al.*, 2013; Kline, 2015). Table I shows respondents' demographic profiles regarding age, gender, status, tenure, sector, supervisor's gender, and co-working time with their leader.

--Insert Table I here--

Measures

This research examined six variables: LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP, and ACS. All of the measurement items used in this research were translated from English to Bahasa Indonesia and then back-translated to English. Then the authors checked whether the original and the back-translated English versions were equivalent, the authors saw no essential differences between the two versions. This back-translation approach is necessary to ensure that the translation does not change the essence of questions (Brislin, 1970). The back-translation technique was carried out with the assistance of an Indonesian-English bilingual scholar.

All of the variables, unless LMX, were rated on a six-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Since each item on the LMX construct asks about a particular condition, the ratings indicate different expressions. However, in general, rating 1 always refers to the most negative expression such as 'not a bit' on the question of whether the supervisor understands the respondent's problems and needs, or 'none' for the chance that the supervisor will help them solve difficulties. Conversely, rating 6 always represents the most positive expression such as 'fully recognize' for whether the supervisor recognizes the respondent's potentials or 'extremely

effective' where the questionnaire asks the respondents to describe the working relationship with their supervisor.

LMX. Six items from Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995) were used to measure LMX. Respondents were asked to respond to items such as: "How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs.". The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.925.

PSS. Similar to previous studies measuring PSS (e.g., Maertz Jr et al., 2007), the authors adopted three items from the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986) by replacing the 'organization' term with 'supervisor'. These three items were selected based on the high factor loading on the SPOS (all above 0.70). The items include "My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work", and the internal consistency of PSS is 0.850.

NAFL. Need for affiliation was measured using the same scale as Kong et al.'s (2017), including this question: "When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself". The internal consistency value of NAFL is 0.800.

PA. The authors employed Thompson (2007) scale to measure positive affectivity. The opening statement for each item was 'these words reflect my personality', and then the respondents will see various terms denoting positive affectivity, such as 'active' and 'determined'. The internal consistency for PA is 0.814.

PP. Ten items from Bateman & Crant (1993) were employed to measure proactive personality. Among the questions example is: 'I can spot a good opportunity long before others can see it' and the internal consistency for this construct is 0.896.

ACS. Affective commitment to supervisor was measured by Perreira et al.'s (2018) scale. A sample item is "I feel privileged to work with someone like my immediate supervisor". The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.839.

Control variables. The authors controlled for various demographic (age, gender, education, and marital status), work (tenure and sector), and leader-follower relationship (co-working time and leader-follower gender similarity) characteristics as according to previous studies (e.g., Graham et al., 2018), these factors potentially influence the interaction of focal variables.

Results

In the first phase of data analysis, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation were analyzed as being recapped in Table II. Afterward, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to identify constructs' validity as being compiled in Table III.

--Insert Table II here--

--Insert Table III here--

Results in Table 3 show that AVE and CR values for all measures are higher than the recommended value (0.50 and 0.70 respectively, Hair et al., 2013). Table 3 shows that the value of the square root of AVE for each variable is higher than the correlations among variables, supporting the discriminant validity for all constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The model Goodness of Fit (GOF) values are as such: CMIN/DF = 1.546; RMSEA = 0.054; SRMR = 0.0414; TLI = 0.959; and CFI= 0.964. These results indicate excellent model fit and validate the suggested research model (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988; Hair *et al.*, 2013).

Finally, the authors tested the hypotheses using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. Table IV compiled the overall regression results. Firstly, all control variables were entered in step one. In step 2, the authors added independent and moderating variables. Finally, the interaction terms were entered in step 3. Before generating the interaction terms, independent and moderating variables were mean-centered, following Aiken & West's (1991) suggestion. The two-way interactions shown by Figure 1 were plotted with moderators' values at one standard deviation below (low condition) and above (high condition) the mean.

--Insert Table IV here--

--Insert Figure I here--

Hypothesis 1 proposed LMX to be positively related to ACS. As shown in Table IV, LMX has a significant and positive effect on ACS (Step 2: $\beta = 0.475$; $p < 0.001$), hypothesis 1 was supported by this finding. Hypothesis 2 predicted that PSS is positively associated with ACS. As shown in the step 2, PSS positively relates to ACS ($\beta = 0.731$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 2.

Hypotheses 3,4 and 5 proposed that NAFL, PA, and PP would moderate the relationship between the independent variables (LMX and PSS) and ACS, such that the relationship is stronger when the moderators are high rather than low. The OLS regression results show that the interactions of LMX x NAFL (Step 3: $\beta = 0.127, p < 0.01$), LMX x PA (Step 3: $\beta = 0.251, p < 0.001$), PSS x NAFL (Step 3: $\beta = 0.175, p < 0.01$), and PSS x PA (Step 3: $\beta = 0.233, p < 0.01$) were significant. Meanwhile, PP was not a significant moderator for the relationships between the independent variables and ACS (see Table IV). These results confirm hypotheses 3 and 4 and reject hypothesis 5.

Discussion

Overall, the results support all but one hypothesis concerning proactive personality's role in enhancing the relationship between LFR variables and ACS. The findings assert that LMX and PSS positively relate to ACS, with a higher correlation found on PSS (0.731) than LMX (0.475). This result is understandable given the different nature of these two variables. Settoon et al. (1996) found that perceived organizational support is associated with organizational commitment while LMX is associated with citizenship and in-role behavior. Although Settoon et al.'s study addresses perceived support and commitment regarding the organization and not to the supervisor, the result is still valuable to explain what is found in the present study for two reasons. First, Eisenberger et al. (2002) suggest that PSS and POS are closely related. The extent to which the supervisor is identified with the organization acts as the factor strengthening the two variables' relationship. Second, the suggested perceived support pattern leads to commitment, explaining the strong correlation between PSS and ACS.

In addition, conceptually, PSS also has a more positive nuance than LMX, which contains a somewhat neutral stance defining the relationship between supervisor and member. For instance, the question for the PSS construct asks 'to what extent the supervisor is willing to spare his/her time to help the members do the job to the best of their ability'. The question shows a positive relationship between the supervisor and the members, at least compared to the relatively neutral question for LMX construct such as 'Do you know the position between you and your supervisor/manager? Do you usually know how satisfied your supervisor/manager is with the things you do?'.

The results also reveal that all moderating variables (NAFL, PA, and PP) positively related to ACS. The present study did not hypothesize these variables to be correlated with ACS as the authors thought that these variables only play moderating roles. Hence seeing these variables independently connected with ACS is somewhat surprising. One possible explanation for these findings is that NAFL (Hill, 1991), PA (Watson and Naragon, 2009), and PP (Yang *et al.*, 2011) belong to the factors enhancing good interpersonal connection. Meanwhile, good interpersonal relationships correlate with employees' affective commitment to supervisor (Chughtai, 2013).

The results also show that, unlike NAFL and PA, PP does not strengthen the relationship between LFR and ACS. According to interpersonal interaction theory, a dyadic relationship will be more harmonious when one party is dominant, and the other is obedient (Leary, 1957). Generally speaking, the need for affiliation and positive affectivity are among the variables that strengthen the submissive role of employees. Meanwhile, individuals with proactive personalities tend to take the initiative to make changes and are not keen to face situational constraints (Bateman and Crant, 1993). These features do not align with the submissive characteristics needed to create a harmonious supervisor-employee dyadic relationship, hence explaining the insignificant role of PP on the relationship between LFR and ACS.

Theoretical implications

From a theoretical perspective, the authors contributed to the nomological network for the tested variables (LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP, ACS). This study also reveals that dispositional factors significantly influence commitment toward humans (i.e., supervisor). Furthermore, the present study shows that dispositional variables may have diverse effects regarding the relationship between LFR and ACS, as demonstrated by the non-significant moderation role of PP. In addition, from the parallel pattern of moderating dispositional variables, this study concludes that LMX and PSS share similar sentiments on representing LFR.

This study's findings also portray the application of social exchange theory in the context of leader-follower interaction. When the leader cooperates with (high LMX) and supports (high PSS) the follower positively, the follower will exchange those good treatments with affective commitment (high ACS). In addition, the findings also slightly touch interpersonal interaction theory, that for interaction to work well, the parties should possess characteristics that describe their social

dominance. The high degree of proactivity by an individual at the lower organizational hierarchy (the follower) misalign with their supposedly submissive position. Henceforth this feature does not significantly influence the relationship between leader-follower interactions and follower's affective commitment to supervisor. Nevertheless, future studies examining interpersonal interaction theory in practice are needed to ensure this argumentation's validity.

Practical implication

The authors divide practical implications from 2 angles: for the leader and the company. The leader should be aware of factors that significantly enhance employees' affective commitment. For instance, it is known that perceived supervisor support is the highest contributor of affective commitment to supervisor. Meaning that a leader should focus on ensuring that the employees feel supported by their leader, which makes them committed to the supervisor. Leaders could also be attentive that employees with a high degree of need for affiliation, positive affectivity, and proactive personality are potentially committed to them. Leaders might also want to pay more attention to the employees who do not possess such characteristics, as a low degree of these features correlates to a low level of affective commitment.

Furthermore, the company might want to include these three variables (NAFL, PA, and PP) as extra elements for the recruitment phase's personality test. Additionally, companies need to ensure that the leaders manage their interaction and support to the follower well as the results suggest LMX and PSS lead to a desirable outcome. These suggestions are especially relevant for the type of jobs demanding a high degree of affective commitment to supervisor.

Limitations and directions for future research

The generalizability of these results is subject to certain limitations. First, the research design involving cross-sectional and one rating source (only from employees' perspective) may limit the depiction of the leader-follower dyadic relationship. Future studies might want to consider longitudinal design and collect data from multiple sources (e.g., the leaders) to better depict inter-variable relationships. Second, the findings might be tied to cultural factors in Indonesia. Future studies on different nations might find different results. Third, although the present research frames

the collection of variables as leader-follower relationship (LFR), in fact the tested variables (LMX and PSS) are only those having positive relationship nuances. Future studies might want to investigate more LFR variables, either those with positive or negative themes, to see whether these moderation patterns from dispositional variables still occur. Finally, future studies might want to investigate the relationship of these variables on each company's sector types, sizes, or industries as each of these elements might hold unique leader-follower relationship characteristics.

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Table I. Respondents' demographic variables

Respondents' Profile		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	215	59.9
	Female	144	40.1
Education	Senior high school	147	40.9
	Diploma degree	30	8.4
	Undergraduate degree	148	41.2
	Graduate degree	34	9.5
Age	Below 30 years	195	54.3
	Between 30 and 40 years	133	37.0
	Above 40 years	31	8.7
Status	Single	148	41.2
	Married	211	58.8
Tenure	0-5 years	234	65.2
	6-10 years	111	30.9
	Over 10 years	14	3.9
Sector	Private	254	70.8
	Public	49	13.6
	Non-governmental organization	13	3.6
	Others	43	12.0
Supervisor's gender	Same	236	65.7
	Different	123	34.3
Co-working time with the supervisor	1-3 years	274	76.3
	4-6 years	65	18.1
	> 6 years	20	5.6

Table II. Means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Leader-Member Exchange	4.98	.95	1					
2. Perceived Supervisor Support	4.69	.73	.598**	1				
3. Need for Affiliation	4.81	.73	.329**	.430**	1			
4. Positive Affectivity	3.15	.37	.303**	.364**	.327**	1		
5. Proactive Personality	4.11	.57	.351**	.457**	.458**	.574**	1	
6. Affective Commitment to Supervisor	4.61	.65	.598**	.754**	.372**	.527**	.464**	1

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Table III. Result of validity and reliability of measurement model

Variables	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Leader-Member Exchange	.925	.638	.799					
2. Perceived Supervisor Support	.850	.654	.727	.809				
3. Need for Affiliation	.800	.572	.547	.529	.756			
4. Positive Affectivity	.814	.526	.446	.368	.492	.725		
5. Proactive Personality	.896	.521	.490	.466	.612	.511	.722	
6. Affective Commitment to Supervisor	.839	.634	.661	.727	.565	.459	.411	.797

Note: CR = construct reliability; AVE = average variance extracted

Table IV. Regression results

Variables	Affective Commitment to Supervisor		
	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)	Step 3 (β)
Gender	-.157***	-.009	-
Tenure	.066	-	-
Education	-.168**	-.013	-
Status	.231**	.026	-
Co-working time	.050	-	-
Sector	.045	-	-
Supervisor's gender	.010	-	-
Age	-.103	-	-
Leader-Member Exchange		.475***	.438***
Perceived Supervisor Support		.731***	.656***
Need for Affiliation		.185**	.156**
Positive Affectivity		.343***	.353***
Proactive Personality		.230***	.237***
Leader-Member Exchange x Need for Affiliation			.127**
Leader-Member Exchange x Positive Affectivity			.251***
Leader-Member Exchange x Proactive Personality			.050
Perceived Supervisor Support x Need for Affiliation			.175**
Perceived Supervisor Support x Positive Affectivity			.233**
Perceived Supervisor Support x Proactive Personality			.033

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

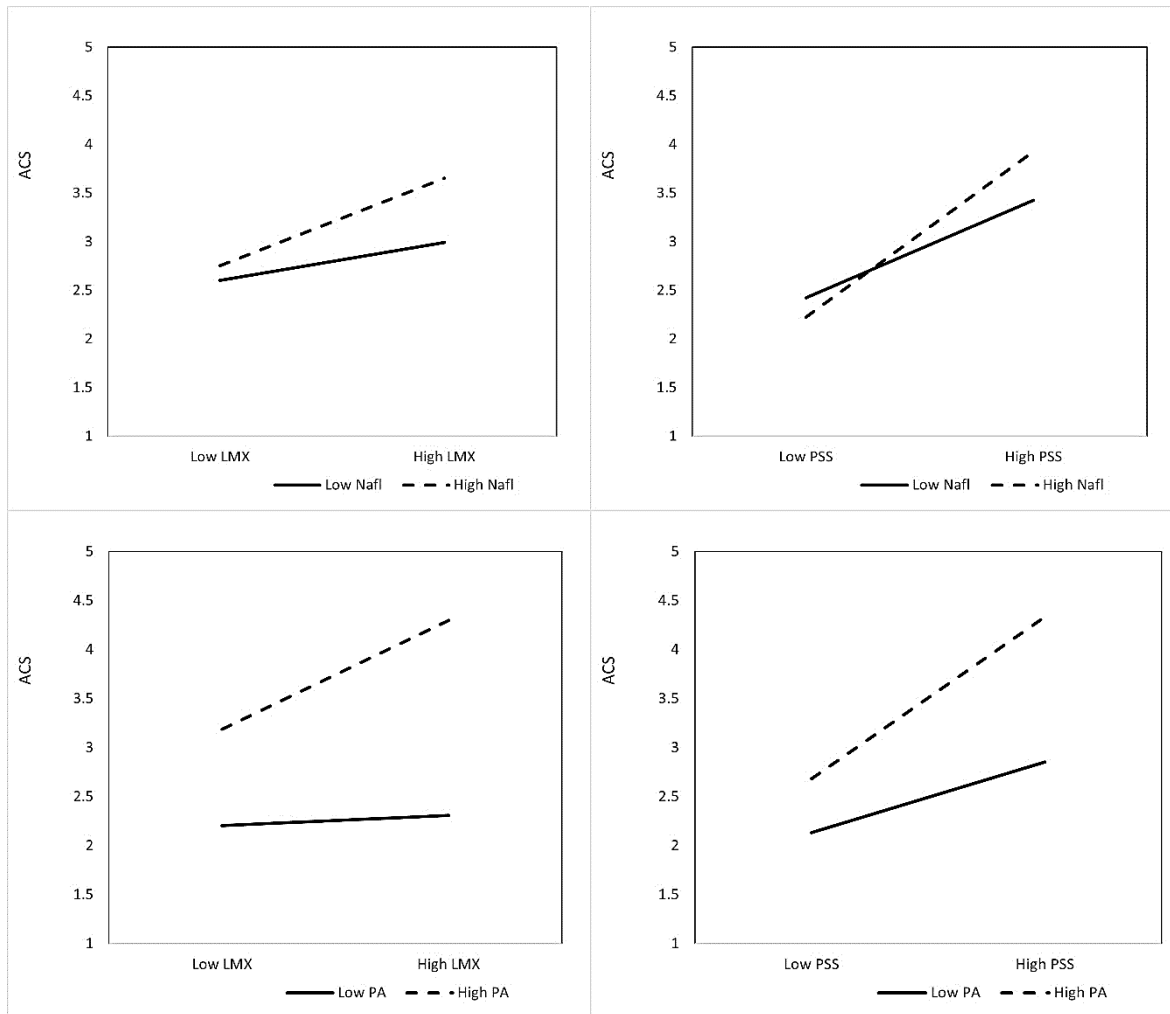


Figure I. The two ways interaction plots

Appendix

Table V. Measurement items

Variable	Items
<p>Leader-Member Exchange (How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you know where you stand with your leader... Do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do? 2. How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs? 3. How well does your leader recognize your potential? 4. Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/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/she would "bail you out," at his/her expense? 6. I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so? 7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
<p>Perceived Supervisor Support (These statements characterize my supervisor...)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My supervisor is willing to extend itself in order to help me perform my job to the best of my ability. 2. My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work. 3. My supervisor tries to make my job as interesting as possible.

Need for Affiliation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself 2. I find myself talking to those around me about nonbusiness-related matters 3. I make a special effort to get along with others.
Positive Affectivity <i>(These words reflect my personality...)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determined 2. Attentive 3. Alert 4. Inspired 5. Active
Proactive Personality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life. 2. Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change. 3. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality. 4. If I see something I don't like, I fix it. 5. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen. 6. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' Opposition 7. I excel at identifying opportunities. 8. I am always looking for better ways to do things. 9. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen. 10. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can see it.
Affective Commitment to Supervisor <i>(The following items express what you may feel about yourself as a member of your organization...)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I like the values conveyed by my immediate supervisor 2. I feel privileged to work with someone like my immediate supervisor 3. When I talk to my friends about my immediate supervisor, I describe him/her as a great person to work with



Jaya Addin Linando <183110101@uii.ac.id>

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship - EBHRM-04-2022-0096

1 message

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarshipThu, Apr 21, 2022 at
1:33 PM

<onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com>

Reply-To: ebhrm.tl@gmail.com

To: addin.linando@uii.ac.id, addinlinando@gmail.com

21-Apr-2022

Dear Mr. Linando,

Your manuscript entitled "Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic" has been successfully submitted online and is presently being given full consideration for publication in Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship.

