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ADVANCES IN GLOBAL SERVICES AND RETAIL MANAGEMENT

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ADVANCES IN GLOBAL SERVICES AND RETAIL MANAGEMENT: VOLUME 2

ISBN 978-1-955833-03-5

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**ISBN 978-1-955833-03-5**

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## Personnel Relationships in the Workplace

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### Abstract

Contemporary organizations become more dynamic and complicated. Resources like building, machinery, culture, and people form the organization foundations. Human capital, as a core factor, directly or indirectly affects organizational outcomes. Some scholars have recently touched on relationships and some aspects of workplace relationships in the organization. But, detailed studies are required to focus on workplace relationships typology, domains of workplace relationships, the process of nurturing and maintaining relationships, and the effects of workplace relationships on organizational outcomes. In order to address the mentioned gap, a literature review method was employed to trace the typology of workplace relationships, in the organization. Underlying dimensions of different workplace relationship, including formal and informal, personal and professional, peer, supervisor- subordinate, and mentor relationship are studied. The study also reviews the formation process and sustaining of workplace relationships in the organization. Results implication by the managers organizes relationships in the workplace. The typology enables managers to differentiate prevailed relationships in flat and hierarchical organizations. Determinant of relationship helps management to lead employee's behavior in the right direction. The relationship process provides opportunities to enhance employee satisfaction.

**Keywords:** relationship typology, relationship dimensions, relationships process, relationship organizational outcomes

**Recommended Citation:** Cetinkaya, A. S., Habibi, S., & Yavuz, U. (2021). Personnel relationships in the workplace. In C. Cobanoglu, & V. Della Corte (Eds.), *Advances in global services and retail management* (pp. 1–16). USF M3 Publishing.  
<https://www.doi.org/10.5038/9781955833035>

### Introduction

Relationships in the workplace are supposed to be a more prevalent phenomenon even though technology develops in the future (Johnson, Geroy, & Griego, 1999). Individuals play a key role in the functioning of the organization (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003; Edela, 2003). Workplace relationship is the process of exchange between dyads at individual, group, or organizational level for the purpose of accomplishing an objective (Ferris et al., 2009). Workplace relationships may carry out some shared characteristics with daily life relationships, avoiding a blend between personal and workplace relationship contributes to the task outcomes (Wall, 1999). Furthermore, other types of relationships like formal or informal (Edela, 2003), personal or professional (Wall, 1999), peers (Colbert, Bono, & Purvanova, 2016), supervisor-subordinate (Bernerth, Armenakis, Feild, Giles, & Walker, 2007), and mentor (Ragins & Kram, 2007), relationships carry out some function which is supposed to have direct or indirect effect on the organization outcomes (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003). Relationships in different domains give meaning to individual's life. People

spend most of their time in the workplace. The qualities of their relationships don't only help to get the job done but also it affects individuals' quality of life (Dutton & Ragins, 2017). Particularly it forms a foundation for works to be done in the organization (Ferris et al., 2009).

Studying of the dominant workplace relationships provides the opportunity to accomplish a typology of the existent prevailed relationship in the organization (Ragins & Kram, 2007). Ferris et al. (2009) state that various underlying domain exist in the workplace relationships. Furthermore, classification, scrutinizing relationship domains, studying different relationships and their outcome, and strengthening workplace relationships are the main objectives of the study.

## Literature Review

A connection that brings people together could be meant by the word relationship. It's somewhat related to the terms 'alliance', 'connection' and 'dependence' (Edela, 2003). Similarly Dutton and Ragins (2017) define relationship as results caused by interactions between people, it involves reciprocity which causes a reaction to an action. Human is a social being- that sociability comes true in making a relationship with other individuals (Fiske, 1992). In other words, people intrinsically try to make and maintain a positive relationship to give meaning and bring purpose to their life (Caillier, 2017). Individuals make a variable extent of connection with each other and share their part in the elevation of an organization (Edela, 2003). Since that is obvious, relationships are vital in the organization context, whether relationships are short term or long term they directly affect the functioning of an organization (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003).

Within the workplace, relationships carry out the characteristics of instrumentality. For instance, individuals interact and make communication to get a job done. However, relationship could be personal and doesn't remain only job oriented. Intimacy in personal relationships is measured by self-disclosure. For example, disclosing private life issues indicates the extent of intimacy between individuals. However, personal disclosure is not common in a workplace relationship. It contains work-related issues, like professional attitude, emotion, and values (Mikkola & Valo, 2019).

Relational models theory explains social life as a process of seeking, making, sustaining, repairing, adjusting, judging, construing, and sanctioning relationships. It encompasses four kinds of relation models including communal sharing, authority ranking relationship, equality matching relationship, and market pricing relationship. The relational model's theory explains social life as a process of seeking, making, sustaining, repairing, adjusting, judging, construing, and sanctioning relationships (Fiske, 1992).

