

Leader member exchange as a predictor of organizational commitment among food and beverage industry employees

Leader-member exchange sebagai prediktor komitmen organisasional pada karyawan industri makanan dan minuman

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ABSTRACT

Organizational commitment is one of the main issues in the food and beverage industry, which relates to dynamic work conditions, high job demands, and relatively high employee turnover rates. Leader-member exchange (LMX) is particularly considered one of the factors that potentially contribute to the development of employees' organizational commitment. This study aimed to examine the role of LMX as a predictor of organizational commitment and the three dimensions within, including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment among employees in the food and beverage industry. The participants consisted of 82 employees of Food and Beverage X company. This study employed a quantitative approach using regression analysis to test a total of four research hypotheses. The findings showed that LMX positively and significantly predicted organizational commitment, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. These findings indicate that the quality of the relationship between supervisors and subordinates contributes to employees' emotional attachment, considerations to remain in the organization, and sense of moral obligation toward the organization within the food and beverage industry context. This study implies that strengthening the quality of working relationships between supervisors and employees may serve as one of the organizational strategies to enhance employee commitment and retention

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh pentingnya komitmen organisasi dalam industri food & beverage yang memiliki karakteristik pekerjaan dinamis, tekanan kerja tinggi, serta tingkat turnover karyawan yang relatif tinggi. Dalam konteks tersebut, leader member exchange (LMX) dipandang sebagai salah satu faktor yang berperan dalam membentuk komitmen organisasi karyawan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji peran LMX sebagai prediktor komitmen organisasi serta tiga dimensinya, yaitu komitmen afektif, komitmen berkelanjutan, dan komitmen normatif pada karyawan industri food & beverage. Partisipan penelitian berjumlah 82 karyawan Food and Beverage X berusia 18-24 tahun. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan analisis regresi untuk menguji empat hipotesis penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa LMX secara positif dan signifikan memprediksi komitmen organisasi, komitmen afektif, komitmen berkelanjutan, dan komitmen normatif. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa kualitas hubungan antara atasan dan bawahan berkontribusi terhadap keterikatan emosional, pertimbangan untuk tetap bertahan, serta rasa kewajiban moral karyawan terhadap organisasi dalam konteks industri food & beverage. Penelitian ini mengimplikasikan bahwa penguatan kualitas hubungan kerja antara atasan dan karyawan dapat menjadi salah satu strategi organisasi dalam meningkatkan komitmen dan mempertahankan karyawan.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational commitment in human resource management is closely associated with employee loyalty, productivity, retention, and organizational sustainability. Organizational commitment refers to employees' psychological attachment to an organization, reflected in their willingness to remain part of the organization, accept its values, and contribute to the achievement of organizational goals (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Han & Cai, 2024). The level of employee commitment in Indonesia varies across organizations. Research conducted by Mercer Indonesia (Mediana, 2023) reported that employee engagement in Indonesia reached 80 percent, which was 3 percent higher than the averages for Southeast Asia and the global level. Similarly, a survey conducted by the Great Place to Work Institute (Zahra, 2025) found that 95 percent of employees at Indosat Ooredoo Hutchison (IOH) felt proud and comfortable working for the company, considerably higher than the global average of 59 percent.

In contrast, global trends in employee commitment indicate increasingly dynamic conditions. A Gallup survey revealed that global employee engagement declined from 23 percent to 21 percent in 2024, particularly among new managers facing high work pressure (Mediana, 2025). This decline contributed to higher turnover, weaker organizational attachment, and lower employee productivity. In Indonesia, similar challenges have emerged due to unstable employment conditions, including wage inequality and unfavorable workplace cultures (Mediana, 2023). These conditions are further supported by the findings of Qatrunnada (2021), which showed that 43 percent of employees demonstrated low organizational commitment. Specifically, 27 percent of employees showed low affective commitment, while 11 percent showed low continuance commitment, and 36 percent showed low normative commitment. These findings indicate that some employees in Indonesia still lack strong emotional attachment and a sense of obligation toward their organizations.

One sector currently facing challenges related to organizational commitment is the food and beverage (F&B) industry. According to Statistics Indonesia (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2024), the food and beverage industry is one of the largest employment sectors in Indonesia, employing approximately 9.80 million workers and experiencing business growth of 21 percent among 4.85 million business units. Particularly in Makassar City, the food and beverage industry has also developed within a highly competitive and dynamic business environment that demands optimal service quality and effective workplace relationships (Sahabuddin et al., 2025). Nevertheless, the characteristics of work in this sector, such as long and irregular working hours as well as high emotional demands due to intensive customer interactions, may affect employees' organizational commitment.

