



6. THE MODERATED EFFECT OF ROLE CONFLICT AND JOB TENURE ON THE LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE RELATION IN UNIVERSITY OFFICES

Disayuit Buajoom
Panyada Praditbathuka
Surawit Assapun

Introduction

The Leader Member Exchange (LMX) is the theory that was developed by Graen and colleagues (Elkins & Keller, as cited in Graen et al. 1973) which mainly focuses on the social exchange process between leaders and members. This theory also studies the leadership based on the quality of the relationship between leaders and members from the view that leaders would have different relationship for different members depending on the quality of relationship that the leaders have on each members. Members who have good relationship with leaders tend to get supported or promoted than members who have bad relationship with their leaders. From the principle of this theory, we can say that the quality of the relationship between leaders and members is an important factor that strongly influences the success of organizations (Elkins & Keller, as cited in Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Therefore, the researches related to the influence on the relationship of the moderators of exchange between leaders and members in working environment tends to study the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members and the result of working. This research found that the exchange between leaders and members relates to the job satisfactions, working performance, relationship between the organizations, conflicts, duties, efficiency, and tendency to quit the job of each member.

Besides studying on the relationship between leaders and members and the result of working, there are another two researches. The first one is the research that tends to find moderators that can forecast quality of the relationship between leaders and members. The second one is the research that tends to study the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with the behaviors of leaders or members (Elkins & Keller, 2003). Moreover, the exchange between leaders and members is also the variable that relates to the relationship between independent variables and the result from working or satisfaction (Panchack, 2004). From the previous researches, even though they found that the exchange between leaders and member relates to the result of working, the quality of the relationship also depends on other factors. For example, Erdogan and Enders (2007) found that leaders who get plenty support from organizations would have higher satisfaction. Furthermore, Golden and Veiga (2008) found that working via Virtual Mode is the moderator that can moderate the relationship between leaders and members which also affects the result of working. Therefore, Erdogan and Enders (2007) concluded that the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members and the performance of the works is not stable. This also includes the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members and the satisfaction of the works. Hence, the study of variables that can increase the level of



the relationship in the exchange between leaders and members with the satisfaction is very interesting. For this research, our group selected two moderators that the previous researches haven't concluded the relationship with the satisfaction clearly to moderate the relationship between the exchange between leaders and members and job satisfactions which are perception of roles and job tenure.

There are two types of perception of roles which are perception of role ambiguity and perception of unclear roles. For example, from the study of Dunegan, Uhl-Bien and Duchon (2002) found that the conflicts in unimportant roles, ambiguity in important roles, and high satisfaction are factors that strengthen the relationship in performance of works. However, conflicts in important roles weaken the relationship. Besides that, Rizzo, House and Listzman (Rizzo, House & Listzman, 1970) found that role ambiguity has negative relationship with job satisfactions which is consistent to the research of Meta on the topic of causes and factors that directly affect job satisfactions for salesman. The research found that Role conflicts and ambiguity in roles have direct affect on job satisfactions (Brown & Peterson, 1993). Furthermore, Chertchard Pukpoon (1992) found that the samples that have different role conflicts will have different job satisfactions with 0.05 significant level and also found that role conflicts has negative relationship with job satisfactions. For the relationship and job tenure, the previous researches found two conclusions of the relationship which are job tenure has relationship with job satisfaction and has no relationship with job satisfactions. The researches in the domestic such as the studies of Thantima Rattanalapo (2002), Napaporn Autsawakanjana (2003), and Chatree Pattanalertphan (2003) also found that the differences in job tenures make the differences in job satisfaction significantly. The researches in abroad such as the studies of Bedeian, Ferris and Kacmar (1991) found that job tenure is the variable that stable in term of job satisfaction and also found different results in males and females. Some researches indicate that job tenure has no relationship with job satisfaction such as the researches of Jirapa Niamnoi (2002), Kamphol Phankasemsuk (2005), Pranot Kaosumran (2005), and Narumon Mongkoktae (2007). For this reason, this research paper aims to bring the variables that haven't been concluded clearly to study again as the moderators of Leader Member Exchange (LMX) since it is very interesting.

