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LEADER-MEMBER EXCHANGE AND CREATIVE IDEA VALIDATION: THE ROLE OF HELPING AND BULLYING

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to explore the role of leader-member exchange (LMX) for selection-focused creativity. Thus, we seek to understand when subordinates develop high-quality relationships with their supervisors, do they also get their creative ideas validated by co-workers or not? The proposed model was tested using data obtained at two points in time from three data sources (co-workers, subordinates, and supervisors) working at a software solution provider operating in Pakistan. The obtained data were then analysed for random coefficient models with Mplus. It was found that having only quality LMX will not guarantee the validation of co-workers' ideas. The focal employee needs to signal to others that they also care about their co-workers and have quality LMX. Subordinates who maintain quality relationships with their supervisors also need to consider what they signal to their co-workers by their behaviours and actions at work. Co-workers are more likely to provide support for creativity to those who are more supportive at work. We extend novel benefits associated with high-quality LMX, that is, the validation of co-workers' ideas. Additionally, by focusing on social relationships for selection-focused creativity, we also extended creativity literature.

Keywords: creative idea validation, peer-attribution, helping behaviour, bullying behaviour, leader-member exchange

INTRODUCTION

The innovation process includes several stages of creativity − the generation of novel and valuable ideas (Amabile, 1988) is considered the actual point of departure for innovation. However, another critical stage in the innovation process is the validation stage − soliciting feedback about a creative idea from others in social interactions (Ohly et al., 2010; Harrison & Wagner, 2016). Producing novel and valuable ideas usually requires different behaviours and skills than to get those ideas validated or endorsed by others (Harrison & Wagner; 2016, Zhang et al., 2018). In the prominent models of creativity (Amabile, 1988; Woodman et al., 1993), innovation has been proposed as an outcome of supervisory support and social influence that stem from workplace interactions. Leader-member exchange (LMX), the dyadic relationship between leaders and followers (Gerstner & Day, 1997), is a prominent example of the supervisory support that can substantially affect followers' willingness to engage in the innovation process (Qu et al., 2015; Khalili, 2018). Nevertheless, the existing literature explaining the vital role of LMX quality in creativity remains inconclusive as the focus remained on variance-focused creativity (problem identification, information searching, and idea generation). In contrast, selection-focused creativity (idea validation and idea endorsement) received less attention. Therefore, in this research, our goal is to explore and explain the role of LMX for selection-focused creativity. More specifically, we seek to understand as members develop high-quality relationships with their supervisors (LMX), do they also get their creative ideas validated by co-workers?

To explore the proposed relationship between LMX and creative idea validation, we integrate the LMX theory (Gerstner & Day, 1997) with attribution theory (Kelley, 1967). The attribution theory posits that the reactions of others depend on how they attribute the behaviour of a focal person (Kelley, 1967). To understand the possibility of creative idea validation by co-workers, we should consider how co-workers attribute focal individuals. In particular, attribution theory proposes that when others attribute the behaviour of focal employee helping, they tend to give actual feedback (Allen & Rush, 1998; Johnson et al., 2002) and not otherwise. Workplace helping and bullying are prominent examples of employees' attributed workplace support behaviours and victimisation (Ågotnes et al., 2018; Cohen, 2016; Salin, 2003; Lin et al., 2020). Thereby, we expect that when a focal employee is engaged in the behaviours that show concern for others in the form of helping and in a hostile activity of targeting others – workplace bullying (Salin, 2003) – will moderate the relationship between LMX and creative idea validation.

There appear to be valuable gains to LMX, creativity, and attribution literature by integrating these two theories. The trivial function of LMX in nurturing and enhancing employees' creativity is well understood in the literature (Khalili, 2018; Qu et al., 2017). What remains inconclusive are the implications of LMX in the form of persons' standing among co-workers in later stages of the creative process. The suggestion that LMX is related to employees' higher creativity (Vila-Vázquez et al., 2020). This mechanism is insufficient to explain what happens to individuals' creative ideas when feedback from others is essential in soliciting creative ideas in later stages of the creative process (Ohly et al., 2010; Harrison & Wagner, 2016). The creative process is a complex phenomenon that could be best understood with an interactional approach (Amabile et al., 1996; Zhou, 2003). Research on how LMX and co-workers' attribution can solicit and nurture creative ideas is still scarce in the literature. Thus, by exploring the moderating role of co-workers' attributions of helping and bulling on the relationship between LMX and creative idea validation, this research emphasises the pivotal role of co-workers' attribution in determining creative idea validation.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

LMX and Creative Idea Validation

Built on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), LMX theory asserts the inimitable, distinct dyadic relationships between subordinates and their supervisors (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). These dyadic relationships can make or break a person's career (Adeel et al., 2019). Such that, position among peers (Erdogan et al., 2015), creative potential (Martin et al., 2016; Qu et al., 2015), and influence the extent to which an individual will get involved in creative endeavours (Zhang et al., 2018; Muñoz-Doyague & Nieto, 2012).

