

Appraisal Context and Supervisory Evaluations of Subordinate Performance

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Abstract

This conceptual paper investigates the impact of social context of performance appraisals on rating characteristics. Drawing on prior research on Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory, social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and performance appraisal, this paper explicates the impact of exchange quality and appraisal purpose on supervisory ratings of task and contextual performance, or Organizational Citizenship Behaviours (Organ, 1997; Coleman & Borman, 2000) during performance appraisals. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

Keywords: Leader member exchange, organizational citizenship behaviours, contextual performance, task performance, performance measurement.

Introduction

Scholars have long argued that the social-psychological context within which performance appraisal takes place has a significant impact on performance ratings received by employees (Curtis, Harvey & Ravden, 2005; Judge & Ferris, 1993; Levy & Williams, 2004; Longnecker, Sims & Gioia, 1987; Wat & Shaffer, 2005). A particularly salient component of the social context of a formal performance appraisal system is the nature of the dyadic work relationship between supervisors and subordinates, or Leader-Member Exchange (LMX; Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Graen, 1976; Graen & Scandura, 1987). Research on Leader Member Exchange has been of interest to scholars within the larger I/O, HR and OB disciplines (Liden, Sparrow & Wayne, 1997) and more specifically, within the performance appraisal literature (Dunegan, Uhl-Bien & Duchon, 2002; Elicker, Levy & Hall, 2006; Lam, Huang & Snape, 2007; Lam, 2006). In this domain, Leader Member Exchange has been studied with respect to topics such as subordinate feedback-seeking behaviours (Lam et al., 2007), justice perceptions in performance appraisals (Erdogan, 2003), interpersonal affect (Judge & Ferris, 1993; Turban, Jones & Rozelle, 1990; Varma & Pichler, 2007) leader-subordinate compatibility and subordinate performance (Basu & Green, 1995), subordinate-supervisor communication frequency and performance ratings (Kacmar, Witt, Zivnuska & Gully, 2003), and supervisor trust building and organizational citizenship behaviors (Deluga, 1994).

The widespread use of Leader Member Exchange theory (LMX: Graen, 1976) in the performance management arena suggests that it is a useful lens with which to view the nature of

social exchanges between supervisors and subordinates in work settings and their impact on performance appraisals received by subordinates (Engle & Lord, 1997; Graen, Dansereau,

Minami & Cashman, 1973). However, some questions of fundamental theoretical interest to scholars in this area remain unanswered, specifically: Do supervisors in high or low quality exchange relationships with their subordinates effectively differentiate between elements of task and contextual performance or organizational citizenship behaviours, when providing performance evaluations for their subordinates? What role does the quality of exchange relationship in supervisor-subordinate dyads play in performance ratings received by subordinates from their supervisors? Do such ratings vary as a function of the purpose of performance appraisal, specifically, whether the appraisal is conducted for administrative or developmental reasons? This theoretical research integrates Leader Member Exchange theory, social exchange theory and research on performance measurement, specifically, Organizational Citizenship behaviours (Organ, 1988) or contextual performance (Coleman & Borman, 2000), to develop propositions surrounding the appraisal and measurement of task and contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997), in the context of high and low quality work relationships. In doing so, this paper responds to calls of numerous researchers in both the leadership (Duarte, Goodson & Klich, 1994; Erdogan, 2002; Judge & Ferris, 1993) and performance management fields (Becton, Giles & Schraeder, 2007; Bolino, Turnley & Niehoff 2004; Jawahar, 1994; Jawahar & Williams, 1997; Paine & Organ, 2000; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine & Bacharach., 2000; Vey & Campbell, 2004) to consider from a theoretical viewpoint, the impact of appraisal context (specifically, leader-member exchange quality and performance appraisal purpose) on rating characteristics in performance appraisal settings.