Literature Review

Leader Member Exchange theory (LMX) is the theory that studies the leadership based on quality of the relationship between leaders and members. This theory was developed from Vertical Dyad Linkage (VDL) that the theory started from the view of the leadership that is different from the previous leadership theory. The previous leadership theory believed that leaders would response to all members equally. In contrast, Vertical Dyad Linkage theory believed that leaders can distinguish each member in the team. Therefore, leadership and the ways that leaders behave with each member would be different depending on the quality of the relationship of leaders and members. Members who have good relationship with leaders tend to get supported or promoted than members who have bad relationship with leaders (Namchai Suppalerkchaisakul, 2007; Dansereau, Graen, &





Haga, 1975). Later, the theory was categorized to two types. The first type is to emphasize on the detail of the theory to be more clearly by explaining the relationship development of leaders and members. There are three steps in the leader member exchange. The first step is the step that members are assigned works by leaders simultaneously evaluate the working performance of members from the works they are assigned. The exchange during this step is mainly on economic purpose. The second step is the step that leaders and members are developing their relationship. Leaders start to determine the relationship with each member. In this step, members who have good relationship and get supported from leaders, the exchange tends to change to social purpose and these members would also gain more trust from leaders. The third step is the step that changes the roles to be standardized. It is the process after members created their roles and relationship with leaders. The exchange and behaviors between leaders and members will change to stable behaviors through processes such as cooperation. Many works that members are assigned would develop to be jobs and duty that they have to work on daily which finally becomes the standard roles and behaviors between leaders and members. For another type of the theory that was developed, it has become the individualized leadership (IL). This idea believes that the exchange between leaders and members occurs at level of relationship between leaders and members, but does not occur at the level of work. Leaders will behave and exchange with each members differently and does not depend on the relationship of leaders on each member. Therefore, the relationship between leaders and each member will be different and independent. This idea is different from the previous idea because the analysis level of this theory is Dyrad. On the other hand, the previous idea, the analysis level of the theory is focused on work (Numchai Suppalerkchaisakul, 2007). The researches that related to the relationship between the exchange of leaders and members and job satisfactions such as Rosse and Kraut (1983) (Numchai Suppalerkchaisakul, 2007) found that members who have good relationship with leaders would have positive relationship with job satisfaction and also have negative relationship with problems which the result is consistent to the research of Gerstner & Day (Numchai Suppalerkchaisakul, 2007) that found the exchange between leaders and members have positive relationship with job satisfaction, relationship with organizations. Moreover, the relationship is negative for the tendency to quit the job. Even though the previous researches found that the exchange between leaders and members has relationship with the result of work, the condition of the relationship is also depended on other factors. For instance, Erdogan and Enders (2007) found that leaders who perceive high support have higher satisfaction. Furthermore, Golden and Veiga (2008) also found that working through Virtual Mode is the moderator that can moderate the relationship between leaders and members and also affects the result of work. Erdogan and Enders (2007) concluded that the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with performance of work is not stable which also includes the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with job satisfaction. Dennis Duchon (2002) found that the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with working performance might be the relationship that coincidentally found. The research stated earlier also found that the relationship of the exchange between leaders and job satisfactions is



