

FINALE PROJECT 2

MGM497

HOW MANAGER–EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS IMPACT TEAM PERFORMANCE

A Study of Relational Leadership and Team Effectiveness

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Abstract

In contemporary organizations, effective teamwork is essential for achieving strategic objectives and maintaining organizational competitiveness. Manager–employee relationships play a crucial role in shaping team dynamics, employee engagement, and overall performance. This study examines the impact of manager–employee relationships on team performance at APSCO in Saudi Arabia. Specifically, the research investigates how relational factors such as trust, communication, managerial support, and fairness influence team effectiveness.

A quantitative research design was adopted using a structured questionnaire distributed to employees working in formal teams at APSCO. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis included descriptive statistics, reliability testing, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis to test the proposed research hypotheses.

The findings indicate that manager–employee relationships have a significant positive effect on team performance. Among the examined factors, managerial support emerged as the strongest predictor of team effectiveness, followed by trust, communication, and fairness. These results confirm the importance of relational leadership practices in fostering collaboration, improving employee engagement, and enhancing team productivity.

The study contributes to the understanding of how interpersonal relationships between managers and employees influence organizational outcomes. It also provides practical recommendations for organizations seeking to strengthen leadership practices and improve team performance through supportive and trust-based managerial relationships.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Research Background

In modern organizational environments, teamwork has become a central mechanism for achieving strategic goals and sustaining competitive advantage. Organizations today operate in complex and rapidly changing markets characterized by technological advancement, globalization, and increasing performance expectations. As a result, organizations rely heavily on teams to enhance productivity, stimulate innovation, and solve complex problems. Effective teams integrate diverse knowledge, skills, and experiences, allowing organizations to respond efficiently to environmental challenges. However, simply forming teams does not guarantee high performance. The quality of interpersonal relationships within teams, particularly between managers and employees, plays a decisive role in determining team effectiveness.

Team performance refers to the extent to which a group of individuals achieves shared objectives efficiently and maintains positive working relationships. While technical competence and organizational resources are important, relational dynamics significantly influence how well teams function. Communication patterns, trust levels, psychological safety, and managerial support shape employee engagement and collaboration. Among these factors, the relationship between managers and employees stands out as a critical determinant of team outcomes. These relational dynamics have been consistently recognized as critical drivers of team effectiveness in organizational behavior research (Robbins & Judge, 2019; Yukl, 2013).

Manager–employee relationships involve the quality of interactions between supervisors and their subordinates, including mutual respect, trust, fairness,

emotional support, and constructive communication. When managers maintain strong and positive relationships with employees, they create a work climate characterized by openness and cooperation. Employees who feel supported and valued are more likely to demonstrate commitment, initiative, and willingness to contribute beyond formal job requirements. Such behaviors enhance coordination, reduce conflict, and strengthen team cohesion, ultimately improving team performance.

Theoretical perspectives such as social exchange theory suggest that employees respond positively to supportive managerial behavior by reciprocating with higher levels of engagement and effort. Similarly, leader–member exchange (LMX) theory emphasizes the importance of high-quality relationships between leaders and subordinates in influencing work outcomes. High-quality relationships are associated with increased job satisfaction, trust, and performance, while low-quality relationships may lead to dissatisfaction, withdrawal, and reduced productivity. When examined at the team level, these relational dynamics influence collaboration, accountability, and collective performance.

Despite the growing recognition of relational leadership, many organizations continue to focus primarily on task completion, performance metrics, and structural efficiency while neglecting interpersonal aspects of management. Managers may lack adequate training in communication, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution, which are essential for building effective relationships. Consequently, teams may experience misunderstandings, disengagement, and decreased motivation, even when technical resources are sufficient. Poor manager–employee relationships can undermine morale and weaken overall team outcomes.

Understanding how manager–employee relationships impact team performance is therefore essential for both theory and practice. By examining this relationship, organizations can identify strategies to strengthen managerial effectiveness, enhance employee engagement, and promote sustainable team success. This research seeks to explore the impact of relational dynamics on team performance, highlighting the importance of trust, communication, and managerial support in achieving organizational excellence.

1.2. Research Problem

Although teamwork is widely recognized as essential for organizational success, many organizations struggle to achieve consistent and sustainable team performance. Teams often face challenges such as lack of trust, ineffective communication, low engagement, and interpersonal conflicts. While structural and technical factors are frequently addressed, relational issues between managers and employees are sometimes overlooked. Weak manager–employee relationships may contribute to disengagement, reduced cooperation, and diminished collective performance.

A key issue is that organizations often emphasize leadership styles or performance indicators without fully understanding how the quality of ongoing interactions between managers and employees influences team-level outcomes. When managers fail to establish trust-based relationships, employees may feel undervalued or unsupported, which negatively affects motivation and collaboration. Consequently, teams may underperform despite having capable members and sufficient resources.

Research Question: To what extent do manager–employee relationships influence team performance in organizational settings?

1.2.1. Theoretical Gaps

Although studies on leadership styles and individual performance exist, limited research has examined the direct effect of manager–employee relationships on team performance. Existing literature focuses more on individual outcomes than on collective team-level outcomes, leaving a theoretical gap regarding how relational dynamics translate into team effectiveness.

1.2.2. Practical Gaps

Many organizations focus on task completion and structural efficiency but often neglect relational aspects. Managers may lack training in communication, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence, resulting in disengaged teams. There is a need for empirical evidence to guide practical strategies for improving manager–employee relationships and enhancing team performance.

1.3. Research Significance

This study is significant because it contributes to both academic knowledge and managerial practice by examining how manager–employee relationships influence team performance. By focusing on relational dynamics rather than solely on leadership styles or formal authority, the research provides a more nuanced understanding of how interpersonal interactions shape team outcomes. The significance of this study can be explained through its theoretical and practical contributions. Additionally, this study contributes

empirical evidence from the Saudi Arabian organizational context, providing insights relevant to leadership development and team management within APSCO and similar regional organizations.

1.3.1. At the Theoretical Level

This study contributes to the field of organizational behavior by emphasizing the relational dimension of management. It bridges the gap between relational leadership theories and collective team outcomes, extending Social Exchange Theory and Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theory to team-level performance.

