

The Influence of Leader-member Exchange (LMX) on Communication Satisfaction and Stress Experienced by Supervisor and Student in Completing Thesis (Study about LMX Theory in the Case of Students Around Final Thesis Completion at FISIP UB)

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ABSTRACT--- *The relation between final thesis supervisor and students has been described within the theory of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) which illustrates the relation between superior and subordinate where superior may treat subordinate differently. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) may influence communication satisfaction and stress in every individual student. Research aims to analyze the influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on communication satisfaction and stress experienced by students with the supervisor of final thesis assignment.*

Research uses quantitative methodology. Data are collected through questionnaire from 100 students of FISIP at Class of 2008-2010 who are undergoing final thesis. Analysis technique is path analysis. Result indicates that Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is positively influencing communication satisfaction. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and communication satisfaction are negatively influential on stress. Finally, Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is negatively influencing stress but indirectly through communication satisfaction.

Keywords--- Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), Communication Satisfaction, Stress

1. INTRODUCTION

All students are required to submit final thesis because it is the precondition for them before they are inaugurated with academic degree. The preparation of final thesis will involve two or three counselors. One is the main counselor or pomotor while other two are the supporting counselor or co-promotor. Every counselor lecturer may treat students in different way. Their relation resembles superior-subordinate relation as stated in theory of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX). The supervisor are positioned in higher position over students such that supervisor will act as superior whereas students must submit the lecturers as subordinate.

Graen and Casman (1975) have defined LMX as a dynamic two-way relation between leader and worker where leader will treat worker in different way based on time and capacity owned by the leader. This difference distinguishes two models of relation, mainly in-group and out-group. The supervisor can develop a close relation to some students (in-group) and this relation is always high quality. The lecturers can also have a distant relation with students (out-group).

A factor that determines the quality of interpersonal relation is communication because communication is a component that shapes interpersonal relation. The communication between lecturers and students is educational communication. Here, communication may not be free or neutral because it must be controlled and conditional to the goals of education. Essentially, a learning process is a communication process which delivers the message from the sender to the receiver (Yusuf, 2010; page 2).

The goal of communication can be achieved only through effective communication. Successfully communicating with others or successfully receiving information from others may involve personal satisfaction, which is called as communication satisfaction (Thayer in Duldt-Batney, 2010). Satisfaction is different from the effectiveness of message expression. If the experience of communicating can meet the interest of others, communication is considered as satisfying although it is not yet effective enough. Despite less effectiveness, as long as communication can meet the standard of creation, expression and interpretation of message, it will be tolerable. Satisfaction is a concept that is closely related to convenience.

A previously related research is conducted by Gunawati et al (2006, Page 93) on the students of Psychology Study Program, University of Diponegoro, to examine the relation between communication effectiveness of students with final thesis main counselor and stress during paper preparation. The finding shows that 29.3 % communication effectiveness are influencing stress experienced by students during the working of final thesis.

Many students are contrasting their opinion and thought against those of supervisor. However, supervisor are higher positioned than students, and therefore, supervisor must have greater knowledge and students must follow what have been said by supervisor to obtain the satisfying result. Students feel so much demanded. The imbalance between the demand and the capacity of students is one reason behind stress as stated by Sutherland and Cooper (in Smet, 1994; Page 112). Experiencing a stress may be positive if it motivates students to accomplish the assignment. When the work role and the work demand are so excessive, only negative consequence is to be found, that is stress (Lawrence and Kacmar, 2012).

Stress is a condition derived from the transaction between individual and environment which results in the perception of gap between the demand of situation and the resources of biology, psychology and sociality systems among individual (Sarafino in Smet, 1994; Page 112). Research about stress has been conducted in UK by Robotham (2008, Page 738). Several evidences have shown that the experience of students is significantly influencing their stress rate and often, crippling their mental health. However, consequence and influence of stress can be different within different individual.