also depended on other moderators. Hence, the researchers try to study the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with job satisfaction again by selecting factors to moderate the level of the relationship.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is mood or feeling of individuals that response to the context of jobs. Job satisfaction may be perceived as intention which is an important variable to determine working behaviors. People who have job satisfaction are people who like jobs that they are responsible for (Jewell, 1998). The previous researches found that there are studies of the relationship of job satisfaction with other variables such as result of working, behavior of good members of the organization, relationship with the organization, behaviors on their roles, etc. Job satisfaction is a causal factor, consequence factor, and moderator. Therefore, job satisfaction would certainly have relationship with behaviors (Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1992). For the relationship of job satisfaction and the exchange between leaders and members, there are studies found that the relationship between these two variables is positive such as the studies of Ross and Kraut (1983), Setton, Bennett and Liden (1996) (as cited in Namchai Suppalerkchaisakul, 2007) and also found that the social exchange affects job satisfaction (Namchai Suppalerkchaisakul, 2007). However, some researches found that the exchange between leaders and members does not affect job satisfaction directly, but does affect indirectly which influenced by paternalistic behavior and emic cultural (Pellegrini & Scandura, 2006). Moreover, Dunegan Uhl-Bien and Duchon (2002) found that conflicts in unimportant roles, ambiguity in important roles, and high job satisfaction are variables that promote the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members and working performance. Nevertheless, conflicts in important roles reduce level of the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members and working performance. From the researches stated earlier, it can be concluded that the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with job satisfaction might be changed if they are influenced by some particular variables. Moreover, there are few domestic studies on the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with job satisfaction so that many researchers are interested in studying the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with job satisfaction by adapting some variables to use as moderators.

Perception of Roles

Role is the part that is related to realization of duties that are assigned. Obstacles related to roles can be occurred under two conditions. The first condition is role ambiguity. Since individuals do not understand their roles clearly. The second condition is role conflicts that occurred when an individual has to perform two different duties at the same time (Duangkam Khankasikam, 1994). Role conflict is the feeling of individuals that related to two or more roles. It is the contrast in their feelings when they have to follow their roles for two related roles (Rizzo, House & Listzman, 1970). Role ambiguity is unclear roles or lacks of understanding in the correct information for performing their works and



responsibility on how their roles are (Rizzo, House & Listzman, 1970). The previous researches found that perceptions of role ambiguity and role conflicts affect how individuals perform their works. This means they cannot perform their works effectively because of pressure, seriousness, and discouragement in performing works (Pirote Klinkularb, 1990; Cherdchart Pukpoon, 1992; Arom Jindaphan, 1993). Rizzo, House and Listzman (1970) found that role ambiguity has negative relationship with job satisfaction which is consistent to meta research on the topic of causes and factors that directly affect job satisfactions for salesman. The research found that role conflicts and role ambiguity affect directly on job satisfactions (Brown & Peterson, 1993). Furthermore, Chertchart Pukpoon (1992) found that the samples that have different role conflicts will have different job satisfactions with 0.05 for the significant level and role conflicts has negative relationship with job satisfactions. From the documented study of perception of roles that related to work, we can infer that perception of roles (role conflicts and role ambiguity) has negative effect on job satisfaction. Therefore, researchers decided to study the perception of roles on staffs according to the lease contract of Rajabhat Jankasem University on how their perceptions of roles affect job satisfaction. Even though the lease contract mentions about job position, job specification on each job is not provided. For this reason, it can create role conflicts and role ambiguity which obviously affect working performance and job satisfaction.

Job tenure

Job tenure is the length of time that individuals work on their roles as one of the staffs or workers according to the contracts of Rajabhat Jankasem University until present. Job tenure is a variable that researchers are interested in because the previous researches inferred that there is no clear conclusion for the relationship between job tenure and job satisfaction. There is no clear conclusion because previous researches found that job tenure is related to job satisfaction and also found that there is no relationship between job tenure and job satisfaction.

