

Linking Leader-Member Exchange to Turnover Intention: The Roles of Job Satisfaction and Positive Organizational Climate

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords:	Purpose – This study investigates whether, how, and when leader-member exchange (LMX) relates
Leader-member Exchange Turnover Intention Job Satisfaction	to employee turnover intention. Drawing upon the LMX theory and job demands-resources model, a research model is developed and tested to identify the role of job satisfaction acts as a mediator and positive organizational climate as a moderator.
Positive Organizational Climate Received 15 November 2024 Revised 1 March 2025	Design/methodology/approach – The study used a cross-sectional design, collecting data through online questionnaires from 454 employees at a large logistics company via random sampling. Data analysis was conducted using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4 software to test the proposed model. This process involved calculating path coefficients, R ² values, and effect sizes (f ²) to assess the strength and significance of variable relationships, along with evaluating the reliability and validity of the constructs in the proposed model.
Accepted 10 March 2025 Article Classification:	Findings – LMX positively impacted job satisfaction, and higher job satisfaction resulted in a decrease in turnover intention. However, LMX's direct effect on turnover intention was found to be insignificant. Instead, the influence of LMX on turnover intention was fully mediated via job satisfaction. Contrary to the initial expectations, positive organizational climate did not moderate the LMX-job satisfaction relationship.
Research Article	Discussion – The factors influencing turnover intention are multifaceted, and LMX alone may not fully explain turnover intention. While leaders may develop strong relationships with their staff, the effectiveness of these interactions in retaining employees largely depends on whether these relationships contribute to job satisfaction. Additionally, the quality of LMX appears to have a stronger effect on employee job satisfaction than the overall organizational climate.

1. Introduction

According to the assumptions of the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory, when stronger and positive interactions exist between the leader and an employee, the employee reciprocates with positive outcomes. Employees who have strong, positive ties with their leaders tend to receive increased support, resources, and guidance from them, compared to employees with weaker or lower-quality relationships (Vidyarthi et al., 2014). This quality relationship with the leader may provide employees with more advantages and benefits in both the organizational and personal domains (Raghuram et al., 2017). Consistent with these insights, research provides empirical evidence that higher LMX is related to increased employee performance, well-being, and affective organizational commitment (Dunegan et al., 2002; Gregersen et al., 2016; Gara Bach Ouerdian et al., 2021).

Although research shows links between LMX and favorable organizational outcomes, the findings regarding its association with turnover intention are inconclusive. For instance, while some limited number of studies (e.g., Jayasundera et al., 2017; Li et al., 2018; Gara Bach Ouerdian et al., 2021; Tabak et al., 2024) have confirmed a direct relationship between LMX and turnover intention, Raghuram et al. (2017), referring to Dulebohn et al.'s (2012) meta-analysis, point out that direct correlation between LMX and turnover is relatively weak (-.17), despite its strong correlations with organizational commitment and job satisfaction. These findings point to a critical research gap to address as turnover intention remains a key human resource challenge for

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organizations (Koesmono, 1999). Furthermore, a deeper understanding of how LMX influences turnover intention could help organizations improve leader-member exchanges, thereby reducing turnover rates and their associated costs. To fill this research gap, the current study incorporates the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, aiming to comprehensively explore the LMX-turnover intention link, and identify the mechanisms and conditions under which LMX may effectively decrease turnover intention.

JD-R model posits that a work setting is defined by the alignment between job demands and resources, which affect employees' psychological and physical health as well as their performance. Job demands, such as workload, may lead to stress, anxiety or burnout if not addressed, while resources including support, feedback, autonomy, and development opportunities can mitigate these effects (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In the context of LMX, leaders having high-quality relationships with their employees tend to supply these critical job resources, thus leading to decreased turnover intention. One of these resources in the JD-R model is job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is significant since it enables not only employees to gain physical and emotional benefits but also organizations to gain economic advantages (Oshagbemi, 1999). Additionally, the concept has been consistently identified as a key antecedent of turnover intention (De Oliveira et al., 2019; Zhang & Li, 2020; Hefny, 2021; Lin & Huang, 2021; Le et al, 2023; Wang et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). From a JD-R perspective, job satisfaction can be viewed as an outcome of sufficient job resources counteracting job demands; therefore, may contribute to decreased turnover intention.

Li et al. (2018) demonstrated the mediating function of job satisfaction in the effect of LMX on turnover intention, which suggests that higher LMX indirectly reduces employee turnover intention by increasing their job satisfaction. The current study, by extending Li et al.'s (2018) study and building on the JD-R model, aims to explore whether job satisfaction similarly transmits the effects of LMX onto turnover intention, while also examining the role of positive organizational climate as a moderating factor. Organizational climate refers to the work environment as perceived by employees, encompassing "trust, morale, conflict, rewards equity, leader credibility, resistance to change, and scapegoating" (Burton et al., 2004: 69). By creating a motivating work environment, a positive organizational climate may result in organizational commitment, perceived organizational performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and job satisfaction (Randhawa & Kaur 2015; Ghavifekr & Pillai, 2016; Berberoglu, 2018), as well as reduced turnover (Ngo et al., 2009). Drawing from the JD-R framework, the current study conceptualizes a positive organizational climate as a crucial resource that supports employees in their functioning and thus mitigates the negative impacts of job demands inherent in their organizational roles. Despite its importance, the moderating role of a positive organizational climate in the link between LMX and job satisfaction is neglected, which is critical to capture the role of environmental factors in the consequences of LMX on employee outcomes.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill gaps in the current literature by investigating how (a) the quality of interactions between employees and leaders (LMX), (b) the attitudes employees hold toward their jobs (job satisfaction), and (c) the situational conditions of the workplace (positive organizational climate) interact, which could yield deeper insights into the mechanisms that lead to turnover intention. The study is significant for exploring the associations among LMX, job satisfaction, and organizational climate within the framework of the JD-R model. By combining LMX theory with the JD-R model, the study provides a further understanding of how and when LMX effects employee turnover intention. It highlights the mediating role of job satisfaction, demonstrating that strong LMX relationships may boost job satisfaction, which in turn helps reduce turnover intention. Additionally, the research investigates the moderating role of a positive organizational climate, which, as an organizational context, may maximize the benefits of LMX.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

LMX and Turnover Intention

The JD-R model explains how workplace dynamics impact employee outcomes based on the job demands and job resources. Accordingly, employees may experience negative consequences such as burnout or job alienation if job demands and resources are not appropriately balanced (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). These job resources may consist of autonomy, growth opportunities, financial records, constructive feedback, and promotion prospects, which are believed to protect against the adverse influences of job demands (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Khan & Malik, 2017). Additionally,

inspiring, encouraging and supportive leaders are also considered a job resource that aids in reducing the effects of stressful factors at the workplace (Schaufeli, 2015).