Harris and Kacmar (2006) observe about the relation between LMX and stress, and have found that people with high quality LMX may suffer from great stress at work. It is said so because high quality LMX may involve higher incidence of work role and work demand than low quality LMX. Previous research has observed that the subordinates in high quality LMX experience lower stress rate because they receive good support, motivation and information from superior. To understand this gap, the author attempts to relate LMX with stress experienced by students when they prepare final thesis (Schriesheim, Castro and Cogliser, 1999).

The average study period needed by the students to achieve their degree is eight semesters or four years. According to the calculation from FISIP Academic Office of Brawijaya University, the average study period at FISIP of Brawijaya University, the average study period at FISIP of Brawijaya University is four years three months, meaning that in average, students can complete their study in period more than four years. The teaching-learning activity can be effective if a lecturer teaches maximally 20 students at the exact science class and 30 students at the social science class. The activity will not be effective if a lecturer must deal with more than 20 or 30 students. Data obtained from the FISIP Employment Office of Brawijaya University have shown that in average, a lecturer may teach more than 30 students because FISIP concerns with a social science.

As defined by Meyer in Gratz and Salem (1981; Page 11), the college is an organization which does human resource management for social activity. The college prioritizes information processing system because difficult communication at education sector may impact negatively the transmitted information. If peoples within the college cannot communicate to each other, the knowledge is hardly transmitted. Hereby, it can be concluded that educational communication is a part of organizational communication.

2. DESIGN AND METHOD

Research uses positivist approach and quantitative methodology. Data collection technique is questionnaire. Type of research is explanatory research because this research attempts to correlate or to search for the causal relation between two or more concepts (variables) that are observed (Kriyantono, 2012; Page 69). Population of research includes FISIP students of Brawijaya University who are working their final thesis, and who belongs to Class of 2007-2010. Sampling technique is non-probability sampling, and the type is accidental sampling. This sampling results in 100 persons of sample.

LMX is a dynamic two-way relation between leader and worker where leader may treat worker differently based on time and leader capacity (Graen and Casman, 1975). Liden and Maslyn (1998) have explained 4 basic dimensions that must be considered in developing the relation with LMX :

Table 1: Indicator of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)

Variable	Indicators	Descriptions	Statements
Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)	Contribution	Contribution is the perceived activity that is oriented toward the assignment at certain level and is given to each member to achieve collective goal. The important thing to evaluate assignment-oriented activity is the degree at which the subordinate is responsible and required to accomplish the assignment by exceeding standard or work contract. Leader must provide resources and opportunities to materialize this indicator.	I am willing to spend my time to accomplish my final thesis as required by my supervisor.
	Loyalty	Loyalty is a statement or expression to support the goal and character of other individual that is similar to a reciprocal relation between leader and worker. Loyalty involves a full and consistent trust upon certain person throughout situations.	My supervisor will stay before me to defend me when I am complicated by other lecturers.

	Affect	Affect is a sense of care between leader and worker based on interpersonal attraction. It is not only developed at work or for professionalism value. Sense of care may reflect the interest to develop a mutual relation like friendship.	My supervisor are convenient for sharing the idea.
	Differential relations with outcomes	It is a perception of how far is a reciprocal relation has owned and developed reputation inside and outside organization which exceed what is stated at work. This perception can derive from life history of other, personal experience of other, opinion of other inside or outside organization, success story or professional recognition achieved by other.	I am impressed by the knowledge of my supervisor about the topic of my final thesis.

