

THE EFFECT OF LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE ON ORGANIZATIONAL BASED SELF-ESTEEM AND TURNOVER INTENTION: THE ROLE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CAPITAL

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Abstract

In this study, whether “Leader Member Exchange” (LMX) has an effect on ‘Organization Based Self-Esteem” (OBSE) and “Turnover Intention” (TI) was investigated. In addition, whether “Psychological Capital” (PC) has a mediating effect on organization based self-esteem and turnover intention which are dependent variables of leader member exchange is examined. Data to be used in the study was obtained via a survey applied to 454 employees of a business active in the logistics sector. In the study Cronbach Alpha coefficients were calculated. LMX Scale (LMX-7) of Scandura and Graen (1984), OBSE scale of Pierce et al., (1989), TI scale of Scott et al., (1999), PC scale of Luthanset al., (2007), which were found to be reliable, were used. Confirmatory factor analysis was made in order to determine validity of all scales and the scales were determined to be valid. Tests of hypotheses were made with structural equation modelling. As a result of analyses made; it was found that LMX affects OBSE level positively but TI negatively, that PC does not have a meaningful effect on OBSE level and TI level in general, and depending on that, it has no mediating role in the relations between LMX-OBSE and LMX-TI. The results related to variables of the study will contribute significantly to those to carry out new studies.

Keywords: Leader-Member Exchange, Organizational Based Self-Esteem, Employee’s Turnover Intention, Psychological Capital, Mediation Effect

INTRODUCTION

Business-worker relations have become a reciprocal exchange of benefits which has gained a bigger meaning and importance in the competition World of 21th century which is increasing more and more. It is often seen in the business world that workers who are volunteers to make positive effort against quality relation with their leaders, who believe that they are compensated for their labour, who feel that they are valuable and happy prefer to stay in their organizations; otherwise they start to look for new jobs. Therefore, turnover intention (TI), which is shown as one of the most important antecedents for the leave of employment of the qualified human resource, which is an important cost item for the businesses, has become a term whose importance is increasing more and more day by day. Within this context, a number of studies conducted in the academic world have shown that TI has relation with the behavior of layoff (Griffeth , 2000; 483; Hom , 1992; 897; Steel and Ovalle, 1984; 683). In this sense, the process that TI, which is defined as thoughts of employees leaving their works (Mobley,1982) and which is considered to be worthy in terms of costs of workers to their organizations, follows is affected from a number of factors (Hom et al., 1992). One of these processes is which leadership method the leaders, which is undeniable strength in directing workers, use in their relations with their followers. At the same time, it was evaluated that the response the workers show to the organizational experiences they have developed with their leaders will shape the levels of Organization Based Self-Esteem (OBSE) (Pierce et al., 1989) and so, they may affect the processes between organization and workers (Hollenbek and Brief, 1987). According to Leader-Member Exchange Theory (LMX), because followers of internal group with mutual close relation based on win-win that they will establish with their leaders will have more OBSE than those remain outside, their attitudes and behaviors are expected to become more compatible with the purposes of the organization.

It is suggested that Psychological Capital (PC), which is the integrated description of positive strengths of workers, has the effects on improving the behaviors towards the work and enabling the life to be enjoyed (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). In this sense, it was seen in the study conducted by Avey et al. (2010), that there is a negative and meaningful relation between PC and TI and behavior of looking for a new job of workers and also that in the study conducted by Çetin and Varoğlu (2014), Çelik (2018), there is a negative and meaningful relation between PC and TI of the workers.

Note: A brief summary of the earlier version of this research was presented at the 14th National Business Congress, Aksaray-Turkey, May 7-9, 2015.

In the examination carried out in the literature, it was found that although there are researches investigating the relations between LMX and OBSE separately, there is no research investigating either the relations as a whole or the role of PC in these relations. Therefore, it is evaluated that results obtained in the study will contribute to the literature.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In the direction of central point behind LMX; quality of the relation between the leaders and followers is based on the respect and trust both the leader and the followers develop against the competences of each other.(Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Luthans and Youssef, 2004; Schermerhorn et al., 2010: 316). In the studies conducted on the benefits that the quality of LMX, it was determined that especially those in the internal group has a higher work performance, that they display more positive attitudes against the work (Wayne, Shore and Liden, 1997, Hui, et al. 1999)

In addition to this, it was described that that level of LMX is high affect TI negatively(Krishnan, 2005; Gerstner ve Day, 1997) and it was found that there is a negative and meaningful relations(Gerstner and Day, 1997). In the studies conducted on LMX, it was suggested that exchange showing change on the quality level from lower to upper between the leader and the followers (Delugaand Perry, 1991:239) has effect on the results such as work satisfaction, loyalty, work performance, worker turnover speed etc. (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Liden et al., 1997; Liden and Graen, 1980; Vecchio and Gobdel, 1984; Maslyn and Uhl-Bien, 2001: 697).