The researches that found the relationship between job tenure and job satisfaction such as researches of Tantima Rattanarapo (2002), Napaporn Autsawakarn (2003), and Chatree Pattanalertphan (2003). These researchers found that different job tenure creates different effects on job satisfaction significantly. On the other hand, the researches of Thanthip Suksaichol (2003), Janya Chokesuchart (2003), and Pongsuk Nuamnakorn (2003) found that different job tenure does not create different effects on job satisfaction significantly. The researches that did not find the relationship between job tenure and job satisfaction such as the researches of Jirapa Niamnoi (2002), Kamphol Phankasemsuk (2005), Pranot Kaosamran (2005), and Narumol Mongkoltae (2007). They found that different job tenure has similar job satisfaction. However, some researches use experience as the variable that substitute job tenure which the experience and job tenure may be the different or same variable. The results are consistent to the research on job tenure which are found and not found relationship. Besides, the researchers also found that experience or job tenure has negative relationship with insipidity such as the research of Brewer



and Shapard (2004) and Nuananong Srithanyarat (1991). (Namchai Suppalerkchaisakul 2007,as cited in Brewer & Shapard 2004; Nuananong Srithanyarat, 1991).

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

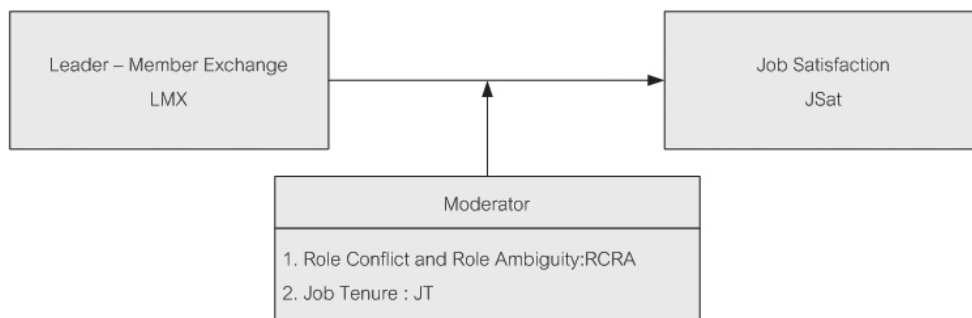


Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of this research that Leader-member exchange cause the Job Satisfaction with two-moderator. The moderators are the role conflict and role ambiguity and the job tenure.

The relationship between Leader-member exchange was found and confirmed. However, the effect size was not consistent (Erdogan & Enders, 2007). Although this study still interest about this relation.

Hypothesis 1. *Leader-member exchange related positive with Job Satisfaction*

According leader-member exchange theory base on role theory, the role should moderate leader-member exchange and job satisfaction relation. Dunegan Uhl-Bien and Duchon (2004) found that Role conflict and role ambiguity moderate leader-member exchange and job performance relationship.

Hypothesis 2. *There is moderated effect of Role conflict and role ambiguity on leader – member relation*

Job tenure was moderate effect on leader-member exchange and others relation. We believe that when job tenure increase the effect of leader-member exchange on job satisfaction was stronger. Maslyn and Uhl-Bien (2001) found that job tenure moderated leader-member exchange and quality of relation relationship.

Hypothesis 3. *Job tenure increase the relation of leader-member exchange and job satisfaction is stronger*

Method

Participants

The participants of this research were 111 officers of a Rajabhat University in Bangkok. All of participants work in same campus. All participants were contract employment (84.7 % contract employment, 7.2 % permanent employment and 8.1 government officer) Although 14 participates returned the incomplete questionnaire or have job tenure deviated more than 2 time of standard deviation from mean so only 98 offices data was analyzed.

Measures

The participants in the present study took 3 questionnaires (1) 20 items of leader-member exchange questionnaire with 7 level Likert scale asked for agreement from 1 (absolutely disagree) to 7 (absolutely agree) that we take from leader-member exchange questionnaire in Panjaks' research (2004). (2) 17 items of job satisfaction with 7 level Likert scale asked for agreement from 1 absolutely disagree to 7 absolutely agree that we take from 20 items of job satisfaction in Panjaks' research (2004), although we cut 3 items because their item-total correlation coefficients are lower than .20. (3) 12 items of role conflict and role ambiguity with 5 level Likert scale asked for frequency of event that take from 14 items of Lu Whlie and Barriball (2006) role conflict and role ambiguity questionnaire , although we cut 3 items because their item-total correlation coefficients are lower than .20.