Similarly, the LMX theory emphasizes that the effect of leadership behavior is shaped by the quality of the individualized, trust-driven, and emotional relationship between a leader and their followers (Vidyarthi et al., 2014). According to the theory, LMX is conceptualized as the degree to which leader-employee work relationship is defined by mutual understanding, respect, and affective bonds (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Integrating The JD-R model with The LMX theory, it is reasonable to hypothesize that a quality LMX relationship may play a critical role in managing job demands-resources balance as it psychologically and physically empowers employees to perform effectively their duties within the organization. This perspective is supported by the insight that higher levels of LMX offer employees increased access to resources, including opportunities, information, and support (Wilson et al. 2010; Kraimer et al., 2015, Doden et al., 2018). Literature provides extensive research evidence that these job resources are positively linked to desirable employee outcomes, including work engagement, well-being, psychological capital, and organizational citizenship behavior (Balducci et al., 2011; Radic et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2021; Zhang & Farndale, 2022). In addition, access to these resources not only increases the likelihood of desired employee behavior and attitudes but also contributes to a decrease in negative outcomes, such as employee turnover intention (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Kim, 2017; De Cuyper et al., 2011 Shahpouri et al., 2016; Hoare & Vandenberghe 2024), which refers to the "conscious and deliberate willfulness to leave the organization" (Tett and Meyer, 1993: 262) due to negative work attitudes, work stress, inter-role conflicts, and abusive supervision (Liu & Onwuegbuzie, 2012; Park & Min, 2020; Moin et al., 2022).

These findings imply that job resources gained by the help of strong LMX relationships may establish a work culture in which employees perceive bond, value, and trust, which may result in a reduced likelihood of turnover intention. Stated differently, it is highly likely that LMX, as both a resource and a resource facilitator, will encourage employees to stay at their current workplace because of their likely commitment to the organization and engagement in their job. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that LMX may negatively impact turnover intention. Thus, considering these arguments, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1. LMX is significantly and negatively related to turnover intention.

Linking LMX to Job Satisfaction

As discussed, stronger LMX provide employees with more tangible and intangible resources for higher motivation and performance (Wilson et al., 2010; Kraimer et al., 2015). According to a JD-R perspective, job satisfaction arises from having adequate job resources to balance out job demands, which implies that a quality LMX relationship may lead to increased job satisfaction.

As Singh et al. (2020) outline, job satisfaction is regarded as a complex concept that includes emotional, behavioral, and cognitive aspects. The emotional dimension reflects the feelings of gratitude and excitement for one's work. The behavioral dimension, on the other hand, deals with how people approach work-related circumstances, such as voluntarily remaining late at work or avoiding absenteeism. The cognitive component includes overall thoughts about the job and job-related factors. Research provides substantial evidence that job satisfaction is associated with working conditions, coworkers, pay and benefits, supervision, quality of work life (Muskat, B., & Reitsamer, 2020; Alzubi et al., 2023). In addition to these predictors, studies also show that LMX directly and indirectly impacts job satisfaction (Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004; Lapierre & Hackett, 2007; Jordan & Troth, 2011; Loi et al., 2014; Eşitti & Kasap, 2020; Liang & Yeh, 2020).). There is also evidence suggesting a reciprocal relationship between these two variables, with each affecting the other (Volmer et al., 2011). The current study posits that an increase in LMX will contribute to higher employee job satisfaction since high-quality LXM may enable employees to feel appreciated and empowered, which may mitigate the negative influences of job demands and result in a more satisfying and motivating work experience. Furthermore, when there is a strong leader-member relationship, employees may think they are supported and understood by their leaders, leading to more positive engagement with their jobs and developing a favorable attitude towards their job roles. Based on these arguments and research findings, H2 is proposed:

H2. LMX is significantly and positively related to job satisfaction.

Negative Link Between Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention

Job satisfaction, as put forward by Niklas and Dormann (2005), refers to the positive attitude and mindset employees form toward their work. When employees are enjoying, fulfilled, and competent in their roles, they are more inclined to develop a positive affective attitude towards their work and feel more content and satisfied (Moro et al., 2021). From the JD-R perspective, job satisfaction is a critical resource that employees can rely on to handle both job-related and personal life demands. Specifically, job satisfaction improves wellbeing, health, happiness, and self-esteem (Satuf et al., 2018), and therefore reduces interpersonal organizational conflict (Jam et al., 2017), lessens the effects of overcommitment on burnout (Avanzi et al., 2014), mitigates the impacts of health risk perception on depression (Yan et al., 2021), and buffers the influence of work-related stress on turnover intention, a mental process where an employee thinks about, plans and decide to leave their current place of work (Busari et al., 2017). It has also a spillover effect, manifesting in employees' marital satisfaction and their emotional states experienced at home (Ilies et al., 2009).

Drawing on the JD-R model, we assert that job satisfaction can help counterbalance job demands, as it enhances psychological and physiological health, provides employees with a feeling of contentment with current their jobs, and thereby encourages them to stay in the organization. This theorizing is supported by numerous studies showing a negative association of job satisfaction with turnover intention (e.g. De Oliveira et al., 2019; Zhang & Li, 2020; Hefny, 2021; Lin & Huang, 2021; Le et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). Following this body of research and incorporating the assumptions of the JD-R model, our study also predicts that job satisfaction will lead to reduced turnover intention. Therefore:

H3. Job satisfaction is significantly and negatively associated with turnover intention.