Setting off from the study examined in the direction of the purposes of the study, relations between the variables of the study are presented below in a way that they will be utilized in the formation of hypotheses.

Examining the relations between the variables;

Workers feel themselves valuable and preferable and accepted more based on more support and benefit they will provide thanks to high level LMX. Therefore, OBSE levels of followers of internal group are high. Because those of outside group feel ostracized, their OBSE level is low (Han and Jekel, 2011).

It may be stated that reverse of the determined relation between LMX and OBSE is valid in TI. Because it is seen that workers decide to leave from their works because of problems experienced between their bosses or leaders rather than the works they carry out. The results obtained from the studies conducted support this idea. Hui, et al., (1999) found out that workers working in the organizations where high level LMX is provided display more positive attitudes

against the work. Therefore, it is possible to say that the quality of LMX between the leaders and followers have a direct and negative effect on TI which is an important organizational problem (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Krishnan, 2005; Bauer et al., 2006; Harris et al. 2009; Harris, Wheeler and Kacmar 2009).

Thanks to high quality LMX, followers obtaining more support and resource within mutual respect and trust develop contributions such as showing higher performance, taking more responsibilities etc. in order to give positive response to their leaders. (Chen et al., 2007). In this sense, features of workers of internal group related to PC are expected to develop and increase in the study.

PC, as a term related to strong sides of the workers rather than their weaknesses, which emphasized their strengths such as hope, optimism, self-sufficiency and endurance etc. means the mental strengths of workers have obtained (Luthansve Youssef 2004; Luthans et al., 2007: Avey et al., 2008: 50). PC was examined as the mediating variable. Because positive point of view and high energy that the workers whose PC levels are high, have cause them to fell more valuable, their OBSE levels are expected to rise.

In the study conducted by Avey et al., (2009), which is one of the studies investigating the relation of PC with TI which is the other variable, negative and meaningful relation was determined between the PC and TI and behaviours of looking for new jobs of workers. In the other study conducted by Avey et al., (2010), it was determined that TI of workers with high level PC has is low. Similarly, in the study conducted by Erkuş, and Fındıklı (2013), workers with high level PC were found to have low level TI.

It was described that quality of the relations between the workers and leaders has an important and negative effect on TI (Vecchio, 1982; Bauer and Green, 1996; Gerstner and Day, 1997). Besides, PC, which emphasizes the importance of people more, attracts attention to the increase in values such as knowledge, skill, competence and experience etc., and it means the mental strength the workers have obtained (Luthans et al., 2007). So, it is expected in the study that OBSE levels of internal group workers whose PC level is high and their TI is low.

As a result of investigations of relations between the variables in the study, hypotheses of the study have been formed as below;

- H₁** : LMX has a meaningful and positive effect on OBSE.
- H₂** : LMX has a meaningful and negative effect on TI.
- H₃** : LMX has a meaningful and positive effect on PC.
- H₄** : PC has an mediating role in the relation between LMX and OBSE.
- H₅** : PC has an mediating role in the relation between LMX and TI.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling and Data Collection Method

The research was carried out with survey method. The questionnaire involves two sections and 52 questions. In the first section are 7 questions, which are gender, marital status, age, education, seniority, occupational experience and work position. In the second section are 45 questions, 7 questions for LMX scale, 24 questions for PC scale, 10 questions for OBSE, and 4 questions for TI scale.

The Questionnaire form was sent via intranet network of a logistics company active all around the country with web based link on 20 December 2014. 454 out of about 7000 workers of the company filled out the questionnaires in the electronic environment until 20 February 2015. It was seen that 450-person sampling size reached in the research may represent the universe with 0,99 reliability and 0,1 sampling fault (Yazıcıoğlu and Erdoğan, 2004: 49-50).