Communal sharing model contains a group of people who behave one another as equivalent. People focus on individual similarities rather than differences. Furthermore, people present more inclination to individuals with whom they are sharing the same characteristics. In the authority ranking relationship model, relationship within a group is based on hierarchy, status, and linear ordering of people. Top level managers have prestige and privileges, compared to subordinates, whereas subordinates are continuously protected and morally supported. The equality matching model explains that the relationship is based on equality, reciprocity, and balance. In addition, individual has the same right and freedom believed to what is fair. According to the market pricing

model, relationships are based on a mutual transaction among individuals. The relationship is characterized by a sense of proportion, trade, and equity (Fiske, 1992).

Respect, loyalty, and trust are some other basic characteristics that represent a high quality of leader-member and coworker relationship (Li & Hung, 2009). Meanwhile in the context of peer relationships, a mutual relationship is characterized by receiving support through peer advice in the period of stress, peer mutual confirmation, peer feedback beyond workplace requirement and finally peer friendship relationship which exceeds the job concerns (Kram & Isabella, 1985).

Dutton and Ragins (2017) argue that relationship is the center for life satisfaction, enhancement, and individual's growth. Through high-quality coworkers relationship employees receive emotional support, assistance to get a job done, opportunities for career development, and they get the opportunity to grow professionally (Colbert et al., 2016). Employees also get personal and technical information, which empower them to get a job done well. Workers will also have a better understanding of their job and working environment to grow in their career. Furthermore, a better relationship enables employees to give each other a sense of support and confidence by a feedback mechanism (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Which decreases job stress among the employees (Caillier, 2017). Colbert et al. (2016) findings show that workplace relationships positively affect employee's personal development.

### ***Classification of Workplace Relationships***

Different types of relationships, supervisor-subordinate, coworker or peers, mentors, romantic (Putnam & Mumby, 2013), personal and professional (Wall, 1999), formal or informal (Edela, 2003), relationships exist in the organization. Underlying features of each relationship, distinguish them from one another. In a supervisor-subordinate relationship, there is an unbalanced power and the appointed supervisor has a defined power over subordinates. However, in a peer relationship, an individual doesn't have any formal and defined authority over others (Mikkola & Valo, 2019). Whereas, in a mentor relationship, third parties like an organization, assign seniors to guide the junior employee to grow in the working environment (Ragins & Kram, 2007). Personal relationship comes true in personal or professional life; here individuals try to make a personal intimacy with each other (Wall, 1999). In a romantic relationship, besides the task-oriented relationship, employees develop private relationships with their coworkers (Mikkola & Valo, 2019). Finally, formal and informal relationships are connected to their definition within the organizational structure (Edela, 2003).

Edela (2003) argues that culture and structure of the organization effects desire relationship type and formulation in the working environment. If supervisor- subordinate or peer relationship receives attention and value by the organization, other types of relationship loses the chance to be dominant in the organization (Mikkola & Valo, 2019). Hence, organizational culture and structure is another factor effecting the creation and growth of a specific relationship in the working environment.

### ***Formal/ Informal Relationships***

Relationships in the small organization are simple and people make a direct connection with each other, whereas relationships in large organizations are more complex. In fact, anyone working in

an organization has the power to influence other members; therefore it's argued that they have a relationship with each other (Edela, 2003).

Within the organizational structure, relationships are divided into formal and informal. The line of command in formal relationships is already defined and relations are relatively static. Meanwhile, informal relationships are dynamic to meet the changing needs of an organization. The formal relationship includes line, staff, functional, and matrix relationships. Line relationship means everyone has a boss, and subordinates are directed by them. One person manages and gives direction to the work of the individual working below in the same line. Staff relationship is described as one person advising the manager. He or she usually gives advices in decision making and working as a liaison with team members. Staff officer's relationship with other individuals who are reporting to the manager is defined as a staff relationship. In functional relationships, line managers, and functional specialists like human resource officers, accountants, and safety officers are connected through functional relationships. Matrix relationship, in this kind of relationship an individual is reporting to more than one person. In addition, Informal relationship is not defined in the organizational chart but plays an important role in communication like any kind of communication that people make in different levels of an organization (Edela, 2003).