The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction

In one study, job satisfaction was found to partially mediate LMX-turnover intention relationship (Li et al., 2018), which suggests that job satisfaction may serve as a significant underlying mechanism linking the nature of the leader-employee interaction to the employee's choice to continue or exit the organization. Recent leadership literature also underscores the mediating function of job satisfaction in the association between leadership practices and employees' perception, behavior, and performance (Alwali & Alwali 2022; Curado & Santos, 2022; Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023). These studies imply that effective leadership behavior or the quality of LMX relationship may not be sufficient for retaining employees. Employees may focus more on their level of contentment and fulfillment at their job when planning to quit their present organization. Recent research further supports this showing that job satisfaction acts as a full or partial mediator linking turnover intention to its several predictors, including flexible working arrangements (Berber et al., 2022), organizational justice (Suifan et al., 2017), job mismatch (Chavadi et al., 2022), decent work (Wan & Duffy, 2022) work-tofamily, and family-to-work conflict (Poulose & Sharma, 2024). Taking these research findings into account, we argue that job satisfaction is a key mechanism in explaining how work or work-related factors affect employees' intention to leave. Specifically, job satisfaction may explain a possible negative link between LMX and turnover intention. Hence, our study anticipates that high-quality LMX relationships result in increased job satisfaction, which subsequently decreases employees' turnover intention. Considering these insights, H4 is posited:

H4. Job satisfaction acts as a mediator in the negative relationship between LMX and turnover intention.

The Moderator Role of Positive Organizational Climate

Organizational climate reflects the general perception of employees about "the manifestation or practices and patterns of behavior rooted in the assumptions, meaning, and beliefs that make up a culture" (McLean, 2005: 229). It is characterized by employee's shared mental depictions of the organizational context (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Synthesizing the work of Litwin and Stringer (1968) and Stringer (2002), Maamari et al. (2017) describe the elements of a positive organizational climate: (a) having clearly defined job roles and definitions, (b) employees feel accountable for their tasks and have a sense of autonomy, (c) the organization is open to employees' novel ideas, d) employees perceive that rewards are given fairly based on performance, (e) there is a warm, flexible, and friendly atmosphere in the organization, (f) maintaining good interpersonal ties and minimizing disputes is emphasized, (g) and employees have a sense of loyalty and pride towards their work setting.

Grounded in the JD-R framework, this study considers a positive organizational climate as a powerful psychosocial resource that may improve employee performance and minimize the harmful effects of job demands. In line with this argument, positive organizational climate has been found to have strong direct impacts on decreased levels of burnout, as well as mediating effects on burnout via employee empowerment (Lee et al., 2013). It is also linked to employee commitment (Khan, 2019), enhanced intent to stay (Vong et al., 2018), as well as reduced turnover (Ngo et al., 2009; Gahlawat & Kundu, 2019). Conversely, dysfunctional and toxic organizational climate may lead to a decline in employee health an intention to stay (Viitala et al.,2015; Hossny et al., 2023). Given all these, it is understandable that the positive impact of LMX on job satisfaction may be most salient depending upon positive organizational climate. In particular, those working in a positive organizational environment will benefit more from high quality LMX relationships. In such climates, the quality of relationships between leaders and employees not only improves job satisfaction but also nurtures a sense of belonging, motivation, and overall well-being. In other words, the synergistic effects of strong LMX and a positive organizational climate may facilitate higher job satisfaction. Following this logic, we assert the following hypothesis:

H5. Positive organizational climate moderates the positive relationship between LMX and job satisfaction.

3. Methodology

Research Model

Drawing on the LMX theory and the JD-R model, along with previous research, the current study employed an explanatory research design using cross sectional survey, to understand whether, how, and under which conditions LMX is positively associated with employee turnover intention.



Figure 1. Research Model

Sample

The data for this study was collected through online questionnaires from 454 employees of a large logistics company, using a random sampling method. The HR director of the company facilitated the survey by sending out the final version of the questionnaire link to all staff members. Initially, the questionnaire was distributed to 564 employees. A total of 454 employees responded, yielding a response rate of approximately 80%, which is considered strong for survey-based research. Before proceeding with data collection, ethical approval was obtained from Başkent University's Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee, ensuring that the study adhered to ethical guidelines and that participants' rights and confidentiality were protected. Moreover, a pilot study was conducted with a small sample of 50 employees to ensure that the survey instrument was both valid and reliable. This preliminary phase allowed the researchers to test the questionnaire for clarity and to identify any potential issues with the wording or structure of the questions. The results from the pilot study indicated no significant issues with the full-scale data collection.

Among the participants, 15% (68) were managers, while the remaining 85% (386) were staff members. The demographic breakdown revealed that a significant majority of the participants were male, comprising 88.8% (403), with females making up 11.2% (51). In terms of marital status, 65.6% (298) of the participants were

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married, while 34.4% (156) identified as single. The ages of the respondents varied considerably, with nearly half (49.8%) falling in the 31 to 40 age range. Participants also had diverse levels of work experience. About 29.3% had 1 to 3 years of experience with their current organization, while 18.5% reported having 4 to 7 years or 8 to 11 years of experience. Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of the sample.