Of the total participants; 11,2% were women (N=51); 88,8% men (N=403), 65,6 % married (N= 298); 34,4% single (N= 156). 31,5 % high school graduate (N=145), 29,3 % working in the company for 1-3 years (N= 133), 29,1 % with 11-15 work experience (N=132), 84,5% workers, 15,5 % managers. Detailed information about the participants is in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the participants

Sex	N	Percent	Age	N	Percent
Female	51	11,2	20-30	189	41,6
Male	403	88,8	31-40	158	34,7
Total	454	100	41-50	101	22,3
Medeni Hal	N	Percent	51-60	6	1,4
Married	298	65,6	Total	459	100
Single/Divorced	156	34,4	Occupational Experience	N	Percent
Total	454	100	Less than 1 year	38	8,4
Education	N	Percent	1-5 year	133	29,3
Primary	96	21,2	6-10 year	123	27
Secondary	120	26,4	11-15 year	92	20,3
High	156	34,3	More than 15 years	68	15
Associate	25	5,5	Total	454	100
License	55	12,2	Tenure	N	Percent

Master	2	0,4	Less than 1 year	38	8,4
Total	454	100	1-5 year	156	34,4
Position	N	Percent	6-10 year	100	22
Manager	70	15,5	11-15 year	132	29,1
Employee	384	84,5	More than 15 years	28	6,1
Total	454	100	Total	454	100

Table 1...

Scales of the Research

Leader Member Exchange Scale: When measuring quality of leader member exchange, LMX-7 scale of Scandura and Graen (1984:430) was used. Turkish adaptation of the scale was used in the studies of Özutku et al. (2008), Karcioğlu and Kahya (2011) and Bolat (2011). The scale is comprised of 7 descriptions prepared for leader and follower each. LMX Scale (LMX-7) of Scandura and Graen (1984) was used in the study. There are 7 descriptions in the scale. Participants were requested to answer the questions compatible with their positions (worker, manager) High values in the scale show that quality of leader-member exchange is high. The scale has single-factor construct.

Organization Based Self Esteem Scale: In order to be able to measure OBSE perceptions of workers, scale developed by Pierce et al. (1989) was used. The scale is comprised of 10 descriptions (For example: *I'm taken seriously at work. I am being trusted at work*) and a single factor. The scale was translated into 6 different languages (Matsuda et al., 2011) and its Turkish version was used in the studies of Yıldırım (2003) and Akalın (2006).

Turnover Intention Scale: When measuring Turnover intention of the workers, the scale, which was developed by Scott et al. (1999) and adapted in Turkish by Aylan (2012), was used. There are total 4 questions in the scale, one of which is with reverse side (For example: *I think I will work here until I retire. I am seriously thinking of looking for another job next year.*) The scale has a single factor construct.

Psychological Capital Scale: When measuring PC levels of the participants, the scale (PCQ-24), which was developed by Luthans et al. (2007) and which was adopted in Turkish in a number of studies (Çetin and Basım, 2012; Erkuş and Fındıklı, 2013; Özer et al., 2013). The scale is comprised of 4 different dimensions, optimism (6 descriptions), Psychological endurance (6 descriptions), hope (6 descriptions) and self-sufficiency (6 descriptions) and 24

description (For example: “I believe in myself in determining goals/purposes in my workplace.”, “There are many ways to solve a problem.”)

Validity and Reliability of the Scales

Packet program of SPSS 22 is used for reliability tests of the scales and that of SPSS AMOS 22 for confirmatory factor analyses and structural equality models. Cronbach Alpha coefficients were identified for the determination of reliability of scales and for the determination whether they are valid corrective factor analyses were made. Both Cronbach Alpha coefficients and factor analyses results are in Table 2.

As a result of confirmatory factor analysis made, single-2 factor constructs of LMX, OBSE and TI scales and 4 factor construct of PC scale were verified. In addition, when values of Cronbach Alpha values obtained are examined, it may be said that the scales are reliable.