The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of leader-member exchange questionnaire was .968, job satisfaction questionnaire was .886 and role conflict and role ambiguity was .783. The item-total correlation coefficients of leader-member exchange questionnaire were among .476-.880, job satisfaction questionnaire were among .313-.672 and role conflict and role ambiguity were among .276-.580.

Result

The participants' job satisfaction score and leader-member exchange score are quite high (\bar{X} = 4.79, 4.99). All of Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were acceptable. There are relation between job satisfaction and role conflict and role ambiguity that was significant ($r = -.34$ $p < .01$) and relation between job satisfaction and job tenure that was significant at ($r = .25$ $p < .05$) as reported on table 1.

Table 1: Means, standard deviations, intercorrelations and Cronbach's Alpha coefficients.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD.	JSat	LMX	RCRA	RC	RA
JSat Job Satisfaction	100	4.78	0.85	(.886)				
LMX Leader-member Exchange	100	4.99	1.18	.63**	(.968)			
RCRA Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity	100	2.38	0.59	-.34**	-.36**	(.783)		
RC Role Conflict	100	2.58	0.75	-.30**	-.34**	.89**	(.760)	
RA Role Ambiguity	100	2.10	0.68	-.26**	-.22*	.71**	.30**	(.770)
JT Job Tenure	100	4.64	3.69	.25*	.03	-.07	-.01	-.14

* Significant at .05 level
 ** Significant at .01 level

The hypothesis 1 was tested by simple linear regression analysis found that leader-member exchange term was significant at .01 level ($\beta = .633$, $t = 8.104$, $p < .001$) that explained 40.1% of variance of job satisfaction score (Adjusted $R^2 = .395$, $F = 65.676$, $p < .001$) that was significant at .01 levels.

Table 2: Hierarchical Moderated Regression 3 model : (1) leader-member exchange and role conflict and role ambiguity (2) leader-member exchange and role conflict (3) leader-member exchange and role ambiguity on job satisfaction.

Predictor	Model RCRA		Model RC		Model RA	
	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2	β	ΔR^2
Step 1 :						
Leader-member exchange (LMX)	.59**		.60**		.60**	
Role conflict and role ambiguity (RCRA)	-.14					
Role conflict (RC)			-.09			
Role Ambiguity (RA)					-.13	
Step 2 :						
LMX x RCRA	-.16*					
LMX x RC			-.17*			
LMX x RA					-.13	
		.024*		.028*		.017

All variables were centered
 * significant at .05 level
 ** significant at .01 level

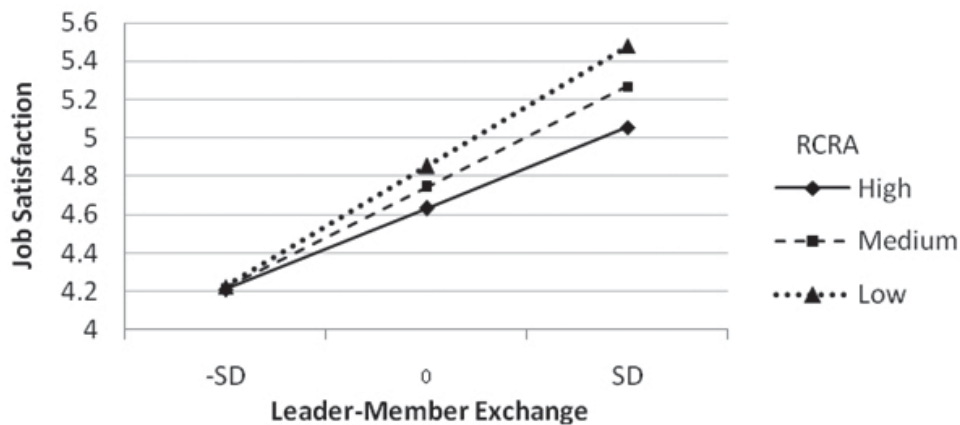
Hypothesis 2 was tested by hierarchical moderated regression analysis as reported on table 2 that shown the interaction term for leader-member exchange x role conflict and role ambiguity was significant at .05 level ($\beta = -.159$, $t = -2.038$, $p < .044$) after leader-member exchange and role conflict and role ambiguity were entered on first step, increase explaining variance of job satisfaction 2.4%. The amount of explained variance for the