LMX (Dienesch & Liden, 1986) brings desirable work outcomes (Bauer & Green, 1996) for a high LMX subordinate, such as favourable attitudes towards the job and job performance (Martin et al., 2016). Research on the relationship between LMX and creativity established that actors in high-quality exchange relationships get support for creativity and gain access to valuable organisational resources needed to generate novel and useful ideas (Qu et al., 2015; Khalili, 2018). LMX members communicate more frequently and access information and other organisations' resources (Walumbwa et al., 2011). Supervisors funnel unique valuable resources they obtain from the organisations' official channels (Erdogan & Enders, 2007) and their supervisors (Tangirala et al., 2007) to high LMX members. LMX members are also considered to have more control over their immediate supervisors

(Schriesheim et al., 2001). LMX members also are able to voice their concerns to managers more clearly (Botero & Van Dyne, 2009) and affect how things get done in their work units (Chen et al., 2007).

The benefits of LMX are not limited to personal success. LMX members are seen as potentially valuable to the co-workers due to their social proximity with their leaders. Co-workers reported more satisfaction with those who maintain high-quality LMX (Green et al., 1983). Co-workers seek more advice and information from them (Erdogan et al., 2015), see them a liaison to the leader (Kramer, 1995), consider them as leader's trusted assistant (Liden et al., 2006), view them as a representative of their leader (Dansereau Jr et al., 1975), seek more help due to their better chance to possess organisational resources and information (Sin et al., 2009), and rate them high on creativity (Muñoz-Doyague & Nieto, 2012). Thus, due to the personal and professional social capital of LMX members (Martin et al., 2016), we expect that those employees who maintain high-quality exchange relationships with their supervisors will be in a better position to get their ideas validated by others at work.

H1: LMX relationship positively affects the validation of creative ideas.

The Moderating Role of Co-Worker Attributed to Helping and Bullying Behaviour

Researchers have stated that people make attributions about others' behaviour, and their actions are affected by such attributions (Green & Mitchell, 1979). Researchers also found that these attributions, when interacted with the quality of relationship with supervisors, affect performance ratings (Lam et al., 2007). In other words, the focal employee's social position (LMX quality) will interact with attribution which may further affect the validation of creative ideas. Co-workers will, therefore, pay attention to cues that signal supportive or discouraging behaviour of the focal employee, maintaining a quality relationship with the supervisor. For example, researchers have shown that co-workers observe the behaviour of those in quality LMX and then seek advice from those who are supportive rather than challenging (Erdogan et al., 2015). Based on these rationales, we expect that the relationship between LMX and creative idea validation is contingent upon how co-workers attribute their behaviour.

LMX members' provided information and advice are potentially valuable by co-workers as they are considered advice-givers at work (Erdogan et al., 2015). Indicating LMX members when helping their co-workers, the possibility of getting creative ideas validated will increase. The literature on helping has concluded

that helping others have both personal and professional benefits. Help givers feel good while helping others; others also see LMX members as the right persons and positively behave (Bergeron et al., 2018). Those who help others at work are known to be supportive and enjoy having a good reputation among co-workers. Thoughts about being helpful to energise actions of others (Weiner, 2006) and attribution of being a helpful shape and energise reactions of self and others (Tscharaktschiew & Rudolph, 2016). Thus, when employees have a quality relationship with their supervisor, they are attributed as helpful at work. It creates a positive impression by making them look good (Bolino, 1999), and colleagues are more likely to provide feedback to them and may solicit their creative ideas. Therefore, we predict that high-quality exchange relationships with supervisors should be associated with a high idea validation level for those whose behaviour is attributed as helpful. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: The relationship between LMX quality and validation of creative ideas is moderated by helping behaviour such that the relationship is strengthened when co-workers attribute the behaviour of focal employee helping.

LMX literature also highlighted the potential cost associated with LMX members (Kramer, 1995). LMX members are sometimes considered as teacher's pets and shunned by co-workers due to their behaviour (Sias & Jablin, 1995). Co-workers have also reported less satisfaction with LMX members (Kim et al., 2013) only when LMX members are behaving negatively. They then avoid them (Erdogan et al., 2015), react to them with cynicism (Davis & Gardner, 2004), and avoid them despite their proximity to the manager (Sias & Jablin, 1995). They indicate that despite being high in quality LMX, co-workers may avoid him and his work due to his behaviour and conduct in the organisations.

Bullying, characterised as a persistent, repetitive, negative activity, targeting those who perceive themselves as less powerful than the bully (Salin, 2003), is a social relationship phenomenon common in contemporary organisations (Harvey et al., 2009). Workplace bullying is categorised as bullying involving personal attacks and intimidation, and bullying directed at task completion (Rayner, 2000; Dick, 2009). This act is facilitated by individuals, groups, and organisational factors such as workplace relationships (Parzefall & Salin, 2010). Irrespective of the type, bullying spawns negative feelings (Giorgi et al., 2015) at work and lowers the bully's trust (Fox & Stallworth, 2005). Power (formal or informal) is one of the main reasons for bullying at the workplace (Spector & Fox, 2005) that allows them to bully others. Formal sources of power come from the position held in organisations that typically lie with managers; however, access to the powerful others and support from significant others represent an informal power source.