Demographics		Frequency	%	Dem	ographics	Frequency	%
	Manager	68	15,0		Woman	51	11,2
Job Role	Staff Member	386	85,0	Gender	Man	403	88,8
	Total	454	100,0		Total	454	100,0
Marital	Married	298	65,6		Less than 1 year	41	9,0
Status	Single	156	34,4	Work	1-3 years	133	29,3
o ta ta s	Total	454	100,0	Experience at	4-7 years	84	18,5
	20-30	102	22,5	the Present Organization	8-11 years	84	18,5
	31-40	226	49,8		12-15 years	83	18,3
Age	41-50	111	24,4		More than 15 years	29	6,4
	51+	15	3,3		Total	454	100,0
	Total	454	100,0		Less than 1 year	9	2,0
	Primary School	92	20,3		1-3 years	54	11,9
	Secondary School	136	30,0		4-7 years	64	14,1
	High School	145	31,9	Total Work	8-11 years	102	22,5
Degree	Vocational School	25	5,5	Experience	12-15 years	132	29,1
	Undergraduate	53	11,7	-	More than 15 years	93	20,5
	Graduate	3	0,7		Total	454	100,0
	Total	454	100,0				100,0

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Participants

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study utilized Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS 4 software to examine a hypothesized model with multiple constructs and relationships (Ringle et al., 2022; Yıldız, 2021). The analysis included calculating path coefficients, R² values, and effect sizes (f²) to evaluate the strength and significance of the relationships among the variables. Bootstrapping with 10,000 subsamples was performed to derive t-values, enhancing the robustness of the path coefficients. Additionally, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) was assessed to identify potential multicollinearity. Furthermore, convergent and discriminant validity were assessed through factor loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) scores, confirming the reliability and validity of the constructs in the model.

Measures

In this study, a five-point Likert scale was employed across all measurement instruments to assess the research constructs (1=totally disagree; 5=totally agree). To measure the quality of LMX, numerous scales exist in the literature However, Gerstner and Day (1997), in their meta-analytic study, highlighted that the LMX-7 scale developed by Scandura and Graen (1984: 430) demonstrates the most appropriate psychometric properties to assess LME quality. Consequently, to measure LMX, this study employed the LMX-7 scale, consisting of 14 items and one dimension. The Turkish adaptation of the scale was conducted by Özutku et al. (2008). Following the factor analysis of the scale, the reliability assessment yielded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.935, indicating strong internal consistency. The Turnover Intention Scale, consisting of 3 items and designed as a unidimensional measure, was adapted by the authors for this study using Brislin's translation–back translation method (1970). Originally developed by Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth (1978), the scale demonstrated Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.794, indicating acceptable internal consistency.

Participants' perceptions of job satisfaction were evaluated using the Job Satisfaction Scale developed by Chen et al. (2009), which was later adapted into Turkish by Turunç and Çelik (2012). The scale consists of 5 items with a single factor. In this study, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient for the scale was calculated as 0.884,

demonstrating strong internal consistency. Lastly, the Positive Organizational Climate scale comprises 29 items and was adapted by Malçok (2011). The original scale, developed by Litwin and Stringer (1968), consists of 9 factors and 50 items. Following a Turkish adaptation study, Doğan and Üngüren (2009) created a scale with 8 factors and 32 items. Building on this Turkish version, Malçok (2011) developed a shorter version, which includes 29 items and 6 factors.

To measure perceptions of positive organizational climate, the scale encompasses the following factors: (a) "Organizational Structure and Constraints" (OYP), consisting of 7 items; (b) "Responsibility" (SOA), which includes 3 items to assess perceptions of responsibility; (c) "Reward" (TOD), a 6-item factor designed to evaluate perceptions of the organization's motivational reward system; (d) "Risk in Decision Making" (RAD), comprising 4 items to measure how much risk individuals feel they can take in organizational processes and working methods; (e) "Warmth" (SAM), consisting of 4 items that gauge perceptions of the sincerity of the organizational environment; and (f) "Support" (DOR), a 5-item factor aimed at assessing perceptions of the supportive atmosphere within the organization. In this study, the scale demonstrated reliability, as a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.882 was found, indicating strong internal consistency.

4. Results

Validity and Reliability Analyses of the Scales

Before analyzing the research model, we first tested the validity and reliability of the constructs used in the study. To streamline the analysis, we treated the positive organizational climate variable as a single dimension using second-order modeling. The validity and reliability assessment included checking internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability (CR) coefficients, while convergent validity was assessed through factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE) scores.

For the results to be considered acceptable, factor loadings should be at least 0.70, with Cronbach's Alpha and CR coefficients meeting or exceeding 0.70, and AVE values above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019; Hair et al., 2022). Table 2 presents the findings of the validity and reliability tests for the current measurement model. According to Hair et al. (2022), items with factor loadings below 0.40 should be removed from the model, while those between 0.40 and 0.70 may be considered for removal if the AVE or CR values for the respective variable fall below the threshold.

In this study, we removed the third item of the job satisfaction variable because its factor loading was below 0.40. After making adjustments, we found that the factor loadings for items 1, 2, and 5 of the Leader-Member Exchange were below 0.70. However, since the AVE and CR values for this variable met the required thresholds, we decided to keep these items in the model. Additionally, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients ranged from 0.794 to 0.935, while the CR coefficients fell between 0.876 and 0.943, confirming strong internal consistency and reliability. As shown in Table 2, factor loadings ranged from 0.633 to 0.887, and AVE values varied between 0.543 and 0.742, indicating that convergent validity was successfully established.

Variable	Item	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alfa	CR	AVE
	lmx1	0.635			
	lmx2	0.699			
	lmx3	0.759			
	lmx4	0.740			
	lmx5	0.633			
	lmx6	0.714			
Looden Menchen Euchen au	lmx7	0.782	0.025	0.943	0 5 4 2
Leader-Member Exchange	lmx8	0.722	0.935	0.943	0.543
	lmx9	0.743			
	lmx10	0.768			
	lmx11	0.779			
	lmx12	0.754			
	lmx13	0.805			
	lmx14	0.759			
	ti1	0.758			
Turnover Intention	ti2	0.866	0.794	0.876	0.703
	ti3	0.887			
	js1	0.853			
Job Satisfaction	js2	0.866	0.884	0.920	0.742
Job Satisfaction	js4	0.845	0.004	0.920	0.742
	js5	0.883			
	DOR	0.803			
	OYP	0.786			
Positive Organizational	RAD	0.787	0.882	0.910	0.627
Climate	SAM	0.812	0.002	0.910	0.027
	SOA	0.796			
	TOD	0.766			

Table 2. Analysis Results of the Measurement Model

To evaluate the discriminant validity of the measurement model, we used the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion, as suggested by Henseler et al. (2015). The HTMT values, shown in Table 3, are all below the recommended threshold of 0.85. This indicates that the constructs in the measurement model are distinct from one another, confirming the presence of discriminant validity.