Redding (1972) in Muhammad (2005; Page 87) has explained communication satisfaction that is used to describe “the whole satisfaction rate perceived by the worker in their total communication environment”. According to Down and Hazen as quoted by Pace and Faules, and translated by Mulyana (2000; Page 163), there are 8 factors to measure communication satisfaction:

Table 2: Indicator of Communication Satisfaction

Variable	Indicators	Descriptions	Statements
Communication Satisfaction	Communication Climate	It is reflecting the communication at personal and organizational levels. It talks about how far is the communication inside organization to motivate and to simulate all employees in meeting organizational goal and interest.	My supervisor and I are giving positive support to each other for the completion of final thesis.
	Supervisory Communication	It is about how far is the superior to open the self for idea by listening and offering the counseling to solve problems related to work.	My supervisor provide me with clear direction about the difficulty in preparing final thesis.
	Integrative Communication	It is about how far is the individual to accept the information about current work environment.	I can obtain easily the information about counseling process (counseling schedule).
	Media Quality	It is about how far is the meetings to be well arranged, be shortly and clearly directed, and sufficiently communicated in organization.	My communication media (laptop, internet, hand phone) are in good quality.
	Co-Worker Communication	It talks about how far the rumors and horizontal communication can develop precisely and fluently among co-workers.	My supervisor and me share the knowledge and discuss the difficulties around the working of final thesis.
	Corporate Information	It is about how far the information of organization is available.	Information from the college about the procedure of final thesis completion is reliable and accessible.
	Relationship With Subordinates	It concerns with how far the subordinates are responsive to the bottom communication and then estimating the demand of superiors.	I give good response to the input of my supervisor.
	Personal Feedback	It relates with how far is the employee to feel that they know how their work to be valued and how their performance to be recognized.	Good or poor judgment for my final thesis is informed clearly to me.

Stress is a condition emanated from the interaction between person and environment. This interaction may then produce a perception of gap among the demands which each demand may come from biological, psychological and social systems of a person. Stress occurs as the consequence of a demand that exceeds the capacity of individual to satisfy. Several aspects of stress are highlighted by Sarafino (1998; Page 70) as following:

Table 3: Indicator of Stress

Variable	Indicators	Descriptions	Statements
Stress (Psychology)	Cognition Symptom	Stress condition may disturb thinking process of individual. The stressful individual tends to have a distorted capacity of recalling, attending and concentrating.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am difficult to concentrate upon the counseling. 2. I cannot focus myself to my final thesis because my other works distract me.
	Emotional Symptom	Stress may disturb emotional stability of the individual. Stressful individual can be easily irritant, excessively anxious, grieving and depressive.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My relation with supervisor is not good such that I am not enthusiastic with my final thesis. 2. I feel disappointed with my supervisor because they do not help me to work for and to deal with difficulties in my final thesis. 3. Counseling schedule is unclearly announced such that I am confused in going to meet my supervisor. 4. I am afraid to contact my supervisor through phone or message. 5. I am quite offended if my friend comments my final thesis. 6. The procedure of final thesis completion is too complicated which distorts and frustrates my effort to complete final thesis. 7. I am despaired of completing my final thesis because the judgment of the supervisor is not like what I expect. 8. It is hard to find proper materials/ literatures, and it does diminishing my enthusiasm of working my final thesis.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The conversion of path diagram into measurement model is aimed to understand the influence of the constructs explained by the effect on model, which includes direct influence and indirect influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on communication satisfaction and stress.

Measurement Model of Path Diagram :

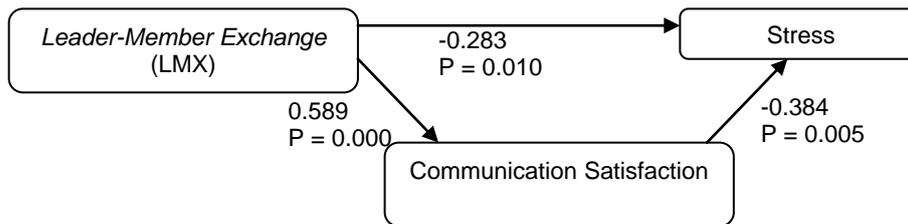


Table 4: The influence between Variables

Relation	Coefficient Rates		
	Direct	Indirect	Total
Leader-Member Exchange → Satisfaction	0.589	--	0.589
Leader-Member Exchange → Stress	-0.283	-0.179	-0.462
Communication Satisfaction → Stress	-0.304	--	-0.304

Note: all indicate that probability rate is < alpha (5 %).