LMX members also gain power due to their unique dyadic relationships with their supervisors (Dulebohn et al., 2012) and achieve high social standing prominence among co-workers (Salk & Brannen, 2000; Sparrowe & Liden, 2005). Due to their power and hostile behaviour, these influential individuals are also being shunned by co-workers (Sias & Jablin, 1995) and are rated negatively by co-workers (Kim et al., 2013). Despite having quality LMX, bullying inevitably has grave consequences; we predict that those whose behaviour is attributed to co-workers bullying, LMX should be negatively related to creative idea validation. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: The relationship between LMX quality and validation of creative ideas is moderated by bullying behaviour such that LMX is negatively related to idea validation when co-workers attribute the behaviour of focal employee bullying.

The Joint Effect of Helping and Bullying on Idea Validation

Finally, we expect that focal employees' quality of LMX will jointly determine the possibility of idea validation, co-workers attributed helping, and co-workers attributed bullying. Such that LMX should be positively related to idea validation for those actors who are attributed high on helping and low on bullying by co-workers. Research has highlighted that helping and bullying could exist side by side at workplaces (Dijkstra et al., 2007). Indicating that, at times, a helpful person may also be engaged in co-workers' victimisation. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H4: There will be a three-way interaction between LMX quality, co-workers attributed helping, and co-workers attributed bullying such that the relationship between LMX and validation of creative ideas will be positive only for those actors who are attributed high on helping and low on bullying by co-workers.

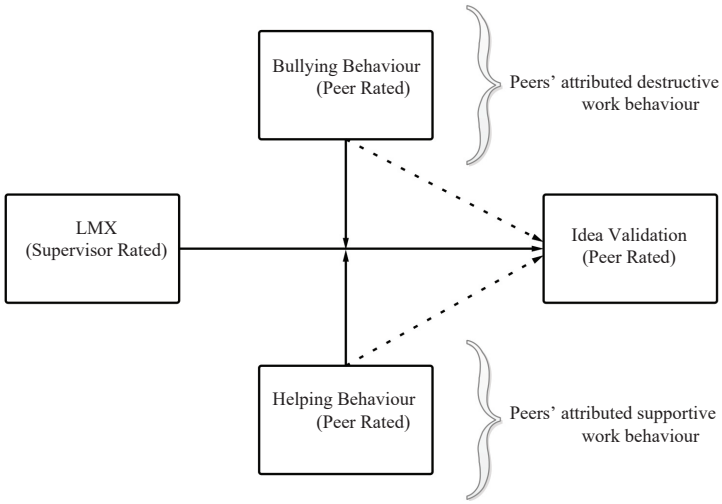

Figure 1. Research model

METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Collection

For this study, data was collected from the employees of a software solution provider operating in Pakistan. After discussing the study's purpose and significance and obtaining formal approval from the company's top management, we invited all the employees from four branches located in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, and Multan (N = 548) to participate in a survey. Three sources – supervisors, subordinates, and co-workers – provided data for multiple variables used in all analyses of this study. Leaders reported their relationship quality with their subordinates; however, helping behaviour, bullying behaviour, and creative idea validation were rated by the co-workers. Thus, helping behaviour, bullying behaviour, and idea validation were obtained using the average method for the focal employee of co-workers' data.

We initially distributed the survey to 516 employees via email and received a completed survey from 213, yielding a response rate of 41%. With the HR coordinator's help, we tagged employee staff ID at the learning portal with a relevant questionnaire and restricted their IP addresses for multiple entries from a single device. Supervisors' response for LMX and co-workers' response to bullying behaviour and helping behaviour were obtained at time one (T1); however, co-workers' response for idea validation was requested at time two (T2). Control

variables were also measured at T1. We received the LMX ratings from their direct supervisors, obtaining a response rate of 100% for the supervisors. There were 37 direct supervisors for the 213 employees. Initially, 342 employees (66% response rate) and their respective 37 supervisors provided their response. We then dropped cases with missing values and mismatched data, the final sample of this study yielded 213 for employees' response (42% response rate) and 37 for supervisors' response. In the final sample, over three quarters (79%) were male, 22.5% had a bachelor's degree, and 77.5% of the respondents held a master's degree. The average age of the employees was 34, and they had worked there for two years on average.

Measures

Creative idea validation

Co-worker's rated creative idea validation was measured with an adapted 5-items 5-points Likert-type scale (Harrison & Wagner, 2016). We provided the respondents with five questions and a list of co-workers working in their work units and asked them to rate. To mitigate any social concerns, we did not restrict them from rating every member of their work unit. Sample items for the scale are: "I provide my opinion to the focal employee about his/her new ideas," "I provide feedback to the focal employee about the feasibility of his/her new ideas," and "I talk to the focal employee about his ideas to see if they will work." Idea validation for a focal employee was then calculated using an average co-workers' response; this method is used to measure the central tendency of advice and friendship network (Carson et al., 2007). The rating scale ranged from 1 = rarely to 5 = very frequently (α = 0.93).