### ***Personal Relationship/ Professional Relationship***

Workplace relationships are complicated because people have personal and professional relationships with co-workers. A relationship that is prevailing in individuals personal life is described as personal relationships (Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014; Wall, 1999). Employees may work with people with whom they are not able to have a relationship in their personal life. It immerses workers to a second type of relation which is called a professional relationship. Professional relationships exists for the job to be done (Wall, 1999). Maintaining workplace communication will enhance trust among individuals and help professional relationships to grow in the workplace (Marr, 2009). Personal relationship comes true in personal or professional life. People who engaged in such relation; try to create a kind of personal intimacy. For example they have some common interests, enjoy talking to each other, feel comfortable in communication, and spend time together. Some people know each other in the workplace, but this may change into marriage in the future. Personal relationships also find negative themes, in some cases when workers are not liking someone (Wall, 1999).

People work with some colleagues with whom they are not present to have a relationship in their personal life; here a professional relationship exists only for the job to be accomplished. In personal relationship, people have the choice to decline or deepen their relationship; however in a professional relationship they have little choice to choose a boss or co-worker (Wall, 1999). Overlapping personal and professional relationships in the workplace creates confusion and negative outcomes for the organization. If organization managers nurture their relationship with workers based on their personal relationship, it creates expectations among employees. A decision made by the organization that doesn't fulfill the personal expectation of employees creates a negative picture of organization among the employees. On the other hand in personal relationship, at least equal power is assumed to exist. But in a professional relationship degree of power is determined by people's position (Wall, 1999).



Finally, personal and professional relationships could exist among peoples working in the same organization. Understanding the purpose and communication method of each relationship avoids the blending of these relationships in organizations. Personal and professional relationships follow different purposes. Employees need to differentiate the personal from a professional relationship; they need to understand whether the aim of their relationship is personal or professional. As personal relationship follows the purpose of intimacy, engaged people empower their relationship by talking about what they are feeling. Conversation's purpose in a professional relationship is not to nurture intimacy but it aims to get the job done (Wall, 1999).

### ***Coworker Relationship/ Peer Relationship***

Coworker is a person who you work with, but he/she is not your supervisor (Colbert et al., 2016). Peers are described as people who are members of the same social group, usually have the same age, grade, or status (Reitz, Zimmermann, Hutteman, Specht, & Neyer, 2014; Tran, Nguyen, Dang, & Ton, 2018). Similarly Kram and Isabella (1985) define peers as people who have the same salary, job, responsibility, and work at the same organization level.

Reitz et al. (2014) argues that the equality model of social relation theory is more suitable in the context of peer relationships. Peer relationships are reciprocal based characteristics. It needs to be balanced and an absence of mutuality will not help the peer's relationship to survive. The equality model of social exchange theory explains that there is no authority in the relationship between peers, they are working with each other to get a job done (Fiske, 1992). Although the equality matching model of Fiske's (1992) theory of social relations matches the characteristics of peer relationships, peer relations vary and they are not the same. For example, the communal sharing model of social relation theory best matches with peer's close friendship. Whereas the authority ranking model of the above theory fits in the context of peer relations regarding their social status, as they hold a high or low status in society (Reitz et al., 2014).

Peers relationship is a type of informal relationships in the workplace. Coworkers don't have any formal authority, but they have the power to influence one another. It's an important source of emotional support in the workplace because employees have more knowledge and understanding than people outside the organization (Sias, 2005). In addition, coworker relationships differ based on the quality of their relationships. Employees with the same marital and family status are more inclined to have interaction with each other. Friendship degree also varies concerning communication, as in close friendship, workers get more engaged and make open communication than acquaintances did (Sias, 2005).

Finally, workers usually have more peers compared to their supervisors. Similarly, there is a less hierarchical relationship in peer relationships. Employees easily make communication, get support, and collaboration is supposed to be more prevalent (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Peer relationship carries out some functions like career enhancing functions, psychosocial functions and special attributes. Career enhancing function encompasses information sharing, which allows workers to receive individual and technical information for work to be done. Career strategizing helps employees to have a better understanding of their career and can discuss career dilemmas. In career enhancing functions peers also receive and give feedback to evaluate their performance. In psychosocial functions, workers give a sense of confidence and competence to the coworkers, as it reflects a high level of trust, disclosure, and intimacy (Kram & Isabella, 1985).

### ***Mentor Relationship***

A mentor relationship is described as a relationship, whereas an experienced person (mentor) advises a less experienced (protege) person to develop a mentee's career. A mentor could be from inside or outside the organization, but the mentee is employed in the same organization. It carries the characteristics of career context which makes it different from other types of relationship (Ragins & Kram, 2007). The mentor relationship, based on their initiation is divided into a formal and informal relationship. Formal mentoring relationship is defined within the organizational structure, whereas the third party like an organization assigns someone to perform mentorship jobs for organization members. Meanwhile, an informal mentor relationship develops naturally without any foreign intervention (Allen & Eby, 2007).