A preliminary study conducted in September 2025 through interviews with food and beverage employees in Makassar revealed that most employees lacked strong emotional attachment to their organizations, indicating low affective commitment. Several employees also expressed intentions to leave because they perceived their salaries as disproportionate to their workload and long working hours, reflecting low continuance commitment. However, normative commitment appeared relatively stronger among employees with longer tenure because they felt a moral obligation to remain with the organization. These findings indicate that organizational commitment among food and beverage employees in Makassar varies, with affective and continuance commitment emerging as the weakest dimensions.

This condition has become a critical issue because low organizational commitment can directly affect organizational sustainability. Data show that the turnover rate in the food and beverage industry averaged 79.6 percent over the past ten years (Guinn, 2024). High turnover rates can increase operational costs, disrupt service quality, and reduce customer satisfaction (Karatepe et al., 2022). In addition, Qatrunnada (2021) reported that 43 percent of employees had low organizational commitment, indicating weak emotional attachment, low intention to remain with the organization, and limited moral obligation toward the organization.

These conditions may be particularly problematic in service-oriented industries such as food and beverage, where employees interact intensively with customers. High turnover and low organizational commitment can reduce service consistency and organizational effectiveness. Therefore, identifying factors that can strengthen organizational commitment is essential for maintaining service quality and supporting organizational sustainability.

Organizational commitment is influenced by various factors, including job satisfaction, organizational culture, compensation, work environment, career development opportunities, and leadership quality. Among these factors, leadership plays a significant role in shaping employee attitudes and behaviors within organizations (Afsar et al., 2020; Qi et al., 2019). Leadership behaviors, including providing support, recognition, and direct attention to employees, can strengthen their sense of belonging and attachment to the organization. Beyond leadership, the quality of relationships established between supervisors and subordinates is considered an important aspect influencing employee commitment.

Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, proposed by Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995), explains that leaders develop different relationship qualities with each subordinate. High-quality LMX relationships are characterized by trust, mutual respect, support, and effective communication, which make employees feel valued and recognized within the organization. Previous studies have shown that high-quality LMX positively contributes to job satisfaction, employee performance, organizational commitment, and retention (Fernandes et al., 2020; Ishak et al., 2022). Supportive supervisor-subordinate relationships also contribute to stronger emotional attachment and, subsequently, improved service quality in service-based industries such as hospitality and food service (Akpobire et al., 2025; Kim et al., 2016).

Previous studies have examined the relationship between leader-member exchange and organizational commitment across various organizational contexts. Fernandes et al. (2020), in a study involving service-sector employees, found that high-quality LMX significantly enhanced organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Similarly, Ishak et al. (2022) demonstrated that supportive supervisor-subordinate relationships positively influenced employee commitment and performance. In the hospitality and food service sectors, Akpobire et al. (2025) reported that employees who experienced supportive relationships with supervisors showed stronger emotional attachment to their organizations and delivered better service quality. In addition, Lim et al. (2025) explained that high-quality LMX relationships contributed to stronger employee attachment and loyalty in the service industry. These findings suggest that leader-member exchange is closely associated with employee commitment across different organizational settings.

Despite the insightful findings, several gaps remain in previous studies. Some studies have reported inconsistent results regarding the relationship between LMX and organizational

commitment. Brown et al. (2019) found that LMX influenced organizational commitment indirectly through job satisfaction rather than through a direct relationship. Similarly, Ariani & Feriyanto (2024) found that LMX affected organizational commitment through perceived organizational support as a mediating variable. In contrast, Hirnawati & Pradana (2023) identified a direct positive relationship between LMX and organizational commitment without mediation effects.

In addition, studies on LMX and organizational commitment have predominantly focused on educational, healthcare, or public organizations (Gonzalez & Denisi, 2019; Richter-Killenbergh & Volmer, 2022), whereas research within the Indonesian food and beverage industry remains limited. Previous studies have also mainly examined organizational commitment as a single construct rather than investigating its three dimensions simultaneously. Therefore, this study offers novelty by examining leader-member exchange as a predictor of organizational commitment and its three dimensions, including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment within the relatively underexplored context of the Indonesian food and beverage industry.

Taken together, this study aims to analyze the role of leader-member exchange in predicting organizational commitment among employees in the food and beverage industry, both simultaneously and individually across its dimensions; affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. This study is backed by the presumption of the quality of the relationship between supervisors and subordinates contributes to employees' emotional attachment, intention to remain, and sense of moral obligation toward the organization. Therefore, leader-member exchange is assumed to be a predictor of organizational commitment, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment among employees in the food and beverage industry.

2. METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory survey design to examine the relationship between leader-member exchange (X) and organizational commitment (Y). Data were collected through structured self-report questionnaires administered to respondents within their organizational setting, which excluding any manipulation of variables. A cross-sectional design was used, in which data were gathered at a single point in time. The survey method was selected because it allows efficient data collection from a relatively large number of respondents and enables objective measurement through standardized rating scales. Since the study relied on self-report data, several procedural remedies were applied to minimize common method bias, including assuring anonymity and confidentiality of respondents, using comprehensible questionnaire items, and reducing evaluation apprehension. The data were analyzed using inferential statistical techniques to test the research hypotheses and examine the relationships between variables.

Participants

The participants in this study were 82 employees of the Food and Beverage X company. The study employed total sampling, a sampling technique participated by all members of

the population. Data collection was conducted systematically through an online survey using Google Forms. A questionnaire link was distributed to all employees. Prior to completing the questionnaire, all respondents first expressed their consent to participate and the use of their data for research purposes.

Instrument

The instruments used in this study consisted of a 7-item leader-member exchange (LMX) scale and a 24-item Organizational Commitment scale. The Organizational Commitment scale was adopted from Sulistiawan et al. (2020), which was developed based on the three-component model of organizational commitment by Allen & Meyer (1990), including affective, continuance, and normative commitment dimensions. Particularly, the LMX-7 scale from Hanasono (2017) was used and adapted in this study, which was originally developed in English to measure the quality of the relationship between supervisors and subordinates.

The adaptation process followed several stages. First, the original English version was translated into Bahasa Indonesia. Second, the translated version underwent a back-translation process to ensure conceptual equivalence between the Indonesian and original English versions. Third, the translated items were reviewed by experts to evaluate linguistic clarity, cultural appropriateness, and content suitability. The final version of the instrument was determined based on the synthesis of the back-translation results and expert review recommendations.

The LMX scale used a five-point response format with response alternatives adjusted to the characteristics of each item, while the Organizational Commitment scale used a four-point Likert scale ranging from "very inappropriate" to "very appropriate." Item scores were summed to obtain total scores for each variable. Reverse scoring was applied to unfavorable items prior to data analysis. Higher total scores indicated higher levels of leader-member exchange quality and organizational commitment among participants. The reliability analysis showed that the Organizational Commitment scale demonstrated excellent internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.976, while the LMX scale also exhibited very good reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.923.

Data Analysis

This study focuses on examining the direct influence of leader-member exchange (LMX) on organizational commitment and its three components: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Consequently, the analysis was conducted to examine the contribution of LMX to both overall organizational commitment and its individual dimensions. Data analysis was conducted using the Jamovi 2.4.2.0 application.

The analysis technique used was simple linear regression to test the influence of LMX on total organizational commitment, as well as separate regressions on each component of organizational commitment. Furthermore, descriptive analysis and statistical assumption testing were conducted before hypothesis testing. Through this procedure, the significance of the influence and the magnitude of LMX's contribution in explaining variations in each dimension of organizational commitment can be determined.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of Research Respondents

A total of 82 employees participated in this study, comprising 44 male employees (53.7 percent) and 38 female employees (46.3 percent). Regarding age, 33 employees (40.2 percent) were between 18 and 20 years old, 27 employees (32.9 percent) were between 21 and 23 years old, and 22 employees (26.8 percent) were aged 24 years or older.

In terms of educational background, 69 employees (84.1 percent) had completed high school or an equivalent level of education, while 13 employees (15.9 percent) held a bachelor's degree. Regarding marital status, 2 employees (2.4 percent) were married, while 80 employees (97.6 percent) were unmarried. Work experience was divided into three categories. The first category consisted of 50 employees (61.0 percent) with a work period of 12 months or less. The second category consisted of 29 employees (35.4 percent) with a work period of more than 12 to 36 months, while the third category consisted of 3 employees (3.7 percent) with a work period of more than 36 months.

