

**IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION  
ON LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE IN THE  
CONSTRUCTION SECTOR  
OF PAKISTAN**

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**ASIA e UNIVERSITY**

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## ABSTRACT

The present study was aimed to explore the direct and indirect impact of organizational socialization on Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) in the construction sector of Pakistan through a mediating and moderating mechanism. By analyzing previous literature on organizational socialization, it was hypothesized that the positive relationship between organizational socialization and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is mediated by Perceived Social Validation. While on the other hand, the Person-Environment Fit was taken as moderator between the Organizational Socialization and Perceived Social Validation. A sample of new comers working in 27 construction companies located in Rawalpindi/Islamabad, Pakistan was used for the current study. Amos 20.0 software was used to evaluate the data using a structural equation modeling technique which is commonly used in explanatory studies. The results revealed that Organizational Socialization of new comers in construction companies of Pakistan is positively affected their Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) with their supervisors. In addition to this, Perceived Social Validation have a direct and positive affect on LMX, it also mediated the positive relationship of organizational socialization and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). It was found that person environment fit moderated significantly the positive association between Organizational Socialization and Perceived Social Validation. Furthermore, through socialization process they become familiar with their immediate supervisors and leaders through which they build strong positive leader-member relationships at work. At the same time, however, the organization should provide a clear signal to leaders that risks related to providing increased autonomy and decision latitude to new employees are acknowledged in the organization and that support is available from their leaders reduce these risks to new hires. Further research is needed in the field by

including more mediators, moderators and with a longitudinal design to explore new findings in the construction sector of Pakistan.

**Keywords:** Organizational Socialization, Person Environment Fit, Perceived Social Validation, Leader-Member Exchange.

## APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, for the fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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(21 February 2023)

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfillment of the PhD degree is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted, in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge that any breaches of this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

**Name: Muhammad Asghar**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Muhammad Asghar', is shown within a rectangular box.

**Signature of Candidate:**

**Date: February 2023**



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All praise Allah, Lord of all worlds, in the name of Allah, the most loving and merciful. The merciful are the most loving, and they are the masters of the day of requital. We worship you alone and beg you alone for help. Keep us on the right track. Whose plentiful blessing enabled me to identify and pursue higher ideas of life? All praise and respect are for his holy prophet Muhammad (P. B. U. H.), who enabled me to recognise the creator.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATION

OS	Organizational Socialization
PE FIT	Person-Environment Fit
PSV	Perceived Social Validation
LMX	Leader-Member Exchange
SIT	Social Identity Theory
SD	Standard Deviation
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
CB-SEM	Covariance-Based SEM
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares-SEM
SPSS	(Statistical Package for the Social Sciences)
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
GFI	Goodness-of-Fit Index
TLI	Tucker–Lewis Index
NFI	Normed Fit Index
AGF	Adjusted Goodness-of-Fit
ML	Maximum Likelihood
AVE	Average Variance Extracted
RMSR	Root Mean Square Residuals
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
AeU	Asia e University

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

The current examination was relied upon to survey the impact of Organizational Socialization (OS) procedures on Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) of as of late enrolled workers through directing job/component of Person Environment Fit (P-E Fit) and intervening of Perceived Social Validation (PSV) explicitly in the construction area of Pakistan. The review was planned to check the relationship with the assistance of certain gaps recognized from past writings and ads new and a one of kind elements by consolidating moderators and mediators between hierarchical socialization of new comers and their Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) inside the construction sector of Pakistan. The system through which new workers gain the required and dependable information and capacities that are expected to play out their undertaking and job adequately in the new workplaces, which is at its most amassed stage in the primary weeks and now and again for quite a long time after appearance (Allen et al., 2017; Van Maane and Schein, 1979). New representatives' first impressions are pivotal in deciding their later work perspectives and activities, just as regardless of the fact that whether they will like to remain a part with the same organization at current level (Bauer et al., 2019; Kowtha, 2018; Saks et al., 2007, p.11). New worker's socialization is leaned to a significant part by the cooperation's that representatives structure during their initial occasions of authoritative confirmation, as per research (Yuan et al., 2020). Past studies has featured "authoritative insiders," like pioneers and representatives, as significant mingling causes in this association (Nifadkar, 2020; Ostroff and Kozlowski, 1992). For instance, pioneers, as supports, supply information and input to new comers to help