Leader Member Exchange theory of leadership (Graen, 1976; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien., 1995; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997) arises from the tenets of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Sullivan, Mitchell & Uhl-Bien, 2003), and is premised on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner 1960). It suggests that leaders' relationships with subordinates can range from those based solely on the formal employment contract (low LMX) to those characterized by mutual trust, respect and reciprocal influence (high LMX; Dansereau, Graen & Haga 1975; Liden & Graen, 1980). Low quality LMX members experience instrumental, quid pro-quo exchanges wherein followers receive standard benefits (e.g., work enrichment) in exchange for complying with formal job requirements (Lapierre, Hackett & Taggar, 2006) whereas high quality LMX are characterised by high levels of respect, trust and mutual obligation (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). LMX theory suggests that supervisors rely on judgements regarding dyadic relationship quality when assigning subordinate roles and responsibilities (Graen, 1976), and the degree of supervisory support present is a reflection of the quality of exchanges occurring within the relationship (Graen, 1976; Lind & Zmud, 1991).

Consistent with the notion that rater motivation plays a significant role in the performance appraisal process, (Levy & Williams, 2004; Longnecker et al., 1987; Murphy & Cleveland, 1991), empirical research suggests that affective variables, such as supervisor liking of a subordinate may influence treatment of the subordinate, and performance ratings assigned to a subordinate (Turban et al., 1990; Engle & Lord, 1997).

Empirical research also suggests that supervisor liking influences subordinate performance by influencing leader member exchange, as subordinates in high quality exchange relationships are provided more assistance, direction and support from supervisors than subordinates in low-quality exchange relationships (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Gerstner & Day, 1997). Turban et al., (1990), in an experimental study demonstrated that supervisor liking positively influenced the supervisors' treatment of their subordinates (in terms of providing greater psychological support and putting more effort into the relationship) compared with relationships where supervisors disliked their subordinates. Supervisors were found to rate the performance of liked subordinates higher than that of disliked subordinates, although subjects received identical information about subordinate performance. Similarly, Duarte et al., (1994) empirically examined the impact of high and low quality LMX relationships on supervisory ratings of subordinate performance in a field study, using a sample of employees of a telephone company. In high quality LMX relationships, employees were assigned high ratings, regardless of objective performance. In contrast, performance ratings of employees in low quality exchange relationships were in line with objective performance levels. Taken together, these results suggest that in high quality LMX relationships, higher levels of supervisory liking towards employees may result in higher performance ratings, regardless of objective performance levels.

Prior research (Hackett, Farh, Song & LaPierre, 2003; Wang, Law, Hackett, Wang & Chen, 2005) also supports the notion that subordinates in high quality LMX relationships, who are provided greater support and assistance from their supervisors are more likely to engage in extra-role or discretionary behaviours (Organizational Citizenship behaviours, OCBs, Organ, 1997; pp. 91), defined as behaviours that contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological context which supports task performance. Extensive empirical work on OCBs indicates that such behaviours are predictive of positive outcomes for employees, such as supervisory reward decisions (Allen & Rush, 1998; Kiker & Motowidlo, 1999; Scotter, Cross & Motowidlo, 2000) and promotion recommendations (Park & Sims, 1989). Accumulated research evidence also indicates that OCBs are critical for organizational effectiveness (Mackenzie; Podsakoff & Ahearne, 1998; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994; Podsakoff, Ahearne & MacKenzie, 1997) and the creation of social capital (Bolino, Turnley & Blodgood, 2002).

Although extant research on leader member exchange theory has contributed significantly to our understanding of the nature of leader-subordinate relationships, and their impact on numerous aspects of the performance appraisal process, several important theoretical gaps remain unaddressed in the literatures on Leader member exchange theory and performance appraisal. First, although numerous empirical findings document positive correlations between high quality exchange relationships and OCBs (Hackett et al., 2003; Rubin, 2013; Wang et al., 2005), from a performance appraisal perspective, limited empirical or theoretical studies have included a consideration of both task and citizenship behaviours as criterion variables simultaneously (exceptions include Shull, 1994; Wang et al., 2005). This is a serious omission as the job performance criterion domain includes both task-related and contextual performance (Hoffman, Blair, Meiac & Woehr, 2007; Sulsky & Keown, 1998). Mutually exclusive consideration of either aspect of performance may contribute to researchers' deficient understanding of an organizations' theory of performance (Sulsky & Keown, 1998). Accordingly, this paper focuses on a theoretical explication of the impact of social and

contextual variables relevant to the performance appraisal process, on both task performance and contextual performance (Coleman & Borman, 2000).

