

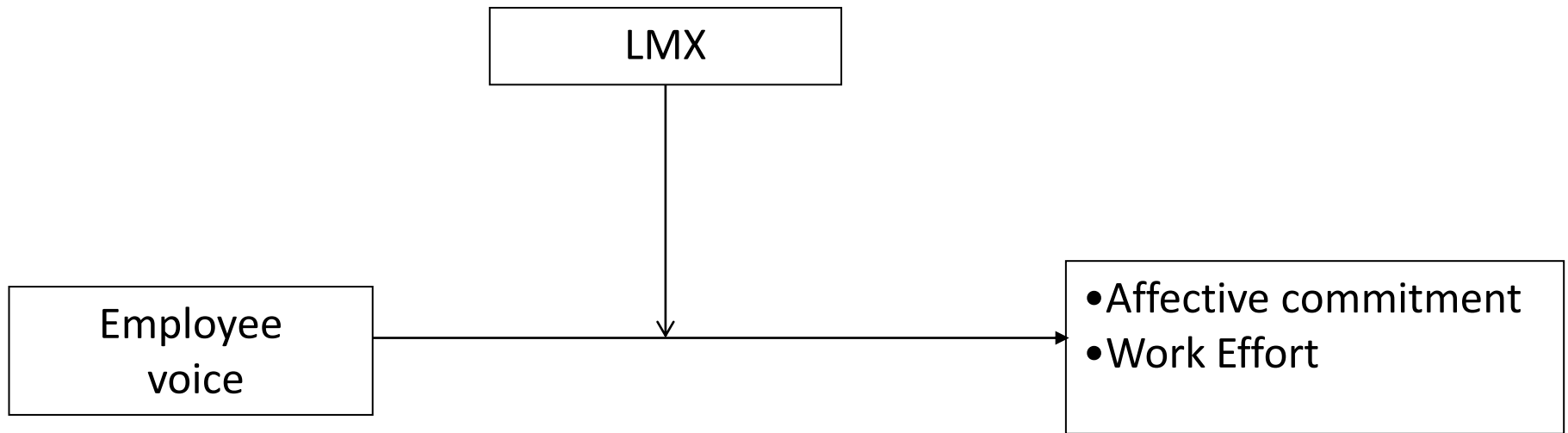
## **The role of front line managers in employee voice: A social exchange perspective**

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- Wilkinson and Fay (2011) .....a very broad term with ‘considerable width in the range and definitions authors assign’ (pg. 66).
- A set of rules or procedures that allow individuals affected by a decision to present information relevant to that decision (Folger, 1977).
- Due process, employee rights and justice literature (McCabe and Lewin, 1992) focusing on the presence of due process procedures that enhance justice judgments and facilitate employee participation in decision making (Folger, 1977; Lind et al., 1990).
- In an exchange relationship, when employees believe they can influence a decision this has the potential to increase their levels of affective commitment (Korsgaard and Roberson, 1995) and effort (Bailey, 1993)

- Important role of the front-line manager in shaping employee attitudes at the workplace level
- Line manager action or inaction is often responsible for the difference between espoused HR policies and successful enactment (Boxall and Purcell, 2008)
- Intangibles such as employee-management relations can be argued as central to the success of employee voice mechanism
- LMX is a construct indicating the quality of the social exchange between supervisors and subordinates (Graen & Scandura, 1987)
- The premise of social-exchange theory suggests that in a dyadic relationship (e.g., supervisor and subordinate), something given begets an obligation to return an equivalent behaviour (Gouldner, 1960; Perugini & Gallucci, 2001).

- H1: There is a positive relationship between perceptions of employee voice and affective commitment.
- H2: There is a positive relationship between perceptions of employee voice and work effort
- H3: LMX quality will mediate the positive relationship between employee voice and affective commitment
- H4: LMX quality will mediate the positive relationship between employee voice and work effort



- **Sample and Data Collection**

- Employees in 3 service organisations surveyed (n = 187)

- **Measures**

- **Employee voice:** 5 item scale adapted from Tyler and Blader (2000). Sample items include ‘I am provided with reasonable opportunities to express new ideas, concerns or become involved in decision making’ and ‘My supervisor gives me the opportunity to express my views and feelings on pay setting issues and pay decisions’.  $\alpha = .834$ .
- **LMX:** 7 item scale by Graen et al., (1982),  $\alpha = .901$ .
- **Affective commitment:** 5 items from Meyer and Allen (1997),  $\alpha = .93$ .
- **Work Effort:** 2 items from Danford et al., (2005)  $\alpha = .83$ .
- **Control variables:** gender, age, education, employment type, tenure, org.