The coefficient rate of the direct influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on communication satisfaction is 0.589. Better Leader-Member Exchange always improves communication satisfaction. The coefficient rate of direct influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on stress is -0.283. Better Leader-Member Exchange may reduce stress.

The coefficient rate of the direct influence of communication satisfaction on stress is -0.304. The improving of communication satisfaction will reduce stress. The coefficient rate of the indirect influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on stress through communication satisfaction is -0.179. Therefore, the increase of communication satisfaction is a factor of better Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and thus, it will reduce stress.

Table 5: The influence of LMX Indicator on Communication Satisfaction

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Error Standard	Beta		
1. (Constant)	1.937	.278		6.980	.000
Contribution	.139	.054	.216	2.593	.011
Loyalty	.118	.038	.281	3.076	.003
Differential Relations with	.071	.043	.146	1.653	.102
Outcomes Affect	.137	.044	.283	3.103	.003

The indicator of affection in Leader-Member Exchange variable is producing the biggest coefficient rate, precisely 0.283. It means that the indicator of affection has the most dominant influence on communication satisfaction.

Table 6: The influence of LMX Indicator on Stress

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.
	B	Error Standard	Beta		
1. (Constant)	5.529	.518		10.674	.000
Contribution	-.316	.100	-.283	-3.161	.00
Loyalty	-.053	.071	-.073	-.747	.457
Differential Relations with	-.127	.080	-.151	-1.590	.115
Outcomes Affect	-.235	.083	-.278	-2.843	.005

The indicator of contribution of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is producing the biggest coefficient, precisely 0.283. It means that this indicator of contribution has the most dominant influence on stress.

Table 7: The influence of Satisfaction Indicator on Stress.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Error Standard	Beta		
1. (Constant)	6.380	.694		9.193	.000
Communication Climate	-.254	.088	-.271	-2.894	.005
Supervisory Communication	-.153	.100	-.158	-1.528	.130
Organizational Integration	-.188	.067	-.265	-2.807	.006
Media Quality	-.004	.099	-.004	-.038	.969
Co-worker Communication	-.036	.090	-.038	-.404	.667
Corporate Information	.021	.079	.027	.270	.788
Relationship with Subordinates	-.385	.126	-.284	-3.071	.003
Personal Feedback	.038	.088	.038	.435	.664

The indicator of relationship with subordinates in communication satisfaction variable has the biggest coefficient rate which is -0.284. It means that the indicator of relationship with subordinates has the most dominant influence on stress.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the data processing and data analysis about the influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on communication satisfaction and stress, it is then concluded that:

1. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) has a positive influence on communication satisfaction. If Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is good, then it is influential to the increase of communication satisfaction rate among students and so is the reverse.
2. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) has a negative influence on stress. If Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is good, then it is influential to the decrease of stress rate among students and so is the reverse.
3. Communication satisfaction has a negative influence on stress. If communication is satisfying, then it is influential to the decrease of stress rate among students and so is the reverse.
4. Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) has a negative but significant influence on stress which is indirectly given through communication satisfaction. The influence is significant if communication satisfaction is increasing due to better Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) which in turn reduces stress, and so is the reverse.

6. SUGGESTION

Concerning with the limit of the current research, further research may examine the other viewpoint of the influence of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) on communication satisfaction and stress experienced by students with their supervisor around final thesis completion. Next research must not only review from the perspective of students but also that of supervisor. Indeed, supervisor include the main counselor or the promotor and the supporting counselor or the co-promotor. It is expected that the current research can support and underline other researches in field of communication and organization using different variables. This research contributes previous research by understanding factors that influence communication satisfaction and stress experienced by students.

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