Second, to the authors' knowledge, no empirical or theoretical research has documented the possibility that OCBs may be demonstrated in low quality LMX relationships, though are less likely to be formally appraised and documented by supervisors during formal performance appraisals. As low quality relationships are presumed to comprise of quid pro quo exchanges between subordinates and supervisors, researchers have overlooked the theoretical possibility that such discretionary behaviours may be exhibited in low quality exchanges between supervisors and subordinates. OCBs may be considered a "currency of exchange" (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) between supervisors and subordinates: a consideration of whether such behaviours occur in low quality relationships may inform an understanding of how low quality relationships may be improved or transformed, enriching existing theoretical models of LMX development (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Third, research on performance appraisal suggests that appraisal purpose acts as a boundary variable, influencing rater motivation to provide accurate ratings (Bernardin & Orban, 1990; Jawahar, 1994; Williams, DeNisi, Blencoe & Cafferty, 1985). Findings from this line of research indicate that ratings provided for administrative purposes tend to be more lenient than those provided for developmental or feedback purposes (Bernardin & Orban, 1990; Jawahar & Williams 1997; Jawahar, 1994; Williams et al., 1985; Zedeck & Cascio, 1982). Given these findings, it is of theoretical interest in this paper to examine the impact of appraisal purpose, a contextual variable, on supervisory ratings of task and contextual performance, in both high and low quality exchange relationships. As prior research on performance management suggests, rater motives to rate accurately may be significantly influenced by political considerations (see Longnecker et al., 1987). Inclusion of this important boundary variable improves researchers' understanding of factors influencing raters' ability to discriminate between elements of task and contextual performance (Coleman & Borman, 2000), aiding in an improved understanding an organizations' theory of performance (Sulsky & Keown, 1998).

The rest of this paper is organised as follows: Following a discussion of prior research on Organizational Citizenship behaviours, Leader member exchange theory (Graen, 1976) and prior empirical literature on leader member exchange and task and contextual performance, conceptual propositions are explicated. This is followed by a discussion of theoretical and practical implications of this research.

Theoretical Background

Organizational Citizenship Behaviours

Performance management researchers have suggested that when making evaluations of subordinate performance, supervisors may take account of organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs; Bateman & Organ, 1983; Smith, Organ & Near, 1983; Organ, 1997), considered to be behaviours above and beyond an organizations' theory of performance, but which nevertheless, which contribute to its effective functioning (Sulsky, Skarlicki & Keown, 2002). OCBs have been defined as "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and that, in the aggregate process, contributes to the effective

functioning of the organization”(Organ, 1988, pg.4). Such behaviours include: volunteering to carry out tasks and activities that are not formally a part of assigned duties, demonstrating enthusiasm and extra effort to complete task activities, helping and cooperating with others, following organizational rules and procedures and supporting organizational objectives (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997).

Borman & Motowidlo (1993) developed a theory of performance arguing that many job performance criteria are too narrowly defined and suggested that the job performance domain be divided into task and contextual performance. Within their model, task performance is defined as “the effectiveness with which job incumbents perform activities that contribute to the organizations’ technical core, either directly by implementing a part of its technological process or indirectly, by providing it with needed materials or services” (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997, pg.99). Contextual performance is defined as “job behaviours that support the organizations’ social and psychological environment in which the technical core must operate” (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; pg. 74). This definition is very similar to that provided later by Organ (1997; pp.91), who redefined OCBs as behaviours that contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the social and psychological organizational context supporting task performance.