Your manuscript ID is EBHRM-04-2022-0096.

Please mention the above manuscript ID in all future correspondence or when calling the office for questions. If there are any changes in your street address or e-mail address, please log in to ScholarOne Manuscripts at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ebhrm> and edit your user information as appropriate.

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Thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Lange

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship

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Jaya Addin Linando <183110101@uii.ac.id>

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship - Decision on Manuscript ID EBHRM-04-2022-0096

1 message

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship

Mon, Aug 8, 2022 at 8:36 PM

<onbehalfof@manuscriptcentral.com>

Reply-To: ebhrm.tl@gmail.com

To: addin.linando@uii.ac.id, addinlinando@gmail.com

08-Aug-2022

Dear Mr. Linando,

Manuscript ID EBHRM-04-2022-0096 entitled "Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic" which you submitted to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship, has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewers and Associate Editor are included at the bottom of this letter (AND IN AN ENCLOSED FILE).

The reviewers have pointed out the merit of your contribution but also express some concerns and suggest revisions to the manuscript. Therefore, I assign a Major Revision decision and invite you to respond to the reviewers' comments and revise your manuscript accordingly.

To revise your manuscript, log into <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ebhrm> and enter your Author Centre, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision.

You will be unable to make your revisions on the originally submitted version of the manuscript. Instead, revise your manuscript using a word processing program and save it on your computer. Please also highlight the changes to your manuscript within the document by using the track changes mode in MS Word or by using bold or coloured text.

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When submitting your revised manuscript, please ensure that you respond to the comments made by the reviewers in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you make to the original manuscript. In order to expedite the processing of the revised manuscript, please be as specific as possible in your response to the reviewers.

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Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship, your revised manuscript should be uploaded as soon as possible. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision in a reasonable amount of time, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Thomas Lange
Editor-in-Chief, Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship

Reviewers' and Associate Editor Comments to Author:

Associate Editor - Comments to the Author:

Dear Author,

Many thanks for your submission to EBHRM which has now been reviewed.

Both reviewers see potential in your work but also flag several shortcomings. In particular, both reviewers flag an insufficient depth in the literature review sections. Reviewer 1 also took the freedom to add comments to your manuscript. You find this commented file attached.

Overall, it is my view that all comments can be dealt with in a thoughtful revision of the manuscript.

I look forward to receiving your revised version in due course.

Best wishes,

Assoc Professor Fabian Homberg

Reviewer: 1

Recommendation: Major Revision

Comments:

Thank you for the pleasure of reading your interesting study. You make a nice contribution by testing the effects of moderators on the relationship between LMX and PSS, and ACS. I provided the editor with a document with some specific edits, questions, and suggestions noted in your submission. I would only add to that document that I think it would strengthen your study to more clearly define the unique dimensions of your constructs to help us understand how they contribute individually to the outcomes you predict. PSS and LMX are very closely related. You might say PSS determines how a subject will respond to the LMX scale questions. Also, is there clearly a cause and effect direction for LMX/PSS to ACS? Could it work the other way? Perhaps this could be more strongly addressed in the literature review section to better support your hypotheses.

My last general comment is that without a true dyadic measure (responses from both parties in the relationship) the LMX construct seems to be a slight variation of the PSS construct. It is difficult to collect the true dyadic LMX measure so perhaps you could discuss this in the limitation sections which might inspire someone to advance your study by comparing a single-sided measure with the two-sided measure.

1. Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?:

Yes, it provides a novel analysis of various components that work together to attempt to predict the causes of employees' perception of relationship quality with their supervisor.

2. Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?:

Partially. The literature review is sufficiently broad to cover the range of proposed relationships but may be lacking in depth to clarify the boundaries of the constructs as many of them are closely related and described similar phenomena.

3. Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?:

The research methodology is sound with the exception of a one-sided measure of a dyadic construct. Studies frequently test LMX with only one of the participants in the relationship's response, but to accurately measure the construct, both sides should be measured and a value calculated based on the shared perception of the strength of relationship.

4. Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?:

Yes, straightforward statistical analysis tests the hypotheses with the data sample data collected.

5. Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and conclusions of the paper?:

Yes, it provides managers and scholars guidance on key constructs that can affect organizational outcomes. The study provides a strong case for these suggestions by the author(s).

6. Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the technical language of the

field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure, jargon use, acronyms, etc.?:

Yes, much of the article was written in clear language. A few areas needed clarification as shown in the attached document.

Reviewer: 2

Recommendation: Major Revision

Comments:

Pay extra attention to the literature part and to the conceptual model. At this form your paper seems data driven...

1. Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?:

Although this is an interesting paper, I am not quite sure if the research findings justify publication. I mean all these relationships have been examined in the past.

2. Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?:

The authors need to strengthen significantly the literature part and consequently, their conceptual model. Why they propose these dispositional factors (need for affiliation, positive affectivity and proactive personality)? Why are these factors the proposed moderators? Social exchange theory cannot be accepted as the only justification...

3. Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?:

The methodology, although it is rather simple, it is solid enough.

4. Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?:

The results are presented clearly but as I said before this is not the problem

5. Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and conclusions of the paper?:

Rather poor theoretical and practical implications. This part of the paper needs major revision.

6. Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure, jargon use, acronyms, etc.?:

The quality is quite good.

2 attachments



* **How-to-submit-a-revision.pdf**

669K



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506K

Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower ~~relationship's~~ relationship's dynamic

Abstract

Purpose – ~~Build on the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964),~~ This study investigates dispositional ~~(need for affiliation, positive affectivity and proactive personality) factors'~~ factors' ~~(need for affiliation, positive affectivity, and proactive personality)~~ moderation effect on the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables (leader-member exchange and perceived supervisor support) and affective commitment to supervisor.

Design/methodology/approach – In total, 359 employees in Indonesia participated ~~d~~ as the ~~study's~~ study's respondents. This study employs hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

Findings – The results show that need for affiliation and positive affectivity moderates ~~s~~ the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and affective commitment to supervisor. In addition, all dispositional factors positively influence affective commitment to supervisor as independent variables. This ~~study's~~ study's findings depict the social exchange theory in practice.

Originality/value – The present study contributes to theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study extends the knowledge on at least four domains: leader-follower relationship; affective commitment particularly aimed at the supervisor; the roles of dispositional variables on leader-member interactions; and empirically demonstrates ~~s~~ social exchange theory. Practically, this study shows which factors are relevant to shaping positive leader-member interactions. Such results are potentially of value for the leader, the organization, and those responsible for recruiting prospective employees.

Keywords: Dispositional variables; Leader-follower relationship; Affective commitment to supervisor.

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Studies (e.g., Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) have emphasized the importance of positive leader-follower relationships (LFR) to generate productive outcomes within the organizations. Morgeson et al. (2005) particularly highlight social skills, personality characteristics, and teamwork knowledge as the factors to look out on forming a positive relationship in an interdependent collaborative relationship setting. Social skills and teamwork knowledge factors are changeable, meaning that the lack of these two aspects should be 'fixable' by either the leader or the organization. Meanwhile, dispositional characteristics is-are relatively stable (Miller et al., 1981), making the f. Failure of understanding employees' personality characteristics leave leader and organization slight room for improvements in creating a positive leader-follower relationship to understand dispositional characteristics limits the chance to create a positive leader-follower relationship as those features are hard, if not impossible, to change. That being said, personality characteristics should receive as much (if not more) attention as the other two aspects in leader-follower interaction's-interaction's discourses. Therefore, the present study is particularly interested in testing employees'-employees' dispositional characteristics within a leader-follower dyadic relationship setting.

In particular, the present study examines three personality characteristics: the need for affiliation (NAFL), positive affectivity (PA), and proactive personality (PP). NAFL is among individual factors receiving little attention in leader-follower discourses, with only a few studies (e.g., Kong et al., 2017; Mathieu, 1990) investigating this variable. In fact, NAFL is among the crucial elements determining employees'-employees' work motivation and behavior, which to some extent will also influence employees'-employees' attitude toward their leader (Jha, 2010). On the other hand, individuals with a high degree of PA are typically socially attractive and likable. Researchers (e.g., Vandenberghe et al., 2019; Yoon & Thye, 2000) confirm that PA directly contributes to the positive LFR relationship between leader and follower. Previous studies (e.g., Wijaya, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021) also concluded the connection between PP and L-leader-f-follower relationship variables. Nevertheless, to the best of the authors'-authors' knowledge, no studies position NAFL, PA and PP as the moderating variables for leader-follower relationship LFR- variables. This

positioning is essential as such a model could further illuminate how ~~employees'~~ employees' dispositional variables contribute in forming positive leader-follower interactions.

The settlement to choose those three variables was not merely a cherry-picking-based decision. In the contemporary workplace sphere, many HR experts argue that the classical aspects of employees' personalities might play a key role in maintaining business survival and advancement. For instance, Forbes recently published an article explaining how modern employees increasingly want to belong in the workplace (Gaskell, 2022), resonating with (Gaskell, 2022) the need for affiliation concept. Such a remark may remain valid, at least within the near future, as O.C. Tanner forecast (Petersen, 2022). Positive affect also regains momentum to be a significant perk in the workplace following Harvard Business Review (Riegel, 2022) gauges its importance in the contemporary workplace. Similarly, proactive personality stays as a relevant dispositional workplace variable in the meantime, following experts' op-eds in leading management popular literature (e.g., Burr, 2019; Forbes Coaches Council, 2019)

To ~~measure~~ indicate a positive ~~leader-follower relationship~~ LFR, the authors place affective commitment to supervisor (ACS) as the dependent variable. Popularized in the ~~'80s-'80s~~ (McGee ~~and~~ & Ford, 1987; Meyer ~~and~~ & Allen, 1984), the affective commitment construct was further distinguished into several foci (for a detailed review, see Vandenberghe et al., 2004), including the affective commitment to supervisor. The present study's approach ~~to of use using a~~ specific affective commitment focus within one research frame aligns with the ~~experts'~~ experts' (e.g., Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) suggestion. As a result, the authors expect this study to better exhibit ~~employees'~~ employees' relevant behavior toward the target (in this ~~study's~~ study's context, the supervisor).

Social exchange norm stands as the main theoretical argument basing the hypothesized correlations between independent and dependent variables within this study. Blau (1964) asserts that ~~employees'~~ employees' commitment to the supervisor is likely to be paid back reciprocally. Chughtai (2013) argues that supervisors may give tangible and intangible resources like support, feedback, and more control in the workplace to their employees, in return for their commitment. This study will put this theory into test, whether it is true that the positive leader-member exchange (LMX) and perceived supervisor support (PSS) will be exchanged with ACS.

To the best of the authors' knowledge, no research has tested the leader's effectiveness of LMX and PSS concurrently. PSS concerns employees' perception of how much their supervisors value their contributions and care for their well-being (Kottke and Sharafinski, 1988; Shanock and Eisenberger, 2006). Whereas LMX concerns the quality of the dyadic interaction between leaders and followers as the key to understanding the effects of leaders on followers, teams, and organizations (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). Leader-member exchange distinguishes itself from other leadership theories by emphasizing the dyadic interaction and the unique relationships leaders cultivate with each follower (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Liden *et al.*, 1997). The authors were curious how these two variables altogether determine employees' affective responses. Examining the uniqueness of LMX and PSS within one frame is arguably essential to go beyond the past research approaches that test those two separately when in fact they are closely related.

After all, this study aims to examine the moderating effects of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) on the relationship between leader-follower interaction (LMX & PSS) and ACS. In so doing, the present study contributes to multiple facets. First, on leader-follower discourses, this study extends the use of social exchange theory in the context of leader-follower interaction. Additionally, the present study also answers Graen & Uhl-Bien's (1995) calls to ~~further explore the stages of LMX theory development~~ explore the stages of LMX theory development further. Second, on affective commitment facade, this study adds more variables ~~on to ACS' ACS'~~ on to ACS' ACS' nomological network as a distinct focus of affective commitment. The authors also offer a unique proposition that this ~~study's study's~~ results might illuminate the interaction pattern of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) and ACS. That addition contributes to the calls from previous scholars (Hemshorn de Sanchez *et al.*, 2022; Linando *et al.*, 2018) focusing on leader-follower interaction discourses (e.g., Hemshorn de Sanchez *et al.*, 2022; Linando *et al.*, 2018). Finally, on the practical level domain, the findings might shed light on the aspects recruiters should pay attention to upon recruiting prospective employees.

Literature Review

Independent and dependent variables

The authors frame two independent variables, namely leader-member exchange (LMX) and Perceived supervisor support (PSS), as variables reflecting the leader-follower relationship (~~LFR~~). Most literature (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Matta et al., 2015) solely focuses on LMX as the variable depicting ~~LFR~~the relationship between leader and follower, while as a matter of fact, essentially ~~LFR~~such a relationship has a much broader scope beyond only LMX. Dansereau et al. (1975) associate many variables to what they call 'a superior and a ~~member~~-member' dyadic relationship, including leadership, supervision, and vertical support. Pulakos ~~and~~& Wexley (1983) also translate a dyad as something different from LMX. They assert that support, work facilitation, goal emphasis, and interaction facilitation reflect the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers. Furthermore, Yammarino et al. (1998) distinguish ~~leader-follower relationship~~ ~~LFR~~ into two types: 'within group ~~dyads~~-dyads', which are typically formal and managed by a superior; and 'between group ~~dyads~~-dyads' reflecting interpersonal relationship independent of the formal workgroup. ~~From these argumentations, as both LMX and PSS involve the interactions between leaders and followers, for the sake of the simplicity of later discourses, the authors will also use the 'LFR' term to refer to these two variables.~~

The authors particularly set affective commitment to supervisor as the dependent variable. Studies (e.g., Perreira et al., 2018; Siders et al., 2001) have underlined the value of differentiating the use of multiple affective commitment foci as each focus bears different antecedents and consequences. ~~For instance, a~~Aligns with affective commitment to organization which linearly leads to organizational level-outcomes, ACS is also predictive of supervisor-related outcomes like citizenship behavior towards supervisor (Wasti ~~and~~-& Can, 2008). The more detailed argumentations of each hypothesis will be further elaborated in the following sections.

~~LFRs~~-LMX and PSS to ACS

Leader-member exchange (LMX) reflects the dyadic relationship between leaders and their subordinates where the two parties form and advance their bond through the sequence of interactions during a particular timespan (Graen & Scandura, 1987). Meanwhile, affective commitment is 'a psychological state that binds the individual to the ~~organization~~-organization' (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 14). Referring to the global definition of affective commitment, ACS could be loosely translated as a psychological state binding the followers to their supervisor/boss. According to the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), the extent to which a leader interacts with

the-followers frames the two parties in a reciprocal social-exchange connection. Previous studies (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Graen & Cashman, 1975) asserted that among the resources appreciable by the leader that employees could offer is their dedication and commitment. These theoretical and empirical bases lead to a postulate that LMX influence ACS.

Like LMX, perceived supervisor support (PSS) also plays a crucial role in shaping employees' affective commitment to supervisor by generating a reciprocity mechanism. PSS is the degree to which supervisors value employees' contributions and are attentive toward employees' conditions (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2002). Supervisors' support indicates their care toward employees' well-being which, as previous studies (e.g., Li *et al.*, 2018; Ng & Sorensen, 2008) suggest, will increase employees' affective commitment.

Both LMX and PSS suggest positive reinforcement leaders give to their followers, which leads to a rationale postulating that these two variables will make the followers more affectively committed to their supervisor. The more supervisors positively interact, understand and support their followers, the more the followers meet their leaders and consequently, the more the proximity among the two. Becker (2009) suggests that proximity and visibility might enhance supervisors' influence leading to subordinates' commitment. Based on these arguments, we hypothesize:

H1. LMX positively relates to ACS.

H2. PSS positively relates to ACS.

The moderating role of dispositional variables

Personality traits predict workplace behaviors and outcomes (e.g., Barrick and Mount, 1991; Hogan and Holland, 2003; Tett *et al.*, 1991). Citing Trait Activation Theory (TAT), the connection between leader-follower relationship and performance depends on the traits of involved parties (Tett and Burnett, 2003). Walumbwa *et al.* (2007) suggest that explaining a leader's effectiveness is insufficient without incorporating the followers' traits into the leadership process. The fundamental concept of TAT is that latent traits are expressed or activated in response to trait-relevant contextual factors, which subsequently affect performance.

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(Tett and Burnett, 2003) Authors argue that proactive personality, positive affectivity, and need for affiliation are exhibited in response to trait-relevant cues. Proactive personality is characterized by a behavioral tendency to act upon or alter one's environment (Bateman and Crant, 1993). A proactive personality archetype is "one who is relatively unconstrained by situational forces, and who effects environmental change" (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). The proactive personality construct originates in interactionism, which "argues that situations are as much a function of the person as the person's behavior is a function of the situation" (Bowers, 1973, p. 327). (Bouckenooghe et al., 2013, p. 109) suggest that "PA and NA are expressed as responses to trait-relevant cues". Different individuals have different traits, which can affect their work behavior. These traits help individuals observe their work environment from different perspectives (Bowling et al., 2008). In addition, the need for affiliation is a personality trait corresponding to the needs of individuals for social interactions (Veroff and Veroff, 2016).