# Results: Voice – LMX - Commitment

|                                |                      | H1                   | H3        |                      |                      |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------|----------------------|
|                                | Affective Commitment | Affective Commitment | LMX       | Affective Commitment | Affective Commitment |
|                                | $\beta$              | $\beta$              | $\beta$   | $\beta$              | $\beta$              |
| <b>Control variables</b>       |                      |                      |           |                      |                      |
| <b>Org size</b>                | -.015                | .012                 | .005      | -.002                | .005                 |
| <b>HRM</b>                     | -.209*               | -.084                | -.078     | -.095                | -.066                |
| <b>Gender</b>                  | -.092                | -.045                | -.067     | -.020                | .001                 |
| <b>Age</b>                     | .148                 | .178*                | .203*     | .061                 | .120                 |
| <b>Education</b>               | -.028                | -.029                | .007      | -.027                | -.034                |
| <b>Tenure</b>                  | .299                 | .162*                | .013      | .197*                | .162                 |
| <b>Employee voice</b>          |                      | .498***              | .617***   |                      | .301**               |
| <b>LMX</b>                     |                      |                      |           | .560***              | .344***              |
| <b>R<sup>2</sup></b>           | .174                 | .396                 | .460      | .437                 | .693                 |
| <b><math>\Delta R^2</math></b> |                      | .222                 | .340      | .285                 | .300                 |
| <b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>  | .136                 | .363                 | .430      | .409                 | .447                 |
| <b>F</b>                       | 4.629***             | 12.257***            | 15.349*** | 15.422***            | 14.437***            |

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ ,  $p < .001$   
 N = 188

# Results: Voice – LMX – Work Effort

|                                |             | H2          | H4        |             |             |
|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-------------|
|                                | Work Effort | Work Effort | LMX       | Work Effort | Work Effort |
|                                | $\beta$     | $\beta$     | $\beta$   | $\beta$     | $\beta$     |
| <b>Control variables</b>       |             |             |           |             |             |
| <b>Org size</b>                | -.059       | -.047       | .005      | -.086       | -.021       |
| <b>HRM</b>                     | .131        | .180*       | -.078     | .194*       | .194*       |
| <b>Gender</b>                  | .202*       | .222**      | -.067     | .228**      | .227**      |
| <b>Age</b>                     | -.056       | -.040       | .203*     | -.055       | -.024       |
| <b>Education</b>               | .053        | .053        | .007      | .036        | .063        |
| <b>Tenure</b>                  | .211*       | .156        | .013      | .104        | .181        |
| <b>Employee voice</b>          |             | .199*       | .617***   |             | .165        |
| <b>LMX</b>                     |             |             |           | .218**      | .042        |
| <b>R<sup>2</sup></b>           | .119        | .155        | .460      | .160        | .413        |
| <b><math>\Delta R^2</math></b> |             | .035        | .340      | .043        | .034        |
| <b>Adjusted R<sup>2</sup></b>  | .080        | .110        | .430      | .117        | .118        |
| <b>F</b>                       | 3.004**     | 3.450**     | 15.349*** | 3.777**     | 3.215**     |

\*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ ,  $p < .001$   
 N = 188



- To further test for mediation, we used nonparametric bootstrapping analyses based on 5000 samples (Preacher et al., 2007).
- The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was .06, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from .21 to .47. Thus, the indirect effect was statistically significant for LMX on the voice-affective commitment relationship.
- The bootstrapped unstandardized indirect effect was .07, and the 95% confidence interval ranged from -.09 to .22. Thus, the indirect effect was not significant for LMX on the voice-work effort relationship.

- Creating the opportunity for employee input into decision making - an important driver of positive employee outcomes including affective commitment and work effort.
- Signalling theory a lens in understanding the positive impact of voice on employee outcomes
- Line managers can be a barrier or facilitator of effective voice systems (Townsend, 2014).

# Questions?