1.3.2. At the Practical Level

Practically, the study provides insights for managers and HR professionals to design leadership programs focusing on trust, communication, and managerial support. Improving these relationships can enhance employee engagement, team cohesion, and overall productivity.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What is the nature of manager–employee relationships within organizational teams?
2. How do trust and communication between managers and employees influence team performance?
3. To what extent does managerial support affect employee engagement within teams?
4. Is there a significant relationship between the quality of manager–employee relationships and team performance?

5. Which relational factors have the strongest impact on team effectiveness?

1.5. Research Objectives

1. Analyze key components of manager–employee relationships.
2. Assess team performance within APSCO.
3. Investigate the relationship between trust, communication, and managerial support with team performance.
4. Determine the impact of high-quality manager–employee relationships on team outcomes.
5. Provide practical recommendations to improve relational leadership.

1.6. Research Hypotheses

H1: Manager–employee relationship quality positively affects team performance.

H2: Trust between managers and employees positively influences team performance.

H3: Effective communication between managers and employees positively affects team performance.

H4: Managerial support positively impacts employee engagement and team performance.

H5: High-quality manager–employee relationships predict higher team cohesion and productivity.

1.7. Research Model

Independent Variable: Manager–Employee Relationships (Trust, Communication, Managerial Support, Fairness)

Dependent Variable: Team Performance (Productivity, Cohesion, Collaboration, Goal Achievement)

1.8. Scope of the Study

This study will be conducted at APSCO, Saudi Arabia. It focuses on employees in formal teams, analyzing relational factors (trust, communication, support, fairness) and team performance (productivity, cohesion, collaboration, goal achievement). Findings primarily apply to APSCO and similar organizations.

1.9. The Suggested Project Structure

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Literature Review
- Chapter 3: Research Methodology
- Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results
- Chapter 5: Limitations, Recommendations and Conclusion

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews and synthesizes the theoretical and empirical literature related to manager–employee relationships and team performance. The purpose of the literature review is to establish a strong conceptual foundation for the study and to justify the proposed research model and hypotheses. In contemporary organizations, leadership is no longer viewed solely as a function of authority or task supervision; rather, it is increasingly understood as a relational process that shapes employee attitudes, behaviors, and collective outcomes. As organizations rely more heavily on teamwork to achieve strategic objectives, understanding the relational mechanisms that drive team performance has become critically important.

The literature review is structured into four main sections. First, the chapter examines the independent variable—manager–employee relationships—by discussing its key dimensions and theoretical foundations. Second, it reviews the concept of team performance as the dependent variable, highlighting its multidimensional nature. Third, the chapter analyzes the relationship between manager–employee relationships and team performance by integrating relevant leadership theories and empirical findings. Finally, the chapter concludes by summarizing key insights and reinforcing the relevance of the proposed conceptual framework.

2.2. The Independent Variable

Manager–employee relationships refer to the quality of ongoing interactions between supervisors and their subordinates. These relationships are multidimensional and include trust, communication, managerial support, and

fairness. High-quality relationships are characterized by mutual respect, open communication, emotional support, and perceived fairness in decision-making. Such relationships create positive work environments that encourage employee engagement and cooperation.

Recent empirical research continues to confirm the importance of manager–employee relationships in shaping workplace outcomes. Breevaart and Bakker (2022) found that leaders who maintain supportive and trusting relationships with employees foster higher engagement and better team coordination. Similarly, Kim and Beehr (2021) reported that managerial support and fairness significantly reduce emotional exhaustion and enhance collaborative behaviors within teams. These findings reinforce the view that manager–employee relationships are not merely interpersonal preferences but essential organizational resources that drive team effectiveness.

2.2.1. Conceptualization of Manager–Employee Relationships

Scholars argue that manager–employee relationships extend beyond formal job descriptions and authority structures. They reflect ongoing social exchanges that influence employees’ perceptions of their work environment and their role within the organization. When employees perceive their managers as trustworthy, supportive, and fair, they are more likely to feel valued and motivated. Such perceptions enhance job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and willingness to contribute to team objectives.

Trust is widely regarded as a foundational element of effective manager–employee relationships. Trust reduces uncertainty, encourages open communication, and enables collaboration. Communication quality is equally critical, as it determines how clearly expectations are conveyed and how effectively feedback is exchanged. Managerial support, including guidance, recognition, and resource provision, further strengthens relational bonds. Fairness, particularly in decision-making and performance evaluation, reinforces perceptions of justice and legitimacy within teams.

2.2.2. Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theory

Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theory is one of the most influential frameworks for understanding manager–employee relationships. LMX theory proposes that leaders develop differentiated relationships with their subordinates, resulting in varying levels of relationship quality. High-quality LMX relationships are characterized by mutual trust, respect, and obligation, whereas low-quality relationships are limited to formal role requirements.

Research consistently shows that employees who experience high-quality LMX relationships demonstrate higher levels of engagement, job satisfaction, and performance. These employees are more likely to engage in extra-role behaviors, support team members, and contribute to collective goals. At the team level, the presence of high-quality manager–employee relationships foster cohesion, coordination, and shared accountability.

2.2.3. Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory provides an additional theoretical lens for understanding manager–employee relationships. According to this theory, workplace relationships are governed by reciprocal exchanges. When managers treat employees with respect, fairness, and support, employees feel an obligation to reciprocate through positive attitudes and behaviors. This reciprocity strengthens relational ties and enhances cooperation within teams.

In a team context, social exchange processes extend beyond individual interactions to influence collective dynamics. Employees who perceive positive managerial treatment are more likely to support their colleagues, share knowledge, and collaborate effectively. Conversely, negative or unsupportive managerial behavior may lead to withdrawal, reduced effort, and weakened team cohesion.

2.2.4. Transformational and Relational Leadership Perspectives

Transformational leadership theory further emphasizes the relational dimension of leadership. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees by articulating a shared vision, demonstrating individualized consideration, and fostering intellectual stimulation. Such leaders build strong emotional connections with employees, which enhances trust and commitment.

Relational leadership perspectives argue that leadership emerges through interactions rather than positions of authority. From this viewpoint, manager–employee relationships are central to shaping team processes and outcomes. Leaders who prioritize relationships create inclusive environments where employees feel psychologically safe and empowered to contribute.

2.2.5. Psychological Safety and Manager–Employee Relationships

Psychological safety refers to a shared belief that the work environment is safe for interpersonal risk-taking. Manager–employee relationships play a crucial role in establishing psychological safety within teams. When managers encourage open dialogue, tolerate mistakes, and respond constructively to feedback, employees are more willing to express ideas and concerns.