Mentors, through supporting less experienced people carry out some career and psychosocial functions. Career function provides career advancement opportunities within the organization hierarchy to the mentees. It includes protection, coaching, sponsoring, and enhancing positive exposure of the people who are advised. Psychosocial function includes behaviors which support personal and professional development of the mentees, for example counseling, acceptance, friendship, and the confirmation which gives mentees a feeling of competence and identity (Allen & Eby, 2007; Ragins & Kram, 2007). Career and psychosocial functions of mentor relationship predict career advancement and satisfaction with the relationship among the proteges (Ragins & Kram, 2007). Scandura (1992) and Scandura and Ragins (1993) findings consider role modeling as a third function of a mentor relationship. It contains behavior like accepting mentor as a role model, perceiving mentors as a source of motivation, mentees feeling that mentor's knowledge should be respected, and mentees respect mentors for their ability to teach others.

Johnson et al. (1999) in a more general model concludes mentoring relationships into socialization, task development, and lifespan development dimension. Socialization is rooted in an individual's cultural knowledge, which they learn about the rules of grounded behavior in their society. Individuals learn in family, school, or media and they realize that mentor/protege relationships have existed; relationships also grow between seniors and juniors. Task development, work and family are structuring our life. Both work and family skills play a key role in task development. Mentor relationship is important for proteges to obtain the information about the task and required skills for the tasks to be done. Life condition provides the opportunity to acquire working skills. The lifespan dimension covers the various stages of an individual's life, ranging from conception to death. It studies an individual's life using physiology, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and other disciplines. Mentor relationships enhance a manager's career in early adulthood and provide development opportunities for more experienced managers. Manager's task at the early age of their career focuses on initiation which consists of developing self, career, and family. Meanwhile, the basic task in the adulthood stage is reappraising and they are advising, guiding, and supporting the young managers (Kram, 1983).

Furthermore, mentor relationships contain loyalty, trust, flexibility, accountability, and support dimensions. Loyalty, the extent of mutual support provided by individuals to confirm one another action and character (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Trust is described as a positive attitude toward people's needs and expectations. Individuals mutually care about fulfilling each other's expectations (Ferris et al., 2009). Flexibility provides a significant opportunity to solve problems and it's marked significant to maintain a healthy relationship. Furthermore, it's the extent of the

compromise to afford with cognitive and social innovation. Accountability is a prevailing dimension of interpersonal relationships. It provides an evaluation of whether the mutual expectations are fulfilled or not (Ferris et al., 2009). It's required for maintaining the social system stick together; it makes individuals responsible for their decisions and actions. Furthermore, accountability provides shared expectation and maintains social order in the workplace (Frink et al., 2008). Moreover Support is the act of emotional, psychosocial, or financial upholds of individuals. For example, giving faith, confirming people in the workplace, and people support through the provision of resources (Ferris et al., 2009)

Mentoring has a positive effect on an individual's career and their social life (Noe, Greenberger, & Wang, 2002). Nemanick Jr (2000) findings show that informal mentoring is more effective than formal mentorship. Furthermore, it's concluded that formal comparison to informal mentorship programs has more positive and fruitful results for the proteges. In addition, Allen, Eby, Poteet, Lentz, and Lima (2004) findings show that proteges who receive mentorship from seniors have more opportunities to advance in their career than individuals who are not mentored. They also have more job satisfaction, job commitment, and expecting more promotion. Mentor relationships provide mentors a sense of satisfaction, career success and advancement, mentees loyalty, and an improvement in performance (Ragins & Kram, 2007).

### ***Peer Mentorship Relationship***

Some organizations are getting flat instead of having complicated hierarchical structure. It enables individuals to find ways to grow in their career and get support for success in the workplace. Peer mentorship is considered as a key source of individual development in the business environment (McDaugall & Beattie, 1997; Ragins & Kram, 2007).

McDaugall and Beattie (1997) define peer mentorship as a process of reciprocal interaction among peers with the same hierarchical status, which motivates employees to learn and grow in their career. Team members, coworkers, and specialized organizations provide mentorship in a lateral and hierarchical relationship. It helps individuals to fulfill their expectations to grow in their career. Work-related support helps individuals to grow, learn, and develop in their career; co-workers and supervisors are the main sources of providing development assistance and support to individuals in the business environment (Ragins & Kram, 2007). In fact, comparing peers and mentors in the context of career and psychosocial function, reveals that peers could compensate mentors in psychosocial function but not in career functions. Peers could provide some mentors function of traditional mentors (Ragins & Kram, 2007).