Table 3. The HTMT coefficients

	Job Satisfaction	Leader- Member Exchange	Positive Organizational Climate	Turnover Intention
Job Satisfaction				
Leader-Member Exchange	0.684			
Positive Organizational Climate	0.696	0.674		
Turnover Intention	0.298	0.164	0.187	

Testing the Research Model

In this study, we applied structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the hypotheses presented in the research framework, which is depicted in Figure 2.

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Figure 2. Structural Equation Model

To evaluate the model, we applied the PLS algorithm, assessing key factors such as linearity, path coefficients, R² values, and effect sizes (f²). To test the significance of the PLS path coefficients, we used a resampling approach, drawing 10,000 subsamples from the original dataset and computing t-values. The results, including Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values, R², and f² coefficients, are summarized in Table 4.

According to Hair et al. (2022), a VIF value below 5 suggests that there are no multicollinearity issues among the variables. Our analysis of the VIF coefficients in Table 4 confirms that all values fall within this acceptable range, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern in this study. Regarding the model's explanatory power, the R² values reveal that job satisfaction accounts for 48% of the variance, while turnover intention explains 7% of the variance. These findings provide insights into the strength of the relationships within our model.

Variables	VIF	R ²	f ²	
Leader-Member Exchange	Turnover	1.645	0.067	0.000
Job Satisfaction	Intention	1.645	0.067	0.048
Leader-Member Exchange		1.718		0.173
Positive Organizational Climate	Job	1.637	0.402	0,174
Positive Organizational Climate x Leader-Member Exchange	Satisfaction	1.063	0.483	0.000

Table 4. Model Coefficients

The effect size coefficient (f^2) helps determine the strength of relationships in the model. According to Cohen (1988), an effect size of 0.02 or higher is considered low, 0.15 or more is moderate, and 0.35 or above is high. Sarstedt et al. (2017) further suggest that an effect size below 0.02 indicates a negligible impact. In this study, the effect size of LMX on turnover intention was calculated as 0.000, indicating no meaningful effect. Additionally, the beta coefficients (β), standard deviation (SD), t-values, and p-values (Table 5) confirm that LMX does not have a direct impact on turnover intention (β =0.021; SD=0.067; t=0.315; p=0.752). As a result, hypothesis H1 is rejected.

On the other hand, the results show a strong positive relationship between LMX and job satisfaction. This suggests that as LMX improves, job satisfaction significantly increases (β =0.392; SD=0.055; t=7.063; p=0.000), supporting hypothesis H2. Furthermore, the findings indicate that higher job satisfaction plays a significant

role in reducing employee turnover intention (β =-0.272; SD=0.062; t=4.387; p=0.000), providing strong support for hypothesis H3.

	Path	β	SD	T value	P value	Results
H_1	Leader-Member Exchange \rightarrow Turnover Intention	0.021	0,067	0.315	0.752	Rejected
H ₂	Leader-Member Exchange \rightarrow Job Satisfaction	0.392	0.055	7.063	0.000	Accepted
H ₃	Job Satisfaction \rightarrow Turnover Intention	-0.272	0.062	4.387	0.000	Accepted
H4	H_4 Leader-Member Exchange \rightarrow Job Satisfaction \rightarrow Turnover Intention		0.028	3.846	0,000	Accepted
H5	Positive Organizational Climate x Leader-Member Exchange \rightarrow Job Satisfaction	0.014	0.036	0.379	0.705	Rejected

Table 5. Effect Size Coefficients of the Research Model

Zhao et al. (2010) describe mediation as occurring when an independent variable significantly affects a mediating variable, which in turn has a significant impact on the dependent variable, creating an indirect effect. The results presented in Table 5 confirm that these indirect effects are indeed significant.

Given the presence of mediation, we further analyzed the type of mediation using the mediation decision tree method outlined by Yıldız (2021: 132). The significant indirect effect along the path LMX \rightarrow Job Satisfaction \rightarrow Turnover Intention (β =-0.107; SD=0.028; t=3.846, p=0.000), combined with the non-significant direct effect of LMX \rightarrow Turnover Intention (β =0.021; SD=0.067; t=0.315; p=0.752), indicates that job satisfaction fully mediates the relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX) and turnover intention. As a result, H4 is accepted. Additionally, we examined the moderating role of positive organizational climate in the LMX \rightarrow Job Satisfaction relationship. With an f² value of 0.000 and a p-value of 0.705, the interaction effect was found to be non-significant. This suggests that a positive organizational climate does not significantly moderate the relationship between LMX and job satisfaction. Therefore, H5 is rejected.

5. Discussion

The current study has set out to investigate the relationships between LMX, turnover intention, the mediating role of job satisfaction, and the moderating role of positive organizational climate. The analysis results provide significant insights as to how and when LMX and turnover intention are associated. The findings regarding H1 of the research model show that LMX has no direct effect on turnover intention, which challenges the widely held assumption that strong, trusting, and friendly LMX inevitably decreases the level of employees' intentions to quit. While this finding in this regard contrasts with the investigations by other studies (Jayasundera et al., 2017; Li et al., 2018; Gara Bach Ouerdian et al., 2021; Tabak et al., 2024), it is partially consistent with the Dulebohn et al.'s (2012) findings demonstrating a weak association between LMX and turnover intention. The insignificant direct effect in the current study implies that several other variables, such as HRM policies and employee personality traits may have an impact on turnover intention, as well. Therefore, the factors influencing turnover intention seem to be complicated and multidimensional, and LMX alone may not be the only reason for an employee's desire to leave. For example, effective human resource management practices, including career development opportunities, fair pay structures, and performancebased rewards, may buffer turnover intention (Santhanam et al., 2017). Lack of fulfillment or satisfaction with job responsibilities, feeling over- or under-skilled for the role, or an inability to balance work demands with personal life may also outweigh positive relationships with immediate supervisors. Furthermore, employees with a strong sense of intrinsic motivation may prioritize personal career goals over relational factors. For these individuals, limited opportunities for growth or promotions within the organization may reduce the influence of LMX on their turnover decisions. Additionally, factors such as peer relationships (Feeley et al., 2008) and perceived fairness (Moon, 2017). may shape turnover intentions. For example, even employees with strong LMX relationships may consider leaving if they work in a dysfunctional or toxic environment. From a practical perspective, while fostering strong LMX relationships is important, organizations must also address a broader range of individual and organizational factors to effectively mitigate turnover intentions.