In order to clearly delineate the underlying structure of citizenship performance, Coleman & Borman (2000), generated twenty-seven citizenship performance behaviours from previously cited literature. These authors developed an integrated model, representative of three broad dimensions or factors of organizational citizenship performance: interpersonal citizenship performance, (behaviours that assist, support and develop organizational members through cooperative efforts that go beyond expectations), organizational citizenship performance (behaviours that demonstrate commitment to the organization through allegiance and loyalty to organizational objectives) and job/task conscientious initiative (making extra efforts that go beyond role requirements). For the sake of conceptual development of propositions presented in this paper, I draw upon Coleman & Borman’s (2000) integrated framework of organizational citizenship performance (Figure 1). This integrated framework encompasses dimensions of citizenship behaviours proposed by Organ (1988), namely, altruism, courtesy, sportsmanship, civic virtue and general compliance (LePine, Erez & Johnson, 2002), which has historically been the most empirically researched framework of OCBs.

Leader Member Exchange Theory

Leader-member exchange theory of leadership (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) focuses on the reciprocal, dyadic relationship between supervisors and subordinates. It arises from the tenets of social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), and is premised on the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner 1960). According to this theory, supervisors treat each subordinate differently, depending upon their membership within an in-group (characterized by high trust, interaction, support, and formal/informal rewards) or an out-groups (characterized by low trust, interaction, support, and rewards; Diencsh & Liden, 1986; Duchon, Green & Taber, 1986). Thus, leaders’ relationship with subordinates can range from those based solely on the formal employment contract (low LMX) to that characterized by mutual trust, respect and reciprocal influence (high LMX; Dansereau et al., 1975; Liden & Graen, 1980). The unit of analysis is the dyadic relationship between the supervisor and the subordinate. Furthermore, in and out-group

membership tends to develop fairly quickly in the life of a dyad and remains stable once established (Graen & Cashman, 1975; Liden & Graen, 1980).

Informed by role-making theory (Graen, 1976) and based on the concept of “negotiated” or “developed” organizational member roles (Dienesch & Liden, 1986), LMX theory proposes that the quality of the interpersonal exchange relationship between supervisor and subordinate determines the type of role that will be assigned to the subordinate. Individuals with whom supervisors have trusting relationships (High LMX) will be assigned more enriched roles and responsibilities whereas less enriched tasks and responsibilities are assigned to individuals who are less trusted (Low LMX, Kacmar et al., 2003).

The “Leadership making model” (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) examines the process through which relationships between leaders and followers progress from quid, pro-quo, economic exchanges towards mature, trusting partnerships, utilising a life-cycle perspective. The process of relationship development begins with a “stranger” phase, where leaders and followers come together as interdependent organizational members, and exchanges are purely contractual, characterised by unilateral downward influence, the exercise of formal authority and role-defined relations (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). From this stage, an offer for an improved working relationship is made by either supervisor or subordinate, moving the relationship towards the “acquaintance” stage, characterised by improved social exchange and greater sharing of information and resources (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Finally, the relationship matures and enters a “mature partnership” stage, where exchanges between supervisor and subordinate are highly developed and subject to the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960). At this stage, the working relationship is characterised by mutual respect, trust and a growing sense of obligation, which motivates both leader and follower to move beyond the formalized employment contract and to develop a partnership based on reciprocal mutual influence (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995).

Leader Member Exchange and Task Performance

The quality of the exchange relationship between supervisors and subordinates has been demonstrated to have a significant impact on supervisory ratings of employee performance. Gerstner & Day (1997) performed a meta-analytic review of the LMX construct and its correlates and reported meta-analytically derived correlations between LMX and member performance ratings, one for follower-reported LMX and one for leader-reported LMX. The mean sample-weighted correlation between leader reports of LMX and member performance ratings was 0.41., suggesting that leader perceptions of LMX quality are correlated with follower performance ratings.