McDaugall and Beattie (1997) classified peer mentorship into coworker, utilitarian peer mentors and holistic peer mentors. Coworkers are described as people with low personal and work focus to learn, their behaviors carry out cognitive and communication attributes. They speak about daily work-related issues and problems at the surface level, but not at the deep level. Hence, it's affordability with the pure mentorship relationship is doubtful. Utilitarian peer mentors have a medium to a high degree of work focus to learn while the personal focus for learning remains in the range of low to medium. Their behavior includes communication, cognitive, emotional, and learning. It's also accompanied by more support, trust, friendship, and joy in the workplace. Holistic peer mentorship encompasses a medium to high level of personal and work focus for learning. Their behavior includes communication, cognitive, affective, learning, and challenging

like asking questions for the learning. Ragins and Kram (2007) also state that Behavior contains a mindset of keeping focus on both work and personal development. Holistic peer mentorship includes attributes that exist in a utilitarian peer mentor relationship like trust, support, and friendship, but it also nurtures a sense of sharing personal and professional vulnerability among the individuals (McDaugall & Beattie, 1997).

Peer mentorship has some benefits including individual benefits which grows, individual interaction skills, friendship, and provides emotional support. Learning benefits includes learning skills, helping individuals to learn from others, and finally learning to learn. While the Mutual benefit carries out the characteristics of sharing ideas, insights, and resources (McDaugall & Beattie, 1997).

### ***Supervisor – Subordinate Relationship***

Leaders develop unique relationships with subordinates (Bernerth et al., 2007), they are not using the same style of behavior with subordinates (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). It ranges from low to high quality of the relationship (Bernerth et al., 2007).

Leader-member exchange theory studies the different aspects of supervisor- subordinate's relationships. It's important to know the way of approaching supervisors to their followers. Especially, the way of their interaction affects the quality of their relationships (Hampton Jr, 2019). Leader- member exchange quality is defined in terms of information received by subordinates. In a high-quality leader member exchange relationship, the worker feels more comfortable and they openly communicate with managers. Workers are able to receive more and better information compared to a low-quality leader member relationships (Sias, 2005). It's common that high quality of relationship is leading to high levels of employee satisfaction, reciprocal influence, honesty in communication, and access to different resources (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001). Receiving inadequate information by employees leads to lower satisfaction, commitment, and employee turnover (Hampton Jr, 2019; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001). Low quality relationships are rooted in employment contracts; individuals make the connection to accomplish objectives (Bernerth et al., 2007). Furthermore, in low-quality interaction, there are weak and surface-level communications between supervisor and subordinate (Sias, 2005). On the other hand, a high-quality relationship is based on mutual respect, trust, and influence (Bernerth et al., 2007). Communication in a high-quality relationship is characterized by shared values and the creation of common ground between supervisor and subordinates (Sias, 2005).

Leader-member exchange relationship is not a unidimensional construct (Ferris et al., 2009), in contrast Liden and Maslyn (1998) proposed four dimensions for leader-member exchange relationships, including loyalty, affect, contribution, and professional respect. Loyalty is defined in terms of reciprocated loyalty between leader and member. They are publicly supporting each other's actions and character. It will nurture the relationship between the two acting parties (leader, follower). Affect is described as "the mutual affection members of the dyad have for each other based primarily on interpersonal attraction rather than work or professional values" (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). Affect plays a critical role in developing the relationship between leader and followers (Liden & Maslyn, 1998), furthermore, it's essential for maintaining the relationship (Li & Hung, 2009). Contribution refers to the "perception of the amount, direction, and quality of work-oriented activity each member puts forth toward the mutual goals (explicit or implicit) of the

dyad" (Dienesch & Liden, 1986). For example, followers put more effort and beyond the required degree to achieve the common objectives (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001). A contributed-based relationship between leader and follower will result in extra work and even work on weekends (Liden & Maslyn, 1998). Professional respect is defined as the degree of respect an individual displays to others, considering their job knowledge (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001), dyads build a reputation for the job they are doing inside or outside the organization (Liden & Maslyn, 1998).

Finally, the functioning of the supervisor- subordinate's relationship is connected to the quality of relation between the two sides (Hampton Jr, 2019). It effects Job satisfaction (Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001), commitment and employee turnover (Hampton Jr, 2019; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001), loyalty, affect, contribution, and professional respect (Liden & Maslyn, 1998) in the organization.

### ***Functions of Workplace Relationship***

Relationships carry out some function in the organization. It forms the condition at which employees are empowered to get their job done. It ranges from giving to other functions to task assistance in the working environment (Colbert et al., 2016). Relationship functions include giving to others, friendship, career advancement, emotional support, personal growth, and task assistance. Giving to others function encompasses to provide support, assistance opportunities, mentorship, and caring for others. In friendship coworkers become friends, they share anything about their personal and work life. Career advancement function includes providing opportunities like advice to the individuals to grow in their career (Colbert et al., 2016), it enables individuals to get personal and technical information (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Emotional support function helps individuals to receive advice about their problems in a supportive way. Personal growth function includes a support that helps individuals to grow in their personal life. Task assistance function enables workers to get their job done through feedback and answering questions (Colbert et al., 2016).