interaction term was comparable to that expected for moderator effects in field studies (Champoux & Peters, 1987; Chaplin, 1991).

After we found moderated effect of role conflict and role ambiguity, the two component (Role conflict, role ambiguity) of this variable were considered. The interaction effect for role conflict and leader-member exchange was significant at .05 level ($\beta = -.173$, $t = -2.196$, $p < .030$) increase explaining variance of job satisfaction 2.8% and the interaction effect term for role ambiguity and leader-member exchange was not significant ($\beta = -.173$, $t = -2.196$, $p < .095$) increase explaining variance of job satisfaction 1.7%

The form of the leader-member exchange x role conflict and role ambiguity interaction was illustrated according to the procedure proposed by Cohen et.al. (2003). Three levels of role conflict and role ambiguity were plotted: at one standard deviation below the mean, at the mean, and at one standard deviation above mean. As expected, for individual for low role conflict and role ambiguity, the relation between leader-member exchange would be stronger than individual for high role conflict and role ambiguity as shown on figure 2.

Figure 2: Interaction for role conflict and role ambiguity (RCRA) and leader-member exchange on job satisfaction



Hypothesis 3 was tested by hierarchical moderated regression analysis as reported on table 3 that shown the interaction term for leader-member exchange x job tenure was not significant ($\beta = -.036$, $t = -.458$, $p = .648$) after leader-member exchange and job tenure were entered on first step, increase explaining variance of job satisfaction .1%. The amount of explained variance for the interaction term was not comparable to that expected for moderator effects in field studies (Champoux & Peters, 1987; Chaplin, 1991).

Table 3: Hierarchical Moderated Regression leader-member exchange and job tenure on job satisfaction.

	Predictor	Model RCRA	
		B	ΔR^2
Step 1 :	Leader-member exchange (LMX)	.63**	-
	Job tenure (JT)	.24**	
Step 2 :	LMX x JT	-.04	.001

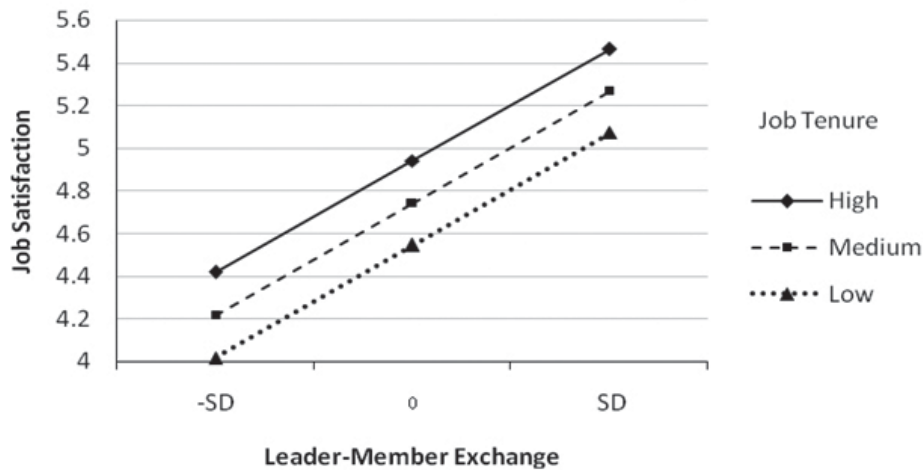
All variable was centered

* significant at .05 level

** significant at .01 level

The form of the leader-member exchange x job tenure interaction was illustrated according to the procedure proposed by Cohen et.al. (2003). Three levels of job tenure were plotted: at one standard deviation below the mean, at the mean, and at one standard deviation above mean. As expected, for individual for low job tenure, the relation between leader-member exchange would not be stronger or weaker than individual for high job tenure as shown on figure 3.