Leader Member Exchange and Organizational Citizenship Behaviours

Organ (1988) suggested that supervisor fairness may lead to subordinate citizenship behaviours. When supervisors treat their subordinates with trust, respect and fairness, the positive social exchange that develops between them and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) dictate that employees reciprocate by engaging in organizational citizenship behaviours as a means of maintaining the positive social exchange (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994). Consistent with this view, prior research indicates that the quality of the exchange relationship between leaders and followers may contribute to the subordinate engaging in organizational citizenship or extra-role behaviours, above and beyond task performance. Hackett et al., (2003) reported a meta-

analytically derived mean correlation of 0.32 between LMX and OCBs, leading these authors to suggest that OCBs may play a significant role in the maintenance of high quality social exchange relationships between supervisors and subordinates. Similarly, Wang et al., (2005) reported that LMX quality was positively and significantly correlated with subordinate organizational citizenship behaviours.

Evidence that contextual performance is reflected in supervisory performance ratings

Results from several studies indicate that raters may incorporate information regarding contextual performance or extra-role behaviours in the overall performance ratings they assign to subordinates. Motowidlo & Van Scotter (1994) empirically tested the distinction between task and contextual performance proposed by Borman & Motowidlo (1993). Using a sample of 421 air force mechanics, performance ratings were collected from three supervisors for each mechanic. One supervisor was assigned to rate task performance, a second to rate contextual performance and a third to rate overall performance. The multiple correlation between overall performance as the criterion variable and task and contextual performance was 0.54 ($p < 0.01$). The correlation between task performance and overall performance was 0.43 ($p < 0.01$) and between citizenship performance and overall performance ratings was 0.41 ($p < 0.01$), suggesting that supervisor ratings are equally affected by subordinate task and citizenship performance.

Johnson (2001) examined the extent to which supervisors consider task and contextual performance, using relative weights (Johnson, 2000) to statistically describe the relative importance of specific dimensions of each type of performance to overall performance ratings. This study investigated the extent to which contextual performance was important to different kinds of jobs, using jobs across eight job families within an organization. Results indicated that every contextual performance dimension contributed significantly beyond task performance in the prediction of overall performance ratings for every job family.

Orr, Sacket & Mercer (1989) utilised a policy-capturing approach to examine whether supervisors use non-prescribed behaviours when making judgements about subordinate work performance. Supervisors attached dollar values to profiles of hypothetical computer programmers. Each profile consisted of performance ratings on ten dimensions of prescribed behaviours and three dimensions of non-prescribed behaviours. Results indicated that most supervisors took non-prescribed behaviours into account when making judgements of subordinate work performance. Similar results were obtained in both a field and experimental study by Borman, White & Dorsey (1995).

Theory Building and Propositions

High Quality LMX relationships and supervisory evaluations of subordinate performance

High quality LMX relationships develop, and are maintained over time on the basis of the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960). Within such relationships, followers provide leaders with valuable work-related contributions, such as, striving to add to the value of assigned tasks, actively seeking out new job assignments and persisting on projects after others give up. (Graen, 2003). That is, through extra efforts put forth in fulfilling supervisor requests and engaging in extra- role behaviours, (such as volunteering for extra responsibilities once assigned duties are completed) employees maintain their high quality LMX relationships (Settoon, Bennet & Liden,

1996). In return for such exemplary contributions followers are entitled to receive special privileges, such as career enhancing opportunities and greater levels of job enrichment and discretion from their supervisors (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Leaders nurture high quality LMX relationships by providing job enrichment opportunities (Bauer & Green, 1996; Lapiere et al., 2006; Yukl, 2002) and offering inducements such as influence and support (Graen & Scandura, 1987), which, in turn, create obligations in the followers to reciprocate with enhanced levels of extra-role behaviours.

Subordinates who develop positive exchanges with their leaders also have been found to assume more involvement in team-based activities and receive greater positional resources from their leaders than do their out-group colleagues (Graen & Cashman, 1975). Extra-role behaviours demonstrated by subordinates within the context of a high quality social exchange relationship (demonstrating extra initiative to do all that is necessary to accomplish objectives, volunteering for additional duties, helping others within a work unit) represent the conscientious initiative and personal support dimensions of OCBs in Coleman & Bormans' (2000) conceptualisation. In high quality exchanges, high levels of positive affect, trust and mutual respect between supervisors and subordinates make it more likely that supervisors will recognise and formally endorse any OCBs performed by subordinates by formally incorporating these OCBs in formal performance evaluations.