LMX quality

Each employee's direct supervisor was asked to rate the employee's LMX quality on each item on a 7-items 7-points Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree (Liden & Graen, 1980). To mitigate any social concerns, we did not provide any subordinates' list to the supervisors; we ask them to recall and rate subordinates working in their work unit under their supervision. Sample items for the LMX scale are: "Subordinate and I are suited to each other" and "I understand subordinate's problems and needs" (α = 0.96).

Bullying behaviour

Employees were asked whether they experienced workplace bullying with a simple yes/no response (Lewis, 1999). In measuring bullying, the researchers' focus remained with enquiring about the experience of bullying rather than perpetrating bullying, which is more likely to subject to human perception. Following the previous literature, we provided a written definition of workplace bullying (Einarsen & Skogstad, 1996). We asked respondents whether they have observed any of the co-workers observed bullying behaviour over the last 12 months on a 7-point Likert-type scale. We again did not restrict respondents to rate every one of the co-workers working in their work units to mitigate any social concern. The bullying behaviour of a focal employee was then calculated using an average method of co-workers' response; this method was used already to calculate central tendency in friendship circles (Carson et al., 2007).

Helping behaviour

Measure drawn from the organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) instrument (Podsakoff et al., 1993; Podsakoff et al., 1990) with 5-items 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree was used to capture workplace helping behaviour. We provided the respondents with helping behaviour five items and asked them to rate their co-workers on the scale. Again, to mitigate any social concern, we did not restrict respondents from responding to every one of their co-workers. Sample items for helping behaviour are: "Focal employee helps others who have heavy workloads" and "Focal employee helps others who have been absent from work." A focal employee's helping behaviour was then calculated using the same average method, which we used to calculate idea validation and bullying behaviour ($\alpha = 0.92$).

Control variables

Self-reporting measures were used to control the variables of this study. We controlled for both demographic and expertise-related variables, providing alternative explanations for idea validation for the focal employee. The control variables used in this research were gender, education, and expertise for demographic variables; other variables included in the study were work duration in the current team, total experience with current functional position, and total experience with the IT sector. These control variables were assessed with one question each. Employee task performance is also an indicator of expertise and may explain validating focal employee's ideas. Therefore, following prior leadership, creativity, and attribution research (Amabile et al., 1996; Martinko et al., 2007;

Liu et al., 2012; Tepper, 2007), supervisors reported task was controlled with with 7-items 7-points Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree (Williams & Anderson, 1991). A sample item for focal employee's task performance was "Adequately completes assigned duties" ($\alpha = 0.974$).

DATA ANALYSIS

Preliminary Analyses

Descriptive statistics and zero order correlation among study variables are shown in Table 1. In addition to Satorra-Bentler difference test using log-likelihood method for chi-square difference test, we also performed conventional model fit indicators for the final model using Mplus 8.1. The conventional statistics for the final model, chi-square baseline model $\chi^2 = 24.79$ (11), $p < 0.001$, log-likelihood for alternate model = –1610.030 with scaling correction factor 1.348, Akaike (AIC) = 3266.060, Bayesian (BIC) = 3343.369, sample-size adjusted BIC = 3270.489; log-likelihood for null model = –1622.953 with scaling correction factor 1.309, AIC = 3267.906, BIC = 3304.880, sample-size adjusted BIC = 3270.025; within level error variance for alternate model = 0.410, between level error variance for alternate model = 0.002, within level error variance for null model = 0.410, between level error variance for alternate model = 0.002, NFI = 0.96, CFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.96, AGFI = 0.95, SRMR = 0.02, and RMSEA = 0.01 with composite reliability tests and average variance extracted (AVE) indicated a good fit of the model to the data (see Appendix).

Table 1
Means, standard deviation, and correlation among study variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Gender	0.79	0.41									
Education	2.77	0.42	–0.053								
[a] Post Experience	2.20	0.65	0.012	–0.044							
Total Experience	10.28	4.10	0.180**	–0.040	0.168*						
[b] Team experience	2.08	0.81	0.169*	–0.069	0.139*	0.192**					
Task performance	4.06	1.21	–0.030	0.210**	–0.099	–0.130	–0.043				
[c] L M X	2.56	0.95	–0.003	–0.081	–0.066	–0.096	–0.115	0.250**			

(continued on next page)

Table 1: (*continued*)

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Helping behaviour	3.49	1.56	–0.049	0.052	0.038	–0.027	–0.085	–0.075	–0.107		
Bullying behaviour	3.87	0.64	0.046	–0.087	–0.035	–0.041	0.030	–0.130	–0.094	–0.149*	
Idea validation	1.09	0.64	0.093	0.061	0.097	0.043	0.075	0.037	0.082	–0.045	–0.053

Notes: Observations = 213; clusters = 39; gender was coded as 0 = female, 1 = male; education was coded as 1 = college graduate, 2 = bachelor's degree, 3 = master's degree, 4 = doctoral degree; current position experience, total experience, and working experience with current team were measured in years; $^{*}p < 0.05$, $^{**}p < 0.01$; [a] current position experience; [b] working experience with current team; [c] leader-member exchange