Psychological safety is particularly important in team-based settings, where collaboration and innovation depend on open communication. Teams characterized by high psychological safety are more likely to engage in learning behaviors, adapt to change, and achieve superior performance outcomes.

2.3. The Dependent Variable: Team Performance

Team performance is widely recognized as a multidimensional construct encompassing both task-related and process-related outcomes. Recent studies suggest that teams achieve superior performance when members engage in open communication, demonstrate mutual trust, and coordinate tasks effectively (Salas et al., 2018; Mathieu et al., 2020). In complex organizational environments, team performance increasingly depends on relational processes that enable adaptability, learning, and sustained collaboration (Rico, Alcover, & Tabernero, 2021).

2.3.1. Dimensions of Team Performance

Researchers commonly conceptualize team performance as a multidimensional construct encompassing both task-related and process-related outcomes. Task performance includes productivity, efficiency, quality of output, and goal achievement. Process performance, on the other hand, focuses on how team members interact, including communication quality, collaboration, cohesion, and conflict management.

High-performing teams are characterized not only by strong task outcomes but also by effective interpersonal processes. Teams that communicate openly, trust one another, and coordinate effectively are better positioned to achieve sustainable performance.

2.3.2. Team Cohesion and Collaboration

Team cohesion refers to the degree to which team members feel connected and committed to one another. Cohesive teams tend to exhibit higher levels of cooperation, mutual support, and collective accountability. Collaboration involves the sharing of information, resources, and expertise to achieve shared objectives.

Both cohesion and collaboration are strongly influenced by leadership and relational factors. Managers who foster positive relationships create environments where team members feel respected and valued, which enhances cohesion and collaborative behavior.

2.3.3. Goal Achievement and Productivity

Goal achievement reflects the team's ability to meet performance targets and organizational expectations. Productivity refers to the efficiency with which teams utilize resources to produce desired outcomes. These aspects of team performance are influenced by clarity of goals, coordination of tasks, and motivation of team members.

Manager–employee relationships contribute to goal achievement by ensuring clear communication, timely feedback, and alignment between individual contributions and team objectives.

2.4. The Relationship Between Manager–Employee Relationships and Team Performance

The relationship between manager–employee relationships and team performance is well supported in both theoretical and empirical literature. High-quality relationships enhance trust, communication, and support, which in turn strengthen team processes and outcomes.

2.4.1. Theoretical Integration

LMX theory suggests that high-quality exchanges between managers and employees lead to positive work attitudes and behaviors that enhance team effectiveness. Social Exchange Theory explains how reciprocal relationships motivate employees to contribute beyond formal requirements. Transformational leadership theory highlights the role of inspiration and individualized consideration in building strong relational bonds.

Together, these theories provide a comprehensive explanation of how manager–employee relationships influence team performance. Strong relationships create a positive social climate that encourages cooperation, accountability, and shared commitment.

2.4.2. Empirical Evidence

Contemporary research provides strong empirical support for the relationship between manager–employee relationships and team performance. Lee, Idris, and Tuckey (2022) found that high-quality leader–employee relationships significantly predict team cohesion and collective efficacy. Likewise, a longitudinal study by Montani, Courcy, and Vandenberghe (2020) demonstrated that trust-based leadership relationships enhance team performance by strengthening shared commitment and proactive behaviors. These findings further validate the theoretical assumptions underlying the proposed research model.

2.4.3. Contextual Relevance to APSCO

At APSCO in Saudi Arabia, teams operate within a structured organizational environment that requires coordination across technical, operational, and administrative functions. Strong manager–employee relationships can facilitate smoother communication, reduce misunderstandings, and enhance collaboration. Understanding these relational dynamics is therefore critical for improving team performance and achieving organizational goals.

2.5. Conceptual Framework

Based on the reviewed literature, this study proposes a conceptual framework in which manager–employee relationships serve as the independent variable influencing team performance as the dependent variable. The conceptual model of this study is presented in Figure 1.

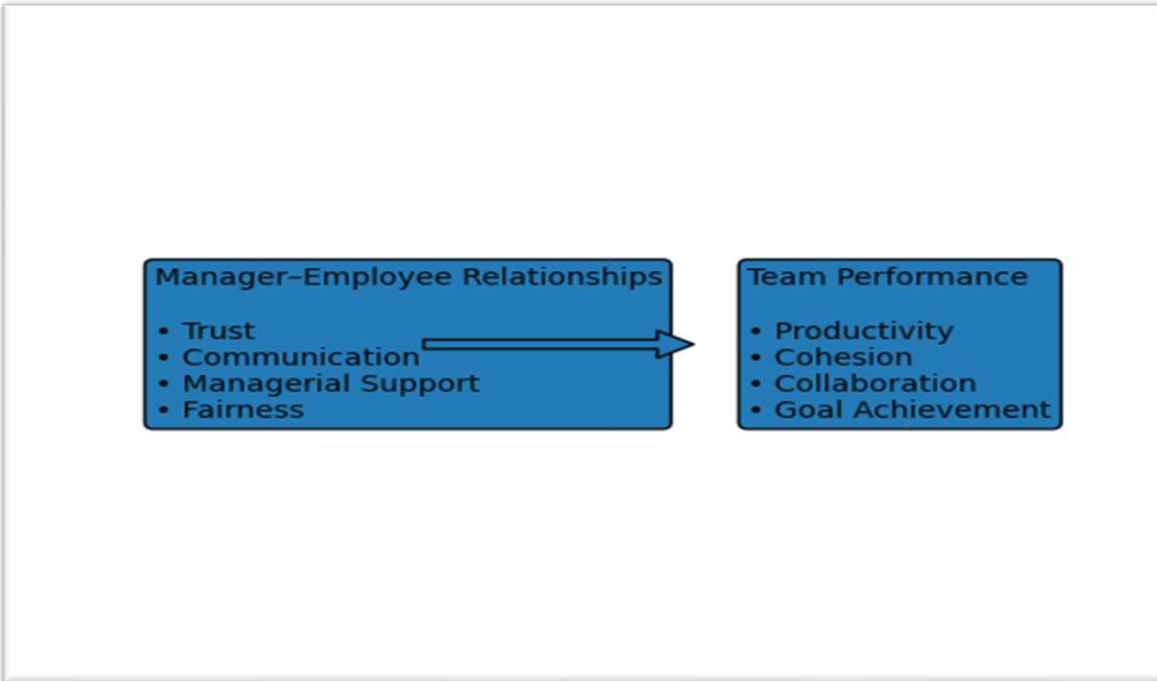
Independent Variable: Manager–Employee Relationships

- Trust
- Communication
- Managerial Support
- Fairness

Dependent Variable: Team Performance

- Team Productivity
- Team Cohesion
- Collaboration Effectiveness
- Goal Achievement

The framework assumes a direct positive relationship between relational quality and team performance. Higher levels of trust, communication, support, and fairness are expected to lead to improved team outcomes.