Finally, employees expect a continuous enhancement in personal and professional life. Workplace relationships support individuals in different domains like, counseling, mentorship, confirmation, caring, information, and friendship (Allen & Eby, 2007; Kram & Isabella, 1985). Hence, nurturing and maintaining positive relationships in the workplace provide enhancement opportunities for both individuals and organizations.

### ***Theories of Workplace Relationship***

Social exchange is a combination of action and reaction by two groups of people, which results in a mutual relationship in the long term (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Social exchange theory has originated in the 1920s, where it made a connection between different disciplines like sociology, anthropology, and social psychology. It is a widely used conceptual framework for studying people's behavior in the workplace (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

Social exchange theory, as the dominant concepts in management science (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels, & Hall, 2017), explains that the organization made an implied contract with employees to receive some benefits in exchange for the time and work they contribute to the organization (Whitener & Walz, 1993). Social exchange assumes that Individuals nurture their interpersonal relationships considering the cost and benefits associated with mutual relationships (Omilion-Hodges, Ptacek, & Zerilli, 2016). Workers are developing their relationships with peers and

supervisors in the context of the social exchange relationship (Li & Hung, 2009). It considers vertical and horizontal relationships in the working environment. Vertical relations studies supervisor and subordinate relationship, meanwhile horizontal relationship focuses on relationship between employees, group members, and organization (Lin & Lin, 2011).

According to social exchange, behavior contains people's initial action toward a person, as people treat the target person in a positive or negative way. In the second stage, the target person responds in an attitudinal or behavioral way to the first person's initial action. Target person, often the worker or coworker, will decide to behave in a good or bad way. The relationship is created in the third stage, mutual positive relationship changes into a high-quality relationship (Cropanzano et al., 2017). Social Exchange Theory benefits an organization in creating and developing a framework where workers acquire enough support to complete their duties. Under certain conditions interaction grows among workers and they create an effective relationship in the workplace. Positive relationship is defined as a beneficial outcome, process, and state which emerge due to recurring interaction between two individuals (Dutton & Ragins, 2017). Moreover, it smooths the flow of information among coworkers and managers (Farr-Wharton, Shacklock, Brunetto, Teo, & Farr-Wharton, 2017).

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory is famous for explaining the relationship between managers and subordinates. It explains that leaders make different types of relationship with subordinates, but the quality of relationship varies with workers. Low-quality relationships are limited to the employment contract (out-group relation), whereas high-quality relationship managers create more close relationships with members and their relationship goes beyond the working contract (in group relation) (Minsky, 2002).

Dr. Eric Berne developed the theory of transactional analysis (TA). TA divides behavior into child, parent, and adult that each has its own characteristics. Parent behavior could be described as a feeling of what is right and wrong. In this kind of behavior an individual feels that they are treated like children, some people may feel comfortable while others may hate this behavior. Adult behavior is aligned with the collection, evaluation, and using the information to make a decision, whereas child behavior is dominant by the feeling of joy and sadness. Some people perceive them as immature and irritating; others think they are innocent, loveable, and extreme. The relationship between managers and organization members will improve due to an understanding of transactional analysis principles. It will help us to know, control, and even replace habitual ways (i.e. Parent, Adult, or Child) of behavior (Edela, 2003).

### ***History and Underlying Dimensions of Workplace Relationships***

Workplace relationships become the main topic of discussion in communication between supervisor and subordinates. In the 1940s managing people effectively and efficiently became a big concern for the business organization. It paves the way for the emergence of workplace communication and relationship as a discipline. Improving workplace communication between supervisor and subordinate was the main objective behind the development of the discipline (Putnam & Mumby, 2013).

Relationships contain different typologies based on different perspectives. Based on relationship definition, formal relationships already are defined within the organizational structure. Meanwhile,

informal relationships exist to respond the changing and unexpected needs of the organization (Edela, 2003). Personal and professional relationship also exist in the workplace, overlapping these relationships create problems in the organization (Wall, 1999). Moreover, supervisor-subordinate (Colbert et al., 2016), peer (Ragins & Kram, 2007), and mentor relationships exist in the organization (Allen & Eby, 2007). People can affect one another and their interaction could find physical and emotional dimensions. Connection starts with a momentary encounter and it will last for a long period of time. Based on connection quality it could result in positive or negative outcomes. A positive connection will be followed by physical and emotional wellness for both employees and organization. Whereas negative like toxic, corrosive, and low-quality connection will cost physically and emotionally for the organization (Dutton & Heaphy, 2003).