Table 2. Results of Validity and Reliability Analysis

Scales	Factor Structure	Confirmatory Factor Analysis					Cronbach Alpha	
		$\Delta\chi^2$	df	$\Delta\chi^2/df$	GFI	CFI		RMSEA
LMX		124,179	35	3,548	0,95	0,96	0,075	0,92
OBSE	Single-factorstructure	24,679	5	4,935	0,98	0,98	0,080	0,90
TI		0,841	2	0,421	0,99	0,99	0,005	0,79
PC	Four-factorstructure	482,240	131	3,681	0,89	0,93	0,077	0,94
Absolute fit indices*				≤3	≥0,90	≥0,97	≤0,05	
Acceptable fit indices*				≤4-5	0,89-0,85	≥0,95	0,06-0,08	

$p>.05$, χ^2 =Chi-Square; df=Degree of Freedom; GFI=Goodness Of Fit Index; CFI=Comparative Fit Index; RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

*Source: Meydan and Şeşen, 2011:37

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Hypothesis formed in the research were tested with constructional equality tests. Within this scope, constructional equality model formed to test the hypothesis 1 and 2 of the research is shown in figure 1. Adaptive values of constructional model seen in Figure 1 ($\Delta\chi^2$: 388,947; df: 150; χ^2/df : 2,593; GFI: 0,91; CFI: 0,95; RMSEA: 0,059) were observed to be acceptable limits. After examining the model, it is seen that LMX has a meaningful and positive effect on OBSE ($\beta=0,51$; $p<0,05$) and meaningful negative effect on TI ($\beta=-0,14$; $p<0,05$). According to these

results hypotheses 1 and 2 of the research were accepted. When R^2 values of the model obtained are examined, it is seen that 26 % of OBSE and 2% of TI is explained with independent variables. Adaptive values of the model ($\Delta\chi^2$: 1472,867; df: 624; χ^2 /df: 2,360; GFI: 0,85; CFI: 0,92; RMSEA: 0,055) were observed to be acceptable limits.

Constructional equality model formed in order to test the hypotheses 3, 4 and 5 of the study is shown in Figure 3. Mediating role of PC in the relation between LUE and OBSE and TI was tested with a 3-stage method that Baron and Kenny (1986) suggested. In the first stage the writers suggested, effects of independent variable on the dependent variable was found out (Figure-1) the second and the third stages were investigated with the model presented in Figure 2.

Because $p > 0,05$ is between the independent variable and mediating variable, no statistically meaningful relation was determined. According to this result, second stage of Baron and Kenny (1986) could not be achieved and no mediating affect was found. In addition to this, no statistically meaningful relation ($p > 0,05$) was determined between the mediating variable (PC) and dependent variables (TI and OBSE). Within this scope, hypothesis H_3 , H_4 and H_5 were rejected.