Test of Hypotheses

Mplus 8.1 was used to test the hypotheses in this study. Employees at the software house were nested into functional workgroups and different chains of commands. In such situations, the use of simple ordinary least squares (OLS) regression could underestimate standard error. Additionally, there could also be a problem of interdependence among study variables in work units with nested data (Bauer, 2003; Curran, 2003). Researchers have recommended random coefficient modeling techniques for data with such characteristics (Scherbaum & Ferreter, 2009). Therefore, we used a random coefficient regression model technique at a single level of analysis for all of the analyses. Although the standard error underestimation problem was mitigated with random coefficient analysis, the model fit results of chi-square generated with random coefficients cannot be used regularly (Muthén, 2010).

Table 2
Summary of random coefficient model results

Predictor	Model 1 Idea validation		Model 2 Idea validation		Model 3 Idea validation		Model 4 Idea validation		Model 5 Idea validation	
	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE
Gender	0.138	0.126	0.134	0.126	0.159	0.123	0.135	0.127	0.133	0.120
Education	0.099	0.134	0.121	0.138	0.033	0.119	0.096	0.129	0.068	0.137
[a] Post experience	0.093	0.082	0.096	0.081	0.076	0.072	0.062	0.075	0.079	0.071
Total experience	0.001	0.009	0.002	0.009	0.001	0.009	0.001	0.009	0.009	0.010
[b] Team experience	0.041	0.065	0.049	0.063	0.072	0.057	0.086	0.062	0.039	0.055
Task performance	0.021	0.062	0.007	0.063	0.011	0.060	−0.002	0.059	0.007	0.056
[c] LMX			0.069	0.064	−0.268	0.150	0.973**	0.313	−0.386	0.405
Helping behaviour					−0.271**	0.089			0.249	0.181
LMX x Helping behaviour					0.098*	0.038			−0.421	0.387
Bullying behaviour							0.574**	0.211	0.265	0.262
LMX x Bullying behaviour							−0.227**	0.080	0.438*	0.220

(continued on next page)

Table 2: (*continued*)

Predictor	Model 1 Idea validation		Model 2 Idea validation		Model 3 Idea validation		Model 4 Idea validation		Model 5 Idea validation	
	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE	Estimate	SE
Helping behaviour x Bullying behaviour									−0.304	0.223
LMX x Helping behaviour x Bullying behaviour									0.236**	0.104
Δ χ 2 (Δdf)	9.22(6)		11.44(7)		19.76(10)*		15.38(9)		24.20(11)*	
Δ R^2	0.24		0.28		0.29		0.27		0.33	

Notes: Observations = 213. Clusters = 39. Gender was coded as 0 = Female, 1 = Male. Education was coded as 1 = college graduate, 2 = bachelor's degree, 3 = master's degree, 4 = doctoral degree. Current Position Experience, Total Experience, and Working Experience with Current Team were measured in years.
*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; [a] Current Position Experience; [b] Working Experience with Current Team; [c] Leader-Member-Exchange
Δ χ 2 refers to Satorra–Bentler scaled chi-square difference test: Muth'en (2010).
Δdf is change in degrees of freedom. R^2 is the proportional reduction in error variance (Snijders & Bosker, 2012).

Therefore, as Muthén (2010) recommended, we also performed Satorra-Bentler difference test using the log-likelihood method depicted in Table 3. Before any analysis, we grand mean centered for all main variables (Hofmann & Gavin, 1998) and interaction terms so that chances of multi-collinearity for interaction terms could be mitigated (Aiken et al., 1991). We also calculated the interclass correlation coefficient (ICC) and design effects for all our study variables. The ICC for creative idea validation was 0.552; for LMX, it was 0.328; for bullying behaviour, it was 0. 316; and for helping behaviour, it was 0.426.

Table 3
Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square difference test

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Log-likelihood for null model	–5404.69	–5115.24	–4064.27	–4305.36	–2623.9
Log-likelihood for alternative model	–5397.8	–5106.33	–4049.52	–4293.2	–2608.77
Scaling correction factor for null model	1.804	1.805	1.745	1.711	1.639
Scaling correction factor for alternative model	1.742	1.745	1.652	1.668	1.453
Number of parameters in null model	24	22	17	18	12
Number of parameters in alternative model	30	29	27	27	23
Δdf	6	7	10	9	11
$\Delta \chi 2$	9.2249	11.44158	19.75768	15.37674	24.19824

Note: $\Delta \chi 2$ refers to Satorra-Bentler scaled chi-square difference test (Muthén , 2010); Δdf is change in degrees of freedom

Table 2-Model 1 is a simple model for random coefficients of control variables (gender, education, and work duration in the current team, work duration in current position, total work experience, and employee task performance) on the dependent variable (idea validation). We found insignificant coefficients of control variables for idea validation. In Table 2-Model 2, we introduced LMX as an independent variable of our study. In the presence of control variables, LMX was insignificant for the relationship between LMX and idea validation; none of the control variables showed a significant coefficient. The results of this model rejected H1 of this study.