The moderating role of NAFL

The need for affiliation is the desire to acquire a sense of belonging and connecting with others (McClelland, 1985). Individuals with a high degree of need for affiliation tend to form a connection with their leaders and peers (Cole et al., 2002), making NAFL a potentially moderator in the relationship between leader-follower relationship LFR and ACS. Even when the supervisor is somewhat aloof, the authors still hypothesize that the moderating role of NAFL still stands. This assumption is based on Kong et al.'s (2017) assertion that individuals with a high need for affiliation are disposed to take up actions for the sake of collective interest. When the supervisor does not initiate the interaction with the employees, those employees with high NAFL will embark upon a dyadic relationship with the supervisor. Henceforth, we hypothesize:

H3a. NAFL strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H3b. NAFL strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of PA

Positive affectivity is an individual propensity to encounter affirmative emotions and will influence how individuals interact with the environment (Ashby et al., 1999). The authors argue

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that PA will moderate the relationship between [leader-follower relationship](#) variables and [followers' affective commitment](#) to supervisor. Since PA provides an individual with a good state of focus and abundant social, intellectual and psychological resources (Fredrickson, 2001), higher PA will likely ease them to connect with the supervisor and consequently enhance the effects of [leader-follower relationship variables](#) and ACS. Even in a condition where the supervisor is challenging to cope with, individuals with high PA will see difficulties as challenges and tend to manage them positively (Kaplan *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, a meta-analysis involving 35 studies conducted by Bowling *et al.* (2008) reveals that PA positively and significantly relates to satisfaction with supervision and co-workers, suggesting that PA is a pertinent element in leader-follower dyadic relationships. Therefore, the hypotheses are:

H4a. PA strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H4b. PA strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of proactive personality

Proactive personality is defined as the personality that "is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and who effects environmental change" (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). Proactive individuals tend to play an active role in interacting with their surroundings. This feature will consequently enhance their closeness with their workplace counterparts (Yang *et al.*, 2011), including their leader. Additionally, Crant (2000) asserts that proactive individuals will generally produce a higher performance level than those less proactive. Such a feature potentially increases the interaction time between proactive individuals and their leaders, in which the authors argue that the higher interaction potentially entails a higher affective commitment. Bernerth *et al.* (2008) also suggest that leaders tend to create closer relationships with followers who have similar personalities to theirs. As generally proactive individuals will stand out among others in their workplace, this might situate them as having leadership quality which may further adorn their relationship with the leaders. Based on these argumentations, the authors hypothesize that:

H5a. PP strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H5b. PP strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

Data collection and method

The data for the study was collected through an online survey with 366 respondents in different cities in Indonesia participating. After [checking for outlier check](#), [seven](#) responses were dropped, making 359 responses finally being processed for data testing. This number adequately fits the [authors' authors'](#) plan to process the data using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) (Hair *et al.*, 2013; Kline, 2015). Table I shows [respondents' respondents'](#) demographic profiles regarding age, gender, status, tenure, sector, [supervisor's supervisor's](#) gender, and co-working time with their leader.

--Insert Table I here--

Measures

This research examined six variables: LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP, and ACS. All of the measurement items used in this research were translated from English to Bahasa Indonesia and then back-translated to English. Then the authors checked whether the original and the back-translated English versions were equivalent. [Both authors checked the two versions separately then discuss again whether there are substantial gap among those versions.](#) ~~the~~ Both authors saw no essential differences between the two versions. This back-translation approach is necessary to ensure that the translation does not change the essence of questions (Brislin, 1970). The back-translation technique was carried out with the assistance of an Indonesian-English bilingual scholar.

All of the variables, ~~unless except~~ LMX, were rated on a six-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Since each item on the LMX construct asks about a particular condition, the ratings indicate different expressions. However, in general, rating 1 always refers to the most negative expression such as ~~'not a bit'~~ 'not a bit' on the question of whether the supervisor understands the [respondent's respondent's](#) problems and needs, or ~~'none'~~ 'none' for the chance that the supervisor will help them solve difficulties. Conversely, rating 6 always represents the most positive expression such as ~~'fully recognize'~~ 'fully recognize' for whether the supervisor recognizes the

~~respondent's~~ respondent's potentials or '~~extremely effective~~ effective' where the questionnaire asks the respondents to describe the working relationship with their supervisor.

LMX. Six items from Graen ~~and~~ Uhl-Bien (1995) were used to measure LMX. Respondents were asked to respond to items such as: "How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?". The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.925.

PSS. Similar to previous studies measuring PSS (e.g., Maertz Jr et al., 2007), the authors adopted three items from the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986) by replacing the 'organization' term with 'supervisor'. These three items were selected based on the high factor loading on the SPOS (all above 0.70). The items include "My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work", and the internal consistency of PSS is 0.850.

NAFL. Need for affiliation was measured using the same scale as Kong et al.'s (2017), including this question: "When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself". The internal consistency value of NAFL is 0.800.

PA. The authors employed Thompson's (2007) scale to measure positive affectivity. The opening statement for each item was 'these words reflect my personality', and then the respondents will see various terms denoting positive affectivity, such as 'active' and 'determined'. The internal consistency for PA is 0.814.

PP. Ten items from Bateman ~~and~~ Crant (1993) were employed to measure proactive personality. Among the questions example is: "I can spot a good opportunity long before others can see it" and the internal consistency for this construct is 0.896.

ACS. Affective commitment to supervisor was measured by Perreira et al.'s (2018) scale. A sample item is "I feel privileged to work with someone like my immediate supervisor". The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.839.

Control variables. The authors controlled for various demographic (age, gender, education, and marital status), work (tenure and sector), and leader-follower relationship (co-working time and leader-follower gender similarity) characteristics as according to previous studies (e.g., Graham et al., 2018), these factors potentially influence the interaction of focal variables.

Results

In the first phase of data analysis, mean, standard deviation, and ~~Pearson's~~Pearson's correlation were analyzed as being recapped in Table II. Afterward, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to identify ~~constructs'~~constructs' validity as being compiled in Table III.

--Insert Table II here--

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Results in Table 3 show that AVE and CR values for all measures are higher than the recommended value (0.50 and 0.70 respectively, Hair et al., 2013). Table 3 shows that the value of the square root of AVE for each variable is higher than the correlations among variables, supporting the discriminant validity for all constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The model Goodness of Fit (GOF) values are as such: CMIN/DF = 1.546; RMSEA = 0.054; SRMR = 0.0414; TLI = 0.959; and CFI= 0.964. These results indicate excellent model fit and validate the suggested research model (Anderson ~~and~~& Gerbing, 1988; Hair *et al.*, 2013).

Finally, the authors tested the hypotheses using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. Table IV compiled the overall regression results. Firstly, all control variables were entered in step one. In step 2, the authors added independent and moderating variables. Finally, the interaction terms were entered in step 3. Before generating the interaction terms, independent and moderating variables were mean-centered, following Aiken & ~~West's~~West's (1991) suggestion. The two-way interactions shown by Figure 1 were plotted with ~~moderators'~~moderators' values at one standard deviation below (low condition) and above (high condition) the mean.

--Insert Table IV here--

--Insert Figure I here--

Hypothesis 1 proposed LMX to be positively related to ACS. As shown in Table IV, LMX has a significant and positive effect on ACS (Step 2: $\beta = 0.475$; $p < 0.001$), hypothesis 1 was supported by this finding. Hypothesis 2 predicted that PSS is positively associated with ACS. As shown in the step 2, PSS positively relates to ACS ($\beta = 0.731$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 2.

Hypotheses 3,4 and 5 proposed that NAFL, PA, and PP would moderate the relationship between the independent variables (LMX and PSS) and ACS, such that the relationship is stronger when the moderators are high rather than low. The OLS regression results show that the interactions of LMX x NAFL (Step 3: $\beta = 0.127, p < 0.01$), LMX x PA (Step 3: $\beta = 0.251, p < 0.001$), PSS x NAFL (Step 3: $\beta = 0.175, p < 0.01$), and PSS x PA (Step 3: $\beta = 0.233, p < 0.01$) were significant. Meanwhile, PP was not a significant moderator for the relationships between the independent variables and ACS (see Table IV). These results confirm hypotheses 3 and 4 and reject hypothesis 5.

Discussion

Overall, the results support all [of the hypotheses](#) but one hypothesis concerning proactive ~~personality's~~ [personality's](#) role in enhancing the relationship between [leader-follower relationship](#) ~~LFR~~ variables and ACS. The findings assert that LMX and PSS positively relate to ACS, with a higher correlation found on PSS (0.731) than LMX (0.475). This result is understandable given the different nature of these two variables. Settoon et al. (1996) found that perceived organizational support is associated with organizational commitment while LMX is associated with citizenship and in-role behavior. Although Settoon et al.'s ~~study~~ [study](#) addresses perceived support and commitment regarding the organization and not to the supervisor, the result is still valuable to explain what is found in the present study for two reasons. First, Eisenberger et al. (2002) suggest that PSS and POS are closely related. The extent to which the supervisor is identified with the organization acts as the factor strengthening the two ~~variables'~~ [variables'](#) relationship. Second, the suggested perceived support pattern leads to commitment, explaining the strong correlation between PSS and ACS.

In addition, conceptually, PSS also has a more positive nuance than LMX, which contains a somewhat neutral stance defining the relationship between supervisor and member. For instance, the question for the PSS construct asks ~~'to~~ ['to](#) what extent the supervisor is willing to spare his/her time to help the members do the job to the best of their ~~ability'~~ [ability'](#). The question shows a positive relationship between the supervisor and the members, at least compared to the relatively neutral question for LMX construct such as ~~'Do~~ ['Do](#) you know the position between you and your

supervisor/manager? Do you usually know how satisfied your supervisor/manager is with the things you do?":

The results also reveal that all moderating variables (NAFL, PA, and PP) positively related to ACS. The present study did not hypothesize these variables to be correlated with ACS as the authors thought that these variables only play moderating roles. Hence seeing these variables independently connected with ACS is somewhat surprising. One possible explanation for these findings is that NAFL (Hill, 1991), PA (Watson ~~and~~ & Naragon, 2009), and PP (Yang *et al.*, 2011) belong to the factors enhancing good interpersonal connection. Meanwhile, good interpersonal relationships correlate with ~~employees'~~ ~~employees'~~ affective commitment to supervisor (Chughtai, 2013).

The results also show that, unlike NAFL and PA, PP does not strengthen the relationship between ~~leader-follower relationship~~ ~~LFR~~ and ACS. According to interpersonal interaction theory, a dyadic relationship will be more harmonious when one party is dominant, and the other is obedient (Leary, 1957). Generally speaking, the need for affiliation and positive affectivity are among the variables that strengthen the submissive role of employees. Meanwhile, individuals with proactive personalities tend to take the initiative to make changes and are not keen to face situational constraints (Bateman ~~and~~ & Crant, 1993). These features do not align with the submissive characteristics needed to create a harmonious supervisor-employee dyadic relationship, hence explaining the insignificant role of PP on the ~~relationship-nexus~~ between ~~leader-follower relationship~~ ~~LFR~~ and ACS.

Theoretical implications

From a theoretical perspective, the authors contributed to the nomological network for the tested variables (LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP, ACS). This study also reveals that dispositional factors significantly influence commitment toward ~~humans (i.e., supervisors)~~. Furthermore, the present study shows that dispositional variables may have diverse effects regarding the ~~relationship connection~~ between ~~leader-follower relationship~~ ~~LFR~~ and ACS, as demonstrated by the non-significant moderation role of PP. In addition, from the parallel pattern of moderating dispositional

variables, this study concludes that LMX and PSS share similar sentiments on representing [leader-follower relationship](#).

This [study's](#) findings also portray the application of social exchange theory in the context of leader-follower interaction. When the leader cooperates with (high LMX) and supports (high PSS) the follower positively, the follower will exchange those good treatments with affective commitment (high ACS). In addition, the findings also slightly touch interpersonal interaction theory, that for interaction to work well, the parties should possess characteristics that describe their social dominance. The high degree of proactivity by an individual at the lower organizational hierarchy (the follower) misalign with their supposedly submissive position. Henceforth this feature does not significantly influence the relationship between leader-follower interactions and [follower's](#) affective commitment to supervisor. Nevertheless, future studies examining interpersonal interaction theory in practice are needed to ensure this [argumentation's](#) validity.

Practical implication

The authors divide practical implications from [two](#) angles: for the leader and the company. The leader should be aware of factors that significantly enhance [employees'](#) affective commitment. For instance, it is known that perceived supervisor support is the highest contributor of affective commitment to supervisor. Meaning that a leader should focus on ensuring that the employees feel supported by their leader, which makes them committed to the supervisor. Leaders could also be attentive that employees with a high degree of need for affiliation, positive affectivity, and proactive personality are potentially committed to them. Leaders might also want to pay more attention to the employees who do not possess such characteristics, as a low degree of these features correlates to a low level of affective commitment.

Furthermore, the company might want to include these three variables (NAFL, PA, and PP) as extra elements for the recruitment [phase's](#) personality test. Additionally, companies need to ensure that the leaders manage their interaction and support to the follower well as the results suggest LMX and PSS lead to a desirable outcome. These suggestions are especially relevant for the type of jobs demanding a high degree of affective commitment to supervisor.

Limitations and directions for future research

The generalizability of these results is subject to certain limitations. First, the research design involving cross-sectional and one rating source (only from ~~employees'~~employees' perspective) may limit the depiction of the leader-follower dyadic relationship. Future studies might want to consider longitudinal design and collect data from multiple sources (e.g., the leaders) to better depict inter-variable relationships. Second, the findings might be tied to cultural factors in Indonesia. Future studies on different nations might find different results. Third, although the present research frames the collection of variables as leader-follower relationship (~~LFR~~), in fact the tested variables (LMX and PSS) are only those having positive relationship nuances. Future studies might want to investigate more leader-follower relationship~~LFR~~ variables, either those with positive or negative themes, to see whether these moderation patterns from dispositional variables still occur. Finally, future studies might want to investigate the relationship of these variables on each ~~company's~~company's sector types, sizes, or industries as each of these elements might hold unique leader-follower relationship characteristics.

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Jaya Addin Linando <183110101@uii.ac.id>

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship - EBHRM-04-2022-0096.R1

1 message

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarshipMon, Nov 7, 2022 at
1:01 AM

<onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com>

Reply-To: ebhrm.tl@gmail.com

To: addin.linando@uii.ac.id, addinlinando@gmail.com

06-Nov-2022

Dear Mr. Linando,

Your revised manuscript entitled "Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic" has been successfully submitted online and is presently being given full consideration for publication in Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship.

Your manuscript ID is EBHRM-04-2022-0096.R1.

Please mention the above manuscript ID in all future correspondence or when calling the office for questions. If there are any changes in your street address or e-mail address, please log in to ScholarOne Manuscripts at <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ebhrm> and edit your user information as appropriate.

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Thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Lange

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship



Jaya Addin Linando <183110101@uii.ac.id>

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship - Decision on Manuscript ID EBHRM-04-2022-0096.R1

1 message

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship

Mon, Dec 19, 2022 at 8:26 PM

<onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com>

Reply-To: ebhrm.tl@gmail.com

To: addin.linando@uii.ac.id, addinlinando@gmail.com

19-Dec-2022

Dear Mr. Linando,

Manuscript ID EBHRM-04-2022-0096.R1 entitled "Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic" which you submitted to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship, has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewers (and Associate Editor) are included at the bottom of this letter.

The reviewers have pointed out the merit of your contribution but also express some concerns and suggest several revisions to the manuscript. Therefore, I assign a Major Revision decision and invite you to respond to the reviewers' comments and revise your manuscript accordingly.

To revise your manuscript, log into <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ebhrm> and enter your Author Centre, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision.

You will be unable to make your revisions on the originally submitted version of the manuscript. Instead, revise your manuscript using a word processing program and save it on your computer. Please also highlight the changes to your manuscript within the document by using the track changes mode in MS Word or by using bold or coloured text.

Once the revised manuscript is prepared, you can upload it and submit it through your Author Centre.

When submitting your revised manuscript, please ensure that you respond to the comments made by the reviewers in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you make to the original manuscript. In order to expedite the processing of the revised manuscript, please be as specific as possible in your response to the reviewers.

IMPORTANT: Your original files are available to you when you upload your revised manuscript. Please delete any redundant files before completing the submission.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship, your revised manuscript should be uploaded as soon as possible. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision in a reasonable amount of time, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Thomas Lange
Editor-in-Chief, Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship

Associate Editor's and Reviewers' Comments to Author:

Associate Editor - Comments to the Author:

Dear Mr Linando,

Many thanks for submitting your revised manuscript which has been reviewed now.

Reviewer 2 suggests a minor revision and provides a few straight-forward comments. Reviewer 1, however, is not convinced as you are arguing for LMX which relies on dyads, but then in your empirics you only measure one side of the dyad. The reviewer comments "However, you emphasize the dyadic nature of the LMX construct as support for how it is different from PSS, but only provide a one-sided measure of the relationship between the supervisor and employee."

Having read your manuscript myself again, I agree with the reviewer that is problematic. Your main argument relies on the differences between PSS and LMX. But the measures of LMX and SPOS become not distinguishable anymore. However, you do not provide all items in an appendix and I can just judge this from the two sample items given in the text. So maybe there is some room for you to address this major criticism. Maybe you find a way to show that they are capturing different concepts. Thus, I would like to give you an opportunity to reply to this concern.

Looking forward to receiving your revised manuscript in due course.

Best wishes

Assoc Professor Fabian Homberg
Associate Editor, EBHRM

Reviewer: 1

Recommendation: Reject

Comments:

You have made good improvements in your manuscript. Your study has the potential to contribute to our understanding of the effects of dispositional characteristics on the relationships between employees and their leaders and how this can contribute to organizational productivity. However, you emphasize the dyadic nature of the LMX construct as support for how it is different from PSS, but only provide a one-sided measure of the relationship between the supervisor and employee. In effect, it becomes just another measure of an employee's perception of their supervisor. I think this limits the contribution of the study as it isn't testing what it claims to be testing.

1. Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?:

Yes, as previously stated, it provides a novel analysis of various components that work together to attempt to predict the causes of employees' perceptions of relationship quality with their supervisor.

2. Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?:

The literature review is broad enough to cover the range of proposed relationships but is lacking in the depth needed to clarify the boundaries of the constructs of PSS and LMX. Furthermore, the support in the paper for LMX emphasizes the dyadic nature of the construct which then undermines the study as the dyad is not tested.

3. Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?:

The research methodology is sound with the exception of a one-sided measure of a dyadic construct. Studies frequently test LMX with only one of the participants in the relationship's response, but to accurately measure the construct, both sides should be measured and a value calculated based on the shared perception of the strength of relationship. The rewritten manuscript focuses on the dyad as the point of distinguish between to the two independent variable but does not measure the dyad.

4. Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?:

The statistical analysis of the hypotheses with the data sample data collected is sound. Including a multicollinearity test such as VIF would strengthen the arguments that the independent variables are individually contributing to the outcome variance.

5. Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and conclusions of the paper?:

The paper has the potential to provide managers and scholars guidance on key constructs that can affect organizational outcomes.

6. Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure, jargon use, acronyms, etc.?:

The written presentation is clear and easy to follow.

Reviewer: 2

Recommendation: Minor Revision

Comments:

Please pay extra attentions to the theoretical and practical implications.

1. Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?:

This is an interesting topic.

2. Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?:

The authors need to further justify the selection of the observed variables and their research model.

3. Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?:

The Methodology is quite solid.

4. Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?:

Results are presented clearly.

5. Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and conclusions of the paper?:

Further theoretical and practical implications are needed!!! This part is the most important one and yet it seems not fully developed.

6. Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure, jargon use, acronyms, etc.?:

Further editing is needed.

 * **How-to-submit-a-revision.pdf**
669K

Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic

Abstract

Purpose – This study investigates dispositional factors' (need for affiliation, positive affectivity, and proactive personality) moderation effect on the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables (leader-member exchange and perceived supervisor support) and affective commitment to supervisor.

Design/methodology/approach – In total, 359 employees in Indonesia participated as the study's respondents. This study employs hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

Findings – The results show that need for affiliation and positive affectivity moderates the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and affective commitment to supervisor. In addition, all dispositional factors positively influence affective commitment to supervisor as independent variables. This study's findings depict the social exchange theory in practice.

Originality/value – The present study contributes to theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study extends the knowledge on at least four domains: leader-follower relationship; affective commitment particularly aimed at the supervisor; the roles of dispositional variables on leader-member interactions; and empirically demonstrates social exchange theory. Practically, this study shows which factors are relevant to shaping positive leader-member interactions. Such results are potentially of value for the leader, the organization, and those responsible for recruiting prospective employees.

Keywords: Dispositional variables; Leader-follower relationship; Affective commitment to supervisor.

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Studies (e.g., Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) have emphasized the importance of positive leader-follower relationships to generate productive outcomes within organizations. Morgeson et al. (2005) particularly highlight social skills, personality characteristics, and teamwork knowledge as the factors to look out on forming a positive relationship in an interdependent collaborative relationship setting. Social skills and teamwork knowledge factors are changeable, meaning that the lack of these two aspects should be 'fixable' by either the leader or the organization. Meanwhile, dispositional characteristics are relatively stable (Linando and Halim, 2022; Miller *et al.*, 1981). Failure to understand dispositional characteristics limits the chance to create a positive leader-follower relationship as those features are hard, if not impossible, to change. That being said, personality characteristics should receive as much (if not more) attention as the other two aspects in leader-follower interaction's discourses. Therefore, the present study is particularly interested in testing employees' dispositional characteristics within a leader-follower relationship setting.

In particular, the present study examines three personality characteristics: the need for affiliation (NAFL), positive affectivity (PA), and proactive personality (PP). NAFL is among individual factors receiving little attention in leader-follower discourses, with only a few studies (e.g., Kong et al., 2017; Mathieu, 1990) investigating this variable. In fact, NAFL is among the crucial elements determining employees' work motivation and behavior, which to some extent will also influence employees' attitude toward their leader (Jha, 2010). On the other hand, individuals with a high degree of PA are typically socially attractive and likable. Researchers (e.g., Vandenberghe et al., 2019; Yoon & Thye, 2000) confirm that PA directly contributes to the positive relationship between leader and follower. Previous studies (e.g., Wijaya, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021) also concluded the connection between PP and leader-follower relationship variables. Nevertheless, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no studies position NAFL, PA and PP as the moderating variables for leader-follower relationship variables. This positioning is essential as such a model could further illuminate how employees' dispositional variables contribute in forming positive leader-follower interactions.

The settlement to choose those three variables was not merely a cherry-picking-based decision. In the contemporary workplace sphere, many HR experts argue that the classical aspects of

employees' personalities might play a key role in maintaining business survival and advancement. For instance, Forbes recently published an article explaining how modern employees increasingly want to belong in the workplace (Gaskell, 2022), resonating with the need for affiliation concept. Such a remark may remain valid, at least within the near future, as O.C. Tanner forecast (Petersen, 2022). Positive affect also regains momentum to be a significant perk in the workplace following Harvard Business Review (Riegel, 2022) gauges its importance in the contemporary workplace. Similarly, proactive personality stays as a relevant dispositional workplace variable in the meantime, following experts' op-eds in leading management popular literature (e.g., Burr, 2019; Forbes Coaches Council, 2019)

To indicate a positive leader-follower relationship, the authors place affective commitment to supervisor (ACS) as the dependent variable. Popularized in the '80s (McGee & Ford, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1984), the affective commitment construct was further distinguished into several foci (for a detailed review, see Vandenberghe et al., 2004), including the affective commitment to supervisor. The present study's approach of using a specific affective commitment focus within one research frame aligns with the experts' (e.g., Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) suggestion. As a result, the authors expect this study to better exhibit employees' relevant behavior toward the target (in this study's context, the supervisor).

Social exchange norm stands as the main theoretical argument basing the hypothesized correlations between independent and dependent variables within this study. Blau (1964) asserts that employees' commitment to the supervisor is likely to be paid back reciprocally. Chughtai (2013) argues that supervisors may give tangible and intangible resources like support, feedback, and more control in the workplace to their employees, in return for their commitment. This study will put this theory into test, whether it is true that the positive leader-member exchange (LMX) and perceived supervisor support (PSS) will be exchanged with ACS.

After all, this study aims to examine the moderating effects of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) on the relationship between leader-follower interaction (LMX & PSS) and ACS. In so doing, the present study contributes to multiple facets. First, on leader-follower discourses, this study extends the use of social exchange theory in the context of leader-follower interaction. Additionally, the present study also answers Graen & Uhl-Bien's (1995) calls to explore the stages of LMX theory development further. Second, on affective commitment facade, this study adds

more variables to ACS' nomological network as a distinct focus of affective commitment. The authors also offer a unique proposition that this study's results might illuminate the interaction pattern of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) and ACS. That addition contributes to the calls from previous scholars focusing on leader-follower interaction discourses (e.g., Hemshorn de Sanchez *et al.*, 2022; Linando *et al.*, 2018). Finally, on the practical level domain, the findings might shed light on the aspects recruiters should pay attention to upon recruiting prospective employees.

Literature Review

Independent and dependent variables

The authors frame two independent variables, namely leader-member exchange (LMX) and Perceived supervisor support (PSS), as variables reflecting the leader-follower relationship. Most literature (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Matta *et al.*, 2015) solely focuses on LMX as the variable depicting the relationship between leader and follower, while as a matter of fact, essentially such a relationship has a much broader scope beyond only LMX. Dansereau *et al.* (1975) associate many variables to what they call 'a superior and a member' dyadic relationship, including leadership, supervision, and vertical support. Pulakos and Wexley (1983) also translate a dyad as something different from LMX. They assert that support, work facilitation, goal emphasis, and interaction facilitation reflect the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers. Furthermore, Yammarino *et al.* (1998) distinguish leader-follower relationship into two types: 'within group dyads', which are typically formal and managed by a superior; and 'between group dyads' reflecting interpersonal relationships independent of the formal workgroup.

Accordingly, this paper's approach of employing both LMX and PSS potentially provides a more comprehensive portrait of the leader-follower relationship. Furthermore, despite the similarities between the two variables, LMX and PSS are conceptually different. PSS concerns employees' perception of how much their supervisors value their contributions and care for their well-being (Kottke and Sharafinski, 1988; Shanock and Eisenberger, 2006). Whereas LMX concerns the quality of the dyadic interaction between leaders and followers as the key to understanding the effects of leaders on followers, teams, and organizations (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). Previous

studies (e.g., Maertz Jr *et al.*, 2007; Wei and Yani, 2010) that place LMX and PSS as two separate constructs also strengthen the claim the authors made, that LMX and PSS are conceptually dissimilar.

The authors particularly set affective commitment to supervisor as the dependent variable. Studies (e.g., Perreira et al., 2018; Siders et al., 2001) have underlined the value of differentiating the use of multiple affective commitment foci as each focus bears different antecedents and consequences. Aligns with affective commitment to organization which linearly leads to organizational level-outcomes, ACS is also predictive of supervisor-related outcomes like citizenship behavior towards supervisor (Wasti & Can, 2008). The more detailed argumentations of each hypothesis will be further elaborated in the following sections.

LMX and PSS to ACS

Leader-member exchange (LMX) reflects the dyadic relationship between leaders and their subordinates where the two parties form and advance their bond through the sequence of interactions during a particular timespan (Graen & Scandura, 1987). Meanwhile, affective commitment is 'a psychological state that binds the individual to the organization' (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 14). Referring to the global definition of affective commitment, ACS could be loosely translated as a psychological state binding the followers to their supervisor/boss. According to the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), the extent to which a leader interacts with followers frames the two parties in a reciprocal social-exchange connection. Previous studies (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Graen & Cashman, 1975) asserted that among the resources appreciable by the leader that employees could offer is their dedication and commitment. These theoretical and empirical bases lead to a postulate that LMX influence ACS.

Like LMX, perceived supervisor support (PSS) also plays a crucial role in shaping employees' affective commitment to supervisor by generating a reciprocity mechanism. PSS is the degree to which supervisors value employees' contributions and are attentive toward employees' conditions (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2002). Supervisors' support indicates their care toward employees' well-being which, as previous studies (e.g., Li et al., 2018; Ng & Sorensen, 2008) suggest, will increase employees' affective commitment.

Both LMX and PSS suggest positive reinforcement leaders give to their followers, which leads to a rationale postulating that these two variables will make the followers more affectively committed to their supervisor. The more supervisors positively interact, understand and support their followers, the more the followers meet their leaders and consequently, the more the proximity among the two. Becker (2009) suggests that proximity and visibility might enhance supervisors' influence leading to subordinates' commitment. Based on these arguments, we hypothesize:

H1. LMX positively relates to ACS.

H2. PSS positively relates to ACS.

The moderating role of dispositional variables

Personality traits predict workplace behaviors and outcomes (e.g., Barrick and Mount, 1991; Hogan and Holland, 2003; Tett *et al.*, 1991). Citing Trait Activation Theory (TAT), the connection between leader-follower relationship and performance depends on the traits of involved parties (Tett and Burnett, 2003). Walumbwa *et al.* (2007) suggest that explaining a leader's effectiveness is insufficient without incorporating the followers' traits into the leadership process. The fundamental concept of TAT is that latent traits are expressed or activated in response to trait-relevant contextual factors, which subsequently affect performance.

Authors argue that proactive personality, positive affectivity, and need for affiliation are exhibited in response to trait-relevant cues. Proactive personality is characterized by a behavioral tendency to act upon or alter one's environment (Bateman and Crant, 1993). A proactive personality archetype is "*one who is relatively unconstrained by situational forces, and who effects environmental change*" (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). The proactive personality construct originates in interactionism, which "*argues that situations are as much a function of the person as the person's behavior is a function of the situation*" (Bowers, 1973, p. 327). Bouckenooghe *et al.* (2013, p. 109) suggest that "*PA and NA are expressed as responses to trait-relevant cues*". Different individuals have different traits, which can affect their work behavior. These traits help individuals observe their work environment from different perspectives (Bowling *et al.*, 2008). In addition, the need for affiliation is a personality trait corresponding to the needs of individuals for social interactions (Veroff and Veroff, 2016).

The moderating role of NAFL

The need for affiliation is the desire to acquire a sense of belonging and connecting with others (McClelland, 1985). Individuals with a high degree of need for affiliation tend to form a connection with their leaders and peers (Cole *et al.*, 2002), making NAFL a potential moderator in the relationship between leader-follower relationship and ACS. Even when the supervisor is somewhat aloof, the authors still hypothesize that the moderating role of NAFL still stands. This assumption is based on Kong *et al.*'s (2017) assertion that individuals with a high need for affiliation are disposed to take up actions for the sake of collective interest. When the supervisor does not initiate the interaction with the employees, those employees with high NAFL will embark upon a dyadic relationship with the supervisor. Henceforth, we hypothesize:

H3a. NAFL strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H3b. NAFL strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of PA

Positive affectivity is an individual propensity to encounter affirmative emotions and will influence how individuals interact with the environment (Ashby *et al.*, 1999). The authors argue that PA will moderate the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and followers' affective commitment to supervisor. Since PA provides an individual with a good state of focus and abundant social, intellectual and psychological resources (Fredrickson, 2001), higher PA will likely ease them to connect with the supervisor and consequently enhance the effects of leader-follower relationship variables and ACS. Even in a condition where the supervisor is challenging to cope with, individuals with high PA will see difficulties as challenges and tend to manage them positively (Kaplan *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, a meta-analysis involving 35 studies conducted by Bowling *et al.* (2008) reveals that PA positively and significantly relates to satisfaction with supervision and co-workers, suggesting that PA is a pertinent element in leader-follower dyadic relationships. Therefore, the hypotheses are:

H4a. PA strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H4b. PA strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of proactive personality

Proactive personality is defined as the personality that “..is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and who effects environmental change” (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). Proactive individuals tend to play an active role in interacting with their surroundings. This feature will consequently enhance their closeness with their workplace counterparts (Yang *et al.*, 2011), including their leader. Additionally, Crant (2000) asserts that proactive individuals will generally produce a higher performance level than those less proactive. Such a feature potentially increases the interaction time between proactive individuals and their leaders, in which the authors argue that the higher interaction potentially entails a higher affective commitment. Bernerth *et al.* (2008) also suggest that leaders tend to create closer relationships with followers who have similar personalities to theirs. As generally proactive individuals will stand out among others in their workplace, this might situate them as having leadership quality which may further adorn their relationship with the leaders. Based on these argumentations, the authors hypothesize that:

H5a. PP strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H5b. PP strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

Data collection and method

The data for the study was collected through an online survey with 366 respondents in different cities in Indonesia participating. After checking for outlier, seven responses were dropped, making 359 responses finally being processed for data testing. This number adequately fits the authors’ plan to process the data using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) (Hair *et al.*, 2013; Kline, 2015). Table I shows respondents’ demographic profiles regarding age, gender, status, tenure, sector, supervisor’s gender, and co-working time with their leader.

--Insert Table I here--

Measures

This research examined six variables: LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP, and ACS. All of the measurement items used in this research were translated from English to Bahasa Indonesia and then back-translated to English. Then the authors checked whether the original and the back-translated English versions were equivalent. Both authors checked the two versions separately then discuss again whether there is substantial gap among those versions. Both authors saw no essential differences between the two versions. This back-translation approach is necessary to ensure that the translation does not change the essence of questions (Brislin, 1970). The back-translation technique was carried out with the assistance of an Indonesian-English bilingual scholar.

All of the variables, except LMX, were rated on a six-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Since each item on the LMX construct asks about a particular condition, the ratings indicate different expressions. However, in general, rating 1 always refers to the most negative expression such as ‘not a bit’ on the question of whether the supervisor understands the respondent’s problems and needs, or ‘none’ for the chance that the supervisor will help them solve difficulties. Conversely, rating 6 always represents the most positive expression such as ‘fully recognize’ for whether the supervisor recognizes the respondent’s potentials or ‘extremely effective’ where the questionnaire asks the respondents to describe the working relationship with their supervisor. **The full items of all measurements are provided in Table 5, in appendix.**

LMX. Seven items from Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) were used to measure LMX. Respondents were asked to respond to items such as: “How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs.”. The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.925.

PSS. Similar to previous studies measuring PSS (e.g., Maertz Jr et al., 2007), the authors adopted three items from the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986) by replacing the ‘organization’ term with ‘supervisor’. These three items were selected based on the high factor loading on the SPOS (all above 0.70). The items include “My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work”, and the internal consistency of PSS is 0.850.

NAFL. Need for affiliation was measured using the same scale as Kong et al.'s (2017), including this question: "When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself". The internal consistency value of NAFL is 0.800.

PA. The authors employed Thompson's (2007) scale to measure positive affectivity. The opening statement for each item was 'these words reflect my personality', and then the respondents will see various terms denoting positive affectivity, such as 'active' and 'determined'. The internal consistency for PA is 0.814.

PP. Ten items from Bateman and Crant (1993) were employed to measure proactive personality. Among the questions example is: 'I can spot a good opportunity long before others can see it' and the internal consistency for this construct is 0.896.

ACS. Affective commitment to supervisor was measured by Perreira et al.'s (2018) scale. A sample item is "I feel privileged to work with someone like my immediate supervisor". The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.839.

Control variables. The authors controlled for various demographic (age, gender, education, and marital status), work (tenure and sector), and leader-follower relationship (co-working time and leader-follower gender similarity) characteristics as according to previous studies (e.g., Graham et al., 2018), these factors potentially influence the interaction of focal variables.

Results

In the first phase of data analysis, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation were analyzed as being recapped in Table II. Afterward, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to identify constructs' validity as being compiled in Table III.