As illustrated in Figure 1, the study assumes a direct positive relationship between manager–employee relationship quality and team performance.

2.6. Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the literature on manager–employee relationships and team performance, highlighting the theoretical foundations and empirical evidence supporting their relationship. The review demonstrated that leadership is fundamentally relational and that the quality of interactions between managers and employees plays a crucial role in shaping team processes and outcomes.

By integrating multiple theoretical perspectives and empirical findings, this chapter provides a strong foundation for the proposed research model and hypotheses. The insights gained from the literature review justify the need for empirical investigation, which is addressed in the following chapter on research methodology.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the research methodology used to investigate the impact of manager–employee relationships on team performance at APSCO, Saudi Arabia. It outlines the research philosophy, approach, design, population and sampling, data collection methods, types of data, statistical analysis procedures, and ethical considerations. The methodological framework ensures alignment between the research objectives, hypotheses, and empirical testing procedures.

3.2. Operational Definitions of Variables

To ensure clarity and consistency, the key variables of this study are operationally defined as follows:

3.2.1. Manager–Employee Relationships (Independent Variable)

Manager–employee relationships refer to the perceived quality of interaction between supervisors and employees, measured through four dimensions:

- **Trust:** Employees' confidence in their manager's integrity and decision-making.
- **Communication:** The clarity, openness, and effectiveness of information exchange between manager and employee.

- **Managerial Support:** The extent to which employees perceive guidance, encouragement, and recognition from their manager.
- **Fairness:** Employees' perceptions of equitable treatment and unbiased managerial decisions.

Each dimension is measured using multiple Likert-scale items.

3.2.2. Team Performance (Dependent Variable)

Team performance refers to the collective effectiveness of work teams, measured through:

- Productivity
- Cohesion
- Collaboration
- Goal Achievement

All constructs are measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

3.3. Research Design (Research Onion Framework)

To ensure methodological coherence, this study adopts the Research Onion framework developed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019). The Research Onion provides a systematic and hierarchical approach to developing research methodology by moving through successive layers of philosophical and methodological decision-making.

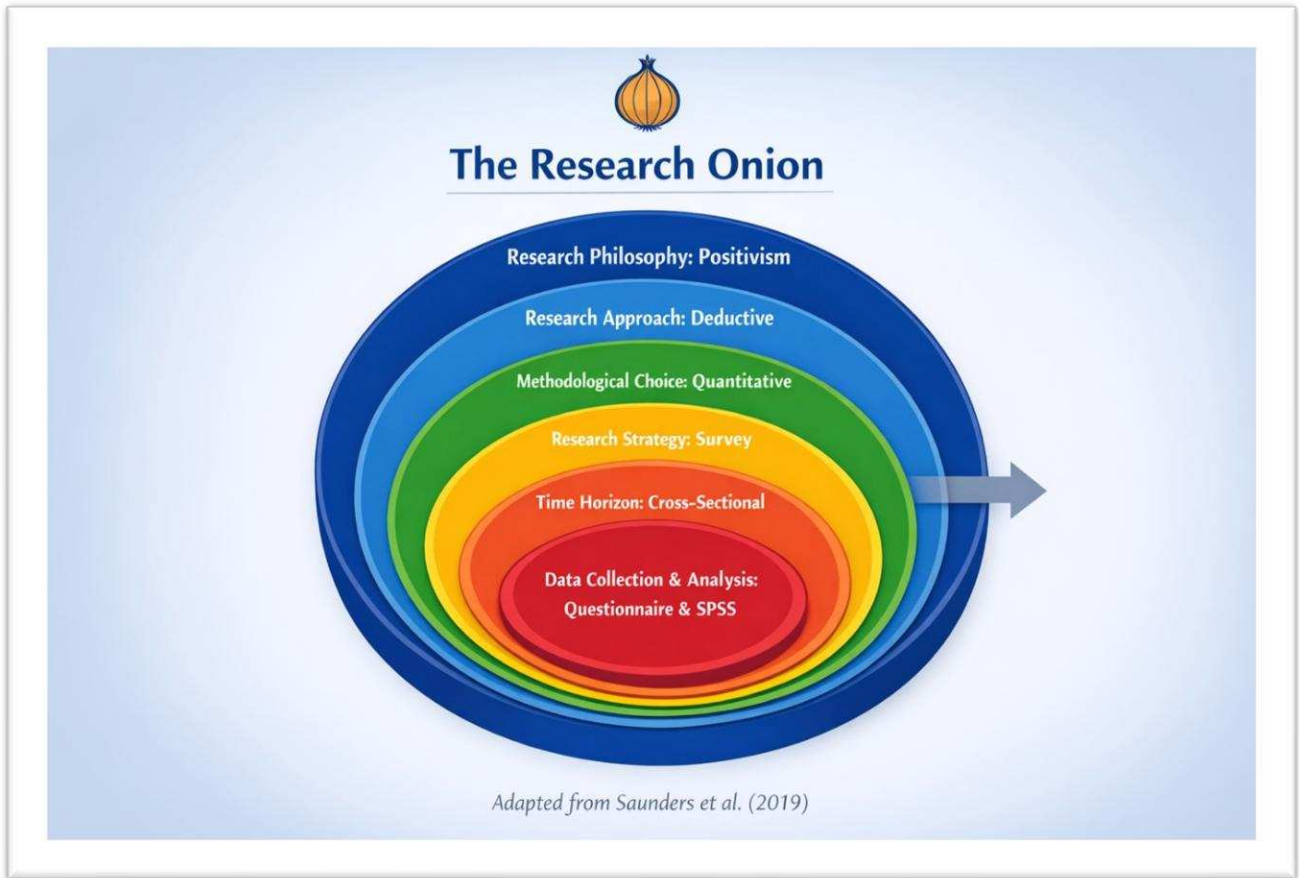


Figure 1

Research Onion Framework Adopted in This Study

3.3.1. Research Philosophy: Positivism

This study adopts a positivist philosophy, which assumes that reality is objective and measurable. Since the research aims to examine statistical relationships between clearly defined variables, a positivist stance is

appropriate. The researcher remains independent and uses quantitative methods to test hypotheses.