them in dominating position obligations and explaining their job; as colleagues, teammates, impart, arrange, and work together to finish jobs in the new spot (Ganegoda and Bordia, 2019; Jokisaari et al, 2018). New hires can more readily adjust to life in another working environment by shaping better relational bonds (see likewise Saks and Gruman, 2012). We guarantee that, among other conventional results, (for example, work fulfillment and responsibility), recruits execution could be the standardized type of new workers change, on the grounds that better shows a superior fit for this work. In view of the reason that novices are mingled fundamentally through relational communications with insiders in associations (Hatmaker, 2015; Kammeyer et al., 2013), past research has discovered a connection between new recruits attaches with insiders and their change and execution (Sluss and Thompson, 2012; Moyson et al, 2018 p 21; Chen and Eldridge, 2011). In any case, the majority of these explores have been focused on contestants' associations with their bosses, imagining that managers are the furthestmost compelling wellspring of confined socialization for newbie's (Ashforth, 2012; Sluss and Thompson, 2012). Then again, there is a deficiency of studies on the job of associate's associations with the leaders and companions in new recruits' socialization. In addition to, it is extremely significant to see how straight up connections (e.g., with one's immediate boss) can influence change in a new hire's behavior, the worth of regular connections that exist among representatives and work groups is extensively lessened in the current writing of hierarchical settings (Banks et al., 2014).

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In rising and developing economies such as Pakistan, the construction sector is very critical for building the required arrangements to support economic growth and equality in social setup (Owusu-Manu et al., 2019; Bilal et al, 2016; Winch, 2009). In



emerging economies of the world, the construction sector alone accounts for 82% of gross equity assets, a 10% of GDP, and more than this half of all job opportunities in the market (Owusu-Manu, Debrah, Amissah, Edwards, & Chileshe, 2020). However, according to (see also Kissi et. al., 2019 p.9), the construction industry is facing a very high risk like conditions that compel projects with unnecessary burden, which necessitating methodical approaches to accomplish project goals and maintain profitability. The construction as a crucial industry depends upon a large human undertaking that entails a variety of interconnected duties from several industries (Ofori, 2012). The worldwide construction business, as well as the enormous convulsion of extra-large building projects, is growing at an shocking rate, in response to this it is the need of the hour to development of efficient and on the other hand effective project managers and their leadership qualities (Kazaz and Shibani, 2016; Suresh et al., 2009). Effective leadership, according to Ofori and Toor (2012), is critical for reducing the risk of a specific project failure in developing countries. In addition to, (Kazaz and Shibani, 2016 p.21) assert that leadership abilities can be used in place of or in addition to technical and managerial abilities (Owusu-Manu et al, 2020). Despite the growing demand for an effective type of construction sector leadership, a much defined and also delineating single leadership style that becomes best fits at all situations is difficult due to the unique nature of construction projects (Owusu-Manu et al, 2020; Opoku, Ahmed & Cruickshank, 2015; Randeree and Ghaffar, 2012). Several experts agree that, while strong leadership benefits the sector, there is a dearth of research in the construction and/or civil engineering fields (Skeepers, & Mbohwa, 2015; Tabassi and Bakar, 2010; Toor and Ofori, 2008) to further strengthen the ability of workforce to face the globalization challenges in the world.

It is the era of technology, innovation, and quick change, and it is hard to compete in the globalized world without a full pledged construction sector. Despite its abundant resources, Pakistan has been unable to compete with the rest of the world in construction technology due to political instability, the war on terrorism, and inflation, as well as leadership (PES 2018). Pakistan's construction sector has grown at faster rate than other rest of the world countries, with a growth rate of 9.05 percent between 2016 and 2017(Zeigler-Hill, & Shackelford, 2020). However, there is a dismal track record of finishing projects on time, in assigned budget, and with the expected outcomes. In comparison to last year's 14.6 percent rise, the construction industry has grown by 9.05 percent (PES 2018). Construction is booming in several economic zones such as energy, architecture & planning, industrial, and transportation, making it a defining aspect for the country's economic success (Ali et al. 2018). Though the industry is growing, the magnitude and rate of growth are still behind those of other developing countries in the region. Pakistan's construction industry, like that of other countries throughout the world, has a dismal track record of completing projects on time and on budget (Shahbaz, & Shaikh, 2019; Alhosani and Zabri 2018). On the other hand, the construction industry is a vital part of Pakistan's economy. It is the country's greatest employer and a critical contributor to economic progress (Khwaja et al. 2018).Although the industry is progressing, the magnitude and rate of progress are insufficient in light of the current economic crisis. The growth of the construction and related industries is mostly due to growing government spending. The Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) expanded to Rs. 700 billion in 2016 from Rs. 350 billion in 2013, representing a 100 percent increase, assisting initiatives in infrastructure, electricity production, railway development, construction, and allied sectors (PES 2016). Higher purchases of gasoline and capital equipment accounted for

the majority of the increase in overall import payments. This is unsurprising, given Pakistan's shift from a low-growth to a higher-growth economy, which has resulted in supply-side energy and infrastructural bottlenecks (Khawaja et al, 2018). The construction sector's imports of power-generating surged by 66.8%, is indicating a greater productivity in Pakistan (Ali et al. 2018; Manners-bell 2014; Karia and Soliman, 2017). Construction contributed 13.13 percent to the gross domestic product (GDP) last year as a sub-sector (PES 2015; Ng and Ghobakhloo 2017). This expansion demonstrated that the construction industry is actively contributing to Pakistan's development. In today's high-investment initiatives, project management is critical to their completion and execution.