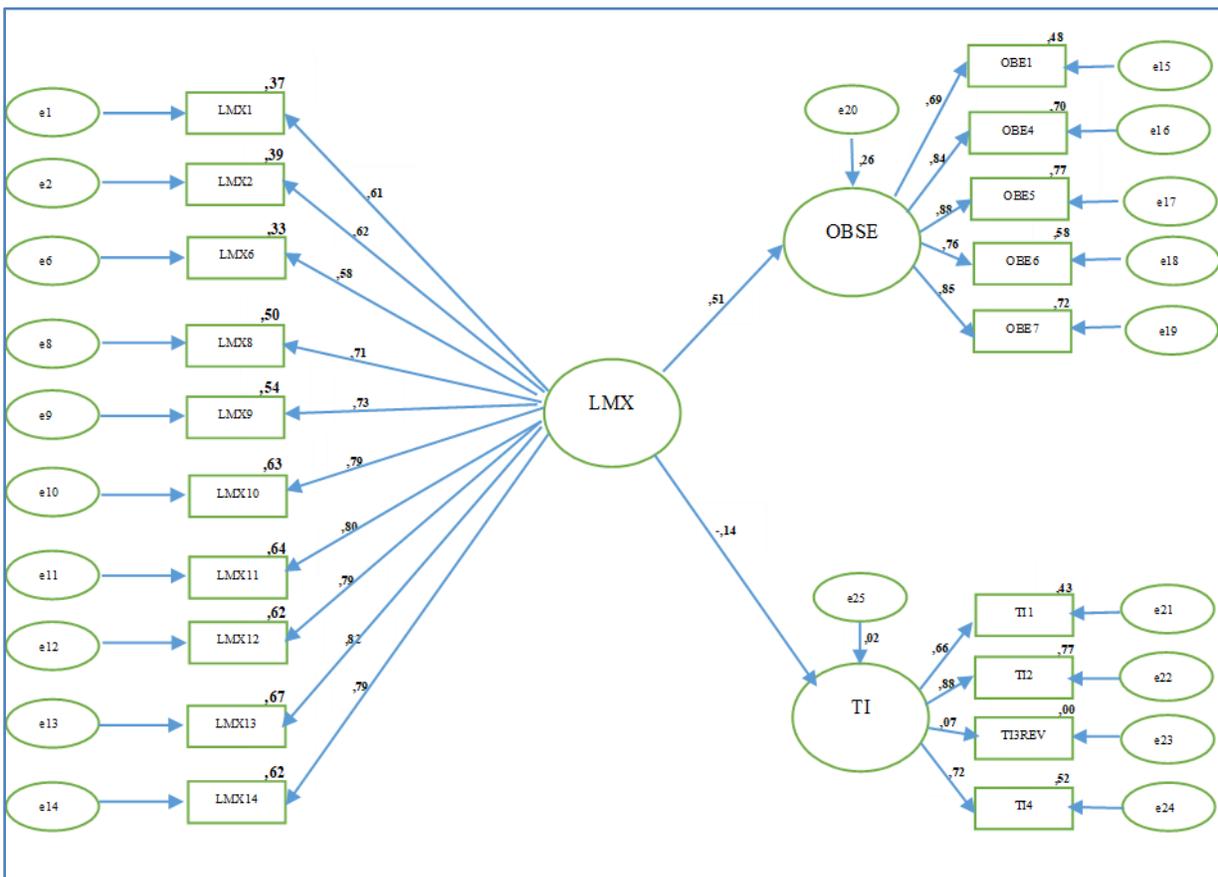


Figure 1. Constructional Equality Model (LMX-TI-OBSE)