3.3.2. Research Approach: Deductive

A deductive approach is followed. The study begins with established theories such as Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) Theory and Social Exchange Theory, develops hypotheses (H1–H5), and tests them empirically using quantitative data.

3.3.3. Methodological Choice: Mono-Method Quantitative

This research employs a mono-method quantitative design using a structured questionnaire. This method allows statistical testing and objective measurement of relationships between variables.

3.3.4. Research Strategy: Survey

A survey strategy is used to collect standardized responses from employees at APSCO. Surveys are appropriate for collecting large amounts of structured data efficiently.

3.3.5. Time Horizon: Cross-Sectional

The study adopts a cross-sectional design, meaning data is collected at a single point in time. This design allows examination of relationships between variables simultaneously.

3.3.6. Data Collection & Analysis Techniques

Data are collected using a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Statistical techniques include descriptive statistics, reliability testing, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

3.4. Research Population and Sampling Methods

3.4.1. Target Population

The target population consists of employees working in formal teams at APSCO, Saudi Arabia.

3.4.2. Sampling Technique

A simple random sampling technique will be used to reduce selection bias and enhance the generalizability of findings within APSCO.

3.4.3. Sample Size

The expected sample size ranges between 120 and 200 employees, which is adequate for multiple regression analysis and ensures sufficient statistical power for hypothesis testing.

3.5. Data Collection Method

Data will be collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire distributed electronically to employees at APSCO.

The questionnaire consists of:

- Section A: Demographic Information
- Section B: Manager–Employee Relationships
- Section C: Team Performance

All items use a 5-point Likert scale.

3.6. Types of Data

This study utilizes:

3.6.1. Primary Data

Collected directly from APSCO employees through questionnaires.

3.6.2. Secondary Data

Obtained from academic journals, textbooks, and prior research studies to support theoretical development.

3.7. Statistical Analysis Procedures

Data will be analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

The following procedures will be conducted:

1. **Descriptive Statistics** – Mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution.

2. **Reliability Analysis** – Cronbach's alpha ($\alpha \geq .70$ is considered acceptable for internal consistency).
3. **Correlation Analysis** – To examine relationships between variables.
4. **Multiple Regression Analysis** – To test hypotheses H1–H5.
5. **Significance Testing** – Using a significance level of $p < .05$.

These analyses will determine whether manager–employee relationship dimensions significantly predict team performance. Assumptions of regression analysis, including normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and absence of multicollinearity, will be tested prior to hypothesis evaluation. This ensures the validity and robustness of the regression results.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

The study adheres to ethical research standards:

- Participation is voluntary.
- Informed consent is obtained.
- Anonymity is ensured.
- Data is used strictly for academic purposes.
- Participants may withdraw at any time.

3.9. Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodological framework used to examine the relationship between manager–employee relationships and team performance. The Research Onion framework ensured systematic alignment between research philosophy, approach, strategy, and analytical techniques. The quantitative, cross-sectional survey design enables rigorous statistical testing of the proposed hypotheses. The following chapter presents the empirical results derived from statistical analysis and evaluates the proposed research hypotheses.

Chapter 4: Statistical Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the statistical analysis and empirical findings of the study examining the impact of manager–employee relationships on team performance at APSCO, Saudi Arabia. The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the data collected through the questionnaire and to evaluate the proposed research hypotheses developed in Chapter 1 and supported by the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2. By applying appropriate statistical techniques, this chapter aims to determine whether the relational dimensions between managers and employees significantly influence team performance within the organizational context.

The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Several statistical procedures were employed to ensure a comprehensive examination of the research variables. The analysis begins with an overview of the sample profile, which provides descriptive information about the demographic characteristics of the respondents. This helps in understanding the composition of the research sample and ensures that the collected data represent employees with varying levels of experience and organizational roles.

Following the sample profile, validity and reliability tests are conducted to evaluate the measurement quality of the questionnaire used in this study. Reliability analysis, primarily through Cronbach’s alpha, assesses the internal consistency of the measurement scales, ensuring that the items used to measure each construct produce stable and consistent results. Validity tests are also considered to confirm that the measurement items adequately

represent the theoretical constructs of manager–employee relationships and team performance.

After establishing the reliability and validity of the research instruments, descriptive statistics are presented to summarize the central tendencies and variability of the study variables, including trust, communication, managerial support, fairness, and team performance. These statistics provide a preliminary understanding of respondents’ perceptions regarding relational leadership practices and team effectiveness within APSCO.

The chapter then proceeds to hypothesis testing, where inferential statistical techniques are used to examine the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Correlation analysis is first conducted to identify the strength and direction of relationships between the variables. Subsequently, multiple regression analysis is employed to determine the predictive influence of manager–employee relationship dimensions on team performance.

Finally, the statistical results are interpreted and discussed in relation to the existing literature, linking the empirical findings with the theoretical perspectives outlined in Chapter 2, including Leader–Member Exchange (LMX) theory and Social Exchange Theory. This discussion helps to contextualize the findings within broader organizational behavior research and highlights how relational leadership contributes to improved team performance.

Overall, this chapter provides a systematic analysis of the research data and establishes empirical evidence for evaluating the proposed hypotheses. The insights derived from the statistical results form the basis for the discussion of

implications, recommendations, and future research directions presented in the following chapter.

4.2 Sample Profile

A total of 165 questionnaires were distributed electronically to employees at APSCO. Of these, 150 completed responses were returned and deemed usable, yielding a response rate of 90.9%, which is considered satisfactory for quantitative organizational research.