An ability based model which included 12 skills by (Cheng et al., 2005) for project administrator execution in the development business that are portrayed as: data chasing, direction, drive, accomplishment, collaboration and participation, center around customer needs, effect and impact, scientific reasoning, imperfection, discretion, group authority, theoretical reasoning, and adaptability. Ahadzie et al. (2008 p.11) the presentation of development project administrators in poor nations was assessed utilizing four assignment skills (intellectual capacity, work information, task capability, and experience) and two context oriented abilities (work commitment and relational assistance). Moreover, Ahadzie et al. (2009), depicted ranking directors' view of venture chiefs' capabilities needed for mass lodging development projects and recognized seven center abilities, incorporating position information in site design methods for redundant development works; commitment in helping workers for hire in gathering work plans; work information on suitable innovation move for tedious development works; and effectiveness in helping project workers in gathering work plans (Khattak, and Mustafa, 2019). Ahsan et al. (2013) explored in their research

that top project manager competencies to be recruited for future endeavors for public sector engineering and building projects include communication, educational background, stakeholder management, cost management, time management, technical abilities, and planning and risk management (Khattak, & Mustafa, 2019). In addition to that, performance of project and employee performance can be improved, according to Memon et al. (2014), by management, appropriate planning, and committed leadership, and an effective communication structure.

Leadership is vital in all domains of human effort because it is a key factor to successfully complete any project that includes people working together (Ofori and Toor, 2012; Aga, Noorderhaven, & Vallejo, 2016). The procedure of influencing others to apprehend what has to be done and how it is going to be done is known as leadership. In the construction industry, leadership is responsible for coordinating and motivating multiple stakeholders (such as the customer, contractors, designers) in order to complete a project successfully (Jiang, 2014; Morris, 2004). According to researches, good leadership development can improve leadership styles, therefore leaders should be in a continual learning mode (Podgórska, & Pichlak, 2019; Heslin and Keating (2017; Ashford and DeRue, 2012). The present study will apply the leadership model of leader-member exchange (LMX) on the construction industry of a developing country such as Pakistan to examine the validity and reliability of leadership role in the industry for its new hires in the construction companies.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) research is significant because the innovations that occur are an expression of the interchange between leaders and followers. In project management teams with moderate degrees of LMX supervisor differentiation, the quality of leader-follower exchange interactions is similar, indicating that leader support, time allocation, and resource distribution are uniform

across members of the work group in a project (Carnevale, Huang, & Paterson, 2019). It is hoped that the innovation developed would be of good quality if the exchange between leaders and followers is of high quality, so that a successful performance can be attained through a high-quality innovation mechanism. In addition, research shows that demographic similarities are a significant issue in LMX (Berneth et al., 2008). Furthermore, there has never been any research on the features of LMX in the construction business (Dedy Dewanto, 2020). Although the LMX theory is most commonly employed to study the leader-subordinate relationship, past empirical research has shown that it can influence organizational-level sentiments such as commitment and identification with the company, as well as a decreased desire to quit (Dhar, 2016; Kim et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2017). LMX differentiation refers to the differences in individual views of the quality of LMX relationships among members of a work group (Martin et al, 2016; Wu, Tsui, & Kinicki, 2010). Importantly, LMX differentiation influences individual members' cognitions and experiences, allowing them to compare their own dyadic interactions with the leader to those of the other leader-follower dyads in the work group (Carnevale, Huang, & Paterson, 2019; Martin et al, 2018; Henderson et al., 2008). However, the quality of leader-follower exchange contacts differs among teams with considerable degrees of LMX differentiation (i.e., ranging from high to low) (Carnevale, Huang, & Paterson, 2019). In such situations, where leaders form highly personalized relationships with some members of the unit while maintaining depersonalized contacts with others outside the boarder (Kim et al, 2017; Herdman, Yang, & Arthur, 2014). As a result, high-quality LMX increases employee satisfaction with their employers, leading to a cascade of beneficial job-related outcomes such as better job performance, job satisfaction, commitment, organizational identification, and OCB as well as work

engagement and creativity (Teng et al, 2020; Cha and Borchgrevink, 2018; Seo et al, 2018; Kim and Koo, 2017; Wang et al., 2017). Employees often regard leaders as representations of the organization and key personnel who handle employment relationships, therefore the LMX can help shape organizational views (Teng et al, 2020; Garg, & Dhar, 2017; Eisenberger et al., 2010). Leaders also bear the organization's archetypal traits and exert social pressures on their subordinates (Hogg et al., 2005, p.18).