--Insert Table II here--

--Insert Table III here--

Results in Table 3 show that AVE and CR values for all measures are higher than the recommended value (0.50 and 0.70 respectively, Hair et al., 2013). Table 3 shows that the value of the square root of AVE for each variable is higher than the correlations among variables, supporting the

discriminant validity for all constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The model Goodness of Fit (GOF) values are as such: CMIN/DF = 1.546; RMSEA = 0.054; SRMR = 0.0414; TLI = 0.959; and CFI= 0.964. These results indicate excellent model fit and validate the suggested research model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Hair *et al.*, 2013).

Finally, the authors tested the hypotheses using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. Table IV compiled the overall regression results. Firstly, all control variables were entered in step one. In step 2, the authors added independent and moderating variables. Finally, the interaction terms were entered in step 3. Before generating the interaction terms, independent and moderating variables were mean-centered, following Aiken & West's (1991) suggestion. The two-way interactions shown by Figure 1 were plotted with moderators' values at one standard deviation below (low condition) and above (high condition) the mean.

--Insert Table IV here--

--Insert Figure I here--

Hypothesis 1 proposed LMX to be positively related to ACS. As shown in Table IV, LMX has a significant and positive effect on ACS (Step 2: $\beta = 0.475$; $p < 0.001$), hypothesis 1 was supported by this finding. Hypothesis 2 predicted that PSS is positively associated with ACS. As shown in the step 2, PSS positively relates to ACS ($\beta = 0.731$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 2.

Hypotheses 3,4 and 5 proposed that NAFL, PA, and PP would moderate the relationship between the independent variables (LMX and PSS) and ACS, such that the relationship is stronger when the moderators are high rather than low. The OLS regression results show that the interactions of LMX x NAFL (Step 3: $\beta = 0.127$, $p < 0.01$), LMX x PA (Step 3: $\beta = 0.251$, $p < 0.001$), PSS x NAFL (Step 3: $\beta = 0.175$, $p < 0.01$), and PSS x PA (Step 3: $\beta = 0.233$, $p < 0.01$) were significant. Meanwhile, PP was not a significant moderator for the relationships between the independent variables and ACS (see Table IV). These results confirm hypotheses 3 and 4 and reject hypothesis 5.

Discussion

Overall, the results support all of the hypotheses but one hypothesis concerning proactive personality's role in enhancing the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and ACS. The findings assert that LMX and PSS positively relate to ACS, with a higher correlation found on PSS (0.731) than LMX (0.475). This result is understandable given the different nature of these two variables. Settoon et al. (1996) found that perceived organizational support is associated with organizational commitment while LMX is associated with citizenship and in-role behavior. Although Settoon et al.'s study addresses perceived support and commitment regarding the organization and not to the supervisor, the result is still valuable to explain what is found in the present study for two reasons. First, Eisenberger et al. (2002) suggest that PSS and POS are closely related. The extent to which the supervisor is identified with the organization acts as the factor strengthening the two variables' relationship. Second, the suggested perceived support pattern leads to commitment, explaining the strong correlation between PSS and ACS.

In addition, conceptually, PSS also has a more positive nuance than LMX, which contains a somewhat neutral stance defining the relationship between supervisor and member. For instance, the question for the PSS construct asks 'to what extent the supervisor is willing to spare his/her time to help the members do the job to the best of their ability'. The question shows a positive relationship between the supervisor and the members, at least compared to the relatively neutral question for LMX construct such as 'Do you know the position between you and your supervisor/manager? Do you usually know how satisfied your supervisor/manager is with the things you do?'.

The results also reveal that all moderating variables (NAFL, PA, and PP) positively related to ACS. The present study did not hypothesize these variables to be correlated with ACS as the authors thought that these variables only play moderating roles. Hence seeing these variables independently connected with ACS is somewhat surprising. One possible explanation for these findings is that NAFL (Hill, 1991), PA (Watson & Naragon, 2009), and PP (Yang *et al.*, 2011) belong to the factors enhancing good interpersonal connection. Meanwhile, good interpersonal relationships correlate with employees' affective commitment to supervisor (Chughtai, 2013).

The results also show that, unlike NAFL and PA, PP does not strengthen the relationship between leader-follower relationship and ACS. According to interpersonal interaction theory, a dyadic relationship will be more harmonious when one party is dominant, and the other is obedient (Leary,

1957). Generally speaking, the need for affiliation and positive affectivity are among the variables that strengthen the submissive role of employees. Meanwhile, individuals with proactive personalities tend to take the initiative to make changes and are not keen to face situational constraints (Bateman & Crant, 1993). These features do not align with the submissive characteristics needed to create a harmonious supervisor-employee dyadic relationship, hence explaining the insignificant role of PP on the nexus between leader-follower relationship and ACS.

Theoretical implications

From a theoretical perspective, the authors contributed to the nomological network for the tested variables (LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP, ACS). This study also reveals that dispositional factors significantly influence commitment toward supervisors. Furthermore, the present study shows that dispositional variables may have diverse effects regarding the connection between leader-follower relationship and ACS, as demonstrated by the non-significant moderation role of PP. In addition, from the parallel pattern of moderating dispositional variables, this study concludes that LMX and PSS share similar sentiments on representing leader-follower relationship.

The present study also adds to the leader-follower relationship in a greater extent. The use of both LMX and PSS at the same frame complete to one another on portraying the comprehensive image of leader-follower relationship. Such an approach answers the call to consider leader-follower relationship beyond the narrow definition (Dansereau *et al.*, 1975; Pulakos and Wexley, 1983).

This study's findings also portray the application of social exchange theory in the context of leader-follower interaction. When the leader cooperates with (high LMX) and supports (high PSS) the follower positively, the follower will exchange those good treatments with affective commitment (high ACS). In addition, the findings also slightly touch interpersonal interaction theory, that for interaction to work well, the parties should possess characteristics that describe their social dominance. The high degree of proactivity by an individual at the lower organizational hierarchy (the follower) misalign with their supposedly submissive position. Henceforth this feature does not significantly influence the relationship between leader-follower interactions and follower's affective commitment to supervisor. Nevertheless, future studies examining interpersonal interaction theory in practice are needed to ensure this argumentation's validity.

Practical implication

The authors divide practical implications from two angles: for the leader and the company. The leader should be aware of factors that significantly enhance employees' affective commitment. For instance, it is known that perceived supervisor support is the highest contributor of affective commitment to supervisor. Meaning that a leader should focus on ensuring that the employees feel supported by their leader, which makes them committed to the supervisor. Leaders could also be attentive that employees with a high degree of need for affiliation, positive affectivity, and proactive personality are potentially committed to them. Leaders might also want to pay more attention to the employees who do not possess such characteristics, as a low degree of these features correlates to a low level of affective commitment.

Furthermore, the company might want to include these three variables (NAFL, PA, and PP) as extra elements for the recruitment phase's personality test. Understandably, the dispositional variables are relatively stable and hence difficult to change. By showing that the disposition factors matter in building a good relationship between the leader and the followers, the present study helps managers to minimize the risk of recruiting difficult individuals. From another perspective, if the companies insist on taking individuals with low NAFL, PA, and PP, the company may want to add more policies on managing such people so that a harmonious leader-follower relationship can still be well managed.

Additionally, companies need to ensure that the leaders manage their interaction and support to the follower well, as the results suggest LMX and PSS lead to a desirable outcome. These suggestions are especially relevant for the type of jobs demanding a high degree of affective commitment to the supervisor. Emphasizing these two aspects to the leaders from the beginning could provide a firm step toward creating a pleasant leader-follower relationship in the workplace.

Limitations and directions for future research

The generalizability of these results is subject to certain limitations. First, the research design involving cross-sectional and one rating source (only from employees' perspective) may limit the depiction of the leader-follower dyadic relationship. Future studies might want to consider longitudinal design and collect data from multiple sources (e.g., the leaders) to better depict inter-

variable relationships. Second, the findings might be tied to cultural factors in Indonesia. Future studies on different nations might find different results. Third, although the present research frames the collection of variables as leader-follower relationship, in fact the tested variables (LMX and PSS) are only those having positive relationship nuances. Future studies might want to investigate more leader-follower relationship variables, either those with positive or negative themes, to see whether these moderation patterns from dispositional variables still occur. Finally, future studies might want to investigate the relationship of these variables on each company's sector types, sizes, or industries as each of these elements might hold unique leader-follower relationship characteristics.

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<onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com>

Reply-To: ebhrm.tl@gmail.com

To: addin.linando@uii.ac.id, addinlinando@gmail.com

21-Mar-2023

Dear Mr. Linando,

Your revised manuscript entitled "Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic" has been successfully submitted online and is presently being given full consideration for publication in Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship.

Your manuscript ID is EBHRM-04-2022-0096.R2.

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Thank you for submitting your manuscript to the Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Lange

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship



Jaya Addin Linando <183110101@uii.ac.id>

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship - Decision on Manuscript ID EBHRM-04-2022-0096.R2

1 message

Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship

Tue, Jun 6, 2023 at 8:35 PM

<onbehalf@manuscriptcentral.com>

Reply-To: ebhrm.tl@gmail.com

To: addin.linando@uii.ac.id, addinlinando@gmail.com

06-Jun-2023

Dear Mr. Linando,

Manuscript ID EBHRM-04-2022-0096.R2 entitled "Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic" which you submitted to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship, has been reviewed. The comments of the reviewers and Associate Editor are included at the bottom of this letter.

The reviewers have reached different recommendations, but the Associate Editor is positively inclined towards your work and suggests some minor revisions to your manuscript. Therefore, I assign a Minor Revision decision and invite you to respond to the comments below and revise your manuscript accordingly.

To revise your manuscript, log into <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/ebhrm> and enter your Author Centre, where you will find your manuscript title listed under "Manuscripts with Decisions." Under "Actions," click on "Create a Revision." Your manuscript number has been appended to denote a revision.

You will be unable to make your revisions on the originally submitted version of the manuscript. Instead, revise your manuscript using a word processing program and save it on your computer. Please also highlight the changes to your manuscript within the document by using the track changes mode in MS Word or by using bold or coloured text.

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Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship, your revised manuscript should be uploaded as soon as possible. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision in a reasonable amount of time, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Once again, thank you for submitting your manuscript to Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship and I look forward to receiving your revision.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Thomas Lange
Editor-in-Chief, Evidence-based HRM: a global forum for empirical scholarship

Reviewers' and Associate Editor Comments to Author:

Associate Editor - Comments to the Author:

Dear Author(s),

Many thanks for submitting your renewed revision which has been seen by the original reviewers. Reviewer 1 is satisfied and recommends acceptance whereas Reviewer 2 insists on a two sided measure of LMX and thus recommends rejection. Due to the split review I have spent some time reading the LMX literature myself to see if it is acceptable to use one sided measures. Based on my screening of this literature it is my view that one sided measures can be used and that this does not constitute a sufficient reason to reject your manuscript.

That said, however, the point made by reviewer 2 is valid and the additional explanations that you have given in the theory sections do help but do not mitigate the concern to a sufficient extent. I thus suggest that you pick this point up explicitly in the limitations, i.e. a limitation is that you were not able to collect dyadic data from both supervisors and employees. You should then go on and reference a couple of recent studies that have used the same approach (e.g. one I have come across that could be used for this purpose is Audenaert, M., Decramer, A., George, B., Verschuere, B., & Van Waeyenberg, T. (2019). When employee performance management affects individual innovation in public organizations: the role of consistency and LMX. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 30(5), 815–834. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1239220>).

In order to allow you time to implement these changes, I recommend the manuscript status is set to minor revision.

To expedite the process I will not send your manuscript to the reviewers again and check the final changes myself.

Best wishes

Fabian Homberg
Associate Editor, EBHRM

Reviewer: 1

Recommendation: Accept

Comments:
Well done!

1. Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?:

Yes.

2. Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?:

The literature part is quite solid.

3. Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?:

The methodology is clear.

4. Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?:

Results are well presented.

5. Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and conclusions of the paper?:

I would expect more practical implications.

6. Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure, jargon use, acronyms, etc.:?

Editing is needed to ensure that the paper is free of grammatical, punctuation and spelling errors.

Reviewer: 2

Recommendation: Reject

Comments:
Your revision makes a nice case for the conceptual distinction between LMX and POS. However, it is not tested in your

study due to the one-sided measure of LMX.

1. Originality: Does the paper contain new and significant information adequate to justify publication?:

Same as before

2. Relationship to Literature: Does the paper demonstrate an adequate understanding of the relevant literature in the field and cite an appropriate range of literature sources? Is any significant work ignored?:

Same as before

3. Methodology: Is the paper's argument built on an appropriate base of theory, concepts, or other ideas? Has the research or equivalent intellectual work on which the paper is based been well designed? Are the methods employed appropriate?:

Given the explanation that LMX is different from POS because of the dyadic nature of LMX, not using a dyadic measure limits the study to truly support its claims.

4. Results: Are results presented clearly and analysed appropriately? Do the conclusions adequately tie together the other elements of the paper?:

Same as before

5. Practicality and/or Research implications: Does the paper identify clearly any implications for practice and/or further research? Are these implications consistent with the findings and conclusions of the paper?:

Same as before

6. Quality of Communication: Does the paper clearly express its case, measured against the technical language of the field and the expected knowledge of the journal's readership? Has attention been paid to the clarity of expression and readability, such as sentence structure, jargon use, acronyms, etc.:

Same as before



* **How-to-submit-a-revision.pdf**

669K

Dispositional factors enhancing leader-follower relationship's dynamic

Abstract

Purpose – This study investigates dispositional factors' (need for affiliation, positive affectivity, and proactive personality) moderation effect on the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables (leader-member exchange and perceived supervisor support) and affective commitment to supervisor.

Design/methodology/approach – In total, 359 employees in Indonesia participated as the study's respondents. This study employs hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

Findings – The results show that need for affiliation and positive affectivity moderates the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and affective commitment to supervisor. In addition, all dispositional factors positively influence affective commitment to supervisor as independent variables. This study's findings depict the social exchange theory in practice.

Originality/value – The present study contributes to theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study extends the knowledge on at least four domains: leader-follower relationship; affective commitment particularly aimed at the supervisor; the roles of dispositional variables on leader-member interactions; and empirically demonstrates social exchange theory. Practically, this study shows which factors are relevant to shaping positive leader-member interactions. Such results are potentially of value for the leader, the organization, and those responsible for recruiting prospective employees.

Keywords: Dispositional variables; Leader-follower relationship; Affective commitment to supervisor.

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Studies (e.g., Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen & Scandura, 1987; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) have emphasized the importance of positive leader-follower relationships to generate productive outcomes within organizations. Morgeson et al. (2005) particularly highlight social skills, personality characteristics, and teamwork knowledge as the factors to look out on forming a positive relationship in an interdependent collaborative relationship setting. Social skills and teamwork knowledge factors are changeable, meaning that the lack of these two aspects should be 'fixable' by either the leader or the organization. Meanwhile, dispositional characteristics are relatively stable (Linando and Halim, 2022; Miller *et al.*, 1981). Failure to understand dispositional characteristics limits the chance to create a positive leader-follower relationship as those features are hard, if not impossible, to change. That being said, personality characteristics should receive as much (if not more) attention as the other two aspects in leader-follower interaction's discourses. Therefore, the present study is particularly interested in testing employees' dispositional characteristics within a leader-follower relationship setting.

In particular, the present study examines three personality characteristics: the need for affiliation (NAFL), positive affectivity (PA), and proactive personality (PP). NAFL is among individual factors receiving little attention in leader-follower discourses, with only a few studies (e.g., Kong et al., 2017; Mathieu, 1990) investigating this variable. In fact, NAFL is among the crucial elements determining employees' work motivation and behavior, which to some extent will also influence employees' attitude toward their leader (Jha, 2010). On the other hand, individuals with a high degree of PA are typically socially attractive and likable. Researchers (e.g., Vandenberghe et al., 2019; Yoon & Thye, 2000) confirm that PA directly contributes to the positive relationship between leader and follower. Previous studies (e.g., Wijaya, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021) also concluded the connection between PP and leader-follower relationship variables. Nevertheless, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no studies position NAFL, PA and PP as the moderating variables for leader-follower relationship variables. This positioning is essential as such a model could further illuminate how employees' dispositional variables contribute in forming positive leader-follower interactions.

The settlement to choose those three variables was not merely a cherry-picking-based decision. In the contemporary workplace sphere, many HR experts argue that the classical aspects of

employees' personalities might play a key role in maintaining business survival and advancement. For instance, Forbes recently published an article explaining how modern employees increasingly want to belong in the workplace (Gaskell, 2022), resonating with the need for affiliation concept. Such a remark may remain valid, at least within the near future, as O.C. Tanner forecast (Petersen, 2022). Positive affect also regains momentum to be a significant perk in the workplace following Harvard Business Review (Riegel, 2022) gauges its importance in the contemporary workplace. Similarly, proactive personality stays as a relevant dispositional workplace variable in the meantime, following experts' op-eds in leading management popular literature (e.g., Burr, 2019; Forbes Coaches Council, 2019)

To indicate a positive leader-follower relationship, the authors place affective commitment to supervisor (ACS) as the dependent variable. Popularized in the '80s (McGee & Ford, 1987; Meyer & Allen, 1984), the affective commitment construct was further distinguished into several foci (for a detailed review, see Vandenberghe et al., 2004), including the affective commitment to supervisor. The present study's approach of using a specific affective commitment focus within one research frame aligns with the experts' (e.g., Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002) suggestion. As a result, the authors expect this study to better exhibit employees' relevant behavior toward the target (in this study's context, the supervisor).

Social exchange norm stands as the main theoretical argument basing the hypothesized correlations between independent and dependent variables within this study. Blau (1964) asserts that employees' commitment to the supervisor is likely to be paid back reciprocally. Chughtai (2013) argues that supervisors may give tangible and intangible resources like support, feedback, and more control in the workplace to their employees, in return for their commitment. This study will put this theory into test, whether it is true that the positive leader-member exchange (LMX) and perceived supervisor support (PSS) will be exchanged with ACS.