Table 2-Model 3 introduced workplace helping behaviour as rated by peers as the first moderator of the relationship between LMX and idea validation. Random coefficient model results showed a significant coefficient ($\beta = 0.098$, $p < 0.05$) of workplace helping behaviour as a moderator of the relationship

between LMX and idea validation. Accepting H2 of this study is also shown in Figure 2. The interaction plot suggests that LMX and idea validation are favorable for high helping behaviour and unfavorable for low helping behaviour. The results indicated that LMX would be positively related to ideas validation for only those whose behaviour is attributed to high helping their co-workers and harmful for those with low helping behaviour.

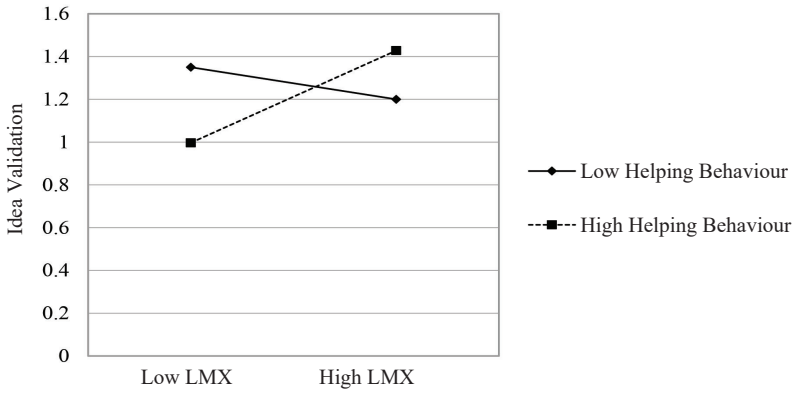

Figure 2. Interaction between LMX relationship and helping behaviour

Table 2-Model 4 introduced bullying behaviour as rated by peers as the second moderator of the relationship between LMX and idea validation. Random coefficient model results showed a significant relationship ($\beta = –0.227$, $p < 0.01$) of bullying behaviour as a moderator of the relationship between LMX and idea validation. The result of the interaction effect supported H3. The moderating result of this interaction is presented in Figure 3. The interaction plot suggested the relationship between LMX and idea validation is negative in high bullying behaviour and positive when subordinates have a low level of bullying behaviour. The results indicated that LMX would be positively related to idea validation for only those whose behaviour is attributed to low bullying and harmful for those with high bullying behaviour.

Finally, in Table 2-Model 5, we introduced workplace helping behaviour, bullying behaviour, the interaction term representing the joint effect of LMX and workplace helping behaviour, the interaction term representing the joint effect of LMX and bullying behaviour, the interaction term of workplace helping behaviour, and workplace bullying behaviour, and the three-way interaction term of LMX, workplace helping behaviour, and workplace bullying behaviour for idea validation in the presence of all of the control variables. The three-way interaction result

showed a positive coefficient (β = 0.236, $p < .01$) for idea validation, supporting H4 of this study. The three-way interaction result is presented in Figure 4; the interaction plot suggested a positive relationship between LMX and idea validation for those with low bullying and high helping behaviour and negative otherwise. The interaction term also indicates that helping with high bullying behaviour will have negative effects on idea validation by co-workers.

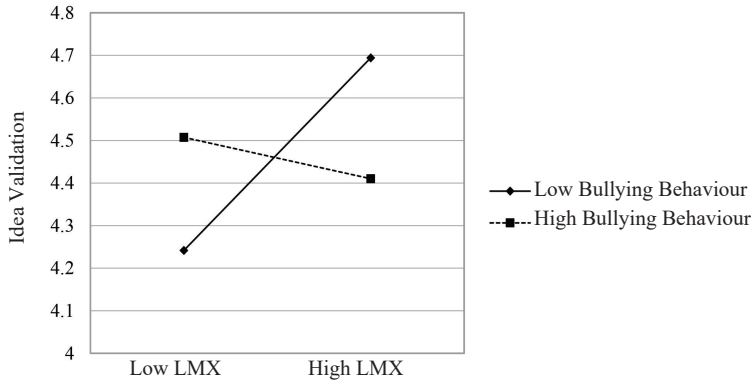

Figure 3. Interaction between LMX relationship and bullying behaviour

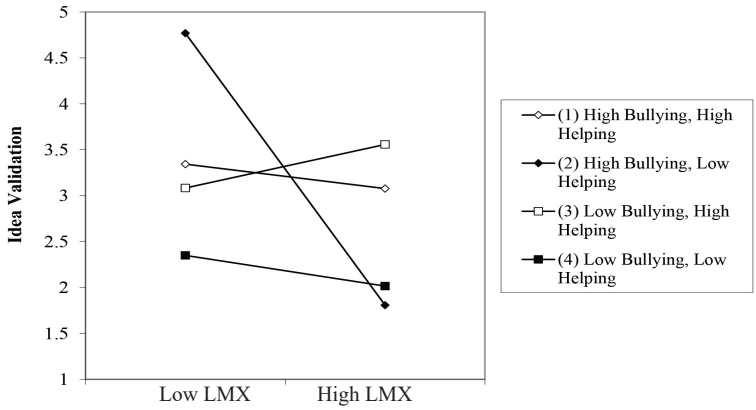

Figure 4. Three-way interaction between LMX relationship, helping behaviour, and bullying behaviour