Therefore, I propose:

P1) The conscientious initiative and personal support dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviours will account for incremental variance in supervisory ratings of subordinate performance beyond task performance within the context of high quality LMX relationships, but not in low quality LMX relationships. This proposition is qualified by the purpose for which the appraisal is conducted (see P2).

The impact of rating purpose on supervisory evaluations of performance

Research on the performance appraisal process (DeNisi, Cafferty & Meglino, 1984; Taylor & Wherry, 1951) suggests that appraisals are conducted within organizations for two primary purposes: administrative or evaluative (making decisions regarding employee compensation, promotions, and allocation of financial rewards), and developmental (identification of employee training needs, providing recommendations and feedback regarding specific areas of improvement, correcting performance deficiencies). Research on the impact of performance appraisal purpose on rater leniency and accuracy indicates that ratings obtained for administrative purposes are more lenient and less accurate than those obtained for developmental reasons (Bernardin & Orban, 1990; Jawahar & Williams, 1997; Zedeck & Cascio, 1982). This is premised on the notion that raters may intentionally bias administrative ratings to avoid providing negative feedback to subordinates or to obtain positive consequences (Murphy & Cleveland, 1995). When ratings are provided for developmental reasons, managers may be motivated to be less lenient in order to provide accurate feedback to employees for improving performance deficiencies, or to determine areas for future performance improvement. Consistent with these views, Jawahar & Williams' (1997) meta-analysis on performance appraisal purpose found that supervisory ratings of subordinate performance obtained for administrative purposes were, on average, one-third of a standard deviation higher than those obtained for developmental purposes. Similarly, in an experimental study, Jawahar (1994) reported that ratings obtained for

administrative purposes (merit raise) were more lenient than those provided for developmental purposes.

Within a high quality LMX relationship, supervisors are likely to recognise superior task performance and extra-role behaviours (volunteering for extra roles and responsibilities, ensuring exemplary performance on tasks, helping others) of their subordinates and reward such behaviours using job enrichment and the provision of career development prospects. Therefore, if the purpose of the appraisal is administrative (to provide opportunities for career progression, promotions, enhanced roles and responsibilities), consistent with social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and the reciprocity norm (Gouldner, 1960), it is likely that supervisors will formally recognize OCBs, by incorporating these into a formal performance appraisal, to provide opportunities for career progression to their subordinates.

Accordingly, I propose:

P2) The conscientious initiative and personal support dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviours will account for incremental variance in supervisory ratings of subordinate performance beyond task performance within the context of high quality LMX relationships, but not in low quality relationships, when the purpose of the appraisal is administrative, rather than developmental.

Low Quality LMX relationships and supervisory evaluations of performance

In low quality LMX relationships, leaders exercise formal authority and allocate standard benefits in exchange for standard, quid pro-quo, contractual performance from employees (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Prior research suggests that subordinates may be unwilling to put forth efforts to help their supervisors and co-workers and that the low exchange quality inherent in such relationships prevents subordinates from engaging in OCBs (Burton, Sablinski & Sekiguchi, 2008).

However, followers in low quality exchange relationships with their supervisors may well engage in specific forms of OCBs (interpersonal support, organizational support; Coleman & Borman, 2000), while failing to engage in others. Subordinates may perform behaviours reflective of the personal support (helping others by offering suggestions for improvement, directly performing team member tasks, putting team objectives ahead of personal interests) and organizational support dimensions (representing the organization favourably, complying with organizational rules and procedures), while failing to perform behaviours that fall within the conscientious initiative dimension (going above and beyond assigned work tasks, demonstrating initiative, volunteering for extra responsibilities beyond assigned tasks). These subordinates may perform non-mandatory (extra-role) behaviors without any expectation of receiving explicit recognition or compensation from their supervisors (Deluga, 1994).