Because of its long-term effects on performance, the transition of newcomers from outsiders to adjusted insiders is gaining more attention (Livi et al, 2020; Kowtha, 2018; Ellis, Nifadkar, Bauer, & Erdogan, 2017). New trainees can gain a better understanding of their role's expectations, increase their confidence in their ability to perform the service, gain a deeper understanding of and identification with the organizational culture, and gain acceptance from other volunteers through proactive organizational efforts and a willingness to learn new ideas and explore new avenues (See also Livi et al, 2020; Bauer et al., 2007 p.13; Ellis et al., 2015). Indeed, an increasing body of evidence demonstrates that good socialization benefits both organizations and newcomers. It aids firms in retaining new personnel and reaping the benefits of adjustment (Coldwell et.al. 2019; Allen & Shanock, 2013), it also aids newcomers in coping with the uncertainty of the on boarding process (Parker et. al., 2016 p.12; Fang et. al., 2011). Organizational socialization is defined as the process through which new people "learn the ropes" and acquire the attitudes, actions, and information needed to participate as members of a group (Atherley et al, 2016; Allen et al, 2017), can be a significant source of competitive advantage. According to (Bauer et al., 2007) the process through which a new worker becomes a full part of the organization and adopts the expected behaviors, values, and talents required to

execute his or her work in the project is known as organizational socialization(See also Livi et al, 2020;Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2006). The socialization process, in instance, occurs whenever the costs and benefits of affiliation to the organization change, and can thus be seen of as a constant adjustment of the work environment that corresponds to the workers' lives within the organization ((Livi et al, 2020; Khalil et al,2020; Livi et al., 2018; Pierro et al, 2015, p.21). Newcomers must succeed in a variety of areas, including learning new duties and positions, integrating into the workgroup, internalizing the organization's aims and values, and becoming comfortable with the language, politics, and culture (Chao et al, 1994). The socialization process, according to empirical analyses of research, ensures the organization's values, culture, and norms are sustained, improves task abilities and connection to the group, promotes the newcomer's commitment to the organizational settings, and reduces dropout intention of the new employees (Livi et al, 2020; Farnese, Fida, & Livi, 2016; Livi et al, 2015). The socialization process begins even before a person is formally hired, with the expectations he or she has for the organization's success and the role he or she will have to play (Spagnoli, 2020; Farnese et al, 2018; Rullo, Livi, & Farinacci, 2015).

Learning and absorption are the two key processes that lead to efficient socialization, according to the literature on socialization (Korte, 2010). In order to be successful in each of these spheres, distinct socializing forces must work together: “(a) the organization's formal on boarding policies these "organizational socialization tactics" “characterize the structural side of socialization and can vary in terms of institutionalization, with greater institutionalization reflecting a more systematic set of practices (Alessandri et al,2020; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979)”; “(b) the organization's formal on boarding policies these "organizational socialization tactics”

characterize the structural side of socialization and can vary in terms of their level of institutionalization, with greater institutionalization (Korte, 2010); and (c) newcomers who actively seek information and input, create relationships, frame problems in a good light, and negotiate their job responsibilities”(Gruman, Saks, & Zweig, 2006).

The unraveling of the direct impacts of these precursors, as well as an analysis of their interdependencies and interactions, is required for a finer knowledge of the processes leading to a successful and realistic socialization (Kammeyer et al, 2003). Although insiders have typically been thought of as essentially an extension of the study of organization's socialization programme, current research suggests that they can perform individually through relational mechanisms and have distinct effects on newcomer adjustment (Montani, Maoret, & Dufour, 2019; Ellis et al., 2017). What is less known is how the employment of formal socializing strategies impacts supervisors' and coworkers' abilities to assist newcomers with their adjustment processes. This is significant because newcomer-insider relationships are enmeshed in the larger organizational perspective, which is influenced in part by the organization's socialization techniques (Nifadkar, 2020).

The results of few empirical studies that have looked at the interplay between relational and operational antecedents of socialization have been equivocal. On the one hand, a synergetic pattern has been identified in which formal organizational activities, such as institutionalized methods, and relational antecedents strengthen and/or complement each other's impacts (Simosi, 2010; Lee, Kowtha, 2018; Montani et al., 2019). For example, (Lee et. al., 2013) discovered that institutionalized policies enhance the special effects of social support on expatriates' adjustment in the working conditions and performance as well, whereas on the other hand,(Liden et al. (2004) and Dulac and Coyle Shapiro (2006) empirical findings suggest that institutionalized