After all, this study aims to examine the moderating effects of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) on the relationship between leader-follower interaction (LMX & PSS) and ACS. In so doing, the present study contributes to multiple facets. First, on leader-follower discourses, this study extends the use of social exchange theory in the context of leader-follower interaction. Additionally, the present study also answers Graen & Uhl-Bien's (1995) calls to explore the stages of LMX theory development further. Second, on affective commitment facade, this study adds

more variables to ACS' nomological network as a distinct focus of affective commitment. The authors also offer a unique proposition that this study's results might illuminate the interaction pattern of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) and ACS. That addition contributes to the calls from previous scholars focusing on leader-follower interaction discourses (e.g., Hemshorn de Sanchez *et al.*, 2022; Linando *et al.*, 2018). Finally, on the practical level domain, the findings might shed light on the aspects recruiters should pay attention to upon recruiting prospective employees.

Literature Review

Independent and dependent variables

The authors frame two independent variables, namely leader-member exchange (LMX) and Perceived supervisor support (PSS), as variables reflecting the leader-follower relationship. Most literature (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Matta *et al.*, 2015) solely focuses on LMX as the variable depicting the relationship between leader and follower, while as a matter of fact, essentially such a relationship has a much broader scope beyond only LMX. Dansereau *et al.* (1975) associate many variables to what they call 'a superior and a member' dyadic relationship, including leadership, supervision, and vertical support. Pulakos and Wexley (1983) also translate a dyad as something different from LMX. They assert that support, work facilitation, goal emphasis, and interaction facilitation reflect the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers. Furthermore, Yammarino *et al.* (1998) distinguish leader-follower relationship into two types: 'within group dyads', which are typically formal and managed by a superior; and 'between group dyads' reflecting interpersonal relationships independent of the formal workgroup.

Accordingly, this paper's approach of employing both LMX and PSS potentially provides a more comprehensive portrait of the leader-follower relationship. Furthermore, despite the similarities between the two variables, LMX and PSS are conceptually different. PSS concerns employees' perception of how much their supervisors value their contributions and care for their well-being (Kottke and Sharafinski, 1988; Shanock and Eisenberger, 2006). Whereas LMX concerns the quality of the dyadic interaction between leaders and followers as the key to understanding the effects of leaders on followers, teams, and organizations (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). Previous

studies (e.g., Maertz Jr *et al.*, 2007; Wei and Yani, 2010) that place LMX and PSS as two separate constructs also strengthen the claim the authors made, that LMX and PSS are conceptually dissimilar.

The authors particularly set affective commitment to supervisor as the dependent variable. Studies (e.g., Perreira *et al.*, 2018; Siders *et al.*, 2001) have underlined the value of differentiating the use of multiple affective commitment foci as each focus bears different antecedents and consequences. Aligns with affective commitment to organization which linearly leads to organizational level-outcomes, ACS is also predictive of supervisor-related outcomes like citizenship behavior towards supervisor (Wasti & Can, 2008). The more detailed argumentations of each hypothesis will be further elaborated in the following sections.

LMX and PSS to ACS

Leader-member exchange (LMX) reflects the dyadic relationship between leaders and their subordinates where the two parties form and advance their bond through the sequence of interactions during a particular timespan (Graen & Scandura, 1987). Meanwhile, affective commitment is 'a psychological state that binds the individual to the organization' (Allen & Meyer, 1990, p. 14). Referring to the global definition of affective commitment, ACS could be loosely translated as a psychological state binding the followers to their supervisor/boss. According to the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964), the extent to which a leader interacts with followers frames the two parties in a reciprocal social-exchange connection. Previous studies (e.g., Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Graen & Cashman, 1975) asserted that among the resources appreciable by the leader that employees could offer is their dedication and commitment. These theoretical and empirical bases lead to a postulate that LMX influence ACS.

Like LMX, perceived supervisor support (PSS) also plays a crucial role in shaping employees' affective commitment to supervisor by generating a reciprocity mechanism. PSS is the degree to which supervisors value employees' contributions and are attentive toward employees' conditions (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2002). Supervisors' support indicates their care toward employees' well-being which, as previous studies (e.g., Li *et al.*, 2018; Ng & Sorensen, 2008) suggest, will increase employees' affective commitment.

Both LMX and PSS suggest positive reinforcement leaders give to their followers, which leads to a rationale postulating that these two variables will make the followers more affectively committed to their supervisor. The more supervisors positively interact, understand and support their followers, the more the followers meet their leaders and consequently, the more the proximity among the two. Becker (2009) suggests that proximity and visibility might enhance supervisors' influence leading to subordinates' commitment. Based on these arguments, we hypothesize:

H1. LMX positively relates to ACS.

H2. PSS positively relates to ACS.

The moderating role of dispositional variables

Personality traits predict workplace behaviors and outcomes (e.g., Barrick and Mount, 1991; Hogan and Holland, 2003; Tett *et al.*, 1991). Citing Trait Activation Theory (TAT), the connection between leader-follower relationship and performance depends on the traits of involved parties (Tett and Burnett, 2003). Walumbwa *et al.* (2007) suggest that explaining a leader's effectiveness is insufficient without incorporating the followers' traits into the leadership process. The fundamental concept of TAT is that latent traits are expressed or activated in response to trait-relevant contextual factors, which subsequently affect performance.

Authors argue that proactive personality, positive affectivity, and need for affiliation are exhibited in response to trait-relevant cues. Proactive personality is characterized by a behavioral tendency to act upon or alter one's environment (Bateman and Crant, 1993). A proactive personality archetype is "*one who is relatively unconstrained by situational forces, and who effects environmental change*" (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). The proactive personality construct originates in interactionism, which "*argues that situations are as much a function of the person as the person's behavior is a function of the situation*" (Bowers, 1973, p. 327). Bouckenooghe *et al.* (2013, p. 109) suggest that "*PA and NA are expressed as responses to trait-relevant cues*". Different individuals have different traits, which can affect their work behavior. These traits help individuals observe their work environment from different perspectives (Bowling *et al.*, 2008). In addition, the need for affiliation is a personality trait corresponding to the needs of individuals for social interactions (Veroff and Veroff, 2016).

The moderating role of NAFL

The need for affiliation is the desire to acquire a sense of belonging and connecting with others (McClelland, 1985). Individuals with a high degree of need for affiliation tend to form a connection with their leaders and peers (Cole *et al.*, 2002), making NAFL a potential moderator in the relationship between leader-follower relationship and ACS. Even when the supervisor is somewhat aloof, the authors still hypothesize that the moderating role of NAFL still stands. This assumption is based on Kong *et al.*'s (2017) assertion that individuals with a high need for affiliation are disposed to take up actions for the sake of collective interest. When the supervisor does not initiate the interaction with the employees, those employees with high NAFL will embark upon a dyadic relationship with the supervisor. Henceforth, we hypothesize:

H3a. NAFL strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H3b. NAFL strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of PA

Positive affectivity is an individual propensity to encounter affirmative emotions and will influence how individuals interact with the environment (Ashby *et al.*, 1999). The authors argue that PA will moderate the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and followers' affective commitment to supervisor. Since PA provides an individual with a good state of focus and abundant social, intellectual and psychological resources (Fredrickson, 2001), higher PA will likely ease them to connect with the supervisor and consequently enhance the effects of leader-follower relationship variables and ACS. Even in a condition where the supervisor is challenging to cope with, individuals with high PA will see difficulties as challenges and tend to manage them positively (Kaplan *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, a meta-analysis involving 35 studies conducted by Bowling *et al.* (2008) reveals that PA positively and significantly relates to satisfaction with supervision and co-workers, suggesting that PA is a pertinent element in leader-follower dyadic relationships. Therefore, the hypotheses are:

H4a. PA strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H4b. PA strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of proactive personality

Proactive personality is defined as the personality that “..is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and who effects environmental change” (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105). Proactive individuals tend to play an active role in interacting with their surroundings. This feature will consequently enhance their closeness with their workplace counterparts (Yang *et al.*, 2011), including their leader. Additionally, Crant (2000) asserts that proactive individuals will generally produce a higher performance level than those less proactive. Such a feature potentially increases the interaction time between proactive individuals and their leaders, in which the authors argue that the higher interaction potentially entails a higher affective commitment. Bernerth *et al.* (2008) also suggest that leaders tend to create closer relationships with followers who have similar personalities to theirs. As generally proactive individuals will stand out among others in their workplace, this might situate them as having leadership quality which may further adorn their relationship with the leaders. Based on these argumentations, the authors hypothesize that:

H5a. PP strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H5b. PP strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

Data collection and method

The data for the study was collected through an online survey with 366 respondents in different cities in Indonesia participating. A convenience sampling method was applied; anyone who meets the basic screening criterion (i.e., currently working with a leader/supervisor) could participate. After checking for outliers, seven responses were dropped, making 359 responses finally being processed for data testing. This number adequately fits the authors’ plan to process the data using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) (Hair *et al.*, 2013; Kline, 2015). Table I shows respondents’ demographic profiles regarding age, gender, status, tenure, sector, supervisor’s gender, and co-working time with their leader.

--Insert Table I here--

Measures

This research examined six variables: LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP, and ACS. All of the measurement items used in this research were translated from English to Bahasa Indonesia and then back-translated to English. Then the authors checked whether the original and the back-translated English versions were equivalent. Both authors checked the two versions separately then discuss again whether there is substantial gap among those versions. Both authors saw no essential differences between the two versions. This back-translation approach is necessary to ensure that the translation does not change the essence of questions (Brislin, 1970). The back-translation technique was carried out with the assistance of an Indonesian-English bilingual scholar.

All of the variables, except LMX, were rated on a six-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Since each item on the LMX construct asks about a particular condition, the ratings indicate different expressions. However, in general, rating 1 always refers to the most negative expression such as ‘not a bit’ on the question of whether the supervisor understands the respondent’s problems and needs, or ‘none’ for the chance that the supervisor will help them solve difficulties. Conversely, rating 6 always represents the most positive expression such as ‘fully recognize’ for whether the supervisor recognizes the respondent’s potentials or ‘extremely effective’ where the questionnaire asks the respondents to describe the working relationship with their supervisor. The full items of all measurements are provided in Table 5, in appendix.

LMX. Seven items from Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) were used to measure LMX. Respondents were asked to respond to items such as: “How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs?”. The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.925.

PSS. Similar to previous studies measuring PSS (e.g., Maertz Jr et al., 2007), the authors adopted three items from the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986) by replacing the ‘organization’ term with ‘supervisor’. These three items were selected based on the high factor loading on the SPOS (all above 0.70). The items include “My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work”, and the internal consistency of PSS is 0.850.

NAFL. Need for affiliation was measured using the same scale as Kong et al.'s (2017), including this question: "When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself". The internal consistency value of NAFL is 0.800.

PA. The authors employed Thompson's (2007) scale to measure positive affectivity. The opening statement for each item was 'these words reflect my personality', and then the respondents will see various terms denoting positive affectivity, such as 'active' and 'determined'. The internal consistency for PA is 0.814.

PP. Ten items from Bateman and Crant (1993) were employed to measure proactive personality. Among the questions example is: 'I can spot a good opportunity long before others can see it' and the internal consistency for this construct is 0.896.

ACS. Affective commitment to supervisor was measured by Perreira et al.'s (2018) scale. A sample item is "I feel privileged to work with someone like my immediate supervisor". The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.839.

Control variables. The authors controlled for various demographic (age, gender, education, and marital status), work (tenure and sector), and leader-follower relationship (co-working time and leader-follower gender similarity) characteristics as according to previous studies (e.g., Graham et al., 2018), these factors potentially influence the interaction of focal variables.

Results

In the first phase of data analysis, mean, standard deviation, and Pearson's correlation were analyzed as being recapped in Table II. Afterward, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to identify constructs' validity as being compiled in Table III.

--Insert Table II here--

--Insert Table III here--

Results in Table 3 show that AVE and CR values for all measures are higher than the recommended value (0.50 and 0.70 respectively, Hair et al., 2013). Table 3 shows that the value of the square root of AVE for each variable is higher than the correlations among variables, supporting the

discriminant validity for all constructs (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The model Goodness of Fit (GOF) values are as such: CMIN/DF = 1.546; RMSEA = 0.054; SRMR = 0.0414; TLI = 0.959; and CFI= 0.964. These results indicate excellent model fit and validate the suggested research model (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Hair *et al.*, 2013).

Finally, the authors tested the hypotheses using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. Table IV compiled the overall regression results. Firstly, all control variables were entered in step one. In step 2, the authors added independent and moderating variables. Finally, the interaction terms were entered in step 3. Before generating the interaction terms, independent and moderating variables were mean-centered, following Aiken & West's (1991) suggestion. The two-way interactions shown by Figure 1 were plotted with moderators' values at one standard deviation below (low condition) and above (high condition) the mean.

--Insert Table IV here--

--Insert Figure I here--

Hypothesis 1 proposed LMX to be positively related to ACS. As shown in Table IV, LMX has a significant and positive effect on ACS (Step 2: $\beta = 0.475$; $p < 0.001$), hypothesis 1 was supported by this finding. Hypothesis 2 predicted that PSS is positively associated with ACS. As shown in the step 2, PSS positively relates to ACS ($\beta = 0.731$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 2.

Hypotheses 3,4 and 5 proposed that NAFL, PA, and PP would moderate the relationship between the independent variables (LMX and PSS) and ACS, such that the relationship is stronger when the moderators are high rather than low. The OLS regression results show that the interactions of LMX x NAFL (Step 3: $\beta = 0.127$, $p < 0.01$), LMX x PA (Step 3: $\beta = 0.251$, $p < 0.001$), PSS x NAFL (Step 3: $\beta = 0.175$, $p < 0.01$), and PSS x PA (Step 3: $\beta = 0.233$, $p < 0.01$) were significant. Meanwhile, PP was not a significant moderator for the relationships between the independent variables and ACS (see Table IV). These results confirm hypotheses 3 and 4 and reject hypothesis 5.

Discussion

Overall, the results support all of the hypotheses but one hypothesis concerning proactive personality's role in enhancing the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and ACS. The findings assert that LMX and PSS positively relate to ACS, with a higher correlation found on PSS (0.731) than LMX (0.475). This result is understandable given the different nature of these two variables. Settoon et al. (1996) found that perceived organizational support is associated with organizational commitment while LMX is associated with citizenship and in-role behavior. Although Settoon et al.'s study addresses perceived support and commitment regarding the organization and not to the supervisor, the result is still valuable to explain what is found in the present study for two reasons. First, Eisenberger et al. (2002) suggest that PSS and POS are closely related. The extent to which the supervisor is identified with the organization acts as the factor strengthening the two variables' relationship. Second, the suggested perceived support pattern leads to commitment, explaining the strong correlation between PSS and ACS.

In addition, conceptually, PSS also has a more positive nuance than LMX, which contains a somewhat neutral stance defining the relationship between supervisor and member. For instance, the question for the PSS construct asks 'to what extent the supervisor is willing to spare his/her time to help the members do the job to the best of their ability'. The question shows a positive relationship between the supervisor and the members, at least compared to the relatively neutral question for LMX construct such as 'Do you know the position between you and your supervisor/manager? Do you usually know how satisfied your supervisor/manager is with the things you do?'.

The results also reveal that all moderating variables (NAFL, PA, and PP) positively related to ACS. The present study did not hypothesize these variables to be correlated with ACS as the authors thought that these variables only play moderating roles. Hence seeing these variables independently connected with ACS is somewhat surprising. One possible explanation for these findings is that NAFL (Hill, 1991), PA (Watson & Naragon, 2009), and PP (Yang *et al.*, 2011) belong to the factors enhancing good interpersonal connection. Meanwhile, good interpersonal relationships correlate with employees' affective commitment to supervisor (Chughtai, 2013).

The results also show that, unlike NAFL and PA, PP does not strengthen the relationship between leader-follower relationship and ACS. According to interpersonal interaction theory, a dyadic relationship will be more harmonious when one party is dominant, and the other is obedient (Leary,

1957). Generally speaking, the need for affiliation and positive affectivity are among the variables that strengthen the submissive role of employees. Meanwhile, individuals with proactive personalities tend to take the initiative to make changes and are not keen to face situational constraints (Bateman & Crant, 1993). These features do not align with the submissive characteristics needed to create a harmonious supervisor-employee dyadic relationship, hence explaining the insignificant role of PP on the nexus between leader-follower relationship and ACS.

Theoretical implications

From a theoretical perspective, the authors contributed to the nomological network for the tested variables (LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP, ACS). This study also reveals that dispositional factors significantly influence commitment toward supervisors. Furthermore, the present study shows that dispositional variables may have diverse effects regarding the connection between leader-follower relationship and ACS, as demonstrated by the non-significant moderation role of PP. In addition, from the parallel pattern of moderating dispositional variables, this study concludes that LMX and PSS share similar sentiments on representing leader-follower relationship.

The present study also adds to the leader-follower relationship in a greater extent. The use of both LMX and PSS at the same frame complete to one another on portraying the comprehensive image of leader-follower relationship. Such an approach answers the call to consider leader-follower relationship beyond the narrow definition (Dansereau *et al.*, 1975; Pulakos and Wexley, 1983).

This study's findings also portray the application of social exchange theory in the context of leader-follower interaction. When the leader cooperates with (high LMX) and supports (high PSS) the follower positively, the follower will exchange those good treatments with affective commitment (high ACS). In addition, the findings also slightly touch interpersonal interaction theory, that for interaction to work well, the parties should possess characteristics that describe their social dominance. The high degree of proactivity by an individual at the lower organizational hierarchy (the follower) misalign with their supposedly submissive position. Henceforth this feature does not significantly influence the relationship between leader-follower interactions and follower's affective commitment to supervisor. Nevertheless, future studies examining interpersonal interaction theory in practice are needed to ensure this argumentation's validity.