Table 1. Respondent characteristics data

Characteristics	Categories	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Gender	Male	44	53.7
	Female	38	46.3
Age	18-20 years old	33	40.2
	21-23 years old	27	32.9
	≥ 24 years old	22	26.8
Education	High School or Equivalent	69	84.1
	Bachelor's Degree	13	15.9
Status	Unmarried	80	97.6
	Married	2	2.4
Working Period	≤ 12 months	50	61.0
	12-36 months	29	35.4
	> 36 months	3	3.7

Descriptive Analysis

Based on Table 2, the organizational commitment variable had an empirical minimum score of 50, a maximum score of 81, a mean of 66.6, and a standard deviation of 21.7. The hypothetical scores ranged from 24 to 120, with a mean of 72 and a standard deviation of 16. For leader-member exchange (LMX), the empirical scores ranged from 13 to 32, with a mean of 21.7 and a standard deviation of 3.88. The hypothetical scores ranged from 7 to 35, with a mean of 21 and a standard deviation of 4.67.

Table 2. Category variable

Variable	Empirical Data				Hypothetical Data			
	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Organizational commitment	50	81	66.6	21.7	24	120	72	16
LMX	13	32	21.7	3.88	7	35	21	4.67

Assumption Test Results

The results of the normality test using the Shapiro-Wilk test showed a statistical value of 0.985 with a significance level (p) of 0.461. Since the p -value was greater than 0.05, the data can be considered normally distributed and meets the assumption required for further regression analysis. In addition, the autocorrelation test using the Durbin-Watson test produced a DW value of 1.83 with a significance value of $p = 0.390$ (> 0.05). The Durbin-Watson value close to 2 indicates that there was no autocorrelation problem in the regression model, suggesting that the assumption of residual independence was met.

The multicollinearity test also indicated no multicollinearity problems, as shown by a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value of 1.00 (< 10) and a Tolerance value of 1.00 (> 0.10). Therefore, the classical regression assumptions were satisfied, and the model was considered suitable for further hypothesis testing.

Hypothesis Test Results

The results of the linear regression analysis indicate that leader-member exchange (LMX) has a significant relationship with organizational commitment. The correlation coefficient was $R = 0.495$, with a coefficient of determination of $R^2 = 0.245$, indicating that 24.5 percent of the variation in organizational commitment can be explained by LMX. The regression coefficient for LMX was 0.889, with a t -value of 5.09 and $p < 0.001$, indicating that LMX has a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment.

Table 3. The influence of LMX on Organizational Commitment

Variable	R	R ²	β	SE	t	P
LMX → Organizational Commitment	0.495	0.245	0.889	0.175	5.09	<0.001

Leader-member exchange (LMX) also has a positive and significant effect on the three components of organizational commitment. For affective commitment, the R value is 0.461 with $R^2 = 0.213$. This indicates that LMX is able to explain 21.3 percent of the variation in affective commitment. The regression coefficient of 0.326 with a t value of 4.65 and $p < 0.001$ indicates that LMX has a positive and significant effect on affective commitment.

In continuance commitment, the R value obtained was 0.306 with $R^2 = 0.0938$, which means LMX explains 9.38 percent of the variation in continuance commitment. The regression coefficient of 0.196 with a t value of 2.88 and $p = 0.005$ indicates that LMX has a positive and significant effect on continuance commitment, although its contribution is relatively smaller compared to other dimensions.

Meanwhile, for normative commitment, the R value was obtained = 0.407 with $R^2 = 0.166$, which means LMX explains 16.6 percent of the variation in normative commitment. The regression coefficient of 0.368 with a t value = 3.99 and $p < 0.001$ indicates a positive and significant influence. Overall, these findings indicate that the higher the quality of the superior-member relationship, the higher the employee's affective, continuance, and normative commitment, with the strongest influence seen in affective commitment.

Table 4. The influence of LMX on organizational commitment components

Variable	R	R ²	β	SE	t	P
LMX → Affective Commitment	0.461	0.213	0.326	0.0701	4.65	<0.001
LMX → Continuance Commitment	0.306	0.094	0.196	0.0680	2.88	0.005
LMX → Normative Commitment	0.407	0.166	0.368	0.0922	3.99	<0.001

Discussion

This study examined the role of leader-member exchange (LMX) as a predictor of employees' organizational commitment, both simultaneously and individually across its dimensions; including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. The hypothesis testing results revealed that LMX positively and significantly predicted organizational commitment, with a significance value of $p = 0.000 < 0.05$ and a path coefficient of 0.503. In addition, LMX was found to significantly predict affective commitment ($p = 0.001$; $\beta = 0.318$), continuance commitment ($p = 0.000$; $\beta = 0.382$), and normative commitment ($p = 0.000$; $\beta = 0.530$). These results indicate that better-quality relationships between supervisors and subordinates are associated with stronger emotional attachment, greater intention to remain in the organization, and a higher sense of moral responsibility toward the organization. Nevertheless, organizational commitment may also be influenced by factors beyond LMX.