As anticipated in H2, the current study's results confirm a significant positive relationship between LMX and job satisfaction, supporting a wide array of literature (Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004; Lapierre & Hackett, 2007;

Volmer et al., 2011). Accordingly, leaders who build strong relationships with their employees, grounded in mutual respect, trust, and emotional bond – play a key role in motivating and encouraging employees to find meaning, fulfillment, and satisfaction in their work. This shows the significance of LMX in employees' wellbeing and sense of belonging, which could ultimately increase both individual and organizational performance. A sense of belonging and purpose at work may serve as a powerful motivational force, and drive employees to invest greater effort in their roles and remain committed to their responsibilities. Moreover, the implications of this relationship extend beyond individual job satisfaction. Employees who obtain satisfaction from their work are more likely to exhibit higher levels of creativity (Miao et al., 2020) and engagement (Vorina et al., 2017), contributing to the organization's overall success. The implications of these findings point to the importance of LMX in not only improving individual well-being but also boosting organizational performance. Satisfied employees tend to exhibit higher productivity, stronger commitment, and greater organizational citizenship behaviors, all of which support the development of a well-organized and cooperative work environment. In terms of practical implications, organizations should focus on developing and nurturing high-quality LMX relationships to enhance employee satisfaction and, by extension, organizational performance. Leadership development programs that focus on trust-building, effective communication, and emotional intelligence can help achieve this goal. By creating strong relationships between leaders and employees, organizations can create an environment in which employees feel appreciated, respected, and inspired to give their best efforts. Additionally, organizations should implement policies and practices that promote a sense of belonging, such as offering career development opportunities and recognizing and rewarding achievements. These initiatives will not only increase job satisfaction but also help establish a collaborative and high-performance culture.

Regarding H3, the results demonstrate a significant negative association between job satisfaction and turnover intention, which shows that employees who are more satisfied are less likely to consider leaving their organizations. This finding aligns with a wide range of existing literature studies, suggesting that higher job satisfaction may effectively reduce employee turnover intention (De Oliveira et al., 2019; Zhang & Li, 2020; Hefny, 2021; Lin & Huang, 2021; Le et al, 2023; Wang et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). Employees who are content and enjoying their job roles, work environment, and relationships with their leaders tend to have stronger commitment to their organization. This commitment may stem from their positive perception of the work that meets their psychological, emotional, and professional needs. When employees have job fulfillment and workplace happiness, they are more likely to develop a sense of loyalty and attachment to the organization, which may discourage them from seeking alternative job opportunities. Moreover, job satisfaction fosters a sense of purpose and contentment, and allows employees to focus on their tasks with increased engagement and enthusiasm. This positive work attitude benefits not only individual performance but also overall organizational success. Furthermore, the results imply that job satisfaction may serve as a protective buffer against other factors that can lead to turnover, such as stress, heavy workloads, or toxic work environment. When employees are satisfied, they are likely to manage job-related pressures and challenges. For instance, satisfied employees are less likely to be overwhelmed by stress because their work experience includes such elements as recognition and a sense of accomplishment. In conclusion, the findings illuminate the key role of job satisfaction not only in reducing turnover intention but also in creating a workplace culture that supports retention, resilience, and long-term organizational success. Thus, in practical terms, organizations should view job satisfaction as a long-term strategic objective, and integrate it into their broader efforts to have a committed workforce. Organizational initiatives should focus on improving job satisfaction through practices such as leadership development, job enrichment, or promoting a positive workplace culture in order to reduce turnover rates and its associated costs.

According to the results for H4, job satisfaction acts as a full mediator between LMX and turnover intention, which demonstrates the importance of job satisfaction as the mechanism through which LMX influences employee turnover. This means that job satisfaction is a critical link that transmits the benefits of strong leader-employee relationships into tangible outcomes such as reduced turnover intention. Specifically, while LMX may not exert a direct effect on turnover intention, its impact is channeled through job satisfaction. This highlights the fact that the quality of the relationship between leaders and employees is not enough to directly discourage employees from leaving the organization. Instead, the positive attributes of these relationships, such as trust, support, and open communication, need to create improved perceptions of job satisfaction to

reduce turnover intentions. This finding aligns with those from Li et al. (2018), who also identified that LMX influences turnover intention indirectly via work attitudes, including job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Therefore, work attitudes play a crucial role in linking leadership quality to employees' decisions about whether to stay with or leave a company. Simply put, without creating job satisfaction, even the strongest relationships between leaders and employees may not be enough to retain talent. While strong LMX relationships provide a foundation of trust, support, and communication, they need to be complemented by efforts that directly enhance how employees feel about their job roles. For example, there may be mutual sense of trust, respect, and support between employees and their leaders, but if employees find their job unfulfilling, lack opportunities for growth, or feel undervalued, they may still consider leaving. In this sense, LMX quality is a necessary but insufficient condition for reducing turnover. Thus, organizations seeking to lower turnover should give priority to programs that increase job satisfaction by meeting employees' unique needs, fostering a workplace where they feel valued and motivated. Organizations could redesign job roles to include variety, autonomy, and opportunities for meaningful contributions. Employees should feel that their work aligns with their skills and career goals (i.e. person-job fit), which can foster a sense of purpose and thereby reduce turnover intentions.