Practical implication

The authors divide practical implications from two angles: for the leader and the company. The leader should be aware of factors that significantly enhance employees' affective commitment. For instance, it is known that perceived supervisor support is the highest contributor of affective commitment to supervisor. Meaning that a leader should focus on ensuring that the employees feel supported by their leader, which makes them committed to the supervisor. Leaders could also be attentive that employees with a high degree of need for affiliation, positive affectivity, and proactive personality are potentially committed to them. Leaders might also want to pay more attention to the employees who do not possess such characteristics, as a low degree of these features correlates to a low level of affective commitment.

Furthermore, the company might want to include these three variables (NAFL, PA, and PP) as extra elements for the recruitment phase's personality test. Understandably, the dispositional variables are relatively stable and hence difficult to change. By showing that the disposition factors matter in building a good relationship between the leader and the followers, the present study helps managers to minimize the risk of recruiting difficult individuals. From another perspective, if the companies insist on taking individuals with low NAFL, PA, and PP, the company may want to add more policies on managing such people so that a harmonious leader-follower relationship can still be well managed.

Additionally, companies need to ensure that the leaders manage their interaction and support to the follower well, as the results suggest LMX and PSS lead to a desirable outcome. These suggestions are especially relevant for the type of jobs demanding a high degree of affective commitment to the supervisor. Emphasizing these two aspects to the leaders from the beginning could provide a firm step toward creating a pleasant leader-follower relationship in the workplace.

Limitations and directions for future research

The generalizability of these results is subject to certain limitations. First and the most notable limitation is the research design that involved cross-sectional and one rating source only (from employees' perspective). **Conceptually LMX illustrates the quality of two-way interaction between leaders and followers, hence dyadic data from both employees and employers should be**

the most ideal type of data for LMX studies. On account of the convenience sampling method applied in this study, collecting the data from each of the respondents' supervisors is impractical. While acknowledging this matter as a huge shortcoming of this study, the authors argue that the results of this study are still worthwhile. The literature recorded LMX studies using single-source data (e.g., Aleksić *et al.*, 2017; Audenaert *et al.*, 2019; Salvaggio and Kent, 2016), indicating such studies' contribution despite the single-source data. Nevertheless, the authors suggest that future studies consider the longitudinal design and collect the data from multiple sources (i.e., employees and leaders) to depict inter-variable relationships better.

Second, the findings might be tied to cultural factors in Indonesia. Future studies on different nations might find different results. Third, although the present research frames the collection of variables as leader-follower relationship, in fact the tested variables (LMX and PSS) are only those having positive relationship nuances. Future studies might want to investigate more leader-follower relationship variables, either those with positive or negative themes, to see whether these moderation patterns from dispositional variables still occur. Finally, future studies might want to investigate the relationship of these variables on each company's sector types, sizes, or industries as each of these elements might hold unique leader-follower relationship characteristics.

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Yours sincerely,

Professor Thomas Lange
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Dispositional factors enhancing leader–follower relationship’s dynamic

Leader–
follower
relationship’s
dynamic

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Abstract

Purpose – This study investigates dispositional factors’ (need for affiliation, positive affectivity and proactive personality) moderation effect on the relationship between leader–follower relationship variables (leader–member exchange and perceived supervisor support) and affective commitment to supervisor.

Design/methodology/approach – In total, 359 employees in Indonesia participated as the study’s respondents. This study employs hierarchical regression analysis to test the hypotheses.

Findings – The results show that need for affiliation and positive affectivity moderates the relationship between leader–follower relationship variables and affective commitment to supervisor. In addition, all dispositional factors positively influence affective commitment to supervisor as independent variables. This study’s findings depict the social exchange theory in practice.

Originality/value – The present study contributes to theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the study extends the knowledge on at least four domains: leader–follower relationship; affective commitment particularly aimed at the supervisor; the roles of dispositional variables on leader–member interactions; and empirically demonstrates social exchange theory. Practically, this study shows which factors are relevant to shaping positive leader–member interactions. Such results are potentially of value for the leader, the organization, and those responsible for recruiting prospective employees.

Keywords Dispositional variables, Leader–follower relationship, Affective commitment to supervisor

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Studies (e.g. Dansereau *et al.*, 1975; Graen and Scandura, 1987; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995) have emphasized the importance of positive leader–follower relationships to generate productive outcomes within organizations. Morgeson *et al.* (2005) particularly highlight social skills, personality characteristics and teamwork knowledge as the factors to look out on forming a positive relationship in an interdependent collaborative relationship setting. Social skills and teamwork knowledge factors are changeable, meaning that the lack of these two aspects should be “fixable” by either the leader or the organization. Meanwhile, dispositional characteristics are relatively stable (Linando and Halim, 2022; Miller *et al.*, 1981). Failure to understand dispositional characteristics limits the chance to create a positive leader–follower relationship as those features are hard, if not impossible, to change. That being said, personality characteristics should receive as much (if not more) attention as the other two aspects in leader–follower interaction’s discourses. Therefore, the present study is particularly interested in testing employees’ dispositional characteristics within a leader–follower relationship setting.

In particular, the present study examines three personality characteristics: the need for affiliation (NAFL), positive affectivity (PA) and proactive personality (PP). NAFL is among



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individual factors receiving little attention in leader–follower discourses, with only a few studies (e.g. [Kong et al., 2017](#); [Mathieu, 1990](#)) investigating this variable. In fact, NAFL is among the crucial elements determining employees' work motivation and behavior, which to some extent will also influence employees' attitude toward their leader ([Jha, 2010](#)). On the other hand, individuals with a high degree of PA are typically socially attractive and likable. Researchers (e.g. [Vandenberghe et al., 2019](#); [Yoon and Thye, 2000](#)) confirm that PA directly contributes to the positive relationship between leader and follower. Previous studies (e.g. [Wijaya, 2019](#); [Zhang et al., 2021](#)) also concluded the connection between PP and leader–follower relationship variables. Nevertheless, to the best of the authors' knowledge, no studies position NAFL, PA and PP as the moderating variables for leader–follower relationship variables. This positioning is essential as such a model could further illuminate how employees' dispositional variables contribute in forming positive leader–follower interactions.

The settlement to choose those three variables was not merely a cherry-picking-based decision. In the contemporary workplace sphere, many HR experts argue that the classical aspects of employees' personalities might play a key role in maintaining business survival and advancement. For instance, *Forbes* recently published an article explaining how modern employees increasingly want to belong in the workplace ([Gaskell, 2022](#)), resonating with the NAFL concept. Such a remark may remain valid, at least within the near future, as O.C. Tanner forecast ([Petersen, 2022](#)). Positive affect also regains momentum to be a significant perk in the workplace following *Harvard Business Review* ([Riegel, 2022](#)) gauges its importance in the contemporary workplace. Similarly, PP stays as a relevant dispositional workplace variable in the meantime, following experts' op-eds in leading management popular literature (e.g. [Burr, 2019](#); [Forbes Coaches Council, 2019](#)).

To indicate a positive leader–follower relationship, the authors place affective commitment to supervisor (ACS) as the dependent variable. Popularized in the 1980s ([McGee and Ford, 1987](#); [Meyer and Allen, 1984](#)), the affective commitment construct was further distinguished into several foci (for a detailed review, see [Vandenberghe et al., 2004](#)), including the ACS. The present study's approach of using a specific affective commitment focus within one research frame aligns with the experts' (e.g. [Herscovitch and Meyer, 2002](#)) suggestion. As a result, the authors expect this study to better exhibit employees' relevant behavior toward the target (in this study's context, the supervisor).

Social exchange norm stands as the main theoretical argument basing the hypothesized correlations between independent and dependent variables within this study. [Blau \(1964\)](#) asserts that employees' commitment to the supervisor is likely to be paid back reciprocally. [Chughtai \(2013\)](#) argues that supervisors may give tangible and intangible resources like support, feedback and more control in the workplace to their employees, in return for their commitment. This study will put this theory into test, whether it is true that the positive leader–member exchange (LMX) and perceived supervisor support (PSS) will be exchanged with ACS.

After all, this study aims to examine the moderating effects of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA & PP) on the relationship between leader–follower interaction (LMX and PSS) and ACS. In so doing, the present study contributes to multiple facets. First, on leader–follower discourses, this study extends the use of social exchange theory in the context of leader–follower interaction. Additionally, the present study answers [Graen and Uhl-Bien's \(1995\)](#) calls to explore the stages of LMX theory development further. Second, on affective commitment facade, this study adds more variables to ACS' nomological network as a distinct focus of affective commitment. The authors also offer a unique proposition that this study's results might illuminate the interaction pattern of dispositional variables (NAFL, PA and PP) and ACS. That addition contributes to the calls from previous scholars focusing on leader–follower interaction discourses (e.g. [Hemshorn de Sanchez et al., 2022](#); [Linando et al., 2018](#)). Finally, on the practical level domain, the findings might shed light on the aspects recruiters should pay attention to upon recruiting prospective employees.

Literature review

Independent and dependent variables

The authors frame two independent variables, namely LMX and perceived supervisor support (PSS), as variables reflecting the leader–follower relationship. Most literature (e.g. Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Matta *et al.*, 2015) solely focuses on LMX as the variable depicting the relationship between leader and follower, while as a matter of fact, essentially such a relationship has a much broader scope beyond only LMX. Dansereau *et al.* (1975) associate many variables to what they call ‘a superior and a member’ dyadic relationship, including leadership, supervision and vertical support. Pulakos and Wexley (1983) also translate a dyad as something different from LMX. They assert that support, work facilitation, goal emphasis and interaction facilitation reflect the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers. Furthermore, Yammarino *et al.* (1998) distinguish leader–follower relationship into two types: “within group dyads,” which are typically formal and managed by a superior; and “between group dyads” reflecting interpersonal relationships independent of the formal workgroup.

Accordingly, this paper’s approach of employing both LMX and PSS potentially provides a more comprehensive portrait of the leader–follower relationship. Furthermore, despite the similarities between the two variables, LMX and PSS are conceptually different. PSS concerns employees’ perception of how much their supervisors value their contributions and care for their well-being (Kottke and Sharafinski, 1988; Shanock and Eisenberger, 2006), whereas LMX concerns the quality of the dyadic interaction between leaders and followers as the key to understanding the effects of leaders on followers, teams, and organizations (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). Previous studies (e.g. Maertz *et al.*, 2007; Wei and Yani, 2010) that place LMX and PSS as two separate constructs also strengthen the claim the authors made, that LMX and PSS are conceptually dissimilar.

The authors particularly set ACS as the dependent variable. Studies (e.g. Ferreira *et al.*, 2018; Siders *et al.*, 2001) have underlined the value of differentiating the use of multiple affective commitment foci as each focus bears different antecedents and consequences. Aligns with affective commitment to organization which linearly leads to organizational level-outcomes, ACS is also predictive of supervisor-related outcomes like citizenship behavior toward supervisor (Wasti and Can, 2008). The more detailed argumentations of each hypothesis will be further elaborated in the following sections.

LMX and PSS to ACS

LMX reflects the dyadic relationship between leaders and their subordinates where the two parties form and advance their bond through the sequence of interactions during a particular timespan (Graen and Scandura, 1987). Meanwhile, affective commitment is “a psychological state that binds the individual to the organization” (Allen and Meyer, 1990, p. 14). Referring to the global definition of affective commitment, ACS could be loosely translated as a psychological state binding the followers to their supervisor/boss. According to the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), the extent to which a leader interacts with followers frames the two parties in a reciprocal social-exchange connection. Previous studies (e.g. Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995; Graen and Cashman, 1975) asserted that among the resources appreciable by the leader that employees could offer is their dedication and commitment. These theoretical and empirical bases lead to a postulate that LMX influence ACS.

Like LMX, PSS also plays a crucial role in shaping employees’ ACS by generating a reciprocity mechanism. PSS is the degree to which supervisors value employees’ contributions and are attentive toward employees’ conditions (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2002). Supervisors’ support indicates their care toward employees’ well-being which, as previous studies (e.g. Li *et al.*, 2018; Ng and Sorensen, 2008) suggest, will increase employees’ affective commitment.

Both LMX and PSS suggest positive reinforcement leaders give to their followers, which leads to a rationale postulating that these two variables will make the followers more affectively committed to their supervisor. The more supervisors positively interact, understand and support their followers, the more the followers meet their leaders and consequently, the more the proximity among the two. [Becker \(2009\)](#) suggests that proximity and visibility might enhance supervisors' influence leading to subordinates' commitment. Based on these arguments, we hypothesize:

-
- H1. LMX positively relates to ACS.
 - H2. PSS positively relates to ACS.

The moderating role of dispositional variables

Personality traits predict workplace behaviors and outcomes (e.g. [Barrick and Mount, 1991](#); [Hogan and Holland, 2003](#); [Tett et al., 1991](#)). Citing trait activation theory (TAT), the connection between leader–follower relationship and performance depends on the traits of involved parties ([Tett and Burnett, 2003](#)). [Walumbwa et al. \(2007\)](#) suggest that explaining a leader's effectiveness is insufficient without incorporating the followers' traits into the leadership process. The fundamental concept of TAT is that latent traits are expressed or activated in response to trait-relevant contextual factors, which subsequently affect performance.

Authors argue that PP, PA and NAFL are exhibited in response to trait-relevant cues. PP is characterized by a behavioral tendency to act upon or alter one's environment ([Bateman and Crant, 1993](#)). A PP archetype is “one who is relatively unconstrained by situational forces, and who effects environmental change” ([Bateman and Crant, 1993](#), p. 105). The PP construct originates in interactionism, which “argues that situations are as much a function of the person as the person's behavior is a function of the situation” ([Bowers, 1973](#), p. 327). [Bouckenoghe et al. \(2013](#), p. 109) suggest that “PA and NA are expressed as responses to trait-relevant cues.” Different individuals have different traits, which can affect their work behavior. These traits help individuals observe their work environment from different perspectives ([Bowling et al., 2008](#)). In addition, the NAFL is a personality trait corresponding to the needs of individuals for social interactions ([Veroff and Veroff, 2016](#)).

The moderating role of NAFL

The NAFL is the desire to acquire a sense of belonging and connecting with others ([McClelland, 1985](#)). Individuals with a high degree of NAFL tend to form a connection with their leaders and peers ([Cole et al., 2002](#)), making NAFL a potential moderator in the relationship between leader-follower relationship and ACS. Even when the supervisor is somewhat aloof, the authors still hypothesize that the moderating role of NAFL still stands. This assumption is based on [Kong et al.'s \(2017\)](#) assertion that individuals with a high NAFL are disposed to take up actions for the sake of collective interest. When the supervisor does not initiate the interaction with the employees, those employees with high NAFL will embark upon a dyadic relationship with the supervisor. Henceforth, we hypothesize:

- H3a. NAFL strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.
- H3b. NAFL strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of PA

PA is an individual propensity to encounter affirmative emotions and will influence how individuals interact with the environment ([Ashby et al., 1999](#)). The authors argue that PA will moderate the relationship between leader–follower relationship variables and followers' ACS.

Since PA provides an individual with a good state of focus and abundant social, intellectual and psychological resources (Fredrickson, 2001), higher PA will likely ease them to connect with the supervisor and consequently enhance the effects of leader–follower relationship variables and ACS. Even in a condition where the supervisor is challenging to cope with, individuals with high PA will see difficulties as challenges and tend to manage them positively (Kaplan *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, a meta-analysis involving 35 studies conducted by Bowling *et al.* (2008) reveals that PA positively and significantly relates to satisfaction with supervision and coworkers, suggesting that PA is a pertinent element in leader–follower dyadic relationships. Therefore, the hypotheses are as follows:

H4a. PA strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H4b. PA strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

The moderating role of proactive personality

PP is defined as the personality that “is relatively unconstrained by situational forces and who effects environmental change” (Bateman and Crant, 1993, p. 105). Proactive individuals tend to play an active role in interacting with their surroundings. This feature will consequently enhance their closeness with their workplace counterparts (Yang *et al.*, 2011), including their leader. Additionally, Crant (2000) asserts that proactive individuals will generally produce a higher performance level than those less proactive. Such a feature potentially increases the interaction time between proactive individuals and their leaders, in which the authors argue that the higher interaction potentially entails a higher affective commitment. Bernerth *et al.* (2008) also suggest that leaders tend to create closer relationships with followers who have similar personalities to theirs. As generally proactive individuals will stand out among others in their workplace, this might situate them as having leadership quality which may further adorn their relationship with the leaders. Based on these argumentations, the authors hypothesize that:

H5a. PP strengthens the relationship between LMX and ACS.

H5b. PP strengthens the relationship between PSS and ACS.

Data collection and method

The data for the study were collected through an online survey with 366 respondents in different cities in Indonesia participating. A convenience sampling method was applied; anyone who meets the basic screening criterion (i.e. currently working with a leader/supervisor) could participate. After checking for outliers, seven responses were dropped, making 359 responses finally being processed for data testing. This number adequately fits the authors’ plan to process the data using structural equation modeling (SEM) (Hair *et al.*, 2013; Kline, 2015). Table 1 shows respondents’ demographic profiles regarding age, gender, status, tenure, sector, supervisor’s gender and coworking time with their leader.

Measures

This research examined six variables: LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP and ACS. All of the measurement items used in this research were translated from English to Bahasa Indonesia and then back-translated to English. Then, the authors checked whether the original and the back-translated English versions were equivalent. Both authors checked the two versions separately then discuss again whether there is substantial gap among those versions. Both authors saw no essential differences between the two versions. This back-translation approach is necessary to ensure that the translation does not change the essence of questions

Respondents' profile		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	215	59.9
	Female	144	40.1
Education	Senior high school	147	40.9
	Diploma degree	30	8.4
	Undergraduate degree	148	41.2
	Graduate degree	34	9.5
Age	Below 30 years	195	54.3
	Between 30 and 40 years	133	37.0
	Above 40 years	31	8.7
Status	Single	148	41.2
	Married	211	58.8
Tenure	0–5 years	234	65.2
	6–10 years	111	30.9
	Over 10 years	14	3.9
Sector	Private	254	70.8
	Public	49	13.6
	Non-governmental organization	13	3.6
	Others	43	12.0
Supervisor's gender	Same	236	65.7
	Different	123	34.3
Coworking time with the supervisor	1–3 years	274	76.3
	4–6 years	65	18.1
	>6 years	20	5.6

Table 1.
Respondents'
demographic variables

Source(s): Authors work

(Brislin, 1970). The back-translation technique was carried out with the assistance of an Indonesian-English bilingual scholar.