From a theoretical perspective, the results support leader-member exchange theory and social exchange theory, which emphasize that high-quality relationships between supervisors and employees can encourage positive work attitudes and strengthen employees' attachment to the organization (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Relationships characterized by trust, open communication, support, and recognition create positive social exchanges within the workplace. Under these conditions, employees tend to feel valued, respected, and fairly treated, which subsequently increases their loyalty and commitment to the organization.

Previous studies have also highlighted the importance of relationship quality in shaping organizational attitudes. Yusuf et al. (2024) explained that strong LMX relationships contribute to positive work attitudes and organizational commitment. Likewise, Prabowo (2020) reported that high-quality LMX relationships strengthen employees' sense of loyalty and organizational attachment, particularly when fairness is perceived within the workplace. Several organizational practices implemented at X, such as monthly meetings, annual work meetings, monthly accountability reporting systems, and employee appreciation programs including best crew and best cashier, also promoted two-way communication, transparency, and recognition of employee contributions. These practices helped strengthen interpersonal relationships between supervisors and employees.

In terms of affective commitment, high-quality relationships with supervisors were associated with stronger emotional attachment, comfort, and a sense of belonging among employees. Support and attention from supervisors made employees feel appreciated, which reinforced their emotional connection to the organization. This result is consistent with studies conducted by Ariani & Feriyanto (2024) and Puspitasari & Mangundjaya (2020), which demonstrated that organizational culture and positive interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates contribute to stronger affective commitment.

Regarding continuance commitment, positive working relationships encouraged employees to consider the psychological and professional benefits of remaining in the organization. Clear work systems, performance evaluations, and opportunities to receive recognition created a sense of security and stability, leading employees to be more willing to stay. Similar conclusions were reported by Willie (2025) who explained that high-quality LMX relationships enhance perceptions of job security as well as access to organizational resources and career development opportunities.

For normative commitment, positive supervisor–subordinate relationships were found to foster employees' sense of moral responsibility and obligation toward the organization. Support, trust, and a culture of togetherness encouraged employees to reciprocate positive treatment through loyalty and willingness to remain with the organization. This interpretation aligns with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the study conducted by Cranmer (2024), which suggested that relationships grounded in trust, respect, and emotional support can reinforce employees' loyalty and moral obligation toward the organization.

The present study is consistent with previous research reporting a positive relationship between LMX and organizational commitment. Hirnawati & Pradana (2023) found that LMX had a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, job performance, and organizational commitment in the public service sector. These results indicate that the influence of LMX is not limited to a particular sector but is also relevant within the food and beverage industry. Other studies similarly reported that high-quality LMX relationships improve employee loyalty, job satisfaction, and both affective and normative commitment (Ouerdian et al., 2021). In addition, Alo & Arslan (2022) explained that positive interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates contribute to stronger emotional attachment and employees' willingness to maintain long-term relationships with the organization.

Social exchange theory further explains that relationships based on positive exchanges tend to create mutual trust, moral obligation, and a willingness to reciprocate favorable treatment received from the organization (Blau, 1964). Within the LMX context, support, attention, and recognition from supervisors are often perceived by employees as forms of organizational care, which subsequently encourage loyalty and organizational commitment. Therefore, the results of this study strengthen the view that the quality of interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates represents an important factor in developing employees' organizational commitment.

Several limitations of this study have also been acknowledged. For instance, data collection was conducted online, limiting the researcher's ability to directly monitor the conditions under which respondents completed the questionnaires. Consequently, differences in interpretation may have occurred since respondents could not directly ask for clarification when encountering incomprehensible statements or unfamiliar terms. Another limitation concerns the relatively homogeneous characteristics of the respondents, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Therefore, future studies are recommended to involve more diverse samples, include broader organizational sectors, and consider additional variables such as job satisfaction, work environment, and career development opportunities to provide a more comprehensive understanding of employees' organizational commitment.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study indicate that leader-member exchange (LMX) positively and significantly predicts organizational commitment, including affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. These results suggest that the quality of the relationship between supervisors and employees plays an important role in shaping employees' emotional attachment, willingness to remain in the organization, and sense of moral responsibility toward the organization.

The practical implication of this study is that organizations need to strengthen the quality of workplace relationships through open communication, supportive interactions, constructive feedback, recognition of employee contributions, and fair leadership practices based on trust. In addition, leadership development programs that emphasize interpersonal skills and positive working relationships may help enhance employee commitment within the organization.

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