Concerning H5, the results indicate that the relationship between LMX and job satisfaction is not influenced by a positive organizational climate, leading to the rejection of the hypothesis. This finding challenges the assumption that a positive organizational climate enhances the benefits of strong LMX relationships on job satisfaction. It also suggests that strong LMX relationships may enhance job satisfaction, even in challenging organizational contexts. In environments where employees may face limited resources, ambiguity, or interpersonal conflicts, a strong relationship with their leader may provide the necessary motivation for employees to find satisfaction in their roles. For instance, when employees feel that their immediate leader understands their problems and needs, acknowledges their potential, and is open and honest about the organizational decisions, they are more likely to remain motivated and satisfied, regardless of the overall organizational climate. The findings also suggest that while a positive organizational climate may contribute to the formation of a supportive work setting, the interpersonal interactions between leaders and employees carry more weight in shaping employees' day-to-day experiences and satisfaction levels. A leader who builds trust by defending employee decisions, shows consistency and integrity in their behavior, and helps employees grow professionally, may have a profound impact on job satisfaction, even when organizational conditions are suboptimal. This relational dynamic between a leader and their team members appears to be the primary driver in achieving job satisfaction and outweighs the influence of organizational factors. The implication is that organizations should design structures and processes that empower leaders to adopt a personalized approach in managing their teams. For example, leaders should be empowered to address the unique concerns of individual employees, support their decisions, and offer guidance and mentorship. These practices may ensure that leaders are adequately prepared to develop meaningful and supportive interactions, even in the face of organizational challenges. While efforts to improve the organizational climate should not be neglected, the findings of the current study emphasize that the primary focus should be on strengthening the direct interpersonal ties between leaders and their employees. A positive organizational climate can provide a helpful backdrop, but it is the day-to-day interactions between employees and their leaders that have the most significant impact on job satisfaction and, ultimately, retention.

Overall, this study enriches both theoretical perspectives and practical approaches by exploring how LMX influences turnover intention, and the role that job satisfaction plays in this relationship. It emphasizes how important it is to promote constructive relationships between team members and leaders in order to create a healthy work atmosphere. By improving employee job satisfaction, fostering positive communication, and encouraging involvement, organizations can reduce turnover intention and develop a more loyal and engaged workforce.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While this study provides important insights into the role of LMX in influencing turnover intention through job satisfaction, several limitations should be acknowledged. The research employed a cross-sectional design to capture the proposed relationships since data was collected at a single point in time. Therefore, it is important to be cautious when making causal inferences between variables. The use of a longitudinal design in future research could improve the effectiveness of explaining these relationships. Second, the study was

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implemented using data from one logistics company, which could affect the ability to generalize the results to other industries or cultural contexts. Research can be broadened by surveying a greater variety of employees across different organizations and industries and thus, provide more evidence for the generalizability of the results. Additionally, while job satisfaction was found to fully mediate the relationship between LMX and turnover intention, other potential mediators, such as job engagement, workplace friendship or organizational embeddedness were not examined in this research, and could be addressed in future research. Lastly, the study's rejection of the moderating effect of positive organizational climate suggests that further research is required to identify the contextual elements that may influence the LMX-job satisfaction relationship. Future research could focus on other organizational or personal factors that may interact with LMX to shape job satisfaction and turnover intention, such as organizational justice, career opportunities, or employee resilience.

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Appendix

Research Questionnaire (Construct names given in red is given for the readers of the manuscript)

Sayın Katılımcı,

Bu anket, çalışanların iş yaşamındaki belirli konulara yönelik algı ve niyetini saptamak üzere hazırlanmıştır. Toplanan veriler tamamen akademik amaçlarla kullanılacağı için kişi isimlerine ihtiyaç duyulmamıştır. Araştırma bilimsel bir nitelik taşıdığından derlenen bilgiler kesinlikle başka amaçlarla kullanılmayacaktır. Lütfen soruları tam olarak okuduktan sonra kendinize en uygun olan cevabı işaretleyiniz.

Ankette hiçbir ifadenin doğru ya da yanlış yanıtı yoktur; önemli olan sizin bu konudaki görüşünüzdür. Bu nedenle, değerlendirmenin daha sağlıklı yapılabilmesi için lütfen tüm maddelerini işaretleyiniz.

Katkılarınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz.

1. BÖLÜM

Lütfen aşağıdakilerden uygun olan seçeneği işaretleyiniz. Yukarıda konusu belirtilen bilimsel çalışmaya hiçbir baskı altında kalmadan, bilinçli ve gönüllü olarak katılmayı ve aşağıdaki sorulara yanıt vermeyi: onaylıyorum () onaylamıyorum ()

 İş tanımınıza uygut □ Yönetici 	n olan seçeneği işaretl	eyiniz.								
□Çalışan										
2. Yaşınıza uygun seçe	eneği işaretleyiniz.									
□ 20-30	□ 31-40	□ 41-50	□ 51-60	□ 61 +						
3. Cinsiyetinize uygur	n seçeneği işaretleyini	Ζ.								
🗆 Kadın	□ Erkek									
4. Medeni durumunuz □ Evli	4. Medeni durumunuza uygun seçeneği işaretleyiniz. □ Evli □ Bekar									
5. Eğitim durumunuz	ile ilgili uvgun secene	eği isaretleviniz.								
□İlkokul	□ Ortaokul	□Lise								
🗆 Yüksekokul	🗆 Üniversite	🗆 Yüksek Lisans	Doktora Doktora							
6. Bu iş yerindeki topl	am çalışma sürenizi y	ul olarak yazınız.								
🗆 1 yıldan az	🗆 1 ila 3	🗆 3 ila 5								
□ 5 ila 10	□ 10 ila 15	🛛 15 yıldan fazla								
7. Şu ana kadar yaşad	ığınız süredeki toplan	n çalışma süreniz yıl c	olarak yazınız.							
🗆 1 yıldan az	□ 1 ila 3	□ 3 ila 5	-							
□ 5 ila 10	🗆 10 ila 15	🛛 15 yıldan fazla								