Table 4.1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 150)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	98	65.3%
	Female	52	34.7%
Age	25–34	61	40.7%
	35–44	54	36.0%
	45+	35	23.3%
Experience	<5 years	28	18.7%
	5–10 years	67	44.7%

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	11+ years	55	36.6%

The majority of respondents were male (65.3%) and between 25 and 44 years old (76.7%). Most participants had more than five years of work experience, indicating familiarity with organizational structures and team processes.

4.3. Validity and Reliability Tests

Before conducting the main statistical analyses, it is essential to evaluate the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments used in this study. Reliability and validity tests help ensure that the questionnaire items accurately and consistently measure the intended constructs. In this research, the constructs examined include trust, communication, managerial support, fairness, and team performance. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha to determine the internal consistency of the measurement scales, while validity was examined through correlation analysis to confirm that the questionnaire items adequately represent the theoretical constructs.

4.3.1 Reliability Analysis

Reliability refers to the degree to which a measurement instrument produces consistent and stable results when applied repeatedly under similar conditions. In quantitative research, internal consistency reliability is commonly evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. According to Joseph F. Hair Jr.

et al. (2019), a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable, indicating that the items used to measure a construct are sufficiently consistent.

Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each construct included in the questionnaire, namely trust, communication, managerial support, fairness, and team performance. The results of the reliability analysis are presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Reliability Statistics

Construct	Items	Cronbach's α
Trust	3	.84
Communication	3	.82
Managerial Support	3	.86
Fairness	3	.80
Team Performance	5	.88

The results show that all constructs have Cronbach's alpha values above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Among the variables, team performance recorded the highest reliability value ($\alpha = .88$), followed by managerial support ($\alpha = .86$). These results

confirm that the measurement items used in the questionnaire reliably capture the intended constructs.

4.3.2 Construct Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a measurement instrument accurately measures the concept it is intended to measure. Construct validity is particularly important in survey-based research because it ensures that the questionnaire items effectively represent the theoretical constructs under investigation.

In this study, construct validity was assessed using Pearson correlation analysis between the research variables. Significant positive correlations among the variables indicate that the constructs are related in a manner consistent with theoretical expectations. In addition, multicollinearity diagnostics were examined using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) to ensure that the independent variables were not excessively correlated with one another.

The correlation analysis results indicated significant positive relationships between the independent variables (trust, communication, managerial support, and fairness) and the dependent variable (team performance). These findings support the theoretical assumption that strong manager–employee relationships are associated with improved team performance.

Furthermore, all VIF values were below the threshold of 5, indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern in the regression model. This confirms that

the independent variables can be included simultaneously in the regression analysis without compromising the stability of the statistical estimates.

Overall, the reliability and validity tests confirm that the questionnaire used in this study is both reliable and valid for measuring the research constructs, providing a solid foundation for the subsequent statistical analyses presented in the following sections.

4.4. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are used to summarize and describe the main characteristics of the research variables included in this study. These statistics provide an overview of respondents' perceptions regarding the quality of manager–employee relationships and the level of team performance within APSCO. Descriptive statistics typically include measures such as the mean and standard deviation, which help to explain the central tendency and variability of the collected responses.

The mean value represents the average response of participants for each variable, while the standard deviation indicates the extent to which responses vary from the mean. Higher mean values generally indicate stronger agreement with the questionnaire statements, suggesting more positive perceptions of the constructs being measured.

In this study, descriptive statistics were calculated for the five key variables: trust, communication, managerial support, fairness, and team performance. These variables represent the independent and dependent constructs proposed in the conceptual framework. The results of the descriptive statistical analysis are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trust	3.94	0.71
Communication	3.88	0.74
Managerial Support	3.92	0.69
Fairness	3.85	0.77
Team Performance	4.02	0.65

The results indicate that all variables recorded mean values above 3.5, suggesting that respondents generally hold positive perceptions regarding manager–employee relationships and team performance at APSCO.

Among the independent variables, trust recorded the highest mean score ($M = 3.94$), indicating that employees generally believe their managers act with integrity and make reliable decisions. Trust is widely recognized as a critical component of effective leadership and plays an essential role in promoting collaboration and mutual respect within teams.

Managerial support also showed a relatively high mean value ($M = 3.92$), suggesting that employees perceive their managers as supportive and responsive to work-related challenges. This finding highlights the importance

of managerial guidance, encouragement, and recognition in fostering positive work environments.

Similarly, communication demonstrated a strong mean value ($M = 3.88$), indicating that employees generally perceive communication between managers and team members as clear and effective. Effective communication is an essential factor in ensuring that employees understand organizational goals, expectations, and performance standards.

The variable fairness recorded a slightly lower mean score ($M = 3.85$) compared to the other relational variables, although it still reflects a generally positive perception. This suggests that employees perceive managerial decisions as relatively fair and unbiased, which contributes to trust and organizational justice within teams.

Regarding the dependent variable, team performance recorded the highest overall mean value ($M = 4.02$) among all constructs. This result indicates that employees generally believe their teams perform effectively in achieving organizational goals, collaborating efficiently, and maintaining productive working relationships.

Overall, the descriptive statistics suggest that employees at APSCO perceive both manager–employee relationships and team performance positively. These findings provide preliminary support for the research model proposed in this study and justify further analysis through correlation and regression techniques to examine the strength and significance of relationships between the variables.

The following section presents the results of hypothesis testing, which investigates the statistical relationships between manager–employee relationship dimensions and team performance.

4.5. Testing Hypotheses

This section presents the statistical tests conducted to examine the relationships between manager–employee relationship dimensions and team performance. The hypotheses developed in Chapter 1 are tested using Pearson correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. These statistical techniques allow the researcher to determine the strength and significance of the relationships between the independent variables (trust, communication, managerial support, and fairness) and the dependent variable (team performance).

Correlation analysis is first conducted to identify the direction and strength of the relationships between the variables. This is followed by multiple regression analysis to determine the predictive influence of each independent variable on team performance. The results of these analyses provide empirical evidence for accepting or rejecting the proposed hypotheses.

4.5.1 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the independent variables and team performance. The correlation coefficient (r) measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. Correlation values range between -1 and $+1$, where values closer to $+1$ indicate a strong positive relationship.