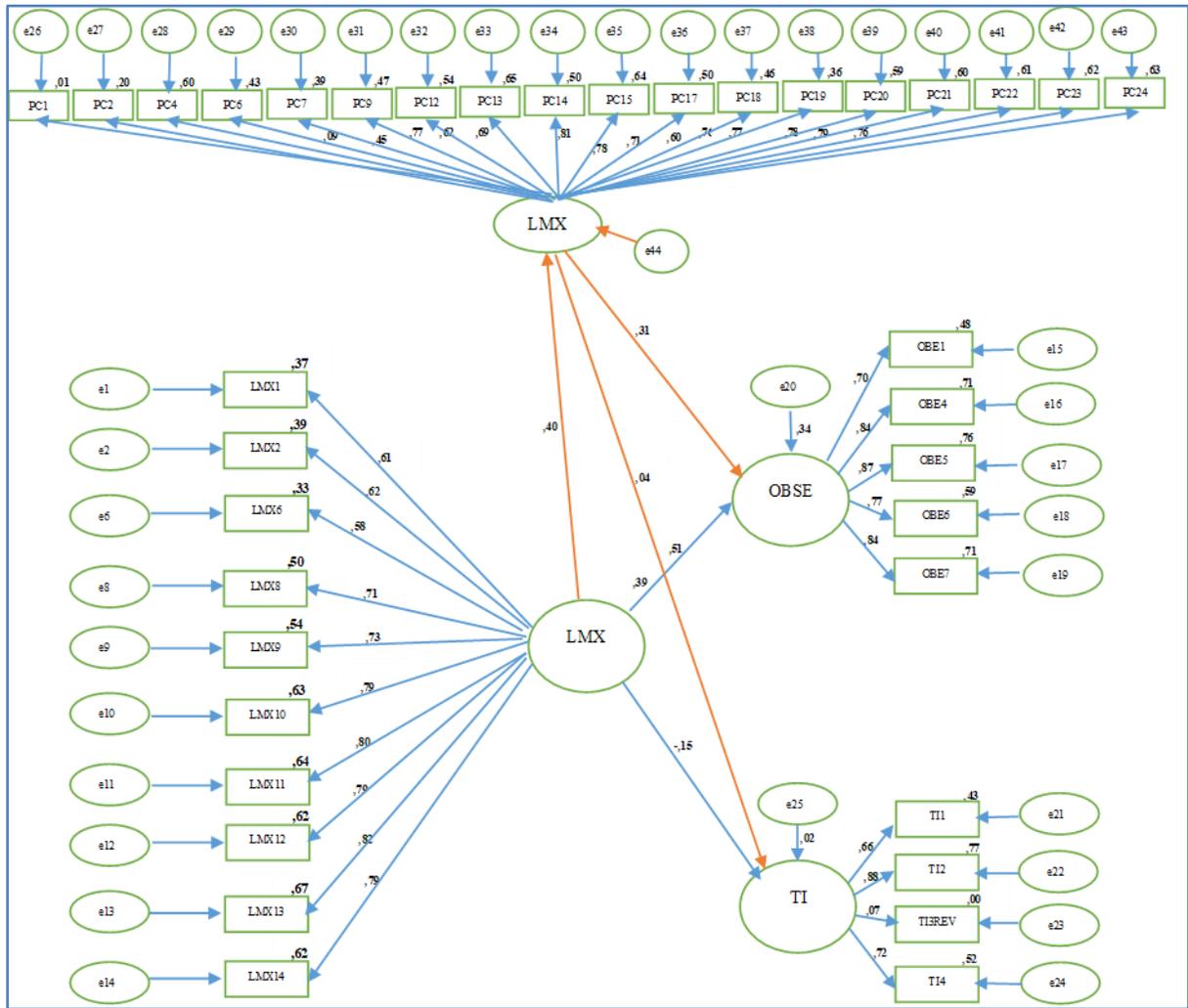


Figure 2. Constructional Equality Model (LMX-PC-OBSE-TI)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In this study, LMX, which plays an important role in featuring and developing strengths of the workers and in forming positive organizational behaviour changes as a result of formation of good relations between the workers and managers, effects of LMX on organization based self-esteem and turnover intention of the workers and mediating roles of PC perceptions which bring a new point of point to organization applications in these relations were investigated. Results obtained; it was concluded that OBSE perceptions of workers working in the businesses where LMX is high is high and their TI decreases; in this process, PC has no mediating role in the relation between LMX OBSE –TI.

It is stated that different bilateral relations that leader develops with his followers will affect the behaviours of both the leader and the followers and the results of leadership process

(Yaşlıoğlu vd., 2013). It is evaluated that organization based self-esteem perceptions and intentions of leave of employment of workers are among the results mentioned. It was specified that OBSE levels of internal group workers who have high level interaction with their leaders may be high depending on the support they get from their leaders (Sparrow and Liden 2005) whereas those of outside group workers who are more distant to their leaders may be low (Han veJekel, 2011). In this study, increase in LMX level was found to affect OBSE perception positively.

It was seen that high quality interaction between leaders and followers based on mutual trust affect attitudes of workers towards the work positively (Hui vd., 1999). On the contrary, it was seen that negative perceptions of workers working in the organizations in which leaders and followers interact at the intended level towards the work and their intentions of leave of employment increase. (Gerstner and Day, 1997; Krishnan, 2005; Bauer et al., 2006; Harris et al., 2009; Harris, Wheeler and Kacmar 2009). Results obtained in the study are in parallel with the previous studies in the literature.

It was clearly expressed that PC, different from personality traits, is open to development. When it is considered that workers with high level interaction with their leaders will get support from their leaders and thanks to this, they will gain confidence and their expectations will be met, it was evaluated that this environment will affect their PC levels positively and develop it. In addition, it was evaluated that positive point of view and high energy that the workers with high PC levels have will cause them to feel more valuable in the organization and depending on this, their OBSE levels will be higher, and TI will be lower. (Avey et al., 2010; Erkuş and Fındıklı, 2013).

No statistically meaningful results have been reached in the relations between LMX and PC as well as those between PC and OBSE and PC and TI. Because the number of studies related to these variables is not at the sufficient level, reasons of the results obtained could not be revealed clearly and it was evaluated that they may be related to samples of the study. Therefore, it is planned that the study related to variable investigated in the study will be repeated in different sample groups and a more comprehensive evaluation will be made with the results to be obtained.

In the literature, no study which handles variables of LMX, PC, TI and OBSE together was found. It is evaluated that the first results obtained in the study will contribute to the literature. On the contrary, the research was carried out with cross-sectional data obtained from the questionnaires and the sample group is comprised of the workers of a single business. So it may be said that they are the limitations of the study. The study is planned to be repeated in different sectors and sample groups. It is planned that the results to be obtained as a result of

the studies to be carried out and the first results obtained in the study will be handled together and more comprehensive evaluation will be made. It is considered that other researchers in this area will be able to carry out research on the variables in the study with additional variables in different sectors.

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