All of the variables, except LMX, were rated on a six-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Since each item on the LMX construct asks about a particular condition, the ratings indicate different expressions. However, in general, rating 1 always refers to the most negative expression such as “not a bit” on the question of whether the supervisor understands the respondent’s problems and needs, or “none” for the chance that the supervisor will help them solve difficulties. Conversely, rating 6 always represents the most positive expression such as “fully recognize” for whether the supervisor recognizes the respondent’s potentials or “extremely effective” where the questionnaire asks the respondents to describe the working relationship with their supervisor. The full items of all measurements are provided in Table A1, in appendix.

LMX. Seven items from Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995) were used to measure LMX. Respondents were asked to respond to items such as: “How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs.” The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.925.

PSS. Similar to previous studies measuring PSS (e.g. Maertz *et al.*, 2007), the authors adopted three items from the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS) (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1986) by replacing the “organization” term with “supervisor.” These three items were selected based on the high factor loading on the SPOS (all above 0.70). The items include “My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work,” and the internal consistency of PSS is 0.850.

NAFL. Need for affiliation was measured using the same scale as Kong *et al.*'s (2017), including this question: “When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself.” The internal consistency value of NAFL is 0.800.

PA. The authors employed Thompson's (2007) scale to measure PA. The opening statement for each item was “these words reflect my personality,” and then the respondents

will see various terms denoting PA, such as “active” and “determined.” The internal consistency for PA is 0.814.

PP. Ten items from [Bateman and Crant \(1993\)](#) were employed to measure PP. Among the questions example is: “I can spot a good opportunity long before others can see it” and the internal consistency for this construct is 0.896.

ACS. Affective commitment to supervisor was measured by [Perreira et al.’s \(2018\)](#) scale. A sample item is “I feel privileged to work with someone like my immediate supervisor.” The internal consistency value of this measure is 0.839.

Control variables. The authors controlled for various demographic (age, gender, education, and marital status), work (tenure and sector) and leader–follower relationship (coworking time and leader–follower gender similarity) characteristics as according to previous studies (e.g. [Graham et al., 2018](#)), these factors potentially influence the interaction of focal variables.

Results

In the first phase of data analysis, mean, standard deviation and Pearson’s correlation were analyzed as being recapped in [Table 2](#). Afterward, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to identify constructs’ validity as being compiled in [Table 3](#).

Results in [Table 3](#) show that AVE and CR values for all measures are higher than the recommended value (0.50 and 0.70 respectively, [Hair et al., 2013](#)). [Table 3](#) shows that the value of the square root of AVE for each variable is higher than the correlations among variables, supporting the discriminant validity for all constructs ([Fornell and Larcker, 1981](#)). The model goodness of fit (GOF) values are as such: CMIN/DF = 1.546; RMSEA = 0.054; SRMR = 0.0414; TLI = 0.959; and CFI = 0.964. These results indicate excellent model fit and validate the suggested research model ([Anderson and Gerbing, 1988](#); [Hair et al., 2013](#)).

Finally, the authors tested the hypotheses using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. [Table 4](#) compiled the overall regression results. Firstly, all control variables were entered in

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Leader–member exchange	4.98	0.95	1					
2. Perceived supervisor support	4.69	0.73	0.598**	1				
3. Need for affiliation	4.81	0.73	0.329**	0.430**	1			
4. Positive affectivity	3.15	0.37	0.303**	0.364**	0.327**	1		
5. Proactive personality	4.11	0.57	0.351**	0.457**	0.458**	0.574**	1	
6. Affective commitment to supervisor	4.61	0.65	0.598**	0.754**	0.372**	0.527**	0.464**	1

Note(s): * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$
Source(s): Authors work

Table 2.
Means, standard deviations and correlations of the study variables

Variables	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Leader–member exchange	0.925	0.638	0.799					
2. Perceived supervisor support	0.850	0.654	0.727	0.809				
3. Need for affiliation	0.800	0.572	0.547	0.529	0.756			
4. Positive affectivity	0.814	0.526	0.446	0.368	0.492	0.725		
5. Proactive personality	0.896	0.521	0.490	0.466	0.612	0.511	0.722	
6. Affective commitment to supervisor	0.839	0.634	0.661	0.727	0.565	0.459	0.411	0.797

Note(s): CR = construct reliability; AVE = average variance extracted
Source(s): Authors work

Table 3.
Result of validity and reliability of measurement model

Variables	Affective commitment to supervisor		
	Step 1 (β)	Step 2 (β)	Step 3 (β)
Gender	-0.157***	-0.009	-
Tenure	0.066	-	-
Education	-0.168**	-0.013	-
Status	0.231**	0.026	-
Coworking time	0.050	-	-
Sector	0.045	-	-
Supervisor's gender	0.010	-	-
Age	-0.103	-	-
Leader-member exchange		0.475***	0.438***
Perceived supervisor support		0.731***	0.656***
Need for affiliation		0.185**	0.156**
Positive affectivity		0.343***	0.353***
Proactive personality		0.230***	0.237***
Leader-member exchange \times Need for Affiliation			0.127**
Leader-member exchange \times Positive affectivity			0.251***
Leader-member exchange \times Proactive personality			0.050
Perceived supervisor support \times Need for affiliation			0.175**
Perceived supervisor support \times Positive affectivity			0.233**
Perceived supervisor support \times Proactive personality			0.033

Table 4.
Regression results

Note(s): * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$
Source(s): Authors work

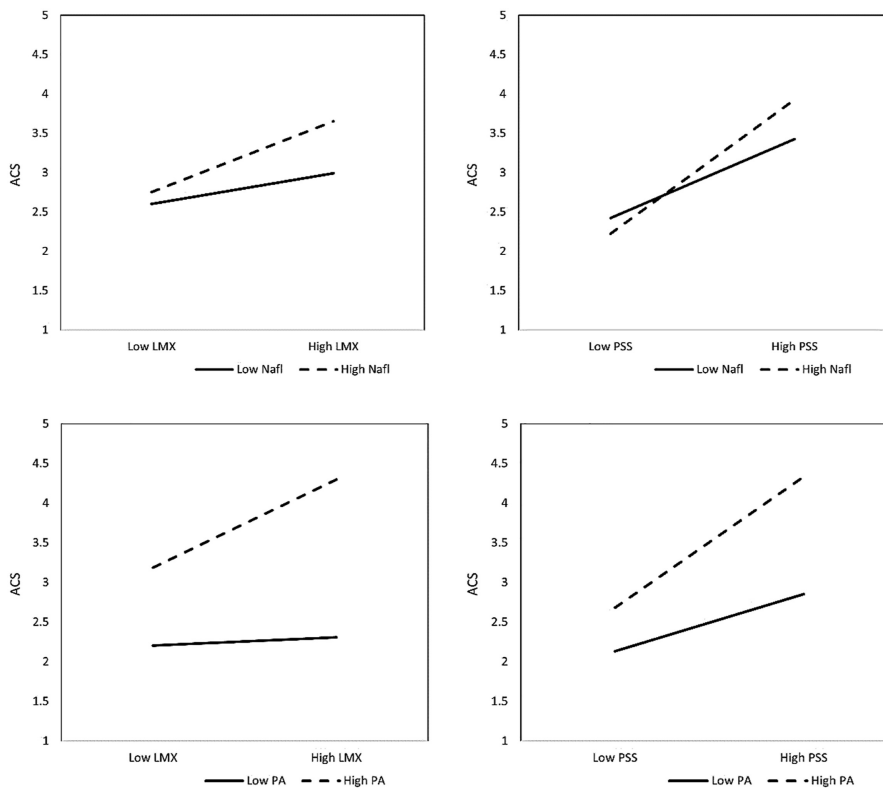
step one. In step 2, the authors added independent and moderating variables. Finally, the interaction terms were entered in step 3. Before generating the interaction terms, independent and moderating variables were mean-centered, following Aiken and West's (1991) suggestion. The two-way interactions shown by Figure 1 were plotted with moderators' values at one standard deviation below (low condition) and above (high condition) the mean.

Hypothesis 1 proposed LMX to be positively related to ACS. As shown in Table 4, LMX has a significant and positive effect on ACS (step 2: $\beta = 0.475$; $p < 0.001$); hypothesis 1 was supported by this finding. Hypothesis 2 predicted that PSS is positively associated with ACS. As shown in the step 2, PSS positively relates to ACS ($\beta = 0.731$, $p < 0.001$), supporting hypothesis 2.

Hypotheses 3, 4 and 5 proposed that NAFL, PA and PP would moderate the relationship between the independent variables (LMX and PSS) and ACS, such that the relationship is stronger when the moderators are high rather than low. The OLS regression results show that the interactions of LMX \times NAFL (step 3: $\beta = 0.127$, $p < 0.01$), LMX \times PA (step 3: $\beta = 0.251$, $p < 0.001$), PSS \times NAFL (step 3: $\beta = 0.175$, $p < 0.01$) and PSS \times PA (step 3: $\beta = 0.233$, $p < 0.01$) were significant. Meanwhile, PP was not a significant moderator for the relationships between the independent variables and ACS (see Table 4). These results confirm hypotheses 3 and 4 and reject hypothesis 5.

Discussion

Overall, the results support all of the hypotheses but one hypothesis concerning PP's role in enhancing the relationship between leader-follower relationship variables and ACS. The findings assert that LMX and PSS positively relate to ACS, with a higher correlation found on PSS (0.731) than LMX (0.475). This result is understandable given the different nature of these two variables. Settoon *et al.* (1996) found that perceived organizational support is associated



Leader–
follower
relationship’s
dynamic

Figure 1.
The two-way
interaction plots

Source(s): Authors work

with organizational commitment, while LMX is associated with citizenship and in-role behavior. Although Settoon *et al.*'s study addresses perceived support and commitment regarding the organization and not to the supervisor, the result is still valuable to explain what is found in the present study for two reasons. First, Eisenberger *et al.* (2002) suggest that PSS and POS are closely related. The extent to which the supervisor is identified with the organization acts as the factor strengthening the two variables' relationship. Second, the suggested perceived support pattern leads to commitment, explaining the strong correlation between PSS and ACS.

In addition, conceptually, PSS has a more positive nuance than LMX, which contains a somewhat neutral stance defining the relationship between supervisor and member. For instance, the question for the PSS construct asks "to what extent the supervisor is willing to spare his/her time to help the members do the job to the best of their ability." The question shows a positive relationship between the supervisor and the members at least compared to the relatively neutral question for LMX construct such as "Do you know the position between you and your supervisor/manager? Do you usually know how satisfied your supervisor/manager is with the things you do?"

The results also reveal that all moderating variables (NAFL, PA and PP) positively related to ACS. The present study did not hypothesize these variables to be correlated with ACS as the authors thought that these variables only play moderating roles. Hence seeing these variables independently connected with ACS is somewhat surprising. One possible explanation for these findings is that NAFL (Hill, 1991), PA (Watson and Naragon, 2009) and PP (Yang *et al.*, 2011)

belong to the factors enhancing good interpersonal connection. Meanwhile, good interpersonal relationships correlate with employees' ACS (Chughtai, 2013).

The results also show that, unlike NAFL and PA, PP does not strengthen the relationship between leader–follower relationship and ACS. According to interpersonal interaction theory, a dyadic relationship will be more harmonious when one party is dominant and the other is obedient (Leary, 1957). Generally speaking, the NAFL and PA are among the variables that strengthen the submissive role of employees. Meanwhile, individuals with proactive personalities tend to take the initiative to make changes and are not keen to face situational constraints (Bateman and Crant, 1993). These features do not align with the submissive characteristics needed to create a harmonious supervisor–employee dyadic relationship, hence explaining the insignificant role of PP on the nexus between leader–follower relationship and ACS.

Theoretical implications

From a theoretical perspective, the authors contributed to the nomological network for the tested variables (LMX, PSS, NAFL, PA, PP and ACS). This study also reveals that dispositional factors significantly influence commitment toward supervisors. Furthermore, the present study shows that dispositional variables may have diverse effects regarding the connection between leader–follower relationship and ACS, as demonstrated by the nonsignificant moderation role of PP. In addition, from the parallel pattern of moderating dispositional variables, this study concludes that LMX and PSS share similar sentiments on representing leader–follower relationship.

The present study also adds to the leader–follower relationship in a greater extent. The use of both LMX and PSS at the same frame complete to one another on portraying the comprehensive image of leader–follower relationship. Such an approach answers the call to consider leader–follower relationship beyond the narrow definition (Dansereau *et al.*, 1975; Pulakos and Wexley, 1983).

This study's findings also portray the application of social exchange theory in the context of leader–follower interaction. When the leader cooperates with (high LMX) and supports (high PSS) the follower positively, the follower will exchange those good treatments with affective commitment (high ACS). In addition, the findings slightly touch interpersonal interaction theory that for interaction to work well, the parties should possess characteristics that describe their social dominance. The high degree of proactivity by an individual at the lower organizational hierarchy (the follower) misaligns with their supposedly submissive position. Henceforth, this feature does not significantly influence the relationship between leader–follower interactions and follower's ACS. Nevertheless, future studies examining interpersonal interaction theory in practice are needed to ensure this argumentation's validity.

Practical implication

The authors divide practical implications from two angles: for the leader and the company. The leader should be aware of factors that significantly enhance employees' affective commitment. For instance, it is known that PSS is the highest contributor of ACS. Meaning that a leader should focus on ensuring that the employees feel supported by their leader, which makes them committed to the supervisor. Leaders could also be attentive that employees with a high degree of NAFL, PA and PP are potentially committed to them. Leaders might also want to pay more attention to the employees who do not possess such characteristics, as a low degree of these features correlates to a low level of affective commitment.

Furthermore, the company might want to include these three variables (NAFL, PA and PP) as extra elements for the recruitment phase's personality test. Understandably, the dispositional variables are relatively stable and hence difficult to change. By showing that the

disposition factors matter in building a good relationship between the leader and the followers, the present study helps managers to minimize the risk of recruiting difficult individuals. From another perspective, if the companies insist on taking individuals with low NAFL, PA and PP, the company may want to add more policies on managing such people so that a harmonious leader–follower relationship can still be well managed.

Additionally, companies need to ensure that the leaders manage their interaction and support to the follower well, as the results suggest LMX and PSS lead to a desirable outcome. These suggestions are especially relevant for the type of jobs demanding a high degree of affective commitment to the supervisor. Emphasizing these two aspects to the leaders from the beginning could provide a firm step toward creating a pleasant leader–follower relationship in the workplace.

Limitations and directions for future research

The generalizability of these results is subject to certain limitations. First and the most notable limitation is the research design that involved cross-sectional and one rating source only (from employees’ perspective). Conceptually, LMX illustrates the quality of two-way interaction between leaders and followers; hence, dyadic data from both employees and employers should be the most ideal type of data for LMX studies. On account of the convenience sampling method applied in this study, collecting the data from each of the respondents’ supervisors is impractical. While acknowledging this matter as a huge shortcoming of this study, the authors argue that the results of this study are still worthwhile. The literature recorded LMX studies using single-source data (e.g. [Aleksić *et al.*, 2017](#); [Audenaert *et al.*, 2019](#); [Salvaggio and Kent, 2016](#)), indicating such studies’ contribution despite the single-source data. Nevertheless, the authors suggest that future studies consider the longitudinal design and collect the data from multiple sources (i.e. employees and leaders) to depict intervariable relationships better.

Second, the findings might be tied to cultural factors in Indonesia. Future studies on different nations might find different results. Third, although the present research frames the collection of variables as leader-follower relationship, in fact, the tested variables (LMX and PSS) are only those having positive relationship nuances. Future studies might want to investigate more leader-follower relationship variables, either those with positive or negative themes, to see whether these moderation patterns from dispositional variables still occur. Finally, future studies might want to investigate the relationship of these variables on each company’s sector types, sizes or industries as each of these elements might hold unique leader–follower relationship characteristics.

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Variable	Items
Leader–member exchange (<i>How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you know where you stand with your leader . . . Do you usually know how satisfied your leader is with what you do? 2. How well does your leader understand your job problems and needs? 3. How well does your leader recognize your potential? 4. Regardless of how much formal authority he/she has built into his/her position, what are the chances that your leader would use his/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/she would “bail you out,” at his/her expense? 6. I have enough confidence in my leader that I would defend and justify his/her decision if he/she were not present to do so? 7. How would you characterize your working relationship with your leader?
Perceived supervisor support (<i>These statements characterize my supervisor . . .</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My supervisor is willing to extend itself in order to help me perform my job to the best of my ability 2. My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work 3. My supervisor tries to make my job as interesting as possible
Need for affiliation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself 2. I find myself talking to those around me about nonbusiness-related matters 3. I make a special effort to get along with others
Positive affectivity (<i>These words reflect my personality . . .</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determined 2. Attentive 3. Alert 4. Inspired 5. Active
Proactive personality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life 2. Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change 3. Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality 4. If I see something I don't like, I fix it 5. No matter what the odds, if I believe in something I will make it happen 6. I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' Opposition 7. I excel at identifying opportunities 8. I am always looking for better ways to do things 9. If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen 10. I can spot a good opportunity long before others can see it
Affective commitment to supervisor (<i>The following items express what you may feel about yourself as a member of your organization . . .</i>)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I like the values conveyed by my immediate supervisor 2. I feel privileged to work with someone like my immediate supervisor 3. When I talk to my friends about my immediate supervisor, I describe him/her as a great person to work with

Table A1.
Measurement items

Source(s): Authors work