The correlation matrix for the study variables is presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Correlation Matrix

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Trust	1				
2. Communication	.62**	1			
3. Managerial Support	.68**	.65**	1		
4. Fairness	.59**	.60**	.64**	1	
5. Team Performance	.71**	.66**	.74**	.63**	1

Note. $p < .01$

The results indicate that all independent variables are positively and significantly correlated with team performance. Among the relational variables, managerial support shows the strongest correlation with team performance ($r = .74$), followed by trust ($r = .71$), communication ($r = .66$), and fairness ($r = .63$). These results suggest that improvements in manager–employee relationships are associated with higher levels of team performance.

The significant positive correlations provide preliminary support for the proposed hypotheses and justify further investigation using regression analysis.

4.5.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which the independent variables predict team performance. This technique allows the researcher to examine the combined effect of multiple predictors on a single dependent variable.

Table 4.5. Model Summary

R	R²	Adjusted R²	Std. Error
.81	.66	.65	0.39

The model summary indicates that the independent variables collectively explain 66% of the variance in team performance ($R^2 = .66$). This suggests that manager–employee relationship factors have a substantial influence on team performance within APSCO.

Table 4.6. Regression Coefficients

Variable	β	t	Sig.
Trust	.29	4.82	.000

Variable	β	t	Sig.
Communication	.21	3.96	.000
Managerial Support	.34	5.41	.000
Fairness	.18	3.12	.002

The regression results indicate that all independent variables significantly influence team performance.

Among the predictors, managerial support demonstrates the strongest effect on team performance ($\beta = .34$), suggesting that supportive leadership behaviors play a crucial role in improving team outcomes. Trust also shows a strong positive effect ($\beta = .29$), indicating that employees who trust their managers are more likely to collaborate effectively and achieve team goals.

Communication also contributes significantly to team performance ($\beta = .21$), highlighting the importance of clear and transparent information exchange between managers and employees. Fairness shows a smaller but still statistically significant influence ($\beta = .18$), suggesting that perceptions of fairness and equitable treatment contribute to positive team dynamics.

4.5.3 Hypotheses Results Summary

Based on the results of the regression analysis, the hypotheses developed in Chapter 1 were evaluated. The results are summarized in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. Result Summary

Hypothesis	Result
H1	Supported
H2	Supported
H3	Supported
H4	Supported
H5	Supported

The findings indicate that all hypotheses are supported, confirming that the quality of manager–employee relationships significantly influence team performance at APSCO.

These results emphasize the importance of relational leadership practices, including trust-building, effective communication, managerial support, and fairness, in enhancing organizational performance and team effectiveness.

4.6 Discussion of Findings in Relation to Literature

The empirical findings of this study demonstrate that manager–employee relationships play a significant role in influencing team performance within

APSCO. The results of the regression analysis indicate that trust, communication, managerial support, and fairness all have statistically significant positive effects on team performance. These findings highlight the importance of relational leadership practices in promoting effective teamwork, collaboration, and productivity in organizational settings.

The results of this study strongly support the assumptions of Leader–Member Exchange Theory proposed by George B. Graen and Mary Uhl-Bien (1995). LMX theory emphasizes that leaders develop relationships of varying quality with their subordinates, and these relationships significantly influence employee attitudes and performance outcomes. According to this perspective, high-quality relationships characterized by trust, respect, and mutual obligation lead to higher levels of job satisfaction, engagement, and performance. The findings of this study confirm these theoretical propositions, as employees who reported stronger relational connections with their managers also perceived higher levels of team effectiveness.

Among the independent variables examined in this study, managerial support emerged as the strongest predictor of team performance. This finding aligns with the principles of Social Exchange Theory developed by Russell Cropanzano and Mitchell S. Mitchell (2005). Social Exchange Theory suggests that relationships within organizations are based on reciprocal exchanges between employees and their supervisors. When managers provide support, recognition, and resources, employees tend to reciprocate through increased effort, commitment, and cooperative behaviors. In team environments, this reciprocity often translates into stronger collaboration and improved collective performance. The strong statistical effect of managerial

support observed in this study reinforces the relevance of this theoretical framework.

The findings related to trust also confirm previous research emphasizing its role as a fundamental element of effective leadership. Trust allows employees to feel confident in managerial decisions and reduces uncertainty within teams. When employees trust their managers, they are more likely to share information, cooperate with colleagues, and contribute to team objectives. These findings are consistent with the trust model proposed by Roger C. Mayer, James H. Davis, and F. David Schoorman (1995), who argued that trust between leaders and employees enhances cooperation and organizational effectiveness.

The significant role of communication observed in this study also aligns with existing organizational behavior research. Effective communication ensures that employees clearly understand expectations, responsibilities, and organizational goals. It also facilitates coordination among team members and reduces misunderstandings that may negatively affect team performance. Clear communication channels between managers and employees help establish transparency and build stronger professional relationships, ultimately improving teamwork and productivity.

Furthermore, the results of this study are consistent with recent empirical research examining leadership and team effectiveness. For example, M. C. C. Lee and colleagues (2022) found that supervisory support significantly improves team performance by strengthening collective efficacy and shared commitment among team members. Similarly, Klaske Breevaart and Arnold B. Bakker (2022) demonstrated that high-quality leader–member relationships enhance employee engagement and improve coordination within

teams. These findings support the results of the present study and reinforce the argument that relational leadership plays a crucial role in organizational effectiveness.

In addition, the findings support the broader argument presented by John E. Mathieu and colleagues (2020), who emphasized that team effectiveness in modern organizations is heavily influenced by relational processes, including leadership interactions, communication patterns, and psychological safety. In complex and dynamic organizational environments, relational dynamics between leaders and employees are essential for maintaining collaboration, adaptability, and sustained performance.

From an organizational perspective, the results of this study suggest that technical skills and structural resources alone are insufficient to achieve high levels of team performance. Instead, organizations must also focus on strengthening interpersonal relationships between managers and employees. By fostering trust, improving communication practices, providing managerial support, and ensuring fairness in decision-making, organizations can create positive work environments that encourage teamwork and enhance productivity.

Overall, the empirical findings of this study strongly reinforce the theoretical framework proposed in Chapter 2. The results confirm that relational leadership factors significantly influence team performance and highlight the importance of high-quality manager–employee relationships in achieving organizational effectiveness.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter presented the statistical analysis and findings of the study examining the impact of manager–employee relationships on team performance at APSCO. Data collected through the questionnaire were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), including descriptive statistics, reliability and validity tests, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis.