As low quality LMX relationships are characterised by a low degree of mutual respect, obligation and reciprocity, supervisors in low quality relationships may fail to observe such OCBs. Even if such behaviours are observed by supervisors, the poor quality of social exchange and lack of any felt obligations towards mutual reciprocation suggest that despite observing extra-role behaviours, supervisors may fail to endorse and formally acknowledge these forms of OCB in a formal performance appraisal, focusing almost entirely on task performance instead.

Accordingly, I propose:

P3a) Task performance will account for incremental variance in supervisory ratings of subordinate performance beyond the personal support and organizational support dimensions of OCBs in low quality LMX relationships.

Consistent with the line of reasoning presented for P3a, subordinates in low quality LMX relationships may well engage in specific forms of OCBs (personal support and organizational support), and hence, these behaviours may manifest themselves in high ratings on self-reported measures of OCBs. However, due to the poor quality of social exchange, lack of mutual respect and reciprocity (Dansereau et al., 1975) supervisors are less likely to acknowledge such extra-role behaviours. Accordingly, I propose that there will be a discrepancy between supervisor-reports and subordinate self-reports of OCBs, with greater subordinate self-reported OCBs compared to supervisor-reported OCBs in low quality LMX relationships, but not in high quality LMX relationships.

Accordingly, I propose:

P3b) There will be a greater discrepancy between self-reported OCBs and supervisor-reported OCBs (with more subordinate-reported than supervisor-reported OCBs) in low quality LMX relationships compared to high quality LMX relationships.

Implications for Research and Practice

Theoretical contributions

Informed by leader member exchange theory (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) and theory on performance appraisal, the role played by the quality of the exchange relationships in performance ratings received by subordinates is examined. I examine whether performance ratings vary as a function of the purpose of performance appraisal, specifically, whether the appraisal is conducted for administrative or developmental reasons. In answering these important, previously unaddressed research questions, this conceptual paper contributes towards the extant literatures on Leader member exchange and performance appraisal in the following ways.

First, this paper examines the impact of social context on supervisory evaluations of both task and contextual performance, aiding researchers' understanding of the impact of social context on an organizations' theory of performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1997; Sulsky & Keown, 1998). Prior research has suggested that the job performance criterion domain consists of both task and contextual performance, and it is essential to distinguish between these two elements of performance from a measurement and performance appraisal perspective (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Borman et al., 1995; Conway, 1999; Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994). This paper adds to a limited LMX literature addressing both task and contextual performance as criterion variables simultaneously (Shull, 1994; Wang et al., 2005), and addresses calls for research on the impact of social context on the discrimination between task and contextual performance (Becton, Giles & Schraeder, 2007 ; Duarte et al., 1994; Judge & Ferris, 1993; Vey & Campbell, 2009).

Second, to my knowledge, no theoretical or empirical research has considered the likelihood that OCBs may be demonstrated in low quality LMX relationships. The “Leadership making model” (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) proposes that leader member exchange relationships may progress from a “stranger” to a “partner” stage. In the initial stages (the stranger phase), interactions between leaders and followers occur on a purely contractual basis. Relationships may progress to the next stage, termed the “acquaintance” stage, as an offer for improved working relationship is made by either supervisor or subordinate, and exchanges become characterised by greater sharing of resources and information. Following iterative testing cycles, relationships may ultimately progress towards a “mature partnership” based on mutually high levels of trust, reciprocity and obligation between supervisor and subordinate. OCBs may act as a currency of exchange between supervisors and subordinates; acknowledgment of OCBs by supervisors may contribute towards improved social exchanges, allowing relationships to progress from low quality (stranger phase) to high quality (partner stage). A consideration of whether OCBs occur, and are duly acknowledged in low quality exchange relationships furthers leadership scholars’ understanding of the mechanisms underlying relationship development, enriching existing theoretical explanations underlying the formation of high quality leader member exchanges. Consistent with this notion, more recently, researchers have proposed that formally incorporating OCBs in performance appraisal systems may enhance manager-employee value congruence, leading to improvements in leader member exchange quality (Becton et al., 2007).