Figure 3: Interaction for job tenure and leader-member exchange on job satisfaction



Conclusion

From the study, we found that the exchange between leaders and members can explain the variance of job satisfaction. This is because the status of staffs who sign contracts with this university will change to be the followers or subordinates in the real working environment which they must perform their works according to the position that



they are assigned. However, some staffs do not only perform their works according to the position that they were assigned, but they also have to work on extra tasks assigned by their bosses or leaders which related to personalities and characteristics of staffs which can cause the relationship between leaders and members to be good or bad. This will affect job satisfaction which is consistent to Danserea et al. (1975) who said that the exchange between leaders and members is the determinant of members' roles. For members who are close to leaders will often have better chance to have conversation with leaders, gain trust, and gain respect. This type of members will have high job satisfaction because they realized that they are close to leaders and are assigned important works, extra works, or challenging work. When they make problems, leaders would forgive them because leaders would think that mistakes they made would caused by external factors which cannot be controlled. On the other hand, members who are not close to leaders have to face the different situations from those who are close to leaders. Leaders would think that those who are not close to them are people who lack of encouragement in working or lack of ability so that leaders would not tend to have conversation or give them the chance to show their talents by assigning works which also includes lack of support in promotion. This study also found that the exchange between leaders and members with job tenure can explain the variance of job satisfaction significantly.

The majority of individuals who have close relationship with leaders are individuals who have long job tenure. The reason is because people who have long job tenure usually work professionally, so they can work on challenging work or works that require high responsibility better than people who have short job tenure. Therefore, they would gain trust from leaders and have better chance to have conversation with leaders which is consistent to the research of Detamore (2008). The research is related to the relationship of job satisfaction, leadership, and tendency to quit the job of engineering consultant which found that job satisfaction will be higher if there is longer job tenure. Moreover, the turnover of staffs tends to be higher for short job tenure.

For the variance of job satisfaction that cannot be described by role conflicts and role ambiguity, the possible reason for this is because the staffs understand their roles and duties clearly for jobs that they are performing even though it is not stated in the job specification. Therefore, staffs would not face ambiguity or conflicts for their roles. However, when consider only the relationship between role conflicts and role ambiguity with job satisfaction, the correlation coefficients is significant and also significantly correlates to the exchange between leaders and members. Therefore, the exchange between leaders and members might be intervening variables of the relationship between role conflicts and role ambiguity with job satisfaction. For the result of the study on moderated effect of role conflicts and role ambiguity on relation between leaders and members exchange and job satisfaction was found because the concept of leader-member exchange and role conflict and role ambiguity based on role theory. According the consideration of the components, there was only moderated effect of role conflict on relation between leader-member exchange because when officer have conflict on their job they would confuse the role of themselves and leader and how to exchange could meet their need. This situation affects



the influent of leader-member exchange to job satisfaction.

Recommendations

This research conducts the analysis on variables to study the moderators. Even though selected variables could moderate the relationship of the exchange between leaders and members with job satisfaction base on role theory. However, this topic should be brought to study again by selecting the suitable variables based on team/organizational context. The exchange between leaders and members could be intervening variable or moderator instead of being independent variable. Therefore, this variable should be studied further. To further study on the exchange between leaders and members with job satisfaction, the sample size should be larger, staffs should be selected from different positions and different organizations.

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