The results confirmed that the measurement scales used in this study were reliable and valid, with Cronbach’s alpha values exceeding the acceptable threshold. Descriptive statistics indicated generally positive perceptions of manager–employee relationships and team performance among respondents.

The hypothesis testing results showed that trust, communication, managerial support, and fairness all have significant positive effects on team performance. Among these variables, managerial support emerged as the strongest predictor. These findings highlight the importance of strong manager–employee relationships in improving teamwork and organizational performance.

Overall, the results support the theoretical framework presented in earlier chapters and emphasize the role of relational leadership in enhancing team effectiveness. The following chapter discusses the implications of these findings and presents recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5: Conclusions, Limitations, and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the final stage of the research by summarizing the main findings, discussing the limitations of the study, and providing practical recommendations for improving manager–employee relationships and team performance. The study aimed to examine the impact of manager–employee relationships on team performance at APSCO in Saudi Arabia. Using a quantitative research approach and statistical analysis, the study explored how relational factors such as trust, communication, managerial support, and fairness influence team effectiveness.

The findings of the study confirmed that manager–employee relationships significantly influence team performance. In particular, managerial support, trust, communication, and fairness were found to positively contribute to improved collaboration, productivity, and goal achievement within teams.

5.2 Research Limitations

Although this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between manager–employee relationships and team performance, several limitations should be acknowledged.

First, the study was conducted within a single organization (APSCO). As a result, the findings may not fully represent other organizations or industries. Organizational culture, leadership styles, and structural differences may influence how manager–employee relationships affect team performance in different contexts.

Second, the research used a cross-sectional design, meaning that data were collected at a single point in time. This design limits the ability to observe changes in relationships and team performance over time. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how these relationships evolve.

Third, the study relied on self-reported questionnaire data, which may introduce response bias. Participants may have provided socially desirable responses rather than completely objective evaluations.

Fourth, the research focused on a limited set of relational variables, specifically trust, communication, managerial support, and fairness. Other leadership factors such as emotional intelligence, transformational leadership, and organizational culture were not examined and could also influence team performance.

Despite these limitations, the study provides meaningful empirical evidence on the importance of relational leadership in organizational performance.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several practical recommendations can be made for organizations seeking to improve team performance through stronger manager–employee relationships.

5.3.1. Strengthening Managerial Support

Managers should actively provide guidance, feedback, and recognition to employees. Supportive leadership practices can improve employee

motivation, engagement, and commitment, which ultimately enhance team performance.

5.3.2. Improving Communication Practices

Organizations should promote open and transparent communication between managers and employees. Clear communication helps employees understand expectations, reduces misunderstandings, and improves collaboration within teams.

5.3.3. Building Trust in Leadership

Trust plays a critical role in effective teamwork. Managers should demonstrate integrity, consistency, and fairness in decision-making in order to build trust among employees.

5.3.4. Ensuring Fair and Transparent Management Practices

Employees are more likely to remain motivated and cooperative when they perceive managerial decisions as fair and unbiased. Organizations should establish clear policies for evaluation, rewards, and recognition.

5.3.5. Leadership Development Programs

Organizations should invest in leadership training programs that emphasize relational leadership skills such as communication, emotional intelligence, and conflict management. These programs can help managers develop stronger relationships with employees and improve overall team effectiveness.

5.4 Conclusion

This study examined the impact of manager–employee relationships on team performance at APSCO in Saudi Arabia. The findings demonstrated that relational factors such as trust, communication, managerial support, and fairness significantly influence team effectiveness. Among these factors, managerial support was identified as the strongest predictor of team performance.

The results highlight the importance of relational leadership practices in modern organizational environments where teamwork and collaboration are essential for achieving strategic objectives. By strengthening manager–employee relationships, organizations can create more supportive work environments that encourage engagement, cooperation, and productivity.

Overall, this research contributes to the understanding of how interpersonal dynamics between managers and employees influence team outcomes. It also provides practical guidance for organizations seeking to enhance leadership effectiveness and improve team performance.

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Appendix A: Research Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to collect data for the research entitled 'How Manager–Employee Relationships Impact Team Performance: A Study of Relational Leadership and Team Effectiveness.' All responses will be kept confidential and used for academic purposes only.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using a 5-point Likert scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female
2. Age: ☐ Under 25 ☐ 25–34 ☐ 35–44 ☐ 45–54 ☐ 55 and above
3. Years of Experience: ☐ Less than 5 ☐ 5–10 ☐ 11–15 ☐ More than 15
4. Department: _____

Section B: Manager–Employee Relationships

- Trust

1. My manager can be trusted to act in my best interest.
2. I feel confident in my manager's decisions.
3. My manager treats employees fairly and honestly.

- Communication

4. My manager communicates expectations clearly.
5. My manager listens to employee concerns.
6. Information from my manager is timely and transparent.
 - Managerial Support
7. My manager supports me when I face work-related challenges.
8. My manager encourages my professional development.
9. My manager recognizes employee contributions.
 - Fairness
10. My manager treats all team members equally.
11. Decisions made by my manager are unbiased.
12. Rewards and recognition are distributed fairly.

Section C: Team Performance

1. Our team consistently meets performance targets.
2. Team members collaborate effectively.
3. Our team works efficiently to achieve goals.
4. There is strong cohesion among team members.
5. Our team handles conflicts constructively.

Table 1: Research instruments

Variable	Dimension	Source	No. of Items	Measurement Scale	Reliability (Expected)
Manager–Employee Relationships	Trust	Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman (1995); Adapted	3	5-point Likert Scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree)	$\alpha \geq .70$
Manager–Employee Relationships	Communication	Graen & Uhl-Bien (1995); Adapted	3	5-point Likert Scale	$\alpha \geq .70$
Manager–Employee Relationships	Managerial Support	Eisenberger et al. (2002); Adapted	3	5-point Likert Scale	$\alpha \geq .70$
Manager–Employee Relationships	Fairness	Colquitt et al. (2013); Adapted	3	5-point Likert Scale	$\alpha \geq .70$
Team Performance	Overall Team Performance (Productivity, Cohesion, Collaboration, Goal Achievement)	Salas et al. (2005); Beal et al. (2003); Adapted	5	5-point Likert Scale	$\alpha \geq .70$

All measurement items were adapted from previously validated scales to ensure content validity. Reliability will be assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with values above 0.70 considered acceptable.