Liden and Maslyn (1998) states that the mentor relationship contains loyalty, trust, flexibility, accountability, and support dimensions. Ferris et al. (2009) conclude that relationship encompasses trust, support, affect, loyalty, accountability, instrumentality, respect, and flexibility domains. Career, psychosocial, and role modeling functions describe protection, coaching, sponsoring, and enhancing positive exposure as underlying domains for career functions. Whereas, underlying domains of psychosocial function include counseling, acceptance, friendship, and confirmation. In addition, the role modeling function encompasses accepting a mentor as a role model (Allen & Eby, 2007; Ragins & Kram, 2007; Scandura, 1992; Scandura & Ragins, 1993). Similarly, leader-member relationships contain loyalty, affect, contribution, and professional respect domains (Liden & Maslyn, 1998).

Kram and Isabella (1985) divided workplace relationships into three sub relationships; informational, collegial, and special peer. Information peer relationship, it's maintained for the purpose of sharing information. This kind of relationship is characterized by low levels of self-disclosure and trust. Peer communication contains low work content and shows a low level of mutual intimacy. Collegial peer relationship is characterized by a moderate level of trust and self-disclosure. The sharing of information is accompanied by feedback, confirmation, and emotional support. Peers share an increasing level of concern about their family; they also reflect a higher level of disclosure and intimacy compare to peer information relationships. Finally, special peer relationships are characterized by a high level of trust and disclosure. A worker finds emotional support, confirmation, and peer communication encompasses a greater self-disclosure and trust. Workers share information openly ranging from family to workplace issues. Special peer relationships are rare to occur in the workplace. It needs several years to grow and require stability as well. Thus, peer relationship contains, support, confirmation, sharing information, trust, and intimacy dimensions.

### ***Workplace Relationships Process***

Relationship in every organization depends on its culture and structure. Relationships in the small organization are more simple compare to large organizations. In small organization relationships are straightforward whereas in a large organization it's more complex (Edela, 2003).

Relationship carries out the characteristics of being dynamic. Some surface level relation will be deepening by the passage of time. Meanwhile, other close relationships become weaker in the long run. Development of personal relationship contains initiation, experimentation, intensification, integration, and bonding stages. As a sequence of the mentioned process, intimacy grows among

dyads in the personal relationships (Knapp & Vangelisti, 2005). On the other hand, formulation of workplace relationships depends on expected safety, adaptation, and potential opportunities for having a broader social network. Relationships among the coworkers may pass through the stage of personal relationship, but the objective is to get the job done (Mikkola & Valo, 2019).

Peer relationships cross three stages between two individuals. It includes transition from coworker to friends and then to close friends and from close friend to best friends. People working in the same business environment and they find some common ground and keep social relations outside the organization make them transfer their relationship from coworkers to friends. They become close friends when their communication experiences intimacy, broadness, and a low extent of caution. Personal and work related problems are the main reason for conversion of friendship to close friendship. Time passes, life events, workplace problems, less cautious interaction, and intimacy make close friend become best friends (Sias & Cahill, 1998).

### ***Determinant of Workplace Relationships***

Relationships come true in a social context, whereas an individual begins and develops recurring interactions with other individuals (Mikkola & Valo, 2019). As working people randomly or based on a previous plan make interaction with each other, it grows by common sense, jokes, and intimacy among the employees (Wall, 1999).

Ongoing interactions between individuals provide the opportunity to build relationship in the working environment. It's argued that relationships grow based on mutual expectations (Mikkola & Valo, 2019). Employees may look for sharing of personal and technical information by their dyads to grow in personal and specially success in their career life (Kram & Isabella, 1985). Other Individuals expect support by their coworkers, it creates an opportunity for relationships to grow (Colbert et al., 2016). Finally, relationships grow based on socially developed expectations and acting according to those expectations (Mikkola & Valo, 2019).

As uses of technology prevail in the future, it creates a suitable condition for the development of new workplace relationships. For example, besides face to face interaction, it's possible to have interaction through a digital environment (Mikkola & Valo, 2019).

### **Discussions**

Relationship carries out some function and it's supposed to have some outcomes for the organization. Relationships main function includes personal and career enhancement, mentoring juniors, and making friendship (Colbert et al., 2016). Previously mentioned function will be accompanied by some consequences in the organization (Mikkola & Valo, 2019).