2. BÖLÜM (LMX)

	sinlikle tılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum		amar atılıy		n	
1		2 3 4							
	Aşağıdaki ifac ilişkilerinizi g kutuyu (X) işa	1	2	3	4	5			
1		rşı konumumu gene	llikle biliyorum.						
2	Yöneticimin, b bana karşı güv	en olmadığımda ber eni vardır.	nim kararlarımı sav	/unacak kadar,					
3	Yöneticimle iş	ilişkim etkindir.							
4	Yöneticim ben	im problemlerimi ve	e ihtiyaçlarımı anlı	yor.					
5	-	yacım olduğunda, yö kurtaracağı konusu		-					
6		im potansiyelimi bil							
7	-	isyonunun gücünde çözmeme kişisel ola							
		ıdelerde çalıştığınız 1 dikkate alarak düş			1	2	3	4	5
8		a karşı konumlarını	genellikle bilirler.						
9	Astlarım olm güvenim varo	adığında onların kaı lır.	arlarını savunacak	kadar, onlara					
10	Astlarımla iş	ilişkim etkindir.							
11	Astlarımın pr	oblemlerini ve ihtiy	açlarını anlıyorum						
12	0 -	ekten ihtiyaçları old rumdan kurtaracağır	0	-					
13		otansiyelini biliyor v		0					
14	-	ın gücünden bağıms i çözmeye kişisel ola		-					

3.BÖLÜM (JOB SATISFACTION)

Kesinlikle	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Tamamen
Katılmıyorum				Katılıyorum
1	2	3	4	5

	Aşağıdaki ifadelerden düşüncelerinize en yakın kutuyu (X) işaretleyin.	1	2	3	4	5
1	İşimden tatmin olduğumu hissediyorum					
2	İşimden heyecan duyuyorum					
3	İşimi yaparken, gün hiç bitmeyecekmiş gibi geliyor					
4	Bu kurumda uzun süre çalışacağımı düşünüyorum					

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5	İşimde kendimi mutlu hissediyorum			

4. BÖLÜM (POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE)

Kesinlikle	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle
Katılmıyorum				Katılıyorum
1	2	3	4	5

Aşa	ğıdaki ifadelerde düşüncelerinize en yakın kutuyu (X) işaretleyin.	1	2	3	4	5
1	Bu kurumda yapılan işler açıkça tanımlanmış ve mantık kurallarına göre yapılandırılmıştır.					
2	Bu kurumda karar almada kimin formal yetkiye sahip olduğu bazen belirsizdir.					
3	Bu kurumda örgütün politikaları ve organizasyon yapısı açıkça tanımlanmıştır.					
4	Bu kurumda bürokrasi minimum seviyededir.					
5	Bu kurumda aşırı kurallar, yönetsel ayrıntılar, bürokrasi yeni ve orijinal fikirlerin dikkate alınmasını zorlaştırmaktadır.					
6	Bu kurumun verimliliği organizasyon ve planlama yeteneğinden dolayı azalmaktadır.					
7	Bulunduğum bazı projelerde kimin yöneticim olduğundan bazen tam olarak emin olamıyorum					
8	Bu kurumdaki önemli problemlerden biride kişilerin sorumluluk almamasıdır.					
9	Bu kurumda çalışanların işle ilgili kendi problemlerini çözebilecekleri felsefesi kabul edilir.					
10	Bu kurumdaki yönetim çalışanlarına rehber oluşturacak ilkeleri belirler ve çalışanların işlerinde sorumluluklar almasına imkan verir.					
11	Bu kurumda işini iyi yapan çalışanların yükseltilmesine yönelik bir ödüllendirme sistemi vardır.					
12	Bu kurumda kişilerin aldığı ödül ve teşvikler eleştiri ve tehditlerden daha fazladır.					
13	Bu kurumda çalışanlar iş performansları ölçüsünde ödüllendirilmektedir.					
14	Bu kurumda büyük oranda eleştiri vardır.					
15	Bu kurumda yapılan iyi işlerin karşılığında yeterli derecede ödül verilmemekte ve kişiler tanınmamaktadır.					
16	Bu kurumda kişiler yanlış yaptıklarında cezalandırılmaktadır.					
17	Bu kurumun yönetimi iyi bir fikre deneme şansı verme konusunda isteklidir.					
18	Bulunduğumuz sektörde rekabet avantajını korumak için bazen büyük riskler almak zorundayız.					
19	Bu kurumda maksimum etkililik için karar alma sürecine tedbirli yaklaşılır.					
20	İşimiz doğru zamanda hesaplanan riskleri göze alarak kurulmuştur.					
21	Bu kurumda çalışanlar arasında arkadaşça bir atmosfer hakimdir.					

22	Bu kurum ılımlı sakin bir çalışma iklimi ile nitelendirilmektedir.			
23	Bu kurumdaki çalışanlar soğuk ve birbirine uzak durma eğilimindedirler.			
24	Bu kurumda çalışanlar ile yönetim arasında ılımlı bir ilişki vardır.			
25	Bu kurumda üst yönetim çalışanların hata yapması durumunda onlara destek olmaz.			
26	İşletme yönetimi çalışanların kariyer beklentileri ile ilgilenmek konusunda çaba gösterir.			
27	Bu kurumda çalışanlar arasında yeterince güvene dayalı bir ilişki sistemi yoktur.			
28	Bu kurumda yönetimin temel felsefesi insan faktörüne ve düşüncelerine önem vermek üzerine kuruludur.			
29	Zor bir proje ile ilgilenirken çalışma arkadaşlarımdan ve üst yönetimden gerekli desteği göreceğime inanırım.			

5. BÖLÜM (TURNOVER INTENTION)

Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1	2	3	4	5

	Aşağıdaki ifadelerde düşüncelerinize en yakın kutuyu (X) işaretleyin.	1	2	3	4	5
1	İşimi bırakmayı düşündüğüm zamanlar oluyor.					
2	İşimi yakın gelecekte bırakmayı planlıyorum.					
3	Eğer başka bir iş bulursam, işimi değiştiririm.					