INPLASY

The Quiet Consequence of Leadership: A Systematic Review of Leader-Member Exchange and Employee Silence

Corresponding author:
Anisha Elama

anisha_e@hs.iitr.ac.in

Author Affiliation:
Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee.

Elama, A; George, AJ; Kühnen, U.

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

*R*eview question / Objective How does Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) quality (high vs low) influence employee silence across different organizational settings?

Rationale Employee silence remains a significant challenge in contemporary workplaces, influencing communication, decision-making, and organizational performance. Leaders play a key role in predicting employee silence. However, most existing studies have primarily focused on traditional leadership styles, such as autocratic, transactional, transformational, and ethical leadership (Politis, 2020), while overlooking more inclusive leadership approaches like Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). Traditional leadership theories offer valuable insights; however, they often fail to account for the relational dynamics between leaders and followers, which can significantly influence employees' willingness to voice concerns or engage in open dialogue (Francisco, 2024).

This systematic review will highlight how the quality of relationships between leaders and their employees (LMX) significantly influences employees' willingness to voice concerns, share knowledge, and engage in innovative behaviours. Drawing on global studies, the study highlights the potential of LMX to reduce silence and foster a culture of openness within organizations. Furthermore, the study advocates for targeted interventions aimed at enhancing LMX quality to empower employees and facilitate a more open organizational dialogue.

Condition being studied This systematic review is designed to examine the influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on employees from all sectors (private, public, self-employed) and industries across the globe.

METHODS

Search strategy The search strategy utilizes the following keyword string: TITLE-ABS-KEY ("employee" W/3 "silence") AND ("LMX" OR

"Leader Member Exchange"), limited to scholarly journal articles (SRCTYPE: "j"), research articles (DOCTYPE: "ar"), and publications in English. The search will be conducted across the following databases: Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest, and APA PsycNet.

Participant or population Employees across organizational settings.

Intervention This systematic review is designed to examine the influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on employee silence. Additionally, future quantitative studies will aim to develop targeted interventions aimed at enhancing LMX quality to empower employees.

Comparator N/A.

Study designs to be included The study will include all empirical studies.

Eligibility criteria
Inclusion:
• Population: Employees from all sectors (private, public, self-employed) and industries.
• Exposure: Perceived LMX of employees from all sectors (private, public, self-employed) and industries as an independent variable.
• Outcome: Employee silence, including its dimensions(acquiescent silence, defensive silence and pro-social silence).
• Study Types: All types of empirical studies.
• Language: English.
• Time Frame: All time.

Information sources The research will be carried out using electronic databases, such as Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest, and APA PsycNet. The Zotero reference manager will manage the bibliographic references.

Main outcome(s) The present systematic review has been designed to examine the impact of employees' perception of Leader-member exchange on employee silence across the organizational context.

Additional outcome(s) This study will also explore potential mediators, moderators, facilitators, antecedents, or any other associated factors in the relationship between Leader-Member Exchange and Employee Silence.

Data management Data will be managed using systematic review management tools such as EndNote, Zotero and Excel.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis The quality of studies will be assessed using the standardised tool- the CASP (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme) checklist. The procedure involves first screening studies based on pre-determined inclusion criteria. Each study is then appraised for aspects such as study design, sample size, data collection methods, validity, and reliability of findings using the CASP checklist. This process helps identify potential biases in study design, reporting, and analysis, such as selection bias or measurement bias, and then we will assess the overall trustworthiness of the findings. After evaluating individual studies, an overall risk of bias is determined, and the findings are synthesized while considering these biases to ensure that conclusions drawn in the review are reliable and valid.

Strategy of data synthesis Two reviewers (A.E. and A.J.G.) will independently screen titles and abstracts to identify articles that potentially meet the inclusion criteria. Full versions of these articles will then be retrieved and assessed independently by the same reviewers to confirm their eligibility. Any disagreements regarding study inclusion will be resolved through consensus, with the involvement of the third reviewer (U.C.).

Subgroup analysis N/A.

Sensitivity analysis N/A.

Language restriction Only English-language studies will be included.

Country(ies) involved India and Germany.

Keywords Leader-Member Exchange (LMX); Employee Silence; Industries; Employees.

Dissemination plans The findings will be disseminated through academic publications and conferences.

Contributions of each author
Author 1 - Anisha Elama - Author 1 will draft the manuscript including data management and analysis.
Email: anisha_e@hs.iitr.ac.in
Author 2 - Allen Joshua George - Author 2 will contribute to data management, and analysis.
Email: allenjoshua.george@iimranchi.ac.in
Author 3 - Ulrich Kühnen - Author 3 will be the advisor and reviewer of the manuscripts.
Email: ukuehnen@constructor.university