Third, research on performance appraisal proposes that appraisal purpose acts as an important boundary variable influencing rater motivation and cognitive processes during performance appraisals, and has an impact on ratings provided by raters (Jawahar & Williams, 1997). Numerous studies have found that ratings provided for administrative purposes tend to be more lenient than those provided for developmental or feedback purposes (Bernardin & Orban, 1990; Jawahar & Williams 1997; Jawahar, 1994; Williams et al., 1985; Zedeck & Cascio, 1982). Additionally, research suggests that appraisal purpose impacts how raters will utilise information to reach decisions regarding the type of ratings to assign a specific ratee (Williams et al., 1985). However, to my knowledge, no theoretical or empirical work in the LMX or performance appraisal literatures has addressed the impact of purpose on managers’ ability to discriminate between task and contextual performance, under conditions of high or low quality exchange relationships. A consideration of appraisal purpose has the potential to inform performance appraisal scholars’ understanding of factors responsible for influencing raters’ ability to discriminate between elements of task and contextual performance (Coleman & Borman, 2000), aiding in a more complete understanding of an organizations’ theory of performance (Sulsky & Keown, 1998).

Implications for practice

In organizational settings, managers may develop certain expectations about their subordinates, and treat them differently, depending upon these expectations, leading to the creation of a self-fulfilling prophecy (Field, 1989; Rosenthal, 1968). This suggests that supervisors in low quality relationships may develop low expectations regarding the performance (both task and extra-role) of their subordinates, and may create a social climate fostering quid pro quo exchanges (offering limited support, job enrichment opportunities, suggestions and feedback for improved performance), maintaining the low quality of the social exchange.

Organizations may develop training programs designed to improve supervisor awareness of potential rating biases and teach supervisors specific behaviours (providing improved psychological support to subordinates, improved effort in developing positive exchange relationships) to motivate subordinates to excel in assigned tasks, as well as engage in extra-role behaviours.

Research on rater motivation suggests that supervisors rely on their own implicit performance theories when making judgements regarding levels of effective and ineffective behaviours in their subordinates (Lord & Maher, 1991; Longnecker et al., 1987). In low quality exchange relationships, supervisors may compare demonstrated behaviours of their subordinates to pre-existing prototypes of effective subordinates, consistent with their internalised, implicit theory of performance. Supervisors may thus label their subordinates as ineffective performers, capable of only task performance, and ignore any OCBs. Findings from frame of reference training programs indicate that explicitly training raters to evaluate OCBs increases the rating accuracy of dimensional performance (Sulsky, Skarlicki & Keown, 2002). Frame of reference training programs incorporating OCB training should be implemented to teach supervisors in low quality exchange relationships deficiencies inherent in their implicit theory of performance, allowing them to broaden their performance theory to include specific dimensions of OCBs, leading to greater rating accuracy.

Appendix

Table 1
Coleman & Borman's (2000) Three Broad Dimensions of Citizenship Performance

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Definition</i>
<i>Interpersonal Support</i>	Helping and cooperating with others by accepting suggestions, helping co-workers, directly performing some of their tasks, accepting suggestions from others, informing them of events they should know about, putting team objectives ahead of personal interests. Showing consideration, courtesy and tact in relations with others as well as motivating and showing confidence in them.
<i>Organizational Support</i>	Representing the organization favourably by defending and promoting it, expressing satisfaction and loyalty by staying within the organization despite temporary hardships. Endorsing, supporting the organizations' mission and objectives, complying with organizational rules and procedures, and suggesting improvements.
<i>Conscientious Initiative</i>	Persisting with extra effort despite difficult conditions. Taking initiative to do all that is necessary to accomplish objectives even if it is not normally a part of own duties and finding additional productive work to perform when own duties are completed. Developing own knowledge and skills by taking advantage of opportunities within and outside the organization using own time and resources.

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