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

We made some distinct contributions to the literature. The prime contribution lies in providing the link between LMX and creative idea validation that how quality LMX is related to the co-workers' validation of ideas. Benefits for LMX members are well understood in the literature; limited research has focused on LMX members' standing among co-workers (Erdogan et al., 2015). Many research has predominantly emphasised on the importance of leaders in making the work environment more productive (Saleem et al., 2020; Khuwaja et al., 2020). We answered the fundamental question of how co-workers react to the ideas of those who maintain a quality relationship with their supervisor. Although there is only limited LMX literature that recognised the importance of co-workers reactions towards LMX members (Erdogan et al., 2015), as per our knowledge, the past research has not focused on the role of co-workers towards ideas at work. We added a novel benefit of idea validation in the literature explaining the benefits for LMX members at work. Although high-quality LMX members enjoy a prominent place among their co-workers (Erdogan et al., 2015) and receive desirable treatment at work (Dulebohn et al., 2012), they are seen as liaison to managers (Kramer, 1995) and enjoy high prominence among co-workers (Green et al., 1983). We added that they also have an excellent chance to get their ideas validated by co-workers only when they demonstrate more helping behaviour than bullying behaviour. Our research indicates that by having only quality LMX will not guarantee the validation of ideas by co-workers. The focal employee needs to signal others that they also care about their co-workers and have quality LMX.

In creativity literature, researchers' focus mainly remained with the variance-focused creativity (problem identification, information searching, and idea generation). We extended the current creativity research scope by investigating selection-focused creativity (idea validation) – the subsequent stage of variance-focused creativity. There are limited research that addressed the role of others in later stages of the creative process (Adeel et al., 2019; Sijbom et al., 2015) even though peer's support is needed in refining and promoting the ideas (Baer, 2012; Kanter, 1988). Co-workers' role is significant in the creative process; before any further development, creative individuals discuss their creative ideas with peers (Zhang et al., 2018; Ohly et al., 2010; Binnewies et al., 2007), seek emotional support from the peers (Madjar, 2008), thus building confidence on their ideas (Hoever et al., 2017; Baer, 2012), and mobilise support for sponsorship from colleagues before translating ideas into any tangible product (Kanter, 1988; Scott & Bruce, 1994). We added to this line of research by explaining how LMX members' ideas are treated (selection-focused creativity) by co-workers, a significant contribution to creativity research.

Finally, we investigated the role of co-workers' attribution in determining their actions towards LMX member ideas. We introduced helping and bullying behaviour as moderators of the relationship between LMX and idea validation. Research has highlighted that attribution plays a vital role in determining the rater's actions and behaviour towards the focal employee (Lam et al., 2007; Johnson et al., 2002). Although much work has been done on the role of attribution at workplaces, studies on peer attribution are sparse in the literature (Liu et al., 2012). Similarly, although limited research has investigated selection-focused creativity (creative idea validation), peer assessment has not been considered in creativity research. We extended the literature by explaining peer attribution's role in determining others' actions and behaviours at workplaces. Our research suggested that regardless of quality relationship with supervisor, co-workers' attribution of behaviour plays a vital role. When co-workers attribute the behaviour of the focal employee to bullying, idea validation is absent. However, attribution of helping behaviour is related to a higher level of idea validation. These patterns suggest that peer attributions are worthy of attention, as they explain their behaviour towards LMX members' ideas.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Creative ideas provide tangible value to the organisations only when others support and validate those deemed valuable for the organisations, while unattended ideas only increase sunk cost. Therefore, creative employees also invest in developing relationships at work. Our results revealed that relationships in general and quality relationships with supervisors, in particular, may not be necessarily associated with creative idea validation. Those interested in maintaining good relationships with supervisors may also need to be supportive at work. Maintaining quality relationships with supervisors is not guaranteeing that these relationships can be leveraged into support for ideas for the focal employee. Focal employees also need to consider what they signal to their co-workers by their behaviour and actions at work. Co-workers are more likely to support creativity by validating the focal employee's ideas for further development who provide value by helping others at work and are less likely to demonstrate destructive work behaviours.

Our results also revealed that quality relationships are positively associated with idea validation when co-workers attribute focal employee behaviour is more supportive (helping) instead of discouraging (bullying). The results help employees understand that the co-workers are expecting supportive behaviour from them. An employee's work-related efforts will be supported when employees demonstrate helping behaviour and are rejected when employees demonstrate

bullying behaviour. Our research indicates that by having only quality LMX will not guarantee workplace support of co-workers towards the creative ideas of LMX members.

