

Systematic Literature Review of Perspective-taking in Social Exchanges: Implications for Management and Leadership

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Abstract

Contemporary research in the area of perspective-taking in the workplace has begun to challenge our view of how it is currently conceptualised and measured. Whereas individual-level perspective-taking was initially assumed to be a predominantly cognitive process, recent empirical work has documented the complexity of perspective-taking and scholars are starting to acknowledge that perspective-taking should not be considered in subjective isolation but in conjunction with sociocultural, affective, and organisational practices. As such, this paper provides an extensive look at perspective-taking within the context of social-exchange theory through a systematic review methodology. Three core research themes are found within perspective-taking literature: (a) emotional reconfiguration; (b) cognitive reconstitution; and (c) social and organisational familiarisation. These research themes are linked with arguments derived from leader–member exchange (LMX) theory to advance a framework of how perspective-taking may affect social-exchange relationships and consequent organisational outcomes.

Keywords: Perspective-taking, LMX, social exchange, social-exchange relationships, leader–member relationships, team performance

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