Improving task performance within the organization could be maintained by encouraging supervisors to have supportive behavior and develop a positive relationship with subordinates (Kamdar & Van Dyne, 2007). Gerstner and Day (1997) examined the leader-member relationship and their relation with different domains of the working environment. Their findings show that the leader - member has a significant relationship with job satisfaction and performance, turnover intention, role clarification, satisfaction with specific and overall supervision. Lee, Teng, and Chen (2015) argue that workplace relationships including leader-member and team- member exchange are positively related to the employee's commitment, performance, and satisfaction. Workplace



relations, including coworkers, supervisor- subordinates, and organization relationships positively affect employee engagement in the workplace (Kim, Cheung, & Kim, 2017).

Many problems in the workplace are vested in confusion about the difference between what is personal and a professional relationship. The purpose of a personal relationship is to make the connection between people, whereas a professional relationship follows the objective that work should be accomplished (Wall, 1999).

## **Conclusion**

Literature provides a detailed typology of relationships inside the work organizations. Including personal and professional, formal and informal, peers, leader- member, and mentor relationship. The underlying dimensions of workplace relationship encompasses trust, support, loyalty, flexibility, and accountability (Liden & Maslyn, 1998), in addition Ferris et al. (2009) states that workplace relationship include trust, support, affect, loyalty, accountability, instrumentality, respect, and flexibility domains. Relationships domains have various outcomes for the organization.

Bakar and Omillion-Hodges (2019) findings show that leadership style affects leader-member relationships. Ethical leadership provides opportunities in which employees can fruitfully communicate with leaders and peers. It improves work quality and avoids mistakes by employees. Meanwhile, unfair behavior makes differences among employees, they make communication with individuals who have a strong relationship with managers. It affects peers and leader-member relationships. Furthermore Li and Hung (2009) states that Different domains of transformational leadership like individualized consideration; inspirational motivation, idealized influence, and intellectual stimulation have a positive relationship with leader-member relations. Although just individualized consideration and inspirational motivation, the dimension of transformational leadership has a positive association with coworker relationships. Similarly, Dulebohn, Bommer, Liden, Brouer, and Ferris (2012) findings show that transformational leadership is positively associated with the leader-member exchange relationships. As transformational leaders inspire subordinates that in exchange, followers will try to form high-quality relationships with their leaders. Leader-member exchange relationship predicts the relationship between leader-member communication quality and organizational commitment (Jian & Dalisay, 2017). Herman, Dasborough, and Ashkanasy (2008) states that leader-member exchange has a positive relationship with nurturing of emotional and instrumental motivation among employees. It support development of friendships in the workplace. Prevailing friendship in the workplace has a positive relationship with the formation of high-quality bonding between the team members.

Coworker relationship has positive effects on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Lin & Lin, 2011). High-quality workplace relationships predict job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and a lower extent of intention to leave (Sias, 2005). (Farr-Wharton et al., 2017) argues that high-quality relationships counter aggressive action by managers and it improves job satisfaction and commitment in the workplace. The positive relationship creates a feeling of support among workers, they easily control workload. Supervisors and senior managers decide effectively, and the organization would be in the path of achieving its objectives (Farr-Wharton et al., 2017). Positive or high-quality workplace relationships provide vitality and learning opportunities which help individuals, groups, and organizations to grow and succeed. Meanwhile,

in the worst-case negative relationship harm individuals and the organization as a whole (Dutton & Ragins, 2017). Tran et al. (2018) finding shows that a high-quality workplace relationship positively effects worker's commitment, lowers the level of stress, and elevates overall well-being among the workers. Predictors that provide information about workers' health include work experience, peer belongings, maintaining a positive relationship with the manager, and care recipients. Worker's health improves by maintaining positive relationships with coworkers, supervisors, and care recipients (Persson, Lindström, Pettersson, & Andersson, 2018).

Workplace relationship form behavior inside the organization (Ferris et al., 2009). A better understanding of workplace relationships, dimensions, and processes will contribute to an organization leading employee's behavior in the right direction. Managing worker behavior provides the opportunity for employees to grow both in personal and professional life. Relationship regulating organizations are supposed to be more successful at achieving their Organizational objectives. This addresses typology, domains, processes, and outcomes of relationship in the organization. It's suggested that more studies should be conducted to measure different domains of organizational relationships in the future.

Mixing private and professional relationship create expectation problems for both supervisor and subordinates working in the organization. Other research directed in the mentioned aspect may smooth relationship and ease constructive behavior among the employees (Wall, 1999). Physical interaction changes to the new type of interaction supported by digital environment. E- Mentoring relationship is an integrated new dimension to personnel relationships in the working environment. E- Relationships and their effects on organizational outcome need to be the core focuses of researchers in the future. Furthermore researches should examine the era of new relationships in the context of new technology and digitalization (Mikkola & Valo, 2019; Ragins & Kram, 2007).

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## Acknowledgements

This research was granted by Selcuk University Office of Scientific Researches Projects with the project number 20401112.