To benefit from employees' creative ideas, organisations must also promote a culture that fosters helping at work. In the absence of helping culture and increased competition, valuable and potentially fruitful ideas may not be communicated to management levels for further processing, utilisation, and implementation, which will increase the waste of employees' creative ideas and thus affecting the organisations in a contemporary competitive environment. Therefore, we recommend organisations to take helping into consideration when developing creative culture. The culture is based on mutual trust and respect so that the real benefits of creativity could be achieved by the organisations. Policies should also be introduced for financial and non-financial incentives that may directly or indirectly promote helping culture. Leadership role will be significant to achieve this target, leaders or supervisors must be informed about the potential benefits of helping in creative cultures and the potential loss for organisations if bullying behaviours foster. Thus, if organisations manage to develop a sense of mutual respect and benefits among employees, they will start to enjoy an increased pool of creative ideas and have more liberty in choosing employee-generated creative ideas. Training is also recommended here, where mutual benefits of supportive behaviours and individual loss of bullying behaviours should be discussed. Hence, to increase the likelihood of creative idea validation by co-workers, organisations may formulate cooperative strategies based on the mutually beneficial social environment of trust and help.

LIMITATIONS AND RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Although the results from this study made some distinct contributions to the literature, there are some limitations; and although we have a strong theoretical reason to expect that LMX quality would precede idea validation, there is some evidence available in the literature that subordinates competence and peer's ingratiation instigate LMX quality (Dulebohn et al., 2012). Nevertheless, due to design limitations, we could not tease apart the causality of observed relationships. There could be a possible explanation for our results. Ideas validated for focal employees help develop high-quality LMX because they demonstrate more helpful behaviour and low bullying behaviour. Further research should consider exploring the relationship between LMX and idea validation by temporally dividing the data collection process into different points in time. Additionally, we focused on validating ideas; this might also be the reason to reject H1. Future research should

investigate this relationship in the presence of characteristics of ideas (useful and novel).

The attribution model poses that the attribution of behaviours regulates actions. We introduced helping behaviour as supportive workplace behaviour and bullying behaviour as discouraging workplace behaviour as moderators of this study. Yet, we recognise that these are not the only two moderators for the relationship between LMX and ideas validation. For example, the motives of the focal employee may affect the validation of ideas, research on attributed motives shows that attribution matters in behaviour and actions towards the focal employee (Lam et al., 2007). In this research, we explained an individual's standing among peers and how employees can influence their standing through the behaviour they demonstrate at workplaces. The attribution model may explain personality, structural, and work-related moderators for validation of ideas.

CONCLUSION

In this research, we concluded that subordinates' social relationships with their supervisors alone will not guarantee co-workers' workplace support towards validation of their creative ideas. A person's standing among peers further depends on what message he/she send to co-workers by his/her behaviour. Co-workers are more likely to support ideas to those who demonstrate helping behaviour (supportive work behaviour) at work rather than bullying behaviour (destructive work behaviour). Further investigation on the attribution of co-workers is a fruitful area for future research.

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APPENDIX

Table 1
Factor loading

ITEMS		LMX	IDV	HLP	BLG
LMX 1	AVE = 0.735 CR = 0.95	0.861			
LMX 2		0.853			
LMX 3		0.849			
LMX 4		0.821			
LMX 5		0.813			
LMX 6		0.890			
LMX 7		0.912			
IDV 1	AVE = 0.71 CR = 0.92		0.874		
IDV 2			0.814		
IDV 3			0.844		
IDV 4			0.806		
IDV 5			0.872		
HLP 1	AVE = 0.70 CR = 0.92			0.952	
HLP 2				0.815	
HLP 3				0.823	
HLP 4				0.751	
HLP 5				0.842	
BLG 1	AVE = 0.74 CR = 0.74				0.861

Table 2
Original scale

LMX (Liden & Graen, 1980)	1.	My supervisor would be personally inclined to help me solve problems in my work.
	2.	My working relationship with my supervisor is effective.
	3.	I have enough confidence in my supervisor that I would defend and justify his/her decisions if he or she were not present to do so.
	4.	My supervisor considers my suggestions for change.
	5.	My supervisor and I are suited to each other.
	6.	My supervisor understands my problems and needs.
	7.	My supervisor recognizes my potential.
Creative idea validation (Harrison & Wagner, 2016)	1.	I tried to get others' opinions about my new ideas.
	2.	I tested out my ideas by explaining them to my co-workers.
	3.	I considered diverse sources in assessing whether my new ideas are appropriate.
	4.	I sought feedback from colleagues about the feasibility of my new ideas.
	5.	I talked to my colleagues about new ideas I have to see if they will work.
Bullying behaviour (Lewis, 1999)	1.	Whether they have observed any of the coworkers' observed bullying behaviour over the last 12 months.
Helping behaviour (Podsakoff et al., 1990)	1.	Help others who have heavy work loads
	2.	Help others who have been absent from work
	3.	Willingly helps others who have work related problems
	4.	Helps orient new people even though it is not required
	5.	Is always ready to lend